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"BLESSED ORIENT" IN THE WORK OF PHOTIS KONTOGLOU: FROM NARRATION TO DRAMA REPRESENTATION

1. PHOTIS KONTOGLOU

Photis Kontoglou was born in 1895 in Aivali (Kydonies) of Minor Asia. He first appeared in Greek letters after the devastation of 1922, when Nikos Kazantzakis, along with Galateia and Elli Alexiou, all very enthusiastic with his book *Pedro Kazas*, invited him - from Mytilini where he had taken refuge, to Athens. Indeed, *Pedro Kazas*, written at about 1919 in Paris, where Kontoglou had been to study and get acquainted with the modern artistic happenings in Europe (1914-1919), was something new and fresh to Greek literature - both in style and in context. In 1923, he goes to Holy Mountain Athos to become a monk. There he discovers the significance of Byzantine iconography. In 1931 he is hired as painting restoration specialist in the Byzantine Museum of Athens and starts illustrating many Byzantine churches in Athens and the rest of Greece. With his students' help he illustrated an immeasurable number of portable icons and frescos. As an author he handled a large variety of different genres and his work is not purely literary. An important part of this work comprises persuasive texts through which he served his commitment to Greek Orthodox tradition. Another part of his work is adaptation of stories with pirates and sea dogs (Skotinioti, 2003). The Academy of Athens honored him for promoting the ideals of Greek tradition and awarded him the *National Prize of Arts and Letters*. He died on July the 13th, 1965.

2. "AIVALI MY HOMELAND" AND "BLESSED ORIENT"

The collection of short stories entitled *Aivali, My Homeland*, published in 1962, comprises Kontoglou's nostalgic reference to the time and space of his childhood, namely of Aivali during the first decade of the 20th century; a time marked by the ending of the last Sultan's reign, when the town was inhabited only by Greeks. Through his stories, very few of which have been purely narrative - such as *Christmas In The Cave, Captain Stelios and Master Vasif, The Blessed Sheep Cote, Strigaros, Carefree Youth And Grumpy Oldness, Uncle Haralambos, Captain Gritsas, Back Then, Honest Pirate* (less than one-fifth of his work), others being stories with loose narrative structure - often told in the form of anecdotes, while the rest being descriptive or lyric stories, which include referential and informative elements (folklore, historical, theological), he creates with abundant nostalgia the world of lost innocence he experienced in that specific time and space, in order to present it to his contemporary Greeks as counterweight and antidote to the dangerous, in his opinion, turn of postwar Greece towards the technocratic civilization of the West and the consequences that turn involves. Thus, he builds with his stories the world of "blessed Orient."

But why is the Orient "blessed" according to Kontoglou? First of all, the word alone implies the superiority of the Orient against the West; the Orient is blessed, graceful, favored by God - qualities that the West lacks, because it has not been equally blessed. Those qualities make Orient the "lost paradise" for which Kontoglou feels a longing for repatriation, the desperate need to return and reunite with this paradise; this spiritual mood is rooted firstly to his violent,

forced expulsion from his native land and secondly to his commitment to the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, which made him rebel against the Westernization of Greece and feel like a stranger in that country. Thus, firstly his native land, Aivali - the time and space that formed his childhood, with a tradition that dates back to the days of Homer and through Byzantine up to the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and secondly, the Byzantine and Orthodoxy whose birthplace is again in that land, comprise the blessed Orient according to Photis Kontoglou: "Landsmen and seamen thought of the Orient as a blessed place, because it was there Christ was born, and it was there the sun rises from, and all the people who were born there are blessed, Greeks and Turks" (*Ancient People of the Orient*, Kontoglou, 1979: 87).

3. THEMATIC ELEMENTS

Nature – People

First of all, nature is blessed because it produces without effort and in abundance the simple goods of God; no need for the man to interfere with his machinery, to toil so to increase land fertility - and that is why people who live there enjoy a carefree life:

There was plenty of food [in Saint Paraskevi, the monastery where Kontoglou spent his childhood, close to his uncle the abbot]. The holy days there would be slaughtered lambs hanging in the kitchen, as if it was a butcher's shop. There were pots with food boiling in two-three fires simultaneously. The fasting days they didn't eat olive oil but they had on the table all kinds of Lenten food: mussels, cockles, oysters, octopuses, caviar, pickles, tahini, and they cooked with sesame oil. They would only buy very few provisions from the city; most of the food came from Saint Paraskevi because it had everything that lives in the land and under the sea, and not just any land or any sea but the blessed Orient (*New Year in Saint Paraskevi*, Kontoglou, 1979: 127).

