

ANNIVERSARY OF THE NOVEMBER 17 1973 EVENTS
THE MEANING OF THE UPRISING

Yiannis (an instructor) begins:

Many people wonder sometimes if the events in the Athens Polytechnic on November 17 of 1973 were the reason of the fall of the junta. Some wonder in order to learn, because they were then small kids or not even born; others wonder in order to answer that that sacrifice had no meaning because it had nothing to do with the fall of the junta; and others wonder in order to answer that this sacrifice did have a result because it was the beginning of the end of the junta. Some, thinking in a more coolheaded way and not through discharges of an emotional charging up, whether positive or negative, answer to this question that this sacrifice, like also the events in the Athens Law School and the events in the funeral of George Papandreou, were what exposed the junta to the international public opinion which the junta was trying to convince that Greeks, in their majority, did accept the dictatorship; and, therefore, that these events canceled the plan of the junta to create a situation in which political parties would, supposedly, do exist, mock elections would do take place, but behind everything, the junta would again be the supervisor, coordinator and decision maker.

Vangelis (student):

It is also natural to wonder about the result expected, and about the answer given to themselves, by those young men who in those three days had closed themselves in the Polytechnic without knowing if they would get out alive or if they would even end up in one of the junta's torture chambers. Many of them had the hope that in this way they might contribute to the awakening of the awareness of many fellow citizens or to the activation of those of them who needed no awakening. Many had the hope that in this way they might help to brief and sensitize the international community.

Yiannis (student):

Some might have heard that some foreign journalists, prior to the events in the Athens Law School about ten months ago, had written that Greek youth was the most docile youth of Europe and did not walk in pace with the movements that disputed the establishment and had started to often stir other nations.

Helen (instructor):

Such movements were the May '68 movement in France and the antiwar movement whose protagonists were the American youth and the conscientious objectors of the Vietnam war. Let's see indicative antiwar poems of that age. We start with one from US, one from Savopoulos here:

Anna

The bombers

We are the Americans,
the coffin fillers.
We are death grocers
we pack deaths in crates
like cauliflowers.
The bomb opens like a shoe-box
and the kid is, of course, not yawning
And the woman?
The woman is shampooing her heart
It's detached; and because it's burned
and as a last act, she rinses it in the river
This is the death bazaar.

America,
Show me your papers.

Angelos

Vietnam ye-ye

In Vietnam they set the rice on fire,
they set the rice on fire,
in Saigon you just can't go on living,
the air was not enough to go on breathing.
Now, you're hiding in a river
reeds can be snorkel and breather
oh, yeah, use a reed to breathe and live under the river.
Ho Mi Tsi, what would you do, say frankly,
now man to man, come on, and say it loudly,
your girlfriend you would be taking for some strolling
into the forest if trees had leaves like b'fore defoliants
hand in hand with your girlfriend you'd be walking.
Ho Mi Tsi, what would you do, say frankly,
if the rain did not burn huts, if kids didn't eat from trash
you and your girl might just like rock to be your dance:
ye-ye-ye, ye; ye-ye-ye-e-e ...(played by DJ (student))

Irene (student):

Let's also hear a song, after we read its lyrics, written in that age by the Beatles, and expressing in the way of youth of the times the quest for a life not mechanized, lonely and alienated.

Eleanor Rigby

Aah, look at all these lonely people!
Aah, look at all these lonely people!

Eleanor Rigby picks up the rice in a church where a wedding has been,
lives in a dream,
waits by the window, wearing a face that she keeps in a jar by the door,
who is it for?

All the lonely people, where do they all come from?
All the lonely people where do they all belong?

Father McKenzie is writing the words of a sermon that no one will hear,
no one comes near,
look at him working darning some socks in the night when there's nobody there,
why does he care?

All the lonely people, where do they all come from?
All the lonely people where do they all belong?

Eleanor Rigby died in the church she was buried along with her name,
nobody came,
Father McKenzie is wiping his hands from the dust as he walks from the grave,
no one was saved.

All the lonely people, where do they all come from?
All the lonely people where do they all belong?

