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The figures of merchant, banker and industrialist in the Greek Dramaturgy and Literature of the 19th and 20th century.

One important pivot of the Greek social life from the ancient times was that of poverty and wealth. The Greek thought, in a direct or indirect way, preferred or glorified poverty. Many sources advance this preference. *Πλούτος* (*Wealth*) of Aristophanes, *Ερωφίλη* (*Erophili*), the Cretan tragedy of George Chortatsis, *Ελληνική Νομαρχία*, of an unknown writer, the Greek musical comedy of the end of the 19th century, which tends to the description of real life, are some striking examples. For instance, the basic idea of *Πλούτος* is that people enrich with dishonesty and stay poor, if they are honest¹.

In agreement with the Greek traditional thought, the moral spirit of Enlightenment and the preparation of the Greek revolution of 1821, wealth is accused that corrupts people. Between the social and professional categories that are accused in *Ελληνική Νομαρχία*, the merchants, who seek profit against other priorities of life and the national fight, and in general the “adorers of gold” («χρυσολάτραι»²), are included. This concept for the merchants constitutes a counterbalance for their progressive spirit and positive contribution to the Greek independence fight³.

From the beginning of the 20th century the socialist conceptions influenced the Greek society and thought. The merchants, bankers and industrialists are qualified as plutocracy and their activities are often condemned or are considered as suspicious. The socialist intellectual George Skliros proposes that the inferior classes must start the fight (“war”) against the superior classes, while another socialist, Ioannis (John) Zervos, refers the unfair and morbid financial phenomena of life through the exploitation and the speculation⁴. The inculcation of the poverty, as penalty and as

¹ See K. J. Dover, *Η κωμωδία του Αριστοφάνη*, trad. Phanis I. Kakridis, National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (Morfotiko Idryma Ethnikis Trapezis), Athens 1978, pp. 287-289.

² Anonymou του Ellinos, *Ελληνική νομαρχία ήτοι Λόγος περί ελευθερίας*, Kalvos, Athens 1968, p. 132.

³ See Mario Vitti, *Ιστορία της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας*, Odyseas, Athens 1978, pp. 125, 140.

⁴ George Skliros, «Αλλ’ οι δημοτικισταί δεν θέλουν να είναι κοινωνιολόγοι», in *Η σοσιαλιστική σκέψη στην Ελλάδα από το 1875 έως το 1974*, ed. Panayotis Noutsos, Vol. 2: Ιδέες και κινήσεις για την οικονομική και πολιτική οργάνωση της εργατικής τάξης, 1st part: Από το Κοινωνικόν μας ζήτημα στην ιδρυτική γενιά του ΣΕΚΕ, Gnossi, Athens 1991, pp. 203-205, Ioannis Zervos, «Η πάταξη της “ειδωλολατρίας του νεώτερου χρυσού μόσχου”», in *Η σοσιαλιστική σκέψη στην Ελλάδα από το 1875*

failure, was nerveless in the Greek society, as the social Darwinism was not developed as in the western societies⁵.

Modern Greek literature, dramaturgy and movies utilized this social and ideological background, which often functioned as stereotype. Concerning the merchant, two different prose pieces, in simple purist language, marked the end of the 19th century: *Λουκής Λάρας* by Dimitrios Vikelas (1879) and *Λυγερή* by Andreas Karkavitsas (1890).

The novel *Λουκής Λάρας*, through the main hero, the merchant Laras, expresses the ideology of the rising bourgeois and of the European Bildungsroman⁶. The old merchant, who remembers his adventurous life during the Greek revolution, is professionally honest. This way of living loses the pleasure of profit and leads him to superior purposes, such as the survival, the independence, the success and the happiness⁷. He promotes the bourgeois values in a non-urban society⁸ and contributes to the formation of terms of regular transition to an urban society and to a stable bourgeois life.

The case of *Λυγερή* is totally different. Two dissimilar types of merchant appear: the old grocer Panayotis Strimmenos, who lives in Lechena of Iliia, and his villager employee Nikolos Pikopoulos, who becomes his son-in-law, namely the husband of Anthi. The first represents the old world of a closed commercialized and traditional society and the second the new mercantile and competitive society. Their mentality is also different. The old man appears as nonchalant, frugal, a moderate

ώς το 1974, ed. P. Noutsos, Vol. 2, 2nd part: Από το ΣΕΚΕ στο ΚΚΕ, 2nd edition, Gnossi, Athens 1994, pp. 466-468.

⁵ See Antonis Liakos, *Εργασία και πολιτική στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου. Το διεθνές γραφείο εργασίας και η ανάδυση των κοινωνικών θεσμών*, Educational and Cultural Foundation of the Commercial Bank of Greece (Idryma Erevnas kai Paideias tis Emborikis Trapezas tis Ellados), Athens 1993, pp. 371-373, Charis Eksertoglou, *Οι «χαμένες πατρίδες» πέρα από τη νοσταλγία. Μια κοινωνική-πολιτισμική ιστορία των Ρωμιών της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας (μέσα 19^{ου}- αρχές 20^{ου} αιώνα)*, Nefeli, Athens 2010, pp. 90-91, 96-98, 101.

⁶ See Maria Sakalaki, *Κοινωνικές ιεραρχίες και σύστημα αξιών. Ιδεολογικές δομές στο νεοελληνικό μυθιστόρημα 1900-1980*, Kedros, 1984, p. 251, Panayotis Kondylis, *Η παρακμή του αστικού πολιτισμού. Από τη μοντέρνα στη μεταμοντέρνα εποχή και από το φιλελευθερισμό στη μαζική δημοκρατία*, Themelio, Athens 1991, pp. 125-126, Vangelis Athanassopoulos, «Ο ρεαλισμός ως μέσο της ηθικής παραδειγματικής λειτουργίας της διήγησης. Η περίπτωση του ιδεολογικού ρεαλισμού του *Λουκή Λάρα*», in *Από τον Λεάνδρο στον Λουκή Λάρα. Μελέτες για την πεζογραφία της περιόδου 1830-1880*, ed. Nassos Vagenas, 2nd edition, Goulandri- Chorn Foundation, Institute of Mediterranean Studies, Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kritis (Editions of the University of Crete), Heraklion 1999, pp. 303-308.

