

“Dear Mary, a friend asked me on the phone a couple of days ago why I don’t make a book out of some of the things I’ve written about (most of which you have seen in our correspondence or our conversation).OK, I did plan to put some other selections on a blog, but, thinking back to it, the selections I sent you a few days ago are fine for a book too, not just for a blog. The book, if finally I do decide it and if finally it does become possible, might best be called “Glossa Skopelos blues” but its title in the context of the wider blog might best be “Personal Selections for Mary and John” since it was your Christmas card that gave me the idea for how to best divide the material of the blog in folders and files, and into parts publishable and non-publishable-but-just-bloggable. What the blog version and the publishable version of that book-like part have in common is the 10 files/chapters we have seen in the present folder plus what you are reading now and you’ll be reading until the end of the present letter. What they do not have in common is the next file of this folder and the part of the present file that comes after this letter, namely the long presentation of, mainly, Lewis Mumford’s “The City in History” that is too long to be included in a book unlike its few selections we saw in file/chapter 9. In the CD that I have enclosed, part of which is what you are reading right now, I have put all the material I will have on the blog. Let me here write down the table of contents of what will come after the letter finishes, so as not to ask you to click on the folders and see their files’ titles (by way of table of contents and outline) Folder 1: “Personal Selections for Mary and John” (=previous 10 files , present file=letter +Mumford, next file “Still lingering on less collective concerns”) Folder 2: “Farcitrilogy, John Alevizos” (=“Mount Bushmore, farcitragedy in soap- opera format” , “Overground, tragicomix in road-movie format”, “Overground, tragicomix in space-movie format”) Folder 3: “Collective concerns and Academia blues” (=“Appendix on Mumford. Labyrinths , Borgesian and not”, “Appendix to Mount Bushmore”, “Princeton’s possibilities as a prestige trap”, “Upshot as Academia blues”, “Upshot as cover letter”).Now what’s the reason for differentiating between what’s for books and what’s for blogs? There’s one that reflects some technological limitations and one that reflects some so-to-speak “social pressures”: Books are unbearably expensive when they include many photos and unbearably heavy to carry when they have many pages. CD’s are equally cheap and equally easy to carry no matter how many photos or pages they have. The not publishable but just bloggable things have many photos and many pages. Also, publishers have some say on what the writers they publish may write because they, publishers, put in money credibility and responsibility. For blogs only writers have a say because only they themselves put the responsibility, and nobody puts in any money; concerning credibility and differentiation from web-pollution, OK, only the writer puts it in if he has it at all, or nobody puts any if he is an unknown. But if one does publish one part of his pages as a book to find credibility for some audiences (and lose it before he even finds it, for other audiences) and to also give, in the book, a reference to the blogs for the rest of his pages, the above technicalities , both technological and other, are met. One that we haven’t yet mentioned, the one related to “social pressures”, can also be met this way: In our days many people, not without reason, would hesitate to use a blog just in case they might be watched and be put on some record with consequences ranging from being harassed to being threatened or to even get into undesired mix-ups, real or imagined or implied, yet equally disturbing one’s peace of mind. Anyone’s reluctance to go to certain blogs for such reasons is to be respected. Equally respectable is going there , if one does want to feel as “looking for it”, or if one does feel he does have a way to have a voice to protest any such consequences (at least if harassment takes visible and tangible forms), or if one feels this as a way of casting a vote or presence in the name of protesting either against the things the blog too protests against or debunks or satirizes and ridicules, or against imposing feelings of being watched. But in all cases this is something which a reader must decide consciously and at the timing he/she feels right (oh! Thus, naturally, if you want to recommend the pages to somebody who e.g. is in another town do remember not to tell him/her what to google but, instead, to mail him/her a copy of the CD so that he/she decides for himself/herself whether he/she wants to go to the blog itself too or stay at the CD). Anonymous buying of the book-form of some pages relieves one from all those concerns. OK, so you see “Mary”, the reason I called you “Mary” and I called your husband “John” was not any egocentricity as it would be if I considered you and your husband as mere alter egos mirroring us, my wife and me, John/Mary. I only meant to skip the need to ask you for the permission to use your real name when including here part of our correspondence or conversation and to also tell you that if you and your husband now or at any point in time feel like also going to the blog where I put the non-book part of my pages, please do that (by just googling “Mount Bushmore, John Alevizos”) Until that time you can of course read the present CD which does contain all of that blog anyway. And of course, since the book-part is contained in the first folder of this CD, you don’t have to buy the book either if it comes out (unless you do want, for some reason, to help out or reward either me or the publisher or both of us); Upshot: Please don’t mind my calling you