Adrianna:

Another song, that became a banner for the antiwar movement of the times was Bob Dylan's "Blowing in the wind". Let's read its lyrics before we hear it:

Blowin' in the Wind

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take till he knows
That too many people have died?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist
Before it's washed to the sea?
Yes, 'n' how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, 'n' how many times can a man turn his head,
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,
The answer is blowin' in the wind.

Pulkheria (student)

These verses ask very vital questions: To trust the answers to such vital questions to the blowing of the wind, is poetic license and possible reference to some Celtic tradition with seers based on the wind like other seers were based on the rustling of leaves in the forest or on the look of intestines of animals sacrificed on the altar. Maybe to someone who only thinks, such an answer just reminds the Druid in the Asterix comics, and maybe to him it would be a surprise that results can come even from just asking without answering, but the fact is that this song did act as a banner and as an awakener and was among the things that did have a result in the efforts to stop the Vietnam war. Maybe it could have been, right from the start, inspired by, or at least in retrospect applied to, the death of Che Guevara in Bolivia in those days, a death that was the answer to song's opening question "How many roads must a man walk down before you call him a man?". Here at that time there was censorship by the junta and so the comment of Savopoulos' rock to that death was a song that could apply both to Che Guevara and to a hero of the Greek revolution of 1821 a song which, of course, the junta would not censor. Let's read the lyrics before we hear it played:

Liana (student):

Ode to George Karaiskakis

The screen is now sinking , the crowd is now moving
images gushing and springing all at once
where are you now going, man of myth, man of beauty
straight to your death swimming as light as if you dance?

And all the antennas of a planet grief-stricken
loudspeakers, wireless and radios from all our earth
join their lulls and their farewells as you rise and keep going
and one more king in heavens comes to birth.

Do I know, deep down, what I'm doing
with all those images in mind, for where I'm bound?
Their light is blinding and I want to kneel down
and kiss your blood that's still fresh on the ground.

Pulkheria:

Manos Loizos, whom everybody knows here since that's where he had spent all his summers after he discovered our village and everybody knows where he was going to build a house, also wrote a song for the death of Che Guevara and for the climate of the junta:

Helen (student):

Che

A poster with your photograph also came to my hands
a photograph with your face mailed from far lands.
One of them that on walls at night they hang
One of them that the cops are there to tear
One of them that the students can just hang
on their hearts
Che Guevara, Che Guevara,
Che.

Shut the windows and the blinds, can you seal all doorways
the man in boots just made me tremble like always.
What he wants? In the shadow now he walks.
What he wants and about you now he talks?
What he wants and is looking at our home
every evening?
Che Guevara, Che Guevara,
Che.

Just how many roses' buds snow this year has bitten
Ah, this Spring has made my heart go bleeding.

Vangelis:

We will better realize what was the atmosphere in the dictatorship years if we think that the censors had even forbidden Hatzidakis' limerick song "John the ripper-hangman". Whether Gatsos who deliberately made the lyrics gross did have the torturers in mind or not, the junta did recognize itself in the mirror and censored the song:

George (student):

John the ripper-hangman

I'm John the ripper-hangman, hai-ho, hai-ho
my friends are now all slaughtered, hai-ho, hai-ho.
They didn't treat me ouzo, they didn't give me wine
this made me start the shouting, you knew the shouts were mine.

I'm John the ripper-hangman, hai-ho, hai-ho
my brothers are all slaughtered, hai-ho, hai-ho.
I wouldn't take an order, I didn't like strange looks
I turned the key in my house and hanged them on some hooks.

I'm John the ripper-hangman, hai-ho, hai-ho
my mother I have slaughtered hai-ho, hai-ho-o-o-o.

Yiannis (the instructor who had read the opening paragraph) resumes the starting subject: The reconstruction and reliving of some features of the atmosphere of the junta years is illuminating, or at least informative, but let's return to the question of what was pushing the young men to the Polytechnic that day:

Yiannis (student):

Some were responding to concrete political analyses and a conscious political stance, others had been awakened by the ordeal suffered by a beloved person who, more conscious and more active than them, had made some act of resistance and happened to have been arrested. Some were

just acting on pure Greek sense of honor towards either solidarity or giving a message of defiance to any Papadopoulos who had dared to threaten , during the events at the Law School, that he would bust the head of any student who would dare to obstruct the work of the “revolution” (this was the name he called his dictatorship)

Irene:

So we see that there were many different motives that led different young men to the Polytechnic. One realization however was common to all, maybe without being easy for all to put in words. This realization, which also constitutes the answer to if this sacrifice was going to have a result or if it finally had a result, was written with spray on the Polytechnic’s wall and was given through a phrase from Kazantzakis’ “Saviors of God” and made the round of the world through the photographs of the foreign press. This phrase, that was transmitted to all foreigners, but not always translated, was “Don’t ask if we win or lose. Go on!”. This is the phrase that gives the meaning of the events at the Polytechnic.

