



Sketch by Takis Kalmouthos, 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 60 – December 2022

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MAIN ARTICLE

2022 comes to an end with five events: The conference in Larissa, (Greece), with subject the «Nature in Nikos Kazantzakis' work», the establishment of the Greek Chapter of the ISFNK into its own offices in Heraklion, the international competition for students of secondary education, the publication of *The Ascent*, the unpublished work of the great Cretan, and finally, with the honorary event for Stelios Matzapetakis, ex-member of Parliament and president of the board of directors of the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum.

2023 will be a significant year. We are celebrating the 149th anniversary of our writer's birth, 35 years from the founding of our Society at the University of Geneva, 85 years from the publication of *Odyssey*, the great epic poem, the publication in Greek of the last interview of Kazantzakis at the French state radio with Sipriot, two significant conferences, in Athens and Thessaloniki, the international competition in Secondary Education schools, the international meeting in Heraklion and the International General Assembly of the ISFNK in New York. We conclude with the 40th anniversary of the Nikos Kazantzakis museum.



LE REGARD CRETOIS, Η ΚΡΗΤΙΚΗ ΜΑΤΙΑ,
THE CRETAN GLANCE, LA MIRADA CRETENSE

Contents of issue 49 – December 2022

Texts of Kazantzakis

Epistles: Nature and journeys – Nobel Prize for literature

Studies and research

- George Stamatiou, Spetses: «Kazantzakis' passion for the mountains» (in French).
- Agathi Markati (Athens): «“Christ Recrucified” by Nikos Kazantzakis. About the good and the bad or the “Closed and open Morality» (in Greek).
- Apostolos Poullos (Piraeus): «Kazantzakis' language ideology concerning language in general: limitations and possibilities of words» (in English).
- Pantelis Kogiamis (Vienna): «Kazantzakis, the Odyssey and the critique» (in Spanish).

Each study includes a summary in the other languages.

Books

- Critique, Studies, Translations.

The review is now being published in digital form too. You can find it at the website:

<http://amis-kazantzaki.gr/leregardcretois>

or email: le.regard.cretois.siank@gmail.com

CONFERENCES IN GREECE

Larissa, November 18-20, 2022: «Nature in Nikos Kazantzakis' work».

We referred to this (hybrid) conference in the previous issue of «Synthesis».

It was an event for this town as well as for Greece. It caused a lot of interest thanks to the distinguished speakers and the public's participation, especially through the modern social media (more than 500 participants).

We would like to thank once more the authorities, the speakers, the officials of the Greek Chapter of the ISFNK and the public.

Athens, June 10 and 11, 2023: «Kazantzakis and his Greek fellow writers».

It will be coordinated by Nikos Hrysos, writer, 1st Vice-president the Greek Chapter of the ISFNK. It has been placed under the aegis of the Writers Society and the French Institute in Greece. Those interested can inquire at the email: synedrio2023nk@gmail.com

Thessaloniki, November 2023: "Kazantzakis and the non-Greek intellectuals".

Kazantzakis met many writers, artists, musicians, translators and generally non-Greek intellectuals, such as: Henri Bergson, abbé Mugnier, Paul Valéry, Paul Claudel, François Mauriac, André Gide, Panaït Istrati, Maxime Gorki, AKITA Ujuka, HU Shi, Jean Herbert, Banine, Juan Ramon Jiménez, Miguel de Unamuno, Albert Schweitzer, Alfredo Varela, Jorge Salamea, Grigol Robakidze, Bohuslav Martinu, Ernst Jünger, Jules Dassin, Marie Bonaparte, Max Tau, Albert Camus, English poets....

The conference has been placed under the aegis of the School of Philosophy of the University of Thessaloniki and the UNESCO Chair at the Ionian University. Those who wish to participate in this conference with suggestions on some of the above personalities can get in touch with the coordinator Elena Avramidou, professor at the University of Beijing, whose e-mail is: eleavramidou@gmail.com

SECONDARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT LITERATURE AND PAINTING COMPETITION

SIANK is organising this competition in Greek and non-Greek secondary education schools, public and private. The youth, of age 13 to 18, can send a text, a poem or a painting about Kazantzakis or a character from his novels. Corresponding committees that have been formed, will judge the entries. Prizes will be awarded to the winners.

Those interested can obtain more details by email at: secretary.siank.gr@gmail.com.

