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in the Nineteenth Century Greek-Speaking World**

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## **Corfiots and the Poems of Ossian by James Macpherson in the Nineteenth Century Greek-Speaking World**

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### **Abstract**

*The Corfiot scholar Andreas Kephallinos was born in 1856, the year when the Kephalonian man of letters, Julius Typaldos published his translation of two poems from "The Poems of Ossian", from the Italian version by Professor Melchior Cesarotti into demotic poetry. After completing his schooling Kephallinos went on to do further studies in Florence and Munich where he obtained his doctorate. Kephallinos published this work under the title "Greek Hetaira under Alexander the Great in India". It was also published in German. He also translated an Indian epic from Sanskrit. Kephallinos was the first Greek scholar to translate "The Poems of Ossian" into demotic **prose**. In 1880, he translated this Celtic poetry from James Macpherson's 1772 new edition, carefully corrected and greatly Improved, from English: 'Oina-morul'-'Oithona' as well as 'The Battle of Inis-thona' in 1880. Then in 1882, he translated 'The Songs of Selma'. A fellow compatriot, Stylianos Chrisomallis born in 1836 who worked as a journalists contributing to his own satirical newspaper 'Kodona' in 1870 as well as other periodicals including 'Zizanos and 'Lyknos', also translated 'To the Sun' from 'Carthon' from the Italian version into demotic poetry. Chrisomallis collaborated with the famous Corfiot composer Dionysius Routhoheatos in his opera 'Oitona' performed, for the first time on Corfu in 1876. This was one year after a Kephalonian scholar, Panyiotis Panas, published 'The Death of Oscar' from the epic 'Temora', in his own newspaper, 'Exegersis (Uprising) In Athens.. The opera was performed again in 1880. Were the translations of "The Poems of Ossian" by these Corfiot scholars related to Kephalonian translators of this Celtic poetry and did they collaborate in their desire to peacefully unite all people under the Democratic Eastern Federation as a protection against Western intervention? Have the translations by these Corfiot scholars been recognised by Greek academia for their enrichment of the Greek language?*

## **Introduction**

Why would Greek scholars translate Celtic mythology when their own myths were so rich? And why do these translators' works continue to be so neglected in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century; their translators almost effaced? This paper will endeavour to show that Corfiot scholars who translated Ossian collaborated with Kephalonian translators to create a peaceful union among people of different creeds under a Democratic Eastern Federation. It will also show the influence of these translations of *The Poems of Ossian* on the Modern Greek language.

## **Scotland and Ireland and "The Poems of Ossian"**

When the English invaded the Highlands in 1745, they were led by the Duke of Cumberland, second son of King George II of England (Marshall 1885). In the Battle of Culloden, the English took no quarter. They dispossessed its citizens, forcing them to live in distant colonies leaving the land free for one million sheep to be reared for profit. In order to preserve Highland culture, (Mackenzie 2017) James Macpherson wrote "The Poems of Ossian" (Pittock 2011). This Gaelic poetry in English inspired the Irish scholar Thomas Moore, who penned his famous "Irish Melodies" which included a preface 'In imitation of Ossian'. His 'Imitation' was published in 'The Press' in Dublin in 1797 (Clifford 1984). And republished in 'The Celt', Dublin in 1857 (Moore 2019). 'Irish Melodies' was written to immortalise Irish patriots, mainly Protestants, who were executed by the English after the 1798 Irish Revolution. Ireland had been subjugated by the English since the English Pope Adrian IV gifted Ireland to Henry II in 1171. (Scott 2013) Nearly two centuries later, the Seven Islands were captured by the Venetians.

## **The Seven Islands**

After having suffered almost five hundred years under Venetian rule the Seven Islanders were liberated by Napoleon who changed the official language of Italian with that of Modern Greek and removed the ruling aristocracy from power replacing it with democracy. Two Zakynthian scholars burnt the libro d'oro, planting an olive tree. Rhigas Velestinlis's famous 'Battle Cry' was sung (Gouzelis 1997). One of them was the first to declare 'Long Live Ossian!' (Vagenas 1995) The French were replaced by a Russo-Ottoman alliance in the Seven Islands when aristocracy was returned and Modern Greek replaced by Italian. By 1807 the inhabitants became French citizens when they were under French control once again. In 1815, the English would impose their rule on the Seven Islands for nearly fifty years (Moore 2019). Unlike other Greeks under Ottoman rule, it is clear that the Seven Islanders underwent various forms of subjugation by different powers which no doubt gave them a greater awareness, especially that of the French Revolution with its claim to liberty, equality and

fraternity as envisioned by the first proto-martyr of the Greek Revolution, Rhigas Velesinlis, a Greek-Rumanian scholar. Seeing the threat of Western monarchy, he hoped to unite all people of different creeds, including Arabs and the Turks themselves, to fight against the tyranny of the Sultan, forming confederations under an Anatolian Confederation. This Confederation was set up in secret in 1780 in Bucharest. (Velesinlis 2002) R

Seven Islanders who had experienced living under English domination were the main translators of Ossian. They foresaw the tyranny and greed of expanding Western monarchy, particularly that of England, so they used Celtic mythology, as depicted by Macpherson and Moore, as a means of cultural empowerment to expose their expediency and to fight against usurpation of their land. It was a blend of combative writing against imperialism known as fratricide (Moore 2019).

