

### The silent concert

#### In London!



In London, a well-known pianist announced that he would play “The silent concerto” in a central hall of the town. The hall was full, the pianist bowed to the public who applauded him warmly and he began to play by moving his arms, his feet, his head and his body, without letting a single note to be heard!

Some people who were sitting at the first seats, became worried, looked behind them, saw the others concentrated and were immobilized as well... After one and

a half hour the pianist stood up, bowed to the public who was applauding him and the next evening he appeared on the television and said: **“I wanted to see how far the stupidity of people in our days can go, it has no limits!”**

How many such phenomena he had found out in his everyday life, before doing his own musical experiment?!

The incident, which resembles to an anecdote, had been published in the Press and the writer André Maurois cites it in his well-known book *Open Letter to Young People*, by also pointing out the consequences that the lack of judgement and that one of taste have, which characterize modern man, particularly in the sensitive domain of art.

#### In Paris!

Of course, this took place in London. Let’s remember Paris, its rival city, so as not to underestimate it. Salvador Dalí was already a well-known painter in the surrealist domain, but he became best known after doing an original thing.

He unfolded his canvas inside a cage of a hippopotamus at the Zoo, in which he dropped his colours and let the animal paint. Then, he took his canvas, put his signature on it, had it framed and exhibited it in an art-gallery, where some other of his paintings were also exhibited. The painting was sold and at a high price indeed!

The painter repeated the experiment always with the same success. The hippopotamuses and rhinoceroses, his pupils, had surpassed him! Until one day when a rhinoceros did not understand that he had to paint, ate the colours, got sick, the veterinaries struggled to cure him and thus it was forbidden to Dalí to collaborate with the pachyderms.

#### In Athens!

One would think with good reason that London and Paris are far away from Athens and from Greeks who are clever. Nevertheless... A book addressed to the sensitive age of 12 years old, a book with orthographic and syntactic errors, of knowledge and of reason, literary, pedagogical and cultural ones, in plural form for each genre, was published for more than 40 times and hundreds of thousands of young Greeks actually read it! It entered in almost all lending



libraries -even in that, “model” one, at Goudi, in many copies!- and was included in the syllabus at school. The public channel (ERT) made it a TV series. Its author (a woman) received a prize by the Greek Ministry of Culture and -more recently on December 2012- by the Academy of Athens! It was even proposed by the IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) for the international Andersen prize. The famous Biographical Dictionary of the Publications of Athens quotes this woman as the only woman author of Greek literature for children. While other women authors such as Penelope Delta and Angeliki Varela, Alki Goulimi and Galatia Soureli, Penelope Maximou

and Filitsa Chatzichannas Maria Goumenopoulou and others, do not have their place in that serious Dictionary. Many people have praised it and, among them Yannis Marinos in the review “The Economist”, a man appreciated by all of us, who does not risk of going down in our esteem. This fact simply reminds us of the spectators sitting at the front seats in the London hall which were followed by many other spectators. And it stresses the great power the modern religion has of the expedience as well as the stupidity to which it emits!

**By nature!**



In this case, “the silent concerto” was played by nature. That’s why neither the author of this book, nor any other spiritual leader appeared to say:

-I wanted to see how far the lack of judgement of our children can go, the lack of culture or rather the indifference, the irresponsibility, the stupidity -you are free to choose what you like!- **of teachers, parents, authors, intellectuals, journalists,**

**Academics, Publishers of Academic books or, why not, even of our politicians**

**who declaim a lot on questions regarding our national education!...**

**Unique the reaction of the “enraged parents!”**

**Only a few parents from the city of Piraeus were filled with indignation and were enraged.** For, according to Aristotle, **“He who has a righteous pretext to be enraged and is not enraged is immoral!”** So, the enraged parents collaborated and wrote a text of 6 long pages and, as we later one knew, **sent it to all those persons cited above.** This was already done during the “International year of the child” –in January 1979!

**Gently... our Republic is sleeping!**

Our prolific press, our diffuse radios, our impressive televisions were silent as the grave! Very few periodicals -of little circulation- actually responded. The former Minister of Presidency and future President of the Republic, Mr. Costis Stefanopoulos congratulated the parents on their courage, but without doing anything else! That is “Bravo colonello!” And Stelios Artemakis, a book reviewer and editor of cultural articles for the newspaper “Naftemporiki”, asked for 40 copies of this text and sent them to all members of the **“Association of Greek Reviewers”**, he who **“had been telling them so all these years!”** However, these reviewers also bowed to the reasons of the expedience: “They did not see, did not hear, did not understand, did not speak!...”

