Edgar Allan Poe’s Presence in Greek Literature

(1878–1900)

by

Eleftheria A. Tsirakoglou

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Eleftheria A. Tsirakoglou

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Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Smaragda Yemenetzi-Malathouni

Dr. Yiorgos Kalogeras

Dr. Tatiani Rapatzikou

Department Chairperson:

Dr. Georgia Theodosiadou

APPROVED:

ACCEPTED:
In loving memory of my father
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Abstract

This dissertation provides readers with insights into Edgar Allan Poe’s presence in Greek letters through an exploration of specific works by Emmanuel Rhoides (1836-1904), Georgios Vizyenos (1849-1896) and Nikolaos Episkopopoulos (1874-1944). In particular, it elucidates the ways in which the Greek writers under study engage in a prolific dialogue with Poe’s works that allows for diverse ways of writing to be introduced to the Greek literary scene of the time.

Such an examination sheds light on Poe’s writing concerns, themes and innovative narrative techniques by focusing on certain key notions as for instance the fragile boundaries between life and death, the problematic nature of “reading” the city and its inhabitants, the consideration of translation as a process of rewriting, the detective’s intellectual prowess as a means for the solution of mysteries, and finally the representation of exceptionally strong and mysterious female characters as well as emotionally overwrought male ones. What is of interest in this doctoral project is the way in which Poe’s tales allow the Greek writers examined here to revisit aspects of death, crime and morality in their attempt to create narratives that are driven by inexplicable incidents and ghastly events that pollinate the literary conventions of the time with new and diverse themes.

The main concerns this author-based dissertation brings forth are: Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s tales alongside the broader need to bring the Greek readership in contact with non-Greek writers and works; the detective essence inherent in Vizyenos’ work alongside the realist precepts of the time; and Episkopopoulos’ adherence to the movement of aestheticism alongside Poe’s writing principles in an effort to deviate from Greek-specific literary trends. All these elements clarify Poe’s impact on the Greek writers presented here and aspire to illuminate Poe’s connection
with modern Greek letters as this results from the writers’ own cross-cultural literary and cultural interests.
Introduction

I. Edgar Allan Poe’s Presence in Greek Literature:

The Example of Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos

Broadly concerned with the discussion surrounding Edgar Allan Poe’s international reputation, this doctoral dissertation seeks to explore Poe’s presence in late nineteenth-century Greece and trace his special impact on three Greek writers of the time: Emmanuel Rhoides (1836-1904), Georgios Vizyenos (1849-1896) and Nikolaos Episkopopoulos (1874-1944). At first glance, Poe’s connection to Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos might seem difficult to locate. Nevertheless, these Greek writers with their works have contributed to the nation’s cultural and literary development. Though mainly writing within the realist tradition, these specific authors assimilate Poe-related themes, motifs, and narrative techniques, proposing in this way an alternative textuality to that prescribed by the Greek realist fiction of the time. Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe not only lies in their ability to assimilate Poe-inherited elements in their own writings but also rests in their willingness to absorb trends and techniques outside the Greek literary practice of the time and pollinate it with diverse themes and methods of narration.

In this respect, a question that might fruitfully be addressed in this dissertation is the following: What is Poe’s contribution to the works of Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos? In attempting to generate answers to this question, this study raises further points that need to be considered: What are the literary and social conditions of the time that enabled the Poe canon to infiltrate into the Greek panorama of literary
production? and in what ways do Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos assimilate Poe’s works?

In this doctoral dissertation, I will address, though by no means exhaust, these issues by putting forth a threefold argument. I shall argue first that all literary and social factors in nineteenth-century Greece—the advent of realism, the prominence of short fiction, the increased number of translations available, the emergence of the reading public, the expansion of the periodical press—converge into creating an intellectual social and cultural milieu which permitted the infusion of foreign literary trends and authors. Secondly, I claim that the cosmopolitan nature of Rhoides’, Vizyenos’ and Episkopopoulos’ works places them in an exceptional position within the literary production of the time that is mostly preoccupied with “the detailed depiction of a small, more or less contemporary, traditional community” (Beaton, *Introduction* 73, emphasis in original). Finally, I maintain that Poe offers these authors an alternative space and a voice to bring forth unique thematic concerns and forms of writing. For Rhoides, Poe’s creative writings serve as a paradigm, through which Rhoides expresses his concern about the fine line between life and death and develops the theme of treating the city as text. For Vizyenos, Poe’s detective works function as a model upon which Vizyenos bases the creation of his own Greek detective story and the emphasis on the study of the psychological elements of his characters. As for Episkopopoulos, Poe’s views on the writing of tales, his recurrent themes and motifs as well as the elements of the fantastic inherent in his fiction serve as a means of expressing Episkopopoulos’ writing concerns and inspire him to create his own stories.

The short stories I choose to discuss in this dissertation differ radically in plotlines, characters, motifs and narrative style. Rather than try to apply a single
theory to all those short stories, I decide to examine how the general theoretical assumptions made about comparative literary studies can illuminate my reading of the three writers’ works. Put it this way, my discussion will necessarily be based on theories and issues of comparative literature and translation studies. I will use Susan Bassnett’s *The Translator as Writer* (2006) and Michael Holman and Jean Boase-Beier’s *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity* (1998) as well as Pierre Brunel, Charles Perrault, Claude Pichois and Andre Rousseau’s theory on comparative literature, as this is articulated in *Qu’est-ce que la Littérature Comparée? [What is Comparative Literature?]* (1983),¹ in order to examine how the Greek texts can reveal Poe-related themes and motifs when they are read in dialogue with the three Greek writers under consideration even if this reading is technically anachronistic.

The cosmopolitan dimensions of the texts under investigation are also examined against the background of nineteenth-century Greek cosmopolitanism, a notion put forward by Δημήτρης Τζιόβας² in his *Κοσμοπολίτες και Αποσυνέγγυοι: Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Πεζογραφία και Κριτική* (2003). There is particular appropriateness in discussing the cosmopolitan trend that emerges in late nineteenth-century Greece because it provides the rationale for a cosmopolitan consideration of the three authors’ life and works. I contend that Rhoides, Vizyenos, and Episkopopoulos’ cosmopolitan disposition, their social origin as well as their involvement with literary developments in the west result in their familiarization with Poe’s works and their subsequent indebtedness to them. Actually Poe’s writings have been largely appreciated in Europe since the 1840s when the first translations of his works appear in France. The French translations of Poe’s writings not only establish

¹ This work is translated into Greek in 1998 with the title *Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία? [Τί εἶναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία?]*.
² [Dimitris Tziovas].
Poe’s genius in France but also, as Lois Davis Vines remarks in *Poe Abroad: Influence, Reputation, Affinities* (1999), “set the tone for admiration that spread quickly to other countries” (2). Because of the great respect French culture enjoys in European intellectual circles, Poe soon begins to be known in other European countries and even in places beyond the European boundaries, such as Japan, China, India and Latin America. The discussion of Poe’s international presence is certainly nothing new, but is in no way exhaustive when it comes to Greek writers and the Greek literary production.

Finally, my study will take a critical cue from Tzvetan Todorov’s approaches to detective fiction and the fantastic, as these are articulated in “The Typology of Detective Fiction” (2000) and in *The Fantastic* (1973) respectively, as I mean to discuss the ways Poe’s detective and fantastic elements are creatively incorporated in the writings of Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos. These diverse perspectives represent the theoretical and critical framework that helps define the purpose of this comparative study.

Starting with this premise, Poe’s connectedness with the Greek literary production of the time falls under the following three standpoints: a) The Cosmopolitan Vision of nineteenth-century Greek Literature; b) The Vast Translation Flow and Poe’s Presence in Greece; and c) The Emergence of Short Fiction and Poe’s Presence in Greece. Let us examine each one of them separately:

**a) The Cosmopolitan Vision of nineteenth-century Greek Literature**

A useful way to begin such a discussion is by considering the social and cultural parameters of the literary production of the time including the social origin of some writers, the cosmopolitan stance particular Greek writers adopt and their
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engagement with prevailing literary trends in the West. During the later nineteenth century, a number of Greek men of letters adopt a cosmopolitan ideology and form of behavior as a result of their extensive traveling abroad for studies or other affairs, thus being into contact with the cultural and literary ferment of the time. This physical and intellectual mobility gives rise to a particular pattern of behavior which Τζιόβας labels as “cosmopolitanism” (Κοσμοπολίτες 9). In the context of nineteenth-century Greek literature, the writers’ cosmopolitan attitude is conceived as deviating from the ethnocentric and national narratives of the time and entails an intellectual and personal stance of openness toward non-Greek cultural and literary experiences (Τζιόβας, Κοσμοπολίτες 12). Τζιόβας deems “Παλαιολόγος, Πιτζιπίος, Βιζυηνός, Κοβάφης, Αποστολάκης” as examples of cosmopolitan ideology in the sense that they exhibit a desire for and appreciation of foreign literary cultures (Κοσμοπολίτες 18).

It is the Greek cosmopolitans’ predilection for relishing foreign literatures and cultures in general, and that of Rhoides’, Vizeanos’ and Episkopopoulos’ in particular, that has enabled the Poe canon to seep into Greek writing. The reason is that these specific Greek cosmopolitans not only absorb foreign literary texts but also introduce novel authors and trends to the Greek literary milieu and reading public. Roderick Beaton notes that certain writers “looked outside Greece to Europe, and particularly to France, and presented what they found there to the Greek reading public” (Introduction 69). Due to Greece’s long-standing cultural ties with France and Poe’s extensive reputation in France, Germany and Great Britain, it was natural for the Greek cosmopolitans who resided, studied and traveled to these specific countries, to become connoisseurs of Poe’s works and use them as a source of inspiration.

3 For a fuller account of cosmopolitanism and its early advocates in nineteenth-century Greece, see Μαυρέλος [Mavrelos], “Οι Κοσμοπολίτες και οι Φουστανελοφόροι: Το Ελληνικό Πρόκλημα και η Κρίση του Νεοελληνικού Επικεφαλείου” [“Οι Kosmopolites kai oi Foustaneloforoi: To Ellinoglosso Kritiko Ergo tou Nikolau Episkopopoulou”] 289-311; and Σαχίνης [Sachinis], “Ο Κοσμοπολιτισμός στη Νεοελληνική Πεζογραφία” [“Ο Kosmopolitismos sti Neoelleniki Pezografia”].
Nineteenth-century cosmopolitanism is not the mere factor that has contributed to Poe’s introduction to Greece though. The proliferation of translated literary works also affect Poe’s introduction to Greek letters, as I will explain in what follows.

b) The Vast Translation Flow and Poe’s Presence in Greece

In this dissertation I argue that the translations of Poe’s works into Greek contribute to and mostly enhance Poe’s popularity in Greece. Following Célestin Pierre Cambiaire’s claim that in order “to exert an important and widespread influence on a whole literature, an author must be well-known and admired. If he writes in a foreign language, his works must be translated” (14), Poe became first known to the Greek readership through the translations of his works. This is where the significance of the information on the first translations of Poe’s works lies. Given that Poe was writing in English, his introduction to Greece and influence on Greek writers could hardly begin before his writings were translated. With short fiction being a preeminently periodical material and the dominant literary form of the time, translations of foreign works flood Greek magazines such as Εστία, Παρνασσός, Θελξινόη, Χρυσαλίς, and Παρθενών to name just a few. The western short story published in translations at this time considerably influenced Greek contemporary writers, with several foreign writers, including Poe, becoming known to Greek readers through translations.

4 The translation of Poe’s tales has been attempted earlier than the translation of his poetry. Poe’s most famous poem “The Raven” was translated into Greek in 1888. For a detailed list of Poe’s poems into Greek, see Κατσίμπαλης, Ελληνική Βιβλιογραφία Εδγαρ Πόε [Hellenike Vivliographia Edgar Poe].
5 [Hestia].
6 [Parnassos].
7 [Thelxinoi].
8 [Chryssalis].
9 [Parthenon].
10 There is a growing interest in translating works from the French and English language. Alexander Dumas (1802-1870), Jules Verne (1828-1905), Victor Hugo (1802-1885), Émile Zola (1840-1902), Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850), Prosper Mérimée (1803-1870) are some of the writers whose works
The earliest known translation of Poe’s work into Greek appeared in 1872 when Νικόλαος Πολίτης\textsuperscript{11} translated “The Thousand-and-Second Tale of Scheherazade” (1850). The daunting task of translating Poe’s tales was attempted five years later, in 1877, when Rhoides translated Poe’s “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” (1845). Two years later, in 1879, Rhoides translated “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843), “Morella” (1835) and “The Oval Portrait” (1842), while in 1883 Rhoides translates “The Black Cat” (1843) and in 1895 “The Gold-Bug” (1843). Παναγιώτης Πανάς\textsuperscript{12} retranslated “The Oval Portrait” in 1888, “Berenice” in 1885 and “Morella” in 1890 respectively. In 1884 Πολίτης translated “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841). Evidently, this is not the place to provide a detailed account of all the translations of Poe’s works during the nineteenth century. What I would like to point out, however, is that the numerous translations provide sufficient proof that the nineteenth-century Greeks read Poe otherwise there would have been no demand for new editions and new versions of the already translated tales. The extended translation practice of the time is not the mere factor that has affected Poe’s introduction to Greek letters though. Poe’s presence in Greece has also intertwined with the rise of short fiction during the period from 1880 to 1930, as I will discuss in what follows.

\footnotesize
appear in Greek from 1830s to 1880s (Κασίνης 35). More precisely, Dumas is the most translated author in Greece at the time. Out of English authors, Sir Walter Scott is quite frequently translated (Κασίνης 35). The choice of foreign works to be translated lies, to a very large extent, in the tastes of the reading public. The urge to be au courant with foreign affairs and lifestyles as well as the necessity to identify with the heroes of the literary works are some of the aspects that define the readers’ yearnings at the time (Κασίνης 29).

\textsuperscript{11} [Nikolaos Politis].
\textsuperscript{12} [Panayotis Panas].
c) The Emergence of Short Fiction and Poe’s Presence in Greece

Relevant to the proliferation of translated works at the time and important for exploring the conditions under which Poe is introduced to the Greek literary scene is the popularity of short fiction in Greece. While short narratives exist prior to the 1880s, it is during that period in particular that short fiction reaches its apogee in Greece. The reasons for the short story’s popularity in Greece are multifold; the emergence of the short story during the 1880s is largely due to the decline of romanticism and the ensuing emergence of realism (Dimaras 335). More precisely, the writers of the 1880s turn to the short story (L. Politis 164) and use as its subject almost exclusively the agrarian life of the inhabitants, thus bringing forth a special mode of writing, that of “ethography,” a mode of writing which may be characterized as “the realistic depiction of the Greek countryside and peasantry” (Tziovas 36). Most Greek writers express themselves through short-story writing because it enables them to write more freely about the parts of the country they know well and to present a much smaller number of characters with stereotypical Greek attributes (Dimaras 380). The peasants’ daily life and the depiction of contemporary society become the focus of most authors and constitute themes eloquently integrated in the writings of this period.

13 Early forms of short narratives in Greek include exhortations, war narratives, folksongs and memoirs. For more information on these literary forms, see Dimaras, A History of Modern Greek Literature 242-68. As for the period from 1830 to 1880, Σοφία Ντενίση [Sophia Denisi] registers roughly 300 short stories («διήγημα» 191). For more information on the short-story production of that period, see Ντενίση, To Διήγημα στην Ελληνική και στις Ξένες Λογοτεχνίες: Θεωρία, Γραφή, Πρόληψη [To Diegema stin Ellini kai stis Xenes Logotechnies: Theoria, Grafi, Prolipsi].

14 Henri Tonnet claims that novels are not produced in Greece between 1880 and 1990 apart from certain novels such as, for example, Οι Άθλιοι των Αθηνών [Oi Athlioi ton Athinon] (1894) by Ιωάννης Κοντάλακης [Ioannis Kondylakis] (137). For further details on the novel production of nineteenth-century Greece, see Politis, A History of Modern Greek Literature 137-49.

15 For a fuller analysis of this mode of writing, see Beaton, Introduction to Modern Greek Literature 73-76; Debasieux, Le Décadentisme Grec, une Esthétique de la Déformation; Μαρμαρινο-Πολίτου, “Ηθογραφία” [“Ethographia”] Πάσης Αγωνού Μητριάνκας; Merry, Encyclopedia of Modern Greek Literature 194-95; Politis, A History of Modern Greek Literature 165-70; Tonnet, Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Μυθιστορήματος [Istoria tou Hellinikou Mythistorematos]; and Tziovas, The Other Self: Selfhood and Society in Modern Greek Fiction 36.
Short fiction also comes into vogue with the establishment of the periodical press, resulting in its publication in all types of magazines and journals. In his 1978 *History of the Greek Literature*, Mario Vitti discusses the role of fiction magazines in promoting short fiction. Vitti maintains that the periodicals of the time provide an essential outlet for the short story and also serve as a significant source of money for the authors (291). Speaking about the magazines, Beaton also notes: “Much of the cultural ferment of the years around 1880 went on in the periodical press, and especially in the columns of *Hestia* (1876-95) and *Rabagas* (1878-89)” (Introduction 71). In addition, *Παρνασσός* (1877-1895), *Μη Χάνεσαι* 16 (1880-1883), later renamed as *Ακρόπολις*, 17 and *Εβδομάς* 18 (1884-1892) become useful venues for the publication and dissemination of short stories (Πατερίδου 26). Numerous short stories appear in the periodicals *Ευτέρπη* 19 (1847-1855) and *Πανδώρα* 20 (1850-1972) as well. It is also in these periodicals that several translations of foreign literary works are hosted. As the short stories gain in popularity and monetary gains are equally good, high-profile writers such as Αλέξανδρος Ρίζος Ραγκαβής 22 (1809-1892) and Vizyenos turn to short-story writing. Arguably, periodicals not only provide a market for writers, offering cash for stories, but they are also easily accessible to Greek readers. The rise of the periodical press, then, favors the production and cultivation of

16 [Mi Chanesai].
17 [Akropolis].
18 [Hevdomas].
19 [Efterpi].
20 [Pandora].
21 For additional information on these periodicals, see Δανόπουλος [Danopoulos] and Χατζοπούλου [Chatzopoulos], *Η Ευτέρπη: 1847-1855: Μητσάκης [Mitsakis], Πορεία μέσα στο χρόνο: Μελέτες Νεοελληνικής Φιλολογίας [Poreia mesa sto Chrono: Meletes Neoellenikis Filologias]; Λούδη [Loudi], «Το Νεοελληνικό Δίηγημα στην Ευτέρπη και την Πανδώρα: Συμβολή στη Μελέτη της Ιστορίας, της Ορολογίας και της Θεματικής του είδους κατά την Περίοδο 1830-1888» [“To Neoelleniko Diegema stin Efterpi kai tin Pandora: Symvoli stin Istoria tou Neolevenikou Diegematos: Prototypa kai Metafrasmena Kaimena sto Pediaiko Eidoou kata tin Periodo 1830-1888”]; Σταυροπούλου [Stavropoulou], «Συμβολή στην Ιστορία του Νεοελληνικού Διηγήματος: Προτύπα και Μεταφρασμένα Κέμματα στο Περιοδικό Εβδομάς» [“Symvoli stin Istoria tou Neolevenikou Diegematos: Prototypos kai Metafrasmena Kaimena sti Periodiko Hevdomas”; and Σαχίνης, Συμβολή στην Ιστορία του Πνεύματος και των Πελών Περιοδικών [Symvoli stin Istoria tis Pandoras kai ton Palion Periodikon].
22 [Alexandros Rizos Rangavis].
threaten the short story.

Cultural and social life affect the promotion of short fiction during the latter part of the nineteenth century as well. The rise of the middle class, the appearance of the working class, the growth of urban centers, the expansion of publishing and printing-houses and the establishment of a press agency in Athens manifest not only the proliferation and wide dissemination of printed documents (Πολίτης, «Αναζητώντας» 565), but also the associated growth of the reading public.23 A new reading class comes into being that is interested in scientific thinking, progress and who or what is out there (Μουλλάς, «Βιζιωνός» λα´). More specifically, the middle-class reading public develops in these years a taste for the contemporary world and technological advancements. The short story seems to condense what the Greek reading public is looking for: it provides brief, accurate and vivid glimpses of new and “exotic” places, such as America, and modes of living quite distinct from Greek ones (Μουλλάς, «Βιζιωνός» λα´-λβ´).24 The periodicals and the newspapers of this period feed the taste of the readers as they are agog with reports and current news from all over the world including information on technological developments such as the railroad’s emergence and the electrical telegraph (Μουλλάς, «Βιζιωνός» λα´-λβ´).

In this way, the Greek readership becomes acquainted with scientific approaches and technological developments and is kept up to date with all the latest news from an international terrain of action. What is significant then is not only that the periodical press sustains the production of short narratives but also that the nineteenth-century readership is willing to become cognizant of foreign cultures, places, lifestyles and,

23 For further details on the publishing houses in Athens, see Πολίτης, «Αναζητώντας Ορισμένους Στοιχείους στην Εξέλιξη της Πεζογραφίας του 19ου Αιώνα» [“Αναζητώντας Ορισμένους Στοιχείους στην Εξέλιξη της Πεζογραφίας του 19ου Αιώνα”] 565-66.
24 Especially for the treatment of America in nineteenth-century periodicals, see Σταυροπούλου, «Η Εικόνα της Αμερικής στην Ελληνική Λογοτεχνία του 19ου Αιώνα: Ανάμεσα στον Εξωτισμό και την Ουτοπία» [“Η Εικόνα της Αμερικής στην Ελληνική Λογοτεχνία του 19ου Αιώνα: Ανάμεσα στον Εξωτισμό και την Ουτοπία”].
consequently, literatures.

Thus it is not surprising that Poe’s short fiction rapidly drew the attention of Greek authors. The American writer not only produced highly skillful short fiction but also offered the first theoretical guidelines for the composition of tales.\footnote{Scholarly criticism on Poe’s contribution to the short-story genre is immense. Recent publications include: Fisher, “Poe and the American Short Story” 20-34; Hayes, The Cambridge Companion to Edgar Allan Poe; May, Edgar Allan Poe: A Study of the Short Fiction; and Scofield, The Cambridge Introduction to the American Short Story 20-34.} In his reviews and critical essays, Poe articulates his theory of tale-writing as a form that shows “superiority even over the poem” \textit{(Essays 573)}. More precisely, in his 1846 essay “The Philosophy of Composition” Poe expounds on his theory saying that: “If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression” \textit{(Essays 15)}. The tale’s exceptionality for Poe lies in its potential to achieve “unity of effect and impression” as it can be read “at one sitting.” The novel, on the contrary, “[a]s it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from \textit{totality}” \textit{(Poe, Essays 572, emphasis in original)}. The novel’s perusal cannot be completed within Poe’s desirable time limit—an hour and a half—and the interventions between readings contradict the unity of effect. Poe’s philosophy that the tale should tend towards a pre-determined effect has been influential on the development of the genre which explains why it has been repeatedly emulated by several writers and critics.

Poe’s contribution to the short story could not fail to be noted by nineteenth-century Greek writers as well. Reference to Poe’s name in Greece is made as early as 1883 in a short-story competition organized by \textit{Εστία}.\footnote{This competition introduces a major shift in the development of short fiction in Greece; it elicits passionate reactions among Greek authors and boosts the publication of a flurry of short stories (Vitti 292). For additional information on this national fiction competition, see Beaton, An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature 71-72; Μουλλάς [Moullas], «Το Νεοελληνικό Δημήτρια και ο Γ.Μ. Βιζηνός» [“To Neoelliniko Diegema kai o G.M. Vizyenos”] λεξικότητα; Παπακώστας [Papakostas], \textit{Το}} In the 1883 competition’s call...
for submissions, Πολίτης extols, among others, Poe’s artistry as a tale writer: “The short story may have reached its perfection abroad in the hands of the Frenchman Mérimée, the German Heyse, the Russian Turgenev, the Americans Poe and Bret Harte; in Greece, meanwhile, short fiction has not developed considerably” (qtd. in Μουλλάς, «Βιζυηνός λέξις»). In this passage, Πολίτης openly acknowledges Poe’s contribution to the short-story genre and also stresses the necessity for promoting short fiction in Greece. A further tribute to Poe’s talent as a writer of the fantastic is made later in 1895 when Εστία organizes a short-story competition. In the committee’s review, Rhoides and Κωστής Παλαμάς cite Poe’s works as praiseworthy specimens of fantasy writing because they are subject to rational analysis and grounded in fact. The references to Poe’s writing style attest to the fact that prominent Greek intellectuals of the time are cognizant of both Poe’s works and his writing techniques.

Hence, Poe’s first appearance in Greece has intertwined historically with the proliferation of translations of works of art, the establishment of the periodical press, the emergence of short fiction both in Europe and the U.S., and generally with the drive to introduce foreign writing into Greek letters. It is helpful to keep these cultural and social factors in mind when considering Poe’s initial presence in nineteenth-century Greece. Focusing on the literary and cultural tendencies that prevail in Greece at the time, this dissertation attempts to show the ways in which these trends have

Περιοδικό Εστία και το Διήγημα [To Periodiko Hestia kai to Diegema]; and Tsiovos, The Other Self: Selfhood and Society in Modern Fiction 36.

27 My translation of: «Ἀν άλλο το διήγημα ἔφτασε στὴν τελειότητα ποὺ ἔχουν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Γάλλου Μεριμέ, τοῦ Γερμανοῦ Χάζ, τοῦ Ρώσσου Τουργένεφ, τῶν Ἀμερικανῶν Ροέ και Βρέτ Ηάρτε, στὴν Ἑλλάδα δὲ γνώρισε ἄκομη ἀξίωση ἀνάπτυξη» (qtd. in Μουλλάς, «Βιζυηνός λέξις»).

28 [Kostis Palamas].

29 The winning short story entitled «Οισιρόν Μεσονυκτίου» [“Oneiron Mesonyktiou”] provides the major impetus for discussing Poe’s literary merits. For a discussion of this short story, see Παπακώστας, Το Περιοδικό Εστία και το Διήγημα 218-20; and Μαυρέλος, «Οι Κοσμοπολίτες και οι Φουστανελοφόροι: Το Ελληνόγλωσσο Κριτικό Έργο του Νικόλαου Επισκοπόπουλου» 96.
paved the path for Greek men of letters in their effort to become creative receptors of Poe’s short fiction. Short fiction not only enables the reception of Poe’s tales in magazines but also explains why the three Greek authors under examination here—Rhoides, Vizyenos, Episkopopoulos—assimilate Poe’s short narratives, as I will discuss in what follows.

II. Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos: “Writers of the World”

The consideration of Rhoides’ Vizyenos’ and Episkopopoulos’ cosmopolitan mode of living and writing is another area of research and discussion of this dissertation that further accounts for and elucidates their literary connection to Poe. In Steven Vertovec’s and Robin Cohen’s vision, “cosmopolitanism is only available to an elite—those who have the resources necessary to travel, learn other languages and absorb other cultures” (5). This is certainly true for Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos who have been privileged enough to travel extensively in Europe, thus coming to direct contact both with Poe’s works, circulating across Europe at the time, as well as with the literary atmosphere of nineteenth-century Europe.

As I will discuss in detail in the relevant chapters of this dissertation, Rhoides resided several years abroad before his permanent return to Athens in 1863. His cosmopolitan background aided him in being open to diverse European languages and cultures as well as literary influences. A cosmopolitan aura is also reflected in Vizyenos’ background who was born in Vizye, a village in eastern Thrace, but spent his youth in Constantinople and Cyprus while travelling extensively in Europe. More precisely, between 1875 and 1884 Vizyenos resided in Europe thus coming into contact with the literary styles being developed there during that period. As for Episkopopoulos, his writings are also shaped by the cosmopolitan ambiance within
which he lived. He started his literary career by publishing numerous short stories and other works in Greece; then he relocated in France and dedicated himself to French letters (Dimaras 388). European literature plays a predominant role in his writings, whilst the cosmopolitan culture was more essential to him than the national literary tradition of his home country. His writings are, therefore, marked by his cosmopolitan orientation thus setting him apart from the rest of his contemporaries (Αθανασόπουλος, Εισαγωγή 20).

The authors’ social origin also deserves to be mentioned; Rhoides and Episkopopoulos originate from major cultural and commercial centers—the islands of Syra and Zante respectively, places that housed at the time printing offices, libraries as well as grand educational institutions like the Hellenic-American Lyceum of Hermoupolis, facts that explain their elevated interest in fiction and poetry. Connections to Europe are also feasible due to trade (A. Politis 226). Drawing from this circumambient atmosphere, these authors developed a cosmopolitan perspective which may account for their tendency to read and admire western literature and come to cherish Poe’s writings as well. In my view, the contemporary European literary trends of the time justify the strong links that develop between Poe’s works and these writers’ individual writing styles which fortified these writers’ indebtedness to the American author and their openness to cross-cultural literary trends.

In addition to the above noted common traits, all three writers express their cosmopolitanism through translation practice. Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos

30 Much of the intellectual and cultural ferment of post-revolutionary Greece derived from the Ionian Islands. Literary output in the Ionian Islands is presented in more detail in Beaton, An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature 29-33; and in the relevant chapters in Beaton and Ricks, The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism and the Uses of the Past (1797-1896).
have engaged themselves in translation practice at some point in their literary career. Their engagement with such an activity is worthy of consideration as the translation process undoubtedly results from their cosmopolitanism to a large extent (Cronin 11).

In the spirit of Cronin’s definition of cosmopolitanism, all translators are cosmopolitans since “going to the other text, the other language, the other culture, involves [a] journey away from the location of one’s birth, language, upbringing” (11). This journey certainly applies to the three Greek authors in question; their involvement with translation not only connects them with a cosmopolitan way of thinking but also reflects their need to absorb foreign cultures and authors in their work, as is the case with Poe.

These three Greek authors could then be characterized as what Alan Latham calls, “people who are ‘of the world’ ” (94). In other words, Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos prove to be the kind of people or writers who can move easily among diverse cultures, literary styles and languages and can adjust to different places and cultures, much as Poe did before them. Although Poe had not travelled extensively abroad, he spent his childhood years in Great Britain and resided in multiple places within America. A cosmopolitan outlook permeates Poe’s writings too and, as Paul Kincaid observes, he frequently “looked to European settings and themes” (37). Poe is widely thought of as an explorer of international themes and shuttles his characters from America to Europe with great regularity. Like Poe, Rhoides, Vizyenos and

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31 For a complete list of Vizyenos’ translations, see Μαμώνη [Mamoni], Βιβλιογραφία Γ. Βιζυηνού (1873-1962): Ανέκδοτα Ποιήματα από το χειρ. <Λυρικά.> [Vivliographia G. Vizyenou (1873-1962): Anekdota Poiemata apo to cheir. ‘Lyrika’].

32 From 1815 to 1820 Poe and his family resided in Great Britain. From 1820s onwards, Poe had the chance to travel extensively within America and resided in several different places such as Boston, Richmond, New York, Philadelphia and West Point. The bibliography on Poe’s biography is immense; some recent sources include: Fisher, The Cambridge Introduction to Edgar Allan Poe; Hayes, Edgar Allan Poe; Hutchisson, Poe; Quinn, Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography; Rapatzikou, “Chronology” in Edgar Allan Poe’s the Fall of the House of Usher and other Stories xv-xix; and Silverman, Edgar Allan Poe: Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance.
Episkopopoulos seem to be somehow based both in Greece and outside Greece at the same time; in their writings, they combine tradition and innovation, much as Poe does. In this framework, their approach has often implied assimilating a particular aspect of Poe’s artistry and, creating works that open up new directions and, in their own right, “Europeanized” the Greek fiction of the time by bridging it both with European and international literary trends.

Seen in this way, in this dissertation the Greek writers to be examined and Poe are presented in their literary contexts within their respective national traditions, while their mutual parallelisms and influences are commented. As such, each chapter focuses on the similarity between a particular work of these Greek writers with a particular dimension of Poe’s artistry. In what follows, I provide a brief description of the chapters of this dissertation specifying the contribution of this research project to the Greek and American literature.

In particular, chapter one with the title “Emmanuel Rhoides’ Resonance with Edgar Allan Poe: Morbidity, Premature Burials and the Dialectic of Seeing and Reading” considers translation practice, being the means through which Poe reaches the Greek-speaking readership, and is devoted to Emmanuel Rhoides, a writer who undertakes translating Poe during the late nineteenth century. Indubitably, Poe’s most well-known translator should be the first to be discussed given that his translations serve as an essential catalyst for Poe’s introduction to the Greek readership of the nineteenth century. Reading Rhoides’ translations through Bassnett’s scholarly work *The Translator as Writer* and Holman and Boase-Beier’s *The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity*, I claim that translation is important for understanding the literary kinship that exists between Poe and Rhoides.
Moving thematically through the chapter, the discussion shifts from translation practices to literary concerns. Although the connection between “Poe and Rhoides” is not a recent discovery amongst critics like Νικόλαος Μαυρέλος, Αθηνά Γεωργαντά, Γεωργία Γκότση and Χριστίνα Ντουνιά, and scholars who have conducted considerable research on this issue, the topic is by no means exhausted. Drawing from these critics, I argue that Rhoides’ response to Poe’s works can be examined both in relation to his essay “Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή” (1878) as well as to his city writings. Rhoides’ “Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή” shows affinities with Poe in its macabre atmosphere and treatment of the theme of live burial.

We may further explore Rhoides’ indebtedness to Poe if we turn to their urban-related texts. I focus, accordingly, on Rhoides’ urban–related texts and show the ways in which Rhoides deliberates upon the meaning of the city and attempts to fix it into a recognizable and identifiable shape. Rhoides’ “Ὁ διαβάτης” (1900), in particular, constitutes a very exciting way of approaching urban experience and explores the problematic nature of reading the city and its inhabitants as Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” (1840) and “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841) do.

In chapter two with the title “Realism and counter-Realism: The Presence of Edgar Allan Poe in Georgios Vizyenos’ «Ποῖος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» a parallel reading of Poe’s Dupin tales and Vizyenos’ story is attempted. Using Todorov’s views in “The Typology of Detective Fiction” (2000) as a theoretical tool, this chapter considers the classic detective formula initiated by Poe and explores the ways Poe’s legacy informs Vizyenos’ particular story, which is commonly regarded as the first detective story in Greece. This story displays a set of thematic features that could easily be bound to Poe’s detective paradigm at first sight. I do not intend to

33 [“Η ἀμφίβολος ζωή”].
34 [“Ὁ διαβάτης”].
35 [“Ποῖος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου”].
claim that Vizyenos wrote his works under Poe’s influence since there is no concrete evidence that Vizyenos had access to Poe’s works; however, a comparison of these particular stories renders a revealing parallelism between the two authors.

When dealing with the affinities between Vizyenos and Poe, I will first refer to those that have been pointed out by Greek scholars. My discussion takes its initial cue from Μουλλάς who suggests that Vizyenos’ story «Ποίος ᾦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἁδελφοῦ μου» is reminiscent of Poe’s detective tales in its unfolding as a puzzle («Βιζυηνός» πς‘). In addition, Στράτος Μυρογιάννης highlights affinities between Poe’s Dupin and Vizyenos’ Yorgis, the person assuming the role of the investigator in the Greek story, since both of them rely on their imagination and deductive reasoning skills in order to solve the mysteries in their respective stories (116). My study takes into account the discussion of the affinities between Dupin and Yorgis and contributes to it by noting their mutual inclination for physical darkness, a fact that helps them find a solution to the mysteries. Admittedly, Poe’s Dupin and Vizyenos’ Yorgis would at first glance appear to have very little in common with each other, but a closer investigation reveals a number of important similarities in the ways they solve the respective mysteries.

The study of the literary affinities between Poe and Vizyenos becomes even more interesting if one considers the blurred frontier between concrete reality and external appearances as well as the level of deception the characters find themselves in. Μιχάλης Χρυσανθόπουλος points to the proximity of Vizyenos’ story to Poe’s “The Purloined Letter” in terms of the deception the characters are caught in (Φαντασία 71). Interestingly, Vizyenos thrusts his characters and readers into a world where appearances and reality are complete opposites, thereby creating complex

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36 [Stratos Mirogiannis].
37 [Michalis Chryssanthopoulos].
situations just as Poe does in his Dupin tales.

In chapter three with the title “The Literary Relationship between Poe and Episkopopoulos: Death, Terror and Women” attention is paid to Nikolaos Episkopopoulos who brings Poe to Greece under the sway of the movement of aestheticism and creates a fantastic world through his stories, in ways that few other fictional accounts have been able to do so at the time. The final part of this doctoral dissertation focuses on two stories by Episkopopoulos, namely “Ut Dièse Mineur” (1893) and «Μαύρα»38 (1893), and sheds light on the ways they are indebted to Poe-related themes and motifs.

A number of Greek scholars have conducted considerable research on the issue of Poe’s influence on Episkopopoulos. Existent critical analyses have focused mainly on the effect of terror, the sense of dread, the gradual psychological and physical decay as well as on the ways Episkopopoulos captures the morbid atmosphere inherent in Poe’s prose fiction generally. Although the general tenor of these approaches contributes to our understanding of Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe, it appears to overlook how Episkopopoulos’ conversation with Poe leads to the development of a literary motif, that of the death-of-a-beautiful-woman. This absence is significant because there are several works by Episkopopoulos that revolve around the elaborate representation of his female characters. In order to fill this gap, the chapter will center on the particular incorporation of Poe’s death-of-a-beautiful-woman motif into Episkopopoulos’ literary universe and will try to offer new insights into Episkopopoulos’ reception and interpretation of Poe’s literary production as well as into the points where Episkopopoulos’ work diverges from it.

38 [“Mavra”].
In addition to Episkopopoulos’ fictional representation of women, I argue that the Greek writer patterns his stories following Poe’s theories of composition. Episkopopoulos’ short fiction is written in an intense style that is so tightly united that everything reflects everything else and motivation is vague opening it up to endless interpretations while virtually defying definitive commentary. Also, the oppressive tone is relentless with no attempt at providing readers with relief. Thus, unity of impression, a Poe hallmark, is well-maintained in Episkopopoulos’ writing as well.

Another way to approach Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe comes from comparing the entire atmosphere inherent in Episkopopoulos’ works to that in Poe’s works. Episkopopoulos uses Poe as a platform from which to stage new thrills. Looked at it this way, his short fiction incorporates Poe’s horrors, inexplicabilities, doubles and madness in an attempt to explore demented personalities, dysfunctional familial relationships and innovative horrific effects. Episkopopoulos’ efforts to generate fear and terror speak back to Poe’s own interest in describing a fantastic dream world that lies beyond the rational limits of space and time. Along with Poe, Episkopopoulos places inexplicable horrors into a Greek literary context defying all expectations of realistic cause and effect or of a world recognizable by readers.

One might wonder why we need another comparative study on Poe. There have already been books, concerted studies and collections of essays providing insights into Poe’s influence both in the United States and abroad such as Lois Vines’ Poe Abroad: Influence, Reputations, Affinities (1999), Burton Pollin’s Poe’s Seductive Influence on Great Writers (2004), Emron Esplin’s “Cosmopolitan Poe: An Introduction” (2011), Barbara Cantalupo’s Poe’s Pervasive Influence (2012), to name just a few. These sources, along with the great number of international conferences celebrating Poe’s impressive worldwide reputation, attest to the fact that Poe’s works,
to use Cantalupo’s words, “will continue to provoke interest and attract readers and critics nationally and internationally for centuries to come” (2). The objective of this dissertation is to complement the international dialogue surrounding Poe’s life and works by offering a wider perspective on Poe’s international influence by adding information with regard to Poe’s presence in Greek letters. As I have mentioned above, the subject of Poe’s presence in Greece has attracted increasing and serious attention from established scholars of Modern Greek literary culture, as is the case for instance with Μαυρέλος, Ντουνιά, Γεωργαντά, Μυρογιάννης and Γκότση, but the list is long.

However, the general thrust of the current doctoral study is to expand on the work of the aforementioned scholars by shedding light on unique aspects of the specific Greek writers’ work. To this extent, it aspires to be regarded as a valued contribution both to Edgar Allan Poe scholarship from the perspective that takes into account his international presence as well as to the scholarship on Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulou from the perspective that takes into account their connectedness to Poe’s works by examining them concurrently. The alternative angles and viewpoints that this dissertation brings forth highlight its explorative and interpretative potential in offering readers an overview of influences and developments that work both individually and concomitantly, as will be shown in the chapters to follow.
Chapter One

Emmanuel Rhoides’ Resonance with Edgar Allan Poe:
Morbidity, Premature Burials and the Dialectic of Seeing and Reading

“to exert an important and widespread influence on a whole literature, an author must be well-known and admired. If he writes in a foreign language, his works must be translated.”

1. Introducing Emmanuel Rhoides

This chapter discusses Edgar Allan Poe’s contribution to specific works by Emmanuel Rhoides and provides insights into the manner in which Poe has been introduced to the Greek readership of the late nineteenth century through Rhoides’ translations. Poe plays a significant role in the development of the Greek writer’s literary imagination and provides Rhoides with a vehicle for elaborating his own theories on writing. In this sense, my purpose in the following discussion will be to suggest how Poe’s voice converges with Rhoides’ realist mode of writing.

The verification of Rhoides’ indebtedness to the American writer is to be sought in the treatment of similar themes. Thematically, one can see in Rhoides, just as in Poe, a preoccupation with the boundaries that separate life from death; Rhoides’ morbid sensibility finds literary expression in his 1878 essay «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή»

1 [“Η amfíbolos zoi”].
wherein he deliberates on the frail boundaries between life and its demise. But beyond its morbid implications, the connection of Rhoides’ writings to Poe’s may be found in Rhoides’ city writings wherein Rhoides probes into an in-text exploration of turn-of-the-century Athens. Like Poe who sets to read the city and its inhabitants as a text, Rhoides treats Athens as a text commenting on and, in some cases, embracing the new urban reality of his time. Seen in this way, Rhoides’ city narratives are indebted to Poe’s urban-related tales and more precisely to “The Man of the Crowd” (1840).