Selections of this Celtic secular poetry played a political, literary and musical role in support of a later Federation as a peaceful solution to the turmoil created by religious and monarchical intervention in the Balkans and Anatolia. Rhigas Velesinlis's direct successor was the Kephalonian scholar and journalist Panayiotis Panas. He founded the Democratic Eastern Federation in 1868 in Athens and Bucharest. He was also the main translator of *The Poems of Ossian* (Stavropoulou 1987).

The Kephalian Julius Typaldos, was a judge on Zakynthos and then Corfu. He was also a poet and lyricist. He translated Ossian from the Italian version by Melchior Cesarotti (Typaldos 1953). Cesarotti's translation of Ossian filled the bookcases of the Seven Island inhabitants from as early as the beginning of the 1800s. (K. Kardamis 2012).

### **The Ionian Academy (1824-1864): The library**

The director of the Ionian Academy on Corfu, Lord Guildford, a Philhellene, donated his library of 25,000 books including 3,000 manuscripts which included Greek, Italian and Arabic tomes, to a wing of the Ionian Academy library in the early 1820s; the library had been set up by the French in 1808. Guildford regarded the vernacular as 'the genuine daughter of Ancient Greek' (Henderson 1988). It was officially opened to the public on 15 September 1826 (Papadopoulos 1990). With Guildford's donation the Ionian University library became one of the richest libraries in the region. Guildford had considered teaching Sanskrit. Although Guildford donated all his books to the Ionian Academy in his will, after his death in 1827, his inheritors, however, shipped all his books to London where they were auctioned off (Henderson 1988). Cesarotti's version of *The Poems of Ossian* was included in the library of Lord Guildford. (Kardemis 2012)

Typaldos whose translation of two 'Bards' from 'Croma' appeared at the same time as his book of poetry, dedicated to the national poet of Greece, the Zakynthina Dionysius Solomos, was published on Zakynthos in 1856, one year before the latter's demise. The first Ossianic-influenced poem in this work is entitled 'Rhigas the Inspirer' (Conemos 1953). Typaldos's work was published in the year Andreas Kephallinos was born on Corfu. He was not born on Kephallonia

as stated in the only paper written on the subject entitled ‘Ossian in Greece’ by Nassos Vagenas in the twentieth century (Moore 2019). This inaccuracy diverts any connection with translators of Ossian from Corfu. It is for this reason that the neglected biography and works of these Corfiots are included to show the existence of these networks. The neglect is evident in that one of the Corfiot translators is omitted from any encyclopaedia while another is given five words in a note on Greek romanticism (Dimaras 1994). Thomas Moore’s name does not appear in this work or in a well-known Greek encyclopaedia (Drandakis nd)

### **The Corfiot: Andreas N. Kephallinos**

After completing his schooling on Corfu, Kephallinos went on to do further studies in Florence and Munich. He obtained his doctorate, publishing it under the title *Greek Hetaira under Alexander the Great in India*. It was also published in German. Kephallinos also translated extracts from the Indian epic **The Mahabharata** from Sanscrit. (Drandakis nd). It was entitled ‘The Death of Iaggadatta’. Indian (Murty 2017) and Celtic mythological heroes (O’Donnell 2014) have a greater magnanimity than those of Greek ones.

### **Examples of Colonialism**

When England took over the Seven Islands in 1815 the inhabitants were forced to remain neutral in the Greek War of Independence (Moore 2019). As England colonised both India and Ireland it found solutions to issues through comparison and assessment; for instance the surveying of the problem of tenancy in both countries (Scott 2013). For example, Gouzelis had his property confiscated for participating in the Greek War of Independence (Gouzelis 1997).

After France invaded Algeria, an Ottoman-ruled country in 1830, forty years later she introduced the Cremieux decree whereby Algerian Jews were given French nationality while Algerian Muslims remained second-class citizens under the ‘code de l’inigenat’, thus creating division over religion (Stora 2019).

After the assassination of the first President of Greece, the Corfiot Jiannis Capodistria in 1831, the Bavarian King Otho, a Catholic, when crowned, removed veteran soldiers of the 1821 Greek Revolution from the court and replaced them with Bavarian militia. The Cycladic revolution was fought between Greek Catholics and Greek Orthodox soldiers (O’Donnell 2014).

In 1849, the aristocracy in the Seven Islands encouraged their children to learn English rather than Modern Greek. Typaldos published the following poem in the Corfiot newspaper ‘Patris’. The following is an extract:

‘Now that a law has been made the Gentry in the street  
Need to know Greek.  
Hat, cigarette and a West European boast  
Is the aristocratic unsociable den.

But I am Greek  
 I brag about it  
 A Greek child was I born  
 With Greeks I measure myself  
 and Greek I speak.' (Milonas 1964)  
 (Translated by K. A. O'Donnell)

So to fight colonialism, a blend of different cultural tactics was used including that of music. Mantzaros, the Corfiot composer of the music of the Greek National Anthem, set the above poem by Typaldos to music (Raftopoulos 1991). The song was also published in the Kephalonian newspaper *Anagennis* (Kavadias 1964). The Kephalonian radical journalist and main translator of *The Poems of Ossian*, Panayiotis Panas, banished from Kephallonia on account of his anti-English activities (Nea Domi 1980), expounded in article the despotic rule of the English and encouraged unity, which he contributed to in *Anagennis* ten years later.(Stavropoulou 1987).

