

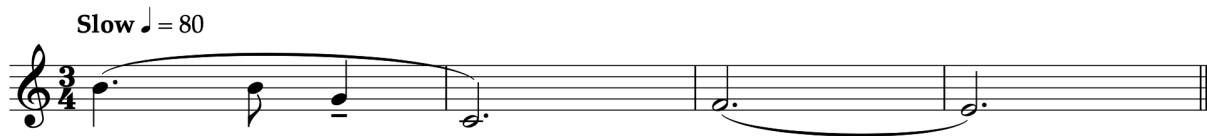
An Island That Dreams of Me:
Score | Direction | Ecumenic
Jeremy Geragotelis

January 2025

I. Description of a Beach House¹

A prelude. We start outside the performance space. There's a basin of water. POΔO hums the melody of "Σε Θυμάμαι."

POΔO



*Then, THE CHORUS recites the following language, each member reads a single line. The **bold** material is said in unison. The italic material is said in unison, whispered.*

It's on stilts—blue-gray, with shutters.
Spiders and a lawn mower kept below—
It was always terrifying to go down
 there for boogie boards and the beach umbrella.
On the back porch—a grill where my
 grandfather, my *Popu*, always made
Barbecue chicken—even though I always only wanted
 burgers and hot dogs.
(*The Best Barbecue Chicken* Ever,
 according to my dad)
 Inside: austere, dark, I remember
 cement floors, but that can't be
 right—
A kitchen with a fridge from the 70s—
 electric appliances—a two-burner
 stove top; a coffee maker.
Bedrooms with wire and wrought iron
 frames—**sand** everywhere.
A **crucifix** above the bed, above the
 door—
 A tube-television with
 rabbit ears and brackish **water**.

Hornets under the back porch—
jellyfish on the beach—²
cold, cold grey-blue **water** by a
blue-grey house, reaching up to the
sky—, on stilts.

Into...

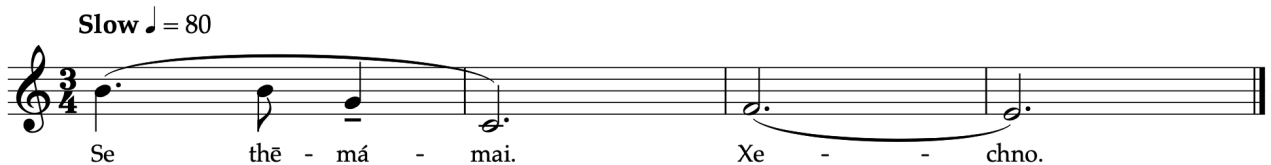
II. The Processional³

Everyone plunges their hands into the basin of water outside of the performance space. They then take notes they've written to their past: their ancestors, themselves, someone or something lost. Something they want known, irretrievable. They fold up this note as tight as can be and walk into the space.

CHORUS A sings the melodic line (with language) of "Σε Θυμάμαι." CHORUS B recites the following text, pausing at the end of each line.

ALL enter the space slowly as they sing or speak. They bring each of their respective notes to the water fixture in the center of the performance space. Then, they open their beach chairs and settle in.

CHORUS A



CHORUS B

I will,
before being admitted to citizenship,
renounce forever all allegiance
and fidelity
to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty,
and particularly,
by name,
to the prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of which I may be at the time of admission
a citizen or subject;
I am not an anarchist;
I am not a polygamist

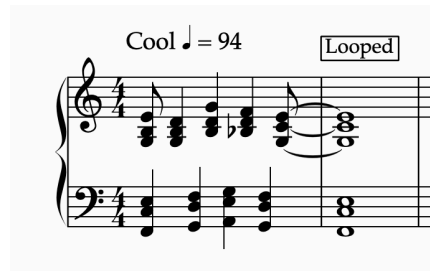
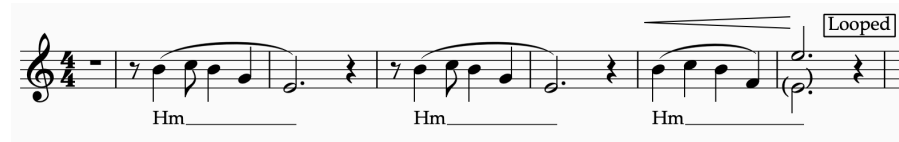
nor a believer in the practice of polygamy;
and it is my intention in good faith
to become a citizen of the United States of America
and to reside permanently therein;
and I certify
that the photograph affixed
to the duplicate and triplicate hereof
is a likeness of me:
SO HELP ME GOD.¹

Into...

