

International Society of Friends of Nikos Kazantzakis

SYNTHESIS

INFORMATION BULLETIN



Sketch by Takis Kalmouhos, 1929

My anxiety is found in this: to incessantly strive for this position and from antithesis to find Synthesis.

Nikos Kazantzakis, Aegina, 12/2/1944

No 56 – August 2021

CONTENTS

- Main article
- Nikos Kazantzakis Museum and the Records of the ISFNK
- Functions of the ISFNK:
 - Steering Committee meeting
 - Appointment of Regional representatives
 - New member of the Steering Committee
 - Melbourne Chapter
- 200th Anniversary of Greek Independence
- The Review «Le Regard crétois», No 48, December 2021.
- Publications.
- Nikos Kazantzakis and the youth.
- Nikos Kazantzakis and nature.
- Other activities.
- Texts of Nikos Kazantzakis.
- Recognitions.
- Donations.
- In Memoriam.
- ISFNK: contact info.

MAIN ARTICLE

Our members and fans continue, despite the pandemic, their activities: consignment of the ISFNK's Records to the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum, meeting of the Steering Committee, appointment of regional representatives, participation in the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of Greek Independence, cultural routes Kazantzakis-Zorbas, International Reading Club, the next issue of *Regard crétois*, studies on the subjects "Nikos Kazantzakis and the youth" and "Nikos Kazantzakis and nature", translations, studies, events in Argentina, Brazil, France, Georgia, Switzerland, Greece, Ireland, Canada, Tunisia...

Below you'll find details and the usual columns (recognitions, donations, in Memoriam, contact info).

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS MUSEUM AND THE RECORDS OF THE ISFNK

In his will that he wrote in Antibes, Nikos Kazantzakis mentioned, among others, the founding of a "House", where he would place his library and personal artifacts. His will was carried out: his books, paintings and personal artifacts were placed in the Historical Museum of Crete in Iraklion, his birthplace. Subsequently, Eleni Kazantzakis and George Anemoyannis, the theatre man, decided to found in Myrtia

(Varvaroi), a special museum dedicated to Kazantzakis, in a house owned by George Anemoyannis. George Stasinakis was, among others, a donor and invitee at the inauguration in 1983. Since then, he continued to help this foundation: monetary donations, paintings, books, various documents, fraternization with writers' museums that Kazantzakis especially respected: Paul Valéry (France) and Juan Ramon Jiménez (Spain), and the musician's Bohuslav Martinů (Czech Republic). George Anemoyannis and Titika Saklabani, director of the Museum, also participated. After their death, the Museum, under the direction of Stelios Matzapetakis, of Mihalis Taroudakis and of Varvara Tsaka, was renovated, expanded its activities and continued its exemplary work.

We should remind you that George Stasinakis donated to the Museum Kazantzakis' desk, where our writer had written most of his books in Antibes and had adapted certain theatrical works. Eleni Kazantzakis had gifted it to him in Geneva, appreciating the fact that he had assumed the international promotion of her husband's work. The desk has been placed in a prominent position in a room of the Museum.

Finally, our president deposited at the Museum the records of the ISFNK: all the Society's correspondence, the complete collection of the minutes of meetings, the Steering Committee's meetings and the reviews *Regard crétois*, many translations of books of the great Cretan, newspaper clippings, topical files, audiovisual material, etc. There couldn't be a better place for the safekeeping of the Records. Sofia Ntalampeki and Katerina Zografistou, members of the Steering Committee, will contact the Museum about the better utilisation and promotion of these documents. We thank them warmly and of course warm thanks to the Board of Directors and Management of the Museum.

FUNCTIONS OF THE ISFNK

Meeting of the Steering Committee

It met on June 20, 2021. The numerous participants discussed, among other: the successful presentation of our writer's works by the International Reading Clubs, the activities for the 200 years of Greek Independence and other events, the cultural routes Kazantzakis-Zorbas, the publication on our Greek website of Synthesis in many languages, the initiatives of artists, the increasing interest of Greek theologians for the great Cretan, the need for organising periodical exhibitions, university studies, the creation of an international agenda for publicising events, our priorities: education and nature, etc. It was a productive meeting, which underlines the increasing

interest of the officials of the ISFNK in discovering various ways to promote Kazantzakis' work.