Poe’s impact on Rhoides extends to the latter’s writing style as well. Rhoides’ stylistic indebtedness to Poe becomes increasingly apparent when one considers Rhoides’ views on writing; Rhoides’ distinction between longer and shorter narratives indubitably aligns him with Poe’s views on tale-writing.

As Poe’s legacy on Rhoides is considerable, I will approach it from various perspectives and divide my discussion into three separate sections. In the first section of the chapter, I will discuss Rhoides’ early school and university years in an attempt to illuminate the conditions under which he has become acquainted with Poe’s literary creations. Rhoides’ written tribute to the American author, wherein he offers keen insights into Poe’s literary importance, will be taken up further on in this section. In the second section of this chapter, I consider Rhoides’ «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» as well as his city-texts seeking to trace the thematic affinities between the two writers. In the concluding part of this chapter, I concentrate on Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s tales, commenting on the ways Rhoides translates and presents Poe’s works to the Greek readership of the nineteenth century. To preface these assertions, however, I will
elaborate on the theoretical framework that embraces this comparative study.

1.1 Perspectives on Rhoides’ Connectedness to Edgar Allan Poe: Cultural Transfers, Circulation and Translation

This chapter is informed by theories of comparative literature and more precisely by Pierre Brunel’s, Claude Pichois’, and Andre Rousseau’s theory on comparative literature as this is articulated in the seminal book *Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία;* (1998). This theory emphasizes specific mediums and parameters that contribute to the transnational circulation of foreign texts into several countries and the subsequent hybridization of these texts with texts by other authors. Brunel, Pichois, and Rousseau argue that mediums such as the periodical press, translation practice, circulating libraries and parameters, such as the knowledge of foreign languages for example, facilitate the circulation and study of texts across diverse cultural and linguistic barriers in the western world during the nineteenth century. Reading Rhoides’ work from this perspective then, I can explore his connections with foreign cultures and literatures as well as his cosmopolitan outlook for living and writing.

Brunel’s, Pichois’, and Rousseau’s theory also takes issue with the practice of literary translation which helps to reinforce awareness of a variety of literary works and authors that exist across the world. For the purposes of this chapter, literary translation constitutes one of the ways in which Poe’s romantic works travel across diverse cultural and linguistic barriers and are made available to the Greek-speaking readers. It is interesting to view the practice of literary translation in terms of re-

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3 *Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία?*
4 The original title of the work is *Qu’est-ce que La Littérature Comparée?* (1983). The references to this theory are from the Greek translated book entitled *Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία;* (1998).
writing using Susan Bassnett’s, Michael Holman’s and Jean Boase-Beier’s work on translation theory. According to Bassnett, “a translator translates and in so doing rewrites what is written by someone else” (“Translator” 2). Translation thus is viewed as “a creative literary activity, for translators are all the time engaging with texts first as readers and then as rewriters, as recreators of that text in another language” (Bassnett, “Translator” 174).

Holman and Boase-Beier endorse Bassnett’s view and perceive translation as a creative process rather than a mechanical one; the relationship between the original and the translated or the occasionally even revised text is essential, as Holman and Boase-Beier note in The Practices of Literary Translation: Constraints and Creativity (1998); the literary translator’s task is not only limited to the transference of words from one language into another; on the contrary, the literary translator should take into consideration other factors as well such as the cultural background against which the source text becomes available to its intended readership (8). The literary translator, in Holman’s and Boase-Beier’s formulation, should be “sensitive to the relation between the SL text and the linguistic and cultural environment in which it [is] exposed” (8). The literary translator will, therefore, be able to assess the degree to which the source text is congruent with the literal and cultural atmosphere of its time and translate it accordingly. The literary translator, Holman and Boase-Beier go on to add, should also take into account the specific conditions, be it social or personal, under which the author produced the source text (8).

Holman’s and Boase-Beier’s viewpoint serves as a means for understanding the rationale lying behind Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s fiction. It is against this theoretical framework that the translation section of this chapter will initially proceed by being concerned with Poe’s intentions and the particular constraints under which
he operates when writing his stories, the message that he wishes to communicate to his readers and the degree to which his romantic tales are consonant with the literary concerns of nineteenth-century Greece. In translating Poe’s works then, Rhoides not only manages to introduce him to the Greek readers, but also turns translation into a creative activity; it is through the process of translation that the Greek writer reconstructs Poe’s gothic gloom toward the normative literary ideology of the time.

The theories on literary translation help to bind together the discussion in which Poe’s romantic works travel across diverse cultural and linguistic barriers and are made available to the Greek-speaking reading public. This is an issue that will be considered in the second part of this chapter. To put the question of Rhoides’ indebtedness to Poe in perspective, it is crucial to probe into a discussion of Rhoides’ childhood and younger years have had a significant bearing on both the formation of his personality, his acquaintance with Poe’s writings and the production of his work.

1.2 From Syra to Europe: Rhoides’ Acquaintance with Poe’s Writings

Rhoides was born in Syra in 1836, the son of a prosperous and aristocratic merchant from Chios. In 1841, Rhoides relocated with his family in Genoa, Italy, where his father is appointed as a consul. In addition to his sojourn in Italy, Rhoides spent brief periods of time in Egypt, Germany, and Romania until 1865 when he permanently settled in Athens (Βουρνάς 213; Καλοκύρης 9; Μπεζάς 8). Due to his frequent sojourns outside Greece, Rhoides adopted an open and adaptive attitude toward foreign cultures and gained a cosmopolitan perspective of living and thinking. With a subtle sense of underlying arrogance, Rhoides himself acknowledged: “I was

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5 For further details on Rhoides’ travels and stays abroad, see Καλοκύρης [Kalokyris], Ο Δημήτρης Καλοκύρης Διαβάζει Ροΐδης [O Dimitris Kalokyris Diavazei Rhoides] 9-10; and Γεωργαντά, Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης: Η Πορεία προς την Πάπισσα Ιωάννα [Emmanuel Rhoides: He Poreia pros ten Papissa Ioanna] 129-30.
brought up abroad” (Α´ 28). According to Άλκης Αγγέλου, there is a sense of arrogance that underlies these specific words by Rhoides. As Αγγέλου notes: “the importance [Rhoides] placed on his upbringing and in which Rhoides evidently took pride in aims at the following: emphasizing and extoling the European perspective he had acquired by then” (μβ´). Rhoides’ European experience, undoubtedly, testifies to his familiarity with foreign cultures, literary trends, authors and, by implication, Poe’s words.

Even though Rhoides’ familiarity with foreign literatures and cultures is almost indisputable, there is a question which naturally arises: How is it possible for a Greek man of letters to be so familiar with the works of an American author? It is my contention that Rhoides first read American literary texts during his studies at the Hellenic-American Lyceum of Hermoupolis (Syra, Greece) between 1849 and 1855, as the instruction of foreign languages and literatures formed part of the school’s innovative curriculum and language was taught through original literary texts (Σμυρναίος 652). The Hellenic-American Lyceum was one of the finest local institutions in Syra largely due to the efforts of its founder Χριστόδουλος Ευαγγελίδης (1815-1881), a Greek-American who had completed his education in the U.S. One innovative aspect of Evangellidis’ curriculum concerned the instruction of foreign languages, acting performances, rhetoric, swimming and physical education. Moreover, students could participate in lectures and debates, contribute articles to and publish in the school’s newspaper (Σμυρναίος 652-53). In short, the

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6 My translation of: «Ἐγὼ δὲ παιδόθεν ἐν τῇ ξένῃ ἀνατραφείς» (Rhoides, Α´ 28).
7 [Alkis Angelou].
8 My translation of: «Ὅλη αὐτή ἡ φόρτιση τοῦ παιδόθεν ἔχει ἕνα σκοπό: να τονίσει και να ἔξαρε τὴν ευρωπαϊκὴ πλευρά» (μβ´-μγ´).
9 [Christodoulos Evangellidis].
Hellenic-American Lyceum was a combination of a Hellenic and an American high school.\textsuperscript{10}

While boarding at the Hellenic-American Lyceum, Rhoides studied both English and French; hence the mastery of foreign languages he exhibits later and his familiarity with Charles Baudelaire’s French translations of Poe’s works. Besides taking foreign language courses, Rhoides could have read Poe’s works in the original as well since American literature formed part of the school’s curriculum for students who excel in English. Apart from introducing students to American literature, the school also encouraged them to translate literary texts, a fact which may have also accounted for Rhoides’ ensuing interest in and engagement with translation practice. Having taken full advantage of the school’s innovative curriculum and having acquired all this knowledge and skills, Rhoides graduated from the Hellenic-American Lyceum in 1855 and relocated in Berlin, in Germany where he took courses in philology and philosophy (Καλοκύρης 10; Μπεζάς 8).

Rhoides’ studies in Berlin may also account for his encounter with Poe’s works as Poe has been introduced to the German readership as early as 1846 through the German translation of “A Descent into the Maelström.” Later, in 1853 Poe’s “The Raven,” “The Pit and the Pendulum,” “Three Sundays in a Week” were translated into German (38).\textsuperscript{11} It is quite possible that these translations or Poe’s tales have circulated in German public or university libraries or in the Universities during the period Rhoides studies there, that is between 1855 and 1857. While there are no sources

\textsuperscript{10} For additional information on Evangellidis and the Hellenic-American Lyceum, see Σμυρναίος, «Ο Μοχλός της Καταράσεως: τό ελληνικόν λύκειον Ερμουπόλεως καί η Προτεσταντική Αγωγή του Εμμ. Ροίδη» [“O Mochlos tis Katarasies: to Hellenikon Lykeion Hermoupolos kai i Protestantiki Agogi tou Emm. Rhoides”] 649-83.

\textsuperscript{11} Poe’s reception in Germany has been documented by Roger Forclaz whose exhaustive study adds many new sources to Vines’ earlier bibliography. For a full analysis of Poe’s early reception, reputation and influence in Germany, see Vines, “Edgar Allan Poe: A Writer for the World” 518-38; and Forclaz, “Poe in Germany and Austria” 38-51.
documenting this point, Rhoides could have read Poe during his stay in Germany and, even more so, he may have read Poe’s work in French as he is well-versed in French and an avid reader of French literature in general. As I mention in the introduction of the present doctoral dissertation, Poe in those days is more widely read in France than in his own country. French literary journals often published Poe’s work and, in addition to numerous single translations of his works, a complete edition, entitled *Les Nouvelles Histoires extraordinaires*, containing Baudelaire’s translations of Poe’s tales that appears in 1857 circulated across Europe, granting Poe immense popularity. Αθηνά Γεωργαντά and Σταύρος Κοντόλεων assert that copies of Baudelaire’s seven volumes, edited by Michel Lévy frères (1868-1870), were found in Rhoides’ home library (qtd. in Κοντόλεων 21). There is unmistakable proof then that, either directly or indirectly through Baudelaire’s translations, Rhoides became cognizant of Poe’s tales some of which he translated into Greek himself, as I will discuss at greater length later in this chapter. Given Rhoides’ awareness of Poe’s works and his intended translation of them, it is impossible not to have been affected by them. It is just as impossible to consider some of Rhoides’ works without connecting them to Poe, knowing the impact that the latter’s work has on the former’s. Last but not least, Rhoides himself expressed his enthusiasm for Poe’s artistry in the prefatory section of the first special issue of *Παρνασσός* entitled «Εγδάρδος Πόου».15

His tribute to Poe, appearing in 1877, is of considerable value for two reasons. First, Rhoides provides details of Poe’s life and oeuvre to the attention of Greek readers for the first time. Second, Rhoides’ discussion of Poe’s literary endeavors throws into sharp relief Poe’s unique literary qualities as well as scientific erudition.

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12 [Athina Georganta].
13 [Stavros Kontoleon].
14 [Parnassos].
15 (“Edgar Poe”).
The following part, coming from Rhoides’ tribute, provides an insight into the high esteem Rhoides has held for the American writer:

Edgar Poe, the greatest poet and writer of his age, faced an unfortunate fate in America. He had been writing masterpieces, in poetry as well as in prose, for years which were admired by a fair number of us his connoisseurs; the reading public, nevertheless, neither read nor purchased them thus letting the poet live in conditions of abject poverty and have wine instead of bread. As a result of his going on a bender, finally the writer perished at the age of thirty-five. (B´ 233)\(^{16}\)

In these lines Rhoides offers a Baudelairian portrait of Poe as a writer whose talent was often disregarded in his native country, while he was alive. The Greek writer is very much affected by what he perceives to be Poe’s miserable life in the U.S., and by the fact that the American readership had been unable to appreciate Poe’s poem “Eureka: A Prose Poem” (1848) as well as his “outstanding critical writings” (Rhoides, B´ 234). As a result of the neglect and contempt that Poe has suffered in his native land, Poe has to become “a money making author” and compose tales “that would appeal to the taste of the American readership of the time” (Rhoides, B´ 233). This is made possible by providing a semblance of verisimilitude to his fictional writings (Rhoides, B´ 234). It is “[Poe’s] accurate knowledge of every issue of mathematics and physics,” Rhoides remarks, that “enable[s] [Poe] to ground his fictional works to scientific fact” (B´ 234).\(^{17}\) It is natural for Rhoides to marvel at

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\(^{16}\) My translation of: «Τοιαύτη τις ύπήρξεν ἡ τύχη ἐν Ἀμερικῇ τοῦ κορυφαίου τῶν συγχρόνων αὐτῆς ποιητῶν καὶ λογογράφων Ἐδγάρου Πόου. Ἐπὶ μακρὰ ἐτης συνέγραψεν ὡς ἐμμετρὰ τε καὶ πεζὰ ἀριστουργήματα, τὰ ὧνα ἐθάμαξε μὲν εὐάριστος τις ὡς εὐηθύνοον, ἀλλὰ τὸ κοινὸν οὕτω ἀνιᾶτονοικόταν ὡς ἄγορατα, ἀφόνον τὸν κοινὸν νὰ παλαιὴ κατὰ τῆς πείνης καὶ ν’ἀναπληρῶσεν τὸν ἄρτον διὰ τῆς ῥαξῆς, ἦτε ἐπιτέλους ἐφόνωσεν αὐτὸν τριμκονταπενταετῆ» (Rhoides, B´ 233).

\(^{17}\) Like Poe, Rhoides exhibits great knowledge of scientific and general affairs. Details on his scientific erudition can be found in Πουλάκου-Ρεμπελάκου [Poulakou-Rebelakou] and Τσιάμης (Τσιάμης), “Ο Ρόλος της Ιατρικής στη Ζωή και το Έργο του Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδη” [“O Rolos tis Iatrikis sti Zoe kai to Ergo tou Emmanouhl Roide”].
Tsirakoglou 31

Poe’s interest in science as well as the latter’s tendency to give scientific validity to the fantastic plot elements of his stories; Rhoides himself also constantly inserts scientific details into his fictional works so as to substantiate his claims. Not only does Rhoides extol Poe’s literary merits, he also puts this aspect into practice, as I will show when I analyze his essay «Η ἀμφίβολος ζωή». In this essay, Rhoides, imitating Poe’s practice in “The Premature Burial,” recounts instances of live burials in an attempt to establish the credibility of his writing. Rhoides’ observations regarding Poe’s scientific erudition and literary artistry leave clear evidence that Rhoides is well-versed both in Poe’s works and writing techniques.\(^\text{18}\)

Just as much as these references manifest Rhoides’ immense respect for Poe’s critical dicta and artistic works, so do they imply his awareness of the literary marketplace and publishing politics prevalent during Poe’s time. The conditions of writing and publication in the mid-1830s and 1840s, when Poe came on the literary scene, encouraged the mass production of popular fiction with readers having developed a yearning for low-rate literature. Pressured to conform to the market demands, and despite his ambitions of establishing himself as a great poet, Poe comes to the writing of salable prose narratives “in the hope of,” as Kenneth Silverman argues, “earning more money than he might for his poetry” (Mournful 87). Producing tales that are notable for their “heightened tone, exaggerated plots, and grotesque subject matter,” Poe strives to make a place for himself in literature (Evelev 160). Poe’s cunningly elaborate style, as Rhoides declares, in “ground[ing] his fictional

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\(^{18}\) Poe’s interest in scientific details coincides with the emergence of the social sciences in the 19th century. For a discussion of Poe’s scientific interests, see Hayes, *Edgar Allan Poe*. 

Ergo tou Emmanuel Rhoides”] 499-507; and in Καραβάτος [Karavatos], «Ο Ροϊδης και οι Νευροεπιστήμες του 19ου Αιώνα» [“Ο Rhoides kai oi Neuroepistimes tou 19ou Aiona”] 488-500.
works to scientific fact” (B’ 234) is part of the former’s attempt to reach a wide reading audience.  

Another mark of Rhoides’ commitment to Poe’s artistry can be seen in the former’s condemnation of overt moralizing in literature. In particular, Rhoides’ attack on didacticism and his claim that pleasure should be the main object of a literary work aligns him with Poe and with the latter’s avowed aversion to didacticism. It is in Poe’s most celebrated critical essay “The Poetic Principle,” that appears posthumously in the December 1850 issue of the Southern Literary Messenger, that Poe overtly expresses his objection to the prevailing view of his time based on which “every poem […] should inculcate a moral” (Essays 75); on the contrary, Poe posits pleasure and not truth as the chief end of all artistic creations since it “derive[s] […] from the contemplation of the Beautiful” (Essays 78). Poe’s most explicit remarks on the concept of beauty are made in his essay “The Philosophy of Composition” (1846) where he expounds on this notion in the following manner:

When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect—they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of soul—not of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating “the beautiful.” (Essays 16, emphasis in original)

Poe insists here that all literary works should aim at what he calls “effect” and at the “elevation of [the] soul” rather than be concerned with “the intellect” or “the heart.”

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19 The discussion of the publishing policies in Poe’s time exceeds the scope of this chapter. In his Edgar Allan Poe and the Masses: The Political Economy of Literature in Antebellum America (1999), Terence Whalen provides a comprehensive account of the literary environment and the publishing conditions that prevail in Poe’s time. However, Rhoides’ awareness of the literary practices in Poe’s time and his response to them not only bespeaks of the former’s in-depth immersion in the latter’s literary works but also reveals that Rhoides is aware of the conditions under which Poe has produced his writings.
In other words, art should not deal with issues of morality but should be concerned with a particular aesthetic sense that for Poe is located within the concept of the “soul.”

Seen in this way, art should convey feelings that evoke strong effects upon the soul. In the case of poetry, Poe pronounces, its sole purpose should be the aesthetic quality, and the poet ought to produce a “poem per se—[a] poem which is a poem and nothing more—[a] poem written solely for the poem’s sake” (Essays 75-76, emphasis in original). By insisting on the poem written as an end in itself, Poe invites us to consider it, and art in general, beyond its moral or educational implications.

Poe’s expressed resentment towards overt didacticism becomes significant for his literary relationship with Rhoides. Quite similarly to Poe who, in Kevin Hayes’ terms, “[a]bandon[s] the delight-and-instruct paradigm” (Poe 22), Rhoides takes a stand against using literature to convey moral principles or to teach. In his review of Angelos Vlachos’ Κωμωδίαι [Komodiai], which appears in 1871, eight years prior to the publication of his first translation of Poe’s works into Greek, Rhoides makes the claim that literature should not be didactic and maintains that the sole purpose of literary works is to elevate excitement and give aesthetic pleasure (qtd. in Παράσχος 167-68).

Rhoides’ advocacy of art functioning free from accountability to didacticism or morality draws attention to another important segment of his critical outlook in close relation to that of Poe’s: his critical viewpoint concerning the short story. In his

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20 Poe’s conception of art more or less relates to Immanuel Kant’s autonomous sphere of aesthetic judgment. That Poe’s critical dicta align him with the movement of aestheticism is beyond the scope of this chapter and will be discussed extensively in the third chapter of this doctoral dissertation.

21 This is reinforced in the following argument drawn by Νικόλαος Μαυρέλος [Nikolaos Mavrelos] where he writes that “in [Rhoides’] review of Angelos Vlachos’ Κωμωδίαι, one can trace [Rhoides’] ironic standpoint against moral pretensions, didacticism, and the idea of literature as having no other purpose beyond the aesthetic essence; an idea which is tied to Poe’s avowed attack on didacticism” («Υποδοχή» 81).

22 My translation of: «για το Ροϊδη σκοπός της κωμωδίας είναι το γέλιο, η άδολη και ανυστερόβουλη αισθητική ευχαρίστηση [...] Η πεποίθησή του αυτή, όχι μόνο για την κωμωδία μάλλον για για κάθε καλλιτέχνη, τόσο σύμφωνη με τις αντιλήψεις των Ελλήνων, του Goethe, του Πόε, του Baudelaire, θα μείνει βασική στο Ροϊδη» (Παράσχος 167-68).
unpublished essay «Ἐγχειρίδιον δηγηματογραφίας», the Greek writer distinguishes between shorter and longer prose narratives. It is the work’s length that, according to Rhoides, forms the basis for such a distinction. Based on this distinction, Rhoides employs the term “short story” for shorter narratives; by contrast, he applies the label “novels” to longer prose narratives (Rhoides, Ε’ 454). Rhoides’ view, as Στράτος Μυρογιάννης remarks, ties in with Poe’s views concerning the length of literary works (53). Indeed, the distinction Rhoides makes between shorter and longer narratives echoes Poe’s basic premise concerning the brevity of a short story, as this is articulated in his most widely appreciated critical work “The Philosophy of Composition” (1846). In this essay Poe argues that all literary works should be short and therefore “read at one sitting”; if “two sittings [are] required,” then, Poe remarks, “the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed” (Essays 15). There is a definite connection thus between brevity and the effect that the author has originally set out to stimulate. Rhoides is not that effusive in his views on the short story; yet, his consideration of length, as the basic element that distinguishes the short story from the novel, points toward Poe’s theoretical manifestos of the short story.

Rhoides’ observation regarding short fiction can be read in the context of his own social and cultural moment. During the period within which Rhoides writes, the Greek literary scene undergoes a process of fermentation. The romantic impulse toward imagination and the fantastic has started to dwindle in favor of the objective representation of the world. As a result, a number of Greek authors practice their talents writing short stories. As Μαυρέλος describes, “it is in the 1890s, the golden

23 [“Enchiridion diegematografias”].
24 [Stratos Mirogiannis].
age for short fiction, when Rhoides writes his short stories” (*Πολίμψηστο* 210). Rhoides’ production of short stories and, even more so, his «Ἐγχειρίδιον διηγηματογραφίας», chart the confluences in his textual relation with Poe, a writer who has left his indelible stamp on the art of the short story.

So much we may deduce from the foregoing. First, that in mid to late nineteenth-century Greece, there is a growing interest in short fiction and non-Greek literature in general. The expression of this interest is to be observed in the numerous literary translations of short prose as well as the proliferation of short stories that appear in the magazines and periodicals of the time. Secondly, that Rhoides, in his capacity as a writer and magazine editor, is thoroughly *en rapport with* this wave of interest. Moreover, it is valuable to note that the Greek author is well versed in spoken and written French and English and, apparently, must have been able to read Poe’s texts either in translation or in the original.

It now remains for us to see what echoes from Rhoides’ readings of Poe we find in his own fiction. In this connection it is fitting to take into consideration his essay entitled «Ἡ ὠμοφόβολος ζωή», an essay that tackles the disputable themes of life and death and also touches upon the theme of premature burial that was a very widespread phenomenon in Poe’s time (Kennedy 33). In treating the theme of

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25 My translation of: «Ο Ρόιδης προσπαθεί να παράγει, κυρίως στη δεκαετία του 1890, τη σειρά διηγημάτων του που είναι είδος προσφιλές τότε» (*Πολίμψηστο* 210).
26 Παράσχος lists seventeen short stories by Rhoides while Στεριόπουλος lists twenty-seven (qtd. in Μαξιάς 39).
27 In “The Premature Burial” Poe draws upon a common preoccupation of his time, that of being unintentionally buried alive. Throughout the nineteenth century, newspapers are agog with cases of people having being prematurely interred, in part due to medical uncertainty. People are very much concerned with this recurring phenomenon and in order to ensure themselves against it they take extreme measures in advance such as “attaching bells to corpses, installing speaking tubes and air tubes in coffins, and providing a flag a victim could wave on distress” (Sova 201). By the time Poe’s “The Premature Burial” is published, this anxiety has become, in Kenneth Silverman’s words, “something of a cliché” thus giving rise to several fictional narratives dealing with this issue (*Mournful* 227). Apparently, Poe is *en rapport with* the popularity of the subject and takes advantage of it in several of his stories, such as “The Oblong Box,” “The Cask of Amontillado,” “Berenice,” “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Black Cat,” recounting accounts of premature burials. For a consideration of this
premature burial and, by implication, death, Rhoides’ essay reveals his own thematic affinity with Poe’s writings, as will be shown next.

1.3 «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή»: Between Life and Death

«Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» appeared in the 1878 edition of the Greek periodical Αττικόν Ημερολόγιον28 one year after Rhoides’ translation of “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” had appeared in print. Rhoides’ «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» bears the imprint of Poe’s essay-like story “The Premature Burial” (1844) as it is concerned with the frail boundaries between life and death.

With regard to the connection between «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» and Poe, Μαυρέλος notes that Rhoides’ text “purports to be a study of incidents of apparent death, but harks back to the American writer’s ‘The Premature Burial’” (Παλίμψηστο 71).29 Referring to the Greek text’s macabre theme Anna Zimbone observes: “This text […] manifests Rhoides’ preoccupation with death and, more precisely with cemeteries that form the natural habitat of the deceased” (6).30 I side with these critics who associate Rhoides’ text with Poe’s “The Premature Burial.” In my view, the juxtaposition of «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» to Poe’s tale, in terms of investigating the fine and somewhat equivocal demarcations between life and death, captures the former’s interest in the ghastly, albeit widespread, phenomenon of live burial; and it is the theme of premature burial that forms the thematic outline of both Poe’s and Rhoides’ texts.

nineteenth-century anxiety, see Kennedy, Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing 34-40; and Silverman, Edgar Allan Poe: Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance 112-13.
28 [Αττικόν Ημερολόγιον].
29 My translation of: «παρουσιάζεται ως μελέτη, αλλά ανακαλεί στη μνήμη μας την ‘Πρόωρη ταφή’ (‘Premature Burial’) του Αμερικανού συγγραφέα» (Παλίμψηστο 71).
30 My translation of: «Το πεζό […] αποκαλύπτει […] μία ροπή του συγγραφέα στη μελέτη του θανάτου και πιο συγκεκριμένα του τόπου των νεκρών, δηλαδή των κοιμητηρίων» (6). Anna Zimbone proceeds to point out that other stories by Rhoides, like «Τὸ παράπονον τοῦ νεκροθάπτον» (“To paraponon tou nekrothaptoi”), «Τὰ ευτυχήματα τῆς ἀρρώστειας» (“Ta euythematasa tes arrostias”) and «Ψυχοσάββατον» (“Psychosavaton”) attest to the latter’s preoccupation with death (6).
But beyond its thematic resemblance, Rhoides’ essay is reminiscent of Poe’s tale because it offers serious examinations of several cases in which people had been buried alive. Much like Poe’s hero who, to quote David Galloway, uses some so-called factual accounts of live burials just to “establish the credibility of his own experience” (14), Rhoides uses scientific and historical cases of live burials in order to validate his own storytelling. In this sense, the resemblance of in subject matter to “The Premature Burial” is much more effectively verified. As the title itself manifests, “The Premature Burial” is an exploration of live inhumation, a condition which, for Poe, “is, beyond question, the most terrific of these extremes which has ever fallen to the lot of mere mortality” (Tales: 2 955). What ensues in the first part of “The Premature Burial” is a series of supposedly authentic cases of persons who have been buried alive. In one of these instances, an unfortunate woman, who is thought to be dead, is buried alive; when later she is disinterred she is discovered in the posture of attempting to escape her horrible fate “[having] rotted, erect” (Poe, Tales: 2 957).\(^{31}\) Other victims are lucky and are rescued in time from their graves, as is the case of Mademoiselle Victorine Lafourcage; the latter’s “condition so closely resembled death as to deceive every one who saw her” (Poe, Tales: 2 957) but regained consciousness and lived happily a long time after that.\(^{32}\)

These case histories are important because they exemplify the speaker’s “own excessive fears” (Hulliburton 370). In essence, the examples provided substantiate the storyteller’s own fear, his fear of being buried alive, a fear that announces itself through “attacks of the singular disorder which physicians have agreed to term catalepsy” (Poe, Tales: 2 962). Because of his malady, the protagonist is in a

\(^{31}\) A research of all the medical periodicals in the libraries of Berlin for the period 1834-1844 has not led to a discovery of the specific case quoted by Poe, albeit the fact that, at the time, there seems to be a keen interest in this phenomenon (qtd. in Cobb 28).

\(^{32}\) This is a very frequently quoted case dating back to 1754, and can be found in various periodicals of the time in slightly different versions (qtd. in Cobb 28).
continuous fear of falling into a cataleptic trance and has taken a number of extreme measures such as having “the family vault so remodeled as to admit of being readily opened from within” (Poe, Tales: 2 965). At the tale’s comical dénouement, however, the hero does not fall victim of premature burial as the readers are inclined to believe. The readers suspect that the protagonist has been trapped alive within a coffin, and that “the story is being told from the other side of the grave” (Forbes 43), only to discover that he was, in reality, asleep in one of the two bunks of a small boat some miles away from the James River. From that point on, the narrator surpasses his fears of being buried alive and, eventually, “[becomes] a new man” (Poe, Tales: 2 969). To this end, the tale’s unexpected resolution undermines the terror of premature burial considering it, as Scott Peeples contends, as “a kind of joke” (121).

Unlike Poe, Rhoides in «Ἠ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» does not turn the phenomenon of premature burial into a joke, but having adopted Poe’s ghoulish trope in “The Premature Burial,” his text appears to be a scholarly consideration of multiple cases of live interments. It is in the opening section of «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» that we catch a first glimpse of the main theme of the essay, that of the macabre interplay between life and death. At the outset of «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή», the traveler pays a visit to an institution, called “Asylum dubiae vitae” in Frankfurt, which hosts patients oscillating between life and death. While wandering within its premises, the traveler’s attention is called to the inmates some of which appear to have consciousness but without exhibiting any vital signs whatsoever. In the narrator’s description of the inmates and the precautions they take to guard themselves from being buried alive one can trace echoes of Poe’s “The Premature Burial.” Specifically, roaming through the inmates’ cells, the narrator observes a patient whose hands are fastened to “copper buckles
which in turn led to bells that are attached to the wall.”\textsuperscript{33} Zimbone uses this passage as proof that Rhoides has read Poe’s tale: “Admittedly, the American writer, in one of his tales of terror, ‘The Premature Burial’ refers to this find, a find that recurs in ‘Dubious Life’ ” \textsuperscript{(10)}.\textsuperscript{34} Rhoides’ use of these particular objects is reminiscent of the “large bell” and “the rope […] extended through a hole of the coffin” that Poe’s narrator in “The Premature Burial” has installed into his coffin in his attempt to protect himself from being buried prematurely and implies that Rhoides might have been cognizant of Poe’s gruesome tale.

This does not constitute the only evidence of Poe being Rhoides’ source of inspiration. Another sign that Rhoides is well-acquainted with the particular American tale can be found in his description of the people who have found themselves in this predicament. As the traveler passes through the building, his interest in the residents is keenly aroused; as a result, he seeks out the institution’s manager, Dr. Othon Inshion, and asks the latter if the residents are in fact dead or alive; nonetheless, the manager is unable to provide a definite reply. The inability to distinguish between life and death enhances the interest of Rhoides’ storyteller in accounts of unfortunate people who are thought to be dead and are inhumed alive, as Poe does in “The Premature Burial.” In the case of people who survived live burials, Rhoides’ notes that they were able to listen to their relatives mourning, the bells ringing, the priests chanting but were unable to utter the words, “Do not bury me alive!” \textsuperscript{(Rhoides, B’ 345).\textsuperscript{35} The helplessness to cry out these words brings to mind another case recounted by Poe’s narrator, that of Edward Stapleton, who has been pronounced dead from typhoid fever. Stapleton admits that “at no period was he altogether insensible— that,

\textsuperscript{33} My translation of: «χαλκίνων κρίκων, εἰς οἷς ἀπέλησε τὸ σχοινίον κόδωνος ἀνατημένου ἐκ τοῦ τοίχου» (Rhoides, B’ 341).

\textsuperscript{34} My translation of: «Πράγματι, ο Αμερικανός συγγραφέας στο Premature Burial, ἕνα από τα διηγήματα τρόμου, κάνει λόγο για αυτό το εύρημα που ξαναθριάσκουμε στην Αμφίβολον Ζωήν» (10).

\textsuperscript{35} My translation of: «Μή με θάπτετε ζώντα!» (Rhoides, B’ 345).
dully and confusedly he was aware of everything which happened to him” (Poe, Tales: 2 960-61). When he realizes that he has been transferred to the dissecting room he attempts in vain to articulate the words “I am alive” (Poe, Tales: 2 961). Poe’s and Rhoides’ references to specific accounts of live burials are crucial for the consideration of the Greek author’s indebtedness to Poe’s tale.

Like Poe who refers to the Chirurgical Journal of Leipsic in order to emphasize the validity of his reports, Rhoides provides accounts of distinguished people who had experienced this phenomenon; the Emperor Zeno from Isauria, the French author Abbé Prévost and Spinosa, the Cardinal Bishop of Siguenza, the President of Philip II’s Council are some of the people Rhoides refers to in his essay. Rhoides’ record of prominent people who have found themselves in this predicament not only raises questions as to when a person is irrevocably dead but also gives credence to his narration. In order to enhance the scientific character of his text, Rhoides’ narrator delves into Xaviet Bichat’s, Hippocrates’ and Orfila’s treatises on the overt signs of death. In connection with this point, Eleftheria Poulakou-Rembelakou and Kostas Tsiamis rightly observe: “[Rhoides’] reference to Orfila’s treatise […] manifests his erudition as well as his deep immersion in affairs such as necrophaneia” (502).

«Η άμφιβολος ζωή» parallels Poe’s “The Premature Burial” inasmuch as it explores the phenomenon of live burials and the vague and shadowy boundaries between life and death as well as the morbid atmosphere inherent in Poe’s tale.

36 At least seven sources of Rhoides’ accounts of live burials have been suggested by Zimbone in her article, «Η Πολυεδρική Φυσιογνωμία του Ευρωπαίου Εμμανουήλ Ροϊδή» ["He Polyedritik Physiognomia tou Evropaiou Emmanuel Rhoides"].
37 For a detailed discussion of these theories, see Μαυρέλος, Το Ψηλαφητό Παλίμπηστο της Ροϊδικής Γραφής: Ζητήματα Λογοτεχνικής και Πολιτισμικής Θεωρίας [To Pslafito Palimsisto tis Rhoidikis Grafis: Zitima Logotexnikis kai Politismikis Theorias] 109-12.
38 [Eleftheria Poulakou-Rembelakou].
39 [Kostas Tsiamis].
40 My translation of: «Το σύγγραμα του Ορφίλα [...] φανερώνει το ευρύτατο φάσμα των γνώσεων του και τη συστηματική ενασχόλησή του με θέματα που τον ενδιέφεραν, όπως η νεκροφάνεια» (502).
Rhoides adopts Poe’s morbid sense and the latter’s guiding thought, but the American writer’s text is, in my opinion, more impressive in its climax. The implication is that Poe relates a short story solely for the telling and for producing a striking literary effect, that of tricking his readers into believing that the protagonist has actually been prematurely entombed. Rhoides uses the same thematic concerns with Poe’s text but concludes his essay in a much milder manner. To this end, the Greek writer embellishes his writing with more scientific details thus manifesting his erudition on the issue rather than demonstrating his artistic qualities in writing a horror story. At times, Rhoides’ text is so elaborately infused with relevant information on the subject that its tone seems almost purely scientific. Nevertheless, Rhoides’ treatment of the subject matter of death strengthens the intertextual connection between «Ἠ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» and “The Premature Burial.”

In addition to the idea of premature burials, Rhoides’ indebtedness to Poe can be further explored in the former’s urban writings that appear at the close of the nineteenth century. In juxtaposing Rhoides’ Athens texts with Poe’s London city narratives one question naturally emerges: what does Rhoides draw from Poe’s urban-related texts?
1.4 The Flâneur: Rhoidean Metamorphoses of a Poesian Figure

As I note in the introductory section to this doctoral dissertation, the unifying factor in prose fiction that appears in Greece from 1880s onward is the “detailed depiction of a small, more or less contemporary traditional community” (Merry 195) with many writers attempting to capture the culture and customs of Greek agrarian life. Unlike his Greek contemporaries and very much like Poe in America, Rhoides uses urban sites and urban issues which city residents face as centers of interest to his characters considering the nation’s capital “the mirror of the entire nation” (B’ 283). The tendency to put the city locale into effective literary uses comes natural to Rhoides, a writer who has spent most of his life in various metropolitan centers such as Hermoupolis, Cairo, Genoa, Berlin, Frankfurt and, of course, Athens.

As one who is an urbanite, Rhoides is certainly sensitive to both the pleasures and dilemmas of city life and his intention is to present, through his writings, the urban changes occurring in Athens during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Rhoides’ life spans approximately the second half of the nineteenth century during which Athens has progressed a lot in various aspects; the Athenian landscape is shaped by changes in population as well as economic imperatives. Between 1880 and 1896, for example, the population rises rapidly; as the population estimate shows, the population of Athens is 149,000 in 1889. In 1896, the Athenian population reaches a estimated at around 180,000 inhabitants. By 1900, the Athenian population reaches a

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41 Only a handful of Greek writers, such as Γεράσιμος Βώκος [Gerasimos Vokos] in Υπό τήν Άκροπολιν [Ypo ten Akropolin] and in Χαραίς και Βάσανα [Xarais kai Vasana] (1895), Μητσόφης [Michael Mitsakis] in Αθηναίκα Σελίδες [Athenaikai Selidas], Γρηγόριος Ξενόπουλος [Gregorios Xenopoulos] in Ανθρωπός του Κόσμου [Anthropos tou Kosmou] and in Νικόλας Σιγαλός [Nikolas Sigalos] (1890) and Ιωάννης Κοντολάκης [Ioannis Kondylakis] in Οι Αθήνες του Αθηνών [Oi Athinos ton Athenon] (1894), make the city an object of literary portrayal and exploration. In addition, Kostis Palamas’ contribution Αθηναϊκοί Περίπατοι [Athenaikoi Peripatoi] offers illustrations of life in Athens. For background information on these writers and a complete discussion of urban fiction in Greece, see Gotsi, “Experiencing the Urban: Athens in Greek Prose Fiction, 1880-1912”; and Γκότση, Η Ζωή εν τη Προτασία: Θέματα Αστικής Πεζογραφίας από το Τέλος του 19ου Αιώνα [H Zoe en ti Proteous: Themata Astikis Pezographias Apo to Telos tou 19ou Aion].
total of 200,000 inhabitants and by 1907 it increases to 250,000 (Γεωργαντά, «ήρωας» 634). Over-crowding is fueled by the fact that large numbers of people migrate to larger urban centers fascinated by the allurement of big-city life and in search of improved living conditions, education opportunities and social promotion. Expatriate Greeks, meanwhile, start to view Athens as a new epicenter for financial activity; they thus settle in Athens and “reinforce capitalistic patterns of development” (Gotsi, “Urban” 127).

The major changes in urban design and lifestyle, wrought by over-growing population and urbanization, have impacted greatly upon the Athenian crowd’s psychology as well. Impoverished neighborhoods emerge on the outskirts of Athens, whereas lavish buildings are put up in downtown area (Gotsi, “Urban” 127). The process of population growth and urbanization comes as a shock to the dwellers of Athens, Gotsi remarks (“Urban” 128). She proceeds to point out that this shock is reminiscent of the one experienced by Walter Benjamin’s flâneur, the character who resides in Paris, a city in a constant state of change (“Urban” 128). Benjamin traces the origins of flanerie in the feuilletons, the cultural and social columns of the Parisian newspapers in the 1830’s. The contributors to the feuilletons take great delight in observing the masses strolling along the “glass-covered, marble-panelled” arcades of Paris (Benjamin 36). The act of looking at and observing the urban crowd entails surveying the faces of the passers-by (Werner 3). By scrutinizing the facial features, the mannerisms and the gestures of the passers-by, the flâneur “make[s] out the[ir] profession, the[ir] character, the[ir] background, and the[ir] lifestyle” (Benjamin 39).

