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Human Apes and the Dual Self: Notes on the Intertext of *Ο Πίθηκος Ξουθ* (*Xouth the Ape*) by Iakovos Pitsipios

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Abstract

This paper explores the intertextual relationships between the Greek novel *Ο Πίθηκος Ξουθ* (1848) by Iakovos Pitsipios and two German short stories: *Nachricht von einem gebildeten jungen Mann* (1814) by E. T. A. Hoffmann and *Der junge Engländer oder der Affe als Mensch* (1827) by W. Hauff. The aim of this investigation is to explore the integration of the Greek novel into the European literary context of simian narratives based on a common cultural tradition. Research to date has demonstrated intertextuality between Pitsipios and Hoffmann, but specific common motifs had not previously been discussed. Furthermore, no relationship between Pitsipios and Hauff has yet been identified. This work focuses on three recurring motifs in simian narratives: 'shoes', 'razors', and 'England'. Furthermore, it suggests a connection between the human animal and the broader theme of the dual self, which was very popular in nineteenth-century literature due to the historical circumstances and intellectual trends of the era.

Keywords

Greek nineteenth-century fiction, German romantic fiction, man-ape motif, second-self theme, anglomania

This article tackles the intertextual dialogue between a nineteenth-century Greek novel, *Xouth the Ape* (1848) by Iakovos Pitsipios, and two earlier German texts of similar content: *Nachricht von einem gebildeten jungen Mann* (1814) by E. T. A. Hoffmann and *Der junge Engländer oder der Affe als Mensch* by Wilhelm Hauff (1827).¹ It examines parallel motifs from the simian literary tradition that appear in all three texts, and connects the human animal with the broader theme of the dual self,² which was very popular in nineteenth-century literature for historical-cultural reasons discussed later on.

Hence, this study falls under the category of contemporary thematic criticism, in the sense that it regards theme as a meeting place between the world of the text, the world outside the text, and the reader's attention. That is, the construction and signification of a theme is not only about the act of writing but also of reading, and should be examined alongside the perceptions and expectation of a readership.³ In accordance with this methodological premise, themes and motifs are placed in their respective historical, social and cultural contexts.⁴

An examination of a motif's origins and multiple manifestations also presupposes a broad concept of intertextuality that, unlike the traditional *Quellenforschung*, does not necessarily involve actual contact between texts.⁵

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- 1 A short, draft form of this article in Greek was presented at the conference dedicated to the memory of Vangelis Athanasopoulos in January 2013, see Iatrou (2016: 176–185).
 - 2 The terms 'theme' and 'motif' are used here (following usual practice) in a rather liberal sense: the first denoting an abstract, general concept, and the second a more concrete, restricted unit – a specific application of a broader theme. See Vanhelleputte (1993: 92–105, especially 100). That is, in our case, 'theme' would apply to the dual self and 'motif' to the human ape and its various manifestations. However, it must be noted that the discussion about the content of those terms is extremely extensive and differentiated, depending to a great extent on the critic's personal interpretation and evaluation standards. Hence their application is generally characterized by flexibility, as the dividing line between them is by no means clear. On the contrary, they may overlap or even interchange: "[...] as with all aesthetic phenomena, abstraction and concretion are only two sides of the same coin. Every motif can be turned into a theme or given thematic dimensions if emphasized and generalized appropriately. And each abstract theme can be made a motif if adequately particularized." See Wolpers (1993: 80–91, especially 91).
 - 3 See Pavel (1993: 121–145, especially 127): "For a theme, to be perceived is to be. [...] all readings are interpretive, and [...] all interpretations reflect the biases of the communities which adopt them."
 - 4 Which obviously presupposes the assumption that "historical periods enjoy some kind of intellectual coherence, conscious or unconscious". Ibid., 142.
 - 5 As in authors like Kristeva, Barthes, Butor, and Derrida. For further information, see the comprehensive works by Broich – Pfister (eds.) (1985); Still – Worton (eds.) (1990); Plett (ed.) (1991) and Allen (2000).

According to this approach, a text is a mosaic or meeting place for multiple cultural discourses, characteristic of a certain worldview.⁶ On that theoretical basis, this Greek novel can be placed within a literary network of common sensibilities and textual practices. These in turn can be interpreted as reflecting a transitional historical background which raises questions of identity and cohesion of the self all over nineteenth-century Europe.

The text in question, *Xouth the Ape*, known as the first Greek novel of the fantastic, is mainly a satire of the mores in the capital of the newly founded Greek state: its slavish xenomania, its affected imitation of western European ways, its superficial education, and the lack of authenticity and integrity in the behaviour of the Greeks. At the same time, however, it also constitutes a satire of the travel literature of the era, and includes some elements of medical satire. Moreover, it has been approached as a picaresque novel, as an investigation into the formation of national identity, as an intertextual *topos*⁷ and, of particular interest for this examination, as a simian narrative.⁸ It was first published in serial form in *Η αποθήκη των ωφελίμων και τερπνών γνώσεων* (*The Repository of Useful and Pleasant Knowledge*), a magazine edited by the author himself (which, notably, also hosted several other publications about apes⁹). The novel remains unfinished for unknown reasons.

The central character of *Xouth* is based on the Prussian writer Jacob Salomon Bartholdy (1779–1825), who travelled through Greece for seven months in 1803–1804, and wrote a report of his experiences, first published in 1805 under the title *Bruchstücke zur näheren Kenntniss des heutigen Griechenlands gesammelt auf einer Reise*. This text is not a travelogue but rather a general study of Greece and Greeks as a whole, conceptualized as an abstract and homogeneous entity without regional variations. Bartholdy's concept of Hellas, nurtured by his classical education, was that of an idealized *heterotopia* beyond history.¹⁰ His views have been regarded as anti-Hellenic. It is true that the largest portion of the second volume of his work constitutes a refutation of Greek scholar Adamantios Korais's opinions about the political and cultural state of Hellenism. Bartholdy,

6 About the difficulties of a definition of 'worldview' in discursive terms and the concept of Foucault's 'episteme' as opposed to the previous 'Zeitgeist', see Pavel (1993: 143–144).