Appointment of regional representatives

In the framework of decentralisation of responsibilities, the ISFNK constitution foresees the appointment of regional representatives, who will manage many chapters. Thus, on June 20, 2021 the Steering Committee decided on the appointment of the following representatives:

- Nikos Skenteris (Larissa, Greece): Bulgaria, Greece and Cyprus chapters.
- Kiriaki Papadopoulou-Samuelsen (Oslo, Norway): Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland chapters.
- Antonis Vasiliadis (Santiago, Chile): Latin America chapters.
- Yannos Roussos (Ottawa, Canada): Canada and USA chapters.
- Elena Avramidou (Beijing, China): Japan, China, and Korea chapters.

We express to them our warm support.

Appointment of a new member.

Due to the large number of new members in the Ireland Chapter, Stella Xenopoulou was appointed member of the Steering Committee. We welcome her.

Melbourne

Leonidas Naoumis, president of the Brisbane (Australia) chapter, has taken on its reorganization. We wish him success in this difficult task.

ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

Greece celebrates this year the 200th anniversary since the end of the Ottoman yoke, and of its Independence. The ISFNK is supporting the following events: **Buenos Aires**, international cultural competition with theme the "200 years of Independence and Hellenism". Organised by "Nostos", whose president is Christina Tsardikou. She is also the president of the Argentina Chapter of our Society. **Crete**, performance of the folk opera *Captain Mihalīs*, adaptation by Dimitris Maramis, composer, (Chania, August 26 and 27, 2021, Rethimno, August 30, 2021, Iraklio, September 5, 2021, Ayios Nikolaos, September 7, 2021, Chania, August 11-September 12, 2021). Chania: poster exhibition on the theme *Travelling in Greece*. The local chapter presented a poster with Kazantzakis' travels. **Brussels**, 9-10 and October 11, 2021: Aristidis Lavrentzos, director of the theatrical troupe "THESPIS", is staging Kazantzakis' work *Capodistrias*. The Belgian review «Ulenspiegel», published in Mons (No 5, Spring 2021), is dedicating a special issue "Greece 1821". It includes among others George Stasinakis' study on Kazantzakis' tragedy *Capodistrias*.



LE REGARD CRETOIS, Η ΚΡΗΤΙΚΗ ΜΑΤΙΑ, THE CRETAN GLANCE

Contents of issue 48 - December 2021

Nikos Kazantzakis texts

Studies and Research

- Dimitris Gounelas (Salonika): *Kazantzakis and refugees* (in French).
- Dimitris Kokoris (Salonika): *Nikos Kazantzakis as a poet* (in Greek).
- Pipina Elles (Sydney): *The woman in the theatrical work of Nikos Kazantzakis* (in English).
- Christina Tsardikou (Buenos Aires): *Borges and Kazantzakis, two writers, one labyrinth* (in Spanish).

Each study includes a summary in the other languages.

Books: translations, studies.

The prefecture of Crete, following our request, decided to subsidise the publication of this issue.

Our sincere thanks.

PUBLICATIONS

Translations from the Greek

- To Bulgarian: *The last temptation*, transl. Georgi Kufov. Enthusiast publications, Sofia 2021. *Travelling*, transl. Nikolai Kostov, text selection by Zdravka Mihaylova, Enthusiast publications, Sofia, 2021.
- To Italian: "*My Greece - Journey to Morias*", transl. Gilda Tentorio, Crocetti publications, Milan, 2021. *The last temptation*, transl. Gilda Tentorio and Nicola Crocetti, Crocetti publications, Milan, 2021.

Studies

- Maria Aggeli: "*Zorbas and women*", Athens 2020 (in Greek).
- Dimitris Kokoris. "*Kazantzakis, the poet*", Pedio publications, Epistimonikes publications, Athens 2020 (in Greek).
- George Stasinakis: "*Life's Paths, in the footsteps of Nikos Kazantzakis, 1989-2019*", Kapa Publications, Athens 2020 (in Greek).
- Theodoros Tasios: "*The anthropografia of a tragic intellectual*", Kazantzakis Museum and University publications of Crete, Iraklion 2021 (in Greek).
- Alain Glykos: «*I-Le Regard crétois*» is about a colourful novel (in French) that presents with an original dialog the life of our writer between 1883 and 1919. The illustration is by Antonin, Cambourakis publications, Paris 2021. A second volume will follow.

