

British Theatre Guide

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Castro of Mediterranean

George Eugeniou

Theatro Technis

7–19 October 2014

In January, Theatro Technis presented [*We, Macbeth*](#), a play by the pseudonymous but probably American dramatist James Hepburn.

It sought to expose the role of the CIA in decades of undercover action (including the assassination of President Kennedy) from the 1930s to the destruction of the World Trade Centre. Now, Theatro Technis's Artistic Director George Eugeniou revisits the characters of CIA's Allen Dulles and Jim Angleton in his own play, which investigates the role of America and other international powers in the sad history of Cyprus.

Eugeniou places Dulles and Angleton on trial before a court in Elysium where other deceased and some of the living are brought to give evidence of their actions and those of other countries as well as the USA.

In fact, what we get is a series of statements and accusations rather than any hard evidence. There are no secret tape recordings or diplomatic documents presented by the prosecutor, but that does not lessen the impact of accusations which those who have followed the struggles of Cyprus may think are largely supported by what is already publicly known and reported.

The prosecution is presented by a female lawyer played by Kathleen Ryan with confident control as she addresses the audience jury and calls her witnesses.

Mark Minshall and Philip Barr make a lively double act as Dulles and Angleton, unapologetically confident in their right to ruthlessly impose their preferences irrespective of the harm it does others.

Self-referencing that early production, they give a rapid rundown of their "achievements", the investigation's "back-story", a whirlwind of information that on opening night went too fast for the actors let alone giving time for the audience to take in much. As director as well as dramatist, Eugeniou seems more concerned here with impact than information and the matters of most importance all crop up again later.

At the centre of this court room confrontation is the figure of Michail Christodolou Mouskos, known better as Archbishop Makarios, the first President of the Republic of Cyprus. It was the CIA who dubbed him "Castro of Mediterranean" for his support of the Non-Aligned Movement led by Nehru and Tito and for being, they thought, pro-Soviet.

Several times, they seem to have tried to assassinate him. Were they really responsible? Alessandro Marchese gives the Archbishop calm authority with a sharp brain behind his urbanity—he needed it to handle the diplomatic difficulties in attempting to do the best for his people. Markarios himself shifted position from support for union with Greece (ENOSIS) to independence

but failed to prevent the acceleration of ethnic division, made much worse by the actions of the CIA-supported Junta in Athens.

The UK too has much to answer for in the history of Cyprus. A surprising appearance is that of Benjamin Disraeli as a witness, a reminder of Britain's long interference in the island because of the strategic importance of Cyprus, even before Britain gained control of it. Philip Gill plays him as the smooth diplomat. He also takes history forward playing PM Jim Callaghan and as President Lyndon B Johnson, here seen as a CIA stooge.

With Fidel Castro (Farid Ahmen), Richard Nixon (Jerry Anton), Nikita Krushchev (John-Paul Brennan, who also doubles Kissinger), J F and Jacqueline Kennedy and Ladybird Johnson (Yvonne Wickham, also the Baroness Turkish spokeswoman for in a House of Lords.

The drama in *Castro of Mediterranean* comes not from a particular conflict in the courtroom; this is a matter of presentment of information rather than argument. The killings and assassinations, carried out or attempted, the destruction of communities and wrecking of lives happened in the real world, not in this after-life Elysium. The drama here comes from the accumulation of accusation and the passion with which it is presented.

Dramatist and director George Eugeniou, who has been running this theatre since 1957, is a gentle and caring soul who would not harm anyone but his play is imbued with the pain that he, as a Greek Cypriot, still feels for the country that bore him and he has passed on his passion to his performers.

His play is not perfect but it makes surprising powerful theatre: you can't help but be moved by it.

Reviewer: [Howard Loxton](#)