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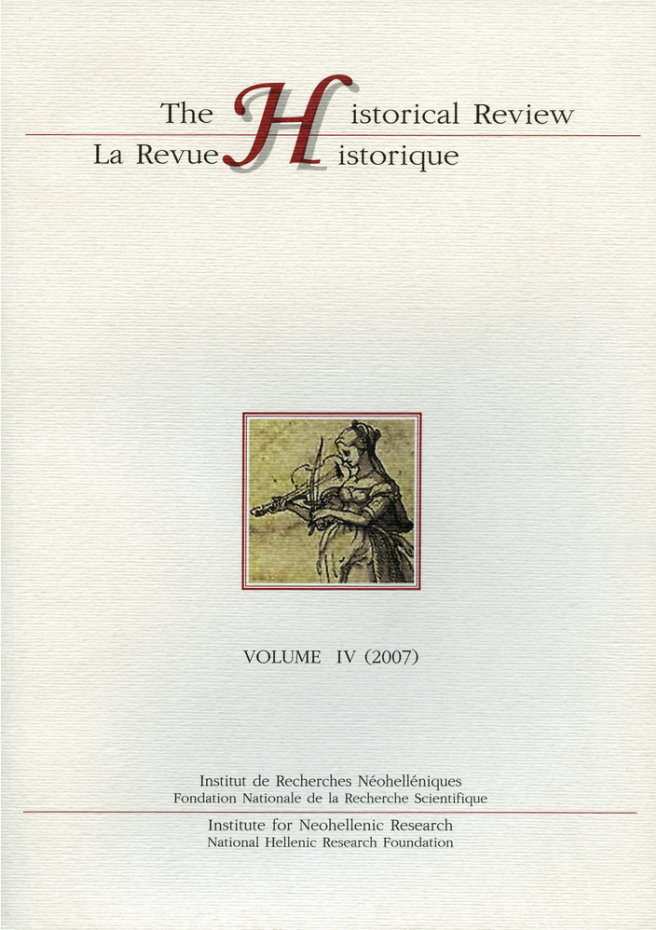

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THE INFLUENCE OF DARWINIAN IDEAS ON GREEK LITERARY WRITERS OF THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES: THE CASE OF EMMANUEL ROIDIS[1]

Maria Zarimis

> *Evolutionism, in one form or another, is the prevailing creed of our time. It dominates our politics, our literature, and not least our philosophy. Nietzsche, pragmatism, Bergson, are phases in its philosophic development, and their popularity far beyond the circles of professional philosophers shows its consonance with the spirit of the age.*[2]

ABSTRACT: Darwin's works provoked an enormous response in many disciplines including the literary world. This paper presents a portion of my doctoral thesis[3], which responds to a blind spot in Greek literary scholarship on evolutionary ideas in comparison to other Western countries. Little work to date focuses on modern Greek writers's responses to Darwinian and other evolutionary ideas. This paper explores the impact of Darwin in selected writings of Emmanuel Roidis and how Roidis satirised Darwinism in his essays and short stories, contributing to the Darwinian discourse on "man's place in nature" and by placing humanity on the same continuum as other primates. The year 2009 marks the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the first publication of his *The Origin of Species*. It is timely, then, to consider Darwin's impact on modern Greek literature.

Darwinian Impact in the Literary World

Literary writers absorbed the implications of the new scientific ideas associated with the theories and ideas found in the key works of the British naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882). These works are *The Origin of Species* (1859) [*OS*], *The Descent of Man* (1871) [*DM*] and *The Expression of the Emotions*

[1] I wish to thank Ms Eleni Molfessi, Chief Librarian at the Institute for Byzantine Research and the Institute for Neohellenic Research at the NHRF (IBE-INE/EIE), Athens. Her expert assistance has greatly contributed to the completion of this paper and my Ph.D. I wish to thank Dr Alfred Vincent for his assistance in editing my translations, particularly those in the katharevousa. (Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this article are my own).

[2] Bertrand Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World as a Field for Scientific Method in Philosophy*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1961 (1914), p. 21, cited by Tom Gibbons, *Rooms in the Darwin Hotel: Studies in English Literary Criticism and Ideas, 1880–1920*, Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1973, pp. 1-2.

[3] Maria Zarimis, *The Influence of Darwinism and Evolutionism in Modern Greek Literature: The Case of Grigorios Xenopoulos*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of New South Wales, Australia, 2007.

in Man and Animals (1872) [*EE*].[4] The work of literary writers has been used by literary commentators to illustrate the impact of evolutionism on Western society. This scholarship is scant in relation to the Greek perspective.

Many writers of fiction were influenced by the primary consequences of Darwinism associated with religion and "man's place in nature".[5] Later, creative writers used a Darwinian or evolutionary approach to address the concepts of class, gender and race which, in the social sciences as well, were major issues in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[6] More specifically, writers in this manner also addressed subjects like eugenics, nurture versus nature, "degeneracy", the "new woman" (associated with the Woman's Movement), atavism and racism, to name a few.

Histories of Modern Greek Literature

Standard histories of modern Greek literature do not discuss the influence of Darwinian thought as an entity on its own. Although they do discuss naturalism, in which Darwinian thought had a formative role, together with

[4] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, London 1859. References in this study are to the following edition: J. W. Burrow (ed.), *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Group, 1968.

— *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, 2 Vols, London: J. Murray, 1871. In this study I have used the 1981 facsimile by Princeton University Press, NJ. It is a photoreproduction of the 1871 edition.

— *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, London 1872. My study refers to the 1969 edition by the University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

[5] The phrase "man's place in nature" is a concept which derived from the nineteenth-century debate of the same name and was adopted by academics as a theme in the discourse on the implications of Darwinian evolutionary thought. It dealt with the Darwinian application of the theory of common descent to humanity, which deprived "man" of his former unique position. English biologist Thomas Huxley (1825-1895) used it as the title of his book published in 1863. When referring to this phrase I have chosen not to change it to "humanity's place in nature" as this loses the background associated with the original phrase.

