

aware of filling the fictional demands of his public, and also like Dickens, many of his stories were published in magazines he edited. More than any other author discussed, Trollope's indifference to printed criticism makes his stories difficult to assess by aesthetic or genre standards.

For Hardy, like the Irish writers, the oral element is vital. And like all those so far discussed, he liked to stress the fact on which his fictions were based. Unlike the other authors, however, his struggles with magazine editors were constant, and he was genuinely unhappy with the tastes of the largely female audience for periodical fiction.

Oddly enough, Stevenson and Kipling offer Orel more grounds for aesthetic judgment than other Victorian writers. Stevenson's struggles to write so that he, as author, need not comment explicitly about a fiction's moral give his work critical depth, but he was often dissatisfied with his achievements. Part of this unhappiness arose from his perception of a market that wanted escapist fiction, part from magazine policy discouraging extensive revision, and part from his belief that fiction should educate by implicit moral if not by fact. Perhaps these often conflicting factors led to the unevenness of his output, and to the continued popularity of what he called his "crawlers."

Like Stevenson, Kipling wrote his stories to order. Orel argues that Kipling's stories are neither simplistically chauvinist nor interesting only for their exotic subjects. Kipling liked the brevity of the story form and worked technical wonders with it. Orel finds Kipling's Anglo-Indian stories among the best of Victorian short fiction.

By the 1980s the "modern" short story, with its focus on irony, a strong narrator, and paradox, was emerging. Orel chooses Conrad and Wells to detail different narrative techniques, focusing on their use of narrative voice. In the evolution of Marlowe, Conrad learned to manipulate the rich detail of his exotic background. Wells's omniscient narrators let him discuss the "new" sciences and their applications.

By focusing on the unjustly neglected field of the British short story and by concentrating on nine authors, their connections with evolving publication techniques and with their audience, and on their attitudes toward reality in their genre, Orel has presented a valuable addition to scholarship and a genuinely fascinating study.

Taken together, these two works supplement each other nicely. The narrower focus of Orel's study makes it more cohesive, but the very scope of Gilmore's study is also an advantage to one wanting an overview. Victorian prose fiction has been well served by both authors.

A Note on Dinos Christianopoulos's

I REBETES TOU DOUNIA

JOHN TAYLOR

Though Dinos Christianopoulos (b. 1931) is best known as a poet—a selection of his poetry, translated into English by Kimon Friar, is soon to be published by Boa Editions—he has also written short stories, prose poems and what in Anglo-American literary jargon have come to be called "short shorts," such as the fourteen

examples selected for this new collection, *I rebetes tou downia* (Thessaloniki: Dhi-agonios, 1986). The title is untranslatable: the word *rebetis* (plural: *rebetes*)—the etymology of this complex term is highly contested; see Stathis Gauntlett, “*Rebetiko Tragoudi* as a Generic Term,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, vol. 8 (1982-1983), pp. 77-102—literally refers to an archetypal figure from the old Greek underworld, a rebellious rogue or troublemaker who lived outside the accepted standards of traditional Greek society and who showed contempt for the establishment in all its forms. As the folklorist Elias Petropoulos notes in his *Rebetika: Songs from the Old Greek Underworld* (Athens: Komboloi, 1975, p. 11), the *rebetis* “didn’t marry . . . and wouldn’t walk arm-in-arm with his girlfriend; he didn’t wear a collar and tie and refused to carry an umbrella; he scorned work, helped the underdog, smoked hashish, bitterly hated the police, and considered going to jail a mark of honor.” Associated with his character is likewise an intensity of feeling, of virile passion, such as is manifest when—as in the first text of this collection, “Hippokleides”—the *rebetis* dances alone in the taverna, at times solemnly and defiantly lifting off the ground with his teeth several chairs or a table. That being said, the title is doubtless borrowed directly from a famous underworld folksong, a “rebetic song,” composed and first recorded in 1938 by the great singer Markos Vamvakaris: *Oli i rebetes tou downia*, literally “All the Rebetes of the World.” It should be noted that Christianopoulos himself has written a study on the “Historical and Aesthetic Development of the Rebetic Song” (1961).