This nature, in the descriptive, lyric stories of the collection, such as *Mother Sea*, *Heat*, *Serene Life*, etc. is described thoroughly (from mountains to crabs and pebbles) as the cradle of the blessed life which locals enjoyed; which he himself enjoyed and now mused of it nostalgically, because "in that quiet place, people forgot about the rest of the world, their minds relaxed, they became 'happy animals' as Plotinus writes" (*Serene Life*, Kontoglou, 1979: 316). Surrounded by that nature, lived a whole generation of people; Greek Christians but Turks as well, on the outskirts of Aivali - people with pure hearts and calm disposition, freed from the vain concerns inherent in the Western civilization: the quest for success, for dominance over nature, even for happiness. Their serenity - originated from their innocence - had an uncommon spirituality, whose elements were a deep sense of religiousness and of being content with little, as well as patience, magnanimity, honesty and agreeable manners. They are the "poor in spirit" mentioned in the Gospel - the naïve:

Just a few years ago you could find in there that generation of ancient people that cannot be found anywhere else [...] There were Greeks mingled together with Oriental Christians; prudent, innocent people [...] They loved tales as if they were children, they would believe anything, their hearts were full of kindness [...] And that, because they led simple lives, they were content with little [...] they were not greedy, the wealthier would give to the poorer, and then again the poorer would not become a burden to or take advantage of the wealthier; people were not envious of each other, nor were they constantly after profit, they just passed their lives in a deeply peaceful way and God was always there blessing them. That is why they lived like happy animals in the lap of Mother Nature [...] As if they came out of earth and went back to earth, without sorrow, without feeling the hand of death ... like the bird that lays its egg on the sand, next to the sea - that's what those people were like... (*Ancient People Of The Orient*, Kontoglou, 1979: 79-80).

This actual and metaphorical paradise which is realized because of the absence of the tree of knowledge and its fruits, is different and opposite compared to other earthly paradises of

Western literature, such as Robinson Crusoe's island; the attitude of Oriental Kontoglou and his characters in the book *Aivali My Homeland* towards nature is completely opposite to that of Western Robinson Crusoe. While the Oriental lives completely happy surrounded by nature, adjusting to its pace, Robinson is the typical workaholic puritan who sees nature as an opportunity to apply his financial plans; as a source of exploitation. He does not become naïve, he does not adjust himself to nature but he uses naïve Friday to adjust nature to his own needs (Skotinioti, 2009: 160-162).

The characters of Aivali, that incarnate all the virtues mentioned, confirm and complete the picture of the paradise his lost homeland has been. A typical blessed Oriental is uncle-Manolis Vasiles, the fisherman, who used to receive news - good or bad - with both the apathy and the happiness of a hermit, uninterested to improve the earthly conditions of his life. He was uninterested to the new boat offered to him by the abbot of Saint Paraskevi, uninterested even to accept the rich meals they gave him; he would simply tar and caulk his rotten skiff, then eat a poor, plain meal he had with him, while stretching out under a tree's shadow. His nickname Vasiles comes from the word Vasileas (King): when he was in the old kafenes (coffee shop), having with him a basket with snacks - fresh seafood - he would some times drink too much and his nose and cheek would turn red, and then he would say: "Now I'm a King." He spent his life in his tarred "tub" during the summers and in his daughter's house during the winters:

Innocent and harmless, a person of another era! He never lost temper, never insulted anyone, never spoke ill of anyone. He was always amiable, though he was a man of few words and a quiet disposition. Everybody loved him. The Turks used to call him "Ihtiyar-papa," which means old-father. Educated people, uneducated people, they would all go near him, as if uncle Manolis was a shady tree in the summer's heat (*Uncle Manolis Vasiles*, Kontoglou, 1979: 213-216).