These are examples of how division was the key to colonialism in the Balkans and Anatolia in the nineteenth century. Its antidote is unity which Balkan scholars endeavoured to implement through translating *The Poems of Ossian*, which provided many examples of turning enemies into friends through Ossianic heroes' magnanimity, self sacrifice and justice.

Kephallinos was employed as a civil servant in education as headmaster then inspector in the Seven Islands and Kalavrita, on the mainland, respectively. His position prevented him from accepting his being elected as Liberal Party M.P. on Corfu. However, when he retired in 1912 he was re-elected.(Drandakis nd) His translated four poems from *The Poems of Ossian* were: 'Oithina' and 'Oinamorul', which were published together in book form in Turin in 1880; (Kephallinos 1880) 'The War of Inisthona (1880) (Kephallinos 1916); it was not included in Vagenas's article on Ossian, and 'The Songs of Selma' (Kephallinos 1882). Kephallinos was the first Greek to translate Ossian into demotic **prose**. His translations are faithful to the original. Although the libretto to the opera 'Oitona' composed by the Corfiot Dionysius Rothotheatos is missing, there is a possibility that Kephallinos collaborated with his fellow countryman, Stylianos Chrisomallis, performed on Corfu in 1876 (Kardamis 2012). Vagenas only refers to the 1880 performance in his article 'Ossian in Greece' (Vagenas 1996). His paper was required reading for students of the English Department of the National and Capodistria University in Athens.

### **The Corfiot: Stylianos Chrisomallis**

Stylianos Chrisomallis was born in 1836. He spent fifteen years studying in Italy, France and Switzerland. A friend of James Polylas, who published the Zakynthian Dionysius Solomos's work posthumously, they were both adherents of Solomos and both belonged to the Rhigas Party. As a journalist and a satirist, Chrisomallis published his poetry in his periodical 'Kodona' (1870-74). A patriot,

he saw the threat of an unshaped attempt of the proselytising of Corfiot youth from the Catholic school and from organised Italian propaganda. His satire exposes the deviousness and incorrigibility of the Jesuits in his poem 'Wolves and Sheep'. He taught French at Junior High School until the government changed when he was exiled to Lyxuri in Kephallonia. His name does not appear in any encyclopaedia nor is it included in a book on Greek romanticism (Dimaras 1994). His work, however, was published in 'Onero', 'Tedini', 'Estia', 'Esperini', 'Acropolis' and 'Zizanio'. He translated 'Eyes' and 'A prayer to spring' by the French Nobel Prize winner Sully Prud'hon (1901). His translation from Ossian entitled 'To the Sun' from 'Carthon' was translated from Italian by Cesarotti into demotic poetry and published in 1898. (Dendrinis 1971). Both Chrisomallis and Kephallinos, who may have collaborated on the missing score of 'Oitona', an Ossianic opera, sung in Italian was performed at the municipal theatre on Corfu in 1876, composed by the well-known Corfiot composer, Dionysius Rothotheatos (Rodoteato (1876).

### **The Corfiot: Dionysius Rothotheatos**

Dionysius Rothotheatos was the son of Spiro Rothotheatos, a judge and Angeliki Zambeli from Lefkada. His father had been granted a bursary by Lord Guildford in order to study at the Ionian Academy. Not only was his father a member of the Philharmonic Society of Corfu but he escorted the coffin of its leader, Mantzaros at his funeral. While Mantzaros composed the music to the National Anthem by Solomos he also set to music the 'Radical Hymn', sung on May 21 when the Seven Islands united with Greece in 1864 (Raftopoulos 1995). Lyrics were written by the Kephallonian scholar and translator of Ossian, Gerassimus Mavroyiannis. (Moore 2019). Dionysius Rothotheatos studied under Manzaros. Later he completed his musical studies in Naples in 1869. In the musical archives of the Philharmonic Society of Corfu is a polka entitled 'Elvira' composed by Rothotheatos in 1868 was found (Kardamis 2012).

### **Thomas Moore's Imitation**

Elvira is mentioned in 'Imitation' by Thomas Moore. There is a plea to her about the state of Ireland: the land is usurped and is controlled by England; corruption prevails and even her own people unite with the usurpers:

'O! Elvira, of love; and 'tis therefore I wander the midnight snows and sigh forth my woes to the wind! Thy beams, O moon! Fall in vain on my frame; they illumine not the breast of the wretched! Thy blasts, O, Wind! Of the North, are futile to me – they disperse not the mist from my soul! O! Children of Erin! You'r robb'd, why not rouse from your slumber of Death? ... and strike off her chains and your own - and hail her to freedom and peace? ... Oh! that *Ossian* now flourished and was here; he would tell us the deeds of our Sires and swell up our souls to be brave! ' (Clifford 1984).