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS AND THE YOUTH

Kazantzakis' interest in the youth is known, especially from his correspondence. Since its inception, the ISFNK has organised numerous lectures, exhibitions, competitions, meetings in schools, universities, institutes, presenting his work and thought. The Greek chapter has appointed Maria Ageli, a gymnasium teacher in Agrinio, in charge of Education matters in its board of directors. She organised many events and competitions highlighting the life and work of the great Cretan, especially *Zorba the Greek* and *Report to Greco*. The students' works were published on our Greek website. The last International General Assembly of the ISFNK, that met on-line in Montreal, defined among its priorities, activities for the youth and appointed as coordinators Maria Ageli and Dionisis Lianos. You can contact them at: agelimaria@yahoo.gr (see below: Other events, France).

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS AND NATURE

Vanda Papaioannou-Voutsas, historian-archaeologist, coordinator of a task force on this subject, is completing her own work, which includes introduction, listing of relevant excerpts from *Captain Mihalidis* -pg 35- and questionnaire for students and whoever likes literary games and nature. If conditions permit, it will be applied to the third class of the 2nd Gymnasium in Komotini. The team remains open to any type of relevant cooperation. vandapapa@gmail.com

OTHER EVENTS

Argentina

Buenos Aires: Christina Tsardikou, president of the local chapter of the ISFNK, will organise reading soirees of the novel *Zorba the Greek*.

Brazil

Sao Paulo: Maria Peretto, president of the local chapter of the ISFNK, is informing us that her team dedicated its activities in the first six months of 2021 to the reading of the novels *Captain Mihalidis* and *Christ Recrucified*. In the second half of 2021, she will study, in cooperation with the association "Arete", Kazantzakis' life, his travels, *Odyssey* and *Zorba the Greek*.

France

Strasbourg, November 23, 2021: Alain Glykos will give a lecture with the title "The childhood of Kazantzakis: a humanity". *November 23 and 24, 2021*: meeting of Alain Glykos and Jean-Claude Schwendemann with students with regards to texts from the work *Report to Greco*. *November 30, 2021*: lecture of Athina Vouyiouka on "The right of refugees to life according to Kazantzakis in the novel *Christ Recrucified*".

Georgia

Maia Kakashvili, member of the Steering Committee, dedicates the study of the work of Nikos Kazantzakis on two levels: academic and translations in literary magazines. We congratulate her.

Switzerland

Lugano (Ticcino), year's end. Rozmi Pahlisch, president of the Swiss chapter of the ISFNK, is proposing to organise, in cooperation with the Greek community an event dedicated to George Stasinakis' book "Life's Paths, in the footsteps of Kazantzakis 1989-2019" and to the Italian translation of *Odyssey* by Nicola Crocetti.

Greece

Crete. At the initiative of the Greek chapter, whose president is Sifis Miheloyannis, and with the support of the Prefecture of Crete, two plays were successfully staged:

- "The Little Prince meets Mister Kazantzakis" by author Christos Tsantis. The Little Prince of Saint Exupéry, Captain Mihalidis, Zorbas and Kazantzakis' papa-Fotis, the heroes of the two writers, are reflecting and exchanging philosophical ideas (*Iraklion, July 24, 2021 and Chania, August 7, 2021*).

- "The Little One at the Big Castle", by author, poetess and actress Marinela Vlahaki. The work refers to the youth of our writer and to Iraklion's 19th century society (*Ayios Nikolaos, Greek Women's High School, July 10, 2021, Iraklion, July 14, 2021, Chania, July 30, 2021, and Rethymno, August 2, 2021*).

Larissa, September 25, 2021. Nikos Skenteris, member of the Board of Directors of the Greek chapter and of the Steering Committee, is informing us of an International Reading Club event dedicated to *Captain Mihalidis*. Organisers/co-organisers: the local team of the ISFNK, the Cultural Centre of Educators (POKEL), the Art Gallery and the Larissa Municipality. It includes: presentation of the International Reading Club and of *Captain Mihalidis*, a showing of an excerpt from an interview of Nikos Kazantzakis on French TV, songs of Manos Hadjidakis from "Captain Mihalidis" by guitarist Spiros Kavalieratos, showing of comics designed for the event by Marios Boras. Coordination by historian Vangelis Rembatis.

Chania, November: in the context of the International Reading Club, the local chapter will organise, via Zoom, a lecture on *Captain Mihalidis*.

