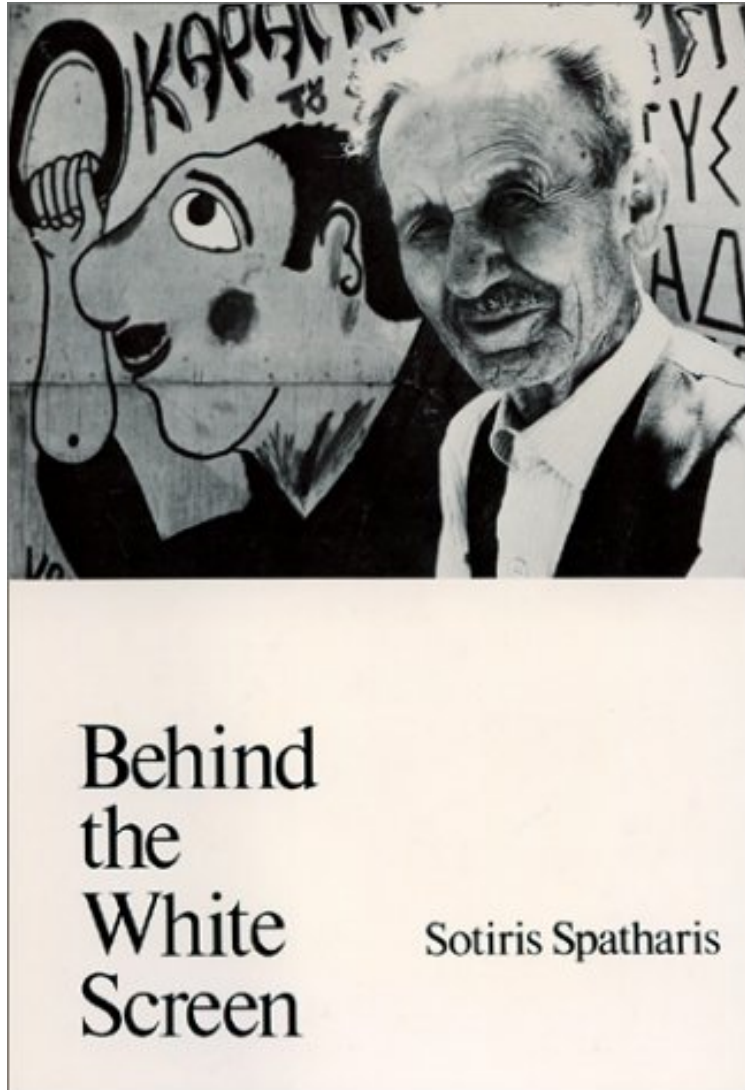


[Mobile book] Behind the White Screen (Greek Fiction and Memoirs)

Behind the White Screen (Greek Fiction and Memoirs)

Sotiris Spatharis

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Sotiris Spatharis : Behind the White Screen (Greek Fiction and Memoirs) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Behind the White Screen (Greek Fiction and Memoirs):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. a masterpiece of greek literature and artBy Rose HobartThe great tradition of Karagiosis (Greek shadow puppet plays), as described by one of it's true masters. Sotiris relates the mad tales of his life spent at the service in this extraordinary art form. The shadow puppet theater intersects with many worlds: the Ottoman Empire, the Greek street scene, the criminal underworld and political parody, rembetika... Sotiris is its Virgil and its Buster Keaton. His mad life, full of guts, laughter and puppets, starts off with an attempted kidnapping and never lets go. Portraits of the other masters of the art weave and warp with flashes in time, Salonika,

the Colonels, the Nazi Occupation, the Resistance. The second part of the book is the history of the art explained in clear, sharp terms. There are reproductions of his beautiful puppets and an important list of plays, biographies of the innovators (sometimes very funny), the whole scene.... Can't recommend this enough. For admirers of the art of puppets, for Balkanists, historians, whatever else. Through it all shines through the irrepressible character of the author. Sotiris lives forever in time. If the future is left with any memoirs of our agonized and convulsive century, I hope that this is chief among them. Then maybe our descendants will think that we had some sense of art, that we were not an utter waste. An absolute masterpiece, beautifully written and finely translated.

The memoirs of the great Greek shadow puppeteer and his history of the art of Karagiosis. His father was blinded by a stone falling on him while he was working as a laborer on the Acropolis. His mother took in washing. After the accident he led his father out begging during the days. At night he sneaked off to the shadow theater which was thought unrespectable. Karagiosis became his great passion. He worked first as a puppeteer's assistant and was able to start on his own when a neighbor gave him a sheet. This he made into a screen which he slept beside outdoors at night so that it would not be stolen. He made his own puppets, scenery, signs, wrote his own plays and performed them with the help of a singer. Memoirs describes his beginnings, the 1914-18 war, the coffee houses all over Greece where he performed and became famous, World War II and the German Occupation. History and Art of Karagiosis tells the main schools of shadow puppetry, the best known puppeteers! -- 'Antonis Poriotis. A good player but he died of too much wine in 1938. It gives the main karagiosis characters and lists the best-known plays. The book is illustrated with Spatharis' own shadow figures.

Sotiris Spatharis, a Greek born in 1898, taught himself to read and write by studying gravestones. Before his death in 1974, he had become one of the foremost practitioners of karagiosis, or shadow puppetry. These memoirs explore the traditions of this form of puppetry at the same time as they provide a picture of Greece from 1900 to 1945. (Publishers Weekly is mH) Spatharis (1898-1974) relates his life as a leading shadow-puppeteer in Greece during the heyday (1924-44) of the form called karagiosis. The memoirs are told in a simple, unpretentious, and almost primitive narrative. Half of the small volume is devoted to an inexact but revealing "History of the Art of Karagiosis"- including thumbnail sketches of the most prominent puppeteers. -- Choice Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. I didn't join the army until 1914 because my name was not down on the call -up lists... My father gave me ninety-five cents all in five cent pieces, saying-- "here you are my son, take these, they're all I've got." ...I was a muleteer in the second divisional workshop unit.... As if it were not enough that I should have a vicious mule, I had over me a sergeant who had taken a dislike to me... Suddenly I saw General Kontarato in front of me, pointing to me and saying-- "You there! What are we all here for?" I "We are soldiers united in brotherhood to defend our country" The General- "Well said! Until that time comes we must do what we can to keep each other amused. Now get behind the screen and do us a show."