



ΟΙ ΔΡΟΜΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΓΝΩΣΗΣ



National and
Kapodistrian
University of
Athens



European Union
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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
MANAGING AUTHORITY

Co-financed by Greece and the European Union



The History of Theater

Summer Schools for Greek children, children from European high Schools and from Schools in America, Australia and Asia

The project "Academy of Plato: Development of Knowledge and innovative ideas" is co-financed from National and European funds through the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning"

The origin of Greek Drama

- Drama originates from religious rituals.
- It was connected, already from the start, with the cult of Dionysus.

RELIGIOUS RITUALS

- Argos - Samos:

The ritual enactment of the wedding of Zeus and Hera.

- Crete:

The ritual enactment of the birth of Zeus

- Delphi :

The ritual enactment of Apollo's fight with the Dragon Python
by adolescents.

Vase depicting the wedding of Zeus and Hera



The wedding of Zeus and Hera

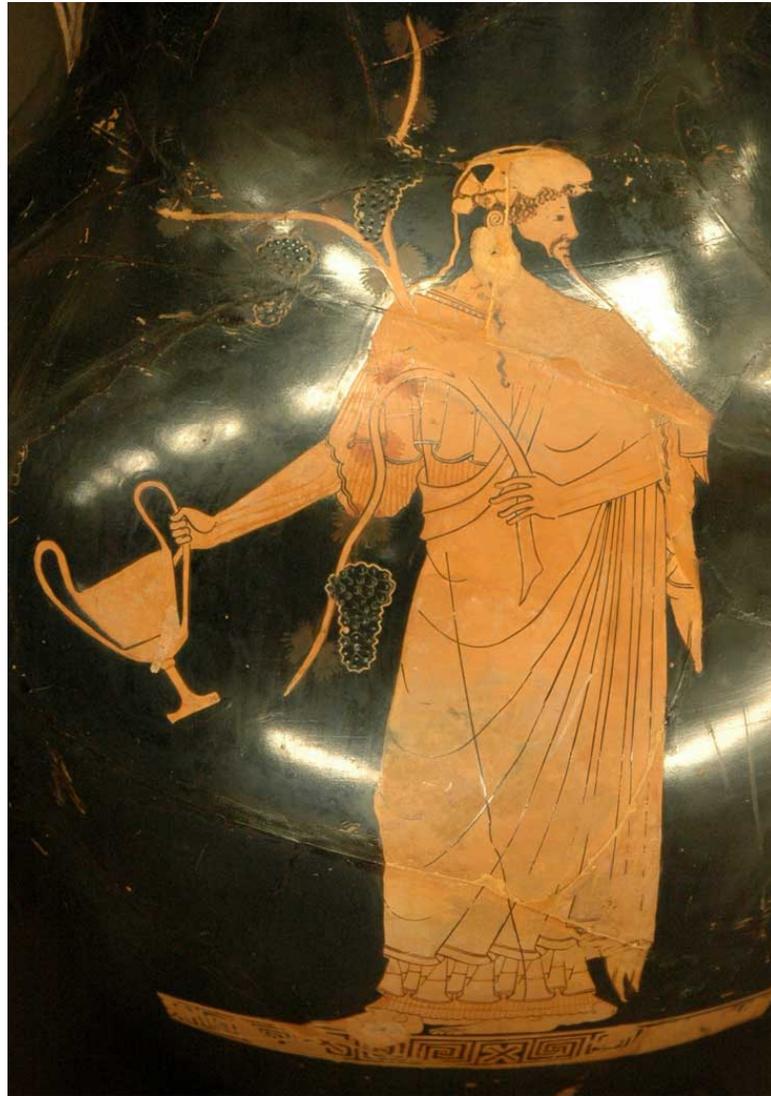
Palazzo Medici Florence



DIONYSUS

- God of the grape and the wine
- He incarnates the season cycle of the year and the eternal cycle of life and death.

Vase depicting Dionysus



Louvre Museum

Vase depicting Dionysus as a youth



Louvre
Museum

“Bacchus”, Michelangelo.
“Dionysus and Eros”, Roman period



“Bacchus”, Caravaggio



ΤΑΒΕΡΝΑ ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ



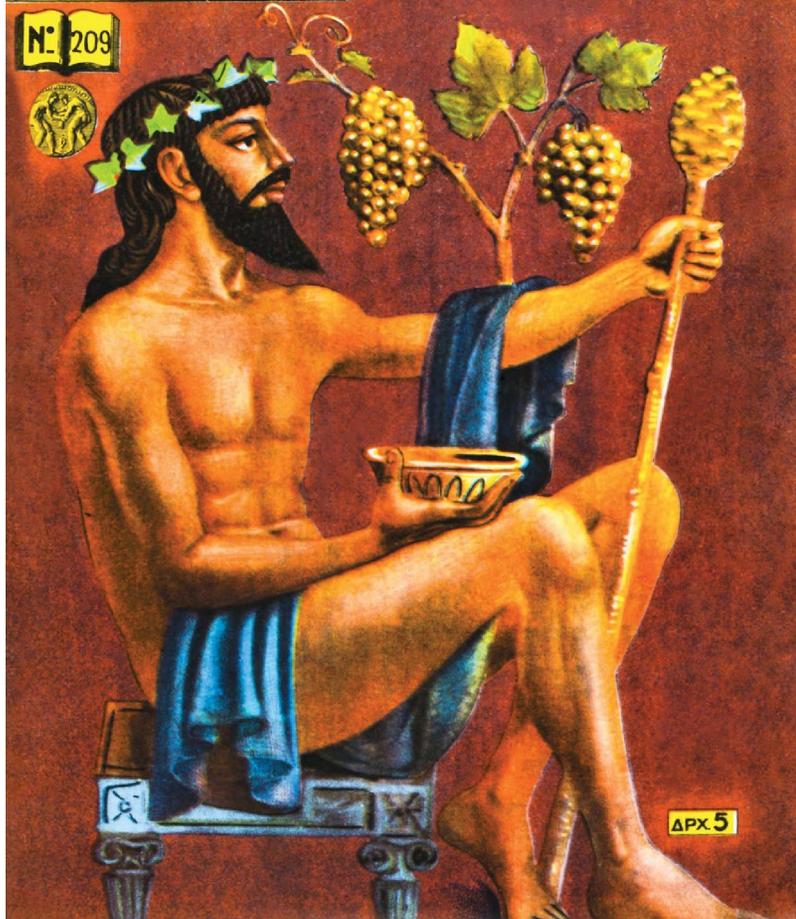
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Επιτομολογούμενα

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

№ 209



ΔΡΧ. 5

THE CULT OF DIONYSUS

- During the festivals of Dionysus, the followers of the god worshiped him in a state of ritual madness and ecstatic frenzy.

Ecstasy

- A basic feature of Dionysus cult was **ecstasy**.
- The worshippers of the God were disguised wearing animal skin, have the dregs of wine spread all over their faces, wearing crowns of ivy, tails, beards or horns like the followers of the god, the Satyrs.
- The worshippers identified themselves emotionally with the satyrs. This is the first step towards the birth of drama.