George:

When the time has come to give one’s all, then the only thing that makes no sense is to weigh the results, the consequences, what you gain or what you lose. When the fighters of 1821 wrote on their banner “Freedom or death” did it cross anybody’s mind that if he died he would have lost or been defeated? When they started for a battle wishing each other “have a good bullet” did they consider the killed a loser? The killed of such fight were also considered as winners by ancient Greeks. These things lead us to discern in the Polytechnic the answer to one more question: many times, many people ask if the modern Greeks are really the descendants of the ancient Greeks. The answer is easy to put in words but difficult to put in action. Descendant of an admirable ancestor is not he who went to a microbiology lab and made a blood test or DNA test and checked that his blood or DNA do resemble the ones of that ancestor. Descendant is he who can do something equally admirable. Otherwise, even if the same blood runs in his veins, it will be a shame, not an honor, to say he had him as an ancestor. It is in this sense that the fighters of 1821 proved, with the blood they gave to fights and not to microbiology labs, that they were indeed descendants of the ancient. And the young men in the Polytechnic did prove they were descendants of the ancients and of their grandparents of 1821. These things also lead us to answer a third question: The foreign press had asked if the Greek youth could walk in pace with the youth of other nations. Let’s leave behind the proud answer that, after the Polytechnic, Greek youth might give inverting the question to “can the foreign youth walk in pace with the Greek?”

Vangelis:

So let’s leave behind this question and let’s ask: “Between peoples which that do not have common ancestors what makes them consider each other as a brother people?”. When things inside each country are orderly, what makes them brother peoples is the harmonic collaboration and the peaceful solution of common problems or of the differences separating them. But when things inside each country are disorderly and violent, then what makes them brothers is the similar fights against similar enemies. Let’s not forget the verse of the Turkish activist-poet Nazim Hikmet “With every new dawn my heart is shot anew in Greece” written when political prisoners both in Turkey and in Greece were treated in the same way by their corresponding governments. Thus a meaning of the Polytechnic is also the fraternization of Greek youth with other youths that had equally difficult problems to confront.

Yiannis:

Finally let’s answer one more question: “But is it only in this way, through uprising , that students must respond? Must them not strive, through the content of their studies’ field, to bring about results in the country’s development , thus helping both themselves and the whole of society? The question is almost funny, and its answer goes without saying, yet we must pose it again and again because it comes up again and again in a new form, since we often see young men in revolt to appeal to that 1973 uprising when they destroy educational and research equipment of the Polytechnic in the process of demonstrating for their problems (unemployment, repression by the

state etc) Their problems are both existent and to be respected but their analogy with the problem that the students of 1973 dared to pose and to confront is far fetched. The students of the Polytechnic of 1973 were exactly the ones who would not face an unemployment problem. A degree from that top-competitive institution at that time carried great weight and prestige jobwise, its BS's five long and hard years of study being equivalent to a master's degree from abroad. In a sense its students were so-to-speak pre-accommodated. And they de-accommodated themselves by their own hand to put themselves into tribulation because they judged that it was necessary and demanded by the circumstances. But let's not emphasize any further this issue since resistance was a common concern of all who dared to rise up and not only of some elite. There's only one difference to be noticed, besides the fact that the destructions of equipment and of other public property in 1973 were made by the invading soldiers and police and not by the barricaded people: The destructions now are made with the use of the legislation for campus asylum while the uprising at that time did involve utmost risk. It was expected that not only policemen with club-sticks would be used but also soldiers with firearms and even tanks. And they were used. Wasn't there hope that the soldiers themselves would object and disobey orders? Yes there was such hope, and there were such soldiers; some crossing over to the students' side with all expected consequences, and some disobeying orders to shoot; some of them were executed inside the tanks by their superiors. So the circumstances at that time were completely different. But let's return to the question about whether in such times the students should give priority to uprising and not to their studies, even if somebody told them that studies too are a way to contribute to the common good, since they do not only help towards their own private professional settlement but also towards the country's development. In one short sentence the answer is: In so disorderly circumstances the concern over the common good cannot be expressed in the way it is expressed when all is, be it just relatively, business as usual.