⁷ Voir Kondylis, op. cit., pp. 87, 89.

⁸ He finally moves to England, where the conditions are obviously favorable for his professional and family prosperity.

utilitarian and aims at a profit for survival⁹, but he cannot resist to the mercantile evolution. He reminds of the European bourgeois of the ancient type before the new era¹⁰. The villager Nikolos represents a dynamic and extrovert conception of commerce, but also the immorality in general terms and the lack of hesitations, so as to achieve his purpose, the superior commercial profit, firstly through his marriage with Anthi¹¹. He follows the stable conception in agreement with the models of naturalism: the merchant as a representative of the negative aspect of bourgeois ethics. The accumulation of wealth and the fetishist way of touching and looking at the money approaches him to the misers of the literary and theatrical tradition. The new mentality of wild competition adopted by the new merchants penetrated the peaceful large village of Lechena.

Does the new grocer open the way towards the bourgeois society and the new era? In financial, commercial and cultural terms he does not. The new society cannot differentiate in a decisive way from the old. The new mentality is dubious. The commerce cannot escape from the interpersonal and kindred relations, which reveals a petit bourgeois and non-capitalist conception, as money and financial exchanges are not morally neutral¹². Nikolos was passed over by other skilful merchants- one of those profited by his relatives for the quick dispatch of the goods. The narrator does not explain clearly at the end of the novel where he utilizes his profit. The main hero is also interested in the accumulation of money, a fair petit bourgeois and non-capitalist conception.

Except his professional activity, and in comparison with his wife, he does not represent the new type of man who announces in advance the new society. Anthi, who suffered a marriage of commercial profit, except the end of the novel, represents the feminine virtues, in opposition with the masculine faults, a situation who follows the conceptions of the Greek feminist movement¹³. The care and the clearness of the

⁹ See Vassilis I. Filias, *Δεκατέσσερα δοκίμια κοινωνιολογίας*, Boukoumanis, Athens 1991, pp. 41-42.

¹⁰ See Werner Sombart (Βέρνερ Ζόμπαρτ), *Ο Αστός. Πνευματικές προϋποθέσεις και ιστορική πορεία του δυτικού καπιταλισμού*, tr. Kostas Koutsourelis, Nefeli, Athens 1998, pp. 159-166.

¹¹ The moral and theological thought of the 19th century condemned this mentality and practice (see Eksertzoglou, op. cit., p. 89, Kondylis, op. cit., pp. 88-89).

¹² See Filias, op. cit., pp. 41-42, Paul Sant Cassia with Constantina Bada, *The making of the modern Greek family. Marriage and exchange in nineteenth-century Athens*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology, ed. Jack Goody, Stephen Gudeman, Michael Herzfeld, Jonathan Parry, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 250-251.

¹³ See Helen Varika, *Η εξέγερση των κυριών. Η γένεση μιας φεμινιστικής συνείδησης στην Ελλάδα 1833-1907*, Educational and Cultural Foundation of the Commercial Bank of Greece (Idryma Erevnas kai Paideias tis Emborikis Trapezas tis Ellados), Athens 1987, pp. 136, 222, 226, 228.

house after her marriage and its artistic look¹⁴ express the habits of a country society, as the narrator says, but also surpass them towards an urban and bourgeois society¹⁵. Nikolos prefers the disorder of his shop, which becomes his own “house”. That means that Anthi is a “queen of the house”, as it is generally accepted for the woman’s role and status in an urban society¹⁶, but without a “king”. The separation and the autonomy of the main spaces of life arrive its extreme borders, so as to turn over the dominant ideology of the sexes, as the role of the woman is without receiver¹⁷. This role is accepted only when she bears a child, condition which brings finally happiness to the house. This false situation, which encounters the ironic distantiation of the narrator, and the general evolution of the plot, show that the social and financial evolution is a relevant notion, that the new mercantile society is not capitalist and that the course towards the urban and the bourgeois world is difficult, with many obstacles. These remarks make the novel pioneer, as it exercises a considerable social criticism¹⁸.

The personality of the merchant appears in many prose pieces and plays of the 20th century. His double status bequeathed by Vikelas and Karkavitsas remains, but the emphasis is given on his negative aspect.

The most characteristic case of the first half of the century is the writer Grigorios (Gregory) Xenopoulos. In the beginning of the century appeared the novelette *Έρωσ εσταυρωμένος (Στέλλα Βιολάντη)* (1901) and later its theatrical version represented in the theatre (*Στέλλα Βιολάντη*) (1909). The main hero, the wholesale merchant Panagis Violantis, is not characterized by his professional attitude, but by his social one, especially towards his family. His daughter Stella is the victim of his cruel attitude, as he rejected and turned away her beloved man Christakis Zamanos. The reaction of Stella leads to her severe punishment by her father, that ends in her death, alone in a secluded room in the novelette, in front of the whole family in the play. His cruelty is evident in the novelette, where he guards the conventional attitude in front of the people during the funeral, but he reveals privately

¹⁴ [...] η αβρά επιμέλεια, η καλλιτεχνική διασκευή, η λεπτή καθαριότης του σπιτιού (A. Karkavitsas, *Η λυγερή*, “Hestia” Bookstore I. D. Kollaros & Co. PLC, Athens s. a., p. 141).