“Satyr”, red figure kylix



“Dionysian procession”, Red figure vase



New Orleans festival “Dionysus’ parade”



Valencia, Spain

“The festival of Dionysus”



Athens and Dionysus

The time of drama performances

- Drama performances took place during the festivities in honor of Dionysus, bound to their religious origin.

Athenian festivities in honor of Dionysus

- **Great or City Dionysia (Μεγάλα or εν άστει Διονύσια):**

They were celebrated during the Athenian month of Elaphebolion (mid March- mid April).

Their duration was 6 days, during which new dramas were presented.

- **Lesser or Rural Dionysia (Κατ' αγρούς Διονύσια):**

They were celebrated during the Athenian month of Poseideon (mid december- mid January).

There were only performances of older successful dramas.

- **Lenaia:**

They were celebrated during the Athenian month of Gamelion (mid January – mid February).

New tragedies and comedies were presented.

Genres of Drama

- **Satyric Drama :**

It is an ancient Greek form of tragicomedy, similar in spirit to burlesque. It was a pleasant play to raise a laugh. It featured a chorus of satyrs and its themes were taken from the life of Dionysus.

Comedy

- The poets of comedy tried, by causing laughter and fun, to criticize actual personalities and political, ethical and social situations that harmed or were dangerous for the city-state.

Tragedy

- According to Aristotle, tragedy is closely related to the dithyramb, a choric hymn in honor of Dionysus.

Important stages of the development of tragedy

Arion of Methymna:

- He gave the dithyramb a more artistic form, in the 6th cent. BC. He added music, lyrics and a chorus of 50 men. This chorus sang the dithyramb accompanied by a guitar and danced around the altar of Dionysus.

Thespis

- In the middle of the 6th cent. BC., the leading actor stepped in front of the chorus and started interacting with the rest of it.
- Thespis' break-through was a success and so, he started touring the villages of Attica with his chorus, called “the wagon of Thespis”, participating in the Dionysian festivities.

The definition of tragedy

- Aristotle, in his Poetics, gives the following definition of tragedy:

“A tragedy, then, is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions”.

The “quantitative” parts of tragedy

Epic (dialogues, monologues)

- Prologue
- Episodes
- Exodus

Lyric (songs)

- Parode
- Stasimon
- Monodies – Diodies – Commoi

The “qualitative” elements of tragedy

- Fable
- Character
- Diction
- Thought
- Melody
- Spectacle

The ancient theater

The parts of the ancient theater:

- **The main theater or “Koilon”**

the part assigned to the audience

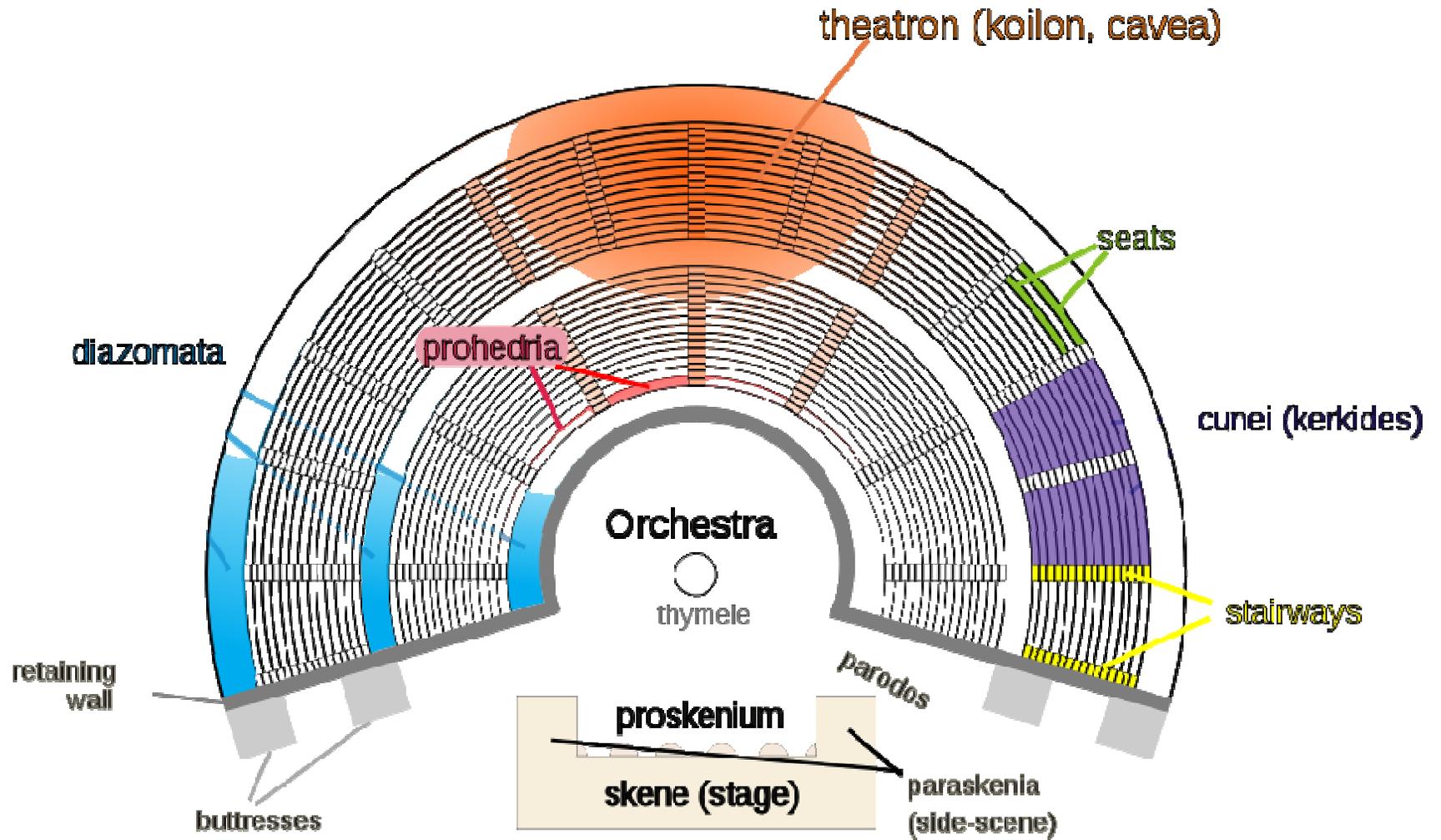
- **Orchestra**

circular or semicircular area where the chorus performed

- **Scene**

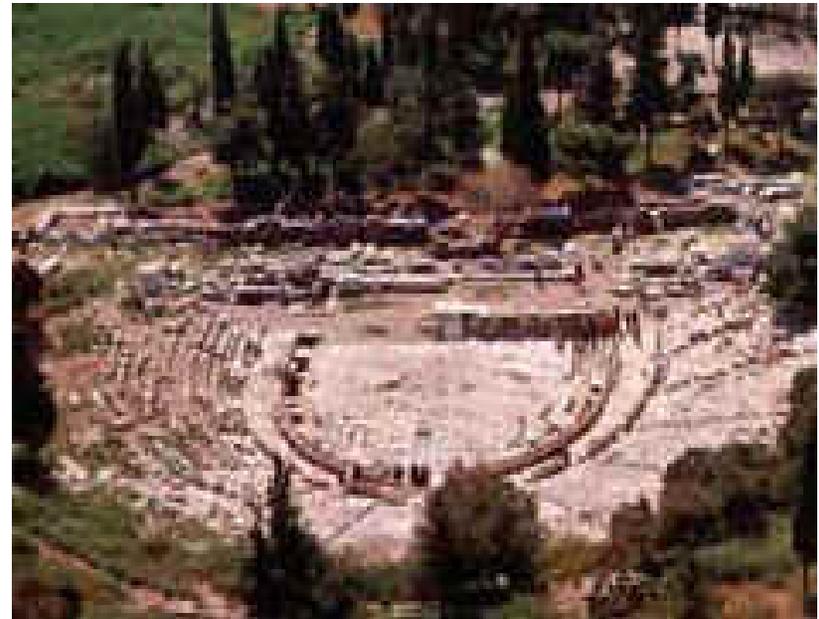
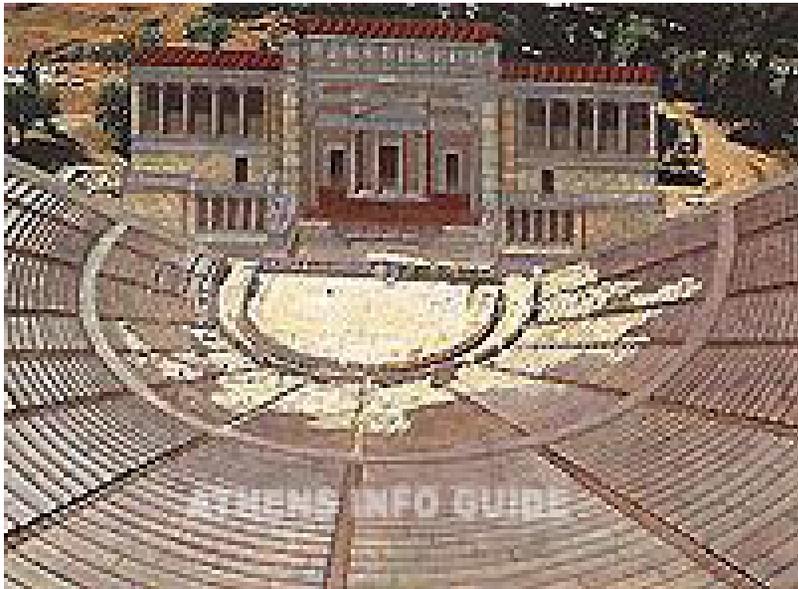
the area for the actors

Ancient Theater



ANCIENT GREEK THEATRE

The theater of Dionysus



The theater of Epidaurus



Scenic elements of ancient theater

- Ekkyklema: a wheeled-plattform on which bodies of dead persons were presented
- Theologion: the flat roof of the scene that was dedicated to gods
- Mechane or Aeorema: a crane by which the gods were appearing on the scene
- Charonian stairway: underground passage ending in a staircase, used for the entrance of spectres from the nether world and for the ghostly apparitions of the dead.
- Vrontion: a machine used to imitate the sound of thunder
- Periaktoi: Two prismatic pillars, put on the left and right side of the scene, turning around their axon, for changing the background of the scene.

Drama competitions

- They are related with the city of Athens and the theater of Dionysus
- They took place during the festivals in honor of Dionysus.
- The Eponymous Archon or the Archon Basileus was in charge.

Choregos

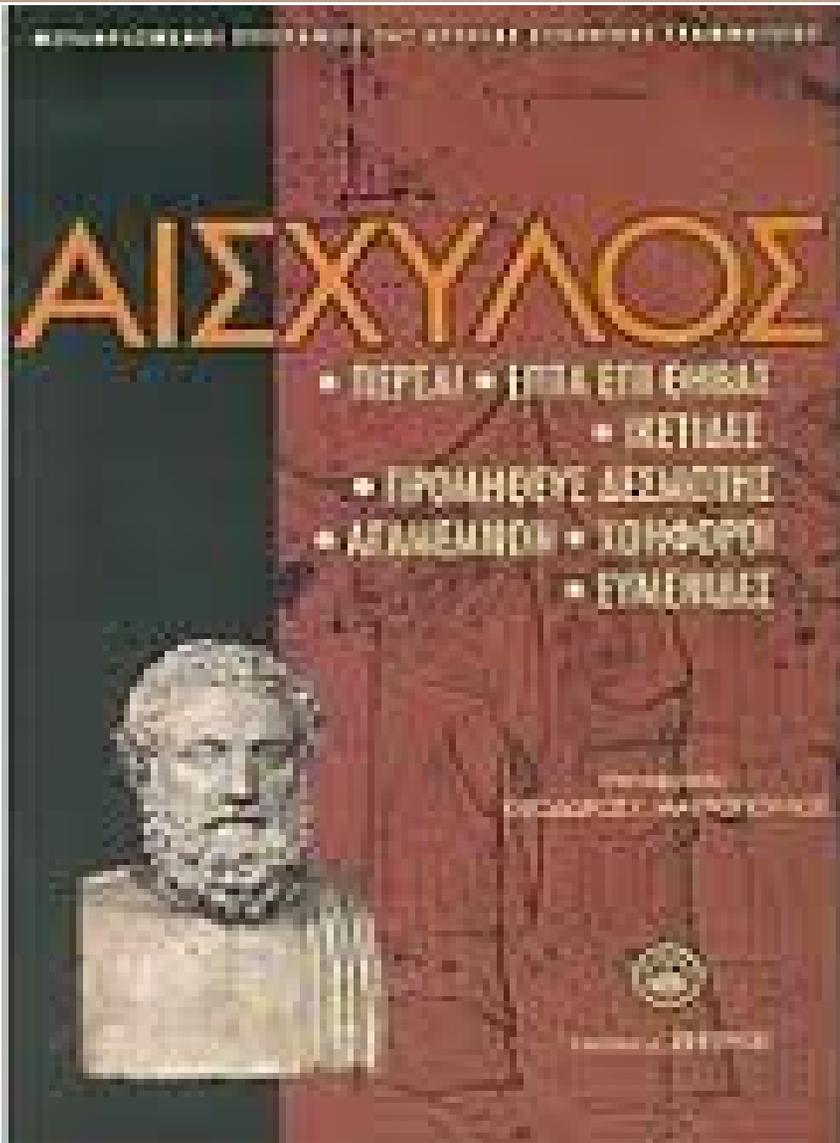
- The Archon in charge assigns wealthy citizens to the honorary liturgy of choregia.
- The choregos finances the preparation of the chorus, pays rehearsal costs, he is responsible for finding a chorus instructor and a flute player and takes care of the costumes for the actors and the members of the chorus.