Chrysa (student):

But more intensely, and in an incomparable way, this answer has been given by, again, Nazim Hikmet in a poem which Yiannis Ritsos chose to translate and Thanos Mikroutsikos chose to put to music. Let's hear it sung after we first read it:

Of stars and men

What now, I have to say and let you know,
 somewhere in Indies within the city of Calcutta
 they put in chains a man, a man like you and me
 they put in chains a man like us as he was walking.
 That's why I don't and I will never condescend
 to raise my eyes to see what shines in starlit spaces.
 You'll counter: Our earth is just a teeny weeny moon
 and there are stars that shine so bright your mind spins dizzy
 Well, whatever all those stars may be I stick my tongue out to their brightness
 For me, the most amazing thing,
 the most imposing, the most grand, and most uncanny
 is man obstructed in his walk, a man when put in chains
 any man in flesh and blood who now is being arrested,
 is man obstructed in his walk, a man when put in chains
 a man in flesh and blood who now is being arrested.

Argyris (student):

Similar is the answer to the question "How come that Greeks who produced such super-brains in antiquity did not give an equally high percentage of great scientists in the more recent centuries?". But a great spirit is not detached from his times. Actually, the greater it is, the more titanically it lives the disorderliness of its times. E.g. let's not forget that the social and historical unrest of Beethoven's times did find its way into his musical inspirations. Similarly here, with

four centuries of Turkish occupation, the spirit gave men like Solomos and Kalvos, not men like Archimedes, Newton, Einstein, Gauss, Riemann, and Edison. And descendants of Solomos and Kalvos were men like Kazantzakis, Sikelianos, Ritsos, Elytis and so many others. With the argument “what would be offered by the self-sacrifice of men who would have so many results if they implemented the content of their field of studies?” (as if those who would be inspired by their example in the difficult decisions would not also be inspired by their example in the less difficult matters, like studying hard, to take over their struggle in that too in better times), OK, with this logic neither the Polytechnic’s uprising should have existed, nor the Sacred Battalion of students should have sacrificed itself in the beginning of the revolution against the Ottoman Empire. And Kalvos’ Ode to the Sacred Battalion should have been lamenting them and not consider blissful the dust covering them in their graves, nor to end with a mother’s prompting to her children to imitate the students of that body.

Varsa (student):

The logic of sacrifice is as simple as it is relentless: To live life with all those little joys that make one say about her “it’s worth it” and for sun to continue to exist, or “for sun to return”, it sometimes “takes thousands of dead at the wheels” and “takes the living giving their blood”. Otherwise, even the smallest joys, the simplest iridescences of sun in the wine in a glass, the best or simplest tastes, the most everyday caress from a passing breeze, that make man say life is worth living, “Axion Esti”- “praised be” as Elytis puts it, become an object of indifference and of consumption in the inept way of the uninvolved type of tourism. The women of Souli, fall one by one, dancing and with their babies in arms, over the cliff, not because they do not consider life desirable. On the contrary, their dance song’s first verse is “bye-bye poor world, bye-bye sweet life”. But they feel certain that if they go on living in a world without freedom, then those same things that seemed to give to life her sweetness, the simple things they now say their goodbyes to, the fountains, the thickets, the mounts, the slopes, in a while will make life something bitter, not sweet. If all this is not lighted by the sun of freedom then the end is better.

George:

“These trees are not comfortable with less sun, these hearts are not comfortable with less right” is what Ritsos writes about this. To live a life worth living sometimes a fight with no gradations and no intermediate alternatives is necessary, in which “Axion Esti” is said about life’s sacrifice as it was said before about life. Either freedom or death.