It is precisely the concept of flanerie and the theme of treating the city as text that provide the context for comparing Rhoides’ urban-related texts to those by Poe. A

42 For a complete discussion of the literary figure of the flâneur, see Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism; and Werner, American Flaneur: The Cosmic Physiognomy of Edgar Allan Poe.
whole series of Rhoides’ writings, namely «Περίπατοι εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας Α´-Γ´» (1896), «Αἱ ἐξοχαὶ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν» (1896) and «Ὁ διαβάτης» (1900), offer literary incarnations of the flâneur walking through Athens, observing the crowd, arranging it neatly into types, reporting on and criticizing the evils of urbanization. It is however in «Ὁ διαβάτης» that the concept of flanerie reaches its fullest articulation. The latter opens with the first-person narrator’s reflections on the phenomenon of the passer-by in Athens. In particular, Rhoides describes this phenomenon as follows:

It has probably been just fifteen or twenty years since the Athenian population amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, when one could encounter passers-by on the streets. By contrast, in provincial cities, as well as in most regions in Greece, there were no passers-by. (Ε´ 321)

This pointed passage suggests that the passer-by walking in the Athenian streets, constitutes an innovative figure in the capital of Greece; since this is, according to Ευαγγελία Κυριακίδου, a “literary image of the Western metropolis” (4) that is missing from the other Greek cities, but is quite frequent in Athens. What is notable here is that the figure of the flâneur appears in the major Greek urban centers only after the 1880 or 1885 that is during the period when the population in Athens started to increase and thousands of passers-by loitered along its city streets (Μαυρέλος, Παλήψηστο 229). Μαυρέλος, Γκότση and Γεωργαντά view a Poe-like flâneur in Rhoides’ narrator. Μαυρέλος makes the point that “the Rhoideian flâneur reminds us

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43 [“Περίπατοι εἰς Ἀθῆνας Α´-Γ´”].
44 [“Αἱ ἐξοχαὶ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν”].
45 [“Ὁ διαβάτης”].
46 My translation of: «Μόλις ἵσως ἀπὸ δεκαπέντε ἦ ἐκκοσιν ἕτον, ὡς οὐ ἀπέκτησαν αἱ Αθήναι περὶ τὰς ἐκατόν πεντήκοντα χιλιάδας κατοίκους, δύναται τὰς νὰ ἴδη εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτῶν διαβάτας, αἱ δὲ ἐπαργηματικὲς πόλεις τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ὡς καὶ τῶν πλείστων ἄλλων τόπων, ἀγνοοῦσιν ἀκόμη τὸ εἶναι διαβάτης» (Rhoides, Ε´ 321).
47 [Evangelia Kyriakidou].
more of Poe’s *flâneur* in ‘The Man of the Crowd’ given that, quoting Benjamin, ‘the *flâneur*, for Poe, is somebody who does not feel content within his own society’” (Παλίμψηστο 231).\(^{48}\)

In a similar vein, Γκότση argues that «Ο διαβάτης» establishes a dialogue both with Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” and Baudelaire’s poetry with its delineation of the urban observer (ζωή 241). Γεωργαντά, not only makes the explicit connection between the figure of the *flâneur* incorporated in Rhoides’ writings and that in Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd,” but further sees parallelisms in the way both Poe and Rhoides portray the urban crowd in their respective cities («Ο Διαβάτης» 637). She also establishes Rhoides’ familiarity with Poe’s tale either through Baudelaire’s French translation or through the Greek translation conducted by Κωσταντίνος Πρασσάς\(^{49}\) («Ο Διαβάτης» 640).\(^{50}\) Drawing on these views, I consider the Rhoidesian *flâneur* in relation to the narrator in Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” who assumes the role of the *flâneur*. The argument is that Rhoides’ *flâneur* experiences his surroundings and endeavors to read Athens like Poe who “treats the city as a text” and “makes a character out of it” (Dickstein 19; Hayes, Journey 97, “Visual” 445; Miller 332; Nicol 77). As I will discuss, Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” has probably prompted Rhoides in «Ο διαβάτης» to delineate a Greek version of Poe’s *flâneur*, the pedestrian who traverses the streets and performs readings of individuals, of the urban crowd and the city. In treating the city as text, the Rhoidesian *flâneur* evokes a facet of life in turn-of-the-century Athens and witnesses the mysteries representative of urban

\(^{48}\) My translation of: «ο ροϊδικός πλάνης θυμίζει περισσότερο εκείνον του Πόε στον «Ανθρωπο του πλήθους», όπως τους διαχωρίζει ο Μπένγιαμι: «Ο πλάνης είναι για τον Πόε κάποιος που δεν νιώθει καλά μέσα στην ίδια την κοινωνία» (Παλίμψηστο 231).

\(^{49}\) [Konstantinos Prassas].

\(^{50}\) Baudelaire’s *Nouvelles Histoires extraordinaires* (1857) contains the French translation of Poe’s tale entitled “L.’ Homme des Foules.” The 1890 edition of the periodical *Εστία* contains the Greek translation of “The Man of the Crowd” by Πρασσάς under the title «Ο άνθρωπος τού πλήθους» [“Ο anthropos tou plithous’].
life and joins Poe, not in denying the city, but in attempting through his narratives to interpret and evaluate it.

In his concern with reading the city, the Rhodeian flâneur in «Ὁ διαβάτης» eagerly hurls himself in the midst of the Athenian crowd and peers into the individuals that pass his vantage point looking for something to read. Like Poe’s speaker in “The Man of the Crowd” who sits in a coffee-house and gazes “at the passengers in masses” through the window (Tales: 1 507), the narrator’s opening remarks in Rhoides’ work inform us that the urban crowd is moving incessantly in the Athenian streets. In order to convey the vibrancy and motion of urban life in Athens, Rhoides uses an abundance of kinesthetic verbs such as “rushes,” “goes over,” “traverses,” “passes by,” “to step on you” and “the speed of his walk.” Rhoides’ writing style, according to Γεωργαντά, is reminiscent of Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” in which the robust mobility of the mid-nineteenth central London streets is highlighted in a similar way («Ὁ Διαβάτης» 641). The sense of noisy London street life, where people pass in an unceasing flow, is reflected in Poe’s story in the following expressions: “very much crowded,” “continuous tides of population were rushing past the door,” “I looked at the passengers in masses” and “were restless in their movements” (Tales: 1 507-08). Drawing on the expressions that Poe uses to illustrate the incessant movement of the passing throng, Rhoides’ uses similar phrases that create a turbulent atmosphere and convey the feel of Athens, that of streets bustling with noise and inhabitants rushing in many directions.

The urban mass is an aspect that connects Poe’s and Rhoides’ texts; one could explore Rhoides’ indebtedness to Poe’s city tales in terms of the crowd’s psychology as well. Rhoides reports on the Athenian crowd’s anonymous and isolated nature. Even though large urban centers are over-crowded, their inhabitants quite often
become adrift from communities and separated from any sense of human connection. While surveying the people that pass by in the streets in Athens, Rhoides’ onlooker realizes that “[the passer-by] is only interested in himself and appears indifferent to the other people’s sufferings or stroke of fortunes; and, even more so, [the passer-by] is not at all interested in whether other people live or die” (E’ 324).\textsuperscript{51} As a result of this, Rhoides’ watcher contends that “[t]he more the passers-by, the more one feels alienated” (E’ 323).\textsuperscript{52} Γεωργαντά links Poe’s narrator to the narrator-reader in Rhoides’ text by noting the urban crowd’ mutual sense of utter egotism and self-centeredness («Ο Διαβάτης» 641); as she clarifies, the only moment that the passers-by establish contact between them is when they accidentally shove each other («Ο Διαβάτης» 641). This becomes apparent in the following line from Poe’s story: “if jostled, they bowed profusely to the jostlers, and appeared overwhelmed with confusion” that registers the feeling of astonishment when human contact is accidentally achieved (Poe, Tales: 1 508).

In addition to examining the crowd scenes, the convalescent narrator, in “The Man of the Crowd,” draws attention to how passers-by are dressed, as well as to their “air, gait, visage, and expression of countenance” (Poe, Tales: 1 507) and, as Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean point out, attempts to “fit all the types he sees in the crowd” (170). Being absorbed in the crowd scene, the narrator notices that the population in Poe’s London not only is isolated and indifferent to what is happening around them, but also is socially diversified. More precisely, the urban crowd in Poe’s London comprises of “junior clerks of flash houses,” “upper clerks of staunch firms,” “steady old fellows,” “gamblers,” “peddlars,” “sturdy professional street beggars,”

\textsuperscript{51} My translation of: «περί ἕνός μόνον ἐνδιαφέρεται εἰς τὸν κόσμον πλάσματος, τοῦ ἕαυτον του, περί δὲ τῆς τύχης ἢ τῆς δυστυχίας τῶν ἄλλων, τῆς οὐδήνης ἢ τῆς χαρᾶς, τῆς ζωῆς ἢ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν» (Rhoides, E’ 324).

\textsuperscript{52} My translation of: «Ὅσον πυκνότεροι εἶναι οἱ διαβάται, τὸσον μᾶλλον αἰσθάνεται τὶς ἕαυτῶν μεμονωμένων» (Rhoides, E’ 323).
“feeble and ghastly invalids,” “modest young girls,” “ragged artizans” as well as “exhausted laborers” (Tales: 1 508-10). Poe attempts to identify the general social groupings of the people in the crowd by their outward appearance and demeanor. The gamblers, for example, are discernible from their “guarded lowness of tone in conversation, and a more than ordinary extension of the thumb” (Poe, Tales: 1 509).

Much as the narrator of “The Man of the Crowd” who, as Richard Lehan describes, “tries to organize [the passers-by] in terms of their professions, their class, and other characteristics of meaning” (18), the urban observer in «Ὁ διαβάτης» devotes considerable attention to the outward appearance, facial features and mannerisms of the passers-by and ventures to arrange them neatly into social categories. However, each face Rhoides describes has at its essential core a cipher, something that ultimately defies being read. What first hinders comprehension is the heterogeneousness of the urban crowd in Athens. For example, the narrator relates:

Since all the passers-by were dressed in a similar manner, it is impossible to make assumptions or guesses about their social status. Each one of them can be a nobleman or a registrar, an ambassador or a tobacconist, a public or a parliamentary orator.

(Rhoides, E´ 322)53

Rhoides’ flâneur has difficulty in identifying a person’s profession as the passers-by are “chameleons” or fakes who can easily adjust to various social categories at the same time. Given that a person’s identity disintegrates into the crowd, any member of the crowd could pass off either “as a friend or foe” (Rhoides, E´ 322).54 For Rhoides,

53 My translation of: «Ἀρρένως κατηργήθη πάσα μεταξύ τῶν διαβατῶν διάκρισις ἐν τῇ ἐνδομασίᾳ […] εἶναι ἡ ἱσοτος πιθανή καὶ εὐλόγως πάσα περί τῆς κοινωνικῆς δέσιως οἰκοδύτης διαβάτων ὑπόθεσις καὶ εἰκασία. Οὗτος δύναται να ἴναι αὐξάρχης ἢ πρωτοκολλητής, πρέσβυς ἢ καπνοπώλης, ρήτωρ τῆς βουλῆς ή τοῦ δρόμου» (Rhoides, E´ 322).
54 City life during Rhoides’ time is not at all serene and safe; as a matter of fact, it is quite the opposite. In reference to the hostile ambience in the Greek capital, Thomas Gallant says: “Violence rose in
each one of the passers-by can be “a journalist who has already written an article that brings shame on you, a judge who is about to shut you into a sunless prison cell or a gravedigger who is bound to dig a pit for you” (E´ 322). Rhoides’ speculations as to the identity of the passers-by include subtle hints that undermine the idea that the superficial features can yield insight into the psychological state of people and, at the same time, create an atmosphere of mystery, unpredictability and uneasiness. The inability to impose his reading strategy on the urban text by enlisting the crowd into distinct types causes anxiety to Rhoides’ flâneur who senses that “danger lies in each stranger” (Rhoides, E´ 322). This makes Rhoides view the crowd as a mystery full of isolated strangers whose real identity can be never truly known since it emerges from a menacing and incomprehensible urban world.

The association of illegibility with peril connects Rhoides to Poe whose “The Man of the Crowd” starts and ends with the narrator equating crime with illegibility. As can be seen in the story’s opening section, Poe’s flâneur easily recognizes “pickpockets, gamblers, conmen and prostitutes” among the London crowd. As their identity is translucent, they cause no anxiety to the narrator; but, once a citizen’s identity disintegrates into the London crowd and makes Poe’s narrator unable to interpret him, then he becomes dangerous. The narrator’s inability to detect who the old man in reality is makes him conclude that this man of the crowd is “the type and the genius of deep crime” (Tales: 1 515). In linking danger with illegibility, Poe suggests that what cannot be interpreted or read forms the ground for danger or, as

Athens as poor young men migrated to the city from a countryside in which violence was also a prominent feature” (404). What is more, active gangs spread the fear across the Athenian streets. As Gallant reports, “[l]awless gangs of young men like the koustvakides (sic) were believed to be roaming the streets and alleys of Athens wreaking mayhem and murder” (404). For a discussion of the nature of crime and violence in the late nineteenth-century Greece, see Gallant, “Crime, Violence and Reform of the Criminal Justice System.”

56 My translation of: «ἐν παντὶ δὲ τῷ σχηματείῳ ὑποκρύπτεται κίνδυνως» (Rhoides, E´ 322).
Robert Tally puts it, it “proffers the notion of inscrutability itself as a terrifying prospect” (“Nightmare” 8). The same observation might apply, in my opinion, to Rhoides’ text in which inscrutability forms the basis for danger. The sense of danger lurking in derives from the flâneur’s failure to understand the passers-by in their own right and, thus, classify them as either friends or enemies. The inability to read and assign stable meanings to the urban crowd renders it all the more unreadable and menacing.

In addition to considering the urban crowd as an unreadable and menacing beast, both Poe and Rhoides view it as a representation of urban trends as well. More precisely, the rapport of the flâneur to his city is further elaborated on through the authors’ testimonies of urban filth. As the Rhodeian flâneur keeps on wandering in Athens, he is confronted by images of land degradation. In observing his immediate surroundings, Rhoides’ flâneur comments extensively on the filth of the urban landscape, which delineates another effect of urbanization and overcrowding, much as Poe does in “The Man of the Crowd. In Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd,” the narrator follows the man all the way over “wooden tenements [which] were seen tottering to their fall” and observes the “[h]orrible filth festered in the dammed-up gutters” in the corners of London (Tales: 1 514).  

Much like Poe’s character who rambles through the dark and filthy streets of London, in a similar manner, Rhoides’ flâneur takes careful note of the effects of urbanization in Athens through his city texts. «Ὁ διαβάτης» is not the only occasion in Rhoides canon when the latter depicts aspects of urban reality. Another work of his,

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57 In a similar manner, in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” Dupin, who assumes the role of the flâneur, and the narrator are wandering around the city of Paris witnessing scenes of urban degradation such as “a pile of paving-stones collected at a spot where the causeway is undergoing repair,” and “holes and ruts in the pavement” (Poe, Tales: 1 535). As a result, Dupin, in Brand’s consideration, “is therefore, like the flâneur, distanced from and invisible to the inhabitants of the city through which he moves” (48). Isolated from and invisible to the city dwellers, yet taking great delight in the observation of the urban landscape, Dupin shares many of the personal traits and habits linked with the flâneur.
«Περίπατοι εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας Β´» speaks about the urban disintegration of his day by detailing polluted sites and scenes of urban shame. As the speaker graphically describes, “cabins, yards, and huts were replaced by newly-built residences that limit[ed] the space area daily” (148). In one of the most crowded streets in Athens, Metropoleos, Rhoides’ flâneur spots “a pit full of contaminated liquid, which the sun rays never managed to dry up completely” (Rhoides, E´ 148). At this point the narrator casts a critique on the Greek living conditions of his time. As he aptly puts it, it is only when distinguished personalities visit Athens or when notable events are held, such as the 1896 Olympic Games, that the police and the Athenians become interested in keeping the streets and houses clean. This situation makes Rhoides wonder: “is it only on urgent occasions that the Athenians should get a breath of fresh air, not trip over blood stains and not stumble over rotten oranges, dead cats and hens? (Rhoides, E´132).

In the images of urban filth and deterioration around which Rhoides’ text revolves, we are given a precise vision of the urban scenery of late nineteenth-century Athens. It goes without saying that the urban scenery of Athens is distinct from that of the large metropolitan cities of Paris and London. Yet, the images of urban filth that appear in Poe’s stories may have worked as a stepping stone for Rhoides to present the unpleasant city aspects of nineteenth-century Athens. Using Poe’s city tales as inspiration, Rhoides manages to accommodate Poe’s images of urban degradation to the Greek reality of his time by providing actual names of Athenian streets and

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58 My translation of: «καλύβας, μάνδρας καί μπαράκας αντικατέστησαν νεόκτιστοι οικίαι, περιορίζουσαν καθ’ ημέραν τήν έκτασιν του χωρίου» (Ροΐδης, Ε´ 148).
59 My translation of: «Κατά τήν διασταύρωσιν τῆς οδοῦ Μητροπόλεως εξακολουθεί νά χαίνη λάκκος πλήρης ακαθάρτου υγρού, τό οποίον ουδέποτε κατώρθωσαν αι ηλιακαί ακτίνες ν’ απορροφήσουν εντελώς» (Ροΐδης, Ε´ 148).
60 My translation of: «οἱ κάτοικοι τῶν Ἀθηνῶν μόνον εἰς ἑκτάκτους περιστάσεις πρέπει ν’ ἀναπνέουν ἄσωμαιν άέρα, νά μη γλιστρούν εἰς αἵματα καί νά μή σκοντάπτουν εἰς σάπια πορτοκάλια καί λείψανα γάτων καί ὀρνίθων;» (Ροΐδης, Ε´ 132).
avenues. His urban texts are interesting in that they engage with the activities of observation and interpretation and in so doing depict the city as having a character of its own, just as Poe does. While reading the surroundings of Athens as text, Rhoides alludes to the isolation, urban degradation, rootlessness and menacing atmosphere that are congenial to the city of Athens and, in general, he captures the urban trends that are tied to the urban world of his time. While Rhoides criticizes the Greek society and the urban mannerisms of his time, he does not condemn the city itself; on the contrary, he regards these new trends as being part of the modern urban environment. Rhoides posits the inevitability of embracing the modern sensibility and remains fascinated by the city’s vitality, its teeming crowds and endless opportunities. Writing at the end of the nineteenth century, Rhoides takes for granted the tensions created by the vastly populated and modernized Athens world several years after the publication of Poe’s urban-related fiction.

Hence a major literary indebtedness of Rhoides to Poe rests upon the treatment of cities and the figure of the *flâneur.* However, it would be interesting to discuss Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s tales as well. Rhoides’ translation activity is worthy of attention as it will reveal the great extent to which Rhoides has immersed in Poe’s oeuvre, an interest that drives Rhoides not only to peruse Poe’s works but also translate them.
1.5 The Translations of Foreign Literature in Greece and their Significance:

Rhoides Translating Poe

Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s short fiction fall within a period during which foreign writing is introduced to the Greek reading public (Γκότση, Αισθητοποίησις 14-15). Especially the period between 1830 and 1880 was marked by numerous translations of European and American literary works in Greek. The reason for the vast translation flow at the time is twofold: first, translation serves as a means of discovering new ways of writing and, secondly, translation communicates to the Greek reading public information about major European writers and their work (Πάτσιου 181). The fascination with foreign literature, as Βίκυ Πάτσιου puts it, provides the context for the adaptation and imitation of foreign works thus paving the way for the establishment of a national literature in Greece (181). In this sense, translation practice contributes to bringing the Greek readership in contact with the artistic achievements of writers in other languages in addition to an array of novel literary forms and writing styles.

It is during this period that Rhoides published his own translations of Poe’s short fiction. His six translations of Poe’s works, spanning from January 1877 to 1895, appeared in widely circulating periodicals of the time. As early as 1877, Rhoides translated “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” and two years later “The Tell-Tale Heart”; both translations appeared in Παρνασσός. The translations of “Morella” (June 1879) and “The Oval Portrait” (November 1879) were included in Εστία and Παρνασσός respectively. Rhoides’ translation of “The Black Cat” followed in November 1886; the latter appeared in the series with the title Εκλεκτά.

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61 [Viky Patsiou].
Mοθιστορήματα [Eklekta Mythistoremata]. 62 Last but not least, the high-acclaimed periodical Εστία included Rhoides’ translation of “The Gold Bug” in 1895.

While Rhoides’ own high regard for Poe’s artistry is almost indisputable, the question remains as to why Rhoides takes the challenging task of rendering Poe’s short fiction into the Greek language. In an attempt to grapple with that question, Παναγιώτης Μουλλάς 63 maintains that Rhoides’ purpose is to familiarize Greek readers with writers who, up to then, have remained unknown to the Greek reading public (Αθηναϊκή Κριτική 139). On the same issue, Γεωργαντά notes: “Rhoides feels an unusual attachment for the American writer who lived in a society that was unable to appreciate his unique literary genius” («Μεταφραστής» 34). 64

Ηρώ Τσαρνά 65 also deliberates over the reasons that have prompted Rhoides to translate Poe’s short fiction. In her mind, Rhoides’ decision to translate the works of the latter is subject to the following principles: The Greek readership could be given the chance to read the masterpieces of world literature and science in Greek, and the aforementioned masterpieces should somehow be in accord with [Rhoides’] own style and ethos («Όψεις»). 66 Ντουνιά endorses the previous argument by saying that “Poe’s tales are attuned to the spirit of the periodicals with which Rhoides collaborates” («Γάτος» 494). 67 Still, most importantly, Ντουνιά avers, Rhoides must have felt Poe as a kindred soul nurtured also in an environment that did not appreciate genuine values; experiencing a similar situation in Greece as Poe had done in the

62 The first part of Rhoides’ translation appears in the 107 issue of Eklektá Mοθιστορήματα and the second part appears in the periodical’s issue number 108.
63 [Panayotis Moullas].
64 My translation of: «Ο Ρ νιώθει μια περίεργη αγάπη για τον Αμερικανό συγγραφέα που έζησε σε μια κοινωνία ελάχιστα ικανή να εκτιμήσει τη μοναδικότητα της λογοτεχνικής ευφοίας του» («Μεταφραστής» 34).
65 [Iro Tsarna].
66 My translation of: «συνδιαφέρεται: α) Να παρουσιάσει στη γλώσσα του και στο ελληνικό κοινό, βέβαια, κάποια αριστουργήματα της παγκόσμιας Λογοτεχνίας, αλλά και Επιστήμης, και β) Αυτά τα αριστουργήματα να ταιριάζουν, κατά κάποιο τρόπο και στο προσωπικό του ίφος και ήθος» («Θεσσεζ»).
67 My translation of: «οι ιστορίες του Πόε ταιριάζουν ευκολότερα στα έντυπα με τα οποία συνεργάζεται ο Ροιδής» («Γάτος» 494).
States, Rhoides desires to introduce Poe’s literary ideas to the Greek readers («Γάτος» 494). Greek criticism has been almost unanimous in asserting that Rhoides’ appreciation of Poe’s works and the similarities between his own life and that of the American author is what must have incited the former to introduce and translate Poe into Greek. While I concur with all these views, I believe that Rhoides’ translation choices should also be assessed on the basis of his European connections and cosmopolitan outlook of life. As I mention above, Rhoides takes great pride in his European background and awareness of foreign cultures and literacies. Thus it is not surprising that he wishes to import novel authors in Greece, and Poe is certainly one of them. Given that the extended translation activity of the time serves as a means of acquiring more information about other writers and their work, it could be deemed reasonable that Rhoides chooses to translate Poe.68

While translating Poe is certainly a pastime for Rhoides, it serves another end as well. His translation activity might have served as a means of obtaining an income. As Δημήτρης Καλοκύρης69 says, the Greek writer did not hold a permanent professional position when he first took up translating Poe’s works into Greek (11). Rhoides was appointed warden to the National Library of Greece in 1880, a post from which he was periodically dismissed (Καλοκύρης 11).70 Having gone bankrupt in 1873 and being of very slender means, Rhoides most probably had found an additional source of income in translating Poe’s works especially during the long periods of unemployment.

68 Rhoides also translates François-René Chateaubriand’s L’itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem (1811) in 1860; in the preface of his translation, Rhoides explains that he chooses to translate Chateaubriand because he holds Chateaubriand’s literary talent in high acclaim and wishes to introduce him to Greek readers. In my view, the same might apply to Poe’s case because Rhoides openly acknowledges his appreciation of Poe’s literary talent.
69 [Dimitris Kalokiris].
70 As Κασίνης indicates, Rhoides works at the National Library of Athens from June 1st to 23rd 1880, from January 1882 to July 1885, from June 1886 to November 1890, from June 17th 1892 to June 28th 1895 and from June 14th 1897 to January 11th 1903 (18).
But despite Rhoides’ financial gains, it is also valuable to consider Rhoides’ translations in relation to the publishing industry. It is significant first of all that the majority of Rhoides’ translations appear in Παρνασσός and Εστία, two prestigious periodicals in Rhoides’ time. As regards Παρνασσός in particular, Poe, along with William Shakespeare, Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, are among the writers who were mostly translated (Πέτκου 371-72). It seems that Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s tales find the right place in Παρνασσός precisely because they are attuned to the usual literary matter published there. As a matter of fact, literary translations hold a prominent place in Παρνασσός and, as Έφη Πέτκου notes,71 one hundred and sixteen literary translations appear in it between 1877 and 1895 (356). What is notable is that the majority of the translated works were translations of short prose (Πέτκου 356-61), a fact that in part accounts for the inclusion of Poe’s translated tales in Παρνασσός.

This drive to bring foreign writing into Greek language is inextricably bound up with the translators’ and the readers’ growing interest in the British and American literature. The Greek readers’ enthusiasm with English literature as well as the developing short story genre in Greece might have laid the ground for Rhoides translating Poe’s works.

In order to assess Rhoides’ intense engagement with the translation of Poe’s prose fiction further, let us consider his views regarding the translation practice. In his 1893 study «Τὰ εἰδωλα»,72 Rhoides reflects upon the difficulties one encounters when translating Poe’s works and the challenges that arise in literary translations in general. Rhoides remarks: “the number of Anglo-Saxon words might be increased in Dickens’ description, in Shakespeare’s dialogue, in Swift’s libel, in Carlyle’s lyrical intervention or in the sentimentalism of Sterne, in Quincey’s dream or in Poe’s vision;
still the style is of utmost importance” (Δ´ 99-100). For Rhoides, the main difference between the translation of scientific documents and that of literary works hinges on the precise transmission of style. As he cites, “the translation of scientific documents implies the rendition of the meaning of the source text, while in a literary translation the tone should also be reflected” (Δ´ 100). The translation of scientific documents involves being faithful merely in words and sentences. On the contrary, literary translation is not just a matter of pure literal rendition of the meaning of the original language in another; the excellent literary translator, Rhoides opines, should not simply adhere to the superficial fidelity on the linguistic level, but should also reflect the very subtle meaning lying between the lines of the source text.

Interestingly, the manner through which Rhoides conveys Poe’s writing style and tone is of particular note. While Rhoides is skilled enough to translate scientific terms and, generally, convey the literal meaning of Poe’s text, he performs substantial changes in terms of style, syntax and, in certain cases, context, which in turn have an effect on the tone of the translated text. It appears that Rhoides, in his attempt to depict the style and the aesthetics of the original in his translation, consciously omits or tends to revise several parts of the source text.

In what follows, I will provide a close analysis of specific parts in which re-writing strategies are at work; in these excerpts, Rhoides’ presence is conspicuous and deviates considerably from the source text. The aim is not to judge the quality of Rhoides’ translations; rather, the intention is to make assumptions about the choices Rhoides makes taking into account the conditions under which the source and target

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73 My translation of: «αἷς περιγραφήν τοῦ Δίκενς, εἷς διάλογον τοῦ Σαξπείρου, εἷς λίβελλον τοῦ Σουήτ, εἷς λορική παράκλησιν τοῦ Καρλάλ. ή αἴσθηματικήν τοῦ Στέρνε, εἷς άνειρον τοῦ Κίντιβρι τήν και τήν άυτήν τήν Πάποπ, ̀αφ ἐνός μέν αὐτίκειν τά ποιητά τῶν σασαλόν κέζων, ἄφ’ ἄτερον δὲ τό ζήτημα τοῦ δρόμου γίνεται ἀπὸ ἐπουσιώδους πρωτεύον» (Rhoides, Δ´ 99-100).

74 My translation of: «Ἐνδό τό ὅτι ἤρθε πρὸς μετάφρασιν ἐπιστημονικοῦ ἡγουμεν ἠνεῖ ἤ λέξεις τοῦ άυτοῦ πράγματος διήλευτη, πρέπει εἷς μετάφρασιν φιλολογικοῦ να ἠνεῖ καὶ αὐτοῦ αἴσθηματος ἐγερτικήν» (Rhoides, Δ´ 100).
texts are produced. A general observation is that the uncanny, fantastic atmosphere permeating Poe’s texts has evaporated. The fantastic substance of Poe’s works, the exploration of the irrational and the bizarre are left out in Rhoides’ translations. In other words, instead of offering a fantastic story, Rhoides presents Poe’s writings under a more reasonable and, perhaps, realistic light that fits the literary content that has been prevalent in Greece at the time. The main point to be explored is not only what Rhoides is doing, but also what he is not doing or even consciously avoiding. This is particularly useful as it will demonstrate the way Rhoides captures Poe’s gothic and romantic sensibilities and submits them to realist writing. The discussion will concentrate on Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar,” “The Oval Portrait,” and “The Tell-Tale Heart” because they illustrate best the above.

A significant instance of Rhoides’ tampering with Poe’s work may be found in his translation of “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” (1845). In Poe’s story, which in Kevin Hayes’ opinion is “possibly the most gruesome tale Poe ever wrote” (Poe 146), P—, a practicing mesmerist, recounts the facts surrounding the remarkable case of M. Valdemar. The patient, having only twenty-four hours to live, consents to a mesmeric experiment to be hypnotized to the point of his death in an attempt to delay death and decomposition. The mesmerist places Valdemar into a mesmeric trance when he is just about to perish and the latter stays in this condition for seven months though his body displays signs of decomposition. Assessing that the patient cannot recover completely, the mesmerist decides to awaken Valdemar who is then reduced

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75 Given Rhoides’ morbid fascination with death, it is not surprising that he decides to translate this specific story by Poe. The manner in which life and death coalesce provides the material for Rhoides’ «Ἡ ἀμφιθλοκος ζωή», as discussed earlier in the chapter.
to “a nearly liquid mass of loathsome—of detestable putridity” (Tales: 2 1243). As is expected, Poe’s appalling story intrigues contemporary readers many of whom have considered the story’s events as factual.

It is Poe’s equivocal preface to the story that affords some evidence of his desire to attach a scientific context to his story and, by implication, trick his readership into considering the story’s incidents as true:

Of course I shall not pretend to consider any matter for wonder, that the extraordinary case of M. Valdemar has excited discussion. It would have been a miracle had it not—especially under the circumstances. Through the desire of all parties concerned, to keep the affair from the public, at least for the present, or until we had farther opportunities for investigation—through our endeavors to effect this—a garbled or exaggerated account made its way into society, and became the source of many unpleasant misinterpretations, and, very naturally, of a great deal of disbelief. It is now rendered necessary that I give the facts—as far as I comprehend them myself. (Tales: 2 1233, emphasis in original)

In these lines, Poe clearly suggests that the horrid events surrounding the case of M. Valdemar are true. Of utmost importance is Poe’s use of the word “case,” a word which refers to an instance of a disease and alludes to medicine thereby adding scientific plausibility to the story. As a result, the readers are predisposed to believe that the dying Valdemar would be able to prolong life by seven months. When

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76 By the end of the eighteenth century, the science of mesmerism gains great popularity with doctors “induc[ing] magnetic sleep as a form of anesthesia” to patients suffering from multiple diseases. What this hypnotic state achieves is “to suspend the experience of surgical pain or the effects of disease” (Mills 326). Poe was well acquainted with these mesmeric experiences and refers to them in three of his tales, namely “A Tale of the Ragged Mountains” (April 1844), “Mesmeric Revelation” (August 1844) and “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” (1845) exploring this issue. Recent publications considering the history and practice of mesmerism include: Mills, “Mesmerism,” Edgar Allan Poe in Context; Hayes, Poe; and Faivre, “Borrowings and Misreading: Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘Mesmeric’ Tales and the Strange Case of their Reception.”
published, the story becomes the subject of ubiquitous speculation regarding the veracity of the story’s events. As a result of the widespread impact the tale exerts, several ignorant people attempt to perform mesmeric experiments with disastrous results.\(^{77}\)

Rhoides’ remarks, in the prefatory section, register an awareness of the public sensation Poe’s story has created, as I will discuss in what follows; in order to protect Greek readers from a similar disaster then, he deliberately avoids translating Poe’s preamble through which the American writer attempts to import a measure of scientific verisimilitude in his pseudo-scientific account. In lieu of Poe’s opening comments, then, Rhoides composes an introductory section to his own translation wherein he explains the reasons why he does not translate Poe’s preface into Greek:

The other work which was published at the time when the belief in magnetism and its consequences were in their heyday, is cited below; the latter intrigued the readership and the district attorney of New York and became the cause of several nervous incidents. In order to avoid such incidents we have considered it pertinent for our readers to include this brief preamble. (Rhoides, B’ 235)\(^{78}\)

In these lines, Rhoides suggests the fictionality of the story by making it completely clear to the Greek readers that Poe’s tale is pure fiction. It appears that Rhoides has no

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\(^{77}\) The impact Poe’s story exerts on its readership as well as on potential scientists is indicated in Robert H. Collyer’s report, an English magnetic healer, who writes to Poe confessing that he has performed a similar act trying to revive a dead body. Another Englishman, Thomas South uses the story as a case study in his book *Early Magnetism in its Higher Relations to Humanity*, which was published in 1846. (Faivre 39-42). For more details on Poe’s story and the interest it arouses, see Stern, “‘Yes:—No:—I have been sleeping—and Now—Now—I am Dead’: Undeath, the Body and Medicine”; and Faivre, “Borrowings and Misreading: Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘Mesmeric’ Tales and the Strange Case of their Reception.”

\(^{78}\) My translation of: «Τὸ ἐτέρον χέλην, τὸ δημοσιευθέν καθ’ ἢν ὄραν ἑκμαζέω ἢ πίστες εἰς τὸν μαγνητισμὸν καὶ τὰ τοῦτο παραπέμενα, εἶναι τὸ κατωτέρω παρατιθέμενον, ὅπερ συνετάραξε τὸ κοινὸν καὶ τὴν εἰσαγγελίαν τοῦ Νεοβοράκου καὶ πολλάν ἐγένετο πρόξενον νευρικάν παθημάτων. Πρὸς ἀποφυγήν, τυχόν, τοιοῦτον καὶ παρά τοῖς ἰματέροις ἀναγνώσταις, ἐκρίναμεν εὐλογὸν νὰ προτάξαμεν τὸ σύντομον τὸῦτο προοίμιον» (Rhoides, B’ 235).
intention of alarming the Greek reading public by suggesting that the appalling events described in “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” have, really, taken place. Rhoides’ decision not to deceive his readership resonates meaningfully with his views regarding the art of fiction. To Rhoides, Μαυρέλος notes, the craft of writing is pre-eminently fiction, a fabrication, and should not be perceived as real; in this respect, fiction, for Rhoides, is essentially a “fairy tale” (Παλίμψηστο 45). If, at times, fiction is to be taken as real, Rhoides remarks, is simply because the author himself has made it so (qtd. in Μαυρέλος, Παλίμψηστο 45). Rhoides dismisses Poe’s misleading preface as the latter would incite Greek readers to give credence to the tale’s events. The Greek writer transfers Poe’s material as appropriately as possible so as not to challenge the Greek readership of his time.

Another case where Rhoides’ intervenes in Poe’s original text occurs in his translation of “The Oval Portrait” that appears in the 1879 edition of Παρνασσός bearing the title «Ἡ στρογγυλῆ ἐικών». Poe’s tale is a typical gothic story as, to quote Fred Botting, it contains “conventional gothic devices like the old castle, the life-like portrait and discovered manuscript” (122). Of particular interest is the gothic castle and the diction Poe employs to describe its interior décor; Poe uses specific phrasing in his depiction of the mansion by means of which he echoes directly the gothic tradition and achieves a relevant atmospheric effect early in the story, when Poe describes the interior design of the mansion in the Apennines:

The château into which my valet had ventured to make forcible entrance, rather than permit me, in my desperately wounded condition, to pass a night in the open air, was one of those piles of commingled gloom and grandeur which have so long frowned among the Appennines, not less in fact that in the
fancy of Mrs. Radcliffe. To all appearance it had been
temporarily and very lately abandoned. We established
ourselves in one of the smallest and least sumptuously
furnished apartments. It lay in a remote turret of the building.
Its decorations were rich, yet tattered and antique. Its walls
were hung with tapestry and bedecked with manifold and
multiform armorial trophies, together with an unusually
great number of very spirited modern paintings in frames of
rich golden arabesque. (Poe, Tales: 1 662)

In the description provided here of the voluminous yet deserted chambers with the
impressive décor and diffuse light, Poe ushers his readers in a scene of eclectic
furnishings which include “manifold and multiform armorial trophies” and “a rich
golden arabesque” (Tales: 1 662). It is significant that Poe employs the word
“arabesque,” a word that, according to Jacob Berman, “illuminates his aesthetic
fascination with decadence and decay” (132), in connection with this shadowy and
obscure place since it creates a dreamlike atmosphere that is in keeping with the
traveler’s unclear state of mind. Poe’s character is presented as hallucinating in a state
of haziness. The narrator’s delirious condition distorts his perception and, the setting,
through Poe’s elaborate description, reflects back on the character’s blurred
perception.

In stark contrast to Poe’s elaborate description of the castle, however,
Rhoides’ rendition of the estate’s interior decoration is rather plain and
straightforward: described by a fully conscious observer and not by a seriously
wounded man with high temperature who may be hallucinating as a result of his
condition. Not at all does the narrator’s description connect to his state of mind nor
does the atmospheric effect predispose the readers’ apprehension:

Ὁ πύργος εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον ὁ ὑπηρέτης μου μὲ εἰσήγαγε σχοδὸν διὰ τῆς βίας, ὅπως μὴ διέλθῃ τὴν νύκτα ἐν ὑπαίθρῳ, ριγῶν καὶ πυρέσσων ἐκ τῆς πληγῆς μου, ἀνήκεν εἰς τὴν τὰξιν τῶν ὑπερηφάνων καὶ μελαγχολικῶν ἐκεῖνων κτηρίων, ὥστε σώζονται εἰσέτι καταρρέοντα τίνα λείψανα ἐπὶ τῶν ἀκρωρειῶν τῶν Ἀπεννίνων. Τὸ μέγαρον τοῦτο ἔφαίνετο πρὸ ὀλίγου χρόνου καὶ προσωρινῶς μόνον ἐγκαταλειφθέν ὑπὸ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότου. Μεταξὺ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν ἐρήμων κοιτών ὑπάρχει ἴμα τῶν μετριωτέρων, κείμενος ἐν πυργίσκῳ. Τά σκεύη αὐτοῦ ἤσαν μεγαλοπρεπὴ, ἄλλα παλαιὰ καὶ εφθαρμένα, οἱ δὲ τοῖχοι ἐκαλύπτοντο διὰ κεντητῶν ἐπιστρομάτων, ἱπποτικῶν οἰκοσήμων καὶ πρὸ πάντων διὰ πλῆθους εἰκόνων νεωτέρων ζωγράφων ἐντὸς ὀλοχρύσων γεγλυμμένων πλαισίων. (Rhoides, Χρυσκάραβος 119)

Rhoides is not so effusive in his use of elaborate and pompous phrasing and, hence, the establishment of a dim and gloomy atmosphere is missing. More precisely, in lieu of Poe’s noun “decoration,” which is a general term corresponding to the adornments inside a room, Rhoides uses a more common noun «σκεύη» which is more specific to kitchen utensils and drinking vessels. A few words further on, Rhoides uses the common adjectives «παλαιά καί ἐφθαρμένα» to replace Poe’s “tattered and antique” which are more sophisticated. In reference to Poe’s “bedecked,” which is a synonym of “decorate,” Rhoides uses the verb «ἐκαλύπτοντο» which is obviously more neutral. There is no essential difference here in the denotation; what is interesting, though, is that throughout the story Rhoides employs common Greek words to replace

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79 [“skevi”].
80 [“palaia kai ephtharmena”].
81 [“ekalyptonto”].
Poe’s elevated literary register. In introducing plain words into his text, Rhoides probably attempts to lighten the gloomy atmosphere that is inherent in Poe’s story.

The contrast between the atmosphere that Rhoides’ translation creates in relation to the original story is conspicuous. It seems that Rhoides wishes to skew away the gothic ambience that emanates from the source text. In this respect, Rhoides avoids translating the adjectives “manifold” and “multiform” as well as the word “arabesque” that Poe uses in his original script. Commenting on Rhoides’ deliberate omissions, Μαυρέλος notes: “The omission might also be related to the constant concealment of the setting’s details that renders the atmosphere less ponderous” («Υποδοχή» 89).82 Poe reinforces the tale’s gothicism with the inclusion of Ann Radcliffe’s name, a pioneer author of gothic fiction; Rhoides does not include Poe’s reference to Ann Radcliffe’s name as this would have tied the text down to the gothic tradition. Significantly, all these changes attest to Rhoides’ predilection for wiping out the elements that betray the original story’s gothic lineage. Apparently, Rhoides’ intention is, once again, not to present a gothic story to the Greek reading audience given that the gothic genre has not yet emerged in late nineteenth-century Greece, due to the different socio-cultural changes Greece was going through at the time as has already been mentioned in the introduction of the present project.

The most important intervention, on Rhoides’ part, occurs toward the tale’s dénouement wherein the traveler’s attention is called to a painting of startling beauty, notable for its lifelike quality; he, therefore, consults a book providing information on the portrait of “a maiden of rarest beauty” (Poe, Tales: 1 664) depicted in it. The narrator learns that the female-model who sat for the oval portrait was very much in love with the painter, who was also her spouse. She sits still for days whilst her

82 Μy translation of: «Η παράλειψη μπορεί να συνδυαστεί και με τη συνεχή απόκρυψη λεπτομερειών του σκηνικού, που καθιστά το κλίμα λιγότερο βαρύ» (Μαυρέλος, «Υποδοχή» 89).
husband depicts her image on canvas. Engrossed in his task and moving his eyes “from the canvas rarely,” however, the artist does not notice that his model-wife gradually withers away. She perishes the moment the work of art is finished only to have her husband look upon his creation and exclaim triumphantly, “This is indeed *Life itself!”* (Poe, *Tales*: 1666, emphasis in original). Turning afterwards to his beloved one, the artist adds, “*She was dead!”* (Poe, *Tales*: 1666, emphasis in original).