Delphi, August 1, 2021: conference on Angelos Sikelianos. Gilda Tentorio, president of the Italian chapter, discussed the relationship of the poet with Nikos Kazantzakis. *Athens*. Agathi Markati, lecturer of philosophy at the University of Athens, is preparing an event on "Kazantzakis and Egypt".

Ireland

Dublin, April 10 and 11, 2021. Pantelis Goularas, member of the Steering Committee, took part in the 5th Festival of Arts and Business, organised by the Greek community, presenting Kazantzakis and giving an interview.

Canada

Ottawa, November 2021. In the context of the International Reading Club, the local chapter with Cathy Dimitriou as president, will present *Captain Mihalidis*.

Toronto. The local chapter, whose president is Voula Vetsi, will analyse via Skype Nikos Kazantzakis' work.

October 5, 2021: "Liberty", by Voula Vetsi. October 26, 2021: "The good and the bad", by Magdalini Agrafioti and Katina Margariti. November 30, 2021: "The Theatre", by Dimitri Karras. December 2021: "Work from a pedagogical point of view - love of learning, respect, love, friendship...", by Spiros Parashis, Fotini Hadjinicolaou and Fifi Milopoulou.

Tunisia

Djerba, November 20 and 21, 2021. Thanks to the efforts of Chedia Haddad, president of the local chapter of the Society and of the Greek Embassy, the ISFNK will take part in the 18th Francophonie summit. Chedia travelled to Greece, collected material about our writer, visited Kazantzakis Publications and the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum in Myrtia and paid her respects at his grave in Iraklion.

TEXTS OF NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS

Letters to Eleni

("The Uncompromising", Kazantzakis Publications, Athens 1977)

Aegina, July 12, 1933

I'm anxious to write about the 24 bodyguards of Odysseus (Dante and Greco were so) where I'll try to write you a canto, oh Leader of all bodyguards, and to tell you about all the rich, beautiful, unending love of mine. Will I ever be able to? Difficult, because I'm living all this emotion. If I wasn't living it, it would have been impossible. But better to live it than never becoming a memory...

Aegina, August 7, 1933

...I have delayed a little, because all these days we had visitors. All this fuss goes against my soul. Of what use is talking and shouting and to what purpose this peacock showing off? Two things I yearn for in this world and they fill my heart: the creation of OBRA [Odyssey] and you. Everything else seem to me vain, tiresome noise. I was hearing them talk, once I talked too and only one thing I was thinking of: to return home and to write you a big letter, warm, to open all the faucets so that love gushes out unimpeded. The more I love you, the more the world is of no use to me, because I can replace it with another, better, warmer, as simpler as I would create all my life, if I were the Creator.

I have now again gotten into the translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. I'm correcting it verse by verse and he's becoming very accurate and good. I wish I could print it. But where could I find the 30,000 drachmas that are needed. In two months it will all be ready.

Aegina, August 15, 1933

...I wrote the 33 cantos in ten days and tomorrow I'm entering Purgatorio. The translation is getting better...To have free time of my own, many years still and it seems to me that I'm ripe to leave a work securely grounded in the Greek, that is to say in the Cretan, soil...

RECOGNITIONS

With a letter of July 7, 2021, the president of the Board of Directors of the Kazantzakis Museum, professor Mihalis Taroudakis, informed George Stasinakis that he was named an honorary member of the Museum's Board. It recounts in detail his activities all over the world for the promotion of the great Cretan's work. George Stasinakis, very moved by this important recognition, thanked him warmly. The Iraklion Municipality with a letter on July 20, 2021, informed George Stasinakis that it will honour him at the appropriate time. The president of the ISFNK expressed his thanks.

DONATIONS

- Swiss chapter: Mrs Jaton, Sarpakis, Koutoulakis Von Burg and Mr. Griffiths.
- Brisbane chapter: Leonidas Naoumis

We thank them warmly.

IN MEMORIAM

South Africa. The death of the distinguished professor of Johannesburg University Benjamin Hendrickh, founder of the South African chapter and honorary member of the ISFNK, has greatly saddened us. He organised numerous lectures on the great Cretan at the University and the High School for Greek Women, whose president is Niki Souri. A great intellectual and friend has left us. Our sincere condolences to his wife Thekla.

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Facebook

Look for us on Facebook in Greek
but also in other languages

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