[6] For further information on the general impact of Darwinism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see David R. Oldroyd, *Darwinian Impacts: An Introduction to the Darwinian Revolution*, Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1980; David Oldroyd and Ian Langham (eds), *The Wider Domain of Evolutionary Thought*, Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983; John C. Greene, *Darwin and the Modern World View*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961; D. F. Bratchell, *The Impact of Darwinism: Texts and Commentary Illustrating Nineteenth Century Religious, Scientific*

many other works in the sciences, such as Claude Bernard's *Introduction to the Study of Medicine* (1865), this role is never mentioned. In fact, Darwin's name is never mentioned directly in connection with Greek literature. I found this to be the case for the following key histories: Roderick Beaton's *Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (1994), P. D. Mastrodimitris' *Εισαγωγή στη νεοελληνική φιλολογία* [Introduction to modern Greek literature] (1974), Linos Politis' *A History of Modern Greek Literature* (1973), Mario Vitti's *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας* [History of modern Greek literature] (1987), C. Th. Dimaras' *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας* [History of modern Greek literature] (first published in 1948) and Ilias Voutieridis' *Σύντομη ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας* [Short history of modern Greek literature] (1933).[7] It should also be noted that numerous foreign literary influences were recorded by literary historians; for example Voutieridis commented on Freudianism, Nietzscheism and other "isms" but not Darwinism.[8] In addition, there was a delay in the reception of Darwinism in Greece, which would have thus also created a delay in its absorption into the Greek literary world.[9]

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and Literary Attitudes, Amersham: Avebury Publishing, 1981; Carl N. Degler, *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Darwinism in American Social Thought*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991; John C. Greene, *Science, Ideology, and World View: Essays in the History of Evolutionary Ideas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

[7] See Roderick Beaton, *Introduction to Modern Greek Literature*, 2nd edn, rev., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999; P. D. Mastrodimitris, *Εισαγωγή στη νεοελληνική φιλολογία*, 7th edn, Athens: Domos, 2005; Linos Politis, *A History of Modern Greek Literature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975 (1973); Mario Vitti, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, Athens: Odysseas, 1987, rev. 2003 (first published in Italian in 1971); C. Th. Dimaras, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας. Από τις πρώτες ρίζες ως την εποχή μας*, 6th edn, Athens: Ikaros, 1975; Ilias Voutieridis, *Σύντομη ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας (1000-1930)*, 2nd edn, Athens: Dimitrios N. Papadimas, 1966. Reference to Darwin's 1859 *OS* occurs in Dimaras' book (p. 648) in a chronological table, found in the final pages of the book, under the heading *Γενική παιδεία* [General culture]. The other headings are *Γενική ιστορία* [General history], *Ελληνική ιστορία* [Greek history] and *Ελληνική παιδεία* [Greek culture]. These timelines cover the world and Greek history and culture of the period 1453-1940. A similar chronological table is found in Politis' book, also in the final pages of the book, which also notes Darwin's *OS* (p. 291). The table dates range from the ninth century AD to 1971.

[8] Voutieridis, *Σύντομη ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, pp. 231-255.

[9] On the general reception of Darwinism in Greece and reasons for its delay see Costas Krimbas, "Ο Δαρβινισμός στην Ελλάδα. Τα πρώτα βήματα. Η αλληλογραφία Χελδράιχ-Δαρβίνου, Μηλιαράκης, Νικολαΐδης, Ζωχιός, Σούγκρας" [Darwinism in Greece: the first steps: the correspondence of Heldreich-Darwin, Miliarakis, Nicolaidis, Zochios, Sougras], *Θραύσματα κατόπτρου* [Mirror fragments], Athens: Themelio, 1993, pp. 81-108. This

Darwin's Works

It is worth just briefly discussing aspects of Darwin's works which are relevant to the works of Roidis. Darwin was the founder of modern evolutionism, the science of evolutionary biology, that is the study by which living organisms have developed following the origin of life. His *OS* (1859) provided the basic argument for evolution by proposing a mechanism of change in animals and plants, that is, natural selection. This is a process in the life of every generation by which individuals who are not sufficiently fit are eliminated from the population; whereas the individuals with certain heritable traits, who survive the environment, will pass on those traits to their offspring.

The concept of natural selection was new and it revolutionised thinking, not only in science, but also in many other disciplines in a way no other evolutionary theory had previously done. Darwin's ideas were to go against the prevailing ideas of his time. This was because, according to his theory, the creation of life did not rely on a designer or creator as evolution via natural selection functioned without one. For this reason Darwin delayed discussing the origin of humanity in the *OS*, in which he spoke of living things, animals and plants in general, leaving humanity until the *DM* (1871).[10]

Darwin's theory eliminated the idea of a teleological force, which was supposed to lead to a higher perfection. This belief, which originated with the

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essay is a revised version and is used in this study. For earlier versions see *Τα Ιστορικά* 2 (1984), pp. 335-348; *Materia Medica Greca* X, no. 5 (1982), pp. 465-471. See further on Darwinism and also on its history in Greece his *Δαρβινικά* [Darwinian issues], Athens: Ermis, 1986, and his *Εκτείνοντας τον Δαρβινισμό και άλλα δοκίμια* [Extending Darwinism and other essays], Athens: Nefeli, 1998. I wish to thank Professor Krimbas for sending me a copy of these last two books. For the delay of Darwinism in modern Greek literature and lack of literary scholarship see Maria Zarimis, "Darwinism in Modern Greek Literature and a Re-reading of Grigorios Xenopoulos' *Πλούσιοι και φτωχοί*" [Rich and poor], *Proceedings of the Third Pan-European Conference of the European Society of Modern Greek Studies*, Bucharest, June 2006 (forthcoming).

[10] Darwin "had lost his orthodox belief and come to the conclusion, which he retained to the end of his life, that questions of ultimate causes and purposes were an insoluble mystery." See J. W. Burrow (ed.), "Editor's Introduction", in Darwin, *OS*, p. 24. Also, so as not to incense the Church in his *OS* and *DM* he attempted to avoid discussion in his work of the metaphysical. He did not succeed with this because there are contradictory elements which make reference to a creator or which imply a creator in his theory of evolution. See *ibid.*, pp. 458-460. In his *DM* Darwin not only placed natural selection in the context of humanity, but he also propounded the theory of sexual selection, which is the selection of certain attributes in a sexual partner to promote the chance of the fittest offspring. Sexual selection also featured as a theme in literary works and is covered in my thesis.

ancient Greeks,[11] still continued in various non-Darwinian theories after Darwin's theory of natural selection. Darwinian evolution was often misinterpreted as leading to a greater perfection, particularly due to some of the contradictory or unclear comments found in his books.[12] Natural selection occurs firstly due to the variation of species and this is due to chance (that is, it is random). However, the actual selection process, it must be realised, is not random but directional.