The opposition between “living” and “lifelikeness” is encapsulated in the artist’s final utterance. More crucially, Poe’s story is concerned with the contrast, to quote Charles May, of “‘life’ that is organic and therefore mortal in everyday reality, and ‘life’ that is idealized and therefore immortal in the art work” (51). It seems that the painting has taken over, what Scott Peeples calls, the girl’s “living spirit” and, as a consequence, the portrait “partakes of immortality” (91) and defies time. With this in view, it is the lifelikeness of the portrait which makes it startling and the means by which the woman achieves immortality. The sense of life becoming immortal in the painting is not markedly reflected in Rhoides’ translation though. Rhoides translates Poe’s phrase, “This is indeed *Life itself!”* (Poe, *Tales*: 1666, emphasis in original) as, «Ἐδῶ ὑπάρχει ζωή ἀληθινή!» 83 (Rhoides, *Χρυσοκάραβος* 123). Commenting on the difference between the two phrases, Μαυρέλος says:

> In the first phrase the object-art work is equated with life, whereas in the second it is considered as another living organism, another body.
>
> From Poe’s romantic “belief,” that art is superior to life and can affect

83 [“Edo iparxei zoi alithini”].
it, we turn to Rhoides’ belief that “art and life coexist and interact.”

(«Υποδοχή» 89)

Read in this way, it appears that Rhoides departs from the romantic ideology and Poe’s concerns with the artist and the artistic process. In an attempt to respond to the dominant realist mode of writing which marks Greek fiction toward the end of the century, Rhoides gives Poe’s romantic tale a semblance of realism.

Perhaps the best example of Rhoides’ interventions can be found in his translation of Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.” In this translation, it is Rhoides’ wish to interpret the story in realistic terms. Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart” has attracted ample critical and scholarly attention as it constitutes, in the words of Magistrale, “a classic narrative of a mind’s psychological unraveling” (83). In this confessional tale, the narrator insists upon his sanity, but discloses his deranged mind by the irrational story he unfolds and by the intense nervousness of his language (Hammond 82). This nervousness of his language is manifested through interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences as well as through multiple repetitions of words and phrases, in which he continuously denies his madness. More specifically, the narrator suffers from hallucinations, delusions of persecution, alterations of mood, ill-judged emotions, violence, anxiety and anger, which he underestimates as anxiety and stress symptoms or even symptoms of superior degree of sensitivity and insight.

Poe begins his tale by trying to evoke a modicum of nervousness and agitation about his speaker: “True!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am” (Tales: 2 792). Through these repetitions the narrator discloses that he is a “dreadfully nervous” man who decides, for no reason whatsoever, to kill an old man.

84 My translation of: «Στην πρώτη φράση το αντικείμενο-έργο τέχνης ταυτίζεται με τη ζωή, ενώ στη δεύτερη θεωρείται ως άλλος ένας ζωντανός οργανισμός, ένα άλλο σώμα. Από το ρομαντικό «πιστεύω» του Poe, ότι «η τέχνη είναι ανώτερη από τη ζωή και την επηρεάζει, περνάμε στο ροϊδική τέχνη και η ζωή συνυπάρχουν και αλληλεπιδρούν» (Μαυρέλος, «Υποδοχή» 89).
The repetitions become more recurrent before the murder is executed as the narrator’s heart beats “quicker and quicker” (*Tales*: 2795) and “louder and louder” (*Tales*: 2795). Finding the old man “stone, stone dead” (*Tales*: 2796), the narrator calms down until he perceives the old man’s heartbeat growing “louder-louder-louder!” (*Tales*: 2796). At this final point, the narrator’s vexation reaches a climax and the narrator loses his control completely. With the extensive use of repetitions, Poe attempts to disclose the hero’s mental disintegration and, as John Dern puts it, to “produce a strong emotional effect” (55).

The narrator’s particular intense emotional effect is missing from the Greek translation, however, as Rhoides does not translate most of Poe’s repetitions in Greek, thus failing to communicate the strong emotional effect of the source language text. Instead, Rhoides either uses synonyms or leaves the repetitions out from his translation. For example, the sentence “It grew louder-louder-louder!” (Poe, *Tales*: 2797), is translated as, «Ἀλλ’ ὁ κτύπος συνηύξανε κακείνος καὶ ἀντήχει εὐκρινέστερος παντός ἄλλου θορύβου» (Rhoides, Χρυσοκάραβος 117). Admittedly, Poe’s repetitiousness creates an atmosphere of suspense and foregrounds the narrator’s mounting hysteria. This is also apparent in the following excerpt from Poe’s story, “and now – again! – hark! louder! louder! louder!” (Poe, *Tales*: 2797) which Rhoides reduces to, «ὁ θόρυβος τῶν κτύπων ἡχήσαν καὶ ἐκορυφώθη» (Rhoides, Χρυσοκάραβος 118). Here Rhoides remains close to the meaning of the source text but he avoids incorporating the repetitions that are inherent in it, an omission which, according to Μαυρέλος, results into the elimination of the verbal nature of the source text («Καρδιόκτυπος» 546). The effect in the Greek text is that of calmness as, in the target text, we are presented with a rather calm narrator completely at odds with the frantic narrator in Poe’s story.
In addition to the repetitive phrases and words, which Poe uses throughout “The Tell-Tale Heart,” he also uses rhetorical questions (erotisis) coupled with a device common in Poe, that of using italics (Zimmerman, “Prose” 21). The following quotes from “The Tell-Tale Heart” exemplify this kind of syntax: “but why will you say that I am mad?” (Tales: 2 792, emphasis in original), and after he reveals his plans he repeats again the statement allegedly confirming his sanity: “I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? (Tales: 2 792), “And now—have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses?” (Tales: 2 795). The narrator, overcome by anxiety, utilizes a number of the rhetorical questions that, according to Corbett, are “a common device in impassioned speeches” (qtd. in Zimmerman, Style 296).

In the Greek translation, Rhoides turns the above interrogative sentences into affirmative ones. Take, for instance, the line in Poe “but why will you say that I am mad?” (Tales: 2 792) which is translated by Rhoides as, «Ἐκ τούτου ὃμως δὲν ἔπεται ὅτι εἶμαι καὶ παράφρων» (Χρυσοκάραβος 111). Also, the line “I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad?” (Poe, Tales: 2 792) is not translated at all, whilst Poe’s line “And now—have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses?” (Poe, Tales: 2 795) is translated as, «Ἀπό τῆς στιγμῆς ἐκείνης ἣρέστο ἐκεῖνο, τὸ ὁποῖον θεωρεῖτε ύμεῖς παραφροσύνην, ἀλλὰ πράγματι οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἦτο εἰμή ἐκτακτός τις τῶν αἰσθήσεων μου ὁξύτητης» (Rhoides, Χρυσοκάραβος 114). Μαυρέλος opines that Rhoides’ translation is («Καρδιόκτυπος» 551) quite at odds with the original text. As a matter of fact, “The Tell-Tale Heart” belongs to the category of autobiographical monologues (Cohn 168), while Rhoides’ translation to that of autobiographical narratives (Μαυρέλος, «Καρδιόκτυπος» 542). Self-evident as the definition of an autobiographical monologue might seem, it
implies the monologic presentation and the chronologic narration of past events. In light of Dorrit Cohn’s definition, autobiographical monologues “create a highly stylistic rhetorical effect, since reciting one’s own biography to oneself does not appear psychologically plausible […]. Despite the absence of listeners, the autobiographical monologue thus retains the meaning of communication, or at least of rehearsal for communication” (181-82). With regard to “The Tell-Tale Heart,” Cohn asserts that “a listening ‘you’ is addressed, who remains disincarnated to the end: is it a listener mutely present on the fictional scene?, is it the reader? or is it an imaginary interlocutor, present only in the speaker’s mind?” (178). In this sense, the readers seem to be overhearing a conversation between the killer and his interlocutor who could either be a prison keeper, a doctor in an asylum, a journalist or a judge (Benfey 30). Benfey considers that “‘The Tell-Tale Heart’ purports to be a spoken narrative and much of the effect is achieved through the illusion of oral delivery” (35).

This is not the case in the target text wherein the narrator does not seem to address a specific audience thus purporting to be a written narrative. That being the case, Rhoides eliminates the verbal character of the narrative and in total contrast to the original text in which, Poe presents a man “obsessed with defending his psychic self” (Robinson 369), Rhoides presents a narrator who rather calmly details the particulars of the murder. As a result of omitting the questions, the Greek text lacks the intensity and emotional effect that the rhetorical questions inherent within the source text produce and the readers do not get to sense the narrator’s genuine anxiety.

Rhoides’ crucial interventions in the original story do not end here though. As I note above, in order to magnify the narrator’s disorderedly speech, Poe supplements it with punctuation marks such as exclamations, dashes, pauses and commas, since he considers punctuation to be a key element in fiction writing. Poe expresses this view
in his letter to the 1848 issue of the *Graham’s Magazine*. As Poe himself asserts, “[t]hat punctuation is important we all agree; but how few comprehend the extent of its importance! The writer who neglects punctuation, or mix-punctuates, is liable to be misunderstood--this, according to the popular idea, is the sum of evils arising from heedlessness or ignorance” (*Essays* 1425). Further on in his essay, Poe discusses the importance of the dash, of which he was particularly fond, noting that it represents “a second thought--an emendation” (*Essays* 1426). In “The Tell-Tale Heart,” according to Dern, Poe employs the punctuation marks to create a constant variation in pitch. Higher pitches generally are employed in order to exhibit excitement and lower pitches to exhibit a sense of control or seriousness (55). Take for example the following passage:

> It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but, once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with the film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever. (Poe, *Tales*: 2 792)

In this excerpt, one notices that the extensive use of punctuation marks plays a vital role in conveying the narrator’s nervousness and agitation. The effect here is that of intensity as one can visualize Poe’s hero speaking hurriedly, nervously and in a high pitch. Talking about the importance of the dash in particular, Zimmerman notes that it “helps out, highlights, the frenzied repetition, and certainly its frequency also detracts
from the smoothness of the narrator’s sentences” (“Prose” 23). The most striking example, however, of Poe employing quotation marks to intensify the emotional level of his scenes occurs towards the story’s extravagant finale; here the speaker stirs into a frantic outburst, “Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed!—tear up the planks!—here, here!—it is the beating of his hideous heart!” (Poe, Tales: 2 797) which Rhoides renders as, «Ἄθλιοι, ἀνέκραξα ἀποτεινόμενος πρὸς αὐτοὺς, παύσατε νά ὑποκρίνεσθε καὶ νά μέ βασανίζετε· ὁμολογῶ τά πάντα· σηκώσατε τάς σανίδας ἐκείνας καὶ θέλετε τόν εὖρε, ἢ μὴ δὲν ἀκούετε τῆς μυσαρᾶς του καρδίας τούς παλμούς» (Χρυσοκάραβος 118). In Rhoides’ text, the punctuation marks are absent and the sentences are complete without any pauses or exclamation marks or implied variations in pitch. In sharp contrast to Poe’s uncontrolled narration that reflects the storyteller’s mental sickness and irritation, Rhoides presents the controlled narrative of a calm murderer who is simply confessing his crime providing all the details. The effect here is that of composure and, even though Rhoides conveys the exact meaning of Poe’s words, he succeeds in downplaying the fragmented aspect of Poe’s narrator in the story’s ending when the narrator’s internal conflict and his hysteric speech are not manifested at all.

Not only does the Greek writer omit repetitive phrases, exclamation marks and rhetorical questions, but also refrains from translating entire sentences and phrases existing in the source text. For example, “I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth, I heard many things in hell” (Poe, Tales: 2 792); or “hearkening to the death watches in the wall” (Poe, Tales: 2 792) and “it was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh! no—it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe” (Poe, Tales: 2 794) are some of the parts that Rhoides avoids translating into the Greek language. It is notable that Rhoides deliberately avoids
translating Poe’s recurrent phrase “Evil eye,” a phrase that carries negative connotations and, in the words of Daniel Hoffman, “usually signifies the attribution to another of a power wished for by the self” (Poe 223). Contrary to Poe’s tale wherein the old man’s eye “provokes a murderer to peer at the eye in order to prey on his victim’s heart” (Rachman, “Arabesque” 12), the eye in the Greek translation plays a vital role in the narrator’s exasperation but is not invested with evil qualities. Rhoides’ decision to dismiss the superstitious beliefs people hold in relation to the evil eye is consistent with his views on metaphysics. For Rhoides, as Μαυρέλος suggests, metaphysics is out of date («Καρδιόκτυπος» 547); this is probably what makes him avoid the reference to the vulture eye. This probably makes Rhoides revise what he translates so that the translated story is consistent with the tastes of the Athenian readership which at the time is far accustomed to works that focus on the “evocation of the traditional way of life in the Greek countryside” (Beaton, Introduction 70). It is probably for the same reasons why Rhoides translates the sentence “hellish tattoo” as «ιχιροτέρωσ»85 thus wiping out completely the metaphysical feel inherent in Poe’s text.

In addition to effacing the original tale’s fantastic substance, Rhoides intervenes considerably in the story’s syntactic pattern as well. There are cases in «Ο Καρδιόκτυπος» in which Rhoides converts the short-length sentences of the original to long sentences paying attention to the syntactic structure as opposed to Poe’s story in which the sentences are incomplete. To make a case of understanding, I will refer to the scene before the crime:

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little—a very, very little

85 [“ichiroteros”].
crevice in the lantern. So, I opened it—you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily—until, at length, a single dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and full upon the vulture eye. It was open—wide, wide open—and I grew furious as…no more. (Poe, *Tales*: 2 794-96).

In the Greek translation, Rhoides limits the description of this scene to three paragraphs only omitting the narrator’s repetitive phrases, several small sentences and the various syntactic abnormalities of the source text. The syntactic consistency in Rhoides’ translation contributes to the presentation of a calm and controlled narrator who simply discusses the events that lead to his killing the old man in contrast to the deranged and lunatic narrator of Poe’s story.

In this sense, the question arises—why does Rhoides perform such changes to Poe’s story? Being a writer himself and knowledgeable of Poe’s critical and literary oeuvre, Rhoides grasps Poe’s aesthetic and romantic concerns and transfers Poe’s material as appropriately as possible. Being wholly immersed in the literary and cultural life of his time, Rhoides tones down the gothic and fantastic ambiance permeating Poe’s writings. By doing so, Rhoides offers a rather realistic version of Poe’s romantic tales in order to become attuned to the literary conventions of the time and meet the demands of the reading public. It is to be noted that the Greek readers of the time miss the particular linguistic and aesthetic techniques that Poe has used. Still, more importantly, these early translations play an essential part in enabling Greek readers, people belonging to a distinct cultural background, to read and appreciate Poe’s works. Besides boosting Poe’s reputation in nineteenth-century Greece,

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86 See pages 114-15 in the Greek translation.
Rhoides’ translations are instrumental in shaping the Greek literary background that ventures more towards novel themes and concerns.

Drawing on Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s short fiction, this chapter has thrown into relief new perspectives on the connection between Poe’s and Rhoides’ writings and has examined how Poe has been read by Rhoides, a key literary figure in Greece. It has been argued that, beyond Rhoides’ fascination with Poe’s literary artistry, Rhoides employs and appropriates Poe’s works so that they fit in with his personal style and the emerging literary precepts of late nineteenth-century Greece. Considering the cultural and literal context in which the particular works by Rhoides are produced, this chapter makes connections between Poe-sque concerns and Rhoides’ tendency to adjust these concerns to the literary context of late nineteenth-century Greece.

This viewpoint allows for a detailed discussion of Rhoides’ texts in relation to specific works by Poe and highlights the particular concerns Rhoides’ works address. More precisely, Rhoides’ essay «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή» in its juxtaposition with Poe’s “The Premature Burial,” serves as a guide for revealing Rhoides’ morbid sensibility as well as his interest in the delicate boundaries enveloping life and death. Rhoides’ factual reports of live burials, as these are articulated in «Ἡ ἀμφίβολος ζωή», attest to the latter’s interest in the current affairs of his time. Such is Rhoides’ desire to address the urban changes that have been taking place in Athens at the time; this becomes apparent in his urban-related texts that are concerned with reading the urban feel of Athens. Rhoides’ interpretative treatment of the Athenian cityscape eloquently associates with Poe’s treatment of the city and dramatizes anxieties and concerns
arising from the sudden urbanization of Athens. Rhoides identifies a wide range of such anxieties including over-crowding, environmental anxieties and isolation. With regard to the Athenian crowd itself, it is presented as strikingly uniform, and, for Rhoides and Poe, in that uniformity lies much of the danger.

Moving thematically through the chapter, the discussion shifts from urban concerns to translation practices as it examines Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s tales into the Greek language. The argument is that Rhoides’ translations of Poe’s oeuvre not only provide the literary framework for Rhoides demonstrating his linguistic skills but also enable Rhoides to rewrite specific parts of Poe’s works. All things considered, reading Rhoides in relation to Poe allows us to bring into focus important thematic elements in the former’s work; it also sheds light on the complex ways in which the interplay of Poe and Rhoides positions Rhoides’ works as products of and contributions to an emerging cosmopolitan Greek literary culture.
Chapter Two

Realism and counter-Realism: The Presence of Edgar Allan Poe in

Georgios Vizyenos’ «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου»¹

“The horrors depicted in ‘Who was my Brother’s Murderer?’ are worthy of Edgar Allan Poe, but the most horrific of all is the narrator’s final realization of the truth.”

−Peter Mackridge, Georgios Vizyenos: Thracian Tales (2014)

2. Georgios Vizyenos’ Emergence

This chapter considers the role and contribution of Edgar Allan Poe’s detective tales to Georgios Vizyenos’ story «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» a story that is structured around the mystery of Christakis’ death and the need to identify his killer.² The mystery sustaining Vizyenos’ story unfolds as a kind of question calling for an answer and this is what, according to Παναγιώτης Μουλλάς³ one of the authorities on Vizyenos’ studies, is reminiscent of Poe’s detective tales («Βιζηνός πς´}); stories that in turn present a mystery relating to the discovery of either a killer, a victim, or a letter.⁴

¹ [“Pios iton o fonefs tou adelfou mou”].
² In his groundbreaking Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel: A History (1972), Julian Symons makes a distinction between the detective story and the crime novel; he argues that the crime novel typically privileges character development over the intellectual challenge of the puzzle (182-84). What is more, in the crime novel often there is no detective (Symons 182). In contrast to the crime novel, the detective story foregrounds the role of the detective and the puzzle that the story presents (Symons 182-84). Following Symons’ claim and since my interest in this chapter lies primarily in the fictional figure of the detective and his ingenious means of resolving a mystery, I use the term detective fiction.
³ [Panayotis Moullas].
⁴ I support my argument about the literary connection between Vizyenos’ story and Poe’s Dupin tales with references to “Who was my Brother’s Murderer?” only since my interest in this chapter lies in the investigator’s ability to forge a series of links by following a process of deductive reasoning as well as his imagination skills. While Vizyenos’ story «Τὸ ἀμάρτημα τῆς μητρὸς μου» [“Τὸ amartema tes metros mou”] (1883) exhibits a mystery, it does not foreground the process of deductive reasoning since Yorgis accidentally overhears his mother confessing that she smothered the baby girl to death
In addition to presenting mysteries, Poe’s “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841), “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” (1842-43) and “The Purloined Letter” (1844) place emphasis on the character of Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin, an ingenious investigator, and on his method of resolving a mystery, thereby celebrating the power of his intellect and his imaginative powers of analysis. Looking at it this way, one can draw a link between Dupin and Yorgis, the person assuming the role of the investigator in Vizyenos’ story, in terms of the detection method they employ in order to solve the mysteries. In drawing from Dupin’s detection method, in my opinion, Vizyenos gives prominence to the idea that the detective’s mind can explicate the most puzzling event with a chain of causes that are to be found beyond the ken of other characters. In addition to the detection process, the connection between Poe and Vizyenos can be further attested by looking at how deception works, Μιχάλης Χρυσανθόπουλος, another established figure in Vizyenos’ studies, argues. Χρυσανθόπουλος points to the story’s proximity with Poe’s “The Purloined Letter” in terms of the deception the characters are caught in (Φαντασία 71), as will be discussed in the present chapter.

A useful way to begin such a discussion is by considering the theoretical framework within which this chapter develops as well as by considering Vizyenos’ early life and background education. The reference to Vizyenos’ early years and education serves to show that the environment within which the Greek writer has been nurtured strengthens his connection with Greek and Euro-American literature. Further on in the chapter, I will discuss specific characteristics of Vizyenos’ specific writing,
such as his tendency to create an atmosphere of suspense through the gradual representation of clues as well as his willingness to explore his characters’ inner soul and compare them to Poe’s relevant writing techniques. The interplay of these techniques between Poe and Vizyenos allows us to consider «Ποιος ήτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφος μου» in conversation with Poe’s work. I will also look at the ways in which this story plays with the notion of reality by placing its characters in perplexing situations equal to Poe’s insoluble puzzling story scenarios. In what follows, due importance is given to the respective literary traditions both Vizyenos and Poe belong to. Given that Poe pioneers the detective tradition in the U.S., I intend to present a brief history of it and shed light on Poe’s contribution to it. As for Vizyenos, he holds an exceptional position within Greek letters partly because with the story «Ποιος ήτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφος μου» he contributes to the emergence of the detective story in Greece. The parallel consideration of Poe and Vizyenos in terms of their contribution to their respective detective traditions will account for the subsequent comparison of their works.

I conclude this chapter by performing a parallel reading of Poe’s Dupin series and Vizyenos’ «Ποιος ήτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφος μου» by laying particular emphasis on the figure of the detective and the ways Vizyenos’ “detective” draws from Poe’s Dupin. Finally, attention is paid to the conflict between reality and appearances and the way this conflict unfurls in the specific works by Poe and Vizyenos. Through this parallel reading, this chapter will ultimately provide new

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6 I develop and support my argument about the literary relationship of Vizyenos’ story and Poe with references to Poe’s Dupin trilogy. Poe’s “The Man of the Crowd” (1840), “The Gold-Bug” (1843) and “Thou Art the Man” (1844) are not works of detective fiction in the sense that his Dupin tales are. Unlike the Dupin series, in “The Gold-Bug” there is no detective nor is there a crime. While “Thou Art the Man” exhibits a mystery, it does not give prominence to the figure of the detective (Knight 28). What is more, in “Thou Art the Man” information is concealed from the reader and is only revealed until after the crime is solved (Haycraft 10). With regard to “The Man of the Crowd,” it is classified as belonging to the metaphysical school of detective fiction, a genre that undermines the traditional
insights into Vizyenos’ work and emphasize his effort to create a story that enhances and challenges the realist trend of his time by drawing on the techniques Poe employs in his Dupin stories.

### 2.1 Comparative Approaches to Detective Fiction: From Poe to Vizyenos

As I mention above, this chapter builds upon the assumption that there are affinities between Vizyenos’ «Ποιος ήτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» Poe’s detective tales. I develop, illustrate and support my argument about the literary affiliation between these two writers drawing from theories that pertain both to comparative literary studies as well as to the genre of detective fiction. In this respect, I use Pierre Brunel’s, Claude Pichois’, and Andre Rousseau’s theory of comparative literature, as articulated in their *Ti είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία*; ⁷ (1998) to demonstrate that the environment Vizyenos lived in and studied provided the required conditions for his familiarization with Poe’s works and other works of detective fiction.⁸ For the French scholars, instruments such as the periodical press, the vast translation flow, circulating libraries and notions such as the knowledge of foreign languages facilitate the dissemination and study of texts across diverse cultures. With this in mind, Vizyenos’ sojourns in Germany, France and the United Kingdom gesture toward his familiarization with non-Greek men of letters as well as toward his openness to foreign cultures in general.

It makes sense from Brunel’s, Pichois’ and Rousseau’s theory that Vizyenos has been exposed to a literary stimulating atmosphere that makes it particularly salient

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⁷ [Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία?](1998).

⁸ The original title of the work is *Qué’est-ce que La Littérature Comparée?* (1983). The references to this theory are from the Greek translated book entitled *Ti είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία* (1998).
for him to become acquainted with Poe’s works. However, there has been no documented proof that Vizyenos must have read or even got hold of Poe’s books before he started writing «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου». The question of whether Vizyenos has actually read Poe’s works or not should not be problematic, however, since literary influences can be examined in light of the affinities between the works of two authors (Brunel, Pichois, and Rousseau 97-98). From the French scholars’ perspective, the literary connections between authors could embrace similarities in theme and structure between literary works; these affinities in question might be ascribed to a common literary tradition or to a common intellectual context between authors or cultures (97-98). Through Brunel’s, Pichois’, and Rousseau’s theory then, this chapter will present both Poe and Vizyenos in their literary contexts and within their respective national traditions, exploring their similarities and parallelisms, in spite of the fact that there has been no documented proof that Vizyenos is familiar with Poe’s detective works.

The discussion of the literary affinities between Vizyenos and Poe is also informed by the views of one of the most important contributions to the field, Tzvetan Todorov’s “The Typology of Detective Fiction” (2000). Todorov provides a structural analysis of the detective story that still characterizes the genre: a classic detective story comprises of two narrative strands, namely “the story of the crime” and “the story of the investigation” (“Detective” 139). Reading Vizyenos’ story in light of Todorov’s distinction, one discerns the two separate narrative lines that are embedded within «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου», a fact that renders it a work of detective fiction. The classification of Vizyenos’ story as detective fiction is particularly important because it provides the appropriate literary context for comparing Vizyenos’ story to Poe’s Dupin series.
The discussion of Vizyenos’ work in terms of Poe’s writing techniques would be incomplete save the reference to the latter’s theory of unity. Unity of impression or effect is particularly important for Poe and can only be achieved if the author has decided on the particular emotional effect his narrative is expected to have on the readers. In “The Philosophy of Composition” (1846), this is expressed in the following argument:

[n]othing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its dénouement before anything be attempted with the pen. It’s not only the dénouement constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention. (Poe, Essays 13, emphasis in original).

In these lines Poe implies that all the events in a story should tend towards a pre-established effect. It is the dénouement that establishes the order and causality of the events narrated from the beginning of the story. When it comes to mystery or detective stories—narratives which typically offer a mystery or puzzle—Poe’s remark comes instantly into effect; all incidents, trail of clues and so forth are wisely planted with a view to the effect they would have on the reader; in practice they should solely and exclusively point to the solution to the mystery which has been determined at the beginning of the story (Porter 25). In a similar way to Poe who argues that every story should be written only after the author has decided on the specific response his narrative is expected to evoke in the readers, Vizyenos succeeds in producing what Μουζάλας calls an “impression” («Βιζυηνός» πζ´). In other words, Vizyenos presents the story’s mystery as a problem, creates suspense through planting false clues and contrives to cause suspicion to fall on a character other than the criminal. By doing so,
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Vizyenos perpetuates the illusion that the murderer could have been a character other than the real culprit. He achieves this through the laying of equivocal clues at the beginning of the narrative, so that the delay in the revelation of the secret becomes an integral instrument of illusion, a technique invented solely for the working out of the plot. The story’s predetermined ending, its intricately crafted structure with the clues being revealed only at the very end attest to Vizyenos’ ability not only to follow closely Poe’s views on writing but also create a memorable impression to his readers, as I will discuss later in the present chapter.

Based on these considerations, the theoretical background framing this chapter provides the appropriate context for understanding the themes and techniques employed by Vizyenos and for reading his story in relation to Poe’s detective trilogy. Against this background, it is suitable to begin an examination of Vizyenos’ indebtedness to Poe with a discussion of Vizyenos’ childhood and early years as these have had a significant bearing on both his personality, his acquaintance with Poe’s writings, and the creation of his work.

2.2 Vizyenos’ Early Education and Cosmopolitan Background

Vizyenos could have read Poe’s works during his stay in Europe and more precisely in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. The Greek writer travelled to Germany in 1875 where he completed his education in the universities of Göttingen, Leipzig and Berlin with a dissertation on the psychology of children’s play. He was first a student at the University of Göttingen (1875-1877) but he completed his studies spending his final semesters at the University of Leipzig (1877-

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9 In 1872, prior to his studies in Germany, Vizyenos is a pupil at the Theological School of Chalkis; he starts studying for priesthood, but he gives up his vocation and, at the age of twenty-four, he enters high school in Athens. After spending a year at school, Vizyenos enrolls in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Athens but he becomes disappointed with his studies there and in 1875 he moves to Germany. For further information on Vizyenos’ school years, see Μουλλάς, Γ.Μ. Βίζινος: Νεοελληνικά Διηγήματα [G.M. Vizyenos: Neoellenika Diegemata] νβ’-νε’.
1878) and the University of Berlin (1878-1880). In 1880, Vizyenos returned to Göttingen and submitted his doctoral dissertation in 1881. During his studies in the German Universities, Vizyenos attended a broad range of courses in Ancient Greek and Latin philology, comparative linguistics, philosophy and psychology. Besides reading literature relevant to his courses, Vizyenos indulged himself in the perusal of other literary works that were circulating in Germany at the time (Σιδερά-Λύτρα, «Γερμανία» 48-49). It is quite probable for Vizyenos to have read Poe either in German translations, which must have been circulating in the country at the time, or in the original, given that copies of The Works of Edgar Allan Poe, edited by John H. Ingram (1874), were included in the library collection at the University of Göttingen during the time Vizyenos studies. Upon completion of his studies in Germany, Vizyenos pays a short visit to Greece and, according to Απόστολος Σαχίνης, resides in Athens for a period of four months between January 21st-May 12th, 1882.

During this period, Vizyenos became affiliated with the Literary Association of Παρνασσός (Πεζογράφοι 121). Many famous writers and academics were members of this particular association, Emmanuel Rhoides being one of them, especially those who were au courant with the literary trends in Europe. Vizyenos may have listened to others’ discussions about Poe and he may have even read the

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10 The German landscape Vizyenos resides in may well account for his future interest in Gothicism and Edgar Allan Poe’s works in particular. Given that the University of Göttingen is one of the oldest universities in Europe, it is possible that the whole atmosphere nurtured in Vizyenos’ mind morbid thoughts. For additional information regarding Vizyenos’ university curriculum, see Μαμώνη, «Η Ακαδημαϊκή Σταδιοδρομία του Βιζυηνού» [“He Akademaike Stadiodromia tou Vizyenoú”]; and Σιδερά-Λύτρα, Ο Γεώργιος Βιζυηνός Φοιτητής στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Γοττίγγης» [“O Georgios Vizyenos Foutitis sto Panepistimio tis Gottingis”].

11 [Apostolos Sachinis].

12 I have discussed the contribution of Παρνασσός and the published translations of Poe which have taken place in the chapter on Emmanuel Rhoides. For further information on the literary association of Παρνασσός, see Ζώρας, Οι Λογοτέχνες της Παλαιάς και της Νέας Αθηναϊκής Σχολής στον Φιλολογικό Σύλλογο Παρνασσό [Oi Logotechnes tis Palaiais kai tis Neas Athenaiakis Scholis ston Filologiko Syllogo Parnasso].
translation of Poe’s “The Murders in Rue Morgue” produced by Νικόλαος Πολίτης in 1884.

In addition to his involvement with the Literary Association of Παρνασσός, Vizyenos must have read Poe’s works in translation during his sojourn in France as well; Vizyenos visited Paris in 1882 a time when Poe’s reputation had been widespread. During his stay there, Vizyenos met the Greek writer Δημήτριος Βικέλας, Juliette Lambert-Adam, the editor of the journal Nouvelle Revue, and the marquis de Queux de Saint-Hilaire (Δούκα 34-35). Vizyenos’ acquaintance with prominent men of letters in Paris might have contributed to his familiarization with Poe’s works which, as I have mentioned above, had enjoyed popularity among the French-speaking readership at the time.

In any case, Vizyenos must have had ample opportunities of getting access to and reading Poe’s books. Residing in France, Vizyenos could have read either translations of Poe’s Dupin tales in French, that were included in Baudelaire’s volume entitled Histoires extraordinaires (1856), or the detective novels written by Émile Gaboriau (1832-1873, a novelist who has been significantly influenced by Poe. In addition to these authors, Vizyenos may have also read Mémoires of Eugène François Vidocq (1828-9) from which Poe himself has been inspired. Thus, either directly or indirectly, Poe’s detective writings could have had an impact on Vizyenos.

Later in 1882 and up to 1883, Vizyenos resided in the United Kingdom where Poe’s introduction to the British reading audience dates back to 1838, when “The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym” was first published. This publication was followed

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13 [Nikolaos Politis].
14 According to Douka (Δούκα), Vizyenos resided in France between May 12th-May 22nd, 1882 (34).
15 [Dimitrios Vikelas].
16 The Mystery of the Yellow Room (1907) by Gaston Leroux (1868-1927), is another detective novel that owes much to Poe’s “The Murders in the Rue Morgue.” However, it is published in 1907 and therefore cannot have constituted a source for Vizyenos’ inspiration. For more information concerning Poe’s influence on these authors, see Cambiaire, The Influence of Edgar Allan Poe in France 264-82.
by the appearance of “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Assignation” in *Bentley’s Miscellany* in 1840. As Benjamin Fisher points out, “The publication of *Tales of Mystery, Imagination and Humour* in 1852 brought Poe’s work as a fiction writer before the British public” (“Great Britain” 55). More specifically, the Dupin tales, “The Gold-Bug” and “The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar” appear to be very popular among the British readership (Fisher, “Great Britain” 55). Given that Poe had immense popularity in Europe at the time, it is quite possible that Vizyenos could have read Poe in Great Britain as well. In any event, it remains a fact that Vizyenos must have had considerable opportunities to have read Poe’s works during his residence in Europe at the time when Poe’s works enjoyed widespread popularity, and had come to direct contact with the intellectual currents of the times. Having this in mind, I maintain that Vizyenos has had considerable opportunities to have read Poe’s tales of detection and the rest of my discussion will explore the literary affinities between «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» and Poe’s detective tales.

### 2.3 Tracing Literary Affinities between Poe’s and Vizyenos’ Works

Vizyenos is adept at creating an atmosphere of suspense, with twists of plot, shifts in emotions and dramatic effects. In regard to the element of suspense, Καίτη Διαμαντάτου observes that Vizyenos introduces the element of uncertainty in his finely crafted stories by withholding clues from the characters, clues that are revealed only at the end of the story (16).

More precisely, «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» has a carefully thought-out structure with twists in narrative and plot. Thus every aspect of the

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17 For a fuller account of Poe’s reception in the United Kingdom, see Vines, *Poe Abroad: Influence, Reputations, Affinities* 52-61.

18 [Kety Diamantatou].
narration leads towards the exposure of the means by which the crime is committed and the discovery of the culprit. Vizyenos succeeds in capturing the readers’ attention by a general announcement at the beginning of the story that the mystery will be resolved; next he reveals the entire background concerning his brother’s death in great detail; then the rhythm accelerates ending in a concluding statement that on the one hand, clears the mystery that has been carefully maintained by Vizyenos throughout the story, but on the other hand, it announces a tragic fact, “I could not tell which was my brother’s murderer” (Vizyenos 140), that I will discuss later in the current chapter.19

The dramatic tension that is therefore created has a very potent effect on the readers. Vizyenos’ technique, which Άρης Μαρανκόπουλος20 calls “spiraling intensification” (72), harks back to Poe’s principle of “gradation,” as Todorov notes. In particular, Todorov explains that Poe piques the readers’ interest by laying emphasis on an extraordinary event, and then he proceeds by presenting the entire background of the story’s main incident; next the tension gradually heightens often leading to a final tragic announcement or action that either resolves the mystery or brings forth an appalling truth (Genres 99). Poe’s principle of “gradation” frequents the majority of his tales, but for the requirements of this chapter, I will limit my discussion only to Poe’s “tales of ratiocination.” Comparing Vizyenos’ “spiraling intensification” technique to Poe’s principle of “gradation” serves to strengthen the affinities in the way both authors structure their stories. In addition, Poe’s and Vizyenos’ writing relates to the psychological dimension of their works that offers a thorough insight into the psychological state of the characters and their mind’s

19 Mackridge’s translation of: «δέν ήξευρον νά εὑρω, ποίος ἐκ τῶν δύο ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου!» (Βιζυηνός 103).
20 [Aris Marankopoulos].
workings. In a Poe story very little action occurs since the main emphasis of the writer is on the investigation of the mind’s workings while in the tales of ratiocination, in particular, on the mental conflict between the detective and the villain (Magistrale 19).

Such is the case in the Dupin series that, to quote Robert Tally, focus on Dupin’s “uncanny ability to read—whether he is reading clues (as in ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’) or reading people (as in ‘The Purloined Letter’)” (“Nightmare” 8, emphasis in original). An incident that occurs early in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” is unparalleled in demonstrating Dupin’s ability to penetrate into another person’s train of thoughts. In one of Dupin’s and his unnamed companion’s nocturnal strolls, their conversation ends as they are strolling down the street in silence. After a period of fifteen minutes, however, the narrator is amazed at hearing Dupin make a remark similar to his own thinking at that moment, and asks Dupin to explain how he has been able to read his mind. Dupin replies by reminding the narrator of the point at which they break off their conversation and he goes on to describe the various subtle behavioral clues, together with the inferences he has drawn from them, that have led to this relevant remark. Dupin is able to retrace the narrator’s series of thoughts that lead from the fruiterer to the inadequacy of the actor Chantilly. This mind-reading episode provides insights into Dupin’s investigation method which entails, in Gordon Kelly’s words, “an intimate knowledge of the narrator as a particular individual” (33). Dupin’s extraordinary ability to read and break in on his companion’s and, by implication, on the culprit’s thoughts helps him unravel the stories’ mysteries.

In a similar way to Poe, Vizyenos’ tales are replete with character development elements and adumbrate Poe’s preoccupation with the human mind.
further argues that Vizyenos’ preoccupation with the psychology of his characters stems from the Greek writer’s studies in psychology at the Universities of Göttingen and Berlin (Μάσκες 433). This fascination with character development may not be the result of Vizyenos’ studies in psychology only; in my opinion, it may be the product of an overall tendency to which Poe devotes himself, that is the exploration of the human mind. Interestingly, the careful delineation of Yorgis’ character in the story reveals Vizyenos’ connection with Poe’s tendency to provide insights into Dupin’s masterful mind rather than indulge him into rigorous physical action. My point is that Yorgis, despite being “a viewer and listener rather than an actor” (Wyatt, “Characters” 48), retains a dominant position in the story since he is the one who scrutinizes the clues and identifies the villain by probing into the inner thoughts and workings of his mind. In short, it is my contention that Ποιός ήτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου tends to this single effect: the demonstration of the rich psychological depth of its characters and even more so the demonstration of the extraordinary intellect of Yorgis that will be cross-read with Dupin’s in the pages that follow.

2.4 Fictional Murders and “Real” Streets: Vizyenos’ Fiction and Alternative Realms of Reality

Critics have pointed out that Vizyenos’ fiction conveys a sense of realism, implicit in the geographical details he includes and the creation of plausible characters within plausible historical spaces. The inclusion of realistic details and familiar scenery, for Βάνια Σύρμου, is significant for it heightens the story’s and the characters’ affinity with the real (175). Taking place in and around Vizye and

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21 [Vangelis Athanasopoulos].
22 [Vania Syrmou].
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Constantinople, Vizyenos’ story «Ποῖος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφοῦ μου» chronicles how Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslim Turks live together in the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. In addition to picturing the relations between the Greeks and the Turks, Vizyenos’ story contains references to a number of well-known places in Constantinople, such as the church of St. Sophia, the Byzantine Hippodrome, the Old Bridge, Divan-Yolu and others (Wyatt, Introduction 53). By including descriptions that particularize his geographical and cultural setting, Vizyenos depicts scenes of daily life, provides a realistic context to his fictional story and, as a consequence, grounds his readers to believe in the events he recounts.

While the story «Ποῖος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφοῦ μου» offers readers a window through which to peer into the life of Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslim Turks, the details concerning daily life in Vizye and Constantinople are of secondary importance. Henri Tonnet dismisses the story’s ethnographic lineage claiming that the information on the life of Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslim Turks embedded in Vizyenos’ story ceases to be a way of creating the feeling of reality, but are there inasmuch as they serve Vizyenos’ literary aims (147). The inclusion of realistic details and well-known scenery in «Ποῖος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφοῦ μου» may be based on the writer’s personal experience in Vizye, but there is a distance between what is real and what the characters themselves perceive as real. The way characters respond to the tragic turns of life matters much more to Vizyenos than his adherence to the literary precepts of the time. One way the story plays with the norms of realism is through its emphasis on insoluble puzzling. The proof is found in the story’s equivocal ending which does not provide a definite answer to the story’s puzzle; rather, it evokes further questions leaving some of Vizyenos’ characters wondering
what is real and what is not, as I will discuss extensively in the chapter. Victims of the tragic fate that surpasses them, Vizyenos’ characters become receptors of diverse perceptions of reality and are led “into a series of labyrinths where nothing is what it seems” (Beaton, *Introduction* 76).

Having characters function as a means to the authors’ end is characteristic of Poe’s writing: Poe’s Dupin tales are well endowed not only with descriptions of London and Paris but also with unique and extravagant characters; the principal aim in Poe’s “tales of ratiocination” is to illustrate Dupin’s imaginative power of analysis that “gives him particular insight into the realm of the irrational, criminal mind” (Magistrale 109), rather than provide an accurate picture of life in Paris during the nineteenth century. Poe’s setting is entirely typical: it is whatever the story’s plot demands. Official crime rates rise in the metropolises of London and Paris in mid-nineteenth century; as a consequence, effective police forces have been established there, as I will highlight in this chapter. Thus it is not surprising that Poe chooses to set his detective tales in a menacing and threatening environment. Also, the Paris and London settings serve the main effect that Poe’s tales set out to achieve by juxtaposing Dupin’s genius with the ineptitude of the police in solving the mysteries. Still, more importantly, Poe’s detective tales present knowledge as a problem and Dupin’s exceptional ability to solve this problem makes these tales all the more fascinating.