This demonstrates combative writing against imperialism known as fratricide (Pittock 2011). It describes what slavery is and how subjective people remain inert calling on Ossian to awaken them, reminding them of their former glory. This 'Imitation' was attached to Moore's 'Irish Melodies'. Both Moore's and Macpherson's works were translated by scholars desiring freedom such as Russian Decembrists, Polish, Italian, Rumanian and Greek people instead of being suppressed under monarchical empires. The title of the polka 'Elvira' suggests that a network existed. A translation of 'Irish Melodies' by Thomas Moore was also published in the Rumanian language from French in Bucharest in 1868. (O'Donnell 2019). The Democratic Eastern Federation was set up by Panas in both Bucharest and Athens in 1868 (Hasiotis 2001).

In a preface to *The Basil Plant* by A. Matesi, a Zakynthian playwright, there is a short poem which the editor claims is from Ossian. This poem contains several omissions including the fifth verse, which refers to Elvira. (Matesi 1953) Matesi translated Solomos's Italian poetry which includes Ossianic-influenced works (Vagenas 1966). In Vagenas's 'Ossian in Greece' he states the Ionian literary critic S. De Viazis whose article on Matesi comprises the translations he made, de Viazis omits to include Matesi's translation of Ossian in his collection (Vagenas 1996).

Rothotheatos completed his studies in Vienna, Milan and Paris from 1869-74. It is noteworthy that Italian composers were greatly influenced by Ossian: Rossini 'The Bard'; Donizetti 'Malvina'; Generali 'Gaul and Oithona' (1813). The latter opera was followed by Rothotheatos's composition almost seventy years' later. Although the libretto is missing, it is recorded that the 1876 version was only one act which required that the performers sing without a break for one hour. This was changed in the 1880 performance by extending the opera into four acts through the Corfiot scholar and 'political activist' Stylianos Chrisomallis who possibly translated the Greek version by Kephallinos back into Italian. (Kardamis 2012) At this time there was division caused by Italian Catholic cultural propaganda in the Seven Islands (Dendrinis 1971).

There was also further Catholic intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina when Francis Joseph, the Emperor of the Austro-Hungarian empire created division. At the suggestion of his military advisers, he visited Herzegovina in the spring of 1875. His objective was to stir up agitation, promising support to the Catholic population. The population of Herzegovina, at that time, consisted of forty per cent Moslem, forty-two percent Orthodox Christian and eighteen per cent Catholic. His troops were on standby ready to occupy both Bosnia and Herzegovina after his tour was completed. In July 1875, an uprising occurred in Herzegovina seeking support of the small majority of Catholics there in the spring of 1875. This resulted in a 'two months' armistice', which would end on 30 May, 1876. If it were not successful, attempts would be made again to retain peace in the Balkans. There were uprisings resulting in the outbreak of vicious hostility between different religious groups (Stavrianos 2000). It is clear that the Catholic Church was staking its claim in the Balkans.

At the same time, the English had created division when it closed down the Ionian Academy when they gave the Seven Islands to Greece in 1864. Dimitris

and George Rodotheatos, elder brothers of Dionysus, took part in an anti-British march protesting against the closure of these educational establishments, in the Ionian High School and the Ionian Academy in March, 1864. They were arrested. (Kardamis 2012). The Greek scholar and lawyer, Panayiotis Mataragkas (1843-95), whose parents were from Zakynthos, translated and published ‘Come o’er the sea’ from Thomas Moore’s ‘Irish Melodies’ in 1864 (Moore 2019).

Many Italian patriots were exiled in Corfu following a failed uprising in 1831. Since Napoleon fought against Austrian monarchy, as well as being against the Papal government, this inspired Italians to become patriots (Macaulay 1944). One of those patriots was Flaminio Lolli. Born in Mirandola, in May 1797, he obtained his Doctorate of Law at the University of Modena in 1819. After becoming implicated in Carbonari conspiracies (both Byron and Calvo were members of the Carbonari) from 1821-27, Lolli was persecuted by the Ducal government, as one of the main leaders in the revolution in Mirandola forcing him to seek refuge as an exile on Corfu in 1831. His brothers had been hanged by the Ducal police (Kourkoumelis 2012). There, he met intellectuals including Solomos and Calvo. He rented accommodation from Solomos, which is now the Solomos Museum. He contributed articles to the Gazette of the Ionian Islands. He also collaborated on a poem with Solomos entitled ‘Aimilia Rodostamo (Politis 1991). In Lolli’s book entitled *La Strenni*, (Lolli 1844) there is a translation of ‘Paradise and the Peri’ from ‘Lalla Rookh’ from the French version into Italian by Thomas Moore. This Eastern tale is seen as representing Ireland under foreign control and symbolises a resistance to despotism known as ‘defensive orientalism’. Byron commented that ‘Lalla Rookh’ would have Ireland as its real subject, ‘the wrongs of our country’ (Pittock 2011). It was an ideal choice for patriots of other countries in their desire for liberty without risk of censorship. It is noteworthy that the official language of The Seven Islands was Italian until it changed to Modern Greek in 1849. In Athens Italian continued to be taught until 1885. The complete works of Thomas Moore from the French version by Louise Swanton Belloc was published in 1843. Her husband was the French painter, Jean Hilaire Belloc who painted the picture of ‘La Morte de Gaul, friend of Ossian’ and fiancé of Oithona. It was exhibited in Paris in 1810 and 1850 (Moore 2019).