The Choragic monument of Lysicrates on the Tripodon street



Aeschylus

- Aeschylus was born in Eleusis in 525 BC.
- Due to his origin and the religious family environment in which he was raised, he had rare virtues, like morality and piety. The Syracusan tyrant Hieron invited him in Sicily to teach.



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- He gained a great reputation, that surpassed Attica's borders. He died at Gela, in Sicily, in 456 BC, a place that he had visited three times.
 - He fought at Marathon, Salamis and Plataea. In the battle of Marathon in 490 BC., he was heavily wounded. πληγώθηκε βαριά.
 - He showed an interest in poetry, from his early youth. He is considered one of the most famous tragic poets of antiquity, but also of the world.

His work:

- He was devoted to tragic poetry.
- He won 13 times. His first victory was in 486 BC in the age of 40.
- Only seven of his tragedies have survived intact: **The Persians, Seven against Thebes, The Suppliants, Prometheus Bound** and the trilogy **Oresteia** (Agamemnon, the Libation Bearers, Eumenides).

The Persians of Aeschylus, 2012



The Oresteia of Aeschylus, 2010



The Suppliants of Aeschylus, 2011



Main features of his work

- Religiousness, fantasy, philosophical thought, majesty, strong images, racy metaphors, figures of speech, loft of language.

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- His characters are titanic.
 - In “The Suppliants”, the collision with the divine forces protects the greater values (customs, laws of the nature, institutions).
 - In the tragedy “Seven against Thebes”, the gods punish whoever is drift into the intoxication of power.
 - In “The Persians” the arrogant ruler is crashed.
 - “The Oresteia” refers to the progress of human kind from the primitive law of nature to the positive law.



Sophocles

- He was born in Colonus, in Attica, in 496 BC
- He learnt music and at the age of 15, he was chosen as the leader of the chorus of the youths. He served his city taking military, economic, religious and diplomatic offices.

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- He served as “strategos” in the campaign against Samos, as a treasurer (hellenotamias) in the Athenian League,
as a priest and a member of diplomatic missions.
 - He lived peacefully and died in 406 BC, at the age of 90, extremely honored.
 - He never abandoned Athens, and, indeed, his tragedy “Oedipus at Colonus” glorifies the city.

His work:

- He wrote 123 tragedies.
- Only seven of them survived intact:
“Ajax”, “Antigone”, “The Trachiniae”, “Oedipus the king”, “Oedipus at Colonus”, “Electra”, “Philoctetes”
and a part of the satyric drama **“Ichneutae”** (Tracking Satyrs).
- He won 24 prizes in around 30 dramatic contests.

Oedipus the King of Sophocles, *2000*





Oedipus the King

Antigone of Sophocles, 1992





And now, lost in grief, I
leave this earth . . .

Antigone

Electra of Sophocles, 2007



THE FEATURES OF HIS WORK

- The main feature of his work is the moral order.
- His heroes don't have the mythical dimensions that we find in Aeschylus, neither the passion of Euripides.
- According to Aristotle, he presents the heroes as they ought to be (“οίους δεῖ εἶναι”).

Euripides

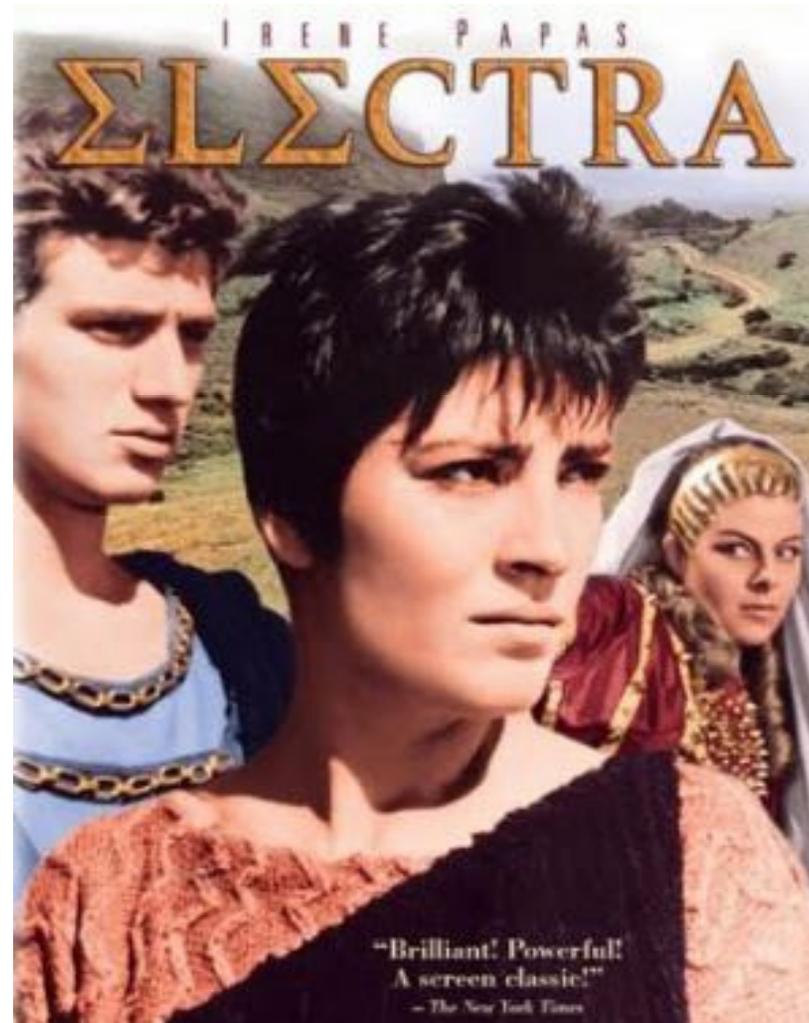
- He was born in Salamis around 485 to 480 BC.
- He was influenced by Herodotus, Phidias, Anaxagoras and the Sophists.
- He had the biggest library, and he often wrote his plays alone, near the sea.

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- He was a rather close and strange character, but he loved his city. He came up against tough competition and irony.
 - He was called “stage philosopher”. In his work we can find his concerns about human passions, the role of the gods, the fate of man.
 - He was parodied by Aristophanes, while his fellow citizens accused him as impious. A few years before his death, he went to Pella in Macedonia at the court of king Archelaus, where he died in 406 BC.

His work

- He first competed in the City Dionysia in 455 BC and he only won 4 times (his first victory was in 441 BC)
- He wrote 92 dramas, but only 19 survived: **“Alcestis”, “Medea”, “Heracleidae”, “Hippolytus”, “Andromache”, “Hecube”, “The Suppliants”, “Electra”, “Heracles”, “The Trojan women”, “Iphigenia in Tauris”, “Ion”, “Helen”, “Phoenician women”, “Orestes”, “Bacchae”, “Iphigenia at Aulis”, the satyric drama “Cyclops” and the tragedy “Rhesus”, which authorship is disputed.**

Electra of Euripides, 1962



Medea of Euripides, 1976





Medea, 2008



Bacchae, 2011



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- The merit of Euripides' works is that: while Sophocles presented things as they should be in the future and Aeschylus as they were in the past, Euripides reflected the actual problems of this time, presenting things as they actually are.