In a similar way to Poe’s detective stories, Vizyenos’ «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφοῦ μου» presents knowledge as a problem that requires to be solved, an

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23 For further information on realism, among many other sources, see Glazener, “The Practice and Promotion of American Literary Realism” 15-34; and Habib, *A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present* 469-88.

24 This is a technique Poe uses in the majority of his tales. However, for the purposes of this chapter, I will limit my discussion to Poe’s Dupin trilogy.
aspect that allows us to read the story in relation to the genre of detective fiction. As a matter of fact, Vizyenos has created a really effective detective story that is commonly regarded as one of the first specimens of detective writing in Greece. The consideration of «Ποιος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» in terms of the detective tradition is necessary because it presupposes Vizyenos’ familiarity with a tradition that owes much to Poe’s Dupin series.

It is in the second half of the nineteenth century that one can trace the first specimens of detective writing in Greece. During that time acclaimed writers, such as Αλέξανδρος Ρίζος Ραγκαβής,25 Vikelas and Vizyenos, create narratives that can be read in the context of the detective fiction genre inasmuch as they posit a mystery at their heart and deploy some of the characteristics that have long defined the genre. To be more specific, «Ο συμβολαιογράφος» that appears in the 1850 edition of the periodical Πανδώρα, is a work of mystery and suspense that, in Beaton’s words, “deserves recognition in the company of Collins and Poe among the first ever ‘whodunnits’” (Introduction 58). In addition to «Ο συμβολαιογράφος», Ραγκαβής publishes another short story that could qualify as a detective story; published in 1863 in Εθνικὸν Ἱμερολόγιον26 «Εκδρομή εἰς Πόρον»27 is a story that pays attention to the mystery, an element that lies at the heart of every detective story. Published several years after «Εκδρομή εἰς Πόρον», «Τα δύο αδέλφια»28 (1887) by Βικέλας constitutes an exemplification of the basic elements of a detective story in that it posits a mystery.

25 [Alexandros Rizos Rangavis].
26 [Ethnikon Imerologia].
27 [“Ekdromin eis Poron”].
28 [“Ta dio adelphia”].
and follows the pattern of investigation having two characters assume the role of the detective (Μυρογιάννης 79).

As regards Vizyenos’ narratives, they too have been connected with the detective tradition by certain Greek scholars and critics. In reference to Vizyenos’ short stories Beaton asserts that “there is a mystery to be solved, and the narrative deploys all the tricks (and respects all the rules) of the detective story” (Foreword xi). With regard to «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» in particular, Χρυσανθόπουλος remarks that it is a detective story («Πενία» 274). Another interesting thesis is maintained by Yota Batsaki who claims that “[m]any of Vizyenos’ own stories are structured as investigations of the real culprit of a murder” (80). Commenting on «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου», Καριοφύλλης Μητσάκης observes that it constitutes a well-crafted detective story holding the readers on the edge of their seats (27). Στεργιαννή Ζανέκα also contends that «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» could qualify as a detective or mystery story (186).

In my view, what is interesting in Vizyenos’ story and sets it apart from the stories written by Βικέλας and Ραγκαβής, is the introduction of an investigator who solves the crime by using his sharp ability to observe small details, pay attention to different testimonies and collected facts. Yorgis, the person assuming the role of the investigator in the story, according to Μυρογιάννης, presents affinities with Poe’s Dupin in terms of the investigation method he employs (115). In essence, Yorgis’ mind works by association and his intellectual power lies in his ability to spot the clues, to perceive how all the incompatible clues fit together and to disentangle the confused chain of circumstances in the case. It is Yorgis’ intellectual superiority, in

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29 For a detailed discussion of these stories and a coherent history of the emergence of detective fiction in Greece, see Μυρογιάννης, Από τις Ιστορίες Μυστηρίων στην Αστυνομική Πλοκή: Αναζητώντας την Εμφάνιση ενός Αινιγματικού Εἴδους στον Ελληνικό 19ο Αιώνα.
30 [Kariophylis Mitsakis].
31 [Sterganni Zaneka].
my view, that differentiates him from the other characters in the story and bears a close resemblance to Dupin’s own investigation method.

Before we can effectively detect the affinities between Yorgis and Dupin, however, it is useful to trace the beginnings of crime and detective writing in the U.S. and Poe’s contribution to it in an attempt to shed light on the ways in which «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφοῦ μου» works on the basis of the pattern Poe set.

2.5 A Short History of Early Crime and Detective Writing in the U.S.

Even though the first detective stories emerge in the first half of the nineteenth century with the publication of Poe’s Dupin series, American crime fiction, of which Poe’s detective tales constitute a subgroup, has a much older provenance. One can trace the origins of American crime narratives as early as the seventeenth century and, to be more precise, in the execution sermons.

As Sara Crosby indicates, in seventeenth-century New England there are sermons that go together with the judicial executions and are usually delivered during the weeks or hours before the executions. The execution sermons mainly center on youthful sins such as going against parents, socializing with the wrong crowd and “committing sexual ‘uncleanness’” (5-6). The execution sermons, which presented the condemned under a sympathetic light, exercise a persistent hold on crime writing until the eighteenth century marked by a cultural shift in the discourse of crime (Crosby 9). Influenced by the principles of the Enlightenment, emphasis is now placed on the autobiographies of rogues meaning rakes, thieves and rebels who are wronged by unrighteous legal authority; in this respect, authors such as William Hill Brown, Susanna Rowson, Hannah Webster Foster and Charles Brockden Brown produce crime narratives that feature actual rapes, seductions and murders (Crosby 9). Put it
this way, these writers turn to another criminal category that of the fiend that, in Crosby’s words, “[u]nlike the rogue, [the fiend] did not play with social order but destroyed it ripping apart affective bonds by slaughtering friends, lovers and family” (9). The fiend gains great popularity over the eighteenth century thus marking a change in the way people view criminals; a criminal previously regarded under a sympathetic light, is now considered alienated, dangerous and mysterious (Crosby 10). Attitudes to the fiend are again challenged over the early nineteenth century due to the popularity of legal discourses and the fusion of law with literature (Crosby 13). In this respect, a flurry of “actual crime” pamphlets, trial transcripts and court reports are constantly being published and circulated at the time (Crosby 13). What they lack, however, is professionalized crime; in other words, the detective, the police officer and the forensic pathologist exist as amateurs only up to the time when Poe introduces the “first” detective (Crosby 13-14).

Admittedly, an overwhelming majority of critics concur that Poe initiates the detective story in the early to mid-1840s with the publication of “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” and “The Purloined Letter.” The word “detective” does not exist at the time and Poe’s tales launch what we now think of as the classic formula of detective fiction. But more crucially, Poe introduces new elements that have become the essentials of the detective story ever since and have differentiated the genre from the previous “crime stories” included in the “execution sermons” or in eighteen-century mystery stories.

The new elements that Poe introduces include the eccentric but remarkably cerebral detective, the detective’s assistant, the bumbling police forces, and the “locked-room” mystery, a subgenre of the detective story in which the plot relies on a villain’s exit from a hermetically sealed place (Rachman, “Detective” 17). Poe also
uses the corruption of big cities as a background for his stories and the armchair
detection, a detection in which the detective solves the mystery by means of deductive
reasoning only (Scaggs 144). Still, most importantly, with his “The Murders in the
Rue Morgue,” Poe establishes the “what was it?” plot, with “The Mystery of Marie
Rogêt,” the “who has done it?” and with “The Purloined Letter,” the “where is it?”
detective fiction motifs.³² Hence, according to Margarita Rigal-Aragón and Beatriz
González-Moreno, Poe not only invents the characters but also the procedures carried
through by Dupin (91-95). Thus it is not surprising that the Dupin tales enjoy
widespread popularity among the reading public and Poe comes to be considered the
first true proponent of the detective fiction’s genre (Rachman, “Detective” 17).

Poe’s major contribution to crime writing, however, has always been
considered the introduction of the cerebral detective, Monsieur C. Auguste Dupin, the
Parisian super-sleuth, who solves crimes based on his extremely well-developed skills
of deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning entails the drawing of inferences based
on careful observation of the external world. Dupin’s intellectual prowess entails
mastery of the human mind, awareness of what to look for in the course of the
investigation process and deep penetration into another’s thinking. The detective
shows his analytic skills by following a methodology that combines careful
observation, logical deduction and inference as well as imagination insights, a
combination that helps Dupin arrive at the solution to the mystery and triumph over
his opponents. Speaking about Dupin, John Gruesser states that he “has the capacity
to look beyond the rules of the game, to see more than simply the pieces on the board
or the cards on the table. He questions the premises that limit other people’s

³² Of all Poe’s “tales of ratiocination,” “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” is of primary importance as
it is widely recognized as the first detective story (Hayes, Poe 103; May 87; Silverman, Mourning 171;
Symons 35; Whalen 228). The innovation is first that the suspects are interrogated by the police and the
detective, second that the detective examines the evidence on the site of the crime and third that the
story ends with a final theatrical revelation of the solution (Bloomfield 200).
reasoning, demonstrating the ability to think outside the box (or in this case, the supposedly locked room that so obsesses the police)” (6-7).

What is also significant with regard to Dupin’s position in the stories is that Poe attributes French nationality to him and inscribes him within the cityscape of busy Paris, the prototype of the nineteenth-century modern capital city. Poe not only situates “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” in a French context but also transfers the murder of Mary Rogers from New York to Paris, a fact that begs the following question: Why has Paris, a European city, been considered to be the desirable fictional locale for Poe, an American? In “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” Poe transports the setting from Staten Island to Paris because the latter “was more mysterious and sinister, more capable of evil” (Lehan 171). The establishment of professional police departments is an inevitable result of the evil and mysterious character of Paris. Napoleon’s creation of the Sûreté, the detective bureau of the Parisian police force, in 1812, several years before the establishment of the first Day and Night Police in New York in 1844, and Allan Pinkerton’s detective agency in the United States in 1850 sheds light on the emergence of systems of policing and surveillance that developed in Paris due to the high crime rates in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (Scaggs 17). The discussion of living conditions within the French capital exceeds the scope of this chapter, but it is a tribute to Poe’s genius that his detective tales are

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33 As Dennis Porter observes, “Until roughly the mid-1820s, New York was a relatively small city with a homogeneous population and an effective form of social control that made for a low crime rate. A system of constables supplemented by marshals who were appointed by the mayor did all the policing that was required” (151). Contrary to New York, the early 1800s see the genesis of criminal investigation departments in the great metropolises such as Paris and London. In Paris it is the Sûreté; in London, the Bow Street Runners, succeeded by Scotland Yard. The men who compose these organizations essentially constitute the first “detectives” and inspire many pages over the years such as Mémoires de Vidocq, Chef de la Police de Sûreté jusqu’en 1827 by Eugène François Vidocq (Haycraft 7). For additional information on the Bow Street Runners, see Knight, Crime Fiction 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity 10-11.
set in Paris. The development of police forces and the rise in crime there render Paris a convenient setting for Poe’s Dupin trilogy.

In addition to being the suitable backdrop against which Poe’s stories are set, Paris, in John Scaggs’ claim, also plays a major role in the template that the Dupin trilogy creates by rendering current police force as an adversary to which Dupin’s analytic genius and insight are compared (19). The police force is the reflection of society’s scientific knowledge; it makes use of all the technological resources available but at the end of the day it fails to reach a conclusion (Dover 122). Relying on common sense and scientific knowledge, the police investigators are incapable of looking beyond the surface of things as is the case, for example, in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” where Prefect G apprehends the bank clerk who delivers gold to Madame L’Espanaye’s apartment, though he cannot really tell how the clerk exits the apartment or why he does not take the gold along with him. The police forces are good at solving ordinary cases or arresting ordinary culprits but when it comes to exceptional cases or villains, science “fails to find an answer” (Dover 123). In such exquisite cases, only a brilliant analyst like Dupin is capable of finding a solution. The rational and unimaginative mental faculties of the police force thus contrast sharply with Dupin’s analytic power. In a similar way to Prefect G, Effendi, the Turkish officer in charge of the investigations in the Greek story, occupies only a small role that of foil to Yorgis’ genius as he exhibits the same characteristics of ineptness, inefficiency and lack of intuition that are present in the fictional prefect of police created by Poe.

Based on the aforementioned elements, Poe is generally considered not only as the progenitor of the genre of detective fiction in the American literature but in the world literature as well. In addition to these elements, Poe, also, fashions a pattern of
writing known by the term “whodunit”—as in “Who done it?”—in which focus is primarily placed on identifying the identity of the culprit. In what follows, I will provide a brief overview of the detective whodunit. This will help read Vizyenos’ tale in the context of the genre of detective fiction while ascertain the affinities it shares with Poe’s Dupin trilogy.

2.6 The Whodunit as Riddle: The Detective Essence in Poe and Vizyenos

Todorov utilizes the term “whodunit” to refer to a specific type of the classic detective fiction. When we read a whodunit, Todorov explains, we are really coping with two stories, namely “the story of the crime” and “the story of the investigation” (“Detective” 139). Todorov opposes “the story of the crime” to “the story of the investigation”: the first one ends before the second one starts; the second story is essentially what we read (“Detective” 139). In other words, the second story is the narrative of the investigation of the murder: the discovery of the dead body, the presentation and logical interpretation of clues, the interrogation of suspects and the arrest of the murderer. As Todorov puts it, “the story of the investigation explains how the reader (or the narrator) has come to know about it” (“Detective” 140). The other story, which Todorov calls “the story of the crime,” is the story of the actual crime: it relates how the crime has been committed. The first story is hidden from

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34 The term “whodunit” is reportedly conceived in 1930 by D. Jordan and concerns a particular type of the detective story, devised by Poe in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” in which emphasis is placed on the identity of the perpetrator. The revelation of the identity of the murderer is usually given at the climax of the story after all clues have been presented (Oleskin 495). For background history and further details on the term, see Herbert, The Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing 495-96.

35 The distinction between “the story of the crime” and “the story of the investigation,” Todorov further suggests, is in accordance with the distinction between the fabula and the sjužet, a distinction put forward by the Russian Formalists (“Detective” 140). The Russian Formalists claim that a story is divided into two parts: the fabula (story) that refers to what really happened and the sjužet (plot) that concerns the way in which the story is wrapped up (“Detective” 140). For Todorov, the term “discourse” can also be used to render the meaning of the sjužet into English (“Detective” 140). For a complete discussion on these terms and Formalism, see Eagleton, Literary Theory: An Introduction 1-4; Habib, A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present 602-31; and Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker, A Reader’s Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory 29-44.
both the reader and the detective and consists of events that have already occurred (“Detective” 140). The detective story typically begins after the crime has been committed and the detective is the one who unravels the tangled complications of murder and intrigue. Essentially the detective story is “a narrative about the detective reconstructing the story of a crime” (Nickerson, Web 4). Thus the solution to the enigma, that the whodunit poses, is the representation of the hidden narrative itself by the detective.

The presence of an enigma in a detective story helps to read Vizyenos’ work in terms of Poe’s detective tales. As regards Poe’s “tales of ratiocination,” they are considered exemplars of whodunit stories and “unfold as a kind of puzzle or game” (Thoms, “Dupin” 133). Recording a quest for explanation and solution, Poe in his detective narratives poses an enigma in the form of a question. Take “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” for example: the readers are presented with the puzzle of a dead body found in a room that is hermetically closed and thus inaccessible to intruders. As noted by Symons, “the problem in such stories concerns the murder method (how was X stabbed, shot, or poisoned, when nobody could have entered the room and there is no trace of a weapon or poison), and sometimes the means of entry or exit” (35). In “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt,” the question is first stated followed by the “evidence interspersed with examples of false reasoning” which Dupin eradicates one by one (Ransome 164). From the beginning of the story the narrator informs the readers of his intention to discuss the murder case of Mary Cecilia Rogers:

The extraordinary details which I am now called upon to make public, will be found to form, as regards sequence of time, the primary branch of a series of scarcely intelligible coincidences, whose secondary or concluding branch will be recognized by
all readers in the late murder of MARY CECILIA ROGERS, at New York. (Poe, Tales 2: 724, emphasis in original)

In asking “Who committed the crime?,” Poe’s story poses a riddle concerning the death of Marie Rogêt. Thus, the question of who killed Mary Rogers is clearly stated at the beginning of “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” and forms the puzzle of this detective story. The third Dupin story, “The Purloined Letter,” constitutes another of his detective stories in which the notion of the puzzle features even more strikingly. The emphasis in this story is on tracing a letter that is purloined from an unnamed Royal Lady by the wicked Minister D. The puzzle is first posed with all its complications after an account of the methods used the mystery is resolved with the recovery of the stolen letter. What is significant with respect to the letter is that it stands for the hidden narrative of the story, a narrative that Dupin seeks to reconstruct.

Similarly to the ways the Dupin tales play out a kind of puzzle or game, Vizyenos’ story «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» undeniably presents a puzzle that the characters and readers are invited to solve. The puzzle element and, by implication, the mystery are created by the title itself that emphasizes the pursuit of the identity of Christakis’ killer. As for its title, Χρυσανθόπουλος notes that it serves as an indirect question calling for an answer (74); this means that the title points to the existence of a riddle and to the necessity to identify the killer. More tellingly, «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου» and Poe’s detective tales respond to the general question raised by detective fiction, that is “whodunit?,” a question responding to a form of writing invented earlier by Poe. Given that Vizyenos’ title prompts readers to identify the identity of the killer, it goes without saying that crime and mystery are afoot in his story. It is through the title that, as Μυρογιάννης claims, Vizyenos’ story sets out to “unfold as a kind of detective game” (114). The mystery then is not only
presented as a mathematical problem requiring solution but also deployed as a sort of
game that the characters and readers are required to play; considering «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ
φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφον μου» in terms of the “whodunit” concept, evidently provides
further grounds for reading Vizyenos’ story alongside Poe’s Dupin series.

The whodunit is therefore a key element for solidifying the Greek story’s
detective essence and for understanding Poe’s contribution to its structure and nature.
The process through which the outcome of the story is revealed is also worthy of
consideration. Paraphrasing Μουλλάς, one could perhaps say that the solution to the
story’s puzzle is given through the individual testimonies of the characters and
witnesses and the final concatenation of all facts («Βιζυηνός» πζ´). The gradual
presentation of clues and the logical interpretation of facts clearly align «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ
φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφον μου» with Poe’s detective paradigm in the estimation of
Μουλλάς («Βιζυηνός» πζ´).

As I discuss above, the solution to the intriguing mystery requires a perceptive
and brilliant hero who can reconstruct the hidden narrative of the detective story.
When it comes to Vizyenos’ story, the brilliant hero who solves the mystery is Yorgis.
«Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφον μου» raises the question of who killed Christakis
and turns to Yorgis for an answer the same way Poe’s detective trilogy turns to Dupin.
Yorgis is similar to Dupin in a variety of ways: for example, both are reserved
personalities, they both share the same love for literacy and both exhibit the sharpest
mental faculties that permit them to perceive the particulars of each case; their
analytic and imaginative skills as well as their deductive synthetic method are what
distinguishes them from the police investigators in the stories.

In the first pages of «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἄδελφον μου», Yorgis is
portrayed as a reclusive figure who has been living away from Vizye the village
where the action takes place for several years. He has been to Europe in order to study and by the time the narration begins he has come back to Thrace after being informed of his brother’s murder. The fact that Yorgis is not present or implicated in the actual world where the murder takes place, distinguishes him from both his family and Kamil’s family who have been more or less involved in the events of the story. The educated and “Europeanized” Yorgis becomes cognizant of the particulars surrounding his brother’s murder after listening to the other characters’ testimonies; it appears that Yorgis acts more as “a viewer and a listener rather than an actor” (Wyatt, “Characters” 48). This initial description of Yorgis who remains distant from actual life suggests close links with Poe’s Dupin who resides in isolation in his apartment in Paris and “retires from the ‘world’ and its concerns” (Thoms, Detection 46). Dupin’s isolation has been the result of “a variety of untoward events”; though originating from an once prosperous family, he has been demoted to such poverty that he has withdrawn from life and “ceased to bestir himself in the world, or to care for the retrieval of his fortunes” (Poe, Tales 1: 531). Whatever the reason, Dupin remains isolated from the outside world by both his misfortunes and his intellect and cannot allow himself any luxuries apart from books. No matter how reclusive he may be, Dupin is the one who reaches the solution of the mystery after careful observation and critical analysis of the facts.

Quite similarly to the astutely intelligent Dupin, Yorgis emerges as a well-educated person, exhibiting a devotion to the life of the mind and is able to deduce the solution to the mystery by combining his intuitive and imagination skills. The

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36 Yorgis differs from Dupin in one considerable manner though. Yorgis’ motivation is personal; he is personally involved in the case as he is striving to locate his brother’s killer. Dupin, on the other hand, usually becomes involved in the cases for pleasure as in “The Purloined Letter” or for financial remuneration or for reciprocating a favor as in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue.” What is more, Dupin aims at outwitting the inept police inspector and thereby demonstrating his own superiority (Hutchisson
“bookish” Yorgis seems bright, well-informed and intuitive in sharp contrast with the more ordinary capacities of his family and the rest of the characters in the story. Yorgis displays his highly-developed intuitive sense early in his aversion to Kamil and his mother. Annoyed by the fact that his mother has “been a nurse to the Turks” (Vizyenos 100), Yorgis refuses to stay at the house of the Turks and resides at a hotel. Yorgis takes an instant dislike to Kamil, the moment he sets his eyes on him for the first time; and he is right in doing so as Kamil eventually proves to have been his brother’s killer. As Διαμαντάτου comments, Yorgis is an intellectual and intelligent person who may remain distant from the narrative events by paying attention to the particulars of Kamil’s story (163); by enhancing the mere facts by imaginary, yet plausible assumptions, Yorgis manages to unravel the web that has been cunningly woven by the writer.

By merely observing and analyzing the information he receives, Yorgis makes assumptions about the particulars of his case for the sake of tracing his brother’s killer. What actually happens in Vizyenos’ story is the following: Kamil is initially after Charalambis, the postman, who has killed Kamil’s blood-brother, the brother of his former fiancée. What Kamil does not know, however, is that Charalambis, in his attempt to escape Kamil’s ambush, has asked Christakis, Yorgis’ brother, to take over his post in the mail route. Christakis naively agrees to do so despite his mother’s fervent objections. As a result, Christakis, who looks very much like Charalambis, falls into Kamil’s ambush and gets killed after he injures Kamil severely. In an ironic twist, Christakis’ mother comes to Kamil’s rescue and devotes herself to his

115). In both cases, nevertheless, Yorgis and Dupin acquire the role of the intelligent and, somewhat, outlandish investigator a fact that provides a rationale for their comparison.

37 Validè refers to their likeness earlier in the story: “While we were laughing, the door opened and in came Charalambis, Mitakos’ son. You remember him—he was the same age as Christakis and very like him in build. […] They were so alike, and because they were in the same line of business they even wore the same clothes” (Vizyenos 91).
recovery without being aware that Kamil is in reality her son’s killer. Kamil does not know the identity of the person he has killed either. Being grateful to Christakis’ mother, Kamil helps Validè in her quest for her son’s murderer along with Yorgis.

Upon listening to Kamil’s narration concerning his blood-brother’s death for the first time, Yorgis seems thunderstruck. As is often the case with Dupin, Yorgis starts mediating the particulars of Kamil’s life events in a dimly lighted room:

For some time after my mother left, I still sat cross-legged on the red rug covering the low sofa, leaning towards the dim light of a wretched lamp and trying to dispel my thoughts and the vivid images of my fancy by reading I know not what book. But the objects of my mental vision, which were far brighter than the pages, interposed themselves between me and the book, and all the time my reading was but a mechanical promenade of my eyes over the lines of each page. Twice or thrice I lay down on my fragrant bed forcing my eyes to remain closed. The scent of the musk emanating from the hand-embroidered pillows exuded, intoxicating and stupefying as it was, had no power to lull my heightened emotions. The story of the unfortunate Kamil kept unfolding before my closed eyes in vivid pictures. (Vizyenos 129-30)

This scene, from my perspective, heightens the dramatic impact Kamil’s story exerts on Yorgis. Being unable to slumber, Yorgis lies in his bed contemplating and

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38 Mackridge’s translation of: «Πολλήν ἢδη ὄραν μετὰ τὴν ἀποχώρησιν τῆς μητρὸς μου, ἑκαθήμεν ἐτι ἐκλαδίν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑρώθρο “χραμίου” τοῦ χαμηλοῦ σοφά, κόστοιν πρὸς τὸ ἀμοδρόν φὸς ἐλεεινοῦ λυχαρίου, καὶ προςπαθῶν νὰ διασκεδάσω τὰς σκέψεις καὶ τὰς ξυπνᾶς τῆς φαντασίας μου ἐκόνας διὰ τῆς ἀναγνώσεως, δὲν ἐνθομοῦμι πλέον τόρα τίνος βιβλίου. Ἀλλὰ τάντακικεῖμεα τῆς νεοπρατικής ὀρασίας παρεμπρόσθουσαν μεταξὺ ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ βιβλίου, πολὺ φοτεινότατα τῶν φύλλων αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἡ ἀνάγνωσις μου καθ’όλου τὸ διάστημα δὲν ἦσαν παρά μηνικὰς τῶν ὀρθολόμων περίπατος ἐπὶ τῶν γραμμῶν ἑκάστης σελίδος. Δι’ ἐς ἔξεπληθύθην χαμαὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ μοχλοβλουλόντος στράμματός μου με ὀμάτα διὰ τῆς βίας κεκλεισμένα, ἀλλ’ ἐς μάτην. Ἡ ὀσμή τοῦ μόσχου, ἢν ἀπενέπεται τὰ χειροκίνητα προσκεφάλαια μου, τόσον μεθυστική, τόσον ναρκωτική, δὲν ἤσχε νὰ ἀποκομίσῃ τὴν συγκίνησιν μου. Ἡ ἱστορία τοῦ δυστυχοῦς Κιαμῆλ ἐξελίσσετο ἐν ἑωταναῖς εἰκόνεις ἐνώπιον τῶν κλειστῶν ὀρθολομῶν μου» (Βιζυηνός 94).
processing this new information in silence. Vizyenos places emphasis on this passage with the inclusion of sensory output such as “the faint light of the pitiful lamp,” the “fragrant bed” and the “scent of the musk,” details that aid Yorgis’ task to recreate the murder scene and at the same time create an atmosphere of mystery and suspense that resonates meaningfully with the story’s tone. In addition to creating a highly-atmospheric effect, the description of this scene also serves as the ideal backdrop for the exemplification of Yorgis’ investigative strategies. In commenting on this scene, Μυρογιάννης argues that “the short story presents the investigator-narrator ‘fantasizing’ about a possible solution” (130).\(^{39}\) It is within this circumscribed and dimly-lit space that Yorgis starts pondering over Kamil’s tragic life events—his blood-brother’s demise, the ending of his engagement, his subsequent collapse as well as his determination to avenge upon his blood-brother’s death—and envisions plausible solutions to Kamil’s drama thereby displaying his imaginative powers.

It seems that the revelation of what actually happened in Vizyenos’ story is built upon the idea that physical darkness aids reflection. It is this contrast between physical darkness and intellectual illumination that creatively aligns Yorgis’ with Dupin’s preference for poorly lit spaces. Richard Steiger notes in relation to this matter: “Dupin’s most noteworthy idiosyncrasy, shared by his friend, is his fondness for darkness” (126). Indeed, at dawn Dupin closes all the windows preferring only the feeble rays of a couple of perfumed candle lights. In “The Purloined Letter,” for instance, Dupin is “sitting in the dark,” “being occupied by the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber” (Poe, Tales: 2 974-75) when he is visited by the Prefect G of the Parisian police, who is contemptuous of Dupin’s conviction that physical darkness assists meditation.

\(^{39}\) My translation of: «το διήγημα εμφανίζει τον ερευνητή-αφηγητή να «φαντασιώνεται» μια πιθανή λύση» (Μυρογιάννης 130).
But it is further on in Vizyenos’ narrative that Yorgis’ intellectual capacity can be compared to that of Dupin’s. Even though Yorgis is aware of most of the facts surrounding Kamil’s story, the most significant clue is only revealed toward the end of the story when Kamil arrives “[i]n the semi-darkness inside the entrance” (Vizyenos 131). Being in a delirious state of mind Kamil provides further details concerning the manner in which he has killed Charalambis, details that build up the suspense and eventually make Yorgis grasp the hidden meaning lying behind Kamil’s unfortunate actions. Kamil’s final storytelling speaks directly to my argument that Yorgis uses his deductive imagination in order to trace the identity of the killer. What Yorgis does is to link two seemingly separate incidents together and deduce an answer to the story’s dramatic riddle. More precisely, toward the end of Kamil’s narration Yorgis realizes that Kamil has killed Christakis after mistaking him for Charalambis, and in despair screams: “Oh wretched man! You murdered my brother!” (Vizyenos 135). Yorgis eventually pieces all events together by creating an associative web that links together the separate incidents such as Charalambis’ intended murder by Kamil and Charalambis’ prior replacement by Christakis (Ζανέκα 210). Yorgis’ behavior, according to Μυρογιάννης, reminds us of Dupin’s tendency to use both his creative and scientific thinking to unravel a mystery (130). Similarly to Dupin who links the murders in the Rue Morgue after having read the accounts in the newspapers to the orang-utang’s escape from the sailor, Yorgis also fits the seemingly irrelevant information in Kamil’s story together so as to be able to understand what has actually happened.

40 Mackridge’s translation of: «Ω! Αθλια! Εφόνευσες τιν άδελφον μου!» (Βιζυηνός 99).
41 Dupin’s method of investigation in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” slightly differs from that in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” and “The Purloined Letter.” In “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” Dupin makes a thorough examination of the crime scene and deduces that the ape must have entered the apartment through a window. The innovation in “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” is that Dupin relies for evidence exclusively upon the press and appears to be “immobil[i][zed] […] in front of a pile of
It follows from this that Vizyenos’ story explicitly engages the issue of narrative control that underpins detective fiction based on which the concealed narrative illuminates the killer’s identity, as is the case with Kamil’s story. Kamil’s story becomes a story of importance that Yorgis exploits accordingly: he reveals the truth to the police but conceals it from his mother, as it “was in no way expedient that she should learn the truth” (Vizyenos 136) which of course shatters its validity. The reconstruction of Kamil’s hidden story becomes literally the goal of detection, much like “The Purloined Letter” wherein the aim of detection is the acquisition of the hidden story of the letter (Thoms, Detection 63). The letter is an essential element in Poe’s story; the villain strives to exploit to his benefit the letter’s content that the royal lady desires to conceal (Thoms, Detection 63). In a similar way to “The Purloined Letter,” Kamil’s storytelling in its illumination of Kamil’s prior actions becomes a narrative of great importance that aids Yorgis to figure out things.

By piecing the various confessions together, Yorgis completely solves the enigma that Vizyenos’ story «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» poses, but he does not manage to lead all the characters and the readers out of the labyrinth of complexity. Vizyenos here offers a solution but this solution proves to be rather ineffective. The solution is actually flawed by the fact that different characters are in possession of conflicting perceptions of the truth the story holds (Beaton, Foreword xi). The solution and by implication the story’s ending rework realism’s general aim based on which realism “offer[s] a truthful, accurate, and objective representation of the real world, both the external world and the human self” (Habib 471). Vizyenos’ story creates a reality that confounds Poe’s readers. Vizyenos offers a world where

"newspaper reports” (Priestman, Crime 10), a fact that renders the story a fine example of “armchair detection.” For additional details on “armchair detection,” see Herbert, The Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing 25-26.

42 Mackridge’s translation of: «Δέν συνέφερε κατ’ουδένα τρόπον νά μάθη τήν ἀλήθειαν...» (Βιζυηνός 100).
nothing is what it appears to be and characters are caught at a web of deception. The way deception works calls for further exploration of the affinities between Poe and Vizyenos; it also suggests links between «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφόν μου» and the last Dupin tale, “The Purloined Letter” in terms of the truth that characters seem to possess.

2.7 How Deception Works in Poe and Vizyenos

In both «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφόν μου» and “The Purloined Letter,” there appears to be superficially no doubt about what really happens. The initial theft of the Queen’s letter by Minister D is explicitly stated at the beginning of “The Purloined Letter” and Dupin’s ensuing theft of it is subsequently acknowledged in the story (Leer 68). Accordingly, the final passage of the Greek story makes it plain that Kamil has unintentionally killed Christakis after having mistaken him for Charalambis. Therefore, everything that makes for mystery in both stories is out in the open: the identity of the villain, the rationale behind his deed and the mode of his actions are all eventually acknowledged. The question hereby raised is the following: Are all the characters in Vizyenos and Poe aware of the truth or are they caught in a web of deception?

Answering this question requires a cross-examination of some of Vizyenos’ and Poe’s characters because they appear to be self-deceived. In «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφόν μου», the exploration of the relation between reality and false appearances is particularly notable. Take, for example, Kamil who lives under the influence of the command of a fiend and cannot be released until he fulfills his promise to find the killer. Being on the lookout for his blood-brother’s murderer, Kamil unknowingly kills Christakis, having mistaken him for Charalambis who “was
the same age as Christakis and very like him in built” (Vizyenos 91). Three years later, Kamil eventually manages to kill Charalambis being, however, under the impression that he has murdered a vampire, a fiend that had been haunting him for years. In both cases, Kamil erroneously thinks that he has killed another person and this is what the other characters believe, too. Kamil even offers to assist with the investigations for Christakis’ killer; the young Turk eagerly insists that “[v]engeance must be taken!” without knowing of course that he was the actual killer (Vizyenos 107) a fact that not only adds a tragic dimension to Kamil’s character but also emphasizes his inner confusion as to what is real and what appears to be real in the story.44

The confusion between reality and appearances is also traceable in Effendi, the Turkish policeman in charge of the investigation. Although the character of Effendi occupies only a small role in this tale, that of the foil to Yorgis’ genius, it can be read alongside the character of Prefect G in “The Purloined Letter.” For Χρυσανθόπουλος, both Effendi and the Prefect G are equally blind because they are unable to identify the criminal or the stolen letter respectively (Φαντασία 87). Effendi is suspicious of Charalambis whom, however, he is unable to accuse and arrest as he thinks that Charalambis has left the country, much like Prefect G who “examined the rungs of every chair in the hotel, and indeed the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope” (Poe, Tales 2: 980) but could not locate the letter lying in a prominent place inside the Minister’s apartment. The Prefect G is narrow-minded and tries to draw conclusions on superficial evidence only; as such, he appears unable to gain a deep understanding of the way the criminal’s mind works.

43 Mackridge’s translation of: «Ἡταν συνομίληκος τοῦ Χρηστάκη καὶ τόν ἐμοίως πολύ στὸ ἄνάστημα καὶ ταῖς πλάταις» (Βιζυηνός 63).
44 Mackridge’s translation of: «Πρέπει νὰ γενη ἑκδίκησι!» (Βιζυηνός 76).
As is the case with Prefect G, Effendi’s investigating abilities are too narrow and he seems unable to think beyond the details and facts supplied by the evidence nor is he able to make the necessary associations. Effendi’s statements show that he lacks Yorgis’ analytical skills and intuitive sense and therefore fails to combine the facts successfully and resolve the puzzle: “That postman’s [Charalambis] going to drive me mad! I find him to be the proven perpetrator of many crimes, I find him the most probably suspect in our poor brother’s murder, but I am unable to find the man himself!” (Vizyenos 118). Effendi’s words not only reflect his helplessness but also intensify the feeling of deception and contrast between what is real and what appears to be real in the story: Effendi is on the outlook for Charalambis whilst Kamil, the person who actually shoots the fire, is standing right in front of him.

However, in «Ποίος ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου», the paradoxical relation between external reality and false appearances is further exemplified in the character of Validè as well. Yorgis’ mother who sympathizes with Kamil’s plight and takes care of his wounds, while hosting him at her house for seven months as if he were her own son. Χρυσανθόπουλος contends that Yorgis’ mother lives in an illusion since she cannot realize that Kamil, the person who is so fond of her to the point of growing flowers on her son’s grave, is in fact his executioner (Φαντασία 71). As a matter of fact, her misguided conviction that Kamil is “a good chap, a very good chap” is emblematic of her deception (105). Yorgis’ mother remains in an illusion till the very end of the story: she keeps seeking for Christakis’ murderer and continues to

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45 Mackridge’s translation of: «Αὐτὸς ὁ ταχυδρόμος θὰ μέ κάμη νὰ χάσω τὸν ναυν μου! Τὸν εὑρίσκω ἀποδειγμένον αὐτουργὸν πολλάν κακοφηγημένων, τὸν εὑρίσκο πιθανότατον ἐνοχὸν εἰς τὸν φόνον του πτωχοῦ αδελφοῦ μας, ἀλλ’ ἀδυνατῶ νὰ τὸν εὑρεῖ αὐτὸν τὸν ἰδίον!» (Βιζυνός 85).
feel affection for Kamil who “grows the flowers on Christakis’ grave—he even insists on lighting the icon-lamp himself” (Vizyenos 140).46

Perhaps it is no accident that Validè is never told that Kamil is actually the unconscious murderer of her own son. By withholding the truth from the mother, Vizyenos treats more intensely the issue of self-deception, a concept that brings us back to “The Purloined Letter.” The reason is that what appears true for the aforementioned characters in the Greek story and Minister D turns out to be misleading in the end. The endings in both stories are instructive in this regard: the mother never learns who has killed her son the same way Poe’s Minister D does not realize that the letter has been purloined by Dupin. The mother still falsely believes that Kamil is a “poor lad” (Vizyenos 140) and Minister D thinks that he is still in possession of the Queen’s letter and that he can still blackmail her, if necessary. In this respect, the key actions in Poe’s and Vizyenos’ stories—Christakis’ murder by Kamil and the usurpation of the letter by Dupin—almost pass unnoticed by the fact that neither the mother nor Minister D learn the truth. As a result, we hardly notice the fact that Kamil is the killer of her son and we marvel at the fact that the truth is not disclosed to Validè; on the same line, in “The Purloined Letter” the contents of the letter are never disclosed to us but we hardly notice that; rather, we marvel at Dupin’s capacity to outwit Minister D (Leer 68). As such, the letter itself loses the power it confers and the readers tend to focus on Minister D’s defeat and Dupin’s intellectual superiority. In a way similar to “The Purloined Letter,” at the end of Vizyenos’ story we are not that interested in the fact that Kamil is the one who has shot the fire, whom by the way Vizyenos represents under a sympathetic vent, but we become astounded by Validè who insists upon looking after him. Validè’s insistence upon looking after

46 Mackridge’s translation of: «καλλιεργεῖ τὰ λουλούδια πάνω στὸν τάφο τοῦ Χρηστάκη μας· ὡς καὶ τὸ κανθάμα θέλει νὰ τ’ ἀνάφητε μὲ τὸ χέρι του!» (Βιζυηνός 103).
Kamil and the readers’ knowledge of the fact that he has murdered her son, make her attitude all the more striking.

The deception Validè and the rest of the characters find themselves in is a significant point for it brilliantly dramatizes, in my view, the conflict between reality and appearances adding a dramatic turn to the story and, most importantly, undermining the genre it adopts as a model based on which the detective “acqui[res] pleasure from the hunt” (Thoms, “Dupin” 141). Contrary to Dupin, Yorgis does not feel any particular satisfaction in unraveling the story’s mystery; instead, he turns out to be dramatically entangled in the very world he seeks to explicate. At the story’s dramatic finale, the narrator reports to his mother not to have tracked down Christakis’ killer although Kamil is standing right in front of him. Witnessing Kamil tending Christakis’ tomb, Yorgis cannot help but wonder: “I compared the simple-minded innocence of the lunatic with the abominable wickedness of the former postman, and I could not tell which was my brother’s murderer” (Vizyenos 140). Yorgis’ words indicate his inner dilemma about the identity of the killer: Who is in reality responsible for Christakis’ murder? Is it Kamil, the person who has fired the gun, or Charalambis the person who has trapped Christakis and led him to his death? This question which, “remains undisclosed to his mother and unanswered by himself” (Alexiou 290), further intensifies the feeling of self-deception inherent in the story and exemplifies Vizyenos’ talent in making the story linger on the readers’ mind long after they have finished its perusal.

47 Mackridge’s translation of: «παρέβαλον τὴν ἀγαθότητα τοῦ παράφρονος μὲ τὴν βδελυράν πανουργίαν τοῦ πρώην ταχυδρόμου, καὶ δὲν ἔξερεν νὰ εὑρίσκει ὅτι τῶν δύο ἦτον ὁ φονεὺς τοῦ αδελφοῦ μου!» (Βιζυηνός 103).
The previous comparison of «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» to Poe’s Dupin series has provided insights into the ways Vizyenos responds to Poe’s detective paradigm. It has suggested connections with Poe’s Dupin tales in terms of the investigation method, the process through which the investigators arrive at the solution as well as in the treatment of similar themes. In short, «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» is characterized by the representation of a crime as an intellectual puzzle and Yorgis’ ability to link together the separate pieces of evidence, a fact that heralds him as a unique literary figure. More precisely, the character of Yorgis epitomizes Poe’s Dupin in the following respects: Much like the “creative” and “resolvent” Dupin, Yorgis’ mind works by association and his intellectual power lies in his capacity to piece all the clues together and uncover the story’s mystery. In essence, «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» displays Yorgis’ deductive way of thinking by which he triumphs over the earthbound techniques of police procedure. In my view, Yorgis’ ability to disentangle the confused chain of circumstances that contrasts sharply with the more ordinary capacities of the rest of the characters is modeled on Dupin’s extraordinary investigation method.