Perhaps the most devastating aspect of Darwin's theory for humanity was the affirmation in his *DM*, and later in his *EE*, of mankind's common descent from one progenitor, in alignment with animals. Religion and philosophy had always placed humans above and distinctly separate from other living beings, whereas Darwinian evolution placed us close to the apes. On mental abilities Darwin maintained:

> [...] the difference in mind between man and the higher animals, great as it is, is certainly one of degree and not kind. We have seen that the senses and intuitions, the various emotions and faculties such as love, memory, attention, curiosity, imitation, reason, etc, of which man boasts, may be found in an incipient, or even sometimes in a well-developed condition, in the lower animals [...]. The ennobling belief in God is not universal with man; and the belief in actual spiritual agencies naturally follows from his other mental powers.[13]

The following passage from Darwin's "Introduction" in the *EE* sums up his approach:

> No doubt as long as man and all other animals are viewed as independent creations, an effectual stop is put to our natural desire to investigate as far as possible the causes of Expression [...] With mankind some expressions, such as the bristling of the hair under the influence of extreme terror, or the uncovering of the teeth under that of furious rage, can hardly be understood, except on the belief that man once existed in a much lower and animal-like condition. The community of certain expressions is distinct though allied species, as in the movements of the same facial muscles during laughter by man and by various monkeys, is rendered somewhat more intelligible, if we believe in their descent from

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[11] Prior to Darwin, as far back as Plato, species ("εἰδη", kinds or types) were argued as being stable and invariable. However, the debate associated with their constancy began in the eighteenth century, and transformation and transmutation were terms utilised in science well before Darwin.

[12] Darwin, *OS*, p. 459.

[13] Darwin, *DM*, Vol. I, pp. 105-106.

> a common progenitor. He who admits on general grounds that the structure and habits of all animals have been gradually evolved, will look at the whole subject of Expression in a new and interesting light.[14]

On Race

Darwin makes no specific reference to man in the *OS*. He speaks collectively of all the animal species, implying humanity is included. And so, the complete title of his book implies that species and race are interchangeable for both man and lower animals, that is: *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. Further to this, Darwin in his *DM* used the terms "race" and "species" and "sub-species" according to the topic of his discussion, often using them interchangeably. For example, when he discussed the "variability of body and mind in man" he stated: "[...] the present discussion [...] bears on the origin of the different races or species of mankind, whichever term may be preferred".[15]

It was difficult for Darwin to maintain consistency in his discussions in the *DM* because he spoke as a naturalist, often comparing specific groups of man to species of lower animals. In addition, Darwin in the *DM* explored extensively the "Arguments in favour of, and opposed to, ranking the so-called races of man as distinct species".[16] Darwin, of course, did not have the knowledge of modern genetic studies to facilitate speciation and his evolutionary theory was controversial. As he stated:

> Those who do not admit the principle of evolution, must look at species either as separate creations or as in some manner distinct entities; and they must decide what forms to rank as species by the analogy of other organic beings which are commonly thus received. But it is a hopeless endeavour to decide this point on sound grounds, until some definition of the term "species" is generally accepted; and the definition must not include an element which cannot possibly be ascertained, such as an act of creation.[17]

This problem of speciation resulted in observations which placed man's evolutionary ancestors under the same umbrella as certain ethnic races. Darwin suggested that classification did not matter. He pointed out: "[...] it is almost a matter of indifference whether the so-called races of man are thus designated,

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[14] Darwin, *EE*, p. 12.
[15] Darwin, *DM*, Vol. I, p. 108.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 217-235.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

or are ranked as species or sub-species; but the latter term appears the most appropriate".[18] The racial discourse of the time was fuelled by Darwin's ideas. Darwin's writing on the races of man would later be misconstrued to sanction racial prejudice.

Darwin's works managed to shift "man's place in nature" in relation to the remainder of the animal kingdom. This was from a position of anthropocentricity and exclusivity to a position on the evolutionary continuum of all life. This of course was at odds with the Church's view of creationism and immutability. These ideas, also touching on the racial discourse, will be explored in this paper in relation to Roidis' work.

Emmanuel Roidis

Extensive satire on Darwinian theory can be found in the works of Emmanuel Roidis (1836-1904). His formal background was literature and philosophy, which he studied in Berlin. In 1871, Roidis in an essay specifically mentioned that he was reading Darwin when he received a collection of comedies from Angelos Vlachos.[19] He states:

> [...] έτυχον βυθισμένος, αγνοώ πώς, εις τας θεωρίας της δαρβινείου σχολής. Προ δύο ήδη μηνών αχώριστοι σύντροφοί μου ήσαν ο Vogt, ο Δαρβίνος, ο Büchner, ο Lamarck, ο Moleschott και άλλοι όσοι φιλοτιμούνται ν' αποδείξωσι τον Σολομώντα δικαίως ισχυριζόμενον ότι *ο άνθρωπος "κατ' ουδέν επερίσσευσε του κτήνους", και μεταξύ ημών και των προγόνων ημών πιθήκων, πλην της ουράς, ουδεμία άλλη υπάρχει ουσιώδης διαρορά.* Τα επιχειρήματα των κυρίων τούτων μ' έπειθον μεν ενίοτε, αλλά πάντοτε μ' ελύπουν· η δε αδημονία μου εκορυφούτο, οσάκις ανελίσσων λεξικόν φυσικής ιστορίας εύρισκον τον άνθρωπον οριζόμενον εκεί, "ζώον σπονδυλωτόν, ανήκον εις το γένος των μαστοφόρων και το είδος των διχείρων, πλατώνυχον, παμφάγον κ.τ.λ." Εις τοιαύτην εξευτελιστικήν κατάταξιν ή μάλλον καταδίκην, αδύνατόν μοι ήτο να κύψω αγογγύστως τον αυχένα, και νυχθήμερον ησχολούμην εις αναζήτησιν διακριτικού τινος γνωρίσματος, χωρίζο-

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 235.

[19] Note that in 1877 Angelos Vlachos and Roidis would battle regarding two issues: the first is whether "a poet is born or made"; the second is the status of Greek poetry, whether it has a future or not. The first issue touches on the work of scientists such as the Darwinian Francis Galton (Darwin's first cousin). The issue of the status of Greek poetry was part of a much broader discussion to which many Greek writers contributed. Palamas also talks about Greek poetry using Darwinian and other evolutionary ideas. For the controversy on Greek poetry and on Palamas see Zarimis, *The Influence of Darwinism and Evolutionism in Modern Greek Literature*, pp. 223-225, 75-86.