¹⁵ See Varika, op. cit., p. 130, Kondylis, op. cit., pp. 87-88, Kostas Raptis, «Αστικές τάξεις και αστικότητα στην Ευρώπη, 1789-1914: προσανατολισμοί της σύγχρονης ιστοριογραφίας», *Μνήμων*, Vol. 20, Athens 1998, p. 238.

¹⁶ See Varika, op. cit., pp. 199, 226-227.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 123-124, 222, 230, Kondylis, op. cit., p. 89, Raptis, op. cit., p. 233.

¹⁸ See P. D. Mastrodimitris, *Ανάλεκτα νεοελληνικής φιλολογίας*, Nefeli, Athens 1995, p. 179.

to his family almost a wild joy for the punishment of her daughter, like the Death (Charos) of the Greek popular tradition. It is not accidental that the most cruel hero in the dramaturgy of the beginning of the century is a merchant, the representative of almost a feudal social order, descendant of other cruel figures, as Philogonos in *Ερωφίλη* by Chortatsis (1590-1600) and Dareios Ronkalas in the play of Antonios Matessis *Βασιλικός* (1829-30)¹⁹. The acquisition of wealth seems to lead some powerful people to a heartless and finally murderous attitude.

Two other prose pieces of Xenopoulos present merchants: the novels *Πλούσιοι και φτωχοί* (1919, 1926) and *Τίμιοι και άτιμοι* (1921). The writer, connected with the principles of a healthy urban society, presents the other status of the merchant. The notion of professional honesty and frugality is accentuated. In the first novel the father and the uncle of Popos Dagatoras are honest merchants, as also Dimos Spathis declares for his father in the second novel. However, the presence of these heroes is not important in the novels. The father and uncle of Popos did not manage to succeed in their trade, as a sudden fire destroyed their not insured goods. They became poor. The honesty does not lead to success, if it not accompanied by clear-sightedness and perspective.

The most striking play of the first period after the Second World War is *Η ηλικία της νύχτας* by Iakovos Kambanellis, represented in 1959 in «*Θέατρο Τέχνης*» (“Theatro Technis”-“Theatre of art”) of Karolos Koun. This drama attributes the social, economical and political climate of Greece some years after the Civil War through the family of the rich merchant Karas and its environment. Karas is connected with the cruel figures of the literary and theatrical tradition. However, his presence is complex, as he moves in certain levels of the plot (family, professional social, political), except the love, that concerns only his son, which is crucial for the most of the plays and prose pieces of the past. He comes in violent conflict with his son Dimitris and he leads him and a bankrupted merchant (Sarris) to commit suicide, as Violantis in *Στέλλα Βιολάντη* was responsible for the death of his daughter and as the factory owner Joe Keller in *All my sons* (1947) by Arthur Miller sacrificed even his

¹⁹ See Telemachus Moudatsakis, «*Η Στέλλα Βιολάντη* του Γρ. Ξενόπουλου. Το φεουδαλικό “έλλειμμα” του άρχοντα στο πρόσωπο του Π. Βιολάντη», *Nulla dies sine linea. Προσεγγίσεις στο έργο του Γρηγόριου Ξενόπουλου*, ed. George P. Pefanis, Kostas et Eleni Ourani Foundation, Athens 2007, pp. 226, 238.

son, in order to accumulate profit²⁰. Karas remains without child, even before his suicide, and without a receiver of his fortune or power, as also was the case of Philogonos and Ronkalas.

Two features of his attitude and of the general dramatic situations are exceptional. The first is that the victimizer hero seems to be, first of all, the victim of an implacable market, which has already appeared in *Λυγερή*. Behind this dramatic situation is expressed the insecurity of the postwar period, but also it reminds us of the conditions of the Greek market during the German occupation and of the activity of the black marketeers. The “rotten rope” («σάπιο σκοινί»²¹), on which Karas believes that he walks, is probably connected with the ruined or problematic economy of this period²². The “known political convictions” («γνωστά πολιτικά φρονήματα»²³), that the hero refers to his son, are connected with the postwar unyielding anticommunism of a certain part of the merchants and industrialists²⁴. This element can, for one more reason, explain why Karas wants to chase from the down floor of his house the poor people, probably some of them of communist convictions, who live there homeless from the war²⁵. The second feature is that he qualifies himself to his son as an honest merchant. This characterization seems correct concerning the typical meaning of honesty, even if he has been a fortune-hunter, so as to utilize the money of the dowry for his profession. The essential meaning of honesty, however, is much broader, beyond the concrete commercial activities²⁶. It has to do with humanism that fails to Karas standing against Sarris²⁷. The merchant is not as all powerful as it seems to be. He cannot control even the space of his house, which becomes a place of uncontrolled

²⁰ See (criticism of) G. Stavrou, in *Θέατρο of Ιάκωβος Καμπανέλλης*, Vol. 1 (*Εβδομη μέρα της δημιουργίας, Η αυλή των θαυμάτων, Η ηλικία της νύχτας*), Kedros, 1978, p. 305 («Αυγή», Februar 1959). The American theatre influenced Kambanellis and the Greek theatre in general, firstly through the representations of the «*Θέατρο Τέχνης*». *All my sons* was represented in this theatre in 1947.

²¹ Iakovos Kambanellis, *Η ηλικία της νύχτας*, in *Θέατρο*, op. cit., p. 226.

²² See (criticism of) G. Stavrou, in *Θέατρο*, op. cit., p. 306, Christos Chatziiosif, «Η περίοδος της ανασυγκρότησης 1945-1953 ως στιγμή της σύγχρονης ελληνικής και ευρωπαϊκής ιστορίας», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο (1945-1967)*, (4th Scientific Congress, Panteion University, 24-27 November 1993) Foundation of Sakis Karagiorgas, Athens 1994, pp. 30-31.

²³ Kambanellis, op. cit., p. 270.