“Mary” and “John” nor my skipping the quotation marks if sometimes I do that. The rest of this letter is fit as part of the answer to your next letter whenever I receive it but let me write it already here so as to write in my answer to that only what will be responding to what you will be writing to me. There it goes: Concerning the rest of the present file, especially in my own notes to Mumford, and also concerning the third folder of the CD, feel free to skip any page or the whole thing, as it gets, progressively, unbearably or even outrageously (and at times irrelevantly) academic. Don't feel obliged to stay on the bus for the whole course, feel free to judge for yourself when it goes past your patience and your interest. I'm sure however you won't get out of the bus before the excerpts from Mumford's book itself, starting on the next page, finish.....John Alevizos 12/13/2007*

*PS: Oh: I almost forgot: Mary, concerning our next summer's reunion it will most probably be in Athens on your way from the airport to here (if it's not through the airport of the island of Skiathos that you come here). I still don't know the address we'll have. It became necessary to move, I'll tell you why when we meet, although the years we've spent here will be so beautifully unforgettable that a file I started about them is titled "Eleven years in the sun" (unfortunately it's not translatable, not because of Greek-into-English problems but because it so much depends on inside classroom events that they would not mean much even to the parents of the students involved. They only make sense to our students and to my fellow teachers). Now why did I hurry to already mention this now and I didn't let it for the answer of your letter after Christmas, or for later e.g. with your Easter wish-card or before summer or before we leave? The reason I wrote it here is because it is in the present file that some things I say to you I also say to the reader of my blog or book: If some friend of yours who will possibly read the CD I've sent you (or any reader to whom somebody gave a copy) wants to write to me, he/she will have my address through you (or through whoever gave the CD to him/her). On my Glossa/Skopelos address one might also stumble (in a natural way like we stumbled on each other) in my pages themselves (but not in my pages concerning letters, that's not any natural way to stumble on an address). And anyway Glossa is so small that Glossa/Skopelos (+Greece) is address enough since letters are not even distributed here but left in a cafeteria to be picked up. If somebody wants to write to me through e-mail then, since he/she doesn't mind being or feeling watched he/she might as well open for a couple of weeks a blog** with a title that I can google if, weekly, I google with the words “Open letter to John Alevizos”. If I see one I'll open an interactive blog too, titled “Open letters to or from John Alevizos” and put there both that letter and my answer and let it open for possible future such letters. I hope that the technical part of it, when I learn it in Christmas, will say that in some such way I can avoid having an e-mail address at all so as not to have to worry about the quality of some antivirus brand or about whether I installed it correctly etcetcetc. I did have some months of free internet, when I bought my PC, and I spent eight hours a day on the net, and then I did have some months of eight hours a day on the net paid, I did collect that way much material that was very relevant and appears on the blog, but now that eight hours are not needed anymore there's not much that I cannot find through just the internet connection of my school that is a three minutes' walk from home. I'll try to house that near school next year too...J.A/12/14*

** They start on the next page if one is in the blog version. In the book version this file ends on the present page and the book we are referring to, and urge the reader to look up and buy, is Mumford's "The City in History".*

PS: This plan is obsolete as too impractical for the reader. I'll explain on next page's PS. The blog will be put on the web right after Christmas or in the first couple of weeks of the new year. The only possible reopening that will be made will be for the inclusion of Mary's answer, possibly not earlier than around Easter time. Web correspondence as we've just said can be well made without such reopening.*

****PS: blog or whatever it's called. I now hear that a blog is something different, not pages with letters and photos.*

Is Mumford's "The City in History" relevant after more than 40 years?

