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Implicit Stage Directions in the "9th July 1821 in Nicosia", by Vassilis Michaelides

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RÉSUMÉ

La synthèse poétique «Le 9 juillet 1821» de Vassilis Michaelidis, très populaire à Chypre, a été mise en scène à plusieurs reprises. Bien que ce texte n'ait pas l'aspect extérieur d'un drame, il présente des caractéristiques théâtrales. L'auteur lui-même incorpore dans son texte toutes ces indications pour l'espace, le temps, les personnages, qu'un auteur dramatique présente d'habitude sous la forme d'instructions de mise en scène.

ABSTRACT

"The 9th July 1821 in Nicosia" has been repeatedly staged as a theatrical play. Even if this very popular text of Cypriot poetic synthesis doesn't have the outer form of a drama, it has many theatrical caracteristics, and the author himself included indications on space, time and persons very similar to a playwright's stage directions.

Introduction

The remarkable and perceptive economy in the use of means of expression, the well-timed and drastic poetic discourse, the careful alteration between the narrator's discourse and the discourse of the players with an emphasis on the latter, all combine to make the "9th July 1821…" one of the most important 19th century Cypriot literary texts. Even though he did not assign the outer form of a drama to his piece, Vassilis Michaelides wrote in fact a poetic synthesis which as noted by several scholars and critics (whose views will be commented on further below), was distinguished by theatricality, at a time when this element was absent from most 19th century Cypriot dramatic pieces. In other words, the poet himself incorporates in his text all inserts on space, time and dramatis personae that a playwright usually presents in the form of stage directions (teachings). Naturally, as already

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known, the effectiveness of Michaelides' aforementioned method has been repeatedly verified on stage. The aim of this paper is to examine the implicit stage directions observed in "9th July…" as merely one of the ingredients of theatricality in the poetic synthesis at hand.

1. The Genre Identity of Poetic Synthesis and the Predominant Theatricality Therein

Theatre theorists, scholars and critics do not agree on the content of the term *theatricality,* while they very oft underline that it is a fluctuating and controversial concept, perceptions of which shift from time to time.[1] "On the one hand, theatricality is considered a "general connotative index", allowing the reader or spectator "to perceive the performance as a network of significations, namely a text",[2] and on the other hand it is astutely stated that theatricality is defined in terms of "the distinct nature of theatre as a transformational process meaning a text-to-stage transition" and depends on "its unique tension between its two poles, the text and the performance, to the degree that the transformation from the first to the second can be achieved".[3] Anne Ubersfeld points out that the term *theatricality* is often used with confused meaning. She herself (agreeing with earlier relevant views of Roland Barthes) purports that theatricality in a text lies in its innate potential to become enacted on stage. Giorgos Pefanis adopts the same view, noting that "we may refer to the implementability or performability of the dramatic dialogue, in order to show its persistent tendency toward its own enacted realization […]".[4] Therefore, the examination of implicit stage directions in this paper requires the elevated degree of performability in "9th July 1821" as a working hypothesis, owing to Vassilis Michaelides' ability to disperse the stage notes required for a theatrical performance throughout his poetic text.

Naturally, despite the intense theatricality of Vassilis Michaelides' poetic synthesis under examination, one should not understate the fact that the play is not written in theatrical form. All scholars converge to the view that the "9th July…" is a narrative poem of a predominantly epic character that does not lack lyrical elements and the element of the dramatic. "An epos", according to Vasilios Tatakis, who underlines: "It is indeed epic; the purest, as far as I know, modern Greek epic poem. Highly wise and contained. Diegesis flows effortlessly and naturally […]. This poem is run by Greek epic health". Pavlos Krinaios writes on "9th July…": "(A poem), grandiose in conception and masterful in execution. The drama and clarity of its descriptive elements, the

innovation of its images, the philosophical thinking embellishing the manifold work, the rich and effortless rhyme and finally its architecture combine to make it a paragon and great tableau of epic and lyric synthesis". The poem is a "small epos" for Costas Proussis, who believes that through the poem the poet presents "the whole heroic drama of the year 1821 in Greece […]". He goes on to add that the "epic element, abundant in the "9th July" is wonderfully interwoven with lyric exaltation and becomes more intense with the brilliant descriptions and the wholesome depiction of the various characters presented in the poem either as protagonists or as personae in passing […].[5] More recently, scholars of the "9th July" concentrate on the dramatic element that prevails in the poem. In particular, Yannis Katsouris points out Michaelides' ability to "set up dramatic human scenes with frugal means" and Michalis Pieris investigates the poem's directorial arrangement and especially the "dramatic function of the light". The latter concludes that the "play's proceedings are limited chronically to only one day, the 9th July 1821 and a specific space, Nicosia" and claims that Michaelides consciously intended to write a piece "which upholds the elementary dramaturgic and stage conventions of ancient tragedy". The poet's "directorial and dramaturgic diligence" is underlined by Lefteris Papaleontiou, who pertains that the aforementioned thoroughness works as a means to tame the "ethnic exaltation caught in a subject such as this".[6] Also notable is K.G. Kasinis' co-examination of the "9th July 1821" with Theodoulos Constantinides' "Küçük Mehmet", which Katsouris shows to be one of the sources used by Michaelides for the poem. Among other things, Kasinis examines genre questions concerning the two pieces: He claims that, even though some parts of Constantinides' piece possess theatricality, in others we merely see a "dialogic arrangement of the material" which in itself does not constitute theater. He concludes with the opinion that we are dealing with an "intermingling of fictional and dramatic elements". In addition to this, he underlines that even though the "9th July" has been called "an epic", it is distinguished for its dialogic parts. More specifically, measurements made by Kasinis showed that 62.5% of the poem consists of dialogic parts and 37.5% of narrative ones. He notes that "the poem's plot is held together, culminates and is resolved using dialogue as a dramatic means". Having indicated the above, the scholar concludes that "the epic poem has greater theatricality than Constantinides' drama. After all, the fact that the "9th July" was staged many times as a theatrical piece without any essential changes is not an accident". In one of his notes, Kasinis points out that in writing about theatricality he converges toward a view similar to the one put forth by M. Pieris (1995).[7]