More crucially, Vizyenos gives Yorgis not only intellectual capabilities similar to those of Dupin’s, but unusual habits as well. Instead of personally interviewing witnesses or engaging into rigorous physical action, Yorgis remains isolated and attempts to solve the mystery using his intellectual power. As a result, Yorgis emerges as a detective who is able to figure things out on his own and whose intellectual capacity is contingent on the confined space and atmosphere he finds himself in. In a similar way to Dupin who contemplates upon and solves the mysteries “sitting in the dark,” Yorgis lies in his “fragrant bed” in “the faint light of the pitiful lamp” and contemplates on the particulars of Kamil’s story.
Thematic unfoldings in Vizyenos’ story uncover even more affinities with Poe’s Dupin trilogy. «Ποίος ἦ τον ὁ φονεὺς τοῦ ἁδηλοφοῦ μου» ventures an exploration of the vague and, at times, misleading relation that exists between reality and appearances, as is the case for example in “The Purloined Letter.” Vizyenos’ story relies heavily upon the conflict between what is real and what appears to be real as major characters in the story hold their own perception of reality; in my opinion, the theme of self-deception inherent in Vizyenos’ tale echoes Minister D’s false perception of reality in Poe’s tale. From this point of view, Vizyenos creates a type of writing that is the result of a mystifying game in which there are very tenuous boundaries between reality and appearances, much to the example of Poe’s writing. In questioning conventional notions about reality and constructing innovative character types, Vizyenos opens the way for a new kind of writing, one that differs from the other mystery narratives that have preceded it within the Greek literary production of the time.
Chapter Three

The Literary Relationship between Edgar Allan Poe and Nikolaos Episkopopoulos: Death, Terror and Women

“Poe surpasses them all with his rich, boundless imagination, his precise, mathematical-proceeding imagination, governed by reason, and his elaborate descriptions.”

–Nikolaos Episkopopoulos, «Τὸ σύγχρονον διήγημα» (1893) ¹

3. Nikolaos Episkopopoulos’ Merit

Parallel to the prominence of realism in nineteenth-century modern Greek letters, another literary movement starts to flourish mainly towards the turn of the century, that of aestheticism. With its roots traced back to Immanuel Kant’s aesthetic theories as well as to the theories of poetic composition articulated by Edgar Allan Poe, the principles of the aesthetic movement are adopted by a number of Greek writers. One of the main early practitioners of aestheticism in Greece is Nikolaos Episkopopoulos who merits attention not only as a significant representative of the movement in Greece but also because he grapples with Poe’s aesthetic explorations and succeeds in creating fiction that reflects important aspects of Poe’s writing: the ability to produce a thrilling effect, the creation of terror and the careful setting up of the ending’s dramatic impact. Furthermore, Poe’s motif of the death-of-a-beautiful-woman manifests itself in Episkopopoulos’ works.

¹ [“To synchronon diegema”].
This chapter examines Poe’s influence on the work of Episkopopoulos and, in particular, on specific short stories included in the Greek writer’s collection Τρελλά Διηγήματα (1893-94). Episkopopoulos admires Poe as a tale-writer and in his article, which he writes in 1893, discusses Poe’s views on the mechanics of short-story writing. Judging from this article as well as from Episkopopoulos’ short fiction, I argue that Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe is immense and can be assessed both thematically and stylistically. A thematic link may be drawn between Poe’s writings and Episkopopoulos’ short narratives most of which revolve around death and include elements of terror associated with the act of killing. While Episkopopoulos’ fascination with death and the macabre has been discussed by Greek scholars, the representation of women in his fiction remains a relatively unexplored subject. This chapter explores this particular aspect of the Greek writer’s work by focusing specifically on the ways Episkopopoulos represents women in his writings and incorporates motifs such as that of the death-of-the-beautiful woman, a motif typical in Poe’s writings. In drawing from Poe’s feminine ideal, Episkopopoulos presents in his writings beautiful young women who, after being reduced to mere objects of adoration, eventually die.

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2 [Trella Diegemata].

3 Βαγγέλης Αθανασόπουλος [Vangelis Athanasopoulos], Ιωάννης Δάλλας [Ioannis Dallas], Νικόλαος Μαυρέλος [Nikolaos Mavrelos], Χριστίνα Ντουνία [Christina Dounia] and Απόστολος Σαχίνης [Apostolos Sachinis] have noted the connection between Episkopopoulos’ and Poe’s works. For additional information, see Αθανασόπουλος, Νικόλαος Επισκοπόπουλος (1874-1944): ο αισθητισμός και η αισθητική του οραμάτων; Δάλλας, Ευργώνια: Δοκίμα στην Ποίηση και την Πεζογραφία; Μαυρέλος, Νικόλαος Επισκοπόπουλος: Μια παρουσίαση από τον Νίκο Μαυρέλο; Ντουνία, «Ο Ε.Α. Πόε και το Ελληνικό Παράξενο Διήγημα: Η Περίπτωση του Ν. Επισκοπόπουλο»; Σαχίνης, Η Πεζογραφία του Αισθητισμού.

4 In his seminal Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing (1987), Daniel Hoffman uses the term death-of-a-beautiful-woman motif to refer to the way death accentuates female beauty in Poe’s works (63-67). For a complete discussion of this motif and Poe’s literary treatment of women, see Hoffman, Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing 60-88.
In addition to being inspired by poesian motifs, Episkopopouloos is captivated by Poe’s use of specific stylistic effects and narrative devices. The Greek writer frequently employs the unreliable first-person narration, a device that indubitably goes back to Poe and whose function is to establish an atmosphere of uncertainty in the narrative. Episkopopouloos enhances this aura of uncertainty with the use of special setting, imagery and tone. In a similar manner to Poe who advocates that every detail of a story should help to establish its dramatic effect, everything in Episkopopouloos’ carefully wrought stories is there to create a specific effect namely that of terror. In essence, the emphasis on physical space, the inclusion of elegant seductive women, pleasing sensory output and erotic atmospherics, in Episkopopouloos’ short stories, all create an effect quite at odds with the literary conventions, of the time but very close to Poe’s writing concerns. The aforementioned elements bound together with Episkopopouloos’ refined and elegant language, make up the central visual objects for the movement of aestheticism, a movement that owes much to Poe. Looked at it this way, Poe’s aesthetic concerns, his stylistic dicta as well as his fantastic imagination function as a repository for Episkopopouloos to move beyond the prevailing trends of the time and bring a new form of writing into Greek literature that merits our attention.

In order to assess Episkopopouloos’ innovative style of writing as well as his indebtedness to Poe, I will first present the theoretical background that frames this chapter so as to provide an appropriate comparative context for the discussion of Episkopopouloos’ indebtedness to Poe. I will then offer a short overview of Episkopopouloos’ early years in order to highlight the conditions under which he becomes cognizant of and eventually influenced by Poe’s work. I will then discuss Episkopopouloos’ 1893 essay, wherein the Greek author shares his enthusiasm for Poe
with the Greek readership of the time. In the next section, I deal with the aesthetic
quality of Episkopopoulos’ narratives and I offer an analysis of Poe’s writing
concerns in an attempt to trace analogies in both authors’ writing styles. In the final
section of this chapter, I will compare and contrast two tales by Episkopopoulos
namely “Ut Dièse Mineur” (1893) and «Μαύρα» (1893) with several Poe tales, and I
will comment on the ways these stories evoke poe-related themes and motifs.

3.1 Transfer of Texts between Languages and Cultures: From Edgar Allan Poe
to Nikolaos Episkopopoulos

In attempting to evaluate Poe’s contribution to Episkopopoulos’ short stories, I
will draw from theories of comparative literature so as to trace the ways through
which Episkopopoulos has become cognizant of Poe’s works and eventually
influenced by them. More precisely, Pierre Brunel’s, Claude Pichois’ and Andre
Rousseau’s theory on comparative literature as this is articulated in the seminal book
Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία; (1998) is promising for its attention to special
mediums and parameters that contribute to the transnational circulation of foreign
texts into several countries and their subsequent hybridization of these texts with texts
by other authors. As Brunel, Pichois, and Rousseau indicate, mediums such as the
periodical press, translation practice, circulating libraries and parameters such as the
knowledge of foreign languages for example, facilitate the circulation and study of
texts across diverse cultural and linguistic barriers in the western world during the
nineteenth century. Reading Episkopopoulos’ works through this theory then, I can
provide insights into the Greek and foreign authors whom Episkopopoulos

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5 [Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία?].
6 The original title of the work is Qu’est-ce que La Littérature Comparée? (1983). The references to
this theory are from the Greek translated book entitled Τι είναι η Συγκριτική Γραμματολογία; (1998).
particularly values, the connections he has with foreign letters as well as his cosmopolitan nature.

In addition to Brunel’s, Pichois’ and Rousseau’s theory, this study will take into consideration Tzvetan Todorov’s seminal work entitled *The Fantastic* (1973). Todorov situates the fantastic between two other literary genres: the “fantastic-uncanny” and the “fantastic-marvelous” (*Fantastic* 44). In the case of the “fantastic-uncanny,” one encounters supernatural events; at the story’s end, however, rational explanations are provided for these events (Todorov, *Fantastic* 44). The marvelous, by contrast, relates to the supernatural and “provoke[s] no reaction either in the characters or in the implicit reader” (Todorov, *Fantastic* 54). With regard to the fantastic itself, Todorov argues that it “lasts only as long as a certain hesitation: a hesitation common to reader and character, who must decide whether or not what they perceive derives from ‘reality’ as it exists in the common opinion” (*Fantastic* 41). Todorov here takes “hesitation” to refer to the “confusion created in both fictional characters and readers when their interpretation of the fantastic events fails to be clearly defined either as *marvelous or uncan...nny*” (Rapatzikou, *Gothic* 45, emphasis in original). Essentially, hesitation constitutes the basic quality of the fantastic.

Todorov’s classification of the different types the fantastic takes is useful in attempting to understand the essence of the fantastic that Episkopopoulos’ writings offer. Critics like Μαυρέλος, Ντουνιά and Kalliopi Ploumistaki view Episkopopoulos’ short stories as early specimens of fantastic writing in nineteenth-century Greece («Παρουσίαση» 19; «Επισκοπόπουλος» 404; Ploumistaki 182). The fantastic overlay in Episkopopoulos’ world lies in the latter’s ability to portray events transcending the sphere of reality and the rules of natural laws, thus creating confusion in the characters. In discussing the essence of the fantastic in
Episkopopoulos’ universe, I will take the example of his short story entitled «Μαύρα» wherein the unnamed narrator-character witnesses the awakening of his seemingly deceased sister. Following Todorov’s diagrammatic representation of the fantastic, it will be argued later in the chapter that «Μαύρα» is an instance of the “fantastic-uncanny.” By reading Episkopopoulos’ work in the context of Todorov’s work on the fantastic, I hold that Episkopopoulos’ work remains very close to Poe’s works in the majority of which there is a fusion of supernatural events and rationality thrusting Poe’s readers into the realm of uncertainty.

Interestingly, the theoretical background framing this chapter provides the context for understanding the themes and techniques employed by Episkopopoulos and for reading his stories in relation to those by Poe. Against this background, it is crucial to begin the examination of Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe with a discussion of Episkopopoulos’ childhood and younger years as these have had a significant bearing on his personality, his acquaintance with Poe’s writings as well as the production of his work.

3.2 A “European” from Zante: Origins of Nikolaos Episkopopoulos’ Literary Debt

Episkopopoulos was born in 1874 in Zante, Greece, and was the only child of Dionysios and Adriani. Episkopopoulos dropped out of primary school and devoted himself to the perusal of books. He was outstandingly fluent in French and Italian, in which he had been instructed by his mother (Μαυρέλος, «Κοσμοπολίτες» 24). His mother also nurtured a love for art in Episkopopoulos at a very early age. Eager to build up his knowledge, Episkopopoulos read a lot of Greek and non-Greek literature
throughout his life (Ξενόπουλος 52-53; Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 9; Δάλλας, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 26).

Critics have extensively commented on Episkopopoulos’ erudition. Γρηγόριος Ξενόπουλος, the accomplished writer and journalist of Zante, describes Episkopopoulos as a young man who frequently visits the municipal library in Zante and later the major libraries in Athens:

[Episkopopoulos] spent the entire day in the National Library of Greece or in the Library of the Hellenic Parliament and in the afternoon he perused, after having a frugal dinner, all the books he could carry from the private libraries to his small room. Mr. Rhoides, when asked about Episkopopoulos, stretches his hands as if he is holding a book and says: “He is always reading, always reading. This is unusual for a Greek person!” (54)

In the same trend, Παύλος Νιρβάνας, the famous Greek writer, describes Episkopopoulos as a person devoted to reading:

Carrying piles of books, Episkopopoulos read everywhere; at the coffee-house, on the rail, on the tram, at the Faliro’s seashore and in the street. Actually, he read books as fast as he wrote. He mostly read contemporary French authors. (qtd. in Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 21)

7 [Gregorios Xenopoulos].
8 My translation of: «Την ημέραν όλην κατηνάλισκεν εις το αναγνωστήριο της Εθνικής Βιβλιοθήκης ή της Βιβλιοθήκης της Βουλής και το εσπέρας κατέτρωγε, μετά του λίτου του δείπνουν, όσα βιβλία εξ ιδιωτικών βιβλιοθηκών κατέφθασε να σύρη μέχρι του μικρού δωματίου του. Ο κ. Ροϊδής, οσάκις πρόκειται περί του Επισκοπόπουλου, ενώνει τας χείρας εις σχήμα βιβλίου και λέγει: Όλο διαβάζει, Όλο διαβάζει. Παράξενο πράγμα για Ρωμή!» (Ξενόπουλος 54).
9 [Pavlos Nirvanas].
10 My translation of: «Φορτωμένος μὲ βιβλία, ὁ Ἑπισκοπόπουλος διάβαζε παντού. Στὸ καφενεῖο, στὸ σιδηρόδρομο, στὸ τρίμ, στὰ μάτια τοῦ Φαλήρου καὶ στὸ δρόμο ἀκόμα. Καὶ διάβαζε μὲ τὴν ἑδική καταπληκτικὴ γραφορία ποὺ ἔγραφε. Διάβαζε κυρίως συγχρόνους Γάλλους συγγραφεῖς» (qtd. in Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 21).
The Greek writer’s fascination with foreign literary works and his passion for French literature in particular might well account for Episkopopoulos’ familiarization with Poe and his writings. Given Poe’s enduring popularity in France from 1846 onwards, it is probable that Episkopopoulos has read Poe either in Charles Baudelaire’s French translations or in Emmanuel Rhoides’ Greek translations.

In addition to being an avid reader of literature, Episkopopoulos also took great delight in reading accounts of medical science and, according to Ξενόπουλος, he even aspires to pursue a career in medicine (53). Even though Episkopopoulos did not practice medicine after all, he worked as an assistant at a drugstore in Zante and he even carried out various chemical experiments himself. Episkopopoulos exhibited a keen interest in medical matters and, as critics have noted, he was fond of reading Theodoros Afedoudis’ Φαρμακολογία (Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 10; Δάλλας, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 26; Μαυρέλος, «Κοσμοπολίτες» 23). The Greek writer’s alertness to the pharmaceutical industry and physical and mental disorders is considerable for three reasons. First, it can help us comprehend Episkopopoulos’ Τρελλά Διηγήματα the majority of which are peopled by overwrought characters who suffer from physical or even mental disorders (Ξενόπουλος 53). Second, it demonstrates Episkopopoulos’ fascination with dementia, demise and, generally the macabre, and finally draws thematic links with Poe’s short fiction that teams with scenes of dying.

Episkopopoulos’ connection with Poe could be further explored with regard to the former’s journalistic career. Determined to pursue a career in writing, Episkopopoulos relocated with his mother in Athens in 1892 and engaged in creative and journalistic writing. While residing in Athens, Episkopopoulos started working as

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11 [Pharmakologia].
an assistant-writer for the periodicals *Η Διάπλασις των Παιδών* and *Εθνικόν Ημερολόγιον Σκόκου* and through his new profession Episkopopoulos became well-acquainted with the literary circles and the distinguished Greek literary figures of the time such as Νιρβάνας, Δημήτριος Καμπούρογλου, Κώστας Κατσίμπαλης, Ιωάννης Ζυγομαλάς and the famous poet Κωστής Παλαμάς (Δάλλας, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 27; Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 11; Ξενόπουλος 55).

In 1893, Episkopopoulos’ career in writing took off after the publication of what has become his best-known short story “Ut Dièse Mineur” in *To Άστυ* a daily newspaper with which he established a journalistic collaboration (Αθανασόπουλος, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 13; Δάλλας, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 26; Ξενόπουλος 54). In addition to *To Άστυ*, Episkopopoulos also worked as a writer and reporter for the periodicals *Το Νέον Άστυ, Εστία* and *Παναθήναια* between 1902 and 1906 (Μαυρέλος, «Κοσμοπολίτες» 26). His work as a reporter required travelling to several European countries and coming in touch with the literary movements developing in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. As a result of his frequent journeys to Europe and his probing into Greek and foreign literature, Episkopopoulos, much like Rhoides and Vizyenos, develops a cosmopolitan mode of thinking and writing; his cosmopolitan outlook allows Episkopopoulos to become familiar with the

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12 *He Diaplasis ton Paidon*.
13 *Ethnikon Hemerologion Skokou*.
14 Dimitrios Kampouroglou.
15 Kostas Katsimpalis.
16 Ioannis Zigmolas.
17 Kostis Palamas.
18 *Panathinea*.
19 More specifically, Episkopopoulos visited Napoli, in Italy (26 and 31/03/99) and Paris, in France (22/07/99). Later in 1900 Episkopopoulos made another visit to Paris (March-May) in order to attend Dreyfus’ trial and in 1901 he traveled to Italy and Switzerland. Later in 1903 Episkopopoulos went to Bretagne as a guest of Renan where he sojourned for six months (Μαυρέλος, «Κοσμοπολίτες» 23). During this time he produced certain travel narratives which were published as articles in several Greek newspapers and journals. Μαυρέλος has gathered Episkopopoulos’ articles that have been published in the newspapers *To Άστυ* and *To Νέον Άστυ* in the collection entitled: *Νικόλαος Επισκοπόπουλος: Επιλογή Κριτικών Κειμένων απο To Άστυ και το Νέον Άστυ* [Nikolaos Episkopopoulos: Epilogi Kritikon Keimenon apo to Asty kai to Neon Asty].
movement of aestheticism, as well as with several of its proponents such as Baudelaire, Gabriele D’Annunzio, Anatole France, and of course Poe (Δάλλας, 
Ευρυγώνια 17). With regard to Poe in particular, it is not to be doubted that he is one of the foreign authors whom Episkopopoulos reads unceasingly and undoubtedly while at the municipal library in Zante or at the major libraries in Athens. In his article entitled «Τὸ σύγχρονον διήγημα», published in To Άστυ, Episkopopoulos provides an account of major practitioners of the fantasy genre both in the U.S. and in Europe such as E.T.A. Hoffmann, Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne. He then openly acknowledges Poe’s brilliance as a tale-writer and praises Poe’s unique ability to fuse imagination with mathematical accuracy:

Poe surpassed them all with his rich, boundless imagination, his precise, mathematical-proceeding imagination, governed by reason, and his elaborate descriptions. Poe is the great author of Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, the master of “Berenice,” “The Black Cat” and “The Gold-Bug.” Poe has an intrinsic capacity to engender terror and fear. It is Poe’s skill in endowing his writings with mathematical precision that instills doubt into us. And it is Poe’s skill in drawing mysterious analogies and connections among the most varied objects that astounds us. (Επισκοπόπουλος, To Άστυ 102-03)

20 In his dissertation, «Οι Κοσμοπολίτες και οι Φουστανελοφόροι: Το Ήλληνογλώσσο Κριτικό Έργο του Νικόλαου Επισκοπόπουλου» [“Οι Κοσμοπολίτες και οι Φουστανελοφόροι: Το Ήλληνογλώσσο Κριτικό έργο του Νικόλαου Επισκοπόπουλου”], Μαυρέλος offers an interesting insight into the authors Episkopopoulos values mostly (275).

21 My translation of: «Ὅλους δήμος τούτος ὑπέρβη μὲ τὴν πλουσίαν, τὴν ἀνεξάντλητην φαντασίαν του, τὴν ἀκριβή, τὴν βασικόν μαθηματικά, τὴν ὡς κανόνα ἔχουσα τὴν λογικήν, καὶ μὲ τὴν αργογραφὴν τοῦ τὴν ἐπιμελημένην ο Πόο, τὸ μεγάλον συγγραφεῖς τῶν Ἀναθρόδης Ἰστοριῶν, ὁ ἀριστοτέχνης τῆς «Βερενίκης», καὶ τοῦ «Μαίρου Γάτου», καὶ τοῦ «Χρυσοκαράνθου», καὶ τοῦ «Χρυσοκαράνθου», τοῦ κατέχοντος τοῦ ὄργανον τῆς φρίκης καὶ τοῦ φοβίου, ὁ ενσπεύσας εἰς τὸν νόμον μας τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν, μὲ τὴν ἀκριβείαν τοῦ τὴν μαθηματικά, ὁ καταπλήσσων ἡμᾶς μὲ τᾶς μυστηριώδεις ἀνάλογες καὶ τᾶς συγγενείας τῆς ὁποίας ἀνευρίσκει μεταξὺ τῶν διαφορετικοτέρων ἀντικειμένων» (To Άστυ Α’ 102-3).
This passage is highly revealing of the specific qualities that Episkopopoulo values in Poe: first, for Episkopopoulo, Poe’s works differ for their exaggerated and detailed imagery and the particular effects as well as for their elaborateness of expression, second, the Greek writer is captivated by Poe’s writings that offer a disordered and fragmented world where nothing is what it appears to be; the universe in Poe’s fiction, according to Episkopopoulo, is one in which mystery and logic fuse, creating a reality that confounds Poe’s readers. In addition, Poe’s way of grounding his literary creations in reason and mathematical accuracy, a characteristic that Poe inherited from the Enlightenment period’s impulse toward reason and rationality, enthralls Episkopopoulo. Drawing from Poe, Episkopopoulo himself has created stories that yield both fantastic and rational interpretations thus leaving the readers in a state of bewilderment.

Episkopopoulo goes so far as to call Poe the writer who establishes a pattern for what eventually becomes the modern “fantasy novel.” In another contribution of his, entitled «Ὁ άορατος» Episkopopoulo remarks that “the fantasy novel developed considerably in the hands of Poe, its first enthusiastic promoter, creator and exponent” (To Άστυ 821) and is fascinated by Poe’s capacity to elide natural life into the supernatural and contends that Poe is the finest representative of fantastic literature. In essence, in his comments on Poe, Episkopopoulo accomplishes two significant things: first, the Greek writer directs attention to Poe’s elegant writing style; and second, he indicates Poe’s writing technique with which Episkopopoulo aligns himself.

The Greek author’s adulation of and indebtedness to the American writer’s work could not fail the attention of several Greek critics and scholars some of whom

22 [“O aoratos”].
23 My translation of: «Τὸ φανταστικὸν μυθιστόρημα, τὸ ὁποῖον εἶχεν αὐτὸς καὶ μόνο ἐφεύρε, δημιουργίης καὶ ἀναγάγει εἰς ὑπέροχον καλλιτεχνικὴν περιουσίαν» (Episkopopoulo, To Άστυ 820).
praise him as even an heir to Poe in Greece, while others remain cautious and sometimes contemptuous of Episkopopoulos and claim that the Greek writer’s works fail to create the thrill or frisson Poe’s stories do.

More specifically, in his discussion of Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to non-Greek literary figures, Δάλλας observes that “Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Baudelaire constitute [Episkopopoulos’] first preferences” (Επισκοπόπουλος 34).24 Additionally, Sachinis contends that Episkopopoulos “was originally influenced by Baudelaire — and translated some of his pétits poèmes en prose. Next, however, he became attached to Poe and he finally devoted himself completely and exclusively to D’Annunzio” (Αισθητισμός 195), thus associating Episkopopoulos both with Poe as well as with seminal figures of the movement of aestheticism.25 This view is endorsed by Μαυρέλος who points out that Episkopopoulos “is influenced by Poe, Maupassant and Villiers de L ‘Isle Adam, among others” («Παρουσίαση» 19), thereby aligning Episkopopoulos with the tradition of the fantastic.26 Χριστόφορος Μηλιώνης27 goes so far as to consider Episkopopoulos an heir to Poe in the former’s treatment of the macabre. As he mentions, “[a]t first, [Episkopopoulos] becomes inspired by Poe, insofar as the themes of emotionally disturbed personalities, passionate love and death are concerned, and afterwards by D’Annunzio and Anatole France” (118), thus drawing thematic links between the Greek and the American writer.28

24 My translation of: «Ο Έντγκαρ Άλλαν Πόε και ο Κάρολος Μπωντλαίρ είναι οι πρώτοι πάλι έλξης του» (Δάλλας, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 34).
26 My translation of: «δέχεται επιδράσεις από τον Ποε, τον Μωπασάν, τον Βιλιέ ντε Λιλ, Αντάμ και έλλοιρ» (Μαυρέλος, «Παρουσίαση» 19).
27 [Christoforos Milionis].
28 My translation of: «Στην αρχή εμπνέεται από τον Ποε (θέματα ταραγμένου ψυχισμού, παράφορου έρωτα και θανάτου) και έπειτα από τον Ντέ Αννούντσιο και τον Ανατόλ Φρανς» (Μηλιώνης 118).
Last but not least, Ντουνιά points out that “N. Episkopopoulos’ short fiction establishes one of the most important instances of creative rapport with E.A. Poe’s oeuvre” («Επισκοπόπουλος», 393).29 A somewhat different thesis is maintained by Στέλιος Ξεφλούδας30 who, although attests to Poe’s strong influence on Episkopopoulos, claims that the latter does not manage to create the effect Poe has created in his own stories of the fantastic: “Insofar as Episkopopoulos’ short fiction is concerned, he has been influenced by Edgar Allan Poe; he was unable, nevertheless, to engender feelings of terror and anxiety, the very shuddering of the soul that the American poet’s stories had managed to do so” (29).31

While there are specific Greek critics who do not deem Episkopopoulos’ works worthy of scholarly attention, all of them concur with the view that the American author has left his indelible mark on the Greek writer’s work. What remains to be seen is what Poe-like elements have imprinted themselves on Episkopopoulos’ short fiction. In order to do so, I will first turn to the movement of aestheticicism, a movement to which both authors are closely tied, and demonstrate that Poe’s writing concerns have had a bearing on Episkopopoulos’ writing as well.

3.3 Nikolaos Episkopopoulos’ Aesthetic Concerns and Edgar Allan Poe’s Legacy

At the turn of the twentieth century, realism is in vogue in Greece; nevertheless, there are alternative concepts also influencing Greek writers: that of refined language, of poetic form, of musicality and that of the evocation of the individual’s inner world. The attempt to explore the psychological state of the

29 My translation of: «Άνα από τα σημαντικά παραδείγματα δημιουργικής επικοινωνίας με το έργο του Ε.Α. Πόε δίνει η δημιουματογραφία του Ν. Επισκοπόπουλου» (Ντουνιά, «Επισκοπόπουλος» 393).
30 [Stelios Xefloudas].
31 My translation of: «Στο δημιουματικό του έργο έπηρεώστηκε από τόν Έντγκαρ Πόε χωρίς δόμος να μπορέσει να μάς δώσει τη φρίκη και την αγονία, το ανατρίχισμα εκείνο τής ψυχής, πού μάς εδώκε με τίς παράξενες ιστορίες του ο άμερικανός ποιητής» (Ξεφλούδας 29).
individual as well as the notion of art as a realm separate from the praxis of the outside world are associated with what Σαχίνης and Ελένη Αραμπατζίδου call the movement of aestheticism, that is to say, a particular form of fiction produced from 1892 or 1893 onwards which takes the publication of Episkopopoulou’s short stories as its starting point (Αραμπατζίδου 27; Σαχίνης, Αισθητισμός 13; Tziovas 38). In this way the writers associated with this turn-of-the-century movement move sideways from the 1880s preoccupation to represent “authentic Greekness in literature” (Tziovas 36) and create an entirely different kind of writing that aims at the exploration of the individual’s inner world.

The movement of aestheticism in Greece clearly looks back at the movement which develops in the late nineteenth century in Europe. Meyer Howard Abrams defines aestheticism as a European movement whose “roots lie in the German theory, proposed by Immanuel Kant in his Critique of Aesthetic Judgment (1790), that the pure aesthetic experience consists of a ‘disinterested’ contemplation of an object without reference to reality or to the ‘external’ ends of its utility or morality” (2-3). Once imported to Greece the movement adapts to native Greek themes that respond to the social and historical conditions of the time. Δάλλας even sees the movement of aestheticism as an expression of the Greek nation’s call for renewal and modernization as the movement emerges alongside a series of unfortunate events, such as the financial bankruptcy of Greece and the national defeat in the Greco-

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32 [Eleni Arambatzidou].
33 Other Greek authors who embrace the principles of the aesthetic movement include Κωνσταντίνος Χρηστομάνος [Konstantinos Christomanos] (1867-1911), Pavlos Nirvanas (1866-1919), Periklis Giannopoulos (Περικλής Γιαννόπουλος) (1869-1910) and Πλάτων Ροδοκανάκης [Platon Rodokanakes] (1883-1919) (Αραμπατζίδου 37; Δάλλας, Ευρυγώνια 13; Ξεφλούδας 12; Tziovas 38). Debaiseux suggests that the principles of the decadent movement fit the works by Episkopopoulos, Kazandzakis and Rodokanakis (13). For the purposes of this chapter, the discussion focuses on Episkopopoulou and the ways his writing converges with Poe’s writing concerns.
Turkish war of 1897. As a result of these ruptures, Greek dignity and pride are severely injured, a fact that makes Greek enthusiasts of the movement adopt a literary style that differs from the 1880s preoccupation with “the realistic depiction of the Greek countryside and peasantry” (Tziovas 36), and take a turn inward away from society and toward the human mind. Being synchronic to tensions such as the economic crash and the defeat by Turkey, the movement of aestheticism becomes the repository for everything from which the Greek nation wants to dissociate itself and represents a sense of renewal and hope (Αράμπατζίδου 37).

With regard to Episkopopoulos’ works in particular, the essential drama inherent in the heroes of his short fiction is that of the individual mind orchestrated and ordered by the life of the senses; what is also interesting in Episkopopoulos’ case is that the aesthetic movement takes an extreme turn that Αράμπατζίδου names “decadence.” Decadence, as Αράμπατζίδου clarifies, conflates positive concepts, such as beauty, with negative ones such as morbidity, death and infirmity (20-21). Renne-Paule Debaissieux uses the term “decadence” exclusively to refer to this temporary circumscribed movement that emerges between 1894 and 1912 in Greece alongside realism with Episkopopoulos being one of the movement’s early practitioners (9). Episkopopoulos’ works link to the movement of aestheticism in their emphasis on sensual details and their refusal to moralize blatantly. Episkopopoulos’ works link to the decadent movement in their choice of titillating topics and focus on decay, danger, morbidity and death.

34 For additional information on the social and financial conditions of the time, see Beaton, An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature 66-127.
35 For a complete discussion of the movement of aestheticism, see Habib, A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present 489-501; and Marshall, The Cambridge Companion to the Fin de Siècle. It is notable that the terms “aestheticism” and “decadence” are frequently paired by scholars. For a complete discussion of the points around which the two terms converge or diverge, see Debaissieux, Le Décadentisme Grec, une Esthétique de la Deformation 9; Gilbert, A Companion to Sensation Fiction 621; and Αράμπατζίδου, Αισθητισμός: Η Ελληνική Εκδοχή του Κινήματος [Aisthitismos: He hellenike Ekdochi tou Kiniatatos] 22-26.
Episkopopoulos’ adherence to the dissident tradition of aestheticism and decadence is essential because it sets the Greek author apart from his fellow contemporaries, reveals his cosmopolitan way of thinking and writing and provides a rationale to cross-read him with Poe whose name has long been associated with aestheticism and the idea of l’art pour l’art (art for art’s sake).36 In his 1848 lecture entitled “The Poetic Principle,” Poe touches upon the idea of l’art pour l’art asserting that literature’s aim is not to mirror external reality but to induce pleasure in his readers. Speaking about poems, in particular, Poe advocates that they should be written “solely for the poem’s sake,” a statement that places Poe at the heart of the aesthetic tradition. For Poe, art is an end in itself and should not be assessed on the basis of its function to teach readers a moral lesson or mirror external reality. Poe’s most explicit claim in regard to artistic autonomy is made in “The Philosophy of Composition” (1846) wherein he postulates that beauty is, essentially, “an elevation of soul—not of intellect, or of heart” (Poe, Essays 16, emphasis in original). Poe clarifies that beauty is not, as is widely thought, “a quality […] but an effect” (Poe, Essays 16). Beauty relates to the effect a work of art has on people and, consequently, “is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem” (Poe, Essays 17). In other words, the beautiful is not supposed to teach a moral lesson or make people feel better. What Poe suggests here is that art should evoke a strong feeling or emotion in the readers’ soul, a feeling most probably associated with the spirit. For Poe, art’s aim is essentially the exaltation of the readers’ soul.

A few years later in “The Poetic Principle” (1850) Poe amplifies his view by arguing that the most dignified and noble work of art is the “poem per se – this poem which is a poem and nothing more – this poem written solely for the poem’s sake”

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36 For further details on the phrase l’art pour l’art, see Habib, A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present 491-92.
(Poe, *Essays* 75-76, emphasis in original). Poe here attempts to undermine what he calls “the heresy of *The Didactic*” based on which every poem “should inculcate a moral” (Poe, *Essays* 75). Again, Poe invites people to recognize the beauty of a poem regardless of its moral or even political implications. Art, for Poe, is primarily an emotion, a stimulant.

Poe’s insistence on artistic autonomy constitutes an essential characteristic of Episkopopoulos’ aesthetic principles as well. Episkopopoulos’ most explicit remarks on the relation between art and external reality are expressed in his 1901 article entitled «Τὸ δένδρον τῆς γνώσεως» where he reconsiders the relationship between art and life which “is the key concern of all Aesthetic criticism” (Small xii). The Greek writer offers a series of incidents to demonstrate that novels, and art by implication, can have a tremendous, and in some cases devastating impact on its readers. For Episkopopoulos, the experiences of life imitate art. Episkopopoulos’ view that literature, despite being detached from the realm of everyday life, is superior to life is important for two reasons: first, Episkopopoulos denounces any didactic or moral incursion from the sphere of art; secondly, it points toward the language of aestheticism and Poe who, as I mention above, lays emphasis on literary autonomy. Similarly to Poe’s, Episkopopoulos’ aestheticism is designed to clear a theoretical space for art to function free from accountability to morality, didacticism or social uplift. In this way Episkopopoulos introduces a type of writing that “s[its] uncomfortably with his time’s moralistic realism” (Filippakopoulou 43), but is closest aligned to Poe’s writing concerns.

Another way to relate Episkopopoulos with Poe’s writing concerns is to consider Poe’s interest in the creation of the sensational effect. I mention above that

37 [“Τὸ δένδρον τῆς γνώσεως”].
38 Episkopopoulos makes a special reference to D’Annunzio’s *Il Trionfo della Morte* (1894) a novel that prompts a man to murder his lover in order to make his point (Επισκοπόπουλος, *Στο Άστυ* 851).
for Poe art should not pertain to morality or truth, but be concerned with the response induced in the readers’ soul. One way Poe manages to invoke feelings to his readers is through the production of a sensational effect. Agnieszka Soltysik-Monnet remarks that “the effect of a text is related to its climax or dénouement. When Poe says that every line of a story should contribute to its effect, he really means that every detail of the story should be helping to set up the dramatic impact of the ending” (“Aesthetics” 131, emphasis in original). In all his tales, Poe first piques the readers’ interest by a general statement of the extraordinary events that he is about to narrate; he then presents the entire background of the action; next the tension gradually accumulates often resulting in a final tragic statement or action that either resolves a mystery or brings forth an appalling deed with Madeline appearing at the door having been buried in “The Fall of the House of Usher,” Ligeia taking over Rowena’s body in “Ligeia” (1838), or the teeth falling out of the narrator’s box and onto the floor in “Berenice” (1835). When it comes to Episkopopoulos’ best-known short stories, the production of a thrilling effect is also a common denominator and mainly depends on the shock factor of a final cataclysmic revelation: Myrrha getting brutally murdered in “Ut Dièse Mineur,” Elli falling a corpse at the end of «Ο ἵπποτης Μαῶρα» the couple committing suicide at the end of «Στὸ θάνατο» and Mavra rising from her deathbed in «Μαῦρα». The effect created in the aforementioned stories by Episkopopoulos bears a close resemblance to Poe’s effect namely in the desire to shock the readers; it also contrasts sharply with realist narratives that typically end with “the reader [being] consoled and uplifted” (Eagleton, How to Read 104). Episkopopoulos, like Poe, creates this thrilling effect by undeniably shocking means and graphic descriptions of gruesomely violent actions, torture, bodily disintegrations and so forth. Every detail in

39 [“Ο ippotis Max”].
40 [“Sto thanato”].
an Episkopopoulos’ story, as is often the case in Poe, has a reason for being there contributing to the creation of an effect and giving the story’s readers in the midst of unexpected events a sense of coherence or wholeness.

Another aspect that relates to this concept of unity or wholeness, and is important for understanding Poe’s influence on Episkopopoulos, is that of musicality. As I mention above, Poe gives special importance to the effect the literary work exerts upon the readers. Poe sees a connection between the response caused in people by the work of art and music. When it comes to poetry in particular, which for Poe is a type of music formed out of words, sound tends to be more important than meaning. Due to his conviction that a literary work’s effect is facilitated by music, Poe pays considerable attention to the musical quality inherent in works of art as his “The Poetic Principle” and “The Rationale of Verse” (1848) demonstrate. In “The Poetic Principle,” Poe characterizes poetry as “[t]he Rhythmical Creation of Beauty” (Essays 78, emphasis in original). Likewise, in “The Rationale of the Verse,” Poe expresses his opinion that “[i]n the construction of the verse, melody should never be left out of view” (Essays 29, emphasis in original). Poe here stresses the rhythmic quality that is available in poetry; the sounds of a poem evoke a sense of beauty that in turn gives the readers pleasure (Fisher, Introduction 103). While Poe sees a clear relation between music and poetry, he is also conscious of the musical possibilities that are available in prose fiction. For Poe, the rhythmic potential is integral in both poetry and prose fiction for the production of the desirable effect.

Musicality in prose fiction has also been considered a significant element in Episkopopoulos’ writing as one might often see scattered references to its importance in some of his theoretical essays such as «Αἱ Νέαι Μορφαί τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς..."
In a way similar to Poe, Episkopopoulos in his fiction demonstrates clear awareness of cadence and rhythmical patterns that can be created by the choice of specific words and their careful positioning within a sentence. That done, the short story in his hands becomes, what Αρμπατζίδου calls, a prose-poem (38). Through his prose-poems, the Greek writer attempts to create a connection between the rhythmical patterns in fiction and the delineation of the story’s events. In “Ut Dièse Mineur” for example, Episkopopoulos uses musical effects to register the character’s sentiments, which I will discuss further on in the current chapter. In «Η Ποητική μιας Κίνησης» (1901), Episkopopoulos marvels at the magnificence of the rhythmical pattern of literature which, along with poetry, he considers the first thing that all people experience (To Άστυ 772). In «Αἱ Νέαι Μορφαί τῆς Έλληνικῆς Φιλολογίας» Episkopopoulos delivers a historical overview of musicality in literature and discusses its progress over the centuries, a fact that supports amply my argument for Episkopopoulos’ interest in the effect of musicality in literature and prose in particular: “[t]he integration of technique and music into language and composition, indubitably, has contributed to the development of our literature. Literature has developed immeasurably since early forms of short stories and poems emerged in Greece” (Επισκοπόπουλος, Αστυ 800-01). Episkopopoulos’ devotion to musicality can be attributed to his conscious effort to manipulate the imagination of the readers—to take them into a realm that never was and perhaps could never be—by describing in detail either the visual boundaries of a room or the musical implications present in his language. Whatever the case, it appears that Episkopopoulos applies

41 [“Ai Neai Morphae tis Ellinikis Filologias”].
42 [“He Poietiki mias Kinesis”].
43 My translation of: «Μία ἄλλη πρόοδος ἀναμφισβήτητος τῆς φιλολογίας μας […] εἶνε ἡ εἰσόδος τῆς τεχνοτροπίας καὶ τῆς μουσικῆς αἷς τὴν γλῶσσαν καὶ τὴν σύνθεσιν. Ἀπὸ τὸν καιρὸν τῶν πρώτων Έλληνικῶν διηγημάτων καὶ θεαμάτων ἡ πρόοδος εἶνε ἀνυπολόγητος» (Επισκοπόπουλος, Αστυ 800-01).
musicality to his language structures because he evidently shares Poe’s views on the function of musicality in a work of art, a concept he applies to his fiction as well. It becomes clear that the correspondence between sound and language verse so apparent in Episkopopoulou’s fiction not only connects him to Poe and to the movement of aestheticism but also reveals Episkopopoulou’s artistry in applying rhyme to his fictional narratives.