Irene:

This was the sensation that touched the hearts of the boys and girls in the Polytechnic and in a while it overtook them completely and, as they would say later, it made them feel they were parts of something greater than the partial ego of each of them. So much greater that it did not matter anymore to each of them if some partial ego, their own ego, was lost. “They rose high, very high; hard to go back low again, hard to see their height too” Ritsos wrote for the fighters of one generation before the Polytechnic’s. But these verses became valid again because such crest moment come and come again without belonging to individuals or to periods. Conversely, individuals and periods, if they can be worthy of it, belong to such moments. “Each one you see now you’re going to see again, one’s name may then be Constantis” or Tom or Dick, “another’s Mihalis” or Harry, was writing for the Constantises and Mihalises and Toms and Dicks and Harries of his generation the poet Katsaros and Theodorakis was putting to music. And we saw then again indeed in their name-mates of the Polytechnic’s generation.

Pulkheria:

Already since the beginning of their gathering they had felt an overcoming of the ego like the one Ritsos has described with the words “...here it’s not a matter of whether I am above you or you above me, here it’s matter of all of us being each above himself...” and they ended up with the absolute self-transcendence where, as we said, each one of them was connected with something which, as if it was metaphysical or cosmic, overcame them all and kept them company

and gave strength to the ones that had to lose their lives saying among their last words “it takes strength to die when you’re nineteen”.

Vangelis:

This was what gave them the strength to walk unarmed against the tanks. The same strength that the “free while besieged” of the previous generation had, for whom Ritsos had written “They ran out of bullets and gunpowder and now they’re filling their cannons only with their hearts”.

The DJ plays that instrumental part of Savopoulos’ “The square” interrupted by a shot and a scream

Dimitris (student):

But we will not have completed our recall to our memory of those persons and of those moments if we do recall to our memory one of them all, who opened way before them and who was to them example, source of inspiration and source of strength with all thing he was going through concurrently. Five years before the events we are talking about, a young man who had earlier been himself a student of the Polytechnic too, made the first act of resistance. He missed nearly killing Papadopoulos, the junta leader. It would be morbid to mention here the forms of torturing he went through, like morbid was the imagination of those who thought them up and morbid were their reactions in the torturers’ trials after the fall of the junta. Here let’s only mention that when, later, he was asked what he considered he had offered he said “if pain is a form of offer , then this is what I offered” and that in a poem of his that from his cell he addressed to all others being tortured he was writing “Complete your offer. Go on having pain”

George Jr.:

Panagoulis, about whom we are talking right now, was the first move that was a credit to Greeks. A rumor says that some “anti-junta fighters from abroad” tried to contact a member of IRA wanted by the British and pay him to come and kill Papadopoulos and that he slapped the whole of Greece by saying “What sense would it make if a foreigner killed Papadopoulos on pay? If Greek liberators do not show up then Greece does not deserve freedom”. Panagoulis did not even know that such things were being said when he was making up his mind to take up all the actions needed towards his bomb attempt (one and a half years after the coup d’etat). The murder of his brother by the junta triggered a state that was very intense in him, something like whispers from heroes poked and kindled his soul with verses like the following:

(Lena and Adrianna who are sisters, and are almost as similar as twins, read at each other’s side:)

Lena

In Greece today

Extinguished fire that’s always burning
gravestone that covers grave with no dead
looks from some eyes that are full of dried tears
people’s thoughts hidden nodding to you.

Beliefs and hopes that their last are breathing
Spirit and Truth that are now in jails
Holy endeavors floating like shipwrecks
Voices of people nodding to you.

A grain of wrath to the soil is falling
A struggle’s message breeds pairs of wings
A sparkle’s light shows up in the darkness
New fights and struggles nodding to you.

Adrianna

The first dead

The funerals are over. Shed no more tears
The first dead are going to be leaders of hope
The rest they now need is unity and struggle
Beginning of struggle have become the first dead.

The first dead are now fertilizers of freedom
A flower of fire comes out of their graves
The answer to this message is unity and struggle
Beginning of struggle have become the first dead.

George Jr. continues :

In other words the fertilizer of freedom that the first dead became, became for him beginning of struggle in new fights and also verses prompting others too, verses that, smuggled out of prison

and put to music by Theodorakis, were passing around from hand to hand and from mouth to mouth, nodding, prompting, encouraging, supporting, and stating clearly the facts of life.