²⁴ See Stavros Thomadakis, «Αδιέξοδα της ανασυγκρότησης και οικονομικοί θεσμοί του μεταπολεμικού κράτους», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο (1945-1967)*, op. cit., p. 39.

²⁵ The conditions of residence in the first postwar decade were worse than these of the period before the Second World War (see Stergios Babanassis, «Η οικονομική ανάπτυξη και οι κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις της στην Ελλάδα κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο [1945-1967]*, Vol. 2, Athens 1995, p. 51).

²⁶ See (criticism of) Stathis Spiliotopoulos, in *Θέατρο*, op. cit., p. 308.

²⁷ Kambanellis was accused by some critics for propaganda or for stereotypic confrontation of bourgeois and of poor people (see K. O., in *Θέατρο*, op. cit., p. 310).

movements of the heroes²⁸. He stays alone, without powerful arguments, as many similar heroes of the dramaturgy of the past, and pays dearly his rigid attitude with the death of his son.

The figure of banker is also one that drew the attention of the writers. In the theatre of the 19th century two characteristic examples are the play of Stephen Xenos *Οι χρυσοκάνθαροι* (1887) and the comedy with songs of Ilias Kapetanakis *Ο γενικός γραμματεύς* (1893). His presentation, as also that of others representatives of high posts and professions, is a caricature. In the first play the gold-bugs of the Greek economy are the bankers, the usurers, the brokers and creditors of the Greek state, who, together with the European diplomats, did manage to lead states to the bankrupt and to oppress the rights of the peoples²⁹. In the second play the banker Chrysoglous is a partner of the politicians in the system of political interchange in Greece through preferential treatments, that shows the lame way of development of the Greek economy and society.

In the 20th century two novels of his first part develop in a clear-cut way the personality of the banker: *Πλούσιοι και φτωχοί* by Xenopoulos and *Γιούγκερμαν* by M. Karagatsis (1938). The Greek banks are presented as organized and hierarchical Organizations that participate in the financial and social evolutions.

In the novel of Xenopoulos one of the top executives of a family bank, Menis Manias, is an important figure, friend of the two main heroes, Popos Dagatoras and Antonis Roukalis-Faraou. In the first place, the personality of Manias and of Antonis are interesting and in the second, the function of the bank. Manias is a negative figure, that is expressed mainly in the relation with the family de Popos. He refutes the Greek myth of the self-made businessman and of the unselfish manager of capitals³⁰. He is cruel, as he dismisses the uncle of Popos, Dionyssakis, who was engaged in the bank after the bankrupt of their family commercial enterprise, and “philanthropist” to Popos, when he asked a credit from the bank. Antonis is opportunist and particularly ambitious. He can combine a bank career, as he is a friend of Menis, and a business

²⁸ The removal of the distinction between the public and the private sphere of life and the overturning of their functions correspond to the abolition of the bourgeois conception and practice of life, to the confusion of the era, to the problematic status of the human relations and to the disintegration of the family bonds.

²⁹ See M. M. Papaioannou, *Το κομειδύλλιο*, Sokolis, Athens 1983, pp. 66, 74, 77.

³⁰ See Alice Vaxevanoglou, *Οι Έλληνες κεφαλαιούχοι 1900-1940. Κοινωνική και οικονομική προσέγγιση*, intr. Spyros I. Asdrachas, Themelio, Athens 1994, p. 156.

career, situation that proves the intense professional mobility in the Greek society and between the financiers³¹. The main heroes, except Popos, and the banker John Manias, the uncle of Menis, are also phalocrats. In this way, their portrait is completed.

The new bank, that the circle of the family Mania creates with the name “Bank of Greek Credit” («Τράπεζα Ελληνικής Πίστεως»³²), shows the evolutions in the Greek economy. At the head will be a rich Greek from Constantinople, Zygidis. The financial mobilization of his environment for the profit of the new bank reveals the massive inflow of foreign capital in Greece from the end of the 19th century³³. The new bank shows not only the continuous movement of capitals and the enchantment that exercised the bank activities to the financiers, but mainly the transition of the individual and family character of a small bank to a large one, that is transformed into a Company of Capitals³⁴. In this way, a tendency of disconnection from the close family and its domination appears. This banking evolution will have victims, as Menis declares. Some other banks will close, showing an implacable competition between the economical interests. The presence of the authorities of the country in the inauguration ceremony, with the Prime Minister at the head, is not accidental for the role and the interest of the state for the financial evolutions. Finally, the transition of the Greek society towards a class structure reveals not only a corporate conception and a class stability, but also a lack of broad class solidarity, that is the real presupposition of a class structure³⁵.

The attitude of Popos and the opinions for the banks of the other heroes of the novel have a certain interest. Popos expresses the instability and the hesitation of a petit bourgeois, who wants to keep in distance from people (bourgeois) and procedures he does not approve, but at the same time they exercise to him a strange attraction or curiosity. The others, as the philosopher and ideological instructor of Popos, Leon Charissis, and his head-master, express totally differentiated opinions, considering their place in the class and social structure.

The novel of Karagatsis has a different perspective from the most prose pieces and plays of the 20th century concerning this subject. It deals with the life of one

³¹ Ibid, pp.156, 306.

³² Grigorios Xenopoulos, *Πλούσιοι και φτωχοί*, Adelphi (Brothers) Vlassi, Athens 1984, p. 293.

³³ See Nikos Mouzelis, «Ταξική δομή και σύστημα πολιτικής πελατείας: Η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας», in *Κοινωνικές και Πολιτικές δυνάμεις στην Ελλάδα*, intr.-ed. G. D. Kontogiorgis, Greek Society of Political Science (Elliniki Etairia Politikis Epistimimis), Exanthas, 1977, p. 138.