> ντος τον άνθρωπον από των λοιπών μαστοφόρων. Εφυλλομέτρησα εν πρώτοις τους δήθεν αναιρέσαντας τας δαρβινείους και βουχνεριανάς θεωρίας, τον Quatrefages, τον Janet και τον καρδινάλιον Καλοπράγμονα (Bonnechose)· αλλά παρ' αυτοίς ουδέν άλλο εύρον ειμή εμπαθείς μόνον αγορεύσεις εκάστου υπέρ βωμών και εστιών, υπέρ του *αμεταβλήτου των ειδών*, της ευθύνης του ανθρώπου και της κοσμικής εξουσίας του πάπα.[20] [my italics]
>
> [...] I happened to have become immersed, I don't know how, in the theories of the Darwinian school. For two months already my inseparable companions had been Vogt, Darwin, Büchner, Lamarck, Moleschott and others who aspire to prove Solomon was right in asserting that man "has in no way surpassed the animals", and that there is no substantial difference between us and our ancestors the apes apart from the tail. The arguments of these gentlemen convinced me at times, but always grieved me; and my anxiety came to a head whenever I leafed through a dictionary of natural history and found man defined there as "a vertebrate animal, belonging to the genus of mammals and to the species of the bimanous, broad-nailed, omnivorous etc". Faced with this insulting classification or rather condemnation, it was impossible for me to bow my head in silence, and night and day I devoted myself in pursuit of some distinguishing characteristic, separating man from the remaining mammals. I searched first of all in the works of writers who claimed to have disproved the Darwinian and Büchnerian theories, namely Quatrefages, Janet and the Cardinal Bonnechose, but in them I could find nothing beyond impassioned rhetoric in support of faith and fatherland, the immutability of species, the responsibilty of man and the temporal power of the pope.

Roidis would have been reading a copy of the *DM* (1871), which in part one of the book dealt with the "Descent of man from lower form", the

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[20] Emmanuel Roidis, "Αγγέλου Βλάχου κωμωδίαι" [Angelos Vlachos' comedies] (1871), *Άπαντα* [Complete works], Vol. II: *1868-1879*, ed. Alkis Angelou, Athens: Ermis, 1978, p. 28. The natural scientists Carl Vogt (1817-1895), Ludwig Büchner (1824-1899) and Jacob Moleschott (1822-1893) were known as the scientific German materialists. Vogt, a Darwinian, is cited by Darwin in the *DM* on a number of occasions, in his introduction. Jean Louis Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau was a French natural scientist who corresponded with Darwin, who refers to some of his studies in his *DM*. Quatrefages though opposed Darwin's evolutionary theory. Henri-Marie-Gaston Boisnormand de Bonnechose (1800-1883) was a French cardinal who between 1869 and 1870 participated in the First Vatican Council. The citing by Solomon alludes to a possible biblical reference. Roidis provides a literal translation in Greek for "Bonnechose", as a play on words.

"Comparison of the mental powers of man and lower animals" and the "Manner of development of man from some lower form".[21]

In the passage cited above Roidis claims to have felt an exaggerated anguish when he read Darwin and the other advocates of evolution, which if interpreted as satire is typically his form of writing. The view that man was no different from the ape, minus the tail, caused Roidis endless searching for characteristics which would differentiate man from other mammals. As seen in the passage, the searching only leads him to rhetorical polemic by anti-Darwinians, that Darwin triggered predictable reponses among conservatives who saw their beliefs threatened.[22] The essay continues with Roidis searching for answers to the differences between man and beast. This issue was widely debated and researched in this period by scientists and intellectuals, which produced significant literary discourse.[23]

At various stages in his writing, as Georganta and Bezas have noted, Roidis ponders upon this issue.[24] The comparison of animal and man is a universal theme of satire, which in Roidis' case was bolstered by the Darwinian ideas of the time.[25] Further to this, Georganta indicates that Darwinian theory "κατέχει ξεχωριστή θέση στο έργο του Ροΐδη [...] και δίνει έναν ακόμη κρίκο για τη σύνδεσή του με τον νατουραλισμό" [occupies a special place in the work of Roidis […] and gives one more link for its connection with naturalism].[26]

In her article "From Aristotle to Darwin", Georganta discusses a study on laughter which Roidis incorporated into his critique of the comedies by

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[21] Darwin, *DM*, pp. 9-157. As Roidis completed his schooling at a Greek-American high school and then studied philosophy and literature in Berlin, thereby knowing English and German, one would argue that he read both the *OS* and the *DM* in one of these languages. In German, the *OS* was first published in 1860 and the *DM* in 1871.

[22] His distaste for papal secular power is reflected in his novel *Η Πάπισσα Ιωάννα* [Pope Joan] (1866), which is a wicked satire about a woman who disguises herself as the pope.

[23] For literary works dealing with this theme see Leo Henkin, *Darwinism in the English Novel: The Impact of Evolution on Victorian Fiction*, New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1963, pp. 83-111.

[24] Athina Georganta, *Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης. Η πορεία προς την Πάπισσα Ιωάννα (1860-1865)* [Emmanuel Roidis: the course towards Pope Joan (1860-1865)], Athens: Istos, 1993, p. 274. Also by Georganta, "Από τον Αριστοτέλη στον Δαρβίνο" [From Aristotle to Darwin], *Το Βήμα* (11 January 2004), p. 43; Donatos Bezas, "Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης" [Emmanuel Roidis], in N. Vagenas, G. Dallas and K. Stergiopoulos (eds), *Η παλαιότερη πεζογραφία, 1830-1880* [The oldest prose, 1830-1880], Vol. V, Athens: Sokolis, 1997, pp. 26-27.

[25] Georganta, *Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης*, p. 274; Georganta, "Από τον Αριστοτέλη στον Δαρβίνο", p. 43; Bezas, "Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης", pp. 26-27.

[26] Georganta, *Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης*, p. 274.

Angelos Vlachos. So it is highly relevant that Roidis was reading Darwin when he received Vlachos' work. It appears that Roidis' study was prompted by his Darwinian readings, which led to his investigation of the distinguishing characteristics in man which make him human. Roidis synthesised the theories of various ancient philosophers, such as Aristotle, who believed that man is the only animal capable of laughter, with trends in science. Roidis, as Georganta observes, concluded that "ο άνθρωπος 'γελά' και τα ζώα δεν 'γελώσιν'. Εν τω γέλωτι λοιπόν, και εν αυτώ μόνω έγκειται η μεταξύ ανθρώπου και κτήνους διαφορά." [man "laughs" and animals don't "laugh". In laughter, then, and there only lies the difference between man and beast.] (p. 30). As he states: "Απ' εναντίας νήφων και σπουδάζων ομολογώ ότι κατ' εμέ η ιδιότης, ην έχει ο άνθρωπος του εμπαίζειν και κωμωδείν αυτός εαυτόν και παν ό,τι εν στιγμαίς ηθικής μέθης ορέγεται και λατρεύει, καθιστά αυτόν ανώτερον του κτήνους." [On the contrary, in all sobriety and seriousness I will confess that for me what makes man superior to the animals is his capacity to laugh at himself, and at everything which he aspires to and worships in moments of moral inebriation.][27] He goes on to have his final say on this in this essay: "Λαοί τινες της Ανατολής, οι Αιθίοπες λ.χ. και οι Φελλάχοι, καίτοι εν πολλοίς κρείττονες ημών, στερούνται του σκωπτικού τούτου χαρίσματος· αλλά και ο εγκέφαλος αυτών, κατά τας νεωτάτας ανθρωπολογικάς ερεύνας, κατ' ουδέν σχεδόν διαφέρει των πιθήκων." [Some peoples of the Orient, the Ethiopians for instance, and the Fellahin, although in many ways better than us, lack this gift of mockery; but also their brain, according to the latest anthropological research, scarcely differs from that of the apes.][28]