Dimitris:

In his interview after the fall of the junta he described very epigrammatically his motives, with which would agree every Irish counterpart of his too: "Alas to a nation not giving birth to a tyrannicide when giving birth to a tyrant."

Liana:

Of course, the story of Panagoulis is very well known, and not only here where books like "The cell of poetry" and "Rehearsals of death" were written. A big book, first in English and then translated in many languages, titled "A Man", was also written about him, by a famous Italian journalist. How does this story connect with the story of all those boys and girls who were "the movers of history" in that historical event now called "the Polytechnico", all those "anonymous" who made that Polytechnico possible and who go with expressions like "every Constantis and Mihalis" or "every Tom, Dick and Harry", and of whom Ritsos sings "we were reading the world's history in first names"?

Helen:

How does the story of "those whom we saw and we'll see again" connect with the story of him whom only the arms of poetry are wide enough to embrace, and whom only She awaits and gifts him, like the ancient myths, a place among the constellations of the anthropomorphic celestial firmament? The answer is given by, again, Mihalis Katsaros in, again, the same poem, "you'll see them again", that Mikis Theodorakis put to music and Grigoris Bithikotsis sang.

Chrysa

You'll see them again

Each one you see now you're going to see again, maybe on another ferry,
one's name may then be Tom or Dick, another's Harry.

Each one you see now you're going to see again, the way to tell it is them
will be a prouder way to walk on all roads of this world.

Each one you see now you're going to see again, again you're going to hate them,
one, strong and youngest won't be found,
for the most bitter turn he's bound,
the lonely one, lonely and brave and the most beloved.

This one you'll never find again, this one the world now misses,
you will not torture him next time nor his big heart tear into pieces.

This one you will not see again, this time he's safely guarded,
the stars are guarding him from you, his sun and moon are watching, too,
now that they've taken him from here,
the lonely one, the young, the brave, the one the most beloved,
for him only I,
I, I, I, I am waiting.

Yiannis, the DJ-ing student, after playing the song by Bithikotsis, comes forth to the stage with a bouzouki and Alekos and Antonis, two younger students who also know how to play bouzouki, join him and Nausika (who plays the piano below the stage), and they all accompany instrumentally the choir (that also goes upstage) in the songs "Live man walking" and "Sun of justice":

Live man walking

As he was walking down the street flying like an eagle
the neighborhood was just admiring from their windows
two fires like sun were sparkling in his black eyes
live man was striding
striding to his death.

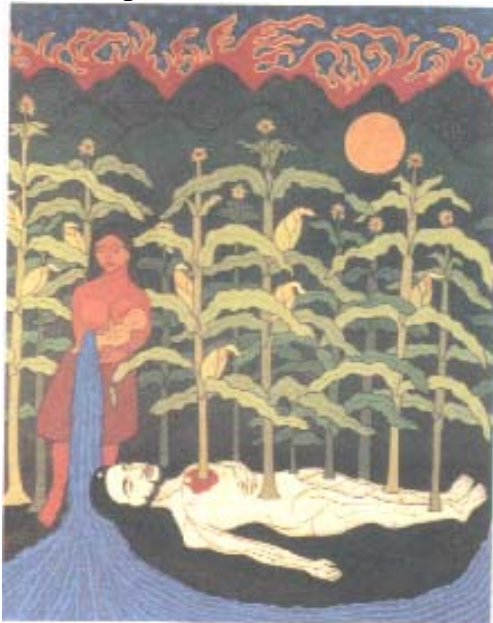
His calm and angry eyes reflect a cloud that's passing
his steps are straight just like the iron in his heart
the sun gets ready to be covered with blood running
his death was striding
striding to live man.

Eyes close and also tight are shut all hearts and windows
as death comes dashing riding on wild black horseback
when they're back open they see live man dying
dying and smiling
smiling his known smile.

Who goes or comes today below in everyone's death's land?
Both neighborhoods are full of preparations.
Why are the mountains, plains and sky so voiceless?
Live man is striding
striding to death's land.



“...as straight as the iron in his heart” “The first dead become fertilizers of freedom...”



“...a flower of fire comes out of their graves” “...smiling his known smile”

Sun of Justice

(From Odysseus Elytis' "Axion Esti")

Sun of Justice living, living in and above our mind
and you myrtle glorious leaf of praise and prize
please don't turn your eyes away from my
please don't turn your eyes away from my
please don't turn your eyes away from my country
my country.