7 About all of the above, see Dimitris Tziouvas's comprehensive introduction to his edition of Iakovos G. Pitsipios, *Η ορφανή της Χίου ή ο θρίαμβος της αρετής – Ο πίθηκος Ξουθ ή τα ήθη του αιώνας*. Tziouvas (1995: 9–86). Also see Servou (1997: 93–102).

8 See O'Neill (2003: 67–111).

9 At least four, according to Tziouvas (1995: 63–64).

10 Roilos (2003: 60–76, especially 65–66).

in contrast to Korais, claimed that the corruption and decline of the Greek nation was irreparable. This, of course, sparked a massive reaction among the Greek scholars of the time, who described Bartholdy as an evil slanderer of the nation and even used his name as a swearword.¹¹

In the novel, Pitsipios portrays Bartholdy's avatar as a reckless, amoral adventurer, who wanders about, loses his paternal fortune due to poor judgement and ends up in jail for debts. He is saved by Karolos Roferos, an old friend of his father, who bails him out. But the ungrateful Bartholdy, carried away by the charms of Roferos's scheming wife Filippina, kills his own savior. Persecuted by the victim's ghost, Bartholdy flees to England and thence to America. There, an ominous voice commands him to withdraw from the world and repent of his crime. Bartholdy decides to retreat to a forest, where, partly due to the harsh conditions and partly due to divine justice, he gradually loses his human nature and is transformed into an ape. Thus Pitsipios takes his revenge on western travelers of the time, who had compared contemporary Greeks to monkeys.¹² It must be noted here that the text does not clarify whether this transformation is supernatural, or a mere deformation caused by his wild solitary living.

Subsequently the human ape is captured by hunters and sold in New York to a Greek student called Ligarides, who seems like an alter ego of Bartholdy: a spoilt, immoral young man wasting the fortune of his kind old uncle Maloucatos, whose daughter he is planning to kill in order to become Maloukatos's only heir. Xouth follows his master to Egypt and then to England, where he is first sold to an English lord and then to another Greek, Kallistratos Evgenidis.

The actual story starts when Kallistratos returns to Athens from the West, after having completed his studies. He is described as a conceited, nouveau riche young man and a compulsive imitator of western fashion – a typical social specimen of his time. He brings with him as a servant the trained ape Xouth (the transformed Bartholdy). One day, while Kallistratos is away, Xouth tries to shave himself using his master's precious razors, which supposedly used to belong to Alexander the Great. His master catches him red-handed and is about to punish him severely, when suddenly the ape begins to talk, revealing his human identity and relating the tale of his past life that led him to become both an animal and the property of Kallistratos. The story stops at the point where Xouth, having completed his narration, asks his master permission to

11 See Tziouvas (1995: 58). For a detailed presentation of Bartholdy's life and work also see Prinzing (2017).

12 Roilos (2003: 60–61). Bartholdy's transformation into an ape is seen in a different light if associated with his renowned ugliness, see Prinzing (2017).

travel to Syros, which to his knowledge is the most civilized place in Greece, in order to complete his re-humanization and then return to Athens. There he intends to spend the rest of his life with his master, trying to be as useful to him as possible.

The first German text intertextually associated with *Xouth* is the short story *Message from a Cultured Young Man* (*Nachricht von einem gebildeten jungen Mann*, 1814) by E. T. A. Hoffmann (1776–1822). In this text, after an introduction to the subject, the narrator cites a letter from a humanized and literate ape, Milo, to his also humanized ape-girlfriend, Pippi. The following quotation describes the ape's capture by hunters:

From time to time I especially think of an old uncle of ours (as far as I recall he was an uncle on my mother's side), who brought us up in accordance with his stupid principles. He did everything he could to keep us away from anything human. He was a serious individual, who would never wear boots. Even now my ears hear that startled warning cry, as I watched with a burning desire those beautiful new boots with their folded tops, which some cunning hunter had left under the tree where I was perched, gorging myself sick on coconuts. I could even see the hunter in the far distance, wearing high boots that suited him so well and were exactly similar to those that he had left. The man acquired, in my opinion, something grand and imposing from those well-polished boots. No, I could not resist. The very notion that I too could be walking along jauntily like him, wearing new boots, consumed my entire being. Does it not constitute sufficient proof of my predilection towards both science and art, that only needed to be awakened within me, that I jumped from my tree deftly and lightly and, as if I had worn boots all my life, knew how to pull my unusual footwear up my thin legs by grasping the metal buckles? But of course I was unable to run, and the hunter lunged at me, grabbing me by the neck and dragging me off. My ancient uncle let out heartbreaking shrieks and hurled coconuts at us, one of which hit me pretty hard behind the left ear, and albeit against the intention of the bad old man, probably contributed greatly to my maturity and future development. But you know all these things, my beloved, as you yourself followed your friend, running with lamentations and wailing, and surrendered voluntarily to your captivity.¹³

13 *Vorzüglich liegt mir noch zuweilen unser alter Onkel (nach meinen Erinnerungen muß es ein Onkel von mütterlicher Seite gewesen sein) im Sinn, der uns nach seiner dummen Weise erzog und alles nur mögliche anwandte, uns von allem, was menschlich, entfernt zu halten. Er war ein ernster Mann, der niemals Stiefeln anziehen wollte, und ich höre noch*

The story is included in the second part of the collection *Imaginary Writings in the Genre of Callot (Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier, 1814)*, in the series *Kreisleriana*, based on the experiences of a fictional character: musician Johannes Kreisler. The human animal motif is an obsession of Hoffmann's, manifested repeatedly as dual beings such as doppelgangers, mirror images, robots, revenants and talking cats. In fact, this romantic writer seems to suffer from 'chronic dualism' ('chronischer Dualismus'), a term he himself uses in connection with one of the characters of his novella *Princess Brambilla (Prinzessin Brambilla, 1820)*.¹⁴ Some of his most exemplary works with this motif are *The Adventures of New Year's Eve (Die Abenteurer der Sylvester-Nacht, 1815)*, *The Devil's Elixirs (Die Elixiere des Teufels, 1815)*, *The Sandman (Der Sandmann, 1815)* and especially the *Life Views of Mürr the Tomcat (Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Mürr, 1819)*, where he employs the humanized animal motif to develop social and cultural satire.