Many Orientals of that kind appear in the part entitled *Bible Of Genesis*. Craftsmen, merchants, ship masters or smugglers, they all have an aura of happiness, magnanimity, innocence and patience – elements of "that blessed generation which lived and faded away in the Orient; those people who died and along with them died the ancient world."

Captain Gritsas, who "never lost temper, never got upset; either enjoying quietly his coffee or fighting for life in a turbulent Black Sea was one and the same". Master Katakouzinis, the Greek tailor, "a weak old man, his heart devastated and humiliated, he walked bent and withdrawn, shivering - scared, you'd think, and he looked down on earth, always whispering sacred phrases and words from the Book of Psalms." Kompothekras the tailor, who gave up tailoring to devote himself to the building of the machine of perpetual motion; Talianis, who owned a shop but instead of selling anything, he was buying scrap metal. Master Paraskevas, "a very good merchant who, nevertheless, was not fitted to be one, because he was very just and a true Christian and his heart couldn't accept his making too much profit out of his job." Captain Rogos, "even though he looked like a beast, had a kind, quiet and humble heart, and talked in a very gentle way, though he was a man of few words." Alexis, the shepherd, "with a flawless body, a well-built, well-born man, blessed by God, with a face like Achilles' and like Alexander's the Great – with whom latter he had the same name." Panagis Strigaros the smuggler, the "innocent killer," who kept asking himself in his old days if he could ever be forgiven - like the thief whom Jesus forgave on his cross. And Yiannis Baikas the shepherd whom they used to call Yiannis the blessed: "an innocent man like the sheep he herded, completely illiterate." And finally the naïve, crazy-Paraskevas who, on Christmas Eve:

[did] a four hour walk, carrying a big earthenware jar through a hellish blizzard, so to reach the monastery, to repent and join the hermits [...] And after he carried the jar into a cave, he went inside it every night and chanted till dawn in a coarse voice that could be heard half mile away.

And he stayed throughout the holidays inside the cave and left after the feast of Epiphany (*Bible Of Genesis*, Kontoglou, 1979: 220-234).

Religion

Those qualities bring to mind the icons of Orthodox Saints, the solemnity and gentleness in their face expression, pointed out by Kontoglou: “All over the world there never was, nor will there ever be art equal to that of the Orient, to give such passion and such sweet complaint to its creatures [...] The art of Oriental Christianity nurtures the spirit and pleases the eye” (*The Melancholy of Palaiologoi*, Kontoglou, 1989: 80).

That remark projects Kontoglou’s conviction that the Orient is superior to the West in yet one more realm, that of religion and religious art. In Oriental spirituality the dominant element is adherence to the sacred, the nonphysical: to faith. On the contrary, in the West there is a cold rationalism which produces materialism, realism and machine domination. The fundamental elements of the Orient are innocence and purity of heart, contrary to the intellectual, pompous, scientific interpretation and life style that ends to materialism. So, the Orient identifies with the only true Christian religion, Orthodoxy, because only Orthodoxy remained “religion,” only Orthodoxy holds to tradition, contrary to Western doctrines and, mainly, Protestantism which hurried to remove everything sacred from religion and rationalize it:

Religion is closer to the people of the Orient, says an ancient man, meaning that Orientals were more pious than the people of the West, of Europe. He said that Orient is the Balkan as well, along with Russia. The Oriental thinks with his heart not with his mind, but the European does the opposite. And since religions speaks to one’s heart, and not to one’s mind, that’s why the Orientals are more pious than the Europeans, and that’s why the Orient gave birth to so many religions, but the West to none [...] In the West even theology is subordinated to rationalization; it became one more of the many scientific disciplines. But in the Orient, religion stayed religion (*Christianity and Mohammedanism*, Kontoglou, 1992: 31).

Believing completely in the spiritual superiority of the Greek tradition and Orthodoxy, he criticizes the Modern Greeks’ worship of the Western world:

Why only what’s brought from Europe or rather from the West is for us a gift from the skies – all that is coming from the countries where the sun sets, but we don’t have the slightest appreciation for what’s coming from the Orient? In the West everything becomes money. How can we not respect what makes and sends us the craziest things? So many factories working to provide the world with glasses, pens, lighters (more and more perfect), cameras, pocket radios, watches the size of a button - that you need a magnifying glass to see the time, and more of the like... (*Xenomania’s reading*, Kontoglou, 1992: 132).