Undoubtedly, the theatricality of a text is eventually judged by its representation on stage or the stage test. Vassilis Michaelides' "9th July 1821" was pronounced a piece that contains all space-time and characterization indexes required by a director and thus it may be represented theatrically without any violation or drastic modification of the poet's intentions. The theatrical destiny of the "9th July 1821" was investigated by Yannis Katsouris, who undertook a thorough study of the Cypriot Press in order to put forth information on the piece's performances (mostly staged by students), the frequency of which heightens in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, for obvious reasons. Among the older performances of the piece the one staged by the Greek High School of Famagusta (1948) stands out. It was based on a theatrical adaptation of the poetic synthesis by the then headmaster Kyriakos Hadjioannou,[8] for which the poet Theodosis Nicolaou offers quite a remarkable personal testament. A student at the time, Nicolaou took part in the performance in the role of the narrator.[9] From the subsequent performances of the "9th July 1821", the piece's presentation by the University of Cyprus' Drama Workshop, directed by Michalis Pieris is distinguished for its quality. This approach, as the director points out, differs from the previous theatrical adaptations given that "it is the first time that the two great epic and lyric pieces, the "9th July 1821" and the "Woman of Hios" are worked on as a poetic diptych and presented as a single dramatic synthesis".[10] Of course, the comparison of the poetic synthesis to its theatrical adaptations may provide interesting indications as to the reading reception of the text's implicit stage directions, especially if the scholar's attention is placed on the process by which implicit stage directions are transformed to explicit ones by the adapters.

2. Implicit Stage Directions: Between the Narrator's Discourse and the Discourse of the Dramatis Personae

According to Anne Ubersfeld, by the term stage directions or teachings we mean evidence on space and time that are necessary for a theatrical piece's stage representation. Ubersfeld stresses that this is in effect an ambiguous term, given that it means both the spatial and chronological conditions in which speech is uttered, through which the fictional fact is represented, as well as the conditions in which its representation on stage will be attempted. The scholar distinguishes between *external* and *internal* stage directions. The first are separated from the theatrical text, as they are noted in the margins

of the character's discourse (either at the beginning of each act or scene or interjected in the monologue or dialogue), whenever deemed necessary, whereas the second are channeled in the speech of the dramatis personae without being separated from it. Ubersfeld's distinction is adopted by G. Pefanis, who points out that the term intra-textual or inner-textual stage directions[11] is also used to describe stage directions detected in the character's discourse. Walter Puchner also comments on the distinction (presented in the Aston and Savona study *Theatre as Sign-System)* between stage directions in terms of those which are explicit (extra-dialogic) -identified with the external directions in Ubersfeld's distinction and implicit (intra-dialogic) - identified with the internal ones.[12] This distinction is based on Manfred Pfister's noteworthy study, *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (1977), which suggests that the use of implicit stage directions is found mostly in classic drama and in Shakespeare's plays. The German scholar focuses on the function of stage directions (of both categories), concerning either the actor (dramatis persona) or the visual and acoustic connotations of the theatrical representation. Those directions referring to the dramatis personae may concern the manner and time during which their entrance to and exit from the stage takes place, their build and physiognomy, masks and costumes, gestures and expressions, the paralingual elements of speech and the characters' interaction. Or again, those directions referring to visual and acoustic connotations may concern the stage, lighting, sounds, special effects and the change of a scene or act.[13] For the purpose of approaching stage directions in the "9th July 1821", Pfister's distinction is considered more appropriate. Implicit[14] in their totality, this poetic synthesis' stage directions either traced in the narrator's discourse or found in the characters' speech, will be examined in terms of their function in the framework of the piece's principal semiotic systems,[15] in other words, space, time and characters.

3. Evidence on Time in Stage Directions

3.1. Evidence in the Narrator's Discourse

3.1.1. Discourse Time

Theatre theorists propose the distinction between action time, meaning action as it unfolds on stage (discourse time) and time traced in stichomythia or in the characters' monologue that is not represented theatrically. This is called diegetic or off stage time.[16] In the discourse of the narrator in the "9th

July 1821" the night of 8th July 1821 is given as the starting point of action emphasizing the contrast between dead calm and clear skies and the impending disaster of slaughter and havoc (lines 1-10: page 137).[17] Kioroglou's arrival at the Archdiocese is placed by the narrator at a time point suitable for precarious endeavors like the venture the aforementioned Turkish Cypriot was planning: to help the Archbishop escape after midnight: "Midnight had passed and dawn was just beginning" (21: 137). Upon failing in his efforts, Kioroglou realized that he had run out of time and could not stay there (obviously because dawn was nearing); therefore he took his leave (69-70: 140). The arrival of the next day is noted in the narrator's discourse with a stage indication about lighting:[18] "the east was turning to a rosy hue" (71: 140). Until the narrator's next clear reference on time (Saturday noon) these events take place: the Archbishop's passage to the Archdiocese's church and his dramatic prayer there, the arrival at the forecourt of Turkish soldiers from the saray and the arrest of Kyprianos, who was led before Kucuk Mehmet at the time the latter was questioning the three Metropolitans. Upon completion of the interrogation of the three and the Archbishop, they are all imprisoned in the same cell. The coercion of the shepherd Dimitris to commit perjury and the deliberation of pasha-aghas regarding the issue of executions (who would be executed and how) follow. When the meeting ends, it is already noon and Turkish officials withdraw in order to pray: "The sun was overhead and at high noon" (297: 147). The passage of time from noon till dusk is not indicated through implicit stage directions in the narrator's discourse but is traced in the characters' speech (in particular that of Kucuk Mehmet), a technique which will be commented on further below. Intermediary plot elements, meaning on the one hand the unsuccessful efforts of Kioroglou's son to change the Archbishop's mind and help him escape and on the other hand the foul venture of a Turk, the pasha's delegate, to coerce the archpriests into compromise and humiliation, the dramatic prayer of archpriests inside the prison, the hanging of the archdeacon and the secretary, the transfer of archpriests outside the saray onto the area of execution, the aghas' final deliberation and their transition from the saray's interior space onto the yard, the hanging of the archbishop and the slaughtering of Metropolitans and of the shepherd Dimitris, all those events are not accompanied by the narrator's explicit references to the passing of time. The final implicit stage direction on time, found in the narrator's discourse is once more supplied with a description of "stage lighting": [19] "A little after the sun had set/ And it had started growing darker" notables and

priests came before the pasha requesting to receive the dead bodies in order to bury them. Their request is bluntly denied by the supreme Turkish official, who decides that the bodies should remain unburied for three days (561-570: 160).