As this excerpt from ‘Lalla Rookh’ was published on Corfu it is evident that the works of Thomas Moore were available in the Seven Islands through the French translation by Louise Swanton Belloc. It is prefaced with a long survey by a Paris High School teacher which *includes extracts from The Poems of Ossian*.

Two more translations of Thomas Moore from ‘Irish Melodies’ were circulated in Athens in 1852: ‘O Breathe not his name’ and ‘The Minstrel Boy’. In his introduction, the author states that ‘the Scottish and the Irish showed a greater display of support for Greek Independence than the English.’ The writer then names all the Scottish and Irish Philhellens. Next to Moore’s translated poem is Byron’s ‘The Isles of Greece’ translated into Greek. Although the Scotch Philhellene [Edward Masson]states that Byron believed that Greece would never have independence Byron retracted his mistaken opinion in the following ‘palinode’ written just before his demise:

‘Tis Greece, but LIVING Greece no more’  
Awake – not Greece she IS awake  
Awake my spirit – Glory and Greece around us see,  
The sword, the banner and the field,  
The Spartan borne upon his shield  
was not MORE free!’ (Scottish philhellene 1852)

Byron had a dislike for imperialism and called for autonomy and liberty for the people of South Europe (Pittock 2011). His adaptation of Ossian entitled ‘The Death of Calmar and Orla’ had been published in the Greek press in 1850. But Vagenas had erroneously omitted Byron’s name from the translation. (Moore 2019), leaving Greek readers unaware of Byron’s fondness of Ossian despite the dispute of authenticity.

When ‘Oitona’ was performed on Corfu in January 1876, Panas had translated and published ‘The Death of Oscar’ in March, 1875 and ‘Oina-morul’ one month later in February 1876 when a peace treaty was signed in Constantinople bringing equality to people of all different creeds. Panas’s ‘Oina-morul’ was published on the same day as the peace agreement in the periodical ‘Byron’ published in Athens. This periodical was founded at the same time as the Democratic Eastern Federation in 1868. The translation of ‘Oina-morul’ by Panas was used to cement unity and in a footnote implicitly refers to the Democratic Eastern Federation. Both poems were used to preserve unity among various different religious groups of people in the area which Western monarchy and ecclesiastical organisations were anxious to divide and take control (O’Donnell 2017). What is noticeable in the translation of ‘Oithona’ by both Panas (Panas 1884) and Kephallinos (Kephallinos 1880) is the capital ‘A’ used for ‘Anatolia’ which is in small letters in the language from which they were translating. Both translators used *The Poems of Ossian* to refer to ‘the people of the East’, which is an indirect reference to The Democratic Eastern Federation. They sought unity through this secular poetry (Kreutz 2019)

Just before the results of the Berlin Congress took place, the Ionian critic Spiro de Viazis, who was supposedly writing a book on Modern Greek literature, wrote to Typaldos requesting his views. Unfortunately, Typaldos had had to leave the Seven Islands because of false rumours, spread by the English stating that Typaldos was in favour of indefinitely ceding Corfu and Paxos to Britain. The British persisted in these allegations despite Typaldos’s firm denial. When Typaldos’s denial was supported in a book brought out by F. Lenormant, an eminent numismatist (Lenormant 1859) it was translated almost immediately into Modern Greek in the Seven Islands in 1859 by Anastasios Gaitos who omitted the relevant pages (Bouboulidos 1950). Gaitos later committed suicide. Mortified by the impending closure of the Ionian University – the glorious beacon of the Seven Islands - when it united with Greece, Typaldos resigned and left the Seven Islands to live in Florence. In 1864, when the Seven Islands were united to Modern Greece, Typaldos turned down the offer by the Greek Government of becoming Ambassador to Rome. He also declined a position in the Supreme Court. Typaldos and his wife, Louisa de Rossi whom he married in 1859, resided in Florence from

1861-1881 (Konomos, 1953). Their literary salon was one of the most famous in Florence (Pernot 1916-18).

Spiro de Viazis was a scholar and a researcher born on Corfu in 1854. He was a Catholic and had to leave Corfu, persecuted over his religion, moving to Zakynthos where he founded the Foscolo library where he was the benefactor and custodian. (New Domi Vol 8) When writing on the theatre in the Seven Islands with L. Zois, de Vazis gathered information from the Public Records Office on plays performed giving the minimum information. For example, emphasis was given as to whether the play was written by a local aristocrat. Neither of them thought it was worth informing anyone about the name of the writer and the play performed. The office was destroyed in an earthquake (Romas 1964). When writing his book on Foscolo published in 1890 he dedicated it to count Camillo Raineri Biscia, a censor (de Viazis 1890).