³⁴ See Vaxevanoglou, op. cit., pp. 154-157.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 156, Mouzelis, op. cit. p. 138.

financially powerful man of Greece, the Finn Vassilis Karlovits Jugerman, who, runaway from Russia after the Revolution of October 1917, came to Greece and became General Secretary of the textile-mill factory “Gortys”, deputy governor and finally governor of the Bank of Commercial Benefits. The novel has an important social dimension, but also moves in other levels, as the love, mental and metaphysical. Just after his final success, the realization of his purpose to become the most powerful financially man in Athens, as the narrator says from his point of view, he prepares himself to get rid of everything, recognizing the vanity of things³⁶.

One foreigner not only managed to become acclimatized to his new environment, but he became a pioneer in the banking and industrial activities. As a deputy governor of the bank he made the decisive step towards the modernization of the banking system. He managed to win the old system and status quo, which tried to deactivate him, through the activity and the coalition of the financial circles against him, represented by his opponent for the government of the bank A. Ieremiadis³⁷. The classical racist method did not help them to win him. His victory based on the support of the small shareholders, that is an important evolution to their advantage, as during the decade of 1920 the administration of the limited liability companies allied with the big shareholders against the small shareholders³⁸. Jugerman succeeded to be philanthropist and mainly to surpass the inefficiencies of the banking system, that, however, remained in Greece till the period of the political changeover (1974) and even later. He led the bank to its independence from politics, financial interests and suspect circles, as he denied to finance the one of the biggest political parties and decided to abolish the illegal subsidy of the journals. The most important is that the writer found an occasion to condemn the function of the rotten political system, namely the republic, and to demystify the power and the expression of the will of the people through the elections. The condemnation of the political and the economic

³⁶ [...] *Η Αθήνα βρισκόταν στα πόδια του, δική του, υποταγμένη, πρόθυμη να δεχθεί τον κατακτητή της, το νεόχριστο οικονομικό βασιλέα της: τον Βασίλη Γιούγκερμαν, Διοικητή της Τραπέζης Εμπορικών Παροχών* (M. Karagatsis, *Ο Γιούγκερμαν και τα στερνά του*, Vol. 2, new [26th] edition, “Hestia” Bookstore I. D. Kollaros & Co. PLC, Athens 2007, p. 395). The dealing with his success and his following mention of death refers to the myth of the dying king and to the medieval philosophical element concerning the kings in tragedy (see Allardyce Nicoll, *Παγκόσμια Ιστορία Θεάτρων*, Vol 2, tr. Maria Oikonomou, Smyrniotis, s. a., p. 240). The difference is that he is not forced to his fall, but he has the immediate knowledge of the vanity of things.

³⁷ The style of Karagatsis oscillate between the irony and the direct condemnation of the social climb of the unimportant flatterers and the hypocrites.

³⁸ See Stathis N. Tsotsoros, *Η συγκρότηση του βιομηχανικού κεφαλαίου στην Ελλάδα (1898-1939)*, Vol. 1: *Η αργόσυρτη εκβιομηχάνιση*, National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (Morfotiko Idryma Ethnikis Trapezis), Athens 1993, pp. 31-32.

power, of the parliamentary system, is expressed in a novel that was published censored during the period of the dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas and this fact has a special meaning³⁹. This condemnation does not allow margins and strengthens doubts or certainties for the function of every political system. The social criticism of Karagatsis reaches a high level and permits the self-consciousness of the Greek society⁴⁰.

The presence of the industrialist is dynamic in the Greek literature and dramaturgy of the 20th century. From the beginning of the century appeared the “labour dramas”, which drew their attention to the deplorable life of the industrial workers in the industry and out of it, which, however, is presented in a militant way and a positive perspective. The most characteristic novel of the first decades of the 20th century is *Το μεγάλο παιδί* of Kostas Paroritis (1915, 1924).

References to the industrialists were made in the prose pieces of Konstantinos Theotokis *Η τιμή και το χρήμα* (1912, 1914) and *Οι σκλάβοι στα δεσμά τους* (1922). The vagueness of the reference for the merchants and the industrialists of the noble Ioustinianis in the second prose piece (novel) is evident, as the hero tries to allocate the responsibility among the various social and professional categories for the false course of Greece.

In the novelette *Η τιμή και το χρήμα* the role of a certain industrialist or farmer is an object of disagreement between siora Epistimi Trinkoulou and a housewife. The first expresses the status quo calling him “breadgiver of the poor” («ψωμοδότη του φτωχού»⁴¹), while the second expresses her hatred for the wealthy people and accuses the concrete person that enriched because of the government policy of partial subsidies or through bribery and black money. The last ascertainment, which cannot become an element of the plot, describes the reality of the monopolized development of chances for short-term profit between certain financial circles and the intervention of the political element and announces in advance the aggravation of the social relations in Greece and the tension of the social struggle⁴².

³⁹ See K. A. Dimadis, *Δικτατορία-πόλεμος και πεζογραφία 1936-1944*, Gnessi, Athens 1991, pp. 379-382.

⁴⁰ See Aris Berlis, «Παρουσίαση- Ανθολόγηση», in *Η μεσοπολεμική πεζογραφία. Από τον πρώτο ως τον δεύτερο παγκόσμιο πόλεμο*, Vol. 4, Sokolis, Athens 1992, p. 294.

⁴¹ Konstantinos Theotokis, *Η τιμή και το χρήμα*, Grammata, Athens 1991, p. 29.

⁴² See Athanassios Blessios, *Κράτος, κοινωνία και έθνος στη νεοελληνική λογοτεχνία. Από τη δεκαετία του 1890 ως το 1930*, Sokolis, Athens 2008, pp. 41-44.