Greeks And Turks

As far as the Greek-Turk relations were concerned, when Kontoglou was a child life was peaceful, so peaceful indeed that the war and the catastrophic persecution of Greeks could not erase from their minds and hearts previous memories of a happy, undisturbed co-existence. Kontoglou mentions of course in his writings the rivalry that divided the two nations, the wall that existed between the conquered and the conquerors; his comments though were limited only to events of historic past - such as the torture of Saint George from Hios in Aivali, and not to people or situations of his contemporary environment. Even though his observations about the other side are very few, some of them concern the qualities shared by all Orientals: happiness, compassion, kindness.

One of the characters in his stories is captain Stelios Karniagouros, whose friendship with master Vasif Onbasi (police sergeant) is the subject of his story *Captain Stelios And Master Vasif*. When the latter suffered a stroke during a lent meal and died, his friend changed:

[...] Captain Karniagouros changed. He who never cried could not hold his tears now and everyone wondered why. Resting in a chair, smoking, he would mumble: The poor man! The poor man! And they say unbaptized Turks! Well, well, well! So strange, I of all people to feel so sad! Even if I lost a brother it wouldn't hurt me so...How unfortunate, and to happen in those holy days! Oh! Oh! [...] Despite all the joy and happiness Christ brought on earth with his birth, captain Stelios was sad. He couldn't get poor master Vasif off his mind, even when he was in church. Forgive me, Lord, he would mumble, for feeling so strong about a man of different religion - like he was my own blood, my own brother! But did Christ come to this world only for us baptized or for everyone, for every human with a kind heart - Turk, Greek, what's the difference? The God of spirits and of all flesh forgave master Vasif who had a heart even better than most Christians did and let him rest in peace! (*Captain Stelios and Master Vasif*, Kontoglou, 1979: 118-124).

So for Kontoglou, the world seems to be divided to blessed Orientals - or to those who live accordingly with the principles of the Orient, and to the cursed Westerns who "try to put the devil in a bottle". Was there ever in reality that ideally described world, or Kontoglou's nostalgia for the lost paradise isolated the characters of *Aivali* in order to create his own ideal reality - to escape from and at the same time react against the technocratic, rationalized and chaotic postwar era to which he saw Greece been dragged, in the name of progress and of an effort to turn to the West? Thus, this world is more likely a representation of his own point of view, the reflection of the "secret garden" to which he had adhered with his heart and his mind. It's the sacred and blessed Orient of Photis Kontoglou.

4. FROM NARRATION TO DRAMA REPRESENTATION

The images from Photis Kontoglou's literary work could be realized through the language of theatre, music, plastic arts, in order to achieve - at a secondary level - a creative reframing of the original work by different forms of art.

Theatre, through its vividness, activates those senses related to creating and perceiving each work's depictive outcome. In this paper we suggest the reformation of images we find in Photis Kontoglou's work *Aivali, My Homeland* by employing drama disciplines and especially the drama conventions and expressive means - bodily and verbal - of an actor. Thus, the author's language takes the form of stage images of the "blessed Orient," which the participants - spectators perceive, as the theatrical practices "speak" their own language stimulating the audience to be involved personally, emotionally and intellectually. Narrative images are projected and seen on stage as "still" or "talking". The characters on stage realize the author's language and bring it to life through human presence (Grammatas, 2003: 139-141). Stage representation of images, both as form and as context, becomes the means for perceiving the blessed Orient.

Method

Through the prism of a teacher-researcher of Kontoglou's work (Altrichter & Posch & Somekh, 1993) and of an inquiring reflective teacher, who integrates drama work into a co-operative, researching frame (Neelands, 1996), we suggest simultaneous exploration by the drama animator and the participants, in the role of researchers. To that direction, action research and particularly St. Kemmis' model which comprises four phases in circular and spiral course: a) Planning, b) Action, c) Observation, d) Reflection (Hopkins, 1985) can be a suitable example of inquiry drama arrangement.