Aristophanes (450 - 380 BC)

- He is the most important writer of Old Comedy.
- With Aristophanes, political comedy met its greatest glamor and strength. His wit and the socio-political situations of his time gave to attic comedy a unique form and content, making the theatrical expression undeniable.
- He has written almost 60 comedies. Only 11 survive: **“The Acharnians”, “The Knights”, “The Clouds”, “The Wasps”, Peace, “The Birds”, “Lysistrata”, “Thesmophoriazousae”, “The Frogs”, “Ecclesiazousae”, “Wealth”.**

ΟΙ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΕΣ

ΤΟΥ **ΑΡΙΣΤΟΦΑΝΗ** *σε κόμικς*

ΔΙΑΣΚΕΥΗ - ΚΕΙΜΕΝΑ
Τ. ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΔΗ

ΣΚΙΤΣΑ
Γ. ΑΚΟΚΑΛΙΔΗ

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΖΟΥΣΕΣ



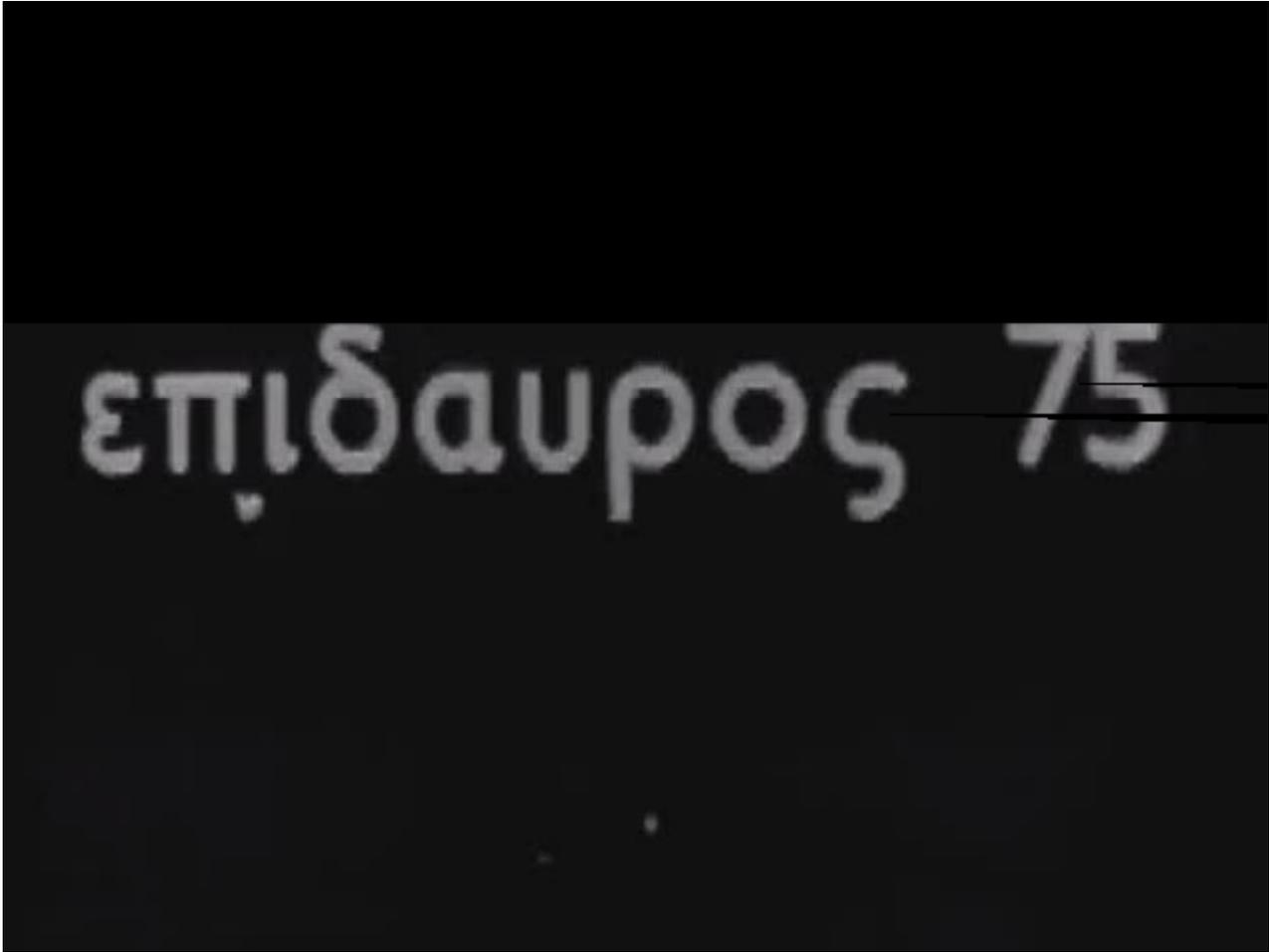
The Birds of Aristophanes, 2008



Peace, 2011







επιδαυρος 75

The Birds

Middle Comedy

- Middle comedy, a new expression of comedy, flourishes and declines between the beginning and the middle of the 4th century BC. The most famous poets are: Antiphanes, Anaxandrides, Eubulus, Timocles. No complete Middle Comic plays have been preserved.

New Attic Comedy

- In the period between 330 and 260 BC, a new kind of comedy emerged, called “**New Attic Comedy**”.
- The most famous poet is Menander, who is considered as the last important comedy writer.
- The writer no longer criticizes political and social situations. He rather focuses on highlighting the psychology and personal experiences of the characters. He wrote 105 comedies. Only one of them survives intact: “**Dyskolos**”.

ΑΡΧΑΙΟ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΘΕΑΤΡΟ

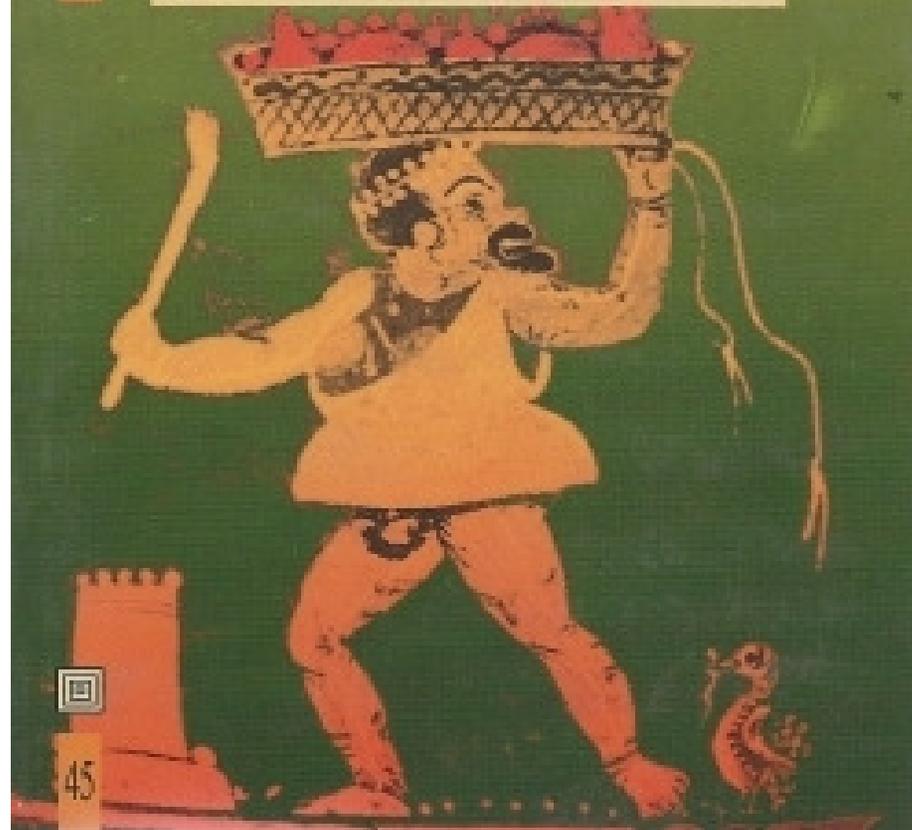
ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΣ

Δύσκολος



Μετάφραση • Εισαγωγή • Σχόλια
Κώστας Τοπούζης

Διόρθωση σιμφών: Κώστας Μπαλάσκας



45

The Roman Comedy

- Shortly afterwards, the Roman comedy writers, having studied Menander and been influenced by him, they create their own Comedy.
- With Titus Maccius Plautus (250 - 184), who is influenced by attic comedy, Roman Comedy takes a new form.

Roman Tragedy

- Roman tragedy is also influenced by ancient Greek tragedy. The only writer of Roman tragedy is Seneca. His plays, though, were not written that much for performance in the theater, but rather for being read in some circles. His most important works are: *Phaedra*, *Medea*, *Agamemnon* etc.

Medieval Theater

- One of the main features of the Middle Ages is the religious fervor.
- The main theatrical genre produced in this period is the “Mystery plays”.
- Initially its subjects were taken only from the life and passion of Jesus Christ.

The Byzantine Theater

- During the period of Byzantine Empire, the theater remained static.
- There are no byzantine theatrical works, except from the religious drama “Christos Paschon” (Christ suffering), of an unknown writer. The people’s needs of some spectacle were satisfied by the Hippodrome.

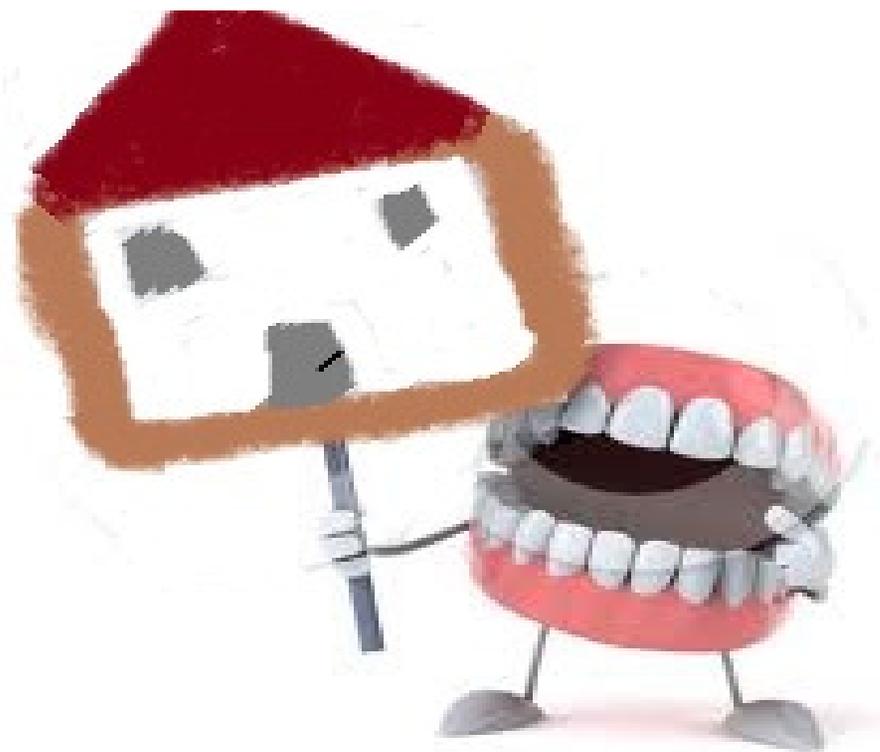
Adaption of the drama “Christos Paschon”, 2010



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- In Byzantium there is, however, folk theater.
 - This is improvised, public, folk entertainment by the mimes.
 - “Are these acceptable? Are these bearable?”, exclaimed John Chrysostom, one of the accusers of theater, in one of his speeches “towards the ones who abandoned the Church” for “the horse-races and the theaters”.

The pantomime of the Emperor

- An interesting pantomime in Byzantium is the “pantomime of the Emperor”.



The theater of Renaissance

- The Renaissance was a culture movement in the period from the 14th to the 17th century. It was a period of revival of the art and thought.

After the Middle ages, scholars and artists discover again the ancient Greek culture, philosophy, literature and art.

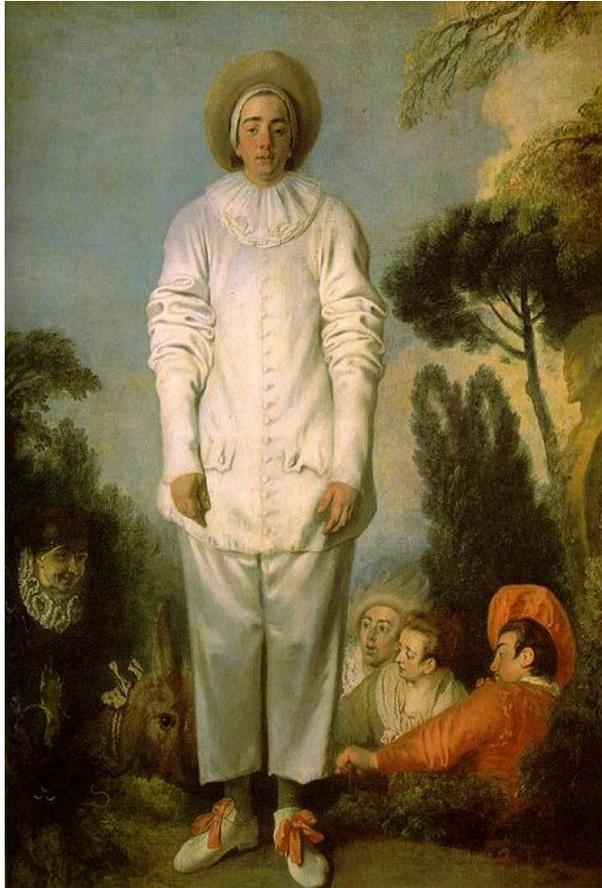
- This results to the rival of the art and the theater.

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- The theater of Renaissance begins in Italy.
 - Going through some attempts, it comes to the **Commedia dell' Arte**, where the basic feature is the actor.
 - In the same time, two excellent writers appear, Lope de Vega in Spain and Shakespeare in England.