Writing a fifteen page letter to de Viazis request on his impressions of Modern Greek literature, in Italian, Typaldos gave his views. He complained about the literary critic Alexander Rangave whose book, written in French, on Modern Greek Literature in 1877, states that Foscolo is a Corfiot (he was born on Zakynthos) who wrote 'Ortis' and only one ode entitled 'Sepulcres' thus undermining the real amount of his work. Typaldos welcomed the demotic prose translation of *The Poems of Ossian* written with accuracy and elegance by the young Corfiot scholar Andreas N. Kephallinos. Typaldos, in his letter, remarked on the fact that the Modern Greek Government chose Attic Greek as the official language. He pointed out, however, that Dionysius Halicarnassus saw that Isocrates was not opposed to using the language of the people, which was more natural than that of Demosthenes and Thucydides. (Konomos 1953) This long letter was only published and translated from Italian into Katharevousa (Purist) thirty years after it was written in 1880, thus leaving the demotic prose translations of Ossian by Kephallinos in obscurity. One critic poses the question as to whether de Viazis actually completed the work and if there were any archives (Zoras G T 1965)

In his book on Foscolo, de Viazis, recounted how Foscolo, an exile in London, wrote to Lord Dacre to ask for a passport to return to Corfu to teach at the Academy but was refused one. Foscolo died shortly after this request. Had he returned to Corfu his life would have been prolonged as he was greatly affected by the English climate. Foscolo had studied under Cesarotti at Padua. In Foscolo's first edition (1798) of his 'The Last Letters of Jacopo Oris', his protagonist Tereza sings two Ossianic songs (De Viazis 1890).

### **The Enrichment of Modern Greek through Celtic literature in English**

As 'The War of Inisthona' by Kephallinos was omitted from 'Ossian in Greece' by Nassos Vagenas, an assessment of language will be made by this translation first. The story involves Oscar, son of Ossian, who goes to aid the leader of Inis-thona in Scandinavia, to rescue his daughter who wants to makes war on her father unaware that her husband has murdered her two brothers and is

using her to usurp Inis-thona. This symbolises the state of affairs at the Berlin Congress, after the Russo-Ottoman war (1878) where decisions were being made as to what parts of the Ottoman Empire were to be ceded to European monarchy; other parts to be added on to existing Western monarchical land in what was the Ottoman Empire. In this translation Kephallinos, like Panas, uses the capital letter for ‘east’ - ‘Anatolia’- which changes its meaning in Greek to ‘people of the East’ so this indicates that there was a network of scholars who used this poetry in support of the Democratic Eastern Federation. This poem is an attempt to right the disunity in the family of the leader which Oscar achieves in that he reunites the daughter with her father and kills the husband who has murdered his wife’s brothers. It is possible that this symbolises both Crete and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where unnecessary blood was shed - a stain on the conscience of the West - was the result of Western monarchical machinations, would be granted their ‘freedom’ through decisions made at the Berlin Congress.

What is most remarkable about this translation is the following:

### **The War of Inis-thona**

‘Ο θάνατος είναι συχνά στή κόψη των σπαθιών μας.’  
[death is often at the point of our swords!.]

And:

The Greek National Anthem

‘Σε γνωρίζω από σην κόψη  
Του σπαθιού την τρομερή.’  
[I know you from the point of your formidable sword.]

Neither the translation which was done by Rudyard Kipling - ‘And the light of thy Sword’ nor the literal translation - ‘I recognise you by the fearsome sharpness of your sword.’ - is as faithful to the translation as James Macpherson’s line in ‘The War of Inis-thona’. This clearly demonstrates the direct influence of Ossian on Solomos.

### **Language**

Comparisons will be made between Macpherson’s 1,772 version of *The Poems of Ossian* with that of Kephallinos’s translations in prose from English. Kephallinos states that he has used the 1847 Leipzig edition published by B. Tauchnitz. Chrisomallis’s demotic poetry translation is from Cesarotti’s Italian version. Ancient Greek words will be cited. The names of later Greek men of letters who use the words included in Kephallinos’s translation are numbered on

pages in the Greek Dictionary Ellyniko Lexiko by Tegopoulos-Phytrakis 1991. The first poem to be compared is ‘The War of Inis-thona’ translated in 1880.

Ανώφελο Ancient Greek (Kephallinos, 100) - useless (James Macpherson 256) - K. Varnalis (78)

Βουρκομένους (Kephallinos 99) – ouzy (Macpherson 256) G. Vinzinos,(156) I. Zervas (155)

Βρυγέται Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 99)- roars (Macpherson 256) A. Sikelianos 159)

Γλυγορο (γλήγορος) Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 99) – fleet and bounding (Macpherson 259) M. Malakasis (172)

Γλωκοπνέει (Kephallinos 102) – soft-rustling (Macpherson 259) Solomos (173)

Γροικώ (γρικώ) (Kephallinos 99)- listens (Macpherson 255) K. Varnalis (176)

Λιαβαίνει (Kephallinos 99) - rush (Macpherson 257) M. Malakasis (192)

Εσκληβώθηκε (Kephallinos 101) – seized (Macpherson 257)

Καμπο (Kephallinos 101) – heath (Macpherson 258) K. Palamas, K. Kariotakis (348)

Καταχνιά (Kephallinos 99) – mist (Macpherson 256) K. Stergiopoulos (p.367)

Καταχνιές (Kephallinos 101) – vapours (Macpherson 258) Tellos Agras (367)