¹ The signed text from the “US Declaration of Intention” (1935; US Department of Labor, Immigration, and Naturalization Service)

III. A Theory of Invention (w/ Music)⁴

POAO makes the music. Anyone can sing along.



Then, they proceed with the following language.

POAO

There's a grasping for a world, a story, a history that makes itself in time, out of its own imagining.⁵ This double-function, this synecdochic form that—in shared time—arises out of and floods into that which is and that which is possible to conceive of as reasonable, narratively enjoined—it is desirous of empty spaces—because there, it has room to become itself and prove its ubiquity. What if we indulge it—knowing it as fantasy—as something un-possibly known?⁶

What if this is the story of Greece's historicity and, so, its relationship to the West? Its recollective function—draped in nostalgia, want, affect-laden conditionality? If you press against it hard enough—what does it give way to? Does its affirmation as trite make-believe reify it as fantasy—foreclose it from fact?⁷

Does leaning toward imagination and fantasm flood it entirely? Or crack the side of the vessel—history—that holds time? So that all its contents spill out? Or does it redirect the flow of some trailed-off record, perpetually mysterious, back toward the prospect of a deep known and knowable remembrance?⁸

My great-grandfather left Greece in 1920—as survivors of Smyrna and refugees from population exchange, from the Greek genocide in Anatolia, displaced people from years of war and foreign rule, flooded into Mytilene port, forty kilometers northeast of my great-grandfather's village on Lesbos. His wife came to the United States ten years before. On all of his records, he is identified as Emanoil Geragotelis (alias Charalambos Chandjelis). No one knows the reason for this double-name. And anyone that could have known is now dead.⁹

So, I return to my question: What if this is the story of Greece's historicity and, so, its relationship to the West? What if I invent upon the lines of my great-grandfather's alias as an unknown and unknowable detail that—in its mystery—has shaped my family's line, down the line, to me? What does this imaginative effort yield but a hodge-podge of dis-locatable feeling, of cultural myth, of gaps in knowledge, of epistemological ignorance, of never knowing enough, of a wealth of proximal but ever-out-of-reach-ness? Floundering, sketching, imprecise rendering, this genre of the second-third-fourth generation *ethnic* minority seeking to retain time beyond the measured time of imperialism and Western domination? This position to the past creates its own undoing, an instability and a failure to retain either its full hegemonic function or its resistant contrarianism. It does both things badly—this form, this thing we are making.¹⁰

But what does this instability wrench forth from the historical ground? A desperate performative gesture informs it: reaching out, pleading, please please please begging. Maybe if we plead hard enough and cry long enough, the rules of the past will change and we'll all get all our answers. It's the attempt at remembrance, futile and poisoned as it may be, that lays ground for a remembering that outpaces this moment. It matters—setting the tempo and the form—even if the thing to fill it won't come but for the lives lived beyond ours that know to remember, intimately, everything.

Into...

IV. Selling the Beach House¹¹

A more standard scene. The family is selling the beach house (referred to at the opening). The patriarch died (not the older Greek one, but his son [my Popu]). The family gathers and discusses their options. JOHN is the eldest. PAUL, the youngest. MARY ELLEN, the middle. MARY, the wife of Nick (the second oldest boy), who is not present. And THERESA is the surviving matriarch. She's referred to as Yiayia by the younger grandchildren, even though she's not Greek—she was just married to one.

JOHN

We're just going to put it on the market and whatever it goes for, it goes for. We're not looking to make a profit.

PAUL laughs.

What?

PAUL

I just don't see why we can't / speak with a realtor—

JOHN

I'm only in town this week and next. And we've got the house to take care of. I don't want to be dealing with a realtor. They're gonna ask to see it and—

PAUL

It's worth at least 200.