The competition is under the aegis of the Secretary General for Greeks Abroad of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Considerable student participation has already been observed.

PUBLICATIONS UNPUBLISHED IN GREEK

- *The Ascent*. It's an unpublished work of Kazantzakis that was translated by René Bouchet, Cambourakis publications, Paris, titled *L'Ascension*. It was published this year by Dioptra in Athens in an excellent presentation, in an original format and a text faithful to that of Kazantzakis. Our warm congratulations.
- *Kazantzakis - Sipriot, Conversations*. A meticulous translation from the French to Greek by Dr. Maria Fletoridou. It will be published by Kastaniotis publications, in Athens, in 2023. We'll revisit this in the next issue of *Synthesis*.

FUNCTIONS OF THE ISFNK

Chapters

Greek Chapter: It's operating under a new charter and moved its seat from Athens to Heraklion, the birthplace of Kazantzakis. It has leased and operates an office in the centre of the town. There one can meet the officials, to ask for information regarding the great writer and poet and regarding the activities of the ISFNK. The Society's records are also kept there. The inauguration will take place on January 22, 2023. We are extending our congratulations and encouragement to the Board of Directors and especially to its new President Katerina Zografistou and the Secretary Sofia Ntalampeki.

French Chapter: At its General Assembly, on December 3, 2022, it was decided to move its seat from Paris to Strasburg. We are sure that its Board of Directors, under the presidency of our friend Jean-Claude Schwedemann, will continue its excellent work.

Steering Committee (SC)

It met on November 26 and 27, 2022 online (Zoom) with the participation of members from Asia, America and Europe. It examined the activities of the Society and appointed new members, coordinators and national officials.

→ **New members of SC:** Nikos Alexiou, professor of Sociology, New York, and Nikos Hrysos, writer, 1st Vice-president of the Greek Chapter of the ISFNK, Athens.

→ **New chapter coordinators:** *United States of America and Canada:* Manolis Velivasakis, ex-president of the World-Council of Cretans, Florida chapter of the ISFNK and Nikos Alexiou. *Latin America:* Cristina Tsardikos, President of the Argentine chapter of the ISFNK and the cultural society "Nostos".

→ **New national officials**

- **Australia**, Melbourne: John Milides, professor of literature.
- **Chile**, Santiago: Ioannis Konstantinidis, lawyer.
- **Uruguay**, Montevideo: Florencia Gutiérrez, professor of literature and Greek.
- **USA:** Philip Trevezas, South California and North California Peter Lagarias.
- **Serbia**, Belgrade: Jadranka Jivanovic, professor of literature and Greek language.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Pale: Vladan Bartula, professor of theology.
- **Kirgistan**, Bishkek: Milana Lazaridi, teacher.
- **Libya**, Benghazi: Kanakis Madalios, businessman.

We congratulate them and we assure them of our complete support.

→ **Financial report.** Claudette Falatakis, treasurer, has reported on the financials, which are not strong.

EVENTS FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER

International Reading Club of our writer's works

This year, thematic readings took place. The first one, on October 26, 2022, remembrance day of the great Cretan, with subject "The human friendship in *Zorba the Greek*". For 2023, we are planning the following reading soirees: **February:** *Zorba the Greek*, **March:** *The fratricides*, **April 4:** *Report to Greco*, **May:** *Alexander the Great*.

Other events

Argentina, Buenos Aires, November 1, 2022: In the context of the Greek Conference at the National University, Cristina Tsardikos, President of the local Chapter, chaired a round table with subject "Kazantzakis and Plato in *Zorba the Greek*". Professors Cristina Quiroga and Angela Gentile took part. Our friend Cristina is planning a conference in all of Latin America with a subject based on our writer.

Australia, Brisbane, November 26, 2022: Lecture by Arthur Comino with subject: "Nikos Kazantzakis translates Machiavelli".

Belgium, Brussels, February 12, 2023: «Journeying in the seas of Nikos Kazantzakis. For children of ages 8-14». **March 10, 2023:** Presentation of Kazantzakis' unpublished work *The Ascent*. The events of the Belgian Chapter are under the aegis of the Greek Embassy.

Brazil, São Paulo: During the last months the local Chapter continued to study Kazantzakis' work based on *Report to Greco*.

Canada, Ottawa, January 20, 2023: Cathy Dimitriou, official of the local Chapter of the ISFNK, organised a meeting of friends of the great Cretan.

