

## **Platonic Myths in the Prose of Modernism**

*A comparative study through representative examples*

The subject of the research is the connection of literary modernism with Platonic philosophy through the concept of *myth*, and in particular the connection of modernist prose with *myths* and *images* of Plato's philosophical *Dialogues* through the investigation of representative texts of the literary period of modernism. Along with other texts, we will deal in detail with the novel *Six Nights on the Acropolis* by George Seferis, the *Lemon Forest* of Kosmas Politis, the novel *In Search of the Lost Time* of Marcel Proust, the novel *Death in Venice* by Thomas Mann etc.

First of all, we will try to answer the question of *the nature and function of the myth in modernism*, so that we can gradually unravel the relationship of modernism with Platonic myths and finally make it possible to formulate a satisfactory answer to why we focus, from a set of myths, to those of the Greek thinker.

In particular, an attempt will be made to investigate the way in which key features of modernist writing, such as the *illogical* element and the element of *timelessness* meet with Platonic metaphysics and the *theory of Ideas*, as well as to investigate analogies in the operation of *mythical narration*, which is an interpretive “key” for the texts under consideration, but also for the Platonic *Dialogues*. In other words, there is a two-way relationship and an indissoluble way of connecting these elements, which characterize both modernist writers and the Greek philosopher. Let us keep in mind, on the one hand, the accepted and indisputable literary nature of philosophical dialogues of Plato, who, as a poet, began his writing activity; on the other hand, the philosophical character of the texts of Modernism, which for this reason have characterized as philosophical essays.

More specifically, we will be concerned with how philosophical myths are transformed and how they appear, transformed into modernist texts, which we will investigate from a comparative-interpretive point of view.

Structurally, the work will be organized in the following sections:

In the Introduction, entitled *Modernists and Classical Education*, the general interest of the writers of the literary period of modernism for classical antiquity and the Greek literature will be highlighted, with reference to and extraction of data from everyone's bio-work. (particularly, of George Seferis, Kosmas Politis, Marcel Proust, Thomas Mann, etc.).

The first Chapter will be entitled *Modernists and Myth* & will consist of subsections entitled *The Function of Myth in Plato*, *The Nature and Function of Myth in Modernism* and *The Illogical Element* respectively.

In the second Chapter, entitled *The literary nature of Plato's Philosophical Myths* and *The philosophical nature of Modernist Prose*, we will delve deeper into the analysis of the previous two chapters through examples from the researched texts.

In the next, third Chapter, we will focus on the *Viewing of Platonic Philosophy by the authors of the texts under consideration*, whose analysis and interpretation will continue in the rest and larger part of the dissertation: the next two Chapters will focus on *Diotima's legend* in *Lemon Forest* (4<sup>th</sup>) and in the "emergence of Platonic mythical elements in the novel *Six Nights on the Acropolis*" (5<sup>th</sup>), while in the sixth and seventh chapters the research will focus respectively on *Death in Venice* and its connection with Dialogue *Phaedrus* (6<sup>th</sup>) and the *Androgyny Myth* in the novel *In Search of Lost Time* (7<sup>th</sup>).

The eighth Chapter will include a final comparative assessment of the texts, always in the light and function of the literary myth.

In the end, the conclusion of the work will be recorded and formulated, for which, for the time being, we can, presumably, quote some thoughts and emphasize that the Platonic mythical elements are not re-introduced to the purpose, merely a reminder of the *primordial* or *old*, as their use and exploitation is not a one-sided "mythical recycling". On the contrary, formatted by the writers, appear as new, transformed myths, satisfying a multifaceted literary demand; because, the coexistence of *old* and *new* and the *new reading* make the literary process of *emergence* visible, as well as the *flexibility* and *radiance* of the myth. In this way, new, complex and multifaceted literary myths emerge, with self-existence and completeness, the multiple recruitment of which ultimately makes the texts equally, if not more, *open* and *polysemy*.