Ambivalent creatures also haunt European literature in general, especially from the late eighteenth century onwards. They are said to represent the 'night side' of human nature and the existential insecurity of an era facing overwhelming scientific and philosophical changes. The second-self theme, similar to that of Faust but also to that of the living dead, has never actually stopped recurring in various literary forms (twin brothers, couples of friends or enemies, deals with the devil, vampires).¹⁵ It has even been argued on the

sein warnendes, ängstliches Geschrei, als ich mit lüsternem Verlangen die schönen, neuen Klappstiefeln anblickte, die der schlaue Jäger unter dem Baum stehen lassen, auf dem ich gerade mit vielem Appetit eine Kokosnuß verzehrte. Ich sah noch in der Entfernung den Jäger gehen, dem die, den zurückgelassenen ganz ähnlichen, Klappstiefeln herrlich standen. Der ganze Mann erhielt eben nur durch die wohlgewichsten Stiefeln für mich so etwas Grandioses und Imposantes – nein, ich konnte nicht widerstehen; der Gedanke, eben so stolz wie jener in neuen Stiefeln einherzugehen, bemächtigte sich meines ganzen Wesens, und war es nicht schon ein Beweis der herrlichen Anlagen zur Wissenschaft und Kunst, die in mir nur geweckt werden durften, daß ich, vom Baum herabgesprungen, leicht und gewandt, als hätte ich zeitlebens Stiefeln getragen, mit den stählernen Stiefelanziehern den schlanken Beinen die ungewohnte Bekleidung anzuzwängen wußte? Daß ich freilich nachher nicht laufen konnte, daß der Jäger nun auf mich zuschritt, mich ohne weiteres beim Kragen nahm und fortschleppte, daß der alte Onkel erbärmlich schrie und uns Kokosnüsse nachwarf, wovon mich eine recht hart ans hintere linke Ohr traf, wider den Willen des bösen Alten aber vielleicht herrliche, neue Organe zur Reife gebracht hat: alles dieses weißt Du, Holde, da Du selbst ja heulend und jammernd Deinem Geliebten nachliefest und so auch freiwillig Dich in die Gefangenschaft begabst. Hoffmann (1993: 418–428, especially 419–421). All quotations cited here were translated by the author unless otherwise noted.

14 See Hoffmann (1985: 767–912, especially 893–894).

15 See Hildenbrock (1986: 17 and also 37–40), where the human ape is discussed as one of the manifestations of the dual-self theme. Also cf. Iatrou (2011: 26–41, also for a detailed bibliography). It must be noted here that since Rank's classical work *Der*

basis of worldwide mythological examples that the experience of duality can be described as the foundation stone of human conscience and that an inevitable dualism bisects nature.¹⁶ Yet the heyday of that phenomenon is undoubtedly the romantic and post-romantic nineteenth century, which is permeated by a multitude of uncanny resemblances, split personalities, lost shadows, stolen reflections, escaped noses, fatal portraits and, of course, man-apes. Jean Paul Richter, Hans Christian Andersen, James Hogg, Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe, Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky and Oscar Wilde comprise only a few examples of major authors making use of the double-self or split-self theme.¹⁷

The causes of this culmination have been traced to the era's 'crisis of reason', the stressful experience of modernity and the disenchantment of all expectations about progress, freedom and justice developed during the Enlightenment era.¹⁸ All texts about dual or liminal beings actually tackle the agony of redefining personal identity within a reality that is gradually becoming more and more hostile and unintelligible. As the Industrial Revolution and its social consequences spread, the stable rules of a Leibnizian universe, based on reason and up to then considered the best possible, were seriously undermined by the contingent, the fortuitous and the relative.¹⁹ As the nineteenth century progressed, the available intellectual tools for handling reality often led to mental and existential dead ends. The rapid collapse of traditional social and financial structures demanded readjustment to an ever transforming frame of industrialization and urbanization. All these developments are portrayed in the literature of the period as a threat to the coherence of personality, and are often

Doppelgänger (1925, written in 1914, see Tucker 1971) the second self has been the object of a large number of studies over several bodies of texts and from different scholarly viewpoints (psychoanalytical, anthropological, intertextual, historical and sociological). This article does not aspire to present this whole discussion in detail but merely to refer concisely to the textual and cultural background of the specific phenomenon examined.