3.1.2. Diegetic or off Stage Time

In the "9th July 1821" the narrator focuses on discourse time avoiding as a rule references to the past or to events unfolding elsewhere, away from the location of the drama. The description of the Greek Revolution in the 10 first lines of the poetic synthesis (137) is an exception wherein the general spatial-chronological context of the tragic events is supplied through the use of metaphorical images (secret preparation of the revolution, participation of the Cypriots, breaking out of the revolution in the Peloponnesus and retaliation in Cyprus). Of course, diegetic time is also found in several other instances of the poetic synthesis, not in the narrator's discourse but in the speech of the characters who (as will be shown further below) in revisiting the recent past are usually attempting to interpret or justify their position.

3.2. Evidence in the Characters' Speech

3.2.1. Discourse Time

The characters' references to the present time of the action through the use of time indexes are less in number than the narrator's said references. A first chronological indication is traced in the speech of Kioroglou, who shortly after midnight secretly arrives at the Archdiocese and attempts to convince Kyprianos to flee. More specifically, he warns the Archbishop that if he is still there when morning comes, it is certain that he will be executed either by hanging or by impalement. "You'll be dead on the spit or the gallows" (38-39: 138). Though grateful to Kioroglou for his stance, Kyprianos is determined to stand by his people. The next day, immediately following mess and the Archbishop's dramatic moments in church, Küçük Mehmet's straw men arrive at the court; the Archbishop asks the Turkish soldiers who had sent them so early to meet him: "He said: Who sent you here so early in the morning?" (97: 141). After being told that the pasha issued an order for his arrest, the Archbishop asks for a five minute interval during which he rushes upstairs into his chamber where he destroys all secret documents lest they fall to Turkish hands (101-110).

Especially important are references to discourse time, traced in Kucuk Mehmet's speech. We have already seen that the beginning of the day up until noon is described through the narrator's discourse. However, references to the afternoon are made by the pasha. Using this technique, the poet emphatically demonstrates the haste with which the Turkish viceroy wanted to carry out the executions and at the same time his irritation and concern throughout the time his plan is still underway. Therefore, in one last effort to humiliate the Archbishop and the rest of the archpriests, he pressures the Cypriot hierarch, by stating that if he wants to save his life, he must speak quickly because it is already late: "It is getting late", Mousselim Agha said/ "*Dusk is approaching, night is nearly here*" (430-431: 155) / "Speak now, if you have anything to say / Get on with it, *or night will overtake us*"(437-438: 155). This is followed by the Archbishop's refusal to compromise, the archpriests' transfer outside the saray, into the execution area and one last council between the pasha and the aghas, during which Kioroglou and Mettes Agha express their reservations, disagreeing with the haste of the executions. Undeterred by the aghas' views, the pasha points out to them that it is afternoon and they're already late. Therefore, they need to stand up and bring their plans to fruition. "*We have delayed. It is dusk* and time to go" (511: 158).

3.2.2. Diegetic or off Stage Time

Even though it lies outside the strict limits of discourse time (that in "9th July 1821" is almost 24 hours) diegetic time, as traced in the characters' speech, sheds light on their motives and intentions. Therefore, it serves as an annotation on theatrically represented time. Thus, the charged ambiance of the 9th July morning does not come as a surprise to the reader/ audience, as that have already been prepared through the dialogue scene between Kyprianos and Kioroglou in which the latter describes the developments that will inevitably lead to the carnage a few hours later. Addressing Kyprianos, Kioroglou mentions an edict sent by the Porte and refers to a sudden council of Turkish officials, launched at the saray the previous night. The pasha now holds in his hands the fate of the Archbishop and the archpriests [31-40: 138] and it is suggested that for his own good the Cypriot hierarch should follow the example of another raya who had fled in disguise for Larnaka seeking protection in the city's consulates just one hour ago [54-60: 138].

Meanwhile, Kucuk Mehmet's persistence to proceed with the execution of the Archbishop who did not give in to Kioroglou's tempting plan to save himself and the other archpriests, is justified by the pasha in two ways. On

the one hand, he mentions the clergy's efforts to unite with the revolted Greeks in order to spread to Cyprus the revolution against the Turks [115-120: 141, 147-150: 142] and on the other he points out that the decision is not his, as he was merely executing the orders of an edict from the High Divan [131-140: 142]. Kyprianos' assurances that the Cypriots were truly disarmed, upon his orders, and that they were not involved in revolutionary activities are rejected as misleading and fallacious with an emphasis on revolutionary leaflets supplied in the villages, some of which he still has in his possession [161-166: 143]. At this point, it would be legitimate to interpret the mention to revolutionary leaflets as an implicit stage direction, namely as an indication that the pasha could be holding a handful of leaflets, presenting them to the Archbishop as undeniable evidence of the guilt weighing upon him, as well as the rest of the archpriests and notables. "No matter what is said, I don't trust hearsay;/ I've seen those leaflets – what more is there to say?" [165-166: 143]

Kucuk Mehmet's intransigent stance does not change despite the Archbishop's assurance that the Cypriots were not involved in the Metropolitan Hellenism's revolutionary upheaval and despite him pointing out that any isolated revolutionary moves on the island took place secretly from the clergy [151-160, 161-170: 143]. In the same way, neither the reminder of the Patriarch Gregorios 5th hanging in Constantinople, three months prior to the poetic synthesis' discourse time nor the suggestion of the Cypriot hierarch that this tactic will harm the Turks themselves leads to a modification of Mehmet's decision to unleash the massacre [421-430: 155]. Equally firm is the Archbishop's decision to sacrifice himself for his people, as he urges the pasha to be quick about his business, referring to two important stage props, the sword and the noose: "bring your sword and the noose of your gallows" [443: 155].

In the discourse of the shepherd Dimitris (as well as in the discourse of the rest of the characters) no references to or recounting of long past events can be traced. His son's departure for the now revolted Greece a month ago, his inability to cope alone with the heavy load of keeping a flock and his arrest a few days prior to the 9th July throw the simpleminded villager into sorrow and despair, making him idealize his previous pastoral life: "I played my flute and the mountains echoed/ My eyes knew nothing of weeping or tears" [249-250: 146]. This extrusion to the idealized pastoral space-time runs in contrast to the prison space. What follows comes naturally – a perjury from a frightened anti-hero as he has been characterized by Lefteris Papaleontiou,[20] who might

have thought that this move could safeguard his return to his village and his quiet pastoral life [271-290: 147].