Beginning of April 2023: Mihalis Kokkoliaris, priest, will give a talk with subject "Nikos Kazantzakis and Orthodoxy".

April 20, 2023: Efharis Kostala will talk about the novel *At the Palaces of Knossos*.

South Korea, Seoul, November: The local Chapter, like every year, organised its 12th conference with the subject the travel reports of Kazantzakis in the Peloponnese.

United States of America, Los Angeles, October 23, 2022, Tampa and New York, November 5, 2022: Successful showings of the Aris Hadjistefanou's documentary "The last journey" of Kazantzakis in Japan.

France, in the previous issue of "Synthesis" we published the catalogue of the presentations of the comics of Allain Glykos. They were very interesting.

Georgia, Tbilisi, December 11, 2022: The SC member Maia Kakashvili presented the translation of the novel *μυθιστορήματος Crist crucified*.

United Kingdom, London, March 2023: The head of the local team of the ISFNK Katerina Monastirli, is organising an important event with Elena Avramidou as the central speaker. They will present the unpublished book by Kazantzakis *The Ascent* and the documentary by Aris Hadjistefanou "The last journey". We wish all the success to the future Chapter of the ISFNK.

Greece, Mitilini: Athanasios Kalamatas, member of the Board of Directors of the Greek Chapter, is organising two events: *February 18, 2023:* «140 years since Nikos Kazantzakis' birth», with the participation of Vasilis Georgas and subject "Kazantzakis' language" and of Panayiotis Skordas with subject "The life and work of Nikos Kazantzakis". A play by Kazantzakis is also foreseen and a reading of an excerpt from *Askitiki*. *March 11, 2023:* "The ecumenical Kazantzakis" with P. Grigoriou, Niki Stavrou and Apolstolos Poullos.

Prefecture of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, April 1-2, 2023: Vanta Papaioannou-Voutsas, coordinator of the Greek Chapter in this region, is planning in conjunction with the Special Advisor to the Regional Governor of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace to organise a musical event, provided there is δυνατότητα από το Komotini Music School, inspired by Kazantzakis' works and a performance by the Theatre of Shadows adapted from the novel *At the Palaces of Knossos*.

Japan, Kyoto: Kosuke Fukuda, member of the SC, has successfully defended his doctoral thesis on Nikos Kazantzakis. It's the first time that such a thesis on the great Cretan is undertaken in this country. He also translated *The Master Builder*. Our congratulations to Kosuke Fukuda.

Switzerland, Geneva: The Chapter, under the presidency of Rozmi Pahlisch-Tzanos, is preparing two events, the showing of the documentary by Aris Hadjistefanou "The last journey" of Kazantzakis in Japan and a reading of *Odyssey*. They will be organised in cooperation with the Swiss and Greek authorities.

Russia, Moscow, The Center of Greek Culture, November 9, 2022: Online lecture (Zoom) by the linguist and professor Apodtolos Poullos with subject "Composite words in Kazantzakis' novels".

Tunisia, Djerba, November 19 and 20, 2022, 18th Francophonie Summit: The ISFNK, due to the work of Chedia Haddad, president of the Society's Tunisian Chapter, had a

considerable presence (distribution of documents, lecture, important visits by the public and personalities...). Bravo Chedia Haddad!

TEXTS BY NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS

"Kazantzakis – Sipriot, Conversations", du Rocher publications, Monaco, 1990 (excerpts). Translation by Dr. Maria Fletoridou.

NK. – A real novelist cannot but live in the reality of his era and, living this reality, he is conscious of his responsibility. He therefore tries to help those like him to confront and resolve, as much as possible, the agonizing problems of his era. Although today his literary work reflects our times, it's out of necessity one of the subtlest and more efficient forms of the action. Or, even better, it can be the seed for action. The novelist, although he's conscious of his mission, tries to propel reality into assuming the form that seems to him more worthy to man. At other times, more steady, more sure for themselves, beauty could be enough, in order to satisfy the writer's ideal. Today, a writer, if he's really diligent, is a man who suffers and worries looking at reality. He's driven to cooperate with all the powers of light that are still surviving and to contribute, so that the heavy destiny of man advances somewhat. If today the writer stays faithful to his mission, he is a fighter.