Commedia dell' Arte

- Commedia dell' Arte appears in Italy in the beginning of 17th century and owes its name to its actors.
- The actors are very skilled in dance, mime, declamation and singing.
- Conventional plot lines were written on themes of adultery, jealousy, old age and love. They drew from current events and local news of the day.

Pierrot Harlequin Columbine



The Cretan Theater

- A revival of Greek theater takes place in Crete, during the period of Venetian rule, from 13th to 17th century.
- The first tragedy in Greek, that survives, is Erophili written by G. Chortatsis apparently at the end of 16th century.

Chortatsis Erophi, 2005



The Greek Theater in the 19th cent.

- Evanthia Kairi 1799-1866
- In 1826, a few months after the fall of Messolonghi, she published the theatrical play “Nikiratos”, the first original female work of modern Greece. She was inspired by the heroic exodus of the people of Messolonghi.

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- **Dimitris Byzantios «Babylonia»**
 - This is a story about Greeks from different parts of Greece, who celebrate the victory of the allies in the Battle of Navarino (1827). The play takes place in an inn in Nafplion and it presents, through comedy, the confusion between the characters, caused by the use of different local idioms and dialects.
 - This is the first play of Greek literature after the Independence from the Ottoman Empire.

Dimitris Byzantios «Babylonia»



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- Elias Kapetanakis: «*The general Secretary*».

Elias Kapetanakis denounces, through the eyes of the former secretary of the minister, the problems of public administration.

ΘΕΑΤΡΙΚΗ ΟΜΑΔΑ ΤΡΙΠΟΛΗΣ

— ΗΛΙΑ ΚΑΠΕΤΑΝΑΚΗ —

Ο ΓΕΝΙΚΟΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΥΣ

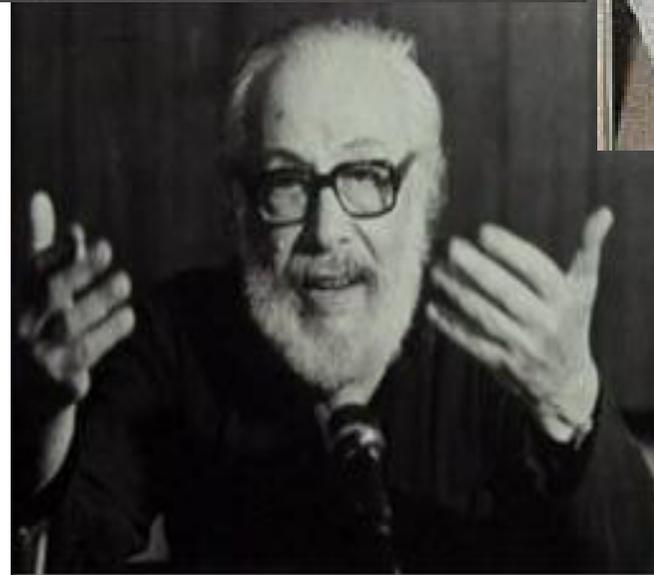
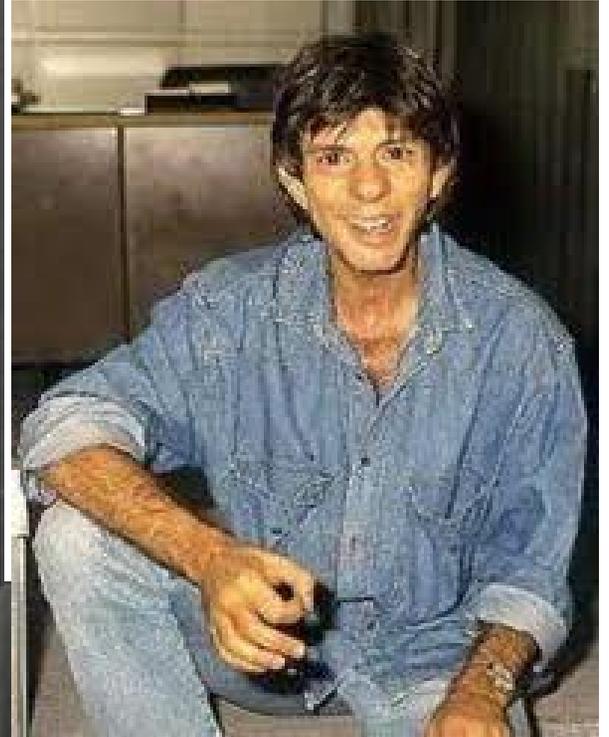


ΜΑΛΛΙΑΡΟΠΟΥΛΕΙΟ ΘΕΑΤΡΟ
21-30 ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΟΥ & 12 ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ 1992

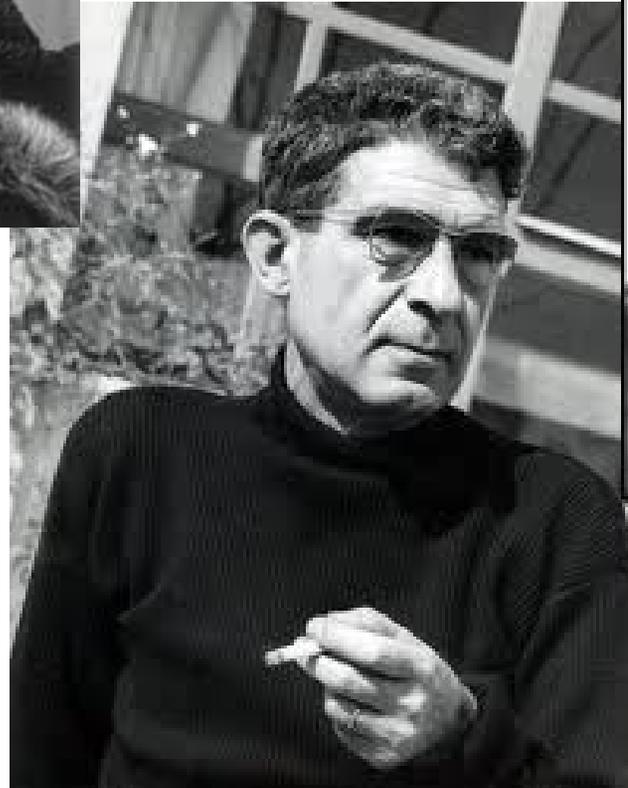
Greek Theater in the 20th cent.

- In the 20th century, Greek theater flourishes.
New theaters, great actors, directors and stage designers appear.