4. Evidence on Space in Stage Directions

4.1. Evidence on Space in the Narrator's Discourse

4.1.1. Action Space (Represented[21] Space) of the Discourse Time

The action unfolds in both open and closed spaces and is structured based on the antithesis between Archdiocese Vs saray (with the secondary closed spaces of these two edifices and their multiple connotations) and Ayios Ioannis church forecourt Vs open space in front of the saray (wherein multiple props suggesting sacrifice and martyrdom are found).

The *Archdiocese space* is where narration focuses, following the epic introduction and summarized presentation of non represented wider geographical areas. The Archbishop's *chamber* is a space linked with meditation and formulation of the Archbishop's final steadfast stance: it is the space where Kyprianos rejects Kioroglou's suggestion to flee [21-70: 137-140] and burns the documents before putting himself at the disposal of the soldiers charged with bringing him to Kucuk Mehmet [106-108: 141]. In contrast to the chamber's space, wherein no stage directions can be traced, the *church's space* is presented in more detail: the Archbishop's dramatic prayer, absolution by the people in the main temple, as well as the tragic obeisance to the Virgin, which preambles the hierarch's sacrifice ("As if to bid farewell to both church and world") [86: 140], entrance to the *Altar* where he receives communion [87-88: 140], exit and a pause at the Beautiful Gate with an expression revealing that he had already taken the painful decision to be sacrificed. Immediately after the aforementioned tragic moments that take place inside the church, *outside,* as soon as the Archbishop exits with his entourage onto the *forecourt,* he is arrested by the Turkish soldiers in order to be brought to the saray. [91-100, 113-114: 141].

This particular space, the center of the Turkish ruling force, is further analyzed. The first (secondary) *internal space* of the *saray* is the *central hall,* as the reader can easily deduce. It is there that both the critical meeting of the pasha with the aghas takes place on the night of the 8th July [19-20: 137] as well as the following morning's interrogation of the Archbishop and the Metropolitans from the pasha and the rest of the Turkish officials [115-200:

141-144], after which the archpriests are led to prison. The interrogation of the shepherd Dimitris unfolds in the same space [211-290: 145-147]. Following his perjury, the shepherd was led back to his cell. Therefore, even though the exact location of the prison is not determined in the narrator's discourse, on stage the prison could be designated by one or two side exits from the saray's central hall, whereas another gate would signify the entrance into the building from the court and other open-air areas in general. Once the interrogations are over, when the pasha and the aghas are left alone inside the saray hall, they open the ledger of those who were listed for beheading and confer on who will be executed and how [291-300: 147]. After a break for prayer at noon, the pasha and the aghas enter the central hall, where two close associates of the Archbishop are called (the secretary and the archdeacon), inculpated with summary proceedings and taken away to be executed then and there [441-410: 153]. In this same space, the last hearing of the archpriests takes place, during which the pasha attempts in vain to talk them into compromising with the ruling authority [411-410: 153] and shortly afterwards, following their transfer to the open area outside the saray, Kucuk Mehmet announces his decision to behead the four high ranking bishops. Kioroglou's attempt to avert the slaughter is proven fruitless and Mettes Agha's intervention to postpone it is ineffective [451-460, 487-500: 156-7]. It is in the same hall that the concluding scene of the poetic synthesis unfolds, during which the pasha rejects the request to give the archpriests' bodies for burial [551-560: 160]. It is worth noting here that in the theatrical adaptation of the "9th July 1821" by Kyriakos Hadjioannou, the stage direction that introduces Scene B refers to the saray setting: "This scene presents Mousselim Agha's Saray, furbished with Turkish luxury. Kucuk Mehmet, Mettes Aghas and 2-3 other Turkish notables[22] are seated on a divan, smoking nargileh. [...]". Similarly, in Theodoulos Constantinides' play *Kucuk Mehemet,* the saray hall is thus described in the introductory stage direction of the third Act: "The scene represents the Saray's great hall, with three gates, one in the back and the other two on its western sides".[23]

The prison, which is another internal area of the saray, has two doors: one external, leading to a garden, and one internal. The reader could deduce that the prison is not a separate building behind the saray, but makes up part of it, if one judges by the haste with which Kioroglou's son escaped through the back gate (in other words, the same door through which he entered) once he became aware that someone was trying to open the other gate and come in [355-360: 150]. All four bishops are imprisoned in the same "narrow and

confining" cell [207: 144], which had on its garden side an iron gate through which "the soft tones of their speech was heard" [301-305: 148]. There, a Turkish delegate of Kucuk Mehmet makes one last effort to humiliate the bishops and when he fails, he stays awhile in a corner before leaving disappointed [387-390: 153]. In the same area, the bishops fall upon their knees and pray [391-400: 153], before being led for the last time into the saray hall, where they are given a last chance to save themselves by compromising [401-410: 153]. In Hadjioannou's theatrical adaptation, stage directions concerning the prison area do not contain but one reference to a bench where the bishops are seated.[24]

External spaces (in contrast to closed spaces, where one may express their opposition to the ruling authority or criticize its planning) connote the absolute enforcement and hasty implementation of subjugation and slaughter (with the exception of the garden behind the prison, from where Kioroglou's son escapes and avoids arrest). *Outside the Archdiocese's church*, Turkish soldiers arrive, surrounding and seizing the Archbishop [91-100, 113-4: 141]. After the Archbishop's and the Metropolitans' proud refusal to compromise, during their interrogation in the saray and their stay in prison, the hierarchs are transferred to the space of torture, namely the *open space in front of the saray:*