MARY ELLEN

That little shack? It's not even heated, is it?

PAUL

It's walking distance to the beach. Who cares?

JOHN

200? So we won't accept anything below 130.

PAUL

What? No, I—

PAUL (CONT'D)

This is why I want a realtor, John.

JOHN

If we sell for 200 with a realtor, we'll probably see about 130.

PAUL

Then maybe we sell it for more?

You don't know what it's worth.

You may pretend that you do, but you don't.

MARY ELLEN

Neither do you—

JOHN

Fine. You want to get a realtor, you get a realtor and figure it out.

I'm just reminding everyone present:

we've also gotta sell the other one. Don't forget.

MARY ELLEN

No one's forgetting.

THERESA

I just think one of you should take it—

JOHN

Mom: no one wants it.

Mary Ellen doesn't want it.

THERESA

Nick—

JOHN

Nick's not here.

MARY

You know we love that beach cottage, Theresa.

But we just can't...

THERESA

The boys would love it—

MARY

We can't afford it, Theresa...

MARY (CONT'D)

We have so many fond memories of spending summers there.
But we just can't afford / it.

THERESA

I'll pay for it–

JOHN

(To THERESA)

They're not taking it.
No one wants it, Mom.

THERESA

I just...
I just thought it would be nice if it could...
I just wanted it to stay in the family.

JOHN

Yeah. That would be nice, but...
I don't know what to tell you, Mom.
You can't always get what you want.

MARY ELLEN

(Singing)

But if you try sometimes: you just might find, you just mind findddd!
You get what you / need–

PAUL

(Also singing)

No, you can't always get what you waaahhhnnttt.
No, you can't always get what you / waaahhhnnttt.

JOHN

Stop.

MARY ELLEN

Is the pizza here yet.

(To PAUL)

Where's Kelly?

PAUL

She's coming.
Downtown gets busy on the weekends.
She's probably still looking for parking.

MARY ELLEN

I'm starving.

THERESA looks like she might cry.

MARY

Theresa... It's...

It's alright.

This is what's best.

THERESA

I'm fine.

MARY ELLEN hugs her.

MARY ELLEN

Oh... Mom...

It's okay, Mom.

Quiet. Quiet. Quiet.

I miss dad, too.

THERESA

He loved pizza.

MARY ELLEN

Caffeine free Pepsi.

THERESA

And he wouldn't want you to sell the beach cottage.

JOHN

(Rolling his eyes)

Mom...

MARY

(Quietly)

Be nice, John...

This is hard for her.

JOHN

It's hard for me too!

MARY

John... Come on...

Quiet.

PAUL whistles “You Can’t Always Get What You Want.”
He stops.
Quiet.

JOHN

I don’t know what you want me to do.
You want me to sell it for you. Fine.
You want to keep it. Fine.
You want to call a realtor. Fine!
Do it your way.
I came out here to help. Okay? **To Help.**
I can head back anytime.
PAUL laughs.

JOHN

(To PAUL)

What?

MARY ELLEN

Guys: don’t. Paul–

JOHN

What?

PAUL

You’re unbelievable.

JOHN

What?

PAUL

Your little life on the other coast. About as far away from Mom and Dad as you can be. And guess who’s the golden boy who gets to “swoop in” and “deal with” and “fix” and “*help*” everyone?

MARY ELLEN

Paul. Stop.

JOHN

Well, I don’t see anyone else jumping to deal with this shit? You want to handle it? / “You”–who hasn’t worked a day in his life?

THERESA

John... John! You watch your mouth.

PAUL

Nick, Mary Ellen, and me: we *saw* Dad before he kicked the bucket. We were with him. And with Mom. You were nowhere to be found.

JOHN

I was *golfing*.
In *Lahaina*.

MARY ELLEN

Ohhh... John...

JOHN

What?
PAUL starts laughing again.

MARY ELLEN

Do you hear yourself?

JOHN

What?

PAUL

Do you hear yourself??

JOHN

WHAT?

MARY ELLEN

John: You were golfing...
In Hawaii...