- 16 See Keppler (1972: 4). Also Herdman (1990: 1): "The experience of duality can be described as the foundation stone of human consciousness." About duality in mythology, see Hallam (1981).
- 17 For further discussion, see Iatrou (2011: 17–18).
- 18 About the historical and social circumstances that led to the culmination of the dual-self phenomenon in literature, especially after 1850, and about the effects of the political and philosophical disillusionment that followed the previous era of revolutionary optimism, see Burrow (2000: 1–30). Again it must be noted here that the main focus of this study is textual/literary, hence the references for further historical/philosophical reading.
- 19 About Leibniz and his effect on European thinking, see Pincard (2002: 9).

depicted in the form of division and reflection, at times accompanied by motifs of wandering and orphanhood.²⁰

Furthermore, the same dividing practices can be detected in the intellectual movements of the time, from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. Kant's philosophy of subjective idealism, for example, distinguished between the empiric and the ideal Self.²¹ Then there was romantic psychology, diving into a yet unexplored unconscious, and, finally the double-edged pessimism of Schopenhauer, with its extended influence on art, literature and, above all, on Nietzsche's thinking.²² Each of these currents of ideas endorses the concept of a double, or even multiple, reality, and eventually, the deconstruction of the traditional wholeness of the self. Lastly, it was not by chance that the cradle of modern duality was romantic Germany, a multiply split country. There, the sense of division and alienation had been endemic since the ending of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). In particular, the young educated members of the rising middle class struggled to find a balance between their personal needs for freedom and the oppressive demands of an obsolete, authoritarian social environment and political system.²³

Such was the intellectual frame in which the man-ape motif, the ambivalent creature as one of the manifestations of the dual self, was coined. It is true that this hybrid, incomplete, half-mythical being and its relationship with humans has appeared in literature since antiquity, in the writings of Pliny, Solinus and Aelian. These authors depict apes being trapped and captured (in the same way as in Pitsipios's novel) or even killed due to their imitative behavior, thus representing general human folly.²⁴ In early Christian tradition, the ape was seen as evil incarnate, or even portrayed as the Devil.²⁵ The end of the twelfth century saw a proliferation of literary and pictorial ape references, in which the ape becomes less the Devil and rather a representative of human folly and sinfulness.²⁶

Nevertheless, simian literature reached its peak in the nineteenth century with the emergence of Darwinian and pre-Darwinian evolutionary theories,²⁷

20 See Miller (1985: 1, 32, 56–84, 166, 369).

21 See Keppler (1972: 183–184), about the relationship between dual-self theme and the idealist division between empirical and ideal self. Also see Hildenbrock (1986: 32), about the connection of the dual self with German romanticism and idealist philosophy; and Herdman (1990: 12), about Kantian philosophy and the conflict between the rational the irrational dimensions in man.

22 About Schopenhauer's effect on European culture after 1850, see Burrow (2000: 29).

23 "A craze for duality spread from Germany to the rest of Europe." Miller (1985: 49).

24 See O'Neill (2003: 74).

25 Due both to its lack of tail and its ability to imitate. See *Ibid.*, 72–74.

26 See *Ibid.*, 74.

27 By Erasmus, Darwin and Lamarck. See Tziovas (1995: 64).

which precipitated an identity crisis within western society and the discovery of the unconscious even before Freud.²⁸ It is not by chance, therefore, that in modern times we find that the ape serves as a symbol of the savage inside civilized man, illustrating his repressed irrational drives.²⁹ An emblematic fragmentary nineteenth-century play, Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck* (1837), tackles (inter alia) the question of the fine dividing line between human being and animal, and explores the social conditions under which man can be driven to a bestial state. The human animal as a threat to reason and bourgeois social order is reflected in the 'ape with a razor' motif, dating back to the twelfth century and reappearing in Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841). The ape has also been used in social and political satire. Thomas Love Peacock's *Melincourt* (1817) portrays an orangutan as a member of parliament whose lack of speech establishes his reputation as a "powerful but cautious thinker". In general, a provisional categorization of apes in modern literature produces three groups, according to the predominance of the human or the animal element. Firstly, we have creatures that are capable of imitating man's behaviour but remain fundamentally apes (Roidis's *Story of an Ape* (*Η ιστορία ενός πιθήκου*, undated), Laskaratos's *Story of a Female Orangutan* (*Η ιστορία μιας ουραγοτάγγου*, undated) and Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841)). Secondly, we have humans perceived or disguised as apes (Poe's *Tarr and Fether* (1850) and *Hop Frog* (1850)). And thirdly, we have cases such as Pitsipios's novel and later Kafka's *Report for an Academy* (1917), in which the 'self' presented is neither completely ape nor man, or perhaps both ape and man at the same time. This uncanny ('unheimlich') status forces a deeper questioning of man as the 'rational beast' and points towards the role of imitation as a means of constructing the self.³⁰

This last category is where Hoffmann's story *Message from a Cultured Young Man* belongs. There, the narrator begins with a general reference to the increasingly wide dissemination of culture and the development of remarkable skills amongst such living species as were previously excluded from high culture (*Geschlechter*, p. 426). He then mentions his friendship with Milo, a very noble and talented youngster, whom he met at the home of a state official. Milo is eventually revealed to be by birth and upbringing a monkey. Milo gives the

28 On the man-ape motif in twentieth-century literature, see Gerigk (1989). Cf. O'Neill (2003: 72–80). On the relationship of literary monkeys to science, and particularly to evolutionary theory, see Medeiros (1993: 59–73). Regarding the same subject in Greek writing, see Zarimis (2015).

29 This has been particularly encouraged by the opportunity to observe the great apes. See O'Neill (2003: 77).

30 See O'Neill (2003: 78–80), about the ape motif in literature.

narrator a letter asking him to deliver it to his favorite monkey girlfriend, Pippi, who lives in America.