"They tied the bishops' hands behind their backs/ And led them to a place outside the Serail". [449-450: 155]. The space is emphatically described: shortly afterwards, following a short meeting, the high ranking Turkish officials exited the saray and went to the area of execution. To their right, the Archbishop's archdeacon and secretary hung from the plane tree. To their left, the gallows stood ready at the "mulberry". The Archbishop and Metropolitans stood with tied hands, surrounded by a crowd of Turks waiting for the execution: "The Muslims surrounded them as if at a fair" [520: 158]. The Archbishop's torture reached its climax when he was led by two or three armed men under the mulberry, where the noose kept swinging against his forehead. At the same time, the bishops were facing westwards on their knees, whereas the executioners provokingly and cynically paraded in front of them [526-530: 158]. Space-time following the execution is macabre: It is afternoon and a pool of blood forms on the earth, heads and bodies still pulsating before death, the gradual withdrawal of the Muslim crowd among whom the Turkish Cypriots who were devastated [545-546: 160], and the three-day abandonment of the unburied bodies in the execution area [551-560: 160]. It is worth noting

that this particular locale is acted out in the novel *Thersandros* by Epaminondas Frangoudis (1847) and the play *Ta Kat'Evanthian kai Aghisilaon* by Theodoulos Constantinides (1873). The latter does not hesitate to copy an extensive excerpt from Frangoudis' novel, in which the saray area is described as a space of torture for Cypriot Hellenism. In *Thersandros,* the writer uses a long footnote in order to comment on the homonymous protagonist's letter to his friend Dimitrios, describing on the one hand the Aghia Sophia in Nicosia and on the other the "venerable and deep-shaded plane tree" whose roots "were dyed in the blood of our bishops". The writer goes on to paint in dark colors the Metropolitans' beheading and Kyprianos' hanging.[25] In the play *Ta Kat'Evanthian kai Aghisilaon* the young poet and romantic traveler Aghisilaos visits among other areas the "beauteous Nicosia [...]". Transcribing from *Thersandros,* Constantinides gives these words to his hero: "In the shadow of its plane tree, I see Aghia Sophia before me, sitting on coarse rocks, weeping for our tortured country". Plagiarism is also quite obvious within the excerpt in which the plane tree is presented as an important monument of the ordeal suffered by Hellenism in Cyprus. Details on the execution of the bishops, found in the aforementioned novel, do not appear in the play.[26] At the same time, in the historic drama *Kucuk Mehemet* by Th. Constantinides (1888) the description of the saray forecourt is not provided in stage directions neither of course are the events unfolding in it represented on stage. Once the slaughter is completed, the eupatrid Zenon (in the beginning of the play's Act 5) recounts what he saw to his friend, Evagoras. "My tongue is lost. Ever since I saw the Archbishop hung from the mulberry in front of the saray, the bishops beheaded and three other men hanging off a plane tree, my whole body has been trembling!..." In Evagora's reply, the horrible image of the unburied dead and how spitefully the execution's mastermind looks upon them recurs: "No! [Kucuk Mehmet] is not asleep; he is looking through a window, gazing at the hanging bodies of the Archbishop and the notables and those of the bishops, wallowing in blood. Delighted, the Satan orders his men to raise more gallows and bring more executioners in order to complete what he had begun by killing all arrested notables".[27] Therefore, it is worth noting that while in V. Michaelides' poetic synthesis the saray forecourt is presented as a major action space, in Constantinides' aforementioned play it is traced in off stage space, given that the playwright alternates the story of the execution of the Cypriot bishops with Kucuk Mehmet's love story, placing emphasis on the latter.

4.1.2. Off Stage Space[28]

Very few references to other spaces that are not represented on stage can be found in the narrator's discourse. In the introduction of the poetic synthesis, the image of the impending revolution is painted, together with the presentation of the wider geographical area: The Ottoman Empire, the Peloponnesus, Cyprus [1-10: 137]. A second reference to a non represented space can be found in the last verses: when the news of the archpriests' execution spread in Nicosia, lament fell over the city, when it had started growing darker [551-554: 160].

The emphasis placed by the narrator on action space and his limited interest in other spaces is an element of theatricality. References to off stage space are skillfully incorporated by the poet in the characters' speech, as will be shown next.

4.2. Evidence on Space in the Characters' Discourse

4.2.1. Evidence on Discourse Time's Action Space

In contrast to the narrator's discourse, very few implicit stage directions referring to the space of action are found in the characters' discourse and these can be traced in the speech of the Turkish viceroy. More specifically, Kucuk Mehmet orders against any gathering *outside the Saray* and that those who are *inside it* should be fully armed. Also, he orders that the executioner and the gallows be ready [127-130: 142]. Invoking information supposedly provided by the shepherd Dimitris who was pressured into committing perjury, Mehmet stresses that the information was not only heard by him but also by all present *in the saray hall:* "We heard your own mouth speak those words in public" [268: 146]. Finally, Kucuk refuses to give the three dead bodies for burial and orders that they remain on the ground in front of the saray, unburied for three days [559-560: 160].

4.2.2. Evidence on other Spaces Acted out Only in the Locutionary Acts of the Characters (Recounted[29] *or Diegetic Space*[30]*)*

Not many references on diegetic space can be traced in the narrator's discourse, as these are found more in the characters' speech; non represented space also serves for the justification of their stand and action as well as for the representation of the drama's wider space.

Of the external spaces, it is worth noting the space of the Walls and the three gates of Nicosia, denoting confinement and oppression of the enslaved

[54-56: 138 and 125-7: 142]. The space in front of the saray also appears in off stage space, there where the execution of the archpriests and other notables took place. Aiming at pressuring the archpriests to compromise, Kucuk Mehmet points out that the executioner is waiting, the gallows are ready and he can no longer wait for them [417-420: 153]. He also warns the archbishop that he will see the archdeacon and his secretary hung outside the saray [435-6: 155]. A richly attired Turkish notable also refers to the torture site. The notable entered the prison and told the archpriests that passing outside the saray he saw three gallows, two at the plane tree and one at the mulberry, which made him feel "very sad". [367-370: 152].

In contrast, the Larnaka area with the European consulates suggests (regardless of how temporary and uncertain) freedom and rescue. The Karpass is the location of escape toward the insurgent Greece. It is precisely from the coast of Karpass that the shepherd Dimitris recounts how his son departed, obviously to fight in the Greek revolution [231-236: 145]. In the meantime, the Bishop Lavrentios talks of the whole of the island when admiringly referring to Theofylaktos, who distributed revolutionary leaflets throughout the length and breadth of the whole island [307-309: 148]. Finally, of the Cypriot spaces, the idyllic picture of the village, the way Dimitris recalls it, is worth mentioning. It was there that he took care of his flock and played his flute oblivious to the meaning of sorrow [241-244: 146]. At this point, it should be said that the element of village and pastoral life idealization can also be traced in Theodoulos Constantinides' *Ta Kat'Evanthian kai Aghisilaon* (1873). Young Aghisilaos dreams of living there with his beloved Evanthia. "Only wilderness, plains, groves and fields are inhabited by virtue and innocence. – Look at the goatherd, the shepherd, how happily he plays his flute, leading his flock to a crystal clear spring; his sheep's bleating echoes round the nearby forests; the sheep, on their part, full of joy and innocence jump from one rock to the other…"[31].