JOHN

What? You just expect me to...to...
I had planned that trip...*months* in advance.
PAUL howls laughing.
I had made sure... Do you realize how difficult it is to get a spot on that course?
And what it costs? Do you?
What the HELL are you laughing about?

PAUL

Your dad was on his deathbed.¹²
Give up Hawaii, give up golfing—
You do whatever it takes to get there.
Here. To be with your family. To say goodbye.

JOHN

Well...

I didn't do that, okay?

I didn't get here. I didn't.

And there's no use crying over it.

Mom: don't you start crying over it.

Because it just didn't happen. That way.

It didn't happen that way. Okay?

And...and...and...and...

And...I...

A moment.

You all should know: I accepted an offer on the beach house.

Silence.

MARY

Oh... John...

You should have talked to Nick.

JOHN

I accepted an offer.

132. Okay.

Split four ways. Evenly.

You... And...

Someone had to just...do it.

So I did it.

Silence.

Silence.

Silence.

PAUL

I WANTED TO SPEAK TO A REALTOR!

Into...

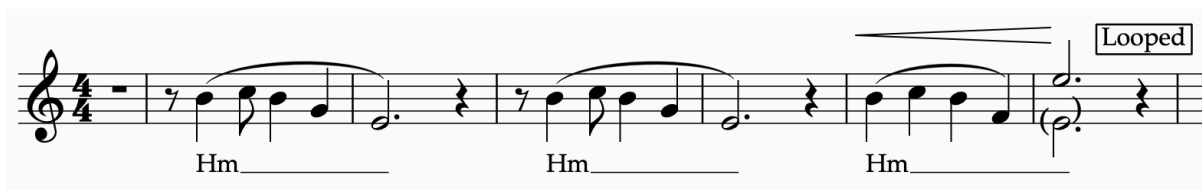
Vb. Brother Bureaucracy¹⁴

*ALL whisper their given book names
into the loop pedal.*

ALL

[Book of Fairy Tales] [Bible] [New Testament] [Psalmody] [Book of Poems] [Recipe Book] [Family Book] [Book of Family Names] [Book of Prayers] [Book of Town History] [The Famed Book of St. Haralambos] [Book of Dead Names] [Book of Ouzo Secrets] [Book of Longing]

*POAO (and anyone else that wants to)
hums above it:*



The other Geragotelis's who live in the town over from us but who we don't talk to. And who we pretend we aren't related to. But who also come from Plomari, Lesvos—that island that dreams of [me[us[them[you]]]].

They're better looking than our clan. And they're buff. And they have bigger cocks. And they have a twinkle in their eye. And they always smell good.

D

We are devilishly handsome—

G

Everyone wishes they were part of our family—

D

Don't they?

G

They do...

A beat.

D

Do you know who's coming over next?

G

Geris?

D

No. Worse.

G

Who?

D

[Gives a Look]

G

No.

D

Yes.

G

Ew.

D lifts a TV cabinet or an heirloom. Take your pick.

Like the one cleared from my Popu's house: I threw it into the dumpster, glass face down. It hit against the side and shattered and went all over my Uncle. As it was happening, he told me not to do it. But it was too late. It looked like he was going to yell at me, but he didn't.

He strains.

D

Augh. Help me with—

G

Why do we keep this?

D

So someone who has forgotten us can eventually throw it out.

G

There aren't any spiders in here?

D

How should I know?

G

I found a spider nestled in its little web-nest on the other side of this book of mine—not the spine—what's the other side called?—

D

Since when do you have books?

G

I have books!

D

No, you don't. We're too good looking to know how to read.

G

Well, this spider had made a little web world—had spun itself a little house out of itself, that surrounded itself—like a white, sticky blanket-bed. I threw the book across the room. I *hate* spiders.

D creepy-crawls behind his brother's ear.

D

Oooo!!

G

Stawwwphhhh—

D

Did you kill it?

G

Yeah.

Quiet.

It maybe came all the way from home.

D

You think?

G

Maybe.

D

Transatlantic spider.

G

Is that an ecological threat?

ALL

(Pick One)

[Yes] [No]

G

Hmmm...

D

Transatlantic spider...

G¹⁵

Did it change its name to gain admittance?