Κόψη (Kephallinos 101) – point (Macpherson 258) Solomos (G. Souris 400)

Λαγκάδιες (Kephallinos 102) – vales (Macpherson 258) K. Varnalis (412)

Λεβέντια (Kephallinos 101) – heroes (Macpherson 257) N. Hadzaras, K. Hadzopoulos, G. Geralis

Χλωμός (Kephallinos 100) – darkly (Macpherson 257) K. Kavafy, K. Kadzopoulos. G. Geralis

## Oithona

The second poem is ‘Oithona’. The story is about the cementing of families between Gaul, whose father, Morni, was a former enemy of Ossian and is united with his band, and Oithona. Her brother Lathmon had fought Ossian and Gaul but deemed them too valiant and stopped fighting them in the midst of battle. He was generously freed by Fingal. This resulted in unity among former enemies. Oithona and Gaul are engaged to be married but unfortunately Oithona is abducted by Dunrommath to his island in the Orkneys where she is raped by the abductor. Gaul attempts to rescue her advising her to hide in a cave while he does battle with her abductor. After slaying Dunrommath, Gaul seeks to find Oithona. Disobeying Gaul, Oithona, disguised as a soldier is wounded in the thick of the battle. She dies feeling ashamed to face her father after having been raped. In the opera, the chorus is very powerful urging Gaul to pursue the enemy Dunrommath. This is a poem about justice in the face of tyranny which is symbolised through Dunrommath. It demonstrates the frustrated feeling of isolation of the people. Disunity is the key to empowerment under colonialism, which was caused either by religious differences or Western monarchical ambitions, the consequences of which were dire in both Crete and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

- Άδραζε** (Kephallinos 2) - took (Macpherson 222) (K.Makriyiannis 15)
- Αθώρητη** (Kephallinos 3) – in secret (Macpherson 222) (G. Drosini 20)
- Ακρουιάλι** (Kephallinos 4) – coast (Macpherson 22) (G. Seferis 29)
- Ανδρειωμένων** (Kephallinos 5) – brave & mighty (Macpherson 224) (Solomos 57)
- Άγαρης** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 3) – unhappy (Macpherson 223) ( I. Griparis 136)
- Βροντερή** (Kephallinos 3) – sounding (Macpherson 223) (Solomos, N Brettakos 159)
- Δειλόν** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 5) – feeble (Macpherson 224) (K. Karthaios 186)
- Δειλιάς** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 5) – feeble hand (Macpherson 224) (Tellos Agras, A. Siklikianos 185)
- Έβουίξε** (Kephallinos 2) – rushed (Macpherson 222) (L. Mavilis 155)
- Εθόλοναν** (Kephallinos 2 - rolled deep (Macpherson 221) (K. Hatzipoulos, G. Skaribas 315)
- Θαλασσοδαρμένος** (Kephallinos 4) – sea-beat (Macpherson 222) (K. Palamas, I. Gryparis 305)
- Θολή** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 5) – troubled (Macpherson 223) (Porphiroas 315)
- Κάμπος** Latin ‘campus’ (Kephallinos 1) – field (Macpherson 220) K. Palamas, K. Kariotakis 384)
- Λαβωματιά** (Kephallinos 2) – wound (Macpherson 221) G. Theotokis 412)
- Λαμπράδα** (Kephallinos 5) – loveliness (Macpherson 224) (M. Malakasis 415)
- Μνέσκουν** (Kephallinos 4) – are strong (Macpherson 223) (Solomos 469)
- Παλληκάρια** (Kephallinos 1) – followers (Macpherson 220) (M. Malakasis 560)
- Πλανιέται** (Kephallinos 4) – is on (Macpherson 224) (I. Gripari, A. Rangavi, K. Ouranis 39)
- Προβαίνεις** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 2) – come forth (Macpherson 221) (Solomos 635)
- Σαίτταις** Latin (Kephallinos 5) – arrows (Macpherson 114) (G. Seferis, A. Ephtaliotis 676)
- Φλοίσβισμα** Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 1) – noise (Macpherson 221) (Karasoutsas 823)
- Φαρέτρα** (Kephallinos 3) – arrows (Macpherson 224) (A. Sikelianos 812)

## OINA-MORUL

This very short prose poem demonstrates the ability of Ossian to make enemies into friends through his own magnanimity and sacrifice. Oina-morul is promised to Ossian when, at the request of her father Mal-orchol, he conquers the enemy Ton-thormod. When Ossian hears Oina-morul sing of her love for Ton-thormod, he recommends Mal-orchol forget his animosity, allow his daughter and enemy to wed and live in peace.

