



In Absentia

A theatrical play written for the 46th International Byron Conference and
filmed at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Figures

Player I (Teresa, Young Hetadge)

Marialena Xydopoulou

Player II (Servant Boy, Secretary)

Spyros Davidopoulos

Player III (Robespierre, Sulio, Byron)

Dimitris Psomiadis

Chorus

Anastasia Botsoglou

Maria Liakatou

Anastasia Miskaki

Eirini Nathanailidou

Sini Pappa

Direction/Writing

Vasileia Moschou

Music

Stavros Tsotras

Cover

Eirini Nathanailidou

Costumes/Props

Team Byron

Editing

Joseph Moschos

A Tale (Ο Μύθος)

Music: Manos Hadjidakis

Lyrics: Thrasyvoulos Stavrou

I'm going to tell you a tale
that we learned when we were kids (twice)

Once, there was someone
that left for the wilderness (twice)

And ever since, in the mountains,

he lived on hunting (twice)

And out of hatred for women
he didn't come down to the village (twice)

Regarding the tale you are telling us
I'm going to tell you a different one (twice)

Once there was someone
without a home (twice)

For men, he had an aversion
and terrible hatred (twice)

But all women,
he loved them, I think (twice)

The song was usually performed in Greek adaptations of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* due to its suggestive lyrics. The song highlights gender conflict and poses questions regarding the reliability of different narrators.

Director's note

Apart from their striking phonetic similarity, "wars" and "words" relate to one's well-being in remarkable ways: thus, both can inflict physical and psychological pain to people who experience them. However, this wrenching pain turns to deep agony the moment one becomes aware of how futile wars and words can be, when their effects counteract their purposes. On the one hand, the thought that one's transformation from a person living their lives into a person taking or destroying lives can be devastating. On the other, the realisation that words can never really capture reality, and meaning always remains elusive, can cause deep frustration and despair. Yet, although wars can be avoided, communication is impossible to escape. A curse and a blessing, words conceal as much as they reveal. Words are present even when they are "absent".

Special thanks to:

- Dr Maria Schoina, who willingly and effectively assisted as a dramatological advisor,
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for offering the Central Library Amphitheatre for the rehearsals and filming of the performance,
- Tasos Paschalis for his valuable technical assistance.