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...OK, Mary the best thing to do is to put all this (and more, an appendix on Mumford) somewhere where it can be googled independently too. So just google the words "Mumford, man-for-all-seasons for our season, by John Alevizos". (And concerning my possible insertions of "political impropriety" into Mumford contexts, I think I have not included there anything more improper than what you already saw here in the file "Mount Bushmore, theater program".)

PS: Plan changes after learning more about internet:

- 1. To replace e-mail by open letters posted on the google would be impractical for the reader for two reasons at least: He would have to pay about 30 \$ to open it and to wait for about two months for his letter to be findable by the google. So I just opened an address*: johnalev@gmail.com**
- 2. "Mount Bushmore" was put on the web on December 31. It became reachable on January 3 (2008) at www.johnalevizos.net. It will become googlable through key words occurring in it etc about a couple of months after that.**

***Neither the reader nor the author of "Mount Bushmore" have to worry about possible viruses communicated through it when downloading it from www.johnalevizos.net. since that site does not receive mail. Mail is through johnalev@gmail.com which is not connected to the above (nor to the author's hard disk).**

One more such plan change:

*Publishers who might be interested in either "Mount Bushmore" or anything else of what shows up at the above site can contact me at johnalev@gmail.com if and ONLY IF they are willing to only publish a leaflet containing the theater program (only**), to have no copyright preventing anybody else from doing the same, to include in the leaflet a CD with exactly the content of the site www.johnalevizos.net and in a way not preventing the copying of the CD, to write on the outer part of the back cover of the leaflet that both the leaflet and all the contents of the enclosed CD can also be obtained for free both at the above site and at the publisher's site***, to sell the leaflet at only the price of a usual color-photo commix (the present analog of the price of the issues of those good old "classics illustrated" coming out weekly in our childhood)+one extra dollar for the expense of including a CD, to either arrange the due loyalties with the originators of the term "Mount Bushmore" or just print the leaflet with the title "Theater Program" on its cover, to pay the author (me) with the average percentage of what they (the publishers) pay their other writers, to keep for themselves exactly the same percentage and, with the rest of their net gain, to finance a plan (either unrelated or even related to these pages) or a cause that we're both interested in helping along. Same deal (but with smaller price since not any paper is involved) is for people interested in fixing and distributing the book not in page form but in CD form only (to be sold either at bookstores or at CD-shops). The plan just proposed, which if shared by many authors is of course a plan for "publisher suicide for the sake of free, or at least less expensive, and higher quality education for wide audiences", goes hand in hand with a proposal in the direction of making cheap book-shape laptops without a keyboard, with only page-change button, as easily useable as a book one leafs sitting in an armchair, i.e. laptops that are friendly to e.g. people of the non computer-friendly generation (and also are friendly to their pocket. Maybe "old timers" do not want to also buy technology they're not going to need if they only want to use a PC for reading CD's. Without reference to keyboard & modem wouldn't reading be cheaper? Also, one doesn't need to be an old timer to prefer to use less paper and to want to be more educated, less expensively, and by less profit-oriented authors and publishers. Also, rewritable CD's, for books and newspapers, are more easily recycled than paper. Overall, this is not a proposal for suicide to publishers, just a proposal for suicide of many functions of them. They can very well be reborn in new form and stay alive)*

***So the plan of page 1 about a book titled "Glossa Skopelos blues" is off. Only the theater program is to be made a book, and maybe the Greek original of files 3,5,6,7 for theater loving high school students.*

****Making reward/ help to both author and publisher (like to street musicians) optional for the reader.*

January 23 2008

Maybe Mary's answer will be in a wish card and so won't come before Easter, so let's not wait that long, to include her answer, before we write to our other readers our address. After the completion of what was to be written in this site the author's arduous work habits have, relatively, at least for the time being, relaxed and whether e-mail (to johnalev@gmail.com) or to my postal address (see below. If I move I'll drop a note somewhere in the site. The e-mail address will not change anyway) will be gladly answered (and, if existing and if so wishing, the letters will also be posted on the internet. Readers who would like this are asked to write their letters in CD form because if they're long, I can't promise I'll copy or photo-scan them to make them digital).

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