



Diasporic  
Literature  
2011



# DIASPORIC LITERATURE

## SOPHIA KOSTOS

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### When was it?

Mar 5, 2011 02:16PM

**Sofia Kontogeorge Kostos**

When was it?  
that Germans and Turks  
of Central Powers-  
pulled from their uniforms,

ORDERS FROM HEADQUARTERS:

"Start from the East; sweep to the Black Sea;  
continue through to Cappadocia; later-  
swing towards the Ionian West.  
There's a shortage of bullets,  
take as long as it takes- *be thorough!*

Phase I:

"Release your lusts.  
Rip! Rape! Plunder!  
Chop all *useless lumber* 1,  
Without mercy: Stab,  
kick, drown, burn!  
Strip trunks, roots,  
branches. Tear! Uproot! Bury!  
Clear the land - neither twigs,  
nor splinters leave.

"Sticks and stones  
will break their bones,  
and names will mark them.  
Call them *useless lumber*-  
until all Armenians, Greeks,  
Assyrians, are eradicated.

Phase II:

"Prevent Ambassador Morgenthau from  
publishing particulars of our crimes!  
Render him and his protests *useless*.  
Confiscate all witness books,  
remain unrepentant-  
'Was Their Fault' must be our motto.  
Carry on, until the job is done!"

For the lure of coveted minerals,  
and the Baghdad Railway Lines-  
church bells toll no more. And,  
names like:

*Mosharopoulos - Papazian - Pincaro* -  
not heard any longer.

When hell's fires fell over Asia Minor 2  
pain knew no bounds

-in the land of their mothers,  
and their mothers' mothers  
before them.

So it was  
to their final days.

**Sofia Kontogeorge Kostos**

USA

1 German: *nutzloses bauholtz* English: useless lumber

\* Turkish:  *faydasiz kereste* English: useless lumber

2 Asia Minor (that is now Turkey)

**Adm. Guido Von Usedom-**

*He [German Admiral Usedom] said that the Armenians were in the way, that they were an obstacle to German success, and that it had there fore been necessary to remove them, just like so much useless lumber. He spoke about them as detachedly as one would speak about removing a row of houses in order to bombard a city.*

*Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* by **Henry Morgenthau**

Also "The Register" newspaper report at the time which inspired the writer

### Ένας Ξαναγεννημένος Φοίνικας

Aug 26, 2009 06:34PM

*Once upon a time...*

Μια φορά κι έναν καιρό, όχι πολύ παλιά,  
για περισσότερο από τέσσερα εκατόχρονα,  
δυναστείες Οθωμανών Σουλτάνων  
βασίλευαν σαν βαριά σύννεφα,  
διώχνοντας τη λιακάδα από τους Ουρανοούς.  
Ο τρόμος γέμιζε τον κάποτε ελεύθερο αέρα της:  
οι βράχοι της πουούσαν, οι θάλασσές της έκλαιγαν,  
τα πουλιά της έκρωζαν θρηνητικά,  
τα λουλούδια της μαραίνονταν, ο λαός της υπέφερε—

αλλά όχι για πάντα.

Η Ελλάδα σαν Φοίνικας ξαναγεννήθηκε, 1821:

Τα παλικάρια της λευτεριάς - γενναίοι άνδρες και γυναίκες,  
τα ονόματά τους σαν ξεδιπλωμένα λάβαρα:

Ανδρούτσος, Μπουμπουλίνα,  
Βύρων, Διάκος, Γρηγόριος ο Ε΄,  
Υψηλάντης, Κανάρης, Καραϊσκάκης,  
Κολοκοτρώνης, Μακρυγιάννης,  
Μαυρογένους, Μιαούλης,  
Οδυσσέας, Παπαφλέσσας...

