

metamorphoSEA *scene by scene summary*

Scene I: Freedom Square

As the audience gathers on the square, the rumour goes round that there is an amazing beach nearby. That lovers meet there. That it is the place to be.

Scene II: Titan Cement Factory

A walk through a dystopian landscape, facing the threat of two monsters.

Scene III: Vrachakia

An elderly lady tells of her memories of going to the beach. Of swimming in the sea, fishing, playing games by the shore.

She once worked at the oil refinery and remembers how dirty and dusty she was at the end of the day. She and her friends would come to the beach to swim and refresh themselves. And she recalls when she was told it was impossible to get to the sea, that the beach could not be brought back. How sad she and her friends were.

She was so sad about the destroyed beach that she did not return to this stretch of the coast for many years. It was too painful.

But during Covid she and her friends walked and walked and they returned to this stretch of coastline. She says she still finds it beautiful, and when she walks from the city centre she does not turn left along the city coast, but right through the Titan factory to Vlycha. It is dirty and destroyed, but she and her friends prefer this route because of the memories it brings back.

Scene IV: Scylla and Charybdis¹

The projections show the clash of the Titans. According to Greek mythology, the Hundred-Handed Giants attacked the Titans with barrages of massive boulders hurled in crushing volleys of 300, one from each of their mighty arms. The clash of warriors was so fierce that the sound of their fighting made the earth rumble, the sea swell, and the heavens shake.

The banner carried before the audience represents a protest banner, a demonstration against the sacrilege caused along the coast of Elefsina and at Vlycha beach. The protest serves as a prelude to the audience's first view of today's destruction of Vlycha. An oracle pointing to Vlycha as a place of memories of an older battlefield where ships were sunk.

¹ Scylla and Charybdis, in Greek mythology, two immortal and irresistible monsters who beset the narrow waters traversed by the hero Odysseus in his wanderings described in Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XII.

Scene V: Vlycha Beach

The flags: Hades & Vlycha Beach in English & Greek / Thrinacia² in Greek.

Song: The quiet evenings

Verse 1: *Even if you go away*

For travelling around the world

You'll be mine forever

We'll be together forever

Verse 2: *And I'm not gonna miss you*

That my soul will be

The song of desert

That will follow you

Verse 3: *The quiet evenings*

Elefsina will light

Like a big ship

Where you'll be there too

Verse 4: *And you're not gonna miss me*

Cause my soul will be

The song of desert

That will follow you

Verse 5: *The quiet evenings*

It will pass full of lights

The train of my life

Where you'll be there too

Verse 6: *And you're not gonna miss me*

Cause my soul will be

The song of desert

That will follow you

Young woman's speech: She tells us about when she went to a bookshop. She buys several books and, whilst she is there, meets a young man. Their eyes meet, they chat, flirt and she is trembling, immediately falling in love with him. He is a musician and is carrying a trumpet. They agree to meet for a coffee and he leaves the bookshop. But she realises she has forgotten to ask his name, to get his number. She feels stupid for making such a mistake. But standing outside the bookshop, he comes up to her and asks what books she has bought. He knows every single one of the books, making her feel so ignorant in the light of his knowledge.

He recites a verse from a poem about her eyes. The verse is repeated and she becomes emotional. He recites another verse about squeezing a lemon. It is an erotic verse, sensual. She feels she can taste the lemon, that she is the lemon, being squeezed.³

Birth scenes: There are seven consecutive births, three are clearly signified (Πώς γεννήθηκα - pos jnithika - "Let me show you how I was born"), the final one being twins born together.

² Thrinacia is an important setting in the *Odyssey*. It is known for being home to the cattle of the sun god, Helios, as well as various other flocks of livestock such as sheep and oxen. Odysseus has been warned that these animals are considered sacred and that if he or his men harm them, the results will be devastating. Driven by hunger, Odysseus' crew slaughter the oxen. Helios is furious. Death and destruction follow. Odysseus is the only one to survive.