The novel of Paroritis is directly connected with the “labour dramas”, as it describes the life and the fights of the factory-workers, but it also has certain differentiations from them. This description passes through the life of the teacher Alexis, who is connected with factory-workers and especially with Zisis, person who becomes their leader. A serious labour accident leads to a strike and to the occupation of the factory, that ends in the death of Zisis and of some of his comrades after the attack of the army. The figure of industrialist is missing, while the political element is dynamic through the action of the deputy Lintas, that is a negative figure. The split of the factory-workers is a fact, while the visionary and revolutionary elements in their fight are present together with the reformatory ones and the sad reality of their life. The novel impresses the confusion of an era, the unorganized movement of the factory-workers, and has finally no relation with the optimism of the working movement that emerges and is evident in the plays⁴³.

In the “labour dramas” *Γήταυρος* by Rigas Golfis (1908), *Εστιάς* by Miltiadis Lidorikis (1917), *Η κόκκινη πρωτομαγιά* by G. Simiriotis (1921), the industrialists or their directors appear and in general terms present a cruel status. Their children play an important role, particularly positive, behind the factory-workers; especially Sylvia, the heroine in the play of Lidorikis, who is murdered by her husband, the director of the factory, Thrasivoulos Tharsis. In the play of Golfis, which precedes the novel of Paroritis, there is a murderous labour accident, that does not lead to a strike. The son of the factory owner Fintis, Stavros, is in conflict with his father. The same situation exists between Niki and his father Varouchas in the play of Simiriotis. The cruel intervention of the political power for the benefit of the industrialists, which appears in *Εστιάς*, is more concrete in *Η κόκκινη πρωτομαγιά*, with the action of certain heroes, as the deputy and lawyer Sfiropoulos, a false friend of the factory-workers. It concerns the coincidence and promotion of interests between organs of the state or of one principal party and the grand bourgeois, with the complicity of some judicial functionaries.

Two main models apply the industrialists: the paternalistic and the cruel. A conflict between the two appears in *Εστιάς*. Concerning the first one, the employers, as the factory owner Dimosthenis Yperidis in the play of Lidorikis, declare that they respect the rights of the workers and that their enterprise is like a family. This attitude,

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 95-106.

that is non-capitalistic, restrictive and often interpersonal, merely charitable, and sometimes expresses a superficial and not permanent interest for them, as in *Η κόκκινη πρωτομαγιά*, is a way for more or less mild relations of exploitation, that hides the suffering of the factory-workers⁴⁴. The second model, the oppressive, is retrogressive, because the industrialists cannot understand even their own interest and profit in perspective. Their direct conflict with the factory-workers, their reluctance to modernize the factories and their incapacity to understand the value of the elevation of the living standard of the workers and of the development of the productive forces are the most characteristic elements of their mentality⁴⁵. Their inflexibility leads to their defeat or to their imminent punishment.

The factory-workers in these three plays move from the instinctive reaction, which threatens the factory owner (*Γήταυρος*), to more organized movements towards the claim of their rights, as mainly the strike and finally the revolution (*Η κόκκινη πρωτομαγιά*). In spite of these evolutions, the immaturity and the inadequacies of the labour movement are evident, as the organization of the workers is rudimentary and their reaction remains often instinctive and sentimental.

After the Second World War a representative play is *Απεργία ή η πάλη των τάξεων απ' αυτούς που παλεύουν* by George Skourtis (1975). This militant “labour play” is enriched by new elements after half a century of experience of the labour movement, in relation with the previous plays. Its theatrical structure and essence is modern. It utilizes in a theatrical way a real history occurred at 1970 in a Belgian factory of rubbers. The occupation of this factory by the workers ended in the violence of the enterprise with the help of the police. With the mentioned data, the play has an extended European scope and not a limited Greek one. It stays without real heroes and the plot does not move forward but is retroactive. It gives the impression of collective action, as the factory-workers are represented by various workers, mainly emigrants, who play their theatrical roles and often act together. These workers are represented in a symbolic level by Karagiozis, as he is expressed in a short comedy of the Shadow Theatre, played by them, with the title “Karagiozis unmasks the play of the employer”. Karagiozis manages to battle his traditional

⁴⁴ See Sakalaki, *Κοινωνικές ιεραρχίες και σύστημα αξιών*. ..., op. cit. p. 243, George Leontaritis, «Το ελληνικό εργατικό κίνημα και το αστικό κράτος 1910-20», in *Μελετήματα γύρω από τον Βενιζέλο και την εποχή του*, Filippotis, Athens 1980, pp. 52-54, A. Liakos, «Από κράτος φύλαξ εις κράτος πρόνοια; Οι παράμετροι της εργατικής πολιτικής στο μεσοπόλεμο», *Ο Πολίτης*, No. 78, 1987, p. 37.

⁴⁵ See Dim. N. Dimitriou, «Παράδειγμα προς αποφυγήν» (*Αποψη του ΚΚΙταλίας για το ΚΚΕ*). *Μελέτη στα επίσημα κείμενα του ΚΚΕ*, Vol. 1 1918-1941, editions “Epichirima”, Athens 1981, pp. 33-37.

hunger and proves himself considerably brave. The plot of the play ends in the music of the song of the occupation, just as the police siren sound.

Despite the fighting attitude of the factory-workers, some categories keep themselves in a distance or disagree with their main stream. In this way, the myth of the unity of them is questioned. In addition, the role of the trade union and of the syndicalists is revealed only as conciliatory between the enterprise and the workers. The relations of exploitation remain, as in the past. The work is underpaid, since the workers are paid by the piece, as it firstly appears in *Η τιμή και το χρέμμα* of Theotokis, without essential social insurance, and their position is precarious, with the permanent threat of dismissal, through a strict structure and hierarchy of the factory. Their status of work not only is unstable, but it deteriorates, as the rhythm of work and the productivity have increased with the same salary. The political element continues to intervene in the financial one. The play reminds us of the conditions of work that appear in *Η κόκκινη πρωτομαγιά*. The difference is that many factory-workers have conscience of their position and of the exploitation they suffer, mainly through the law of surplus-value. The myth of the financial prosperity and of the efficient system of social welfare of the countries of the European Economic Community is fallen down.