**Ανδράγνο** (Kephallinos 1) –demanded (Macpherson 213) (K. Kavafy, K. Varnalis 78)

**Αλβιόνης** (Kephallinos 1) – Albion (Macpherson 214) Albion name of Great Britain known as ‘old Albion’ 876) Alba is Gaelic for Scotland. Britain comes from variegated island - ‘Breac’t in’ (Macpherson 1996)

Ανώφελα (Kephallinos 1) – demanded (Macpherson 213) (K. Kavafy, K. Varnalis 78)

Διαβαίνει Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 1) – flies (Macpherson 213) (G. Geralis, M. Malakasis 192)

Θλίβεσαι Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 2) – mourn (Macpherson 215) (Solomos 314)

Επροβαίνει (Kephallinos 2) – moved (Macpherson 214) (Solomos 635)

Κατάγνια (Kephallinos 2) – mist (Macpherson 215) (K. Stergiopoulos 367)

Κόμη (Kephallinos\_1) – locks (Macpherson 213) (A. Rangavi, D. Solomos 388)

Σκλάβο (Kephallinos 1) – prisoner (Macpherson 213) (Petsalis-Diomidis, I. Gryparis 696)

Χιονάτα (Kephallinos 1) – white (Macpherson 214) (A. Porphiras 849)

Χλωρασία (Kephallinos 2) – grass (Macpherson 215) (Krystallis 850)

### The Songs of Selma

The Songs of Selma is a lyrical prose poem about the melancholy after war and the sadness it brings. Colma searches for her brother and lover Salgar only to discover that they were enemies and have killed each other. The dead are recalled through the sound of the wind and the harp in mourning. The songs lament Fingal's son Ryno, Morar, brother of Minona who sings some of the songs, and all the sons of Armin, father of Arindel and Daura; the death by drowning of Arindal, shot with an arrow by Erath. Daura, his sister is left to die on an island. The harmless ghosts are seen representing memories. In order to remain in existence they must be remembered through song (Macpherson 1996). It was first made popular by Goethe who included it in his 'The Sorrows of Young Werther', which was translated into Greek in 1843 and 1848 in Athens and Smyrna respectively making Greek readers aware of this Celtic poetry (Kreutz 2019).

Άστρο Ancient Greek (Kephallinos 1) – star (Macpherson 260) (A. Calvo, K. Palamas 119)

Ανδρειωμένος (Kephallinos ) valiant (Macpherson 264) (Solomos 57)

Γαλήνός (Kephallinos ) – calm (A. Sikelianos 163)

Γροικήστε (Kephallinos 6) – hear (Macpherson 262) (K. Varnalis 260)

Θνητός Ancient Greek (Kephallinos ) – mortal (Macpherson 262)

Ίσκιος Ancient Greek (Kephallinos ) – ghost (Macpherson 262) (D. Solomos, I. Gryparis, N. Lapatiotis 327)

Μάρμαρο (Kephallinos ) – clay (Macpherson 262) (L. Mavilis, G. Seferis 442)

Μεσημεριάτικος (Kephallinos ) –noon (Macpherson 262) (R. Apostolidis 262)

Νυχτιά (Kephallinos ) – night (Macpherson 264) (K. Palamas 508)

Ξακουτός (Kephallinos ) –mighty (Macpherson 264) (A. Pallis 509)

Σιγαλή (Kephallinos ) – silent (Macpherson 263)

Σιγαλιά (Kephallinos ) - calm (Macpherson 263) (K. Varnalis 688)

Χιονάτος

**'TO THE SUN'** BY STYLIANOS CHRISOMALLIS (This is a beautiful short extract from 'Carthon')

(Mela 1952)

Ανεβαίνει (Chrisomallis 9) – rises (Cesarotti) (A. Sikelianos 57)



Αργοπόρος (Chrisomallis 32) – lingers – (Macpherson ‘shrinks’) (A. Sikelianos 57)  
Άστερια (Chrisomallis 3) – stars (A. Sikelianos 118)  
Άστρο Ancient Greek (Chrisomallis 1) – star (K. Palamas, A. Calvo 119)  
Βροντή (Chrisomallis 14) – thunder (N. Vrettakos 159)  
Καταχνιά (Chrisomallis 29) – mist (K. Stergiopoulos, Tellos Agras (367)  
Ντροπαλό Ancient Greek (Chrisomallis 4) - diffident (Macpherson cold and pale) (G. Theotokas, I. Prevelakis 507)  
Σειόνται (Chrisomallis 7) – shake (Macpherson fall) (L Porphyras 683)  
Σωριάζουν (Chrisomallis 8) – sink (Macpherson decay) (K. Palamas 749)  
Χλωμό (Chrisomallis 5) – pale (K. Kavafy, Hatzopoulos 850)

In conclusion it is clear that Celtic poetry in English translated into Greek had a greater influence than has been recognized by Greek Academia today. The power of song in the opera ‘Oitona’ on Corfu in 1876, conveyed political influences in relation to the Vatican’s encroachment on the Corfiot youth. Up until recently there was no record of this performance. It also sent a message to Bosnians and Herzegovinians who had been in turmoil since the visit of the Catholic Austro-Hungarian monarch. The closing of the Ionian Academy by the British was uncivilized and indicative of how they would control Greece as Athens became known as its Protectorate after the union of the Seven Islands in 1864. A selection of certain poems and excerpts from *The Poems of Ossian as well as several poems from ‘Irish Melodies’ by Thomas Moore* that was used to combat colonialism known as fratritism in favour of a peaceful Democratic Eastern Federation of all people in the Balkans and Anatolia. The contribution of Celtic literature in English translated into Greek has received scant attention in Greek academia; their work deserves to be unveiled so as to give a true full picture of the cultural and historical role it played in the nineteenth-century Greek-speaking world.

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