³ The poem recalls a comic Greek expression 'I am going to squeeze you, squeeze all the juice out of you, just like a lemon'.

Young man's speech: He tells a story about Christmas with his (male) lover. How they bought presents for each other - how he received a Polaroid camera and did some photography courses. How the memory is carved in his heart. So no photo is necessary.

Scratching scene: An image of disease, of a worm eating her from within, eating the ships, eating her out of existence until she becomes sexless, a monster.

Speeches from the audience: Love letters written to their loved ones, reflecting on being on Vlycha Beach. Talking about bringing the beach back, recreating it.

ΚΟΓΞ ΟΜ ΠΑΞ sign (KOGX OM PAX): A Greek expression supposedly used in the Eleusinian Mysteries to bid initiates to depart after having completed the tests for admission to the degree of epopt (overseer / watcher: the highest grade in the Eleusinian Mysteries). Supposedly derived from the ancient Egyptian "Khabs Am Pekht." It means, "Light in extension" or "Light rushing out in a single ray."

Projection text: Meletis' speech:

I remember an Eleusis which used to be.... more agricultural...or mainly agricultural. I specifically remember the many vegetable agro-fields that there used to be...the cattle-farmers who used to bring milk to the Union of cattle-farmers... I remember seasonal jobs, which you now find in other places. It wasn't an Eleusis of a monoculture, oriented towards industry.

What I also remember is a much cooler Eleusis... This may seem strange to you, but there used to be a cool breeze at night. You had to wear something over your T-shirt, because it used to be humid. Humidity coming from the watered fields... The city's surroundings were not built up then, so the landscape would absorb the day's heat and then release it at night...

And there used to be a very close relationship with the sea. The sea used to be an indispensable part of Eleusis. There were the sea baths, there were games. The sea was at our feet... And we used it for enjoyment. I mean... it was part of our lives.

I remember that it was around 1970 - 71 that we could no longer swim from Eleusis' beaches. The central port had been built, and we gradually began to travel to beaches further to the west. At first we would go to Paraeleusinia, but then industrial facilities were built, oil refineries, shipyards. So then we went to Eutaxia, then even further to the west, to Loutropirgo, to Neraki, and bit by bit we could see the pollution of the sea! The oil spills, the tar on the gravel, the eutrophication. The intense eutrophication, which pushed us further west, until it pushed us out of the sea for good.

I think that sometimes you build the future on your own. You build it yourself. You say, this is how I want my city to be... and sometimes you need to make the city... you need to

make it fit your own needs, not the needs which others force on you. I lived through that period... When they forced a city on us which did not meet our needs. It was meeting the needs of financial interests, big enterprise, big economic gain. And now I think that we need to make the effort to make a city that is fit for its inhabitants. Fit for the needs of its inhabitants. Not for those who have a business interest. Trade, industrial activity in the city... These can take place outside of the city... But the city must belong to its inhabitants.

It may seem as if you are chasing a dream. Because in Eleusis, starting only a few years ago, you can't even reach the sea to put your foot in it. We're not even talking about the quality of the water... You couldn't even reach it...

Whilst Eleusis is indispensably tied to the sea. The life of the city is indispensably tied to the sea. The life of man is indispensably tied to the sea.

I don't know. I can't say it... It's hard for me.

The sea is... It is something forbidden to us. It is forbidden to us. Sometimes we see it in the distance. But when we reach it... It is a forbidden paradise. It is paradise. But it is something forbidden... We can't reach it. There are railings and walls that separate us from the sea... The sea is a forbidden paradise, and we are a bit... a bit incomplete as human beings... Because of the very fact that we cannot go near our sea. Our very own sea, which lies before us...

Think about it. You have the sea before you. In the summer you want to swim in it... But you have to travel 20 km away from here... Can you imagine that? Can you even imagine that?

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