The passage reveals Roidis' knowledge of the anthropological studies of his time although the source of his information, or rather what we now know as his misinformation regarding the Ethiopians and the Fellahin,[29] is unknown. Also it is not clear how seriously one should take him. With its origins in Lamarck and Darwin, the racial biology of the human race was a study which provided information on "racial variation in physical and psychological traits in the human species".[30] Internationally numerous social and scientific theories emerged in the 1800s to highlight the inequality of races within the human race

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[27] Roidis, "Αγγέλου Βλάχου κωμωδίαι", p. 30.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] The Fellahin are peasants or agricultural workers in Egypt.

[30] Nancy Stepan, "Biological Degeneration: Races and Proper Places", in J. Edward Chamberlain and Sander L. Gilman (eds), *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, p. 97.

such as that of Louis Agassiz (1807-1873). Scientists believed that due to similarities between man and animal, human races like animal species tended to localise in certain areas in the world. "Signs of inferiority" within a race were taken to indicate that the race was degenerate.[31] In the passage, Roidis could again be satirising the idea that the scope of one's intelligence was determined by race and by certain features of one's cranium (as perceived by the popular craniological studies of the time).

These ideas, which were popular at the time, were also seen in the *DM*. As mentioned earlier, Darwin dedicates two chapters in the *DM* to the "Comparison of the mental powers of man and the lower animals", where he writes on issues such as the emotions, imitation and language. It should come as no surprise then that having read Darwin and his supporter, Carl Vogt, whose craniological studies Darwin refers to in the *DM*, Roidis was able to make these comments, though they are somewhat different from those of Darwin.[32]

Roidis would also have known that in the last paragraph of Darwin's introduction to the *DM* (p. 5), Darwin mentions that he had wanted to add his study on the "expressions of the various emotions by man and lower animals". Darwin was drawn to the work by prominent anatomist Sir Charles Bell. In Darwin's words, Bell "maintain[ed] that man is endowed with certain muscles solely for the sake of expressing his emotions" (p. 4). This view was "obviously opposed to the belief that man is descended from some other and lower form"; so Darwin needed time to consider it. He also wanted to "ascertain how far the emotions are expressed in the same manner by different races of man" (p. 4). For these two reasons he excluded the study and the following year in 1872 he published the book *EE*. Anticipation of this next book of Darwin's would have sent the scholarly world buzzing with controversial discourse. I would imagine that Roidis' disquisition on laughter was his contribution to such discourse.

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[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

[32] See *DM*, Vol. I. Here Darwin refers to Vogt's study "Memoire sur les microcéphales" of 1867, when making the following comments. "The principle of *Imitation* is strong in man, and especially in man in a barbarous state […] no animal voluntarily imitates an action performed by man, until in the ascending scale we come to monkeys, which are well-known to be ridiculous mockers" (p. 44, italics in original). Also "[…] on the subject of imitation, the strong tendency in our nearest allies, the monkeys, in microcephalous idiots, and in the barbarous races of mankind, to imitate whatever they hear deserves notice" (pp. 56-57). Also "[he] refer[s] to the arrested brain-development of microcephalous idiots, as described in Vogt's great memoir [at least 200 pages]. Their skulls are smaller […] but they are much given to imitation" (p. 121).

Following from this would come Roidis' undated short story "Ιστορία ενός πιθήκου" [Story of an ape].[33] Simos Menardos regarded it a "σύνοψι[ς] του Δαρβινισμού" [synopsis of Darwinism].[34] Georganta and Bezas acknowledge Menardos' comment, but neither elaborates on the short story.[35] However, it appears to be more specifically a satire based on Roidis' presumed readings of the *DM*, dealing with the comparisons and differences between man and ape. I argue that Roidis draws from the *DM* to satirise Darwin's comments on "the principle of *Imitation*" as being strong in man, and so monkeys which are close to man in kinship are known to be "ridiculous mockers".[36] It touches also on the concept of mutability of species as described in the *OS*.

As indicated by Bezas, the satire *Ο πίθηκος Ξουθ* [The ape Xouth] (1848) by Iakovos Pitsipios was possibly one stimulus in the realisation of Roidis' short story in question.[37] Roidis' story, however, is reminiscent of other satires such as Thomas Love Peacock's novel *Melincourt* (1817), where an ape named Sir Oran Haut-ton is introduced to polite society.[38] In relation to the "Story of an ape", Roidis, considered one of the few key Greek prose satirists of the nineteenth century, does not appear to have been placed within the context of European and British writers of his time.[39] It is appropriate that this is dealt with here specifically on the topic of man's relationship with animals. Gillian

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[33] Emmanuel Roidis, "Ιστορία ενός πιθήκου" [Story of an ape], *Άπαντα*, Vol. V: *1894-1904*, pp. 347-353. Note that a short story entitled "Η δίκη των πιθήκων" [The trial of the apes], published in 1881 by Zisimos Typaldos (1839-1907) is a satire along similar lines. I would like to thank Professor Costas Krimbas for kindly sending me a copy of the story.

[34] Simos Menardos, *Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης* [Emmanuel Roidis], Athens: Kollaros, 1918, p. 20. Menardos comments that in the story Roidis "προσπαθεί ν' αφανίση πάσαν από του ανθρώπου διαφοράν παριστάνων τον πίθηκον Θωμάν υπηρέτην και το κωμικότερον βιβλιοφύλακα ενός ευθύμου ευπατρίδου" [is attempting to remove all the differences man has by portraying Thomas the ape as a servant and comical librarian of a spirited nobleman]. Menardos claims that Roidis was able to avenge opponents at the National Library with this satire.

[35] Georganta, "Από τον Αριστοτέλη στον Δαρβίνο", p. 43; Bezas, "Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης", p. 27.

[36] Darwin, *DM*, Vol. I, p. 44, italics in original.