Only “Hippokleides” and the text “Roza Eskenazi,” which in moving details sketches the life story of one of the early, popular singers of rebetic songs, allude to this underworld; but the title of this untypically heterogeneous collection, if taken metaphorically—where “rebetis” might signify an “outlaw,” an “outcast”—still encompasses several of the other texts, especially when the term is given the additional nuance, specific to Christianopoulos’s writing, that the “outlaws” or “outcasts” in question are outlaws and outcasts of love. As in Christianopoulos’s poetry and other prose writings, the hero (usually a first-person narrator) is an outlaw or outcast because of the very intensity of his or her sexual desire, in most cases the sexual desire of a solitary homosexual who, when young, is attracted to other young men (“Sweets”); or who, as an adult, cruises the streets of Thessaloniki in search of amorous relationships (“Christmas Eve,” “Maundy Thursday”). With clarity and succinctness Christianopoulos evokes the passionate “drunkenness” which causes the narrator to unknowingly leave behind in a field the pullover generously knit for him by a friend; he tells of how a picked-up lover suddenly remembers it is Maundy Thursday and for that reason decides not to make love. In these stories Christianopoulos reveals his talent for concentrating, in one telltale erotic detail, all the emotion linked to a painful memory or, less often, to a pleasurable one. In this respect he proves himself to be the worthy descendant in Modern Greek literature of one of his first spiritual and stylistic masters, the poet C.P. Cavafy (1863-1933).

This group of short prose texts written between 1982 and 1985 marks, however, in terms of characters, indeed in terms of themes, a broadening of Christianopoulos’s scope. In “Arethas, Bishop of Caesarea,” which like “Demosthenes” and some of Christianopoulos’s earliest poetry is a first-person narrative, set in the present, of a scene from the distant past, Arethas recounts the ennui of the provinces and tells of his disgust at hearing barbarians, “with their sloppy errors in syntax and with their wretched rhythms” (p. 13), sing Greek odes. In “Stefan Zweig” the narrator (Zweig himself) tells of his disappointing first impressions of Franz Kafka, whom Max Brod enables him to meet in Prague. Similar texts concern the Greek writers Yiannis Vlachoyiannis (1868-1945) and Adamantios Korais (*alias* Coray; 1748-1833). Such narratives represent explorations of themes outside of the autobiographical, sexual sphere within which Christianopoulos typically finds his inspiration.

"Roza Eskenazi" and "On the Island of Skyros," however, bring forth in unexpectedly positive formulations a theme present in Christianopoulos's work from the very beginning. In the former a truck driver from Corinth "moves Heaven and Earth" to locate the now impoverished and deranged Roza—in more fortunate days, before the Second World War, the singer had helped him out in some way or perhaps even had loved him—and takes care of her until her death. "All by himself he served and nursed her . . . he washed her, combed her hair, took her out for walks, and whenever he had to leave on long trips entrusted her to the women in the neighborhood. . . . When you hear such stories," concludes the narrator, "you gain faith in man" (p. 22). In the latter a girl, a foreign tourist, chooses to walk all night back to town with her Greek boyfriend—they had apparently made love in the countryside, then on the way back their motorcycle had been damaged—rather than to accept a ride with the narrator and his friend. Because of the late hour the narrator and his friend have not been able to make their "pilgrimage" to the grave of the English poet Rupert Brooke, but now they are struck with an equally revering admiration for the girl's love. In the work of Dinos Christianopoulos such faithfulness, whether to others or to oneself, is rarely depicted as leading to anything but a "catastrophe."

Rather than as turning points, however, these two cautiously optimistic stories should doubtless be viewed as adding but additional facets to the complex image of human love which Christianopoulos has been constructing in his work, poem by poem, story by story, over the past forty years. What the short narratives in *I rebetes tou downia* confirm, after the longer stories in *I kato volta* (1963/1980) and the prose poems in *Nekri piatsa* (1981/1983), is that Christianopoulos indeed is a master, not only of poetry, but also of prose. One is moved by the same stylistic simplicity, sometimes charming, sometimes brutal; by the same acute emotions; by the same forthright expression of the protagonist's desire—whether he be Hippokleides or the poet himself—"to be" when he is not able "to become."

O Silencio Redimido: a New Perspective on the Spanish Civil War

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The Spanish Civil War has been the theme or has appeared incidentally in many of the novels written in Spain during the last forty years. In Castilian literature, events of the Spanish civil conflict provide the background to numerous important novels such as Arturo Barea's *La forja de un rebelde* (1951), Ana María Matute's *Los hijos muertos* (1957), Juan Goytisolo's *Duelo en el paraíso* (1955) and José María Gironella's *Un millón de muertos* (1961). Galician literature also offers an interesting and fascinating novel, not as well known as the other works, but deserving of recognition: *O Silencio Redimido* (1976) by the Galician writer Silvio Santiago.¹ This novel develops the theme of the Spanish Civil War in a new and significant manner.

¹Silvio Santiago, *O Silencio Redimido* (Vigo: Galaxia, 1976). All references are to this edition; all translations are mine.