In this paper concerning stage representation of various frames from narratives or plays, we propose as suggested procedure and context two models that are developed in circular and spiral course and concern a) the drama animator and b) the participants (see table 1):

□ The drama animator

a) Frame planning b) Observation c) Reflective Assessment a) New Frame Planning, etc.

□ The participant group

a) Frame planning b) Development (i. Stage Action – Improvisation, ii. Self-observation – Still Image iii. Reflection – Thought Tracking – Monologue) c) Reflective Assessment a) New Frame Planning, etc.

Among recommended models: a) The Frame Planning in the animator's model coincide with the Planning in the participant group's model (all out of theatrical role) b1) The Observation in the animator's model coincides with the Development of frames in the participant group's model (animator out of theatrical role) b2) The Development in the participant group's model is arranged in three partial phases: i) the Stage Action which is realized through Improvisation, ii) the Observation which takes the form of Self-observation of the action through the creation of a Still Image, iii) the Reflection through Thought Tracking – Monologue (participants in theatrical role), c) The Reflective Assessment in the animator's model coincides with the Reflective Assessment in the participant group's model (all out of theatrical role).

Especially in the participant group's model:

a) Planning

During Planning animator and participants define the targets and criteria of the suggested procedure in terms of form and content. In that phase the animator can ask the participants to arrange by themselves the Development of the theatrical frames allowing, depending on the group's needs, 10 to 20 minutes.

b) Development

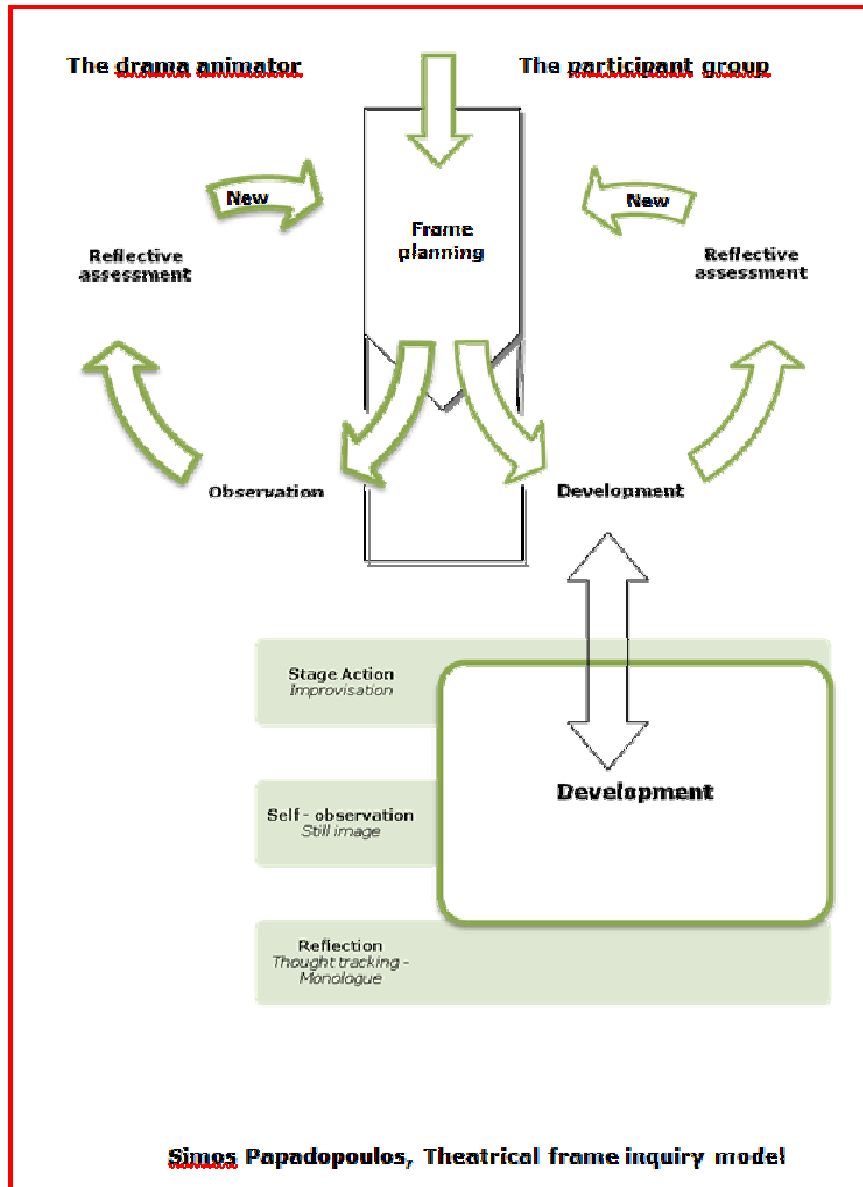
The participants in theatrical role:

- During the phase of Stage Action they get involved in Frame-Related Improvisation.
- During the phase of Self-observation, after they stop Improvisation, they make use of the Still Image, they show through their bodily expressions the frame each time agreed – in the phase of planning – and at the same time they observe their situation.
- During the phase of Reflection they express whatever it is they want to give vent to, by Thinking Aloud or by Monologue - or they answer to relative questions posed by the animator through Thought Tracking.

c) Reflective Assessment

- During Reflective Assessment, animator and participant assess what has preceded. So they rethink the development so far. They discuss, examine and interpret the facts provided by the participants and the animator (their expressed views which could have been taped, written down and recorded), in order to arrange a new plan, a new development, etc.

table 1



Drama Conventions

Improvisation

Basic element of improvisation is for the participants to be spontaneous, which presupposes and, at the same time, reinforces their physical, verbal and psycho-intellectual liberation (Spolin, 1999). Emphasis is given on the procedure, the improvising action, which does not necessarily need the support of a theatrical text (O'Neil, 1995: 19). On the contrary, it is based on the non-planned and, consequently, it is formed on the spot, while it is subject to limitations that derive from the dramatic context. In that setting the participants, beyond any criticism, invent and employ their ideas which they later combine so to create an original synthesis. The significance of improvisation in the participants' drama education is that it teaches them to feel, think and act as genuine creators. Their target is to play as actors their invented stories, in a way which they themselves choose and direct. Often, letting loose the boundaries of the theatrical context (space, time, roles, situations) facilitates the action's

orientation (structured improvisation). The participants take the necessary information from a role card and so they initiate things in a spontaneous way, starting from a certain point.

Still Image

It is an image where no one moves or talks (tableau, still image, depiction, freeze frame) and which presents a frame in the story's flow. The dramatic situation in focus can be a concept, a social or imaginary occasion, a critical moment, a significant event, a character's thought or attitude before a significant decision in the past, the present or the future. Some times, a number of still images are presented in order to show the unfolding of a situation or important frames from a character's life through time. It is basically a depictive, alienative drama convention, where action stops and time freezes and opens in order to shed light to the details of a story. A concentration takes place that creates a poetic, reflective atmosphere (Brook, 1999: 217). Frames freeze and the characters' thoughts are projected through the magnifying glass of an intense image. Speed of action slows down; silence, observation and control of feeling takes its place – and this happens in a particularly fast and abstractive way, while there's special interest in the importance of body expression which reveals instantly the connections between the characters; the mood of each role. (Fleming, 1994: 93-94). What is actually projected is the essence of each situation, reinforcing thus the audience's critical reflective thinking, allowing them to examine closely the ambiguity of the image, to explain and understand intersubjectively what they see, as well as what lies behind the things they see.

Thought And Social Situation Tracking. Thinking aloud - Monologue

In the convention of still image we can add a second, dynamic level in order to investigate the psycho-emotional, mental and social state of the characters. So, action is stopped and the characters stand still, their expressions frozen, while the slow flow of time allows them to reveal their thoughts. The chosen time to express their thoughts and put them into words can be a critical frame, a moment which concentrates the main issue, a detail that needs further illumination. Thinking aloud, thought-tracking or talking freeze can be expressed with short reflective monologues from the characters (Pavis, 1998: 218-219), who respond to questions posed by the audience or the animator in relation to each situation. Indicative questions, said in second person, could be the following: who are you, what are you doing, why do you do it, what are you hoping to achieve, who are your models, what does it mean about your life (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995: 19-20). Indeed in an alternative version of "thought tracking" people from the audience take the initiative to enter the still image and, using the "alter ego" convention, to present their own point of view by assuming a role (Neelands, 1998:93). This intensely stylish and reflective convention stops time, allowing the audience to find out what the characters truly believe. Often, the audience's initial understanding was wrong and new clues channeled to them reveal the subtext (Somers, 1994: 74). Additionally, this technique strengthens the meta-cognitive state of the participants who, in role, observe their own thoughts and watch their relationship with the others inside the image. (Papadopoulos, 2007: 65). At the same time, it gives spectators the opportunity to assess the generated context and the communicative competence which is reinforced by appropriate style, body position and gestures (Papadopoulos, 2004).