[37] Bezas, "Εμμανουήλ Ροΐδης", p. 27. See also Nasos Vagenas, "Ο πίθηκος Ξουθ" [The ape Xouth], *Η ειρωνική γλώσσα* [The ironic language], Athens: Stigmi, 1994, pp. 222-223.

[38] Thomas Love Peacock, "Melincourt", *The Works of Thomas Love Peacock*, London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1824 (1817). *Melincourt* was translated into French soon after its publication. William Hauff wrote a short story, "The Young Englishman", with a similar idea.

[39] Beaton, *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature*, p. 52. On Roidis' one novel, his satirical masterpiece *Pope Joan,* there has been substantial commentary.

Beer, in her paper "Satire, Voice, and Nineteenth-Century Science", indicates that "a repeated topic in later nineteenth century satire within and without science is the fraught debate concerning possible kinship between man and the animals, particularly in its evolutionist frame".[40]

Beer discusses the other themes of satire associated with Darwinism and the reasons why satires arise. She states that at the end of the nineteenth century "language [...] is taken as the distinguishing feature between the human and the animal".[41] This is one of the main features which is satirised in Roidis' short story. She notes the "usual" theme of mimicry of man by ape in satire but analyses in detail a rather subtle satire of the mimicry of ape by man, based on an excerpt from the *DM*.[42] As Beer indicates, "the human family tree" was commonly satirised, revealing "a queasy uneasy anxiety about humanity's unique status" regarding any resemblance of the ape to man.[43] This is reflected in Roidis' story when admirers liken Thomas the ape's portrait to not just any person, but to members of the aristocracy. Further to Beer's argument, satire, she says, "is often the product of anxiety: a means of warding off disagreeable insights. In that guise it is a conservative weapon, drawing on 'common sense' – that set of current assumptions presented as instinctive wisdom".[44] Satire, according to Beer, "had important and acknowledged functions in nineteenth century science".[45] Beer argues that attack, the most likely quality of satire,

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[40] G. Beer, "Satire, Voice, and Nineteenth-Century Science", in Tina Krontiri and Katerina Kitsi-Mytakou (eds), *Η λογοτεχνία και οι προϋποθέσεις της. Τιμητικό αφιέρωμα στην Τζίνα Πολίτη* [Literature and its presuppostions: honourable dedication to Jina Politi], Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1999, p. 270. See also the two chapters "Satires on Evolution and the 'Monkey Theory'" and "Satires on Darwinism" in Leo Henkin, *Darwinism in the English Novel*, pp. 76-111; and Roslynn D. Haynes, *From Faust to Strangelove: Representations of the Scientist in Western Literature*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994. In dealing with how scientists are perceived, Haynes also intrinsically examines the satires which arose due to Darwinism. For an example of this see p. 119 of her book.

[41] Beer, "Satire, Voice, and Nineteenth-Century Science", p. 271. In this paper, it is worth noting that Beer examines a poem entitled "Monkeyana" and an associated picture of a gorilla wearing a placard which says "Am I a man and a brother?". It was published in the English magazine *Punch* in 1861 and although the poet was initially anonymous (he signed the poem Gorilla) it was later discovered that it was written and illustrated by geologist and taxonomist Philip Egerton (1806-1881). It is a satire of an ape who, naturally, is unable to speak, but is able to write. In the poem the ape is questioning his status on the evolutionary ladder, particularly in relation to man (pp. 273-276).

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 276-277.

[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 280.

permitted scholars "to think in opposition to themselves and their tenets".[46] Through satire, Beer indicates that "scepticism is endemic".[47] Satire becomes a means to arouse enquiry and debate on issues.[48]

In "Story of an ape", Roidis through a third person narrator, as omniscient observer, tells the clever and wickedly funny tale of Thomas, an ape of the species "Chimpagni" (a spoof on biological names), who is highly revered and lives with his owner, the banker and archaeologist Baron Dimitrios Kuste. The story highlights the fact that the ape cannot talk but that he can imitate humans in his behaviour. The baron has Thomas painted by the famous artist Izola (presumably a play on the word Zola, who, as the French naturalist writer, aimed in his work to "paint" life in microscopic detail, no matter how ugly it was). Thomas, who as the narrator clearly says, "ωμοίαζεν εν συνόλω όλους τους πιθήκους" [completely resembled all apes],[49] has admirers of his portrait believing he resembled individual members of the aristocracy, such as a countess and a female poet.

When sick with a cold he has the best Italian doctor: "διά να ποτίση την μαϊμού του χαμόμηλα, θηριακήν και θερμόν οίνον" [so as to hydrate his monkey with camomile, theriac and warm wine].[50] The baron invites those who do not believe that Thomas is worthy of such treatment to his mansion for a lavish celebration of the ape's name day, St Thomas' day (the patron saint of doubters). At the reception Thomas' physical, moral and spiritual attributes are wryly observed. The baron attempts to make Thomas appear human. Thomas mimicks his owner in dress, and in his aristocratic airs:

> Όταν το εσπέρας μετέβημεν εις το Κούστειον μέγαρον, έσπευσε πλην του οικοδεσπότου να δεξιωθή ημάς και ο πίθηκος Θωμάς τείνων κατά μίμησιν του κυρίου του εις έκαστον ημών την χείρα [...] είχεν ενδυθή την στολήν του αξιώματός του, φράκον από κυανούν βελούδον, ερυθρόν βραίον και λαιμοδέτην εκ τριχάπτου και καμέλιαν εις την κομβιοδόχην [...] ήτο όσον εύμορφος δύναται να ήναι πίθηκος. Αν δεν εφοβούμην να μη θεωρηθώ αντιφάσκων, θα έλεγα ότι ήτο εύμορφος ασχημομούρης. Και τοιαύτα μεν ήσαν τα εξωτερικά, τα δε ηθικά και πνευματικά προσόντα του Θωμά ήσαν πολύ ανώτερα τούτων. [pp. 349-350]

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[46] *Ibid.*, p. 279.

[47] *Ibid.*

[48] Note that Roidis' novel *Pope Joan*, which takes a satirical stance against the Church, would certainly have been fuelled by Roidis' readings of the *OS*. He was writing about Darwinism in 1867.

[49] Roidis, "Ιστορία ενός πιθήκου", p. 348.

[50] *Ibid.*

> In the evening, when we arrived at Kuste's mansion, the master of the house hurried up to welcome us, and with him the ape Thomas, who extended his hand to each of us in imitation of his master […] He had donned the uniform of his office, a frock coat blue velvet, red breeches, a lace necktie and a camelia in his buttonhole […] he was as handsome as an ape could possibly be. If I was not afraid to being considered contradictory, I would say that he was handsome with an ugly snout. And these were merely his external features; Thomas' moral and intellectual qualities were far superior to these.