The letter has been sent, but I did not retain it, kind young man, so as to have a copy as a monument to your high wisdom and virtue, and your genuine feeling for art. I cannot deny that this rare young man, by birth and original situation an ape, speaks, reads, writes, and plays music, all of which he has learned in the home of the Kommerzienrat. In short he has come so far in the acquisition of culture that by his grace and manners he has made a lot of friends and is welcomed in witty circles. There are, however, a few small strange things. At Thés Dansants in the Hops Angloisen he will perform somewhat strange leaps and there will be the sound of some chatter and nuts (but this might be attributed to him as to all persecuted geniuses). Also, despite their gloves, the ladies feel a scratching as he kisses their hand, such being due to his exotic origin. There are further little bits of mischief that he has exhibited over recent years, such as quickly tearing off the hats of all those who enter the house and jumping behind the sugar barrel, such witty Bon Mots being appreciated by his keeper with jubilant applause.³¹

In the letter, Milo initially states his dislike for his animal past and points to the intellectual advancement he has achieved by living as a human, due to his ability to imitate man. This evolution is driven by an inherent capability within the brain, and it only requires an appropriate catalyst for development to occur. He then emphasizes the special role of language in social integration. Indeed, pre-empting thinkers of the twentieth century, the monkey considers language not only as a vehicle to externalize his thoughts and feelings, but also as the

31 *Der Brief ist abgesendet: aber mußte ich nicht, lebenswürdiger Jüngling, dein Schreiben abschriftlich als ein Denkmal deiner hohen Weisheit und Tugend, deines echten Kunstgefühls bewahren? – Nicht verhehlen kann ich, daß der seltene junge Mann seiner Geburt und ursprünglichen Profession nach eigentlich – ein Affe ist, der im Hause des Kommerzienrats sprechen, lesen, schreiben, musizieren usw. lernte, kurz, es in der Kultur so weit brachte, daß er seiner Kunst und Wissenschaft sowie der Anmut seiner Sitten wegen sich eine Menge Freunde erwarb und in allen geistreichen Zirkeln gern gesehen wird. Bis auf Kleinigkeiten, z. B. daß er bei den Thés dansants in den Hops-Angloisen zuweilen etwas sonderbare Sprünge ausführt, daß er ohne gewisse innere Bewegung nicht wohl mit Nüssen klappern hören kann sowie (doch dies mag ihm vielleicht nur der Neid, der alle Genies verfolgt, nachsagen) daß er, der Handschuhe unerachtet, die Damen beim Handkuß etwas wenig kratzt, merkt man auch nicht das mindeste von seiner exotischen Herkunft, und alle die kleinen Schelmereien, die er sonst in jüngeren Jahren ausübte, wie z. B. wenn er den ins Haus Eintretenden schnell die Hüte vom Kopfe riß und hinter ein Zuckerfaß sprang, sind jetzt zu geistreichen Bonmots geworden, welche mit jauchzendem Beifall beklatscht werden. Hoffmann (1993: 418–419).*

actual creator of all cultural values. In this way, such values are de-mystified and revealed as social constructs rather than as metaphysical entities.

Milo writes that he is gradually initiated into all forms of science and art, particularly musical performance, in which he is recognized as a genius. These achievements, however, are always accompanied by undermining remarks that indirectly reveal (just as in Hoffmann's *Kater Mürr*) the trivialization and superficiality of human culture. This narrative of double standards is supported by memories of savagery that Milo himself admits he has not completely eliminated. Such memories bubble up every so often within the refined humanized surface to ironically comment on the very fine dividing line that separates man from animal. At the most inappropriate moments, the former monkey succumbs to old habits, causing surprise and embarrassment to his companions. The letter closes with a classical poetic promise of eternal love to Pippi.

Hoffmann's monkey has already been associated with Pitsipios's monkey, although we have no concrete evidence that the Greek writer knew the German text.³² If he did indeed know *Message from a Cultured Young Man*, then it was most likely through the French versions of Hoffmann, whose work had largely been translated by the 1830s.³³ However, the similarity in deployment of the man-ape motif in both works of fiction has remained unremarked upon. Specifically, the humanization of monkeys by means of footwear (the 'Shoe-Trap') is repeated almost identically in *Ξουθ* in the chapter titled *The Captivity*:

Towards noon as I ran through the shady forest paths looking for food I saw a pair of European shoes. The view of a thing like that in the middle of nowhere on one hand and on the other hand some pleasant, comforting idea flashing through my mind like lightning got me completely fixed on that object. So for about half an hour I stood there looking at the shoes inquisitively, struggling to guess how on earth they had found themselves there. In the end I lost all hope of any longer explaining this puzzling phenomenon, and experienced an

32 Roilos (2003: 68–69). On *Ξουθ* intertextualities, see also Tziouvas (2003: 21–109, especially 88–100). On the specific similarities between *Ο πιθηκος Ξουθ* and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1833), see Yagou (2009: 325–344, especially 338).

33 Moreover, in two different translations: *Oevres complètes*, 19 volumes, translation Loève-Veimars, Paris, 1830–1832, and *Oevres complètes de E. T. A. Hoffmann*, translation M. Théodore Toussenel et le traducteur des romans de Veit-Wéber, 12 volumes, Paris, 1830. About the history of the reception of this German writer in France, see Teichmann (1961). About the Greek translation of a short story by Hoffmann (*Οι λησταί. Τα συμβάντα δυο φίλων εις ένα πύργον της Βοεμίας. Διήγημα του Οφφμάνου.*) appearing in the *Συντηρητική* newspaper in 1847, see Varelas (2009: 206–224, especially 217–218, 221).

overwhelming desire that I should wear these pieces of human footwear. But as I, oh so gleefully, introduced a foot carefully into each boot, I encountered a slimy, sticky material that held my feet fast in such a manner as I could not remove them, despite all my efforts to wrench them out of the boots. Then I was suddenly aware of the tramping of approaching humans and found myself surrounded by a multitude of hunters armed with knives and guns, all screaming ‘We’ve got him! We’ve got him! Attention! Attention!’³⁴

The shoe trap motif is derived from the classical ape tradition, namely from the Roman author and teacher of rhetoric Aelian (Claudius Aelianus, c. 175 – c. 235 C.E.) and his work *On the Nature of Animals* (*Περὶ ζώων ιδιότητος*, 17.25):³⁵