5. CASE STUDIES

In order to demonstrate the educational value of the Theatrical Frame Inquiry Model we choose the case of Kontoglou's *Aivali, My Homeland* as application field for the pertinent theoretical structure (methods, drama conventions).

Thus, we assume that the model in question can contribute to: a) understanding the chosen passages of the literary work, b) bringing forward the pictorial energy of the images used to describe the place, the time, the people and their lives, c) cultivating the intercultural conscience of the participants.

In order to apply the Plan, the participants, guided by the animator: a) during the phase of Planning, they choose frames from the narratives of the literary work in question and define the next steps of the following phases, b) during the phase of Development they examine in theatrical role the frames and c) during the phase of Reflective Assessment they assess what has happened so far.

Especially during the Development, improvisation allows, through its spontaneous and inventive character, the stage representation of nature and people's lives in Kontoglou's Aivali. Then, the still image through its alienating effect lets the ambiance of blessed Orient penetrate the participants' conscience and feeling, making audible the silence of a speech which, though not articulated, dominates all senses and speaks straight to the heart. Then, thought tracking, which comprises a later stage of still image, lets speech be articulated and thoughts be heard as monologue or as a reply to a question.

Uncle Manolis Vasiles (King) – Episode 1

□ Stage Action – Improvisation

The participants depict uncle-Manolis after his supper, sleeping happily under a big tree's shadow; the sea made him drowsy, while a bird sings a sweet melody. He is resting, free from concerns, distractions and worries for the material world, involved in an inner conversation with nature, with "...the sea, the land, the trees, the wind, the rain, the stones. Like everything loved him" (Kontoglou, 1979: 216).

□ Self-observation – Still Image

Assuming the role of uncle Manolis, each participant freezes their expression, standing still and silent. He feels surrendered to natural law and necessity. The sea hums to his ear an enchanting, boisterous tune, some times soft and soothing, some times angry and destructive. And the bird's singing pacifies his soul. Being himself a genuine creature of nature, he nestles into her lap - happy to be simply alive - to enjoy a sweet careless sleep.

□ Reflection – Thinking aloud– Monologue

The thoughts that can be expressed and heard out loud in the form of a monologue or of answers to questions posed by the animator to the participant in uncle Manolis' role, mirror the latter's serenity, self-sufficiency and material poverty. All of which make him radiant – a blessed man. His soul is illuminated and his face becomes love in everything around him. That is why he can converse with nature's elements. He listens as they talk to him and then he replies to them and when he speaks he is filled with jubilation and happiness. "Like everything loved him." He feels like Telegin in Chekhov's Uncle Vanya: "... as I walk in the fields or in the shady garden, as I look at this table here, my heart swells with unbounded happiness. The weather is enchanting, the birds are singing, we are all living in peace and contentment - what more could the soul desire?" (Chekhov, 2008: 5), filled with love and ready to ask for forgiveness like Markel in Dostoyevsky's Karamazov Brothers: "...life is paradise, and we are all in paradise, but we won't see it; if we would, we should have heaven on earth the next day [...] Birds of heaven, happy birds, forgive me, for I have sinned against you too [...] there was such a glory of God all about me: birds, trees, meadows, sky..." (Dostoyevsky, 2007: 316-317).

Episode 2

□ Stage Action – Improvisation

The participants assume the roles of uncle Manolis and the women, maybe also of the turbulent sea. Transporting some women with his boat during a storm, he tries to calm them down: "...he would say: 'women, why do you cry? What are you afraid of, women? It's only God's sea!' He would give the braver one a tin pot to take the water out and he would say: 'Help me, my girl! Don't get desperate!'" (Kontoglou, 1979: 216).