**The consequences of the submission to the religion of the Expedience**

The modern man, tired or spiritually fainted, his sense of responsibility nerveless or marginal, pretends usually “not seeing, not hearing, not understanding and not speaking”. Once, twice, three, 103 times, one, two, three years from now on, and he gets used to it and gets the diploma in “innocence” and stupidity. In his book titled *The Temptation of Innocence*, Pascal Bruckner has developed with strong and

persuasive arguments this modern social phenomenon<sup>1</sup>, which reminds us of a story written by Andersen about the flattery that the courtiers would show to their king, thus misleading the people as well: A child, among the crowd who was applauding the new clothes of the king on his horse, cried out: “But, the king is nude!”



## The consequences are bigger!



It goes without saying that the notorious book forms the top of the iceberg, which also form the thousands of books of mediocrity, of lack of judgment and of the chasing of the expedience<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, it does not claim to be unique, but there are “like and so-called” scientists, celebrities, politicians, committees, services, vehicles of values and institutions... The applications of the silent concerto go far and deep in the human existence and in all manifestations of its culture. Facing them is not impossible, but rather difficult. It demands strong intellectual armour, a will of iron, a vision with a perspective, determination as well as persistence in the battle for the specific and the impossible! That is, **faith in the Power of the Good and of the Truth that liberates**. On the condition that we don't leave this truth on the shelf “for reasons of the expedience”... ***The truth! The truth! And the whole truth!*** as the writer Charles Péguy was crying out.

 A fake world cannot be saved but only by truth. Zalokostas  *Socrates*, Estia, p. 193

 What do you expect from a true and direct book of our times? That this book will reveal you the truth. What is going on, where you are, what you should do, how to live in this terrible crisis.

Tsiropoulos  *The Testimony of Man*, E. FLN, p.76

 One thing is for sure: that the fight for truth can never be lost. It's like the seed, which, no matter how deep it is hidden in the ground; shall germinate and continue its secret life in other times and for other people.

Matsas  *The Memoirs of Socrates*, Filippotis, p.120

 The revolution that must take place in our times will be guided by truth and only truth, without being hindered by any conventionality or expedience.

Tsirintanis  *Humanism*, vol. 3, SZT, p.66

 Truth always does its work constantly, even though we are late to open our eyes to it.

Vamvounaki  *The rendez-vous with Simone*, Filippotis, p.24

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<sup>1</sup> Pascal Bruckner, author of the book *La Mélancolie démocratique*, with his *Temptation of Innocence*, a sharp sociological study -which won the Médicis prize in 1995- calls innocence “the malady of individualism, which consists of our wish to avoid the consequences of our actions, that is our pursuit to delight in the privileges of freedom, without suffering any of its difficulties. The two strategies of this blissful irresponsibility, therefore the two ways of escaping the difficulty of the existence, are the “infantilism” and the “victimisation”. In the infantilism (where the demand for safety is combined with the greed of no limits), the innocence is meant as a parody of the insouciance and is crystallized in the form of a man eternally immature. In the victimisation, innocence becomes a synonym of what is angelic, it signals the absence of the feeling of culpability and is incarnated in the figure of the self-proclaimed martyr. “The victimisation is also the tendency of the spoilt child in the capitalist ‘paradise’ to belong to the model of the oppressive people”. From this malady of the innocence, of the infantilism and of the victimisation suffers the whole modern world and at all levels: psychological, erotic, family, social, political and national one.

Bookmark- Dimitra Roumboulas

<sup>2</sup> The publication of the title will function as an exemption, publicity or defamation, a slogan for or against, a pretext for gossip! However, it is a typical example of a silent concerto in the domain of books. It should not lose its importance and its value. Those who are really interested, must go to the trouble of reading the six-pages written by the “enraged” parents of Piraeus. They are specific, analytic and realistic, with objective criteria, far from every characterisation, ideology and dogmatism. The last one stay on the surface, without a human face, the depth, where nevertheless lies truth, the simple truth of God.