κι' άλλα ονόματα πολλά—

ξαναζωντάνεψαν το Ελληνικό πνεύμα της Δημοκρατίας,  
διώχνοντας τους χυδαίους βαρβάρους  
από τις περισσότερες Ελληνικές Χώρες.  
Η λιακάδα έλαμψε φωτεινή ανάμεσα στους καθάριους γαλανούς  
ουρανού της—  
τα βράχια της χαμογέλασαν, οι θάλασσές της λαμπύρισαν, τα  
πουλιά της τραγούδησαν,  
τα λουλούδια της άθισαν και ο λαός της τραγούδησε:  
«Χαίρε! Ω, χείρε Ελευθεριά!»

**Σοφία Κοντογιώργου Κόστος, Φιλαδέλφεια, ΗΠΑ**

*ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΗ Στρατηγός Δημήτριος Αλευρομάγειρος*

*Once upon a time. (Αγγλικά) □ Μία φορά κι έναν καιρό.*  
Αγγλική απόδοση του ποιήματος

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## The Duchess Of Alba On South Street©

Aug 22, 2009 11:24PM

I saw the Duchess of Alba  
at the checkout counter of The Whole Foods  
food market on South Street, today.  
She was here in Philadelphia,  
miles from Madrid, —and Goya,  
was bagging her wares.

Mesmerized, I stared straight at her  
as she gazed through me as if I were air.  
As I peered at her plume-jet-black hair,  
I marveled to myself, *It IS,*  
*it's the Duchess of Alba,*  
*just like Goya once painted her!*

Her eyes were black like Andalusian olives,  
framed by two small arcs;  
her nose brushed with  
a whisper of a line;  
and her lips were dabbed lightly  
with rose-petal pink.

As her right silk-satin shoe pointed towards me,  
she was standing proudly—  
in that same haughty pose  
once made famous by *The Master* ...  
In her hand,  
she held an empty leash.

I wondered, *Where could her Lowchen be?*  
Like a paparazzo, my eyes followed her  
as she exited the store.  
By unseen magic, the leash latched  
to her little white lion dog—  
eagerly waiting outside the door.

As the Duchess exited the food market,  
guitar strains of *Malagueña*, the click-click  
of castanets, the tap-tap of flamenco dancers,  
and the scent of *Naranja de Seville*—  
emanated from all the check-out counters—

filling the room, then spilling on to South Street.

Then much to my surprise—  
The Duchess and Goya later were seen  
sipping frosty summer drinks  
in tall-stem glasses—at the COPABANANA cabana—  
all the way down on Fourth Street!

**Sofia Kontogeorge Kostos**

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## A Phoenix Reborn

Aug 15, 2009 11:54PM

*Mia fora kai enan kero...*  
Once upon a time, not too long ago,  
for four plus centuries,  
successions of Ottoman Sultans  
reigned down like gloomy clouds,  
blocking sunlight from Grecian skies.  
Terror filled her once-free air:  
her rocks ached, her seas wept, her birds shrilled  
her flowers withered, her people suffered—

but no longer.  
Greece like a Phoenix reborn, 1821:  
Freedom's *palikaria*—  
men and women,  
their names like banners unfurled:  
Androutsos, Bouboulina,  
Byron, Diakos, Gregorios the 5<sup>th</sup>,  
Ipsilantis, Kanaris, Keraïskakis,  
Kolokotronis, Makrygiannis,  
Mavrogenous, Miaoulis,  
Odysseas, Papaflessas...  
Names but a few—

they revived democracy's Greek spirit,  
banishing brutal barbarians  
from most Grecian lands.  
Sunlight shone bright through her clear blue skies—  
her rocks smiled, her seas sparkled, her birds sang,  
her flowers blossomed, and her people sang:  
*"Hiere O, hiere Eleftheria!"*

**Sofia Kontogeorge Kostos**

*Mia fora kai enan kero.* (Greek) Once upon a time.

From the last line of the Greek National Anthem, by poet  
Dionysios Solonos:  
*"Hiere O, hiere Eleftheria!"* (Greek) "Hale O, hale Freedom!"

The version of this poem in Greek

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