Or did it slip through, past, the border guard?

What did it have to renounce to come here?

What did it have to forget or forgive or stow away—
deep inside itself?

Did it change its name? Is it called a different name here? Now?

D

What book?

*The loop pedal and humming stop,
suddenly.*

G

Mama's _____

Continue on...

ALL

(At Once, Staggered, At Once)

[Book of Fairy Tales] [Bible] [New Testament] [Psalmody] [Book of Poems] [Recipe Book] [Family Book] [Book of Family Names] [Book of Prayers] [Book of Town History] [The Famed Book of St. Haralambos] [Book of Dead Names] [Book of Ouzo Secrets] [Book of Longing]

[Book-of-Fair-y-Tales]

[Bi - ble]

[New-Test-a-ment]

[Psal-mo-dy]

[Book-of-Poems]

[Re - ci-pe-Book]

[Fam - i-ly-Book]

[Book-of-Fam-i-ly-

Names]

[Book - of-Prayers]

[Book -of-Town-His-tor-y]

[The-Famed-Book-of-Saint-Har-a-lam-bos]

[Book-of-Dead-Names]

[Book -

of-Ou-zo-Se-crets]

[Book-of-Long-ing]

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[Book of Fairy Tales] [Bible] [New Testament] [Psalmody] [Book of Poems] [Recipe Book] [Family Book] [Book of Family Names] [Book of Prayers] [Book of Town History] [The Famed Book of St. Haralambos] [Book of Dead Names] [Book of Ouzo Secrets] [Book of Longing]

*The humming returns. Without the loop
pedal...*

D

Oh... I didn't know you had that.
Why do you have it?

G

So someone who has forgotten us can eventually throw it out.

D

Hmmm—

G

I hate spiders.
Silence.
Silence.

D

I have a proposition.

G

Hmm?

D

Haralambos is seeking citizenship.

G

Mhmm...

D

That got me thinking...

G

No.

D

Why not?

G

No.

D

Listen:
Get Mary off our hands.
Keep him close.
Bring him into the family.

D (CONT'D)

Make him do all the *brunt* work.
All the things we're too beautiful to do.

G

Demi, no.
No.

D

Change his name at the border.
Call in a favor with the constable—you know him, right?
Get him over here, washed clean.
He'll be indebted to us, brother.
Silence.

G

You aren't seriously thinking—

D

Why not?

G

Demi—are you serious? Dude sucks ass—
A moment.

D

Remember when he nearly shot Costas's ear off?

G

He's a grump.

D

It's because he's not as devilishly handsome as us.

G

True.
Silence.

D

Well...

G

What?

D

It's already in motion. He's coming.
New name: Emanoil Geragotelis.
Manny.

G

Fuck...

They laugh.

The humming stops.

Into...

VII. Strophic Fugue^{17 - 20}

*Voices read sideways, diagonal,
vertically, any way that they desire. In
time with the passing moments until
everything is read....*

Ocean	I don't remember	My left eye hangs	Prayers every night	Logan's Auto Sales	Italian neighbors	We aren't related to them	We'd steal grapes
Grape vines on the left side of the house	The house on the cliff	Left	Broken glass and mossed stone	Thank your parents	Here	Here	Where?
I am left	With	Sores on my left side	Here	I remember	They are beautiful	The others	Were more handsome
Sores on the inside	The car still out front	Here	Μεθ ήμών ο Θεός	God is With Us	Marry her	There?	I am left
He'd yell at us in Greek	The doors still open	We'd steal grapes	I am left	Logan's Auto Sales	He must have smiled	He must have smiled	Must
Logan's Auto Sales	For the music	He must have smiled	Across my brow	He must have smiled	What I call you	I don't remember	Some other name
Left side	There	The others	They were more handsome	He would have smiled	What you call yourself	Grapes on the left side of the house	The house on the cliff
Ocean	There	Came later and broke the law	I am	Smiled	What becoming	Left	I can't remember

Into...

