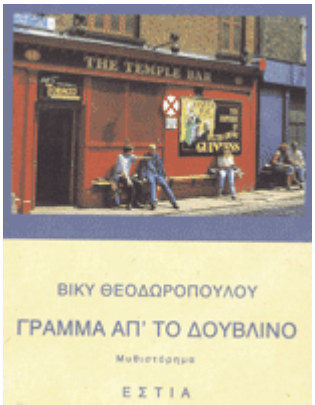
Life is elsewhere - LETTER FROM DUBLIN

NATIONAL BOOK CENTER OF GREECE Magazine VIVLIOFILIKI, Issue No 4, September 1997. Vicky Theodoropoulou, Letter from Dublin, Hestia Publishers & Booksellers, Athens 1997

Greek Contemporary fiction has scarcely - if at all - contemplated on the subject of the dispersion of Greek youths around the world during the seventies and eighties, to study and be lost in the offices of the European cities. Some became rooted in the Western metropolis; some returned and - as distinguished members of the celebrated forty year-old generation - demanded tokens of merit in their homeland.



Vicky Theodoropoulou begins her writing itinerancy with characters chosen from this generation, her own generation. *"I wanted"*, she says, *"to speak the tale of the people of my age, who left and dispersed, to speak of their travels, of their come-and-go between Greece and the cities of the world. Although the real reason for which this generation left Greece, was to study, to stand on its own feet, to earn tokens and inadvertently to travel".*

The whole novel is a "street game". At first it seems like a game played along the streets of love or friendship experienced between the two key characters, Marina and Nasos. But, soon, it becomes evident that the game is played along the streets treded by a part of this

generation.

The writer ties with dexterity these two games, the two levels of her work. Her heroes' common characteristic is a motto that Marina, the main heroine, phrased "Life is elsewhere", even though each one of the company - it's all about a large group of friends - perceives differently the meaning of this phrase.

Marina, outrageous as she is, always wants "to leave, to be lost, to dérive..." Her life is not revealed, in contrast to her character, which is slowly and masterly built, mainly through her letters to Nasos - one from Porto, one from Barcelona and the last one from Dublin - which play a special role in the structure of the novel.

Nasos - in love with Marina all his life - with his grand composure, leaves and settles down, creating the model of the composed citizen with career and power. The writer wants Marina to reveal the funny side of Nasos. The title of the novel, as the author points out, could have been *"The funny side of Nasos Stavropoulos".*

Enchanting novel, revealing the author's capabilities at her debut.

Dimitra Roumboula