Further, if it catches sight of someone putting on his shoes, it imitates the action; and if a man underlines his eyes with lamp-black, it is anxious to do this too. Accordingly in place of the aforesaid objects men put out hollow, heavy shoes made of lead, to which they attach a noose underneath, so that when the monkeys slip their feet into them they are caught in the snare and cannot escape.³⁶

What has not been previously detected is the possible mediation of this particular motif through Hoffmann and, most interestingly, the reverse situation in the Modern Greek text. Thus Milo the monkey falls into the trap by trying to emulate people and to progress to their level. Conversely, Xouth the monkey falls into a similar trap, precisely because he retains the memory of his human nature, and therefore feels the need to return to his underlying human

34 Μίαν ημέραν περί την μεσημβρίαν περιτρέχων τας ατραπούς σκιδώδους δάσους προς ζήτησιν τροφής, βλέπω κείμενα κατά γης ζυγὴν ευρωπαϊκῶν υποδημάτων· και ἐξ ενός μεν η θέα τοιοῦτου πράγματος ἐν μέσω τῆς ἐρήμου, ἐξ ἐτέρου δε ευχάριστος παρηγορητικὴ τις ιδέα διελθούσα τον νουν μου ως αστραπή, μ’ ἔκαμε να προσηλωθῶ τοσοῦτον ἐπὶ του ἀντικειμένου τούτου, ὡστε ημίσιαν περίπου ὥραν ἰστάμην θεωρών αὐτὰ περιέργως και ἀγωνιζόμενος να μαντεύσω πόθεν ἀρα ευρέθησαν ἐνταῦθα. Ἐπὶ τέλους ἀπελπισθεὶς πλέον του να δυνηθῶ να ἐξηγήσω το ἀκατανόητον τούτο φαινόμενον, ἔλαβον το ἐν και καθήσας ἐδοκίμασα να φορέσω αὐτό, ἀλλ’ ἀμα εἰσάξας τον πόδα μου ησθάνθημι ὅτι οὗτος ἐβυθίσθη εἰς γλοιώδη τινὰ ὕλην, ἐφ’ ἧς και προσεκολλήθη· και ἐν ὧ ἐκπλαγῆς ἐζήτουν ν’ ἀποσπάσω του ποδός το ὑπόδημα, ἀκούω αἴφνης κρότον πολλῶν βημάτων και συγχρόνως βλέπω ἐπιπεσόντας κατ’ ἐμοῦ πολλούς κυνηγούς μετὰ μαχαϊρῶν και πυροβόλων κραυγάζοντας «συνελήφθη! συνελήφθη! προσοχή! προσοχή!» Vagenas (ed.) (1995: 101–102). All citations are from this edition.

35 O’Neill (2003: 74), about the reference to the Aelian passage.

36 Πρὸς τούτους εἰ θεάσαιτό τινα ὑποδήματα τοῖς ποσὶ περιτιθέντα, μιμνῆται τὴν ὑπόδεσιν· και ὑπογράφοντα τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ μιλτῶ, και τοῦτο δρᾶσαι θέλει. οὐκοῦν ὑπὲρ τῶν εἰρημένων μολῖθου πεποιημένα κοῖλα και βαρέα ὑποδήματα προτιθέασι, και θρόχους αὐτοῖς ὑποβαλόντες, ὡς εἰσβαλεῖν μὲν τῷ πόδε, ἔχρεσθαι δὲ τῇ πάγῃ και μάλα ἀφύκτω· See Scholfield (transl.) (1959: 355).

condition from the animal state to which he has descended because of his previous misconduct. This fact recalls the opinion of the critics that in this text transformation is rendered in a purely descriptive way and serves only didactic aims, with almost no account taken of the inner experience of the individual being transformed. Nevertheless, this passage, where Xouth appears to feel nostalgic about his human past, is the only point in the narrative where some allusion to the existential dimensions of transformation can be detected.³⁷ In any case, whether he was aware of Hoffmann or not, Pitsipios seems to ironically utilize the existing literary tradition by representing the ‘fallen’ man as actually imitating himself. This deconstructs the distinction between original and copy, the genuine and the spurious, and questions the very notion of identity to the extent that it challenges the limits of both human and animal.

This phenomenon runs throughout the text as a complex nexus of imitations, reverse mirror images and fake identities: Bartholdy/Xouth is a man who imitates an ape, and at the same time an ape who imitates a man. He also is a western orientalist transformed into an exotic object of orientalist discourse.³⁸ His mimicry is further reflected in the mimicry of his Greek masters, who ape the European aristocrats’ passion for classical Greece but also for oriental exoticism. It is interesting that Ligarides, Xouth’s first Greek master, adopts the orientalist habits of European travelers and decides to visit Egypt, thus becoming another Bartholdy. So the original situation is reversed. Xouth/Bartholdy, the denigrator of modern Greece,³⁹ is forced to follow his Greek master on his orientalist expedition, during which Ligarides will readily copy all the fake methods of his European role models: he will give detailed descriptions of places he has never seen.⁴⁰ As a result of all this, representations of authenticity in the novel are limited to very few individual characters (such as Bartholdy’s paternal friend or old Maloukatos and his daughter), as is the hope of redemption in the (as yet incomplete) re-establishment of Xouth’s humanity.

It is no coincidence that the motif of footwear is repeatedly deployed to establish a distinction between man and animal. Footwear is directly related to walking and, by extension, to the achievement of upright stance, which had a decisive impact on the growth of the human brain. So it can be said

37 For further discussion on this point, see Polycandrioti (2002: 37–45, especially 45).

38 Roilos (2003: 67).

39 Note the ironic subversion: English travelers have described contemporary Greeks as “monkeys and baboons”. *Ibid.*, 60.