VIII. Uncle Tim Translated²¹

*This is from the other side of my family.
Do all families keep secrets? How is
intrigue mobilized across family lines?
For what purpose, for what good, are
secrets kept?*

*I wish someone, anyone, had asked
someone, anyone, to tell the truth before
they died. But I suppose the intrigue is
far more interesting and survives
something... The what might never be
known. It cannot be known.*

*Now, my father's Popu's house is a used
car garage. And I threw away—with my
uncle—all this clutter, these things, that
accumulated meaning and never sought
to be known, but even at the time—with
the dumpster—they still were asking to be
saved and scrutinized.*

*How carelessly we immobilize our past.
How carelessly we obliterate
'unsalvageable' memory.*

CHORUS

[Become larger than you are.]

If I'm being honest, I wasn't sure I wanted to come today.

Honestly, I was worried about [Insert a Name of Your Choosing. From Your Family].

I wasn't sure how we'd do.

[Shuffle]

*The text is a single voice, except when
bolded. Then it is unison.*

SINGLE VOICE / UNISON VOICE

I am **used** to being the **secret-keeper**.

You probably know this: but there are **things** that we've never said

And that we probably **should**.

But

[Shuffle]

CHORUS

[Big Shuffle and stand up as if your knees don't work]

Mom used to tell me. After spending time with [The Name],

She'd pull me aside and she would tell me things.

Not worth saying now. But really...not good things.

[Find a new seat with your bad knees. Lower yourself slowly into the chair:]

You probably know what I mean—you and [A Different Name] and [A Second Different Name].

You spent so much time with her at the end.

[Shuffle]

There's just so much we should say.

SINGLE VOICE/UNISON VOICE

There's **so much** I want to **say**.

But. How do we fix something like this?

I'm glad I came. I'm very, very glad I came.

I was hurt by [The First Name] for **missing** my **anniversary party**.

SINGLE VOICE

But what are you going to do?

[Everyone still shuffles]

I...

ALL

We should probably get out of your hair; it's getting late...

Into...

Interlude. A Theory of Invention, Revisited (w/ Music)²²

POAO settles in and makes the music, with the loop pedal. Anyone can sing along.

The musical score is written for guitar and voice, in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It is marked 'Very slow' with a tempo of 54 beats per minute. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features a vocal line with long notes and a guitar line with a walking bass line. Chords are indicated above the guitar line: D, F#min7, Gmaj7, D, Bb, and Gmaj7. The second system (measures 6-9) continues the vocal and guitar lines. Chords are indicated: D, A°7, C, C°7, Bb, B7, Gmaj7, and D°7. The third system (measures 10-11) shows the vocal line ending with a double bar line and the guitar line continuing with a single note. A 'Looped' box is present at the end of the third system. The score includes a 'Tr. Solo' label for the guitar part in the second system. Red dots on the guitar staff indicate specific notes or chords.

Then, they proceed with the following language.

POAO

I heard from my dad that his Popu, my great-grandfather, was an unhappy man. I hear he was unhappy. And I wonder why. And for how long.

In 1922, Greece had moved from a subjugated people to a colonial force in its own right, as it tried to model its nationalist ambitions after Western European powers. By 1914, the Concert of Europe awarded Lesbos to Greece, following its annexation during the First Balkan War. Μεγάλη Ιδέα. My great-grandfather left the island during the height of the Greco-Turkish war, which broke out five years later. You can see the Turkish mainland—Anatolia—from Lesbos's eastern shore. The start of 1923 saw the forced exchange of a million and a half people between the Greek territories and the collapsing/collapsed Ottoman Empire.

Maybe they considered themselves Turkish, my great-grandfather and his people. Handjelis. Chandjelis. Andjelis.

CHORUS A

All my husband's fathers have been told that during the Greek Civil War, brothers within the Geragotelis family fought on opposite sides, and to avoid persecution the family changed their surname to Papazoglou. It is interesting that when they migrated to United States and Australia respectively, Stratis Geragotelis (Jeris) and my husband's father John George Geragotelis (Garis) kept their original family name, while their siblings adopted the surname Papazoglou. All the brothers and sisters of my husband's father John George Geragotelis (Garis) became known as Papazoglou.²