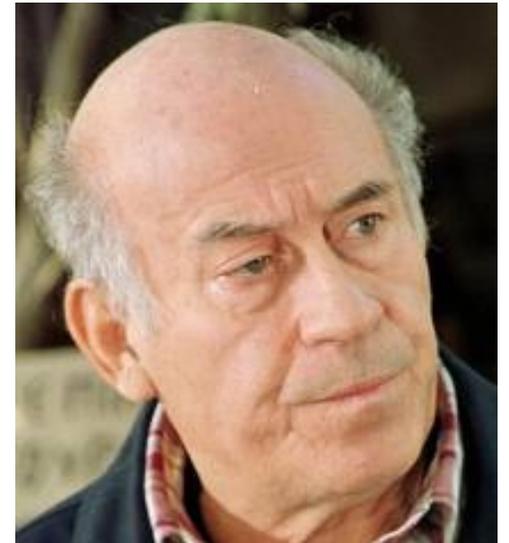
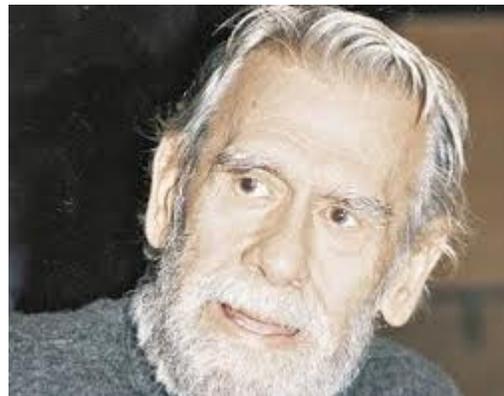
Greek directors



Greek stage designers



Greek actors





Important Greek Theaters



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- **Gregorios Xenopoulos**(1867 - 1951) was a novelist, journalist and writer of plays from Zakynthos.
 - His work “*Stella Violanti*” was presented in 1909, with the great greek actress Marika Kotopouli in the leading part.

Xenopoulos Stella *Violanti*



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- **Iakovos Kambanellis (1922 – 2011)**
 - The productions of Karolos Koun’ “Art Theater”, in the winter of 1945-46, fascinate him.
 - In his work *The Courtyard of miracles*, he presents the transition from the traditional Greek way of life in the small neighborhood to the modern way of life in the urban centers.

Iakovos Kambanellis

The courtyard of miracles, 2008



photo by KARTsonakis Pan

-
- **Dimitris Kehaidis, 1937-2005.**
 - His work “The Celebration” (Το Πανηγύρι) was written in 1962. In this play, he presents the rural exodus during the post war era, the rural depopulation and the migration of young people to the big cities.

ΚΡΑΤΙΚΟ ΘΕΑΤΡΟ
ΒΟΡΕΙΟΥ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ
ΘΕΑΤΡΟ ΘΡΑΚΗΣ

Δ. ΚΕΧΑΪΔΗ
Το Πανηγύρι

ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΟ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΩΣΗΜΟΝΙΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΡΑΤΟΥ

- **Loula Anagnostaki**

- In her works touches upon the history of the country, in the post war period, the Greek family and, in general, the Greek reality.

Loula Anagnostaki
The sound of the gun, 2008



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- **Vasilis Katsikonouris (birth 1960).**
 - In his play “To gala” he touches upon the problem of immigration.

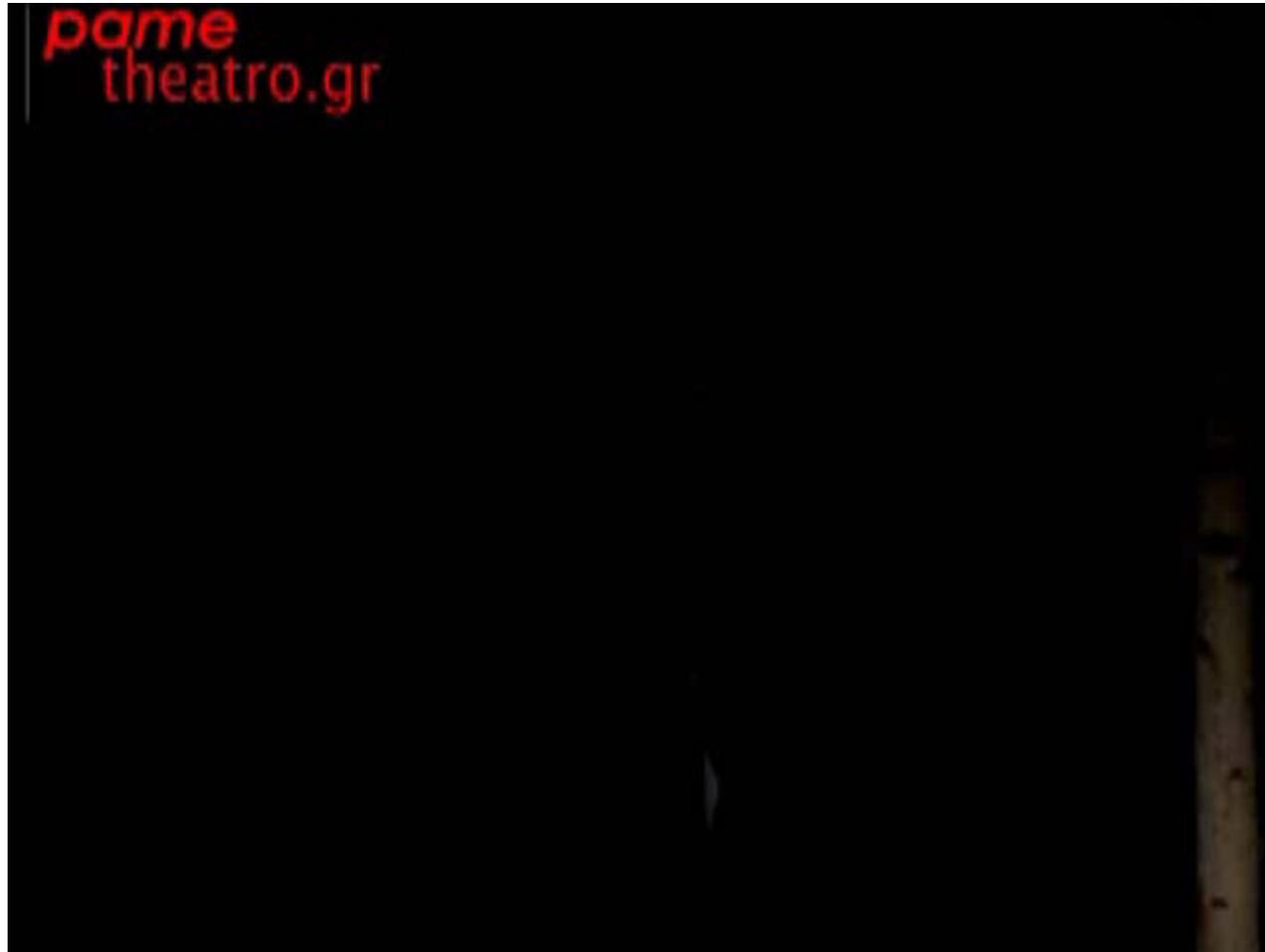
Katsikonouris, “To gala”, 2011



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-ΤΟ ΓΑΛΑ- ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΗ ΚΑΤΣΙΚΟΝΟΥΡΗ
ΣΚΗΝΟΣ: ANNA ΒΑΓΕΝΑ
ANNA ΒΑΓΕΝΑ - ΔΗΜΗΤΡΗΣ ΠΑΤΗΣ

Burning Heads (To gala)



D. Horn (actor)





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