The baron, determined to prove to his guests Thomas' deserved "status", eagerly asks Thomas to relay to them how his previous owner abandoned him on the street. What follows is a comic "dialogue" between the baron and Thomas, in front of the guests. Thomas proceeds to carry out a complicated mime of the relevant events leading to his abandonment. The baron, who does not appear fazed by the fact that the ape cannot speak, improvises by speaking for the ape.

Roidis satirises the ape's intellectual proximity to man by presenting Thomas as the baron's "fine" librarian. Thomas' library duties are described, which in reality are only capabilities within the scope of a trained ape. His owner has trained him to imitate the stance and gait of those visitors known to them. So that when a known visitor arrives to use the library, Thomas is able to imitate the person to the baron who then decides whether this person is allowed in. The baron, by sound association and a long cane pointer, is able to direct the ape to the book that he wants retrieved. The very high bookshelves are not an access problem for Thomas, who, according to the narrator, was "σπουδάσας πιθανώς κατά την παιδικήν του ηλικίαν την αναρριχητικήν τέχνην" [probably educated in his younger years in the art of climbing] (p. 352). The ape's duties are mocked further by the narrator with this final comment on the issue:

> Πράγματι η ταχύτης της προσαγωγής του βιβλίου και η απόσεισις του κονιορτού και του θορύβου πατημάτων είναι τα πρώτα και απαραίτητα προς μελέτην εφόδια, προκαλώ δε τον Έφορον της Λαυρεωτικής[51] να μου επιδείξη ένα μόνον βιβλιοφύλακα δυνάμενον να συγκριθή με τον ιδικόν μου. [p. 352]
>
> Indeed the alacrity with which he fetches the book and his shaking off the dust and the clatter of his feet are the first and essential qualities

[51] The chief librarian in the municipality would have held a rather important and dignified position. Calling on the chief to find a finer librarian than Thomas is mocking the chief himself.

> worthy of study and I challenge the director of the Lavrion Library to show me a single librarian comparable with mine.

The satire's culminating scene occurs when the baron overindulges in food and wine, and suffers severe indigestion for three days. The doctor arrives with a vial of medicine which, when taken orally, will cause the patient to shake violently and so facilitate digestion, thereby avoiding death. According to the doctor, there is a danger that the patient may not be able to survive the shaking. What then occurs is seen in the following passage:

> [...] ο πίθηκος ήρπασεν από της τραπέζης το ιατρικόν, ανέβη επί ερμαρίου και ήρχισε να παρατηρή αυτό μετά προσοχής, να το οσφραίνεται και έπειτα ν' αποστρέφη το πρόσωπον μετ' αηδίας, να κοιτάζη τον ασθενή και να σείη την κεφαλήν ως συμβουλεύων αυτόν να μη λάβη το δύσοσμον ιατρικόν. Επί τέλους, ήρχισε να κινή την φιάλην άνω και κάτω, ως αν είχεν αναγνώσει επί της επιγραφής αυτής το στερεότυπον: "Ανακίνησον πριν ή λάβης". Η παντομίμα ήτο εις τοιούτον βαθμόν εκφραστική και υπερφύως κωμική, ώστε δύο εκ των παρισταμένων φίλων του ασθενούς κατελήφθησαν υπό γέλωτος ακρατήτου και σπασμωδικού. Ο γέλως ούτος εξερράγη ως βόμβα, μετεδόθη ως πυρκαϊά, κατέλαβε τους προσελθόντας υπηρέτας και επί τέλους και αυτόν τον επιθανάτιον βαρώνον, τόσον ακράτητος και σφοδρός, ώστε ήρκεσε να προκαλέση τον επιδιωκόμενον διά του δραστικού κλονισμόν και να σώση τον ασθενή. [p. 353]

> [...] the ape grabbed the medicine from the table; climbed onto a cabinet and started to examine it carefully; he would smell it and then avert his face in disgust; looking at the patient and shaking his head as if to advise him not to take the foul-smelling medicine. Finally he started to shake the bottle up and down, as if he had read the stock formula: "Shake the bottle before taking" on its label. The pantomime was so expressive and so extraordinarily comic that two of the patient's friends standing nearby were overcome by uncontrollable, convulsive laughter. This laughter exploded like a bomb, spread like fire, took hold of the servants who had come up and finally also, the dying baron himself; it was so intense and uncontrollable that it was sufficient to bring on the shock which was the purpose of the potion and hence save the patient's life.

The baron and other observers of the ape's buffoonery finally see the ape's ability, as an animal, to mock man by imitating him. However, the response of laughter only serves to highlight, at that time, the perceived absurdity of man's close kinship with the ape. Roidis juxtaposes cleverly what he sees as a unique attribute of man, that is his ability to laugh, with the ape's ability to imitate

man and his inability to speak. The concept of mimicry is directly linked to and elaborated in Darwin's book the *DM*. Roidis argues in his study that only man is capable of laughter and the more the laughter, the more human one becomes.[52] As indicated earlier, the concept of expressions is mentioned in anticipation of the *EE*, which will include the expression of laughter in man and the ape.

The short story also relates to another aspect of Darwin's concepts, which arises in the *OS*: namely, the mutability of the species. The narrator makes a point of describing the baron's zoological museum, "η μάλλον αληθής κιβωτός του Νώε, διότι τα ζώα ήσαν ζωντανά" [or rather a real Noah's ark because the animals were alive] (p. 349). He goes on to describe the animals:

> Είχεν εικοσιεπτά σκύλους παντός είδους και μεγέθους, από του ποιμενικού μολοσσού των Απεννίνων μέχρι του κυναρίου της Μάλτας και της Αυλής του βασιλέως της Αγγλίας Καρόλου, και γάτας αναριθμήτους, της Αγκύρας, της Τάρμας, τριχρόους της Ισπανίας και χρυσότριχας της Περσίας. Ο Κούστε δύναται να θεωρηθή Ιωάννης ο πρόδρομος της σήμερον ακμαζούσης γατοφιλίας. Αλλά το προ πάντων αξιοθαύμαστον ήτο η εντός παραρτήματος του υαλοφράκτου θερμοκηπίου μοναδική συλλογή παντοίων υπερποντίων πτηνών από δύο μεγαλοπρεπών στρουθοκαμήλων μέχρι των θαμβούντων την όρασιν μικροσκοπικών κολυβρίων, τα οποία ηδύνατό τις να παρομοιάση προς πετώντας σμαράγδους και σαπφείρους. Όλον το πτερωτόν, τον πτιλωτόν και τριχώτον τούτο γένος ετρέφετο και υπηρετείτο δαπανή ιδιαιτέρου προϋπολογισμού, ανερχομένου εις ικανάς χιλιάδας λιρών, τον οποίον παρουσίαζε κατά μήνα ιδιαίτερος υπάληλλος, φέρων των τίτλων "Επιμελητού των ζώων", εις την αυτού εξοχότητα τον βαρώνον Κούστε. [p. 349]
>
> He had twenty-seven dogs of every breed and size, from the Apennine sheepdog to the Maltese terrier and the spaniel of the court of King Charles of England, as well as innumerable cats from Ankara, from Tarma, Spanish tabbies and golden-haired Persians. Kuste could be considered the forerunner of today's flourishing feliophily. But most remarkable of all was his unique collection of all kinds of exotic birds in an annex to the glass greenhouse, from two imposing ostriches to the dazzling, microscopic humming birds, which resemble flying emeralds and sapphires. All this feathered, downy and hairy domain was fed and serviced through a special account, amounting to several thousand pounds, presented each month to His Excellency Baron Kuste by a special employee, bearing the title of "Curator of animals".