CHORUS B

Suppose that something like this had recently occurred: that twenty-six million men, women, and children had suddenly and unexpectedly arrived by steamer at the ports of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Suppose, further, that this mighty host was well-nigh starved, was penniless, was without worldly possessions beyond the clothes they stood in, their bodies covered with vermin and filth and ravaged by typhoid and smallpox. Imagine these twenty-six million human beings (chiefly women, children, and old men) to be absolutely dependent upon American charity for immediate food, for shelter, and for medical attention. Imagine that they must depend entirely upon America for an opportunity to make their homes and their livelihoods for the rest of their days.³

ΠΟΔΟ

Many would also adopt Hellenized versions of their names, chosen either for the sake of grammatical correctness (i.e., adding a terminal -s, as in *Topali-s*) or to replace common Turkish suffixes with Greek ones (i.e., from -oglou or -li to -idis or -adis).⁴

² Some distant cousin of mine, Robyn Garis, on the Facebook group Bartis Group, run by George Bartis, who is slowly collecting the genealogies of Lesbian families from the advent of the first Greek Republic, onwards. God's work.

³ From *I Was Sent to Athens* (Henry Morgenthau, Sr., 1929)

⁴ From *Genres of Recollection: Archival Poetics and Modern Greece* (Penelope Papailias, 2005)

VOICE I	VOICE II	VOICE III	VOICE IV	VOICE V	VOICE VI
Please comment.	As from the 1st May, 1923,		-oglou,	As	I know the
Please comment.	there shall take place a		-idis,	there	night no
Please comment.	compulsory exchange of	A crucifix	-li,	compulsory	longer, the
Please comment.	Turkish nationals of	above the bed,	-adis.	Turkish	terrible
Please comment.	the Greek Orthodox	above the door—	-oglou,	the	anonymity of
Please comment.	religion established in	A tube-television	-idis,	religion	death.
Please comment.	Turkish territory, and	with rabbit ears and	-li,	Turkish	A fleet of stars
Please comment.	of Greek nationals of	brackish water.	-adis.	of	moors in the
Please comment.	the Moslem religion	Hornets under the back	-oglou,	the	haven of my
Please comment.	established in Greek	porch—	-idis,	established	heart.
Please comment.	territory.	jellyfish on the beach— ²	-li,	territory	O Hesperus,
Please comment.	These persons shall not return	cold, cold grey-blue	-oglou,	These	sentinel,
Please comment.	to live in Turkey or	water by a blue-grey	-idis,	to	because you
Please comment.	Greece respectively	house,	-li,	Greece	shine by the
Please comment.	without the authorisation	reaching up to the sky—, on	-adis.	without	side
Please comment.	of the Turkish Government or	stilts.	-oglou,	of	Of a skyblue
Please comment.	of the Greek Government		-idis,	of	breeze on an
Please comment.	respectively. ⁵		-li,	respectively.	island which
			-adis.		dreams of me
					Proclaiming
					the dawn from
					its rocky
					heights,
					My two eyes
					set you sailing
					embraced, by
					the side
					Of my true
					heart's star: I
					know the night
					no longer.
					I know the
					names no
					longer of a
					world that
					disavows me.
					[...]

ΠΟΔΟ

I read seashells, leaves, and the stars clearly.
I have no need of hatred on the roads of the sky
Unless the dream is that which watches me again
As I walk by the sea of immortality in tears.
O Hesperus, under the arc of your golden flame
I know the night no longer that is a night only.⁶

⁵ From the Lausanne Peace Treaty, ratified conclusively in 1924.

⁶ "Poem" by Oddyseus Elytis (1911 - 1996).

I don't know how to think with this cacophonous roar of an eternity of life that's always lost to me, out of reach. And so, I imagine these other Geragotelis's to have coaxed by cowardly great-grandfather to the States for some shady dealing. I imagine him wanting to leave my great-grandmother, trying to wriggle out from underneath the thumb of these other Geragotelis's, who we've always claimed we don't know and have never known.

I imagine him as terribly unhappy, as this is one of the only things I know for sure about him.

But to discern an unshakeable and unknowable past, rendering it in melancholy... there's a certain place in Hell for people like me.

For a place and people who know themselves within their own terms, inscrutable to those beyond. I know my way in by poison: untruth, unlived life, un-mythed past.