The coherence of musicality, aestheticism and wordplay provide a unity of effect in Episkopopoulou’s prose fiction, similar to that in Poe’s well-wrought poetry and prose. Episkopopoulou’s prose poems then, just like those by Poe, allow the distinct expression of the characters’ feelings and lay emphasis on the characters’ psychological state, rather than engage them into vigorous action. As a matter of fact, intense physical action is not a characteristic of Episkopopoulou’s short narratives; on the contrary, Episkopopoulou’s protagonists find themselves in extreme situations that evoke terror. The way characters respond to these extreme situations helps us get a glimpse of their inner world. Admittedly, this evocation of terror not only accelerates the story’s tension but also indicates the Greek writer’s choice to apply Poe’s theoretical views to his short fiction in an attempt to transplant the aesthetic experience in the Greek literary scene. The terror emerging from the depths of the soul of Episkopopoulou’s characters could be easily depicted in a different language, but the cadence and musicality of the language that produce this effect is the result of genuine talent and not simply the result of imitation and mere influence. Evidently, Episkopopoulou has not only been significantly influenced by Poe’s writing concerns, but also proves his ability to apply them to his own language and writing thus manifesting his literary artistry. But beyond Episkopopoulou’s indebtedness to Poe’s
writing concerns there emerges another aspect common in the two writers, that of the creation of terror.

“Terror is not of Germany, but of the Soul” is Poe’s well-known quote that appears in the preface of his Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque; a collection of twenty-five stories, gathered into two volumes, that was first published by Lea & Blanchard in 1839. In indicating that terror is “of the soul,” Poe lays emphasis on the psychological nature of terror that is inherent in his writings. For Poe, soul is both the locus of terror and the “ground upon which it unfolds” (Tally, “Nightmare” 3). What stimulates real terror in Poe then is the “unknowable, the dim and gloomy sense that what is at first merely unfamiliar and perplexing is actually inscrutable, something that we do not, and cannot ever really, understand” (Tally, “Nightmare” 3, emphasis in original). This is not to imply that physical terror is not generated through Poe’s writings; the collapse of mansions, the premature burials and the ensuing resurrections create an atmosphere of mystery that terminates in death and terror. Poe, however, reinforces these sentiments by invoking terror that is, in Clive Bloom’s words, “more closely associated with the mind” (3). Terror, in Poe’s literary universe, takes an inward turn emanating from and resulting in the characters’ inner realms.

With terror being an aspect that connects Episkopopoulos with Poe, one can argue that the psychological component of terror in their writings manifests itself in the characters’ extreme psychological states. The prominence given on the characters’ soul indubitably suggests that not much action takes place within the stories. Both authors focus on the terrors created by the minds of the protagonists rather than on physical action taking place in the haunted corridors of large mansions. A number of Poe’s and Episkopopoulos’ tales constitute monologues with no real action as is Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Black Cat” and “Morella,” to mention just some of the
most famous ones, and so are Episkopopoulos’ «Μαύρα», «Ο ἱππότης Μαξ» and «Ἡ ἀπολογία».44 In some of these tales, perhaps most notably in «Μαύρα» the inability of an individual to come to terms with another character that represents an aspect of the narrator’s own personality is thrown into sharp relief.

What characterizes Episkopopoulos’ short stories is their exploration of extreme psychological states; the narrators or chief characters are often neurotic, strange, mysterious, or undergo some excruciating suffering of the soul (Σαχίνης, Αισθητισμός 180). Episkopopoulos’ writing then privileges the character’s inner state of mind over physical action and incident. Action, in Episkopopoulos’ fiction, involves yielding to the characters’ inner state of mind (Δάλλας, Ευρυγώνια 24-25; Μαυρέλος, «Παρουσίαση» 19). That which invokes terror for Episkopopoulos is therefore mental; it is the effect of his attempts to explore the psychological states and subjective perceptions of the individual. Like Poe who “undeniably create[s] terror rooted in the mind” (Fisher, Introduction 24), Episkopopoulos focuses on the narrators’ perceptions and observations of a crumbling intellect rather than of a crumbling castle. The effect produced is not the result of physical, but of psychological terror that reveals the characters’ perverted state of mind and soul. This also encourages the readers to penetrate the narrator’s mind and join him in his fear of being pushed to insanity.

In addition to the dimension of terror, I intend to examine those motifs and themes in Poe that recur in Episkopopoulos’ fiction in order to provide an appropriate comparative context for the investigation of Poe’s influence on the Greek writer. In what follows, I will focus on a Poe-related motif that manifests itself in

44 [“He apologia”].
3.4 Fantastic Desire: Poe, Episkopopoulos and the Death-of-a-Beautiful-Woman Motif

A remarkable number of feminine figures inhabits Episkopopoulos’ narratives; these figures weave a spell over male protagonists, gaze intently at their lovers, perish unexpectedly or mysteriously and seduce the male characters. More precisely, in some of Episkopopoulos’ stories, women are the main protagonists, whilst in others women play a much smaller role. Some of Episkopopoulos’ stories feature delicately beautiful and erotically desirable women, while others represent emaciated and prone to death heroines. Some of Episkopopoulos’ fictional female characters lack individual development and pass silently from this life, rarely expressing their sentiments; yet, the whole story revolves around them as they become the object of fear and desire of the male protagonists. Others have a mind of their own, they suffer doubtful deaths and ensuing resurrections and return from the dead as active agents to inspire fear and terror.

Whatever the case, upon a close reading of the texts in which women appear, one can come into the following conclusion: Episkopopoulos’ male protagonists may idealize women, obsess over women, sublimate women, disfigure women, objectify women, often deny voice to women and they eventually kill women. Women undoubtedly play an integral part in Episkopopoulos’ art and especially fatal women who dominate the story despite being silent or subtle. This is where Episkopopoulos’ literary merit and indebtedness to Poe lies: the image of mysterious and fatal women emerges in his writings in a similar way it does in the American writer’s works. To illustrate Episkopopoulos’ fictional representation of women more precisely, I will
focus on two of Episkopopoulos’ most celebrated female characters: Myrrha in “Ut Dièse Mineur” and Mavra in the synonymous story as they bear a close resemblance to Poe’s dark ladies.

My contention is that representations of femininity in “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα» embody the aesthetic ideal of an erotically desirable woman who allures the narrator with some kind of supernatural power; as such, in the two stories women play no major part and they appear as simple objects of desire but also of fear while they lack individuality; they are only there in order to serve the representation of the narrator’s emotional excesses the objects of their ultimate fear and of suppressed desire at once. Instead of simply fulfilling male desires, Myrrha and Mavra, in my opinion, also stand for mystery and strangeness as their existence poses a riddle for the narrators. Even though they carry an ethereal and mystifying quality, both Myrrha and Mavra die, and Mavra even returns in some form to haunt the male protagonist. In any case, Episkopopoulos’ fictional treatment of women has special significance as it leads to the development of a literary motif that of the beautiful, erotic, exotic, less tied to the mundane world woman who perishes at the end. It is here that I find a strong connection with Poe who, as it is well known, has been very consistent in his exploration of women as figures of death and desire. Poe’s Ligeias, Morellas, Madelines and Berenices all sicken, suffer doubtful deaths and eventually perish.45 In the context of Episkopopoulos’ short fiction, Myrrha, like Berenice who is of “gorgeous, yet fantastic beauty!” (Poe, Tales: 1 210), is beautiful but gets brutally

45 In order to understand Poe’s obsession with female characters, one ought to consider his biography and the multiple deaths of his beloved ones; Poe has suffered the loss of his mother, Eliza Poe; his foster mother, Fanny Allan; the mother of one of his friends, Jane Stanard; and of his own spouse, Virginia Clemm. Further information can be found in Fisher, The Cambridge Introduction to Edgar Allan Poe; Hayes, Edgar Allan Poe; and Hutchisson, Poe.
murdered at the end of the tale. Mavra, like Madeline Usher, suffers from a fatal illness but resists death.

Episkopopoulos’ representation of these female characters exemplifies his philosophy of beauty and relates closely to Poe’s ideas concerning the death of a beautiful woman. It might help to recall at this point Poe’s philosophy of beauty. In “The Philosophy of Composition” Poe defines beauty as, “the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul” (Essays 16). Beauty, for Poe, is ideal; he regards beauty not as a quality belonging to an object, but as an emotional effect. As Rafey Habib explains, “[beauty] is a response caused in the reader or listener by the literary object or poem” (464). In speaking about beauty’s “highest manifestation” (Essays 17), Poe alludes to the tone of melancholy: “[b]eauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones” (Essays 17). Poe here defines the melancholy tone of beauty as an effect.

This leads to Poe’s well-known view that the saddest thing, and, hence, the most beautiful, is the death of a beautiful woman. When it comes to Poe’s fictional ladies, his theory of beauty being paired with sadness and death becomes evident. To prove his point, Poe alludes to the poet and to the state he finds himself in when he loses a lover (Magistrale 10). While the death of a woman generates grief, it arouses a supreme sense of self-awareness to the poet. Each time the poet reflects with sadness upon his lost love then, another type of beauty, a sorrowful one, is created (Magistrale 10). Karen Weekes’ observation is particularly instructive in this regard: “[t]he woman must die in order to enlarge the experience of the narrator, her viewer” (148). Consider, for example, Berenice who attracts Egaeus’ attention when she becomes sick and emaciated. It is then that Berenice ironically becomes increasingly beautiful
and her lips redden and become more desired as her skin pales. Poe here suggests that through the physical transformation, women attain an eternal beauty and theoretically at least the corpse of the dead woman briefly incarnates ideality. Since death presupposes physical decay, then beauty becomes intertwined with death and terror.

The conflation of beauty with misery and disease, in my opinion, supplies Episkopopoulos with an aesthetic rationale for his fascination with dying women and provides links with Poe’s own theory on beauty. By killing off his ethereal ladies, Episkopopoulos establishes a close connection between eternal beauty, misery and illness that is firmly entrenched in the aesthetic philosophy: for the proponents of the movement of aestheticism and, of course for Episkopopoulos, beauty is aligned with sorrow, decay and even infirmity (Αραμπατζίδου 19). The character of Myrrha in “Ut Diène Mineur” is unparalleled in demonstrating the conjunction between death, the principles of the aesthetic movement and Poe’s fictional portrayal of women: she presents a spectacle at once irresistible and unbearable for the male protagonist. She also becomes a receptacle for the narrator’s angst and guilt, a tabula rasa on which the narrator inscribes his needs and emotional excesses.

In addition to accentuating Episkopopoulos’ exceptional way of representing women in his writings, the conjunction of death, the principles of the aesthetic movement and Poe’s female ideal also throw into relief the complicated relation between female and male characters. In this respect, it is quite interesting to keep in mind the character who speaks and the character who is silenced. It is the male character who enacts, while the female is presented to be the recipient of violence that objectifies and dismantles her. The objectification of female characters and the seeming superiority of male heroes are enhanced by the point of view through which several of Episkopopoulos’ storytellers narrate the story. As a point in fact,
Episkopopoulos uses first-person narrators in several of his short stories whose subjective point of view is flawed in some way, thus compelling the readers to cast the narrators’ authority into doubt. The majority of Episkopopoulos’ first-person narrators describe the story’s events but fail to recognize important elements in the narrative, thereby obliging readers to fill in the missing associations the narrators fail to observe and therefore report. Episkopopoulos’ use of this device may have derived from Poe who “was a master of the first-person point of view, which he used in many of his most famous tales” (Hayes, *Journey* 4). According to Hayes,

[Poe’s] innovative use of the first-person point of view may represent his most influential contribution to the history of narrative. He created narrators the like of which literature had never seen. The first person voice naturally fosters a sense of emotional identification between the narrator and the reader. In Poe’s stories, readers accept this relationship with mixed feelings of revulsion and fascination. (*Journey* 76)

Consider, for instance, Poe’s “The Black Cat” (1845) that is narrated by a man who has been embroiled in a series of violent acts against his wife and against what he loves most at the story’s onset, his cat. The easiness with which the narrator relates how he has axed his wife to death, how methodically he has interred her in a false chimney in the cellar and how confidently he has invited the policemen to search the cellar endows the tale with an upsetting immediacy that exalts the readers’ anxiety (Hayes, *Journey* 76). Axe murderers, to quote Alfred Bendixen, “do not make reliable narrators” (11); a technique that allows Poe to fuse both factual pieces of information that often appear to have been taken from a police report with the doubts and the emotional upheavals of the character who performs the act.
“The Cask of Amontillado” (1846) is another of Poe’s first-person stories told from the point of view of a psychopath, Montresor. The latter betrays his unreliability almost at the beginning of the narrative, as he announces his intention of avenging himself upon Fortunato and even prides himself on having successfully accomplished that. The fact that Poe’s vindictive narrator never acknowledges the motive behind his act and expresses no remorse for his murder not only betrays his blind perspective but also allows readers to penetrate the narrator’s psychotic mind. Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart” also provides an insider’s view of a madman. The narrator reveals his unreliability early in the narrative through his emphatic assertion that he is sane and by recounting the details of his dreadful crime. The narrator-protagonist confidently relates how he has smothered an old man for no apparent reason, dismembered the body and placed it under the floorboards. The coolness with which the narrator relates how carefully he has committed the crime and most importantly his anguish to convince the readers of his sanity give the tale a disturbing immediacy.46

Like Poe who, in Soltysik-Monnet’s words, “uses unreliable narrators in virtually all of his stories” (Politics 35), Episkopopoulos creates tales where the narrator also betrays his unreliability and hints to his insanity early in the story. We can turn to “Ut Dièse Mineur” for a moment to appreciate how this specific device works. “Ut Dièse Mineur” is narrated from the perspective of a man who commits homicide with no justifiable motive and thereby both his reliability and his sanity are challenged. By providing an inside perspective of the perverted killer’s mind, his own

46 A distinction should be made between Poe’s fantastic and “grotesque” tales. The point is that Poe’s fantastic tales are always narrated in the first person (Todorov, Genres 100). Such is the case in “The Black Cat” “William Wilson,” “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “Berenice” and so forth (Todorov, Genres 100). On the other hand, Poe’s “grotesque” tales are always narrated in the third person (Todorov, Genres 100). Such is the case in “Lionizing,” “Hop-Frog”, “King Pest,” “Four Beasts in One,” “Some Words with a Mummy,” “The Masque of the Red Death” and so forth (Todorov, Genres 100). For the purposes of this chapter, I read Poe’s fantastic tales in relation to Episkopopoulos’ “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα» which are recounted in the first person.
mind, and by revealing no feelings of remorse for his act, the first-person voice makes readers severely question his sanity as a character and consequently his reliability as a narrator.

Similarly to Poe’s Montresor, the narrator in “Ut Dièse Mineur” not only does he feel any compunction about having killed Myrrha, he also perceives Myrrha’s murder as a successful act of punishment rather than crime. Another instance of a flawed first-person narration occurs in «Μαύρα» wherein the readers are privy to the observations of a man who admits his defective and disordered nature from the beginning of the story. Almost emulating Poe’s Usher and Egaeus, Episkopoulos’ gloomy and meditative narrator suffers from an unusual attentiveness a fact that enhances the readers’ uneasiness and raises questions with regard to the narrator’s credibility.

In “Ut Dièse Mineur” and in «Μαύρα», as well as in other short stories by Episkopoulos, the main narrator of the story remains anonymous. By doing so, Episkopoulos may be emulating Poe who tends to leave most of his narrators nameless, as evidenced in “The Fall of the House of Usher,” “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Oval Portrait,” “Morella,” “Ligeia,” “The Masque of the Red Death” and the Dupin trilogy, to name just a few of Poe’s stories. For Benjamin Fisher, Poe through his unnamed characters wants to show that these characters and the circumstances they become involved in can easily “have universal appeal” (Introduction 31).47 Similarly to Poe, Episkopoulos’ purpose is probably not to depict a standard type of character and delineate events that occur to specific people at specific places and times; instead, Episkopoulos aims at focusing on the characters’ psychological state, an issue which may prove of universal application and therefore does not

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47 This only applies to Poe’s “arabesque” tales. In his “grotesque” and “tales of ratiocination” both setting and time are recognizable (Hoffman, “Grotesques” 10).
distract his readers’ attention with redundant character information following Poe’s example.

It can also be surmised that Episkopopoulos’ tendency to present people completely dissociated from any personal or geographically identifiable context could also be emblematic of his cosmopolitan ideology and his awareness of European literary theories; his cosmopolitan outlook could have prevented him from creating fiction that would be confined to Greek themes or stereotypical Greek characters. Echoing Poe’s writings most of which are unrelated to themes, settings and characters in possession of an American “identity,” Episkopopoulos wishes to illustrate characters, situations and events that have a universal endurance and any reader could relate to. Episkopopoulos does not seem to be interested in his character’s identity or prior history but simply in the depth of their character’s soul. Evidently, the effect achieved by Episkopopoulos in his narratives is that his personas, even though unnamed and unreliable, acquire a dynamic of their own and fascinate readers with their demented interior realms.

Episkopopoulos’ use of first-person narrators is also a suitable condition for the appearance of the fantastic in his tales. As Todorov avers, the fantastic “requires doubt” (Fantastic 83). In reading stories of the fantastic, readers usually face a dilemma: they do not know whether they are supposed to trust or distrust the stories’ events (Todorov, Fantastic 83). The hesitation that stories of the fantastic opt for is at times created by the narrative voice. The stories of the fantastic are mostly told in first-person narrative (Todorov, Fantastic 82). While the narrator’s sentences usually have an assertive form, they are not assertions in the strict sense since they do not meet one important prerequisite: the test of truth (Todorov, Fantastic 82). “The speech of the characters can be true or false,” Todorov maintains; “[t]he problem
becomes more complex in the case of a narrator-character—a narrator who says ‘I’. As narrator, his discourse is not subject to the test of truth; but as a character, he can lie” (Fantastic 83). Thus it is not surprising that “represented” (“dramatized”) narrators are frequently employed in the fantastic (Todorov, Fantastic 83). They are more suitable to the fantastic in contrast to characters who can “easily lie” (Todorov, Fantastic 83). The hesitation of the protagonist of the fantastic is sustained through the fusion between narrator and character.

Todorov’s theory helps make sense of several of Episkopopoulos’ stories that are told by “represented” (“dramatized”) narrators (Δάλλας, Ευρυγώνια 26). In several of Episkopopoulos’ stories, the narrator habitually says “I”. The first-person narrator permits the readers to identify with the character and sustains the feeling of hesitation the fantastic aims to achieve. The hero in «Μαύρα», for instance, is an average man in whom almost every reader can recognize himself; yet, he is also the narrator of the story. Thus, the strange events of «Μαύρα» are narrated by someone who is one of the heroes of the story as well as its narrator. This confronts readers with a dilemma as to whether they should believe or not since, “a character can lie, the narrator must not” (Todorov, Fantastic 85). This is a condition for the appearance of the fantastic in Episkopopoulos’ stories. As it frequently happens in the fantastic, the hesitation of the protagonist is achieved and spread to the readers through the conflation between narrator and character.

It is this hesitation and ambiguity of Episkopopoulos’ story that contributes to its richness and relates to Poe’s tales, the majority of which “derive their effect from the uncanny” (Todorov, Fantastic 48), as I will discuss later in the current chapter. In order to situate Episkopopoulos’ works in the context of the fantastic, it is crucial to probe into a comparative analysis of major themes and motifs in Episkopopoulos’ and
Poe’s short stories. The close reading of Poe’s and Episkopopoulou’s texts will highlight the ease with which Poe’s literary artistry informs the Greek writer’s short fiction.

3.5 Episkopopoulou’s Τρελλά Διηγήματα: “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα»

In the following analysis I will consider Episkopopoulou’s “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα» alongside Poe’s tales of terror and demonstrate that they pull together Poe’s death-of-a-beautiful-woman motif, Poe-related themes and devices such as the claustrophobic house, the hypersensitive narrator, the passive and debilitated heroine, the mysterious and electrifying relationship between the two siblings and multiple mysterious occurrences that culminate in the return of a ghostly character and the eventual collapse of the protagonists. Of all the stories that belong to Episkopopoulou’s collection, I have chosen to discuss “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα» as they are emblematic of Episkopopoulou’s indebtedness to Poe, especially since they focus on characters with demented psychological conditions such as self-destructive impulses and perverted psyches. In addition to demonstrating Episkopopoulou’s indebtedness to Poe, “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα» are important from a literary perspective; these tales constitute the first instances of aestheticism as it maneuvers through the final decade of the nineteenth century in Greece.

Read in relation to Episkopopoulou’s aesthetic concerns, “Ut Dièse Mineur” prefigures by several years the writing of his critical principles, but offers an instance of synaesthesia with the merging of multiple senses. “Ut Dièse Mineur,” as he titles

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48 For Δάλλας, the short stories are titled as such since most of them are typified by a pervasive sense of madness; madness either props the movement of the story or results from action (Ευρυγώνια 19).
49 In addition to “Ut Dièse Mineur” and «Μαύρα», the collection Τρελλά Διηγήματα comprises of the following stories: «Ο ιππότης Μαξ» (1894), «Η μητέρα γη» [“He mitera gi”] (1894), «Στή θάλασσα» [“Sti thalassa”] (1894), «Ο έφιάλτης» [“O eflatis”] (1894), «Τό φιλό το ηλίου» [“To filo tou Heliou”] (1894), «Η αἰονία γονή» [“He aeonia gini”] (1895), and «Στο Θάνατο» (1900).
this story, is most probably linked to Beethoven’s sonata inspired by the composer’s unrequited love for his pupil Giulietta Guicciard. The plot developing along the lines of Beethoven’s music perfectly complements the plot in “Ut Dièse Mineur” thus creating a remarkable aesthetic effect. Beyond its aesthetic import, Episkopopoulo’s story depicts a world of gross distortion of violent and immoral behavior. In fact, it is a tale of homicide that owes much to Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843). Similarly to Poe’s story, “Ut Dièse Mineur” represents an immoral male-protagonist who commits a murder in cold-blood. In the narrator’s distorted moral world, the heroine’s eyes are the cause of his obsession and hatred as well as the justification of his revulsion, as is the case in “The Tell-Tale Heart.” The description of the female protagonist’s eyes and her entire physical appearance is a defining feature in the story for it allows Episkopopoulo to relate a gripping story of terror under the guise of aestheticism. In addition to providing an insider’s view of the murderer’s mind, “Ut Dièse Mineur” also revolves around the character of Myrrha, a beautiful, sustaining, illuminating, yet voiceless presence. Through the character of Myrrha, Episkopopoulo is reiterating a connection both with the movement of aestheticism as well as with Poe’s feminine ideal. For nearly the first page and a half of this tale, the male protagonist describes Myrrha in detail, with whom presumably the narrator has a love obsession. Like several of Poe’s heroines and much like Berenice who is

50 Myrrha’s name is subject to varying interpretations. Arambatzidou and Kalliopi Ploumistaki suggest that it could either evoke the Greek word «μύρα» [myrra] meaning “perfumes” or the Greek word «μοίρα» [moira] meaning “fate.” In the first case, Myrrha’s name connotes lust and feminine vanity, whilst in the second Myrrha’s name is indicative of the impending fatal event of the story (Αραμπατζίδου 189; Ploumistaki 184). In my view, Myrrha’s name is a fine example of Episkopopoulo’s carrying over into his prose fiction the lyrical effects that are associated with poetry. As I mention above, Episkopopoulo’s fictional writings are more like prose rhythmical poems rather than rigid prose narratives. In this story, Episkopopoulo develops his philosophy that the artwork’s literary form and its idea or, as he says, its lyrics should be in perfect harmony. In choosing a name that alludes to a sensory output, the Greek author probably wishes to endow his heroine with certain characteristics, sensual, pleasing, beautiful and erotic; attributes that are closely aligned both with the story’s central theme and its aesthetic concerns. Whatever the case, the Greek transcription of the heroine’s name—«Μύρρα» [Myrrha]—is closer to the word “perfume.”
described as being a woman of “gorgeous, yet fantastic beauty!” (Poe, *Tales*: 1 210), Myrrha is also of outstanding beauty; she is presented possessing a delicate figure, with “full scarlet lips” and “large lustrous eyes,” that gleam in the candlelight (Επισκοπόπουλος 246). By using particular language conventions—large eyes, round mouth, delicate postures—conventions that, according to Kathy Alexis Psomiades, pertain to the movement of aestheticism (7), Episkopopoulos manages to represent Myrrha as a seductive object of adoration.

The presentation of Myrrha’s ethereal beauty is not coincidental but a rather succinct expression of Episkopopoulos’ aesthetic concerns. Myrrha represents the aesthetic female ideal that perceives woman as an “irresistible object of desire” (Psomiades 4). Myrrha is as remarkable for her beauty as for her ability to allure the narrator. Indeed, she maintains a remarkable power over the narrator who cannot resist her, even though he wishes to. As he admits: “I cannot see anything, I cannot listen to anything but be eternally intoxicated by and long for her love” (Επισκοπόπουλος 245).51 The narrator falls a powerless victim of the beautiful Myrrha who functions more as an object of adoration rather than as an active participant in the story. Being an incarnation of the aestheticist object of adoration, Myrrha lacks a basic quality: a voice. In keeping with the principles of aestheticist writing that aims at generating an intense visual and sensual effect in the readers, Episkopopoulos does not add depth to Myrrha’s character. Much like many Poe’s heroines, Ligeia, Madeleine, Berenice to name only a few, Myrrha remains voiceless throughout “Ut Dièse Mineur”; in his tendency to objectify Myrrha as a composition of aesthetic attributes and associations, Episkopopoulos also endows her with an air of mystery and enchantment.

51 My translation of: «μέ δεκαμε νά μή βλέπω τίποτε, τίποτε νά μή άκουω, καὶ νά μεθύω αιώνιος και νά διψῶ τόν έρωτά της» (Επισκοπόπουλος 245).
This atmosphere of strangeness is evident in the description of Myrrha’s eyes, a description reminiscent of Poe’s descriptions of Ligeia in the synonymous story. Lady Ligeia is depicted as having large and extraordinary dark expressive eyes that chiefly fascinate the narrator who devotes a lengthy description to them: “Those eyes! Those large, those shining, those divine orbs!” (Poe, Tales: 1 313). Apparently, Ligeia’s eyes assume an exceptional size and, as Elisabete Lopes notes, “constitute indeed the uncanny body part that triggers the suspicion that Ligeia stands for more than what is shown. Thus the expression of Ligeia’s eyes becomes a riddle to be deciphered, a challenge that persists obsessively in the narrator thoughts” (Lopes 41-42). Admittedly, Ligeia’s expression is what chiefly fascinates the narrator and requires to be deciphered. The reason is that Ligeia’s eyes are endowed with an uncanny quality that cannot be easily explained by the male hero in his quest to interpret the mystery that they evoke, the narrator equates the eyes with the Democritus well: “What was it—that something more profound than the well of Democritus—which lay far within the pupils of my beloved” (Poe, Tales: 1 313). By identifying Ligeia’s eyes with the well of Democritus, the narrator is figuratively talking about death that entails an absence, an abyss (Lopes 42). In this respect, the mystery surrounding the heroine’s eyes stands for death, a recurrent theme in Poe’s work.\(^{52}\)

The atmosphere of death and strangeness that Ligeia’s eyes trigger can be aligned with Episkopopoulos’ “Ut Dièse Mineur.” As is the case in “Ligeia,” Myrrha’s eyes epitomize her beauty and even evoke an air of strangeness. Episkopopoulos endows his fictional Myrrha with strangeness for we are told that “her large and lustrous eyes symbolize her volition and surpassing beauty”

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\(^{52}\) For a complete discussion of Poe’s literary treatment of death, see Kennedy, *Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing*. 
Ineffable and inscrutable, Myrrha’s large and expressive eyes reflect her strong will which underpins her dynamic presence in the story. Throughout the story, Myrrha stares intently at the narrator who cannot realize why he feels so attracted to her. The way Myrrha’s eyes challenge the narrator with their reiterated strangeness suggests a connection to Poe’s Ligeia; the physical consistency of both Ligeia and Myrrha creates an aura of strangeness when the texts are read in succession. It is as if Episkopopoulos is trying to textually represent the image of Myrrha as a figure of beauty, desire and mystery, an object inspiring desire and fear at the same time, a figure emblematic of most Poe’s heroines. In addition to revealing his indebtedness to Poe, the portrayal of Myrrha reveals Episkopopoulos’ ability to pollinate Greek writing of the time with exceptionally strong and mysterious female characters.

It is precisely the force emanating from Myrrha’s eyes that affects the narrator tremendously. Myrrha’s eyes do not stand for mystery but exert a powerful force that irritates the narrator similar to the force exerted by the old man’s eyes in Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart.” In the latter, the narrator admits that “it was not the old man who vexed me [narrator], but his Evil Eye” (Poe, Tales: 2793). The old man’s penetrating eye forms the main cause for the narrator’s repugnance; in order to get rid of it, the lunatic narrator decides to kill the old man. It is only when the old man’s eye opens that the narrator confronts it. Similarly to the “Tell-Tale Heart” in which the “wide open” eye motivates the narrator to attack the old man, in “Ut Dièse Mineur” it is Myrrha’s playful look that enrages the narrator: “The outrage, the fury and the idea of murder started to spring into my highly-strung nerves. Her luminous eyes and her

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53 My translation of: «Τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς τόσον μεγάλους καὶ ὑγροὺς, σύμβολον τῆς θελήσεως καὶ τῆς ισχίος τῆς καλλονῆς της» (Επισκοπόπουλος 246).
insensitivity made me go berserk” (Επισκόποπουλος 250). Not only does Myrrha’s look infuriate the narrator, it also provides an irresistible urge for him to murder her. While the narrator vaguely insinuates to Myrrha’s alleged unfaithfulness as the source of his indignation, it is Myrrha’s electrifying gaze that finally exasperates him to the point of committing a murder, similarly to “The Tell-Tale Heart” in which the old man’s gaze becomes the source for the narrator’s indignation.

As I suggest in the previous section, in the narrator’s warped moral universe, Myrrha’s eyes justify her murder. Yet, it is the mounting intensity of Beethoven’s sonata, which Myrrha is playing on the piano, that makes the narrator lose control and strangle Myrrha. Episkopopoulos here draws on the notion of correspondences between the senses in order to elaborate on the instance of synaesthesia; in other words, Episkopopoulos describes the climax which the narrator’s intense feelings reach in relation to the sonata’s crescendo notes. This correspondence between music and exasperating sentiments, in my opinion, is reminiscent of “The Tell-Tale Heart” wherein the special imagery and the wordplay create a background music-rhythm that mirrors the narrator’s heart beating. The musical implications inherent in Poe’s language as well as the effect that the specific sound has upon the narrator become apparent the moment the narrator reaches the old man’s room:

And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stool still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me—the sound

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54 My translation of: «Εἰς τὰ διατεταμένα μέχρι τῶν νεχρῶν νεόρα μου ἡ παραφορά καὶ ἡ λύσσα, καὶ ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ ἐγκλήματος ἐκορυφώθησαν. Ἡ λάμψεις ἐκείνη ἡ ζωόδης τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τῆς, καὶ ἡ αναισθησία τῆς μέ κατέστησαν ἐκφρονά» (Επισκόποπουλος 250).
would be heard by a neighbor! The old man’s hour had come!

(Poe, Tales: 2795)

The protagonist’s perception of having heard a peculiar sound in the middle of the night, his vigorous attempts to get rid of it and his eventual realization that the noise is growing louder all point to the intensity of the narrator’s feelings. Put it this way, the constantly growing sound of the heartbeat aligns with the speaker’s own heartbeat and his subsequent mounting hysteria. The specific language structures and the choice of words create a background rhythm that corresponds to and throws the narrator’s agony and fury into sharp relief.

In Episkopopoulos’ case, the language used creates a background tune that exemplifies the male protagonist’s feelings. Episkopopoulos goes a step further and enhances the language effect by conflating it with an imaginary music motif that enhances the effect the story has on the reader. As evinced by the story’s title, this connection between sound and feeling is accomplished through Beethoven’s sonata played by Myrrha on the piano. As I mention above, the particular sonata by Beethoven centers on the composer’s unrequited love for his pupil Giulietta Guicciard. This piano sonata is characterized by its fierceness; interestingly, the sonata’s finale is extremely unconstrained in its representation of emotion. The sonata’s function in the story is to amplify the narrator’s feeling as well as allow the writer to construct a much more synthesizing story structure. As a consequence, the narrator imagines that the composer’s exacerbation corresponds to his own feelings as well. The sonata’s melody makes the narrator increasingly irritated and angry: “I was filled with indignation and sadness for this woman, the legendary one, who instilled
passion into this great musician” (Επισκοπόπουλος 248). The more the narrator listens to the sonata, the more he sees himself in it believing that the sounds correspond to his own fury that is clearly manifested through the harsh sounds that the narrator hears. Towards the sonata’s finale the sound becomes even wilder as

[in a twitchy sort of way, her fingers pressed the piano keys

[…] fast, fierce sounds came out, sounds that abruptly became softer. They were tears, fervent tears, spasms, tears of abandonment, tears of rage accompanied by screams of despair and cries of revolt. (Επισκοπόπουλος 248)

The narrator’s sentiments are in accordance with the gruesome tones of Beethoven’s sonata. At this point, the narrative causes finely tuned effects on the nerves of the male protagonist thus creating an interesting play with music and language. Like Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart,” wherein the sound of the heartbeat results in the storyteller’s final outburst, the increasing fierceness of Beethoven’s sonata results in a similar explosion on the part of Episkopopoulos’ narrator. Beethoven’s sonata then creates a sustained crescendo of encroaching dread in the face of an imminent catastrophe. At the sonata’s dénouement, the narrator strangles Myrrha to death, in an ardent and exalted vein.

The narrators’ easiness in committing the crime prompts me to consider Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe further. What links Episkopopoulos’ narrator to Poe’s narrators is their unreliability. Narrators can be unreliable in a number of ways, but the narrator in “Ut Dièse Mineur” is unreliable in one specific way: like the

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55 My translation of: «Καὶ ἐμὲ κατέλαβεν ἄγανακτησις καὶ λύπη κατὰ τῆς γυναικὸς ἐκείνης τῆς ἱστορικῆς, ὥστε ἀπόσπασαν ἐκ τοῦ στήθους τοῦ μεγάλου ἐκείνου μουσικοῦ τὸν ὅψισιν ἐκείνων γαγγομένων τοῦ πάθους» (Επισκοπόπουλος 248).

56 My translation of: «Τὰ πλήκτρα ἐφετέραν τῶν ὑπὸ τὴν γοργὴν, τὴν τεταραγμένην περιοδείαν τῶν δακτύλων, καὶ ἀνέδιδον ἄρθρον […] ταχυτάτους, τελευτάντας, σφιννυμένους εἰς μικράν παράτασιν ἀπότομον. Ἡςαν δάκρυα, δάκρυα φλογερά, ἀπολήγοντα εἰς σπασμόν, δάκρυα ἐγκαταλείπεσον, δάκρυα λύσσης, συνοδευόμενα ὑπὸ κραυγῆν ἀπελπισίας, ὑπὸ φωνῶν ἐξεγέρσεως» (Επισκοπόπουλος 248).
majority of Poe’s narrators, and much more like the narrator in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” he has no scruples. From the beginning of the tale, the narrator declares that Myrrha has been unfaithful to him; nevertheless, the narrator does not provide any evidence for this allegation, a fact that renders his accusation unreliable. He seems more concerned with murdering Myrrha than finding out the truth. Not only does the morally myopic narrator commit his horrible crime, he also experiences an after-murder ease. As the cold-blooded and marble-hearted murderer says: “I was liberated, the anguished perversion of her face gave me eternal release…” (Επισκοπόπουλος 250). Guilt appears to the narrator a totally alienated agent since he ceases to feel the misery that Myrrha’s presumed infidelity has brought in and is freed forever; a feeling similar to the sense of freedom the storyteller in “The Tell-Tale Heart” experiences: “His eye would trouble me no more” (Poe, Tales: 2 796). Poe demonstrates the perversity of the human mind when it comes to the committing of acts without real justification; “the spirit of PERVERSENESS” as he confesses in “The Black Cat” overwhelms him, yet trying to get away with it at the same time (Tales: 2 852); the narrator defines perverseness as “this unfathomable longing of the soul to vex itself—to offer violence to its own nature—to do wrong for the wrong’s sake only—that urged [him] to continue and finally consummate the injury [he] had inflicted upon the unoffending brute” (Poe, Tales: 2 852, emphasis in original). As the narrator explains perverseness is a natural human quality; it suggests that all human beings sometimes engage into violent or illicit acts simply because they know they are not allowed to do so.

This is precisely what the narrator does in “The Black Cat” who indulges into all kinds of perverted acts just for the sake of committing them and he suffers no

57 My translation of: «καί δόλου τοῦ προσώπου τῆς τὴν ἁγιασάδοι διαστροφὴν ἢ ὁποία μοι ἀπέδιδε τὴν ἔλευθεριαν, μ’ ἐλύσατο διὰ παντός…» (Επισκοπόπουλος 251).
feelings of remorse. The narrator’s feelings a few days after he has pulled out the cat’s eye and killed his wife are instructive in this regard: “Once again I breathed as a freeman. The monster, in terror, had fled the premises for ever! I should behold it no more! My happiness was supreme! The guild of my dark deed disturbed me but little” (Poe, Tales: 2 858). In contrast to “The Black Cat” and “The Tell-Tale Heart,” Episkopopoulo’s story ends shortly after the murder has been executed without letting us know if the narrator feels guilt afterwards, nor if he has finally been arrested by the police. The moralizing tone implicit in “The Black Cat” and “The Tell-Tale Heart” is missing in Episkopopoulo’s story. This marks an important subversion for Greek storytelling standards: Episkopopoulo’s story deviates from realist writing that typically “encourages readers to […] organize their interpretations around the moral and psychological qualities of significant individuals in the narrative” (Glazener 22). In contrast to realist writing, the whole point in “Ut Dièse Mineur,” as in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” may be that the speaker has no moral sense at all, but unlike Poe’s story Episkopopoulo ends his story without the retributive justice noted in the American text. As I mention above, Episkopopoulo’s purpose is to create a thrilling effect for his readers rather than making them feel better about themselves or instructing them.

The story’s open-endedness, allowing for multiple interpretations on the part of the readers, exemplifies Episkopopoulo’s talent in making the story linger on the reader’s mind long after he has finished its perusal. As a result, Episkopopoulo’s writing departs from the didacticism of his predecessors investing more in the art of storytelling. Examining this from the point of view of aestheticism, one could claim that Episkopopoulo’s writing aims at evoking a particular atmosphere or describing a scene rather than teaching a moral value to his readers.
In another story of his entitled «Μαύρα», Episkopopoulos introduces his readers to another unnamed but equally sadistically disturbed narrator who is driven to destruction after witnessing his deceased sister returning from the dead. With respect to the story’s treatment of the macabre, Ντουνά suggests that it has been informed by Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” («Επισκοπόπουλος» 401). In a similar vein, Μαυρέλος suggests thematic ties between «Μαύρα» and Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” («Μαύρα» 14). It is my argument that at the level of surface plot one encounters in «Μαύρα» a story containing a number of themes and devices that are important to Poe: a claustrophobic house, a hypersensitive narrator, the passive and debilitated heroine, the mysterious and electrified relationship between the two siblings, and multiple mysterious occurrences that culminate in the return of a ghostly character and the eventual collapse of the protagonists, a fact that again evokes Poe’s motif. This physical resemblance of the two siblings as well as Mavra’s death and her ensuing resurrection are some of the themes that render Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe clear. But beyond its thematic import, «Μαύρα» resembles Poe’s story in the creation of growing tension and suspense. Throughout the story, suspense builds gradually, and the settings—the narrator’s dimly-lit room and Mavra’s shadowy chamber—create an atmosphere of mystery and impending horror that complements the story’s tone and provide a sense of coherence or wholeness. Appropriately, this suspense terminates in death and horror, as it happens in “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839) and “Berenice” that further highlight Episkopopoulos’ indebtedness to Poe.

From the start of the tale, the narrator-protagonist informs us of the peculiar state of mind he is in. Even though the speaker does not admit suffering from any particular illness, he confesses that he is in an emotional deterioration and experiences
an unusual attentiveness. He claims that he finds even the slightest sound or light intolerable. The narrator’s emotional condition immediately reminds the reader of Roderick Usher’s emotional turmoil in “The Fall of the House of Usher” and that of Egaeus’ in “Berenice,” already stated at the outset of the story:

I was bending over my desk, holding my head with my hands, with my eyes shut to avoid the irritating, annoying light radiating from the single candle that was lit. I was observing with curiosity the violent and fast pulsation of my meninx. My attention was riveted on the absurd parade of the thousand, bright, colorful illusions that went on before my hermetically shut eyes. I was pressing my fingers on them to keep them shut till they hurt. I felt a crushing pain in my head and my nerves were on edge. I was sitting there for a long time having vague thoughts at first while several ideas were crossing my mind; I was distracted by even the slightest, random sounds and I collected my train of thoughts again, scrutinizing everything, paying attention to everything. (Επισκοπόπουλος 319)

In his painfully stated prologue, the first-person narrator makes several things quite explicit: first, that his eyes are tortured by even a feeble gleam of light, second, that he is aware of his racing heartbeat and that he is in a hallucinatory state observing non-existing things passing before his eyes. Furthermore, the storyteller makes it clear that he is in a condition of intense nervous excitement; even the slightest sound can

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58 My translation of: «Εκαθήμεν ἐκεί πρὸ τοῦ γραφείου μου, μὲ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐστήριγμένην, βουθημένην ἐντὸς τῶν χερῶν μου, μὲ τοὺς οφθαλμούς κλεισμένους αἰς τὸ ἐρυθρότερον, τὸ ἐνυγχαλητικὸν φῶς τοῦ μόνου ἀνημμένου κηρίου, περιέργως παρακολουθών τὴν σφύξιν τῶν μυελίνων μου, θανωπὸν καὶ ταχυτύτηταν, προσηλωμένος εἰς τὴν παρέλασιν, τὴν ἀτακτικὴν, τὴν παράδοξον τῶν μυρίων ψυχικῶν ἑνδαμότων, τὰ ὁποία οἱ οφθαλμοὶ μου παρασκευητοῦντες ἠβλεπον πολύχρωμα καὶ φευγαλέα, κλεισμένοι ὡς ὦν, καὶ μέχρι πόνου πιεζόμενοι διὰ τῶν δακτύλων τῆς χειρὸς μου. Ἡ κεφαλῆς μου ἐπονεῖ ὡς νὰ τὴν συνοψιφικῶς πανταχῦν, καὶ τὰ νεφρὰ μου ἦσαν ἐκτάκτως ἐρευμένα. Εκαθήμεν ἐς τὰ πολλάς ἐκεῖ σκεπτόμενος κατὰ πρῶτον ἄφισσός, μὲ ὁδὸς διαφόρους διατρεχόμενος τὸν ἐγκέφαλον μου, διακοπτόμενος καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ελαχίστων τυχαίων κρότων καὶ ἐπανερχόμενος πάλιν, τὰ πάντα ἐξετάζων, προσέχων εἰς δίλα» (Επισκοπόπουλος 319).
become most disturbing to him. His mental state is far removed from that of normal reason or sense-experience. It is also apparent that the hero of the tale cannot tolerate any sensory experience at all and, consequently, has cut himself from any contact from the external real world that is replete with sounds and intense sensory stimuli. Like Poe who “us[es] the first-person narrator as observer-reporter rather than experincer lets the telling center on Roderick and his particular symptoms” (Shear 282), Episkopopoulos uses the first-person narrator as well so as to draw attention to his protagonist’s flawed and oversensitive physicality. What Episkopopoulos attempts here is not to instruct his readers about what is right or wrong but encourage them to gain an insight into human character and psychology. By doing so, his writing ushers the readers into the characters’ extreme psychological states and evokes Poe’s typical male protagonists.