40 Cf. *Ibid.*, 69–73, where imitation is interpreted as a mechanism of colonial manipulation and, therefore, its deconstruction through continuous repetition reveals the face of power.

that footwear mirrors the evolutionary development of *Homo sapiens*. In the Middle Ages, the ‘Shoe Trap’ acted as an allegory for entrapment by material assets and sinful passions,⁴¹ whereas in modern times, it seems to prepare the way, albeit ironically, for the transition from nature to culture. The same applies to the semiotics of another core distinction between human and animal: body hair.

The scene where Xouth’s master Kallistratos Evgenidis catches the ape in the act of shaving marks this action as essential to the process of Xouth’s rehabilitation as a human being. The first indication of this process is the recovery of speech and, thence, the production of the narrative itself. It is significant that the same theme appears in Hoffmann’s story, when Milo describes the mechanism of ‘progress by imitation’ in both humans and monkeys (p. 430):

The same principle [imitation] has long been adopted by most humans. But the truly wise, who have always set an example for me, apply it in the following way: Someone creates an artwork or something else. Everyone exclaims, ‘This is excellent.’ Immediately, the wise man, driven by his own intellect, reproduces another work that is maybe different, yet he insists: ‘This is the real thing, and the original, which you have deemed exquisite, offered me just the impetus to create a really excellent work – which had long been held in my mind.’ It is, dear Pippi, much like when one of our brothers cuts his nose while shaving and gives his beard such an original line, one that the man he copied it from could never succeed in doing.⁴²

The fact is that the monkey with the razor is a popular motif in international simian literature.⁴³ In this case, however, Hoffmann implicitly devalues culture by comparing it to the grooming of hair. Hairiness is, after all, the ultimate litmus test for the disclosure of the identity of yet another literary monkey that

41 O’Neill (2003: 76).

42 *Dasselbe Prinzip ist bei den Menschen längst angenommen, und die wahrhaft Weisen, denen ich immer nachgestrebt, machen es in folgender Art. Es verfertigt irgend jemand etwas, sei es ein Kunstwerk oder sonst; alles ruft: ‘Das ist vortrefflich’; gleich macht der Weise, von innerm Beruf beseelt, es nach. Zwar wird etwas anders daraus, aber er sagt: ‘So ist es eigentlich recht, und jenes Werk, das ihr für vortrefflich hieltet, gab mir nur den Sporn, das wahrhaft Vortreffliche ans Tageslicht zu fördern, das ich längst in mir trug.’ Es ist ungefähr so, liebe Pipi, als wenn einer unserer Mitbrüder sich beim Rasieren zwar in die Nase schneidet, dadurch aber dem Stutzbart einen gewissen originellen Schwung gibt, den der Mann, dem er es absah, niemals erreicht.* Hoffmann (1993: 422).

43 See O’Neill (2003: 76), in which the cases of Roidis and Poe are mentioned.

penetrates the human community, successfully deceiving everyone:⁴⁴ in *The Young Englishman* (1827)⁴⁵ by Wilhelm Hauff (1802–1827), a German storyteller and satirist who was familiar with the story by Hoffmann,⁴⁶ the title character is a monkey, trained by a mysterious and remote stranger and introduced to society in Grünwiesel, a small town, where he is presented as the trainer's nephew from England. The young man becomes especially popular in this provincial microcosm, and all his iconoclastic views and erratic behaviour are attributed to his exotic British origin (p. 160):

*'He is English,' they said, 'this is how they all behave. An Englishman can lie on the couch and fall asleep while around him ten ladies have no place to sit and are obliged to stand upright. Yet this is not something that you can hold against him, for he is English.'*⁴⁷

Indeed, the monkey's behaviours become fashionable, as all the youths of the city start to systematically mimic him, because he "as an Englishman must naturally know everything better than we" (p. 162).⁴⁸ But when the man-ape performs in a musical event as a tenor, his conduct exceeds permissible limits. The mayor, then, as he tries to bring the creature to order, loosens its collar and, much to the surprise of all, uncovers the dark thick fur of its neck. The story concludes with the presentation of a letter from the owner and trainer of the monkey, who reveals the farce and brings the people face to face with their hypocritical, petty bourgeois nature and their myopic attitude. It is notable that in this case too, footwear plays a role, in that the first suspicious movement of the 'Englishman' during the concert is to remove his shoe and throw it at the

44 Critics connect the text to the tradition of the comedy of errors, which could also be associated with *Εορθ*. See Gerigk (1989: 47).

45 This text usually appears in bibliographies as *Der junge Engländer* or by the double title *Der junge Engländer oder der Affe als Mensch*. It appears by the second of the titles (*Der Affe als Mensch*) in Steinsdorff von, S. – Schweikert, U. (eds.) (1970: 2, 153–176). All quotations come from this edition. According to the popular fashion of the time, the author included this story along with others in a frame narrative (*Der Scheik von Alessandria und seine Sklaven*), where a group of people meet under certain circumstances and tell each other stories.

46 See Haussmann (1917: 53–66, especially 58–60).

47 *'Er ist ein Engländer', sagte man, 'so sind sie alle; ein Engländer kann sich aufs Kanapee legen und einschlafen, während zehen Damen keinen Platz haben und umherstehen müssen; einem Engländer kann man so etwas nicht übel nehmen.'* Steinsdorff von, S. – Schweikert, U. (eds.) (1970: 2, 160).

48 [...] denn er mußte als Engländer natürlich alles besser wissen. *Ibid.*, 162.

organ player. It seems that in all three cases discussed here, footwear is a vehicle of transition from animal to human or from human to animal.