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[52] Roidis, "Άγγελου Βλάχου κωμωδίαι", p. 30.

Likening it to Noah's ark alludes to the biblical creation of species. He proceeds to describe the 27 canines of every species and size and the countless varieties of cat contained in it. The literal biblical version of creation (creationism) adheres to the premise that all the species of the animal kingdom were created through separate acts and that they are immutable; hence according to the Bible, Noah's ark housed all the species of the animal kingdom (and presumably the plant kingdom). By comparing the baron's museum to Noah's ark, Roidis mocks the biblical creation. By emphasising the numbers and naming some of the species of animals in the baron's "ark" and also highlighting the huge expense of feeding these animals, Roidis attempts to show the absurdity of keeping so many animal species in one space. On the whole, Roidis attacks the biblical story of the ark which discounts Darwin's theory of the origin of life arising from one or a few cells. In other words, according to creationism, all the different species known today have always existed, exactly as they are now, since the time of creation.

A special employee under the baron looks after all the animals. At this point it is emphasised that the zoo has only one ape and that it is Thomas. The fact that there is one ape, referred to after the description of the other animals, places him at the end of the narrator's list of animals; and possibly it was Roidis' intention to compare this hierarchy to Darwin's evolutionary continuum of life. Further to this, placing the ape in a paragraph on his own also singles him out as a special entity and certainly, with the publishing of the *DM*, the idea of man's close proximity to the ape was an uneasy concept for man to accept. Highlighting the supervisor or keeper of the animals alludes to an omnipotent being overseeing the "Noah's ark". Lastly, the overseer of the animals is human, which implies man's self-proclaimed superiority over all animals. Roidis in an essay says it aptly: "Αληθές είναι ότι ο άνθρωπος έλαβεν ή μάλλον έδωκεν εις εαυτόν το όνομα βασιλέως των ζώων." [It is true that man received or rather gave to himself the name of king of the animals.][53]

From his *Complete works* around 1900 it can be seen that Roidis did not consider it an insult to be called an animal; he maintains that whatever differences exist between man and animals do not prove man's superiority:

> Εξ όσων ηυτύχησα ή εδυστύχησα να γνωρίσω είμαι, πιστεύω, ο μόνος άνθρωπος όστις, αν τον ωνόμαζον ζώον, δεν θα εθεώρει τούτο ως προσβολήν. Όσον συναναστρέφομαι τα ζώα, τόσον μάλλον πείθομαι, [όχι πως] [...] δεν υπάρχει μεταξύ αυτών και των ανθρώπων καμμία διαφορά, ως ηθέλησαν παραδοξολόγοι τινές να ισχυρισθώσιν, αλλά μόνον

[53] Roidis, "Σκαλάθυρμα" [Short treatise], *Άπαντα*, Vol. III: *1880-1890*, p. 190.

> ότι τα πράγματα, κατά τα οποία διαφέρομεν από τα ζώα, δεν αποδεικνύουν όλα την ανθρωπίνην υπεροχήν. Το κυρίως διακρίνον αυτά από ημάς είναι ότι παρέλαβαν από τους ανθρώπους όσα έχουσιν ούτοι καλά, και απέφυγαν να μιμηθώσι τα άχρηστα, τα επιβλαβή και τα γελοία.[54]

> From what I have been fortunate or unfortunate enough to discover, I am, I believe, the only person who, if they named me animal, would not consider it an insult. The more I mix with animals, the more I am rather convinced, [not that] there is no difference between them and humans, as some lovers of paradoxes have wished to assert, but only that the things in which we differ from animals do not all establish human superiority. The primary difference between them and us is that they received from humans everything good humans possess, and they avoided imitating all that is useless, harmful and ridiculous.

Roidis goes on to give instances of mankind's negative habits, such as unnecessary violence, which are not found in animals. Perhaps this could be compared to Darwin's final comments in the *DM*:

> For my part I would as soon be descended from that brave little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper; or from that old baboon, who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practises infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions.[55]

This exploration has shown Roidis' strong literary response to Darwin's *OS* and *DM*. He appears to have been quite disillusioned initially by the idea that man and beast had an evolutionary kinship. Despite this he is quite accepting of the mutability of species and presumably of Darwinism. Initially Roidis' disquisition on laughter, a reaction to Darwin's observations in the *DM*, leads him to believe that man is unique due to his ability to laugh. However this is prior to the 1872 publication of the *EE*, where Darwin showed evidence of smiling and laughter in apes.[56] The "Story of an ape", although its date of writing is unknown, highlights his ideas on man's ability to laugh at himself by simultaneously observing the ape's ability to *imitate* man. Eventually, in his

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[54] Roidis, "Ιστορία ορνιθώνος" [Story of a hen], *Άπαντα*, Vol. V: *1894-1904*, p. 218.

[55] Darwin, *DM*, Vol. II, pp. 404-405.

[56] Darwin, *EE*, pp. 130-135.

later responses he declares that man was not superior to other animals and that there were no essential differences between them. This view, of course, would have agitated the Church, a response which he had also received with his novel *Pope Joan*.[57]

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[57] See further Roidis' essay on issues regarding man's descent and the definition of man: Roidis, "Η εορτή του Όνου κατά τον μεσαίωνα" [The celebration of the Aino towards the Middle Ages], *Άπαντα*, Vol. II, pp. 9-10. Also his preoccupation with animals is seen in his other works: "Ιστορία μιας γάτας" [Story of a cat] (1893), "Ιστορία ενός σκύλου" [Story of a dog] (1893), "Ιστορία ενός αλόγου" [Story of a horse] (1894) and "Ιστορία ορνιθώνος" (1897).