Into...

IX. I Heard He Was Unhappy & I Wonder Why & For How Long²³

E

You came alone?

D

Ehhh *φίλε, μου* (fee-lie moo)– *Γιατί είμαι εδώ* (Yee,ah-tí ee-may e-dtho)–

E

Were you followed?

D

Tí; (Tee?)

E

Were you followed??

D

Όχι. Όχι!! (Oh-hee. oh-hee!!)

E

Καλά (ka-lah)...

D

Why'd you drag me all the way out to Rhode Island, Manny?

E

I have something to ask you.

D

Phhhbbtt– Rhode Island– *Οι Πορτογάλοι...* (Ee Porto-gáhlee)

E

Would you stop?

D

What?

E

...I need you to give something to your brother.
For me.

D

Why can't you just drop it in the mail, Manny.

E

No, I need to *know* he gets it.

D

Why didn't you get *him* out here, if it was so—?

E

Irene—

I can't risk having...

And you— We understand one another.

We like one another, don't we?

D

Not really.

E

You're like a brother to me.

D scoffs.

D

What is this, Manny?

E

Just—

Just hand it to him.

You understand?

No snooping.

D

Εντάξει (En-taxi).

He extends his hand.

Quiet.

Such Drama.

E

Promise me.

You'll take what I'm about to give you and hand / it off—

D

Yes, yes. Yes. Fine. Fine.

E

Promise me.

D

I promise.

Nothing.

I do; I promise.

E begins to riffle through his pockets to retrieve a small piece of paper, folded up an impossible number of times.

E

Shit.

D

You didn't lose it, did you?

E

No, it's—

He's searching. Meanwhile.

D

Eleni and I should buy something like this. You like it?

E

(Preoccupied)

Mm.

D

It's quaint.

He runs his finger upon the wall.

Inspects it and flicks the debris away with this thumb.

Nothing special.

But it's close to the ocean.

Why haven't you invited us out here before, Manny?

Hmm?

For a dip and dinner?

E

It's not mine; it's my son's.

He hands off the paper.

D

Ehh...same difference.

But if I remember correctly, you're not one to enjoy the beach.

E

No.

D

(Laughing)

No...

J begins to open the note.

E pushes into him.

They tussle.

J pushes E to the ground.

He reads.

He begins to laugh.

E

You promised.

D

(Laughing)

Are you serious?

E

You promised me.

D

Ohhhh, Manny...

No...

No no no no no.

I don't think so.

I don't think so at all.

No, no. This simply won't do.

E

Brother: listen—

You promised to—

J lifts E to his feet.

He's strong, bulging, angry. E is a bit of a pork—at least by comparison.

D

No. *You* promised. We brought you here to have you under our noses, always within reach.

E

I'm so unhappy.

D

I don't care.

E

I don't love her.

D

I don't care.

E

You could hear the gunfire from Mytilene, Demi.

You could see it.

Little fireflies across the bay. I couldn't stay, Demi.

D

You're a coward.

E

Brother—

D

I'm not your brother, Manny.

You begged us to help you here.

You promised us that if we brought you all that way, you'd—

We vouched for you. Mr. Main stuck his neck out with the constable for your fucking naturalization. We gave you money—hundreds of dollars to get you here, Manny.

And you promised us that if we did: you'd take Mary back from us.

That was it. You'd take her back. You'd treat her with kindness.

You'd give her more children. You'd marry her. You'd trade in your name and settle down.

And now you're trying to run. *Again.*

He crumples the paper and throws it in E's face.

E

I am so unhappy, Demi.

I *hate* her. In an unbearable sort of way.

I hate that house. I hate her cooking.

And the little sound she makes to the youngest one.

Her cooing and her...her...

...

I should have never left.

If I had known what this life would be, I would have...

Give me a gun: I'll do it now:

I'll kill Greeks, I'll kill Turks. The Slavs.

At this point: I don't care.

E (CONT'D)

I am so...so unhappy, Demi—

D swings at E.

He breaks his nose.

D

If you leave her: we will find you, tie an anvil around your neck, and drown you in the sea.

E sputters blood.

Into...