Episkopopoulos’ main character is described as a reclusive Usher, who finds himself in a condition of similar nervous anxiety and appears to be tortured “by even a faint light” and “the odors of all flowers” that is the reason why he “[can] wear only garments of certain texture;” or even like Egaeus, whose malady results “in the contemplation of even the most common objects of the universe” (Poe, Tales: 1211). Both Roderick and Egaeus then appear to be completely withdrawn into their individual world of senses and so does Episkopopoulos’ narrator who is overwhelmed by an influx of senses that seem to acquire a vitality of their own. As a result of

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60 Egaeus suffers from monomania, a malady that causes him to become obsessed with trivial and material objects in his surroundings (Poe, Tales: 1211). As a result of his illness, Egaeus becomes fixated on Berenice’s teeth. For thorough information on Egaeus’ malady, see Montgomery, “Poe’s
being intolerant of the concrete physical world around him, the hero in «Μαύρα» is enclosed into his own world and spends time alone in reverie, much like Roderick Usher and Egaeus.

The narrator’s only contact with life is through his sister, Mavra, a figure the narrator regards with considerable dread and indignation. It is Mavra’s physical similitude to himself that constitutes the source of the protagonist’s indignation. The narrator and Mavra look very much alike that when the former looks at Mavra he claims he is looking at a mirror: “She bore a remarkable likeness to me. She was, like my ghost, my image, the eternal reflection of my countenance and her presence made me feel a vague uneasiness, a somewhat bad temper and agitation that quickly turned into resentment and deep aversion” (Επισκοπόπουλος 320).

The likeness the narrator and his sister share harks back to Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher” in which Madeline and Roderick Usher are twins and appear to be doomed to a catastrophic fate. Even though there is no clear indication that the relation between Mavra and her brother is one of mutual destruction, it is a fact that Mavra plays a considerable part in his melancholy.

Oriental Gothic: ‘Metzengerstein’ (1832), ‘The Visionary’ (1834), ‘Berenice’ (1835), the Imagination, and Authorship’s Perils.”

Mavra’s name is richly symbolic of her plight. The name “Mavra” derives from the Greek word «Μαύρα» [Mavra] that refers to the feminine gender of the Greek adjective «μαύρος» [mavros] that means “black”; “Mavra” could therefore be translated as “Blacky,” a black or dark complexioned girl. The black color in folklore has become associated with pessimism, melancholy and death. Given the nature of the tale, the name “Mavra” complements the story’s bleak and gloomy atmosphere and perhaps insinuates that the two brothers are doomed to death and destruction. The tragic nature of the protagonists, then, frames the story and infuses its title with a sense of gloom, death and decay. It might help to recall that Poe uses a special technique of naming his characters. Take, for example, Madeline who, according to Fisher, is named after the biblical Mary Magdalene. Madeline’s name could also suggest “lady of the house” or “tower of strength” (“Poe and the American Short Story” 29). Whatever Poe’s intentions are, he seems to have chosen names that have a special significance in his text; this is a technique the American author frequently employs in his writings. In any case, it seems that Episkopopoulos follows Poe’s technique with respect to the naming of his female characters or to the lack of naming his narrators, as I discuss above.

My translation of: «Εἰς ἄλα, εἰς ἄλα, ὡμοιώμεν καταπληκτικῶς. Ἡτο ἑκείνη, ὡς τὸ φάσμα μου, ἢ εἰκόν μου, ὁ αὐτός ἄντικατατηρησάμενος τῆς μορφῆς μου, καὶ μοι ἐπέφερεν ἡ παροισία τῆς ἀντιπαθείας ταύτης ἀρχής ἀδύνατον, ποιῶν ταύτῃ κακοδιάθεσιν καὶ ταραχὴν, ἐν γάρ τε ταχέως μετεβλήθη εἰς ἀντιπαθείαν καὶ βαθείαν ἀποστροφήν» (Επισκοπόπουλος 320).
It is not only Mavra’s face that torments the narrator; the narrator’s mood and condition is also aggravated by the fact that his sister is sensitive and susceptible to diseases. As the narrator describes, “[t]his thin and pale face with the luminous blue eyes, the ghostly footsteps, the odd and weird habits, the neurotic, hypersensitive and unhealthy nature” (Επισκοπόπουλος 319) is what vexes the narrator as well. Mavra’s ghost-like presence calls to mind Poe’s shadowy heroines: Lady Madeline suffers from a malady the symptoms of which are described as, “a settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character” (Poe, Tales: 1404). It is Madeline’s disease that brings her prematurely to the grave and it is from the same symptoms Berenice has also suffered; Berenice is inflicted with a disease “the most distressing and obstinate in its nature” that is diagnosed as “a species of epilepsy not infrequently terminating in trance itself” (Poe, Tales: 1211, emphasis in original). As Berenice grows ill, her dark hair turns yellow and her eyes seem lifeless and lusterless. It is her disease that leads Berenice to her mysterious demise.

Like Berenice and Ligeia, Mavra’s physical weakness appears to be bringing her to the grave, and according to the narrator, she is also subject to epileptic seizures: “the epileptic paroxysms which for me were terrible and horrific—not the result of epilepsy, I hope—included hysterical crises that would even lead to heart attack” (Επισκοπόπουλος 319-20). Since all the information about Mavra is filtered through the narrator’s eyes, one cannot tell with certainty whether Mavra suffers from epilepsy or whether the paroxysms described were as violent as represented by the

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63 My translation of: «Το αὐτό πρόσωπον λεπτόν καὶ λευκόν, μὲ διαυγές γαλαυγούς ὄρθιαμοις, ἢ αὐτή χαρακτηριστικῆ ἐλαφρότης τοῦ βαθισμάτος, ὡς φαντάσματος, αἱ αὕται ἔξεις παράξειν καὶ ἱδιάζουσα, ἢ αὐτή νευρικὴ φύσις, ὑπεραισθητος καὶ ἄσθενική» (Επισκοπόπουλος 319).
64 My translation of: «Οἱ τόσον ἀπαίσιοι καὶ φρικτοὶ δὴ ὡς ἐπιληπτικοὶ παροξυσμοὶ—ὅχι καθαρῶς επιληπτικοί, ἐλπιζόμενοι—καὶ εἰς αὐτήν εξεδήλωσαν ὕπο μορφήν κρίσεων ὑστερικῶν, ἐξενυμένων μέχρι συγκοπῆς» (Επισκοπόπουλος 319-20).
narrator; after all, the narrator himself introduces the element of subjectivity with the phrase “for me.” What is certain, however, is that from the beginning of «Μαύρα» the narrator yearns for his sister’s demise and repeatedly expresses his dislike towards her and their likeness. Unlike Roderick, who actually buries his sister alive, the narrator fosters only a deep wish for his sister’s destruction:

I wish Mavra did not exist, I wish she could just disappear. —
If only she drowned herself, if only she died! I whispered to myself. I quickly considered the improbability of such luck and soon I got disillusioned and realized that this would be impossible. She was only twenty years old and her illness was not life threatening … Unless something unexpected, something happened by chance. (Επισκοπόπουλος 321)65

Quite unexpectedly, however, the narrator’s wish is fulfilled when the servant maiden announces Mavra’s sudden death to her brother:

Overwrought with fear, the maid rushed into the room. I turned pale as I heard the news. —Your sister had a hysterical crisis, she said quickly. Hurry, right now… (Επισκοπόπουλος 321-22).66

The narrator appears thunderstruck by Mavra’s death; at first, he stands completely motionless; he cannot believe his luck: “I stood stock-still, staring into space and

65 My translation of: «Καί άμος ἤθελα νά μήν ὑπῆρξη ἡ Μαύρα, ἤθελα νά ἔξηφανιζετο, ἂν τοῦτο ἦτο ὑπάρχείν τάν. — Ἀν ἐπέδρα, ἀν ἐπέθανε! ἑρθόντος' κατ' ἑμαυτοῦ. ἄλλα ταχέως ἐπιθετείμην, ἐπὶ στημήν μεθυσμένη ὑπὸ τῆς τουταύτης ἀλόγους, ταχέως ἀνολογητώς τὸ ἀδύνατον τῆς τουταύτης καλοτυχίας. Ἡ ὑπό μόλις εἰκοσαετίς, καὶ κίνδυνον κανένα δὲν διέσχε ἢκ τῆς ἀσθενείας τῆς … Ἐκτός ἃν κανέν ἀπρόσπιτον, κανέν τοπηρόν συμβέλλεται ἐπηρετεῖτο» (Επισκοπόπουλος 321).

tapping my hand unconsciously on the table” (Επισκοπόπουλος 322). As soon as he realizes that his sister has indeed expired, he expresses his satisfaction by noting that: “I felt like laughing and I laughed heartily, perhaps too loudly” (Επισκοπόπουλος 322). However, the narrator’s joyful feelings are succeeded by feelings of guilt and remorse. These disagreeable feelings attain almost the proportions of repentance and horror with the narrator assuming that he is somehow responsible for Mavra’s death since he has subconsciously longed for it. At this point, the narrator gets to suffer from pangs of conscience and starts losing control.

The narrator’s overwrought state of mind threads its way through his external surroundings. Everything inside the narrator’s room seems to be animate mirroring the narrator’s physical and mental deterioration. The pairing between the narrator and his surroundings is sustained in the careful detailing of descriptions of the room. In the narrator’s disturbed mind, the candlelight starts to flicker so rapidly that the entire room gets illuminated: “The candlelight was rapidly flickering, and strong gleams of light made their way through the whole room fantastically and the shadows were dancing and everything was animate and anguished” (Επισκοπόπουλος 322). The narrator’s guilty conscience makes him feel ensnared inside the chamber; what is more, the story’s hero envisions everything in the room as if they are in motion.

What Episkopopoulos does here with so restricted a setting is to make every detail heighten the story’s suspense and create an atmospheric and thrilling effect. Maria Filippakopoulou discusses the interconnectedness between the setting and the character’s inner world by noting that: “[Episkopopoulos’] prose is characterized by

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67 My translation of: «Ἐμέ είμαι άκινητος, με τούς οφθαλμός ἰμνωγιμένους πολύ, ἄτενεις, παίζουν μηχανικῶς διὰ τῆς χειρός ἐπί τῆς τράπεζης» (Επισκοπόπουλος 322).

68 My translation of: «Μοῦ ἦλθε νὰ γελάσω, καὶ ἐγέλασα ἐκ χαρᾶς, πολὺ θορυβωδῶς ἰσως» (Επισκοπόπουλος 322).

69 My translation of: «Τὸ φῶς τοῦ κηρίου ἔπαλλε, ἔπαλλε τρελλά, καὶ συνεκλόνει εἰς ἐκλάμψεις πολὺ φωτεινῶς τὸ δομάτιον ὀλόκληρον φανταστικῶς, καὶ αἱ σκιαὶ ἔχόρευον, καὶ ἦτο τὸ πᾶν ἔμυσχον καὶ ἐγανίϊν» (Επισκοπόπουλος 322).
obsessive Poesque first-person narration foregrounding the effects of the surroundings on his characters” (“Poe” 43). Indeed, Episkopopoulos reinforces the description of the male character’s mental state, just like Poe who uses these detailed descriptions of the surroundings in order to create the kind of atmosphere that will preoccupy the readers’ mind, to the point of accepting everything as plausible, and reflect the protagonist’s state of mind. In a welter of guilt and confusion, the protagonist enters Mavra’s room. But crucially, like Poe’s narratives in which action usually occurs when the characters “either enter or exit a particular setting” (Fernández-Santiago 86), the hero’s entrance into Mavra’s cramped, dark and death-smelling place results in his destruction:

The crimsoned, still, gloomy, cold and even bloody light pervaded the chamber; the dark ash-colored shadows made their way through the corners of the room and the blemished white ones made their way through the light-colored lines of the objects. Everything is dead and still here. The gleam of the lamp with the crimsoned lampshade stood still and frozen. There was complete silence in the entire chamber; not even a gust of wind nor an insect’s buzz was there to disturb the air. The pile of furniture was antique, tattered and strangely covered with large sheeting.” (Επισκοπόπουλος 322)

This passage heightens the dark and morbid atmosphere enveloping Mavra’s room and the narrator’s sensations. The atmosphere in Mavra’s room is fraught with intimations of death and the narrator’s overwrought state of mind while it throws into

70 My translation of: «Ἔκωμι ἅξιον φῶς ἁκίνητον, σκοτεινόν, νεκρόν ώς διερχόμενον διὰ πάγων αἰματιρῶν, καὶ τὸ μαλακὸς σεικτόχρονος τῶν σκιῶν εἰς τὰς γονίας καὶ ὅλους ἁμαρτώς λευκὸν εἰς τὰς ἀνοικτοχρόνους γραμμὰς τῶν ἀντηκιμένων. Ὄλα νεκρά καὶ ἁκίνητα ἔδο. Ἡ φλόγα τοῦ λαμπτήρου με τὸ πορφυρόν ἅλαξιφωτόν, ἁκίνητος, παγιωμένη, ὅλον τὸ δωμάτιον σιγηλον, οὔτε πνοή ἁνέμου ἐφύσα, οὔτε βομβὸς ἐντόμου ἐδόνει τὸν ἀέρα. Σοφρός ἐπίπλουν παλαιῶν ἁμαρτῶν, παραδόξως σκηπτομένων διὰ μεγάλων καλυμμάτων φασματειδῶν» (Επισκοπόπουλος 322)
high relief the emotional explosions and horrors that are about to occur; the gleams of light suffice to engender such a frisson. The flickering gleams of light, highlighting the narrator’s befuddlement and nervousness, have pervaded the narrator’s room before; but now, in Mavra’s chamber, the light is “crimsoned,” “bloody” and “gloomy”: ominous words that prepare us for the death and silence that will follow. There are other qualities also that lend certain eeriness to the description. The “still gleam of the lamp” and the “silence” intensify this eeriness, as do the “antique” and “tattered” furniture. None of these things are represented as creating a vivid visual image of Mavra’s chamber; they are simply intended to evoke an impression of death and mirror Mavra’s cadaverous condition as well as the narrator’s affective impression and state of mind.

Episkopopoulos’ wordplay reinforces the parallel between the dwelling and its inhabitants. The Greek writer adumbrates a common Poe-like technique according to which the setting functions as “a metaphor for internal states” (Haggerty 93). The dilapidated mansion in Poe’s “The Fall of the House of Usher,” for instance, constitutes a brilliant example of setting playing a major role in the short story because it functions as a symbol of Roderick’s doomed and tragic life only to end along with the collapse of the house of Usher. Even though there is no allegorical connection between the house and the narrator in «Μαύρα», in my opinion, the chamber works as a mirror for the narrator’s warped mind; the description of the room builds up an atmosphere of impending horror and creates a sensation of claustrophobia in the story. As a matter of fact, one of the principal horrors lurking in «Μαύρα» is the narrator’s sense that there is no exit from the dimly illuminated labyrinth of Mavra’s bedroom. It is the description of Mavra’s bedroom that props the movement of the story, and allows a step-by-step progression to its climactic moment.
Having entered his diseased sister’s room, the narrator, conscious of his own vague terror and therefore the more apprehensive, moves towards Mavra’s bed with his attention being focused on his sister’s ghastly demeanor. As the emotionally overwrought protagonist approaches Mavra’s bed, as he penetrates deeper and deeper into the room, horror takes complete possession of his mind. In this ardent and exalted vein, Episkopopoulou’s narrator bends over his seemingly deceased sister only to find Mavra with her eyes open. Terrified, the narrator closes Mavra’s eyes and, in his attempt to alleviate his condition, he turns around, picks up a book and starts reading: “I read without being able to comprehend anything; I slowly, rhythmically turned over the pages and was caught in an eternal universe of words, words, words” (Επισκοπόπουλος 324). This scene reads very much like the scene in “The Fall of the House of Usher” wherein Roderick awaits for Madeline’s return from the vault, whilst the narrator reads the “Mad Trist” of Sir Launcelot Canning. Certainly, this section in “The Fall of the House of Usher” is far more extensive than the one in “Μαύρα”; Episkopopoulou’s relevant passage may be much briefer, but still it emphasizes the narrator’s unstable emotional condition, creates an atmospheric effect and provides a threatening sense that sets the stage for the horrors that are doomed to follow.

As the narrative becomes increasingly fraught with the emotional pressure that has been building up in the tale, the seemingly dead Mavra stands erect on her bed, a fact that terrifies the narrator. Two things could be said about this scene that is intended to shock or startle the nineteenth-century Greek readers. One is that it contributes to the creation of an aesthetic effect by undeniably abominable means: Mavra’s ambiguous return from the dead is a ghastly thought in itself that also

71 My translation of: «ἀνέγνωσα χωρὶς νά ἀντιλαμβάνομαι τίποτε, στρέφων σιγά μετά παλμῶν τὰς σελίδας καὶ ἀναγιγνώσκων λέξεις, λέξεις, λέξεις αἰωνίως» (Επισκοπόπουλος 324).
challenges the religious beliefs of the readers. It also bears a close resemblance to Poe’s feminine ideal based on which fatal heroines come back from the grave as revenging revenants, in order to haunt the men who mistreated or buried them or simply to excite horror, a storytelling device that draws on the multiple cases of living burials occurring in the U.S. in the nineteenth century.\(^\text{72}\)

Such is the case of the “lofty” and “enshrouded figure” of Madeline who rises from her coffin, falls upon Roderick and “with a low moaning cry” drags him “to the floor a corpse and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated” (Poe, *Tales*: 1 416-17) and avenges her brother for having prematurely interred her. Ploumistaki contends that Madeline’s crises form the basis for Mavra’s demeanor and behavior thus revealing Poe’s influence on the Greek writer (188). Mavra, in the manner of Madeline, appears to possess barely enough strength to rise from her deathbed and confront her brother who has previously wished her dead. The latter’s horror and bewilderment reach a climax the moment Mavra starts laughing: “She let out a deep sigh and, as I approached, she gave a ghastly laughter” (Επισκοπόπουλος 324).\(^\text{73}\)

Mavra’s scornful laughter resonates with Lady Madeline’s “suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip” (Poe, *Tales*: 1 410) at the time of her interment or with the emaciated Berenice and her “smile of peculiar meaning” (Poe, *Tales*: 1 215). Following the example of Poe’s heroines, I would interpret the meaning of Mavra’s smile as a suggestion of the inevitability of the narrator’s similarly doomed fate and the inextricable connection between them. Mavra’s resurrection or awakening is the source of the narrator’s own terror because it reminds her brother of the inevitability

\(^\text{72}\) Poe capitalizes on the fear of living entombment that culminated in the nineteenth century and resulted in the publication of relevant stories in periodicals of the time, as I discuss in the first chapter of the dissertation. Further information on this literary motif can be found in Kennedy, *Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing* 32-59; and Silverman, *Edgar Allan Poe: Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* 112-13.

\(^\text{73}\) My translation of: «Στεναγμός βαθύς και μακρός ἄνηλθεν ἐκ τοῦ διατεταμένου στήθους της καὶ ἑνόσσω ἐπιλησίαν τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς ἱνοίγετο εἰς ἄπαθους γέλοια τελικῶν» (Επισκοπόπουλος 324).
of death and provides an image of his own eventual collapse. It also challenges the dénouement of the story by offering an alternative ending that questions linear narration.

The story comes to its grotesque climax the moment Mavra seizes her brother and attempts to strangle him:

Her death-ridden hands grasped mine, squeezed me and dragged me towards her with a diabolic expression as if she wished to bite me, spit on me, strangle me, and she gave a muffled cry:

— I shall live, I shall live, she whispered.

And then a bloody hot foam came out of her yellow lips, fell upon me, and thus spread all over me. Her body was also shaken by a spasm.

(Eπισκοπόπουλος 325)  

The image of Mavra with “blood coming out of her yellow lips” coming for her brother again reminds one of the “lofty and enshrouded” image of Lady Madeline having “blood upon her white robes” (Poe, Tales: 1 416) and even more so epitomizes Poe’s conception of beauty being intertwined with death. What makes Mavra’s revivification even more interesting, however, is that it seems to be an act of revenge similar to Madeline’s silent vengeance on Roderick. Put it this way, Mavra, being a Greek version of Poe’s Madeline, returns to haunt her brother who, although has not literally caused her death, subconsciously has ardently wished for it. As a result, the narrator in «Μαύρα» suffers and dies as a punishment—not strictly for killing Mavra but for cunningly desiring her annihilation:

A faint horror, like a gust of fresh air, ran from my feet to the knees,

74 My translation of: «αἱ χεῖρες μου ἴππαιζοντο ὡς τῶν σιδηρῶν ὡς τῶν χειρῶν τῆς καὶ ἐπάξαντο καὶ μὲ ἐξουργόν ἐκείτη πρὸς αὐτὴν μὲ ἐκφασιν διαβολικήν ὡς διὰ νὰ μὲ δαγκάση, νὰ μὲ πτύση, νὰ μὲ πνίξη, καὶ μου ἐνθύρησε μὲ σβενύμενον μικηθμόν: — Θὰ ζήσω, θὰ ζήσω. Καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνέβλυσεν αἰματηρός ἄφρος εἰς τὰ κίτρινα χείλη τῆς, ἄφρος θερμός, δοκεῖς μὲ ἐρράντισεν ἐκτιναχθές, καὶ σπασμός συνεκλόνισε τὸ σῶμα τῆς» (Επισκοπόπουλος 325).
to the abdomen, to the chest, to the throat, to the head; and my teeth were shaking then and a loud cry, the distinct cry of my cursed passion came out from my guts, and I fell on top of her motionless body and face. (Επισκοπόπουλος 325)

The story draws to a close with the narrator collapsing upon Mavra’s wraithlike figure, a scene reminiscent of that of Madeline’s ghastly clutch of Roderick that “bear[s] him [Roderick] to the floor a corpse” (Poe, Tales: 1 417). In «Μαύρα» death comes to the narrator in the form of a fatal embrace, similar to that of the Ushers who “expire simultaneously in one another’s arms” (Halliburton 296). Most critics agree that Madeline and Usher feel cursed by the guilt of some secret sin, a sin that implies an incestuous relationship that all Ushers share and is expiated with their fatal collapse. But what does this collapse suggest in Episkopopoulos’ carefully structured narrative?

It seems that there is some sort of mystery in the family or perhaps a deadly secret. Yet, no definite explanation is provided at the end of the story regarding the mystery or the exact relationship existing between the two siblings in «Μαύρα». The question of how and why Mavra returns from the dead remains completely open-ended, as it does in Poe’s story to a certain extent. Does the story display instances of supernatural terror? Or could the story’s peculiar events result from the speaker’s overwrought mind? Nothing is out in the open: the narrator is not clear about what is

75 My translation of: «Φρικίασις ἐλαφρά, ὥς φύσημα δροσεροῦ ἄρος ἀνήρχετο ἐκ τῶν ποδῶν μου εἰς τὰ γόνατα, εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν, τὰ στέρνα, τὸν λαιμὸν, τὴν κεφαλήν, καὶ οἱ ὀδόντες μου συνεκλονίσθησαν τότε καὶ γοερὰ κραυγὴ, ἢ χαρακτηριστική κραυγὴ τοῦ κυτηριμένου μου πάθους, ἔξωθε τῶν σπλάγχνων μου, καὶ ἔπεσα ἐπὶ τὸ ἄδρανος σώματός της καὶ τοῦ προσώπου της» (Επισκοπόπουλος 325).

76 Usher’s incestuous relationship is hinted throughout Poe’s story; as a matter of fact, Roderick’s disease might have been the result of incest (Peeples 85). In reference to his malady, Roderick says: “It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil” (Poe, Tales: 1 402). For more information on this issue, see Day, In the Circles of Fear and Desire: A Study of Gothic Fantasy 129-31; Peeples, Edgar Allan Poe Revisited 84-88; Kennedy, Poe, Death, and the Life of Writing; and Hoffman, Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe.
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going on and his emotional disturbance makes him unreliable about his own state and correspondingly about what he perceives as Mavra’s death and her subsequent revival. For Σαχίνης, Mavra suffers a hysteria attack and dies. Upon entering her room, the narrator is filled with dread and horror and is under the illusion that he is to blame for Mavra’s death (Λισθητισμός 200). For Ντουνιά, Mavra is alive the moment the narrator enters her room («Επισκοπόπουλος» 404).

Thus the story’s equivocal ending conjures different responses and has created a mood in Episkopopoulos’ story that allows the reader to admit the possibility of an alternate fantastic reality. In this respect, Ντουνιά notes that Episkopopoulos’ short stories are instances of the uncanny bordering on the fantastic («Επισκοπόπουλος» 394). I hold that Mavra’s apparent death and subsequent resurrection provoke a sense of the “fantastic-uncanny,” to use Todorov’s categorization, which evokes the option of both a supernatural and a rational explanation. He particularly defines the “fantastic-uncanny” as such: “In this sub-genre events that seem supernatural throughout the story receive a rational explanation at its end” (Todorov, Fantastic 47). Todorov proceeds to add that “[t]he uncanny realizes, as we see, only one of the conditions of the fantastic: the description of certain reactions, especially of fear. It is uniquely linked to the sentiments of the characters and not to a material event defying reason” (Fantastic 47).

With regard to the fantastic itself, Todorov underlines that it “requires doubt” (Fantastic 83). Doubt has been sustained in «Μαύρα» between two poles: the existence of the supernatural and a series of rational explanations. While Mavra’s death and her ensuing awakening may appear supernatural, Episkopopoulos supplies quite rational explanations for both events. Of Mavra’s disease, he writes: “the epileptic paroxysms which for me were terrible and horrific—not the result of
epilepsy, I hope—included hysterical crises that would even lead to heart attack” (Επισκοπόπουλος 319-20). As for Mavra’s apparent death, he writes: “I remembered the way she looked at me after suffering a hysterical crisis […] Had she sensed everything then? Had she heard everything while she fell into a trance during which she was perceived to be dead?” (Επισκοπόπουλος 324-25). Perhaps Mavra has fallen into an epileptic trance and gained consciousness afterwards. Perhaps Mavra returns to seek vengeance upon her brother. All explanations are possible since the narrator has previously mentioned that Mavra displays symptoms of epilepsy. Thus the supernatural explanation is simply insinuated, and one is not obliged to accept it. Episkopopoulos’ writing is fantastic because it is superrational, not because it borders on the irrational.

So, in this sense, the version of the fantastic that Episkopopoulos’ story offers hovers between the sphere of the rational and the superrational which offers a different understanding of the pollination opportunities the injection of realism in the fantastic offers. The tale’s ambiguous resolution shows how arbitrary events are in the canon of Episkopopoulos; in the latter, characters move in a world in which events are often disconnected and in which meaning is opaque. The story places the readers in an untenable position: it appears to supply some clues to meaning, but there is nevertheless something withheld; it is as if there might be some key to the tale, but this key is never placed in the reader’s hands. As a result, the readers themselves, and even more so the narrator, are forced to ponder about the secret that the narrator shares with Mavra.

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77 My translation of: «Οἱ τόσον ἀπαίσιοι καὶ φρικτοί δι’ ἐμὲ ἐπιληπτικῶν παροξυσμῶν—ὡς καθαρῶς ἐπιληπτικοὶ, ἐπιζωο—καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν ἐξεσάπλεθον ὡς προφήθην κρίσεων ὑστερικῶν, ἐξικνουμένων μέχρι συγκοπῆς» (Επισκοπόπουλος 319-20).

78 My translation of: «Ἐνθυμήθην τὰ ὑποτα βλέμματα μετὰ τὰς ὑστερικὰς κρίσεις τῆς […] Ὅλα λοιπὸν τὰ εἶχεν ἰδεί, ὅλα τὰ εἶχεν ἀκούσα τον παθολογικὸν τῆς λήθαργον κατὰ τὸν ὁποίον τὴν ἐξέλαβον ὡς νεκρᾶν;» (Επισκοπόπουλος 324-25).
The previous comparison of «Μαύρα» to Poe’s works demonstrates how deeply Episkopopoulos grasps Poe’s tendency to obscure the boundaries between concrete reality and human imaginative states. Both «Μαύρα» and “Ut Diése Mineur” exhibit other major resemblances to Poe’s fiction as well. The female figures inhabiting these stories are very much like Poe’s women in appearance and in character; Episkopopoulos’ fictional ladies epitomize Poe’s death-of-a-beautiful-woman motif: they play no significant part in the story and appear as mere mechanisms of the plot without character or individuality. Female characters also appear as simple objects of desire and they eventually die. In addition to representing Episkopopoulos’ command of Poe-related themes and motifs, «Μαύρα» and “Ut Diése Mineur” reveal Episkopopoulos’ exploitation of Poe’s narrative techniques. Echoing Poe’s narrators in works such as “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Black Cat,” “Ligeia” and “The Fall of the House of Usher,” the obsessive speakers in Episkopopoulos emphasize their unreliability under the most bizarre circumstances. The stories discussed rely heavily upon the narrator’s altered state of consciousness for successful effects, whether such a state results from heightened emotion, as in “Ut Diese Mineur,” or from some other source such as disease or hallucination as in «Μαύρα». More to the point, like the narrator in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the paranoid delusions about Myhra’s supposed infidelity eventually dominate the thoughts and actions of the narrator in “Ut Diese Mineur” until he finally commits murder.

Episkopopoulos also owes much to Poe’s tradition both in terms of narrative techniques and in his handling of settings. The surface trappings of Poe’s fiction with its gloomy and claustrophobic interiors, reincarnated dead bodies, paranoid narrators,
the collapsing of the psychic boundaries of life and death, are features that are prominent in Episkopopoulos’ tales as well. Drawing from Poe’s handling of settings, Episkopopoulos establishes the psychological relationship between character and physical surroundings in a dreamlike atmosphere that builds toward an explosive climax of collapse and destruction. Episkopopoulos does not merely use all the aforementioned Poe-like elements; most importantly, he transforms and enriches them with his own imagination. Instead of using creaky castles, dungeons or haunted mansions to furnish his writings, the Greek author focuses on small chambers that are, however, equally confined and claustrophobic. All these settings, as is often the case in Poe, augment the sense of mystery and suspense and reflect the emotional state of the characters. Seen in this way, the works discussed here represent a significant stage in the development of Episkopopoulos’ art which owes much to the example of Poe.
Concluding Remarks

“No other American writer has had such a profound impact on the arts as well as on the popular imagination in the United States and abroad as Edgar Allan Poe.”

− Barbara Cantalupo, Poe’s Pervasive Influence (2012)

The current doctoral study on Edgar Allan Poe’s presence in Greece and more precisely on his impact on Emmanuel Rhoides, Georgios Vizyenos and Nikolaos Episkopopoulos, is by no means exhaustive. This dissertation has aimed at shedding light on the ways the Greek authors under discussion have read Poe and how they have infiltrated his writing techniques and practices into their own works. The dissertation is also given a sense of historical breadth by the reference to the literary and cultural parameters that have accounted for the resurgence of interest in Poe’s works during the late nineteenth century. What I have tried to avoid is to place the Greek writers under study in a position subordinate to Poe, deny their full credit for rich innovation and insights and thereby downgrade them to mere imitators of Poe’s themes, motifs and literary imagination as a whole. In order to avoid this problem, I have therefore argued that each one of the Greek writers has entered into a prolific literary dialogue with Poe and, consequently, has expanded and enriched with their own literary interventions the writing modes prominent in nineteenth-century Greece. What may be discerned in the specific works by Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos is a desire to make use of a wide range of Poe’s artistry and, at the same time, embrace Greek literary attributes of the time in a creative way. Thus, this study contributes to the enhancement of traditional readings of Greek literary texts
revealing at the same time the pervasiveness of Poe’s contribution to the literary craft of these Greek authors.

It is rather complex to draw a concrete conclusion from this comparative study. Poe has exerted a titanic effect on major authors throughout the world and his work continues finding even nowadays literary advocates in diverse languages and cultures.¹ One of the most significant aspects of Poe’s international reputation relates to his articulation of a theory of literary writing, his invention of detective fiction and his contributions to the fantasy story but this is not what the current study has been interested in. The cosmopolitan culture of Poe’s legacy and his ability to engage successfully with various genres and areas of literary production explains why I have selected to read his works alongside those of Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos. As I have discussed in the relevant chapters, Poe’s Greek descendants transcend national borders and establish a writing style that effectively disaggregates traditional conceptions of the ethnocentric nineteenth-century Greek culture. Rather than remaining enclosed within the Greek literary precepts of the time, Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos look outside Greece, absorb and transform foreign trends, a process which mirrors the cosmopolitan and exceptional nature of their short fiction.

The cosmopolitan perspective underlying the Greek authors’ works does not exclusively account for reading them against Poe. Most importantly, what connects these Greek writers with Poe is the literary tradition to which they are closely tied as well as the specific cultural and aesthetic concerns their works attempt to address. As such, in this dissertation, I have looked to find ways of reading the Greek works under

¹ For details on Poe’s international reputation, see among other sources Cantalupo, Poe’s Pervasive Influence; Esplin, “Cosmopolitan Poe: An Introduction”; Filippakopoulou, Transatlantic Poe: Eliot, Williams and Huxley, Readers of the French Poe; and Vines, Poe Abroad: Influence, Reputations, Affinities.
consideration in light of Poe’s concerns and anxieties such as the sense of what it means to be buried alive or what it means to reside in a city that constantly changes.

My claim then in the first chapter is that Rhoides develops a facet of death that particularly fascinates Poe: the burial of a living being. For Poe, live burials result from a character’s desire to kill, as is the case in “The Cask of Amontillado,” or to conceal a dead body, as this ensues in “The Tell-Tale Heart” and in “The Black Cat.” Such is the case with “Berenice,” “The Premature Burial” and Madeline Usher. For Rhoides’ narrator, this process begins upon his first encounter with the asylum patients in Frankfurt, Germany. Indubitably, Rhoides’ concern with the fine line between life and death bears strong affinities with Poe’s theme of premature burials.

In addition to the gruesome theme of premature burial, Rhoides develops Poe’s theme of treating the city as text as a means of reading and viewing end-of-the-century Athens, plunging into the crowd’s psychology and making remarks on the Athenian lifestyle of his time. Poe’s and Rhoides’ cities would at first glance appear to have very little in common with each other, but a closer conception reveals a number of important similarities in the ways Poe’s and Rhoides’ narrators read and traverse urban space. Rhoides’ interest in Poe is significant because, through Poe’s city-texts, the Greek writer finds a voice to express his urban concerns and represent the experience of urban life in Athens. So, in this sense, Rhoides’ voice converges with Poe’s in an attempt to convey the experience of disorientation or aching isolation apparent in turn-of-the-century Athens.

With regard the second chapter of the dissertation, my assumption is that Poe’s concern with the thin boundaries between reality and external appearances forms the thematic base on which Vizyenos constructs a localized, yet cosmopolitan work that in turn functions as an alternative to the Greek context of his time. While
Vizyenos’ story includes the mundane details of everyday life in Vizye, its inhabitants and the historical information on the Greco-Russian War, it meaningfully plays with the conventional notions of reality. Poe’s intense concern with what is real or not is sensitively explored by Vizyenos who frames it in explicitly Greek terms. The parallel reading of Poe’s detective trilogy and Vizyenos’ story becomes even more interesting if one considers the importance both writers have in their respective literary contexts. On the one hand, Poe is universally credited as the father of the detective story. On the other hand, Vizyenos holds an outstanding position within Greek letters in that his story with the title «Ποιός ἦτον ὁ φονεύς τοῦ ἀδέλφου μου» is considered an early specimen of detective writing incorporating elements such as the puzzle-clue structure, the cerebral yet eccentric investigator as well as the duped police officer, elements that have emerged from Poe’s detective story tradition.

The influence of Poe on Episkopopoulos, with which the third chapter takes issue, is quite evident and emerges in several aspects of the Greek author’s work. At first sight, most readers and critics would easily recognize the similarities in style, setting and atmosphere in the work of both writers. The surface trappings of Poe’s fiction with its gloomy and claustrophobic interiors, reincarnated dead bodies, emotionally disturbed narrators, the collapse of the psychic boundaries of life and death, are features that are prominent in Episkopopoulos’ tales as well.

The literary dialogue between Poe and Episkopopoulos is even more palpable when the latter’s imagination turns to the aesthetic principles promulgated by the former: Episkopopoulos’ writing style is indebted to Poe’s aesthetic dicta. Episkopopoulos’ short fiction is written in an intense style that focuses on the unity of impression, a Poe hallmark, maintained in Episkopopoulos’ writing as well. Episkopopoulos creatively blends sensual female figures with dark houses, cemeteries
and corpses in tightly unified texts. As a result of this admixture, Episkopopoulo’s innovative style enriches Greek writing, as this was understood in the 1900s, setting the author in a unique position within the Greek letters with stories that are characterized as proponents of the movement of aestheticism.

It is valuable to note, however, that this dissertation has not attempted to exhaust Poe’s literary dialogue with these Greek writers. What it has concentrated on regards the connections between texts with a pluralistic storytelling structure that draws on multiple disciplines and trends such as comparative critical studies, detective story, translation methodology, so as to shed light on the multiple ways Poe’s literary imagination informs the specific works of the Greek writers under consideration. This is exactly where the originality of this project resides in bringing to the surface the distinct ways in which nineteenth-century Greek fiction fosters a dialogic relationship with American fiction.

As an epilogue to this project, therefore, I wish to indicate future avenues for research. Established scholars in American and Greek literature explore the kinds of debates surrounding Poe’s presence in Greek letters and have pointed out Poe connections in relation to other Greek writers: Γιώργος Καλογεράς refers to the indebtedness of Κωνσταντίνος Καζάντζης (1864-1926) to Poe. 3 Νικόλαος Μαυρέλος traces affinities between Poe and a short story by Κωνσταντίνος Καβάφης (1863-1933). 4 At the same time, Χριστίνα Ντουνιά couples Poe and Ιωάννης Σκαρίμπας (1893-1984). 5 Λάμπρος Βαρελάς 6 points out Poe connections in relation to

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2 [Konstantinos Kazantzis].
3 See Καλογεράς, Ιστορίες της Πατρίδος μου [Istoriais tis Patriados mou] 77.
4 [Konstantinos Kavafis].
5 See Μαυρέλος, Ιταλοελληνικά [Italoellinika]: Rivista Di Cultura Greco-Romana 109-34.
6 [Ioannis Skarimbas].
7 See Ντουνιά, Πρακτικά Α’ Πανελληνίου Συνεδρίου για τον Γιάννη Σκαρίμπα [Praktika A’ Panelleniou Synedriou gia ton Yanni Skarimpa] 241-54.
8 [Lampros Varelas].
All these references reveal the diverse ideas, criticisms and perspectives that result from the creative engagement of Greek writers with Poe’s literary oeuvre. My own interest lies in making sense of the ways in which these writers have assumed a familiarity with Poe’s fiction. I also have an interest in exploring the ways in which other works by Rhoides, Vizyenos and Episkopopoulos reveal connections with Poe’s works. Finally, it would be of interest to me to investigate whether Poe’s literary techniques have led to various other creative transformations when engaging with the works of other twentieth-century Greek writers.

By probing into an investigation of these Greek writers and their potential influence by Poe, I have hoped to explore at greater length the bounds that link the literary worlds of Edgar Allan Poe and Greek literature. Reading Greek fiction in dialogue with Poe’s works, I believe it will give me the opportunity to expand my literary and cultural horizons beyond my current engagements featured in this dissertation and delve into other readings and understandings of the cross-cultural connections that develop between them. In this sense, one can learn a good deal both about Greek and American culture by seeing which elements from Poe’s works the Greek culture highlights as well as how Greek writers use them in their texts. By situating Poe within a broad and diverse cultural context, future research will eventually show that literary influences run both ways. Poe’s impact on Greek authors has certainly spawned a number of creative responses and literary possibilities that reveal both the multilayered and intertextual dynamic of Poe’s works and the imaginative transformations such conversations can generate.

9 See Βαρελάς, «Ο Ζήτα και ο Παπαδιαμάντης. Άλλη μια Πρόταση για την Ταύτιση του Ψευδονύμου» [O Zeta kai o Papadiamantis. Alli mia Protasi gia tin Taytisi tou Pseydonimou].
10 Maria Filippakopoulou’s essay entitled “Edgar Allan Poe in Greek Letters” bears further evidence of the continuing scholarly interest in Poe and attempt to be approached from various perspectives.
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