The boss⁴⁶ and the other speakers display the known conceptions of the employers concerning the rates of profit of them, which are reduced, and the necessity of collaboration between the capital and the workers. The problematic, old-fashioned model of the employer is connected with inflexibility, despotism, narrow-minded and antidemocratic spirit.

The most important prose piece from the point of view of the employer is *Γιούγκερμαν* by Karagatsis. It presents the industrial evolution in Greece through the family Sklavoyannis and the intervention of Jugerman. This model of family industry prevails in the postwar literature and dramaturgy. Stratis Sklavoyannis promotes the portrait of the self-made bourgeois who manages to create textile factories after the Movement of Goudi (1909). He has worked personally, made savings, was inventive, made a perfect technically factory and profited by the First World War. This sudden development, which reflects a broader industrial development, could not have a

⁴⁶ The conversation concerning his ancestors proves the stability of class from one generation to the other, but also confirms the notions of social injustice and of deceit, who refers to his first ancestor, to the “head of the dynasty”, without acquitting the last (the boss).

duration, as he was depended by the banks and the whole family was engaged in his factories⁴⁷. Their excessive and irrational financing by the banks, the briberies, the wastes of money, the luxurious way of life and the vanity of the family were the main reasons for the fall of the family Sklavoyannis and the bankruptcy of their factories.

Jugerman is the ideal representative of the new capitalistic morals, a new type of healthy businessman, who is a foreigner and contributes to the purge of the financial life of Greece⁴⁸. He also has broader ideas, as he supports the promotion of the financial independence of the poor and small nations. By his quite stable moral quality, flexibility, knowledge of financial matters and business acumen, not only rescues the family Sklavoyannis, which becomes wiser in the future, but, as the General Secretary of the textile factory “Gortys”, leads it to a profitable condition through a careful policy, the abolition of the deceits of the past, the systematization of the production, the pursuit of clients, the return of the silk production, the engagement of a designer and other initiatives. He also managed to deactivate the “red core” («κόκκινος πυρήνας»⁴⁹) of the factory with a clever policy, which can be characterized as “labour”. In this way, as well as by the dishonour of the “red core”, Karagatsis downgraded the differences of class and the claims of the factory-workers. Jugerman made a friendly environment through his human and patronizing attitude. Concerning the work ethics, he imposed a control on himself against his uncontrolled sexuality⁵⁰. He arranged many financial facilities for the workers, as work permit with wages, free medicare, shop with prices at cost etc. What is a fact nowadays, concerning the rights of the workers, was not in the decade of 1920. Finally, he managed to obtain the positive perspective of the factories of Sklavoyannis after his withdrawal. The paternalistic policy of Jugerman, as nothing was claimed by the workers, is placed in the frame of modern industrial relations⁵¹, renews and enriches

⁴⁷ See Dionysis K. Magliveras, *Η νεοελληνική κοινωνία του Εικοστού αιώνα μέσα από το μυθιστόρημα. Μελέτημα*, Οι Ekdoseis ton filon (The friends' editions), Athens 1996, pp. 337-340.

⁴⁸ See A. Berlis, op. cit., p. 266.

⁴⁹ M. Karagatsis, *Ο Γιούγκερμαν και τα στερνά του*, Vol. 1, intr. Meri Mike, new [26th] edition, “Hestia” Bookstore I. D. Kollaros & Co. PLC, Athens 2007, pp. 562-564.

⁵⁰ The matter of his sexual desire for a very young factory-girl of 15 years old remains in suspense. The dealing with the factory-girls in the novel is dominated by the male word and mentality. These women remain without a voice, presented as desire objects, without self-control, and as objects in the hands of the “red core” and the Party, without a social or political conscience (see Mike, «Έμφυλη και φυλετική διαφορά στον Γιούγκερμαν», in *Ο Γιούγκερμαν και τα στερνά του*, op. cit., Leda Papastefanaki, *Εργασία, τεχνολογία και φύλο στην ελληνική βιομηχανία. Η κλωστοϋφαντουργία του Πειραιά, 1870-1940*, Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kritis [Editions of the University of Crete], Heraklion 2009, p. 28).

⁵¹ See Papastefanaki, op. cit.

the old humanistic policy of the employers and anticipates the state policy, which did not manage to impose and apply the insurance law of 1922⁵².

The figure of the industrialist is completed in the literature and dramaturgy after the political changeover of 1974 with the novel of Tasos Athanasiadis *Οι Φρουροί της Αχαΐας* (1975) and with the play of Kambanellis *Τα τέσσερα πόδια του τραπεζίου* (1978, 1981). The model of the family industry is applied in these two works. There are common elements, but also main differences.

In the novel, the writer is interested in the historical evolution of the family of Nezi-Villi-Kaziani through the life of its members and in the climate of the era after the first postwar decade. The family, which has the family enterprise “Oinopoiia Aegiou” (“Wine-making of Aegion”), is active in the fifteen-year period 1960-1975. At the head was the ninety-year-old grandmother Natalia Villi, who kept a decisive word in the enterprise for matters of general politics⁵³. Natalia, who was more broad-minded than her sons, was a progressive element in the local society of Achaia. She had to confront the moralists, who formed the patriotic and moralistic association “Frouri tis Achaias” (“Guardians of Achaia”) during the dictatorship of the colonels⁵⁴. In this context the figure of the industrialist is not well planned and complete. The “war” between the members of the family and shareholders of the enterprise was continuous. The bastard Zanis Kazianis stands alone among his family, as he had a future plan to dominate in the family enterprise, but his tragic death cancelled it. These conflicts, their lack of principles and of perspective and the general political conditions during the dictatorship, as the Wine-making did not contribute to the work of the regime⁵⁵, lead to the fall of the family and of the enterprise in a society that functions in the same way⁵⁶.