External spaces are not only Cypriot ones: Determined to sacrifice himself, Archbishop Kyprianos reminds Kucuk Mehmet that the patriarch and other archpriests were executed in Constantinople and that he believes that the bloodshed will harm the Turks themselves [426-430: 155]. Later, in an effort to appease the aghas that there's no risk of retaliation from the rayas over the impending execution of the archpriests, Kucuk points out that on the one hand the oppressed are aware that the Turks outnumber them and on the other hand they take very seriously the island's being in close vicinity to Turkey [506-510: 157]. He also mentions Cyprus' nearness to another Turkish-dominated

country, namely Egypt, their isolation from the rest of Hellenism and their encirclement by Turkey like lambs kept in a fold [505-510: 157].

As far as internal spaces are concerned, Kioroglou's house, outside which a car ready to transfer the Archbishop to Larnaka's consulates was parked, can only be traced in off stage space whereas the other two closed spaces, namely the saray and the prison are also theatrically represented in other parts of the piece. In particular, Kioroglou refers to a meeting held the night before at the saray, in an effort to convince Kyprianos to flee [25-30: 137]. Moreover, questioned inside the saray, Dimitris says that he can no longer stand the prison and that he feels exhausted [241-244: 146].

5. Evidence on Characters in Implicit Stage Directions

5.1. Evidence on Characters in the Narrator's Discourse

5.1.1. The Archbishop and the other Archpriests

The following implicit stage directions are linked with the painful course of the Archbishop toward sacrifice: rejection of Kioroglou's proposal to flee, after bowing his head in silence and thinking for a while [41-2: 138], dramatic prayer in the church, sorrow, devastation, crying, farewell to the people and the church, paleness [78-90: 140], a fierce glance and anger when laying eyes upon Kucuk Mehmet's straw men there to arrest him [92-100: 141], destruction of secret documents in his chamber prior to his apprehension [106-7: 141], imprisonment together with the three bishops [300-304: 148], immediate and decisive reaction and refusal to compromise despite the Turkish delegate's sweet-talking [380-384: 152], his violent presentation into the plight area with the other three bishops, where they stood tied [445-450], last prayer, lifting his eyes to heaven shortly before the execution [531-534: 158], sweat rolling down his face from excessive heat, hanging [537-540: 158]. The archpriests are presented twice, upon their knees: the first time they kneel (with the Archbishop) inside the prison and pray crying softly in broken voice [391-400: 153]; the second time they are forced by the executioners to kneel one after the other shortly before their execution, facing westward [526-530: 158].

5.1.2. The Shepherd Dimitris

In stark contrast to the Archbishop's heroic stance, the frightened Dimitris committed perjury in order to save his life (or so he thought) and immediately

afterwards "he was bathed in tears" [270-280, 281: 146-7]. The perjury scene concludes when he's forced to place his fingerprint (since he was illiterate) upon his "confession" document, prepared by Kucuk Mehmet's minions. Therefore, unbeknown to him, Dimitris (an example of the thematic role of the traitor) makes himself one of the helpers of the aforementioned Turkish dignitary and an opponent of the Archbishop and his nation too.

5.1.3. Kioroglou, his Son and other Turkish Cypriots

It has been already noted[32] that in the "9th July" Vassilis Michaelides clearly distinguishes between Turkish Cypriots and Turks, by bringing forth the Turkish Cypriots' humanitarian stance in contrast to the latter's intolerance. Therefore Kioroglou, who belongs to the first category, is shown to make magnanimous efforts at his own risk to help the Archbishop escape. He secretly goes to the Archdiocese to speak to him [22: 137]. His efforts are proven as being in vain [67-8: 140] which makes him take his leave "in sorrow and distress" [70: 140]. Not giving up, Kioroglou sends his son, a handsome lad, tall, well-dressed and smiling – in all an image revealing his noble background and wealth. The young man's efforts are interrupted as, when trying to change Kyprianos' mind, a noise is heard at the prison's interior door that makes him flee [321-324, 359-360: 148-150]. Finally, at the area of the execution, Turkish Cypriots (contrary to the cheering Muslims) [520: 158] seem sorrowful and are silent and pensive at the sight of the gallows and the tied archpriests bound to be executed shortly [521-523: 158]. The Turkish Cypriots' sorrow culminates with the completion of the execution [547-8: 160].

5.1.4. Kucuk Mehmet and his Straw Men

The Turkish viceroy of Cyprus, as a basic subject in the action is surrounded by his aids, in other words his spineless (as a rule) empty suits. When the Archbishop is brought before him, with a glance he beckons a soldier to approach and orders him to have all the gates of Nicosia locked [121-130: 142]. Later, upon Kyprianos' proud response underlying the immortality of the Greek race, Mousselim has no trouble putting on a mellow mask, trying with a honeyed glance to cajole the Cypriot hierarch [191-2: 144]. However, when Kyprianos firmly rejects Kucuk's proposition for compromise and treason, he enrages the pasha and the attending aghas who, in awe, are trying to conceal their shame [201-210: 144]. The Turkish notable's ability to pretend and sweet-talk in order to serve his purposes bears fruit in the scene

where Dimitris is being questioned and finally commits perjury [287-290: 147]. But when addressing his Turkish subordinates his speech is imperative and commanding, leaving no room for a reply (for example in the case of a few aghas who believed that not all those listed should be executed [296: 147]. One glance from him is enough for the soldiers to tie up the archpriests and transfer them to the execution area [445-447: 155] while cruelly rejecting the priests and notables' request to bury the dead bodies [551-560: 160].