The previous scene, which exposes the monkey to social interaction, recalls a similar circumstance in *Ξουθ*, where Xouth's boss takes him for a meal. There, in the face of "an ugly old woman", he recognizes much to his horror Abendrote, a woman who had previously deceived and exploited him. Here, ironically, the man mimics the monkey (p. 145):

As a maniac I raged in a terrible voice, and as a true and angry monkey, I stood up and I ground my teeth ready to lunge at her and tear the hideous old woman to pieces. Now her cries and those of others present prompted Ligaridis [his master at the time] to grab me by the neck and pull me out of the room and hand me to his servant [...].⁴⁹

The same context also raises issues of simian geography: Pitsipios could be intertextually associated with Hoffmann through America, as he might likewise be associated with Hauff through England. Xouth as a monkey receives an English education, but he also appears to display a spontaneous appreciation for the English demeanor (pp. 179–180):

That English master of mine possessed such a noble proclivity towards lying that sometimes he would say that he had captured me in Africa and other times that I, having appreciated his free-spirited and sincere English manners, had followed him on my own free will to the desert of Arabia for several days [...].⁵⁰

The ironic undermining of the orientalist, hegemonizing discourse of colonialism is obvious here, as is Ligaridis's attempt to internalize, through his uncritical mimicry of English manners (p. 107), such hegemonizing discourses.⁵¹ One more ironic English instance in the text involves the appearance of a lady at

49 Ως μαινόμενος αφήκα ακουσίως τρομεράν φωνήν, και εξαγριωθείς ως αληθής πίθηκος, ανέστην όρθιος και τρίζων τους οδόντας ήμην έτοιμος να ορμήσω κατ' αυτής και να καταξέσχισω την βδελυράν γραίαν, ότε αι κραυγαί αυτής τε και των παρόντων παρεκίνησαν τον Λιγαριδην να με λάβη εκ του τραχήλου και σύρων με έξω της αιθούσης να με παραδώσει εις τον υπηρέτην αυτού [...].

50 Translated by Roilos (2003: 68). Διότι ο Άγγλος ούτος δεσπότης μου είχε τοσοούτην προς το ψεύδεσθαι ευγενή κλίσιν και έξιν, ώστε διηγείτο περί εμού ποτέ μεν ότι κυνηγών εις την Αφρικήν με συνέλαβεν ο ίδιος κοιμώμενος επί τινος δένδρου, ποτέ δεν ότι αυθόρμητος παρηκολούθουν αυτόν επί πολλάς ημέρας εις την έρημον της Αραβίας, συλλαβών, ως έλεγεν, εξιδιάζουσαν υπολήψιν προς τον ελεύθερον και ειλικρινή αυτού αγγλικών χαρακτήρα [...].

51 Ibid., 70.

the staging of a formal dinner in Alexandria, “who, being English, [...] would greatly enjoy the acquaintance of such an intelligent animal-compatriot, so to speak” (p. 143).⁵² The Englishwoman is impressed by Xouth and later recommends him as a “worthy ape, educated in England” (p. 144).

This common ground between the two texts is by no means accidental. As recent studies have made evident, ‘Anglomania’, just like ‘Anglophobia’, was not only a Greek obsession but, from the eighteenth century on, it was also a broader social phenomenon.⁵³ This was largely due to the prestige of Britain’s liberal political and financial institutions and the general belief in the superiority of English culture. “Why can’t the world be more like England?” Voltaire asks in the *Philosophical Dictionary* of 1756, and in 1833 an anglophile German prince declares that “England is at least a century ahead of us in the scale of civilization”.⁵⁴

Moreover, it was the research of a British scientist, Edward Tyson, who in 1699 raised for the first time, in scientific terms, the question of the relationship between man and ape. His study *Orang-Outang, sive Homo Sylvestris*, where he compared the anatomy of man and ape, had a significant impact on European literature of the time, such as on Ludwig Tieck’s *Affenkomödie* (*Ape Comedy*, 1801) and Percy Shelley’s *Queen Mab* (1813). In fact, although scientifically questionable, Tyson’s work marked the official entrance of the human ape into western conscience.⁵⁵

It should also be noted here that Hoffmann and Hauff are both writers of literature of the fantastic, and that Pitsipios’s text is also considered the earliest specimen of the fantastic in Greek fiction.⁵⁶ Finally the placing of *Ξουθ* into its international context highlights the wider cultural functions of the man-ape motif in the novel. Criticism has distinguished eight thematic categories of literary apes, according to the role of the animal in the story: the civilized man as a scholar monkey, the monkey as a subverter of human civilization, the monkey as a rebel outcast, the beauty and the beast, Lucy’s daughters (Lucy being the name given by scientists to the skeleton of a prehistoric woman), the

52 [...] ήτις, [...] ούσα Αγγλίσ, ήθελεν ευχαριστηθή μεγάληως εις την θέαν τοιούτου ευφυούς συμπατριώτου αυτής τρόπον τινά ζώου.

53 Gerigk (1989: 47).

54 Buruma (2000: 21, 87). Britons themselves though “were never convinced that foreigners could follow the British example. And when foreigners tried, in literary societies in Calcutta or grand hotels in Cairo, they were laughed at and called *monkeys*”. Ibid., 197 (my emphasis).

55 Gerigk (1989: 47–48).

56 For further discussion on this point, see Farinou-Malamatari (1996: 222–247, especially 238–239). Cf. also O’Neill (2003: 81–86), regarding the concept of the ‘uncanny’ in Pitsipios and Kafka.

ape state, ape experiments and the ape as an innocent creature (something like a noble savage). Of these functions, *Ξουθ* obviously covers the first two cases, as do Hoffmann and Hauff: both the civilized man as a monkey and the monkey as subverter of human civilization.⁵⁷

Texts communicate, under unexpected circumstances, in a free play independent from their authors. Corresponding discourses coexist in diverse cultural contexts. Fragments of Hoffmann's and Hauff's discursive imagery reappear, transformed, in a nineteenth-century Greek novel, possibly pointing back to a common cultural and textual tradition and, above all, reflecting a similar sensitivity to the challenges of an era in transition.

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