Similar situations exist in the play of Kambanellis. The model of the family leader dominates, as the father of the family, the ninety nine years old Asimakis

⁵² See Konstantinos Mavreas, «Κοινωνική πολιτική και ιδεολογία στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου: επιδράσεις και εξελίξεις με αφορμή το ζήτημα των κοινωνικών ασφαλίσεων», *Θέσεις*, No. 64, July-September 1998.

⁵³ See Magliveras, op. cit., pp. 505-506.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 515, Germain Mamalaki, *Τάσος Αθανασιάδης, ο επικός της ελληνικής κοινωνίας*, Athens 1990, p. 49.

⁵⁵ The dependence of the state remained for the local capital during the first decades after the Second World War, and, as the novel indicates, every tendency for financial independence was not tolerable during the dictatorship from the regime (see Pantelis Skayannis, «Ο ρόλος των υποδομών στα καθεστώτα συσσώρευσης των πρώτων μεταπολεμικών περιόδων στην Ελλάδα», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο [1945-1967]*, [4th Scientific Congress, Panteion University, 24-27 November 1993] Foundation of Sakis Karagiorgas, Athens 1994, p. 127).

⁵⁶ See Mamalaki, op. cit., pp. 43-44, Magliveras, op. cit., pp. 517-518, 538.

Kavalas, who lives in a long aphasia, has created an all powerful industry of brandy, in which exclusive shareholders are his sons and daughters. His course of life in some aspects reminds of the course of Stratis Sklavoyannis in *Γιούγκερμαν*⁵⁷. His mercantile capital was transformed after a personal effort to an industrial one, circumstance that does not exist in the case of Sklavoyannis and explains, adding other elements, the growth of a certain type of capitalism in Greece⁵⁸. One main difference with the novel of Athanasiadis is that this figure is the main source of family and financial stagnation. His presence does not allow the development of initiatives by his children. As an alive-dead person with a permanent anomaly, symbolizes the inflexibility and finally the death of the patriarchal structure of the family and of the society.

The relations and the mentality of the children of Kavalas are also crucial for the development of their industry. For instance, Tonis, as the temporary director of it, came to conflict with the others because of his choices and illegalities, with the concentration of shares beyond their agreed limit and the postdating of orders. The reaction of the others and his justification show that the personal flourishing presupposes the collective and is dependent on it⁵⁹. The most important is their mentality derived from the discussion concerning their factory-workers. The intervention of the government concerning their salaries shows the level of the protective policy of the Greek state⁶⁰. Their mentality is similar to that of the industrialists of the beginning of the century, as shown in the “labour dramas”. They live in another era and are incapable to understand their interest in correlation with the interests of the workers.

This stagnation and imminent fall of the family industry has the same features with the circumstances concerning the families Sklavoyannis in *Γιούγκερμαν* and Nezi-Villi-Kaziani in *Οι Φρουροί της Αχαΐας*. The family of Kavalas cannot find successors and turns towards the past, that is the father. This lack of perspective

⁵⁷ See Magliveras, op. cit., pp. 337-338.

⁵⁸ See Nikos Kotzias, «Η κοινωνία της συνενοχής. Κρατική νομιμότητα και νομιμοποίηση στη μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα. Μια πρόταση ερμηνείας του ιστορικού γίνεσθαι της ελληνικής κοινωνίας την περίοδο 1950-1967», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο (1945-1967)*, Vol. 2, Athens 1995, pp. 140-141.

⁵⁹ See Vaxevanoglou, op. cit., pp. 240-241.

⁶⁰ See Christos Ioannou, «Το εθνικό σύστημα εργασιακών σχέσεων στη μεταπολεμική Ελλάδα, 1955-67», in *Η ελληνική κοινωνία κατά την πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδο (1945-1967)*, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

explains the decline of the family industrial model in Greece during the 20th century and the incapacity of its further evolution on a new basis.

The figures of merchant, banker and industrialist in the Greek Dramaturgy and Literature of the 19th and 20th century are mainly negative. The main reasons can be searched in the literary climate and in the characteristics, the ideology and the evolution of the Greek society. The tradition of the Bildungsroman did not manage to get deep roots in Greece, while the bourgeois was transformed in the European literature of the 19th century as a figure which characterizes the negative features of the society⁶¹. This condition influenced the Greek literature.

Many prose pieces and plays of the 20th century had a militant or a social character. The morbid social and political climate of the country, the extended social inequalities, the role of the politics and of the political element, the non-positive evolution of the Greek economy, perhaps an anti-industrial ideology⁶², contributed in the formation of these figures and in the relative difficulty of finding positive heroes, who, however, could more easily be found in the simple and poor people, in the workers or employees. The capitalistic formation of the Greek economy and society delayed and the Greek urban society was based on a non-authentic bourgeois class. The result is that a pure bourgeois ideology was not developed in the Greek society and its positive characteristics, as the value of civilization, did not have a broad application⁶³. In these conditions the existence of positive heroes in the bourgeois world was quite rare and some exceptions did verify the rule, as the atypical case of the foreigner Jugerman, who fought with success against the establishment of all kinds of interests.

⁶¹ See Kondylis, *Η παρακμή του αστικού πολιτισμού. ...*, op. cit., pp. 112-113.

⁶² See Christos Hadziiosif, *Η Γηραιά Σελήνη. Η βιομηχανία στην ελληνική οικονομία 1830-1940*, Themelio, Athens 1993, p. 217.

⁶³ See Sakalaki, op. cit., p. 200, Kondylis, op. cit., pp. 23-24, 39-41.