□ **Self-observation – Still Image**

In the still image the contrast between uncle Manolis' jubilation and the women's despair has to be expressed intensely, since his strong bond with nature gives him a surplus of trust and happiness, while the women's alienation from the natural environment causes them to fear and howl in despair.

□ **Reflection – Thinking Aloud – Monologue**

The participants express their thoughts in the roles of uncle Manolis and the women - the first encouraging the latter who are panicking, not to give up hope, to take action and remove the water out of the boat.

New Year in Saint Paraskevi – Episode 1

□ **Stage Action – Improvisation**

Improvisation of the frame that unfolds in Saint Paraskevi's church when, instead of The Nicene Creed which is supposed to be sang, suddenly crazy-Paraskevas appears, red-bearded, his moustache curled, and starts singing it himself in his coarse voice, wearing a self-made, Hodja-like, knee-short, potato sack-ish sort of cloth while the congregation laughs. (Kontoglou, 1979: 134).

□ **Self-observation – Still Image**

The participants in role freeze their expression. The strong contrast of the stage image is based on three characters. First is crazy-Paraskevas, then is the congregation and last the abbot. Paraskevas is the naïve Bible type, dressed in his own innocence, participating humbly and whole-heartedly in the performed mystery. Nevertheless, the inability of "different" Paraskevas to behave within the limits of social acceptability keeps him withdrawn in his own world.

□ **Reflection – Thinking Aloud – Monologue**

In the roles of Paraskevas, the abbot and the congregation, the participants think aloud about the situation either by replying to the animator's questions or by monologue.

Episode 2

□ **Stage Action - Improvisation**

Stage representation of the following frame with the participants in the roles of the abbot and of Paraskevas: "The abbot was angry. After the service, he reprimanded poor Paraskevas and punished him. And Paraskevas asked for forgiveness and kissed his hand..." (Kontoglou, 1979: 134).

□ **Self-observation – Still Image**

In still image there is Paraskevas who is very naïve, and the abbot who is on the contrary intolerant with him and scares him by reprimanding him and making him carry out a punishment.

□ **Reflection – Thinking Aloud – Monologue**

Reflective situation creates an environment of alienation, where the participants in the roles of Paraskevas and the abbot express consecutively or by turns their thoughts in reflective monologue.

Captain Stelios and Vasif-Efentis (Master Vasif) – Episode 1

□ **Stage Action – Improvisation**

Representation of the frame where the participants depict master Vasif leaning on a chair and Stelios, agitated by what has happened: "... Vasif ... ate too much that day. As they were having their coffee, master Vasif's face changed, his eyes widened, the cup fell off his hand, he leaned back... leaned back, until he stayed stiff on the chair. He had a stroke" (See above, section *Greeks And Turks*).

□ Self-observation – Still Image

The essence of the blessed Orient is demonstrated in two consecutive or alternate stage images; in the first the participants assume the role of Vasif leaning on the chair and of Stelios crying, and in the second the role of sad Stelios as he prays to God to forgive his friend and rest his soul.

□ Reflection –Thinking Aloud – Monologue

The thoughts of the characters Stelios and Vasif are expressed through reflective monologue. The audible monologues emphasize the characters' thoughts, and the things said are echoing the characters' attitude and behavior. Both characters are a part of the blessed Orient, living under the indiscriminating roof of a loving God.

6. SUGGESTIONS

We believe that applying the recommended Theatrical Frame Inquiry Model in Kontoglou's Aivali, My Homeland:

- a) facilitates understanding of the essence of Kontoglou's writings because drama improvisation, still images and thought tracking can bring to life places and characters of the Orient along with scents, sounds and feelings from that paradise.
- b) underlines the pictorial energy of the images that make the nature and people of Aivali stand out; that project a paradise of happiness, from which the modern person has cut off, living in a technocratic civilization.
- c) provides and consolidates an insight to the cultural code of the blessed Orient as well as an empathy for the shared, cultural and customary elements of the people occupying the land on the borders between East and West - allowing those who wish to do so to explore the common traditions, but also to get familiar with the "other" culture created by that co-existence in the coast of Minor Asia.

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