On the other hand, while the Turkish aghas seem to have their own personal opinion of what is going on, in the end they do not move against Kucuk Mehmet's will. They whisper to one another and write Dimitris' "testimony" on a piece of paper, forcing him to sign it [281-286: 147]. Shortly before noon they momentarily disagree with Kucuk as to the number of those to be executed [297-300: 147], while upon hearing the muezzin at noon, they put down the ledger and go out to pray [297-300: 147].

Spineless straw men (symbols of the occupying force) are (usually) not required to talk much. Therefore, the Turkish soldiers who arrive at the Archdiocese church in order to arrest Kyprianos are initially hesitant to explain why they are there and then succinctly mention the order they received from Kucuk Mehmet. The encirclement and apprehension of the Archbishop follows [95-114: 141]. The "richly attired notable" that comes to prison supposedly to help the archpriests is more talkative. He pretends to care for them, offers them food and asks from them one word (capitulation, compromise, treason) in order to save them, until the moment Kyprianos calls on him to be quiet and leave. Sullen, saddened and ashamed, küçük Mehmet's Turkish representative leaves the prison empty-handed [361-390: 152]. The twelve fully armed Turkish soldiers who transfer the archpriests from the prison to the saray hall are silent characters [410-414: 153]. Rushing about in anger, they tie the archpriests and lead them to the execution area [445-450: 155]. The three executioners who looked like wild men, brandishing their swords above the bishops' heads are also silent characters [529-530: 158]. They are presented as the ones to slaughter their victims with the dynast's presumptuous pride standing with their victims' blood on their faces and clothes [541-550: 160].

5.2. Evidence on Characters in the Characters' Discourse

There are very few implicit stage directions traced in the characters' speech concerning other characters and these can be found in the Archbishop's speech, when he admires Kioroglou's good upbringing [62: 140] and when

he rejects his son's second effort to change his mind, asking the young man to convey to his father his gratitude and his request to help the rest of the Greeks on the island [341-350: 150].

A few implicit stage directions referring to the characters themselves can be found in their own speech. At the moment of his arrest, the Archbishop calls on the Turkish soldiers not to hesitate to tell him why they are there, because his "heart's like stone" [97-100: 141]. At the same time Dimitris tells Kucuk Mehmet that he's been worn out in the saray prison and that his heart is burned from sorrow [241-244: 146].

6. Conclusion

The theatricality of the "9th July 1821" is unquestionable. It has been shown how in this poetic synthesis implicit stage directions can indeed be traced (both in the narrator's discourse and in the characters' discourse). Their quantity and quality make the piece representable contrary to many 19th century Cypriot *pièces-de-theâtre* that do not easily lend themselves to on-stage presentation. The narrator's persistent focus on the discourse time's space and time of action as well as the astute interchange between narration and dialogue attribute to this poetic synthesis the distinctive mark of clear and drastic speech, which is at the same time poetic and theatrical.

NOTES

1. See Walther Puchner, *O Palamas kai to Theatro* (Palamas and the Theatre) (Athens: Kastaniotis, 1995) 447. Puchner, *Apo ti theoria tou theatrou stis theories tou theatricou.* Exelixeis stin episteme tou theatrou sto telos tou 20ou aiona (From the Theory of Theatre to the Theories of the Theatrical. Evolutions in the episteme of theatre in the end of the 20th century) (Athens: Patakis, 2003) 390 and Patrice Pavis, *Lexico tou theatrou* (Lexicon of the Theatre) (translated by Agne Stroumbouli) (Athens: Gutenberg, 2006) 203-205.
2. See Keir Elam, *H Simiotiki Theatrou kai Dramatos* (The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama) Translation – introduction by Kaite Diamantakou (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2001 (1980)) 34.
3. Jean Alter, *A Sociosemiotic Theory of Theatre* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990) 149.

4. See Annn Ubersfeld, *Les Terms Clés de l'Analyse du Theâtre* (Paris: Seuil 1996) 83· Giorgos Pefanis, *To Theatro kai ta Symvola. Diadikasies symvolisis tou dramaticou logou* (The Theatre and the Symbols. Procedures of symbolization of dramatic discourse) (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1999) 185.
5. See Vasilios Tatakis, "V. Michaelides". *Kypriaka Grammata* 62 August 1940: 80· Pavlos Krinaios, "V. Michaelides", *Kypriaka Grammata:* 86· Costas Proussis, "To tefhos tou Vassili Michaelide" ("The issue of Vassilis Michaelides"), *Kypriaka Grammata:* 111.
6. See Yannis Katsouris. *Vassilis Michaelides. I zoi, I prosopikotita kai to ergo tou* (Vassilis Michaelides. His life, personality and work) (Nicosia: Chr. Andreou, 2002 (1987)): 354· Michalis Pieris. "Stathmoi tis kipriakis logotehnias" ("Milestones of Cypriot literature") *Palimpsiston* 5 (Herakleion 1987):140-144 [= Michalis Pieris [editor] *Vassilis Michaelides: The race of the Greeks was born when the world was born* (Nicosia, UCY Drama Workshop, 2001) 146-9· Lefteris Papaleontiou "Kypriaki idiomatiki piisi: Apo ton agnosto piiti tou 16ou aiona eos ton V. Michaelide kai ton K. Monti" ("Cypriot idiomatic poetry: From the 16th century unknown poet to V. Michaelides and K. Montis"). *Epetirida tou Kentrou Epistimonikon Erevnon* (Scientific Studies Center Yearbook), XXVIII (Nicosia: 2002): 291. See also L. Papaleontiou "H 9n Iouliou 1821 se kypriaka logotehnika keimena tou 19ou aiona" ("The 9th July 1821 in 19th century Cypriot literary texts"). *Simerini* 3 (August 1995), where the scholar correlates the poetic synthesis under examination with other thematically similar Cypriot literary texts concluding that " "Djyprianos' song" as the poet himself referred to it, is the most remarkable text written on the issue under examination".
7. See K.G. Kasinis, "1821 in Cyprus. A drama and an epos" *Diastavroseis.* Studies on the 19th and 20th century (Athens: Hadjinicolis, 1998) 301-335· for the issue under discussion, 321-323. For Michalis Pieris' views see also, Michalis Pieris, "Aristotelis Valaoritis-Vassilis Michaelides. I elxi tou montelou tou ethnikou piiti" ("The attraction of the "national" poet's model") *Parousia* 3 (Winter 1995): 13-16 and [=Michalis Pieris] [edit.] (2001): 160.
8. See Yiannis Katsouris, *Theatre in Cyprus* Vol. B 1940-1959 (Nicosia: 2005) 125, 131, 140, 152, 154, 159, 284. The issue of the theatrical adaptations of the "9th July 1821" and of the piece's onstage representations is worth a more thorough investigation in a separate study.
9. See Theodosis Nicolaou, "The 9th July 1821". Michalis Pieris (edit.): 189-190. See also the text of Hadjioannou's theatrical adaptation: Kyriakos Hadjioannou, *The 9th July 1821 in Cyprus,* a drama in the Cypriot dialect, poem by Vassilis Michaelides. (Famagusta: Library of Famagusta's Greek High School, 1960).
10. See Michalis Pieris (edit.): 216. The directorial line followed by M. Pieris may be further studied through the comparison of his own theatrical adaptation