Her volcanoes have rows of vines with blood-red wine
her high mountains are proud and eagle-like
and her houses when painted white
and her houses when painted white
and her houses when painted white shine
when her sky is blue and bright.

I reach with my two bitter hands behind old Time
Holding in their strength the Thunderbolt of Right
and I call my old friends and pals
and I call my old friends and pals
and I call my old friends and pals
shouting threats and splashed with blood.

Sun of Justice living, living in and above our mind
and you myrtle glorious leaf of praise and prize
please don't turn your eyes away from my
please don't turn your eyes away from my
please don't turn your eyes away from my country
my country.

Yiannis (instructor):

Let's all stand up and keep one minute's silence for the fallen:

Yiannis (another instructor, Helen's husband, took a harmonica out of his pocket and played during the silence the melody of "Brothers you fell victims for a honest struggle")

National Anthem

Helen (instructor):

If we do think that the goals of the Polytechnic's uprising have been accomplished let's also think from time to time what it took. If we don't think they were accomplished, let's keep them in our mind and let's think if the Polytechnic's uprising inspires anything for their accomplishment... The song you're going to be hearing on your way out is John Lennon's "Imagine" which Irene thought was the best for the role of a goodbye to you... Oh! Whoever, among the older students, is willing can stay for helping us bring the theater-room back to its classroom form...and for whatever else might come up...

Follow up:

...What did come up, in no time, was a "broom sweeping party", a dancing-cleaning combination under the sounds of a cassette of rock prepared for the occasion by Dimitra (instructor) and, as it was very natural, her free associations, maybe due to the day, before ending to Blues Brothers and Johnny B. Goode, had passed from songs like Janice's "Bobby Mc Gee" (the "*freedom was just another name for nothing left to lose*" song) and Kurt Weil and Morrison's "Alabama song" (the "*I tell you we must die*" song). A very

interesting piece of food for thought about the way music functions (and about the way Dimitra's and Helen's ears or minds or hearts function) is the fact that Dimitra is an instructor of French but does not speak English, and did not know what the lyrics of Bobby Mc Gee and of the Alabama song were about yet she did feel they were good for the occasion of a post-17N party. Also, Helen is an instructor of literature and also picked on Eleanor Rigby just through melody for the purposes we saw in the paragraphs that were read (she even thought the song was called "Father McKenzie") So the present instructor (of physics and, some time in the past, of English), surprised as he saw unfolding such fantastic combinations, started throwing little bits of paper with translations of some verses of both "Eleanor Rigby" and "Blowin' in the wind" for Yiannis (the DJ-ing student) to read loud on the microphone during the instrumental parts of the songs, decided not to ever again miss any rehearsals, realized that he should have broken his long speech-in-monologue-format to many pieces assigned to several students and, like Helen had done with her rock selections and her comments, he should either have rephrased them to fit the students who would read them or should have proposed them to student only after their choosing the paragraphs as fitting them after hearing them in the rehearsals; and broke it the way we saw only in retrospect (after many years actually. So this event was never realized in the matter presented here. Helen did with the students what she has prepared and at the moment she had planned beckoned to me to go up and read my speech. I wrote down what of Helen's work could be reconstructed by memory (i.e. mainly the songs). Finally I realized that this way of presentation was more fit for radio than for live presence. Actually even on radio one could write so that students read to each other and not to the audience, so make it like a theater, but only two years later, when George (instructor of literature) suggested a skit by K. Mitropoulou, did we start writing skits like videoclips to some songs or to some scenes from books to make their point more live (especially with respect to songs, the point was that since none of us could compose music to create soundtracks for skits we could well write skits to have some given (and excellent songs) as soundtracks, i.e. write "videoclips". Besides, writing skits by starting from the soundtrack was dictated to us from the fact that music, as noticed above too, can convey its meanings and moods almost without the lyrics. And the lyrics can be said through skits instead of through just being read before being played by a DJ or sung by a choir. And the scenarios of the videoclips could be easily related to scenes from the books we wanted to present).Upshot: The phrase "Earlier 17N anniversaries" in the bibliography of the skits meant, in more detail, exactly the follow up finished right now.