(219-240) with i.e. K. Hadjioannou's adaptation (See endnote 9) or A. Kouros' adaptation: Andreas Kouros, *The 9th July 1821,* adaptation for the stage (Nicosia: Ministry of Education) or even with other theatrical adaptations of the poem that may be discovered in the future.

11. See Anne Ubersfeld, endnote 4: 29-31 – Giorgos Pefanis, endnote 4: 213. For the function of stage directions, see also Jean Alter, endnote 3: 165-168.
12. See Walter Puchner, *Apo ti theoria tou theatrou stis theories tou theatricou.* Exelixeis stin episteme tou theatrou sto telos tou 20ou aiona (From the Theory of Theatre to the Theories of the Theatrical. Evolutions in the episteme of theatre in the end of the 20th century) (Athens: Patakis, 2003) 74.
13. See Manfred Pfister, *The Theory and Analysis of Drama* (transl. John Halliday) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) (1997): 15-16. On the same subject, see also Patrice Pavis, endnote 1: 348-350.
14. The term "stage directions" will hence denote implicit stage directions.
15. See Marika Thomadaki, *Simiotiki tou olikou theatrikou* logou (Semiotics of the Total Theatrical Discourse) (Athens: Domos, 1993) 87-149.
16. See Anne Ubersfeld, *Lire Le Theatre I* (Paris: Belin, 1996) (1997): 151-157· Keir Elam, endnote 2: 143-145· Marika Thomadaki, 120-128· Patrice Pavis, endnote 1: 534.
17. The first numbers show the poem's verses and the last number the page of the following edition from which all quotations from the "9th July 1821" are taken: Vassilis Michaelides, *Apanta* (Complete Works) (Nicosia: Chr. Andreou, 2002) (1987). Highlighting is mine, marked with italics.
18. For the issue of lighting in the "9th July 1821" see Michalis Pieris' interesting study "Stathmoi tis kypriakis logotehnias; I dramatiki leitourgia tou photos stin Enati Iouliou ("Milestones of Cypriot literature – the dramatic function of light in the Ninth July) [= Michalis Pieris (ed), endnote 6: 145-149.
19. See above, 147.
20. See Lefteris Papaleontiou (2002): endnote 6: 290.
21. For represented space see more in Giorgos Pefanis, endnote 4: 370.
22. See Kyriakos Hadjioannou, endnote 9: 19. Contrary to Hadjioannou, who makes a creative use of the "9th July 1821" implicit stage directions and transforms them into analytical explicit ones, in his own adaptation A. Kouros writes laconic stage directions that would probably perplex whomever tried to stage the piece. See Andreas Kouros, endnote 10: passim.
23. See Theodoulos Constantinides, *Kucuk Mehemet I to 1821 en Kypro. Drama istorikon eis pente praxeis* (Kucuk Mehemet or 1821 in Cyprus. Historic drama in five acts) (Alexandria: "I Omonia" Vitalis and Manousakis, 1888): 44.

24. Endnote 9, 24.

25. See Epaminondas I. Frangoudis, *Thersandros kai alla afigimata* (Thersandros and other narratives) (Ed. Lefteris Papaleontiou) (Athens: Nefeli, 2002): 42-45.

26. See Theodoulos Constantinides, *Dio eiseti tou erotos thymata I ta Kat'Evanthian kai Aghisilaon. Drama eis praxeis tris* (Two more victims of Eros or Evanthias' and Aghisilaos'. Drama in three acts. (Smyrne: Nicolaos A. Damianou, 1873) 58-59. The relation between *Thersandros* and *Dio eiseti tou erotos thymata* cannot be studied systematically here. What would merit an in-depth investigation is not just the issue of plagiarism by Constantinides that probably does not even require any documentation, but the possibility that the very dramatic structure of the said theatrical piece is built on the basis of *Thersandros*' narrative structure. I extend my thanks to Lefteris Papaleontiou for his suggestions on the aforementioned issue.

27. See Theodoulos Constantinides, endnote 23: 101.

28. The term denotes the space which is not represented theatrically. It is in fact an off stage space, as described by the dramatis personae in their monologues and dialogues. See Manfred Pfister, endnote 13: 257.

29. For this term see Marika Thomadaki, endnote 15: 132.

30. For diegetic space see Giorgos Pefanis, endnote 4: 368-371.

31. See Theodoulos Constantinides, endnote 26: 52. The possibility that the play *Dio eiseti tou erotos thymata I ta Kat'Evanthian kai Aghisilaon* was one of the sources of Vassilis Michaelides' "9th July 1821" merits further investigation. The same applies to Ep. Frangoudis' *Thersandros.* For Theod. Constantinides' aforementioned play, see Leonidas Galazis, "Dio dysevreta kypriaka theatrica erga" ("Two rare Cypriot plays") *Mikrofilolofika* 21 (Spring 2007): 21.

32. See Yiannis Katsouris, endnote 6: 241-2· Michalis Pieris *Apo to Mertikon tis Kyprou* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 1991) 278-9· Lefteris Papaleontiou, endnote 6 (2002): 290.

Translator's Note: The excerpts from the poem "The Ninth of July 1821 in Nicosia, Cyprus" are taken from a translation by Athan Anagnostopoulos, adapted by Kinereth Gensler and Ruth Whitman to the form in which they appear within this essay. *Poems of Cyprus* (Nicosia: The Printing Office of the Republic of Cyprus, 1970).