NK. – Greece had always been a toy in the hands of the Great Powers. We suffered a lot under the barbaric yoke of the Turks. We suffered a lot and we still do under the hypocritical yoke of the Great Powers. The Greek people are a tormented people. Even more so since for it the need for freedom is equally necessary as bread. It possesses an innate sensibility that makes it vulnerable to every offense against freedom. Not only its freedom, but to every harmful attempt against the freedom of whichever people.

NK. - Christ, for me, has been the archetype of a hero. The highest archetype. The union of Jesus - Christ the godly and the human has always been for me an unfathomable mystery. The superhuman elevation of the soul, and simultaneously so human, towards God in order to unite with him, always seemed to me the ultimate conclusion of human destiny.

NK. – Christ crucified was born out of an inner need, without thinking, I did not have the time to think about the social conditions.

Naturally, the society in Lykovrisis was a closed society; everything in it follow strict and mandatory rules; all of a sudden, Manolios shows up, a hero who was born and propelled by circumstances. This revolutionary wanted to introduce into this closed society new demons; compassion, social justice, the ethical responsibility of the individual.

As it was unavoidable, the hero's cry disturbed the relations between the social Ego and the individual Ego. The discord between these two realities was quite substantial; and it was getting even larger since this cry, this ethical anxiety of the hero, had Christ himself as the supreme and extreme model.

Unavoidable consequence: the rage of the closed society, conviction of the hero to death and the expulsion of all those who heeded the revolutionary's cry. That's where the gist of the drama in my novel is based.

TESTIMONIES

Jeff Bridges, American actor, singer and producer: «I Am a Big Fan of Kazantzakis».

A letter of Queen Elisabeth of Belgium.

«Stuyvenberg Castle, June 23, 1955

Dear Dr. Schweitzer,

I'm glad I'm writing to you again before your departure from Lambaréné, but I hope you won't mind, therefore I'm asking you to please not answer now.

This is what it's all about. The princess and wife of George of Greece, of the Bonaparte family, wrote in order to ask you, if you could nominate the Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis, whose literary work you are familiar with, for the Nobel Prize. It seems that his book, *Christ recrucified*, made a huge impression on you... Nikos Kazantzakis was a victim of reactionaries in Greece, who caused the Synod in Athens to condemn him. But neither the Greek Government nor the Patriarch of Constantinople committed the Synod's gaffes. He was nominated twice for the Nobel Prize by the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters, but the machinations of the mean Greek writers prevented him from receiving it. One of them, Spiros Melas, even came to Stockholm to harm him».

CREDIT FOR A WORTHY CRETAN

Crete, Peza, December 5, 2022. During a moving ceremony with great participation by officials and others, Stelios Matzapetakis, ex-member of Parliament, ex-president of the Board of Directors of the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum, was declared Honorary President of the said Board of Directors and Honorary Citizen of the Municipality of Arhanon-Asterousio. Our warm congratulations to our friend Stelios, for this worthy distinction. George Stasinakis expressed the congratulations of the ISFNK, particularly stressing, among others, his long and important contribution to the promotion of our writer's work.

IN MEMORIAM

We are saddened by the death of two faithful members of the ISFNK. Katharina Mayor-Scholer (Switzerland) and Christiane Engel-Schweitzer (USA). Our condolences to their loved ones.

Heraklion, October 26, 2022. The Trisagion in memory of Nikos Kazantzakis was performed by the Archbishop of Crete Mr. Evgenios (see picture in «Le Regard crétois / The Cretan Glance», No 49, December 2022)

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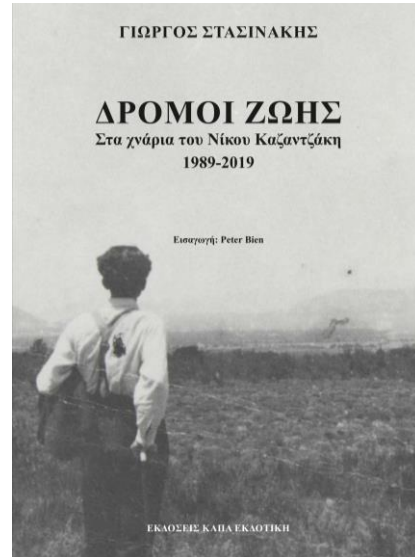
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Published by the Coordinating Committee of the ISFNK, an independent, non-profit cultural association that was founded in Geneva on December 14, 1988.

Drawing: Takis Kalmouhos. Dépôt légal No.60, December 2022. ISSN 1764-6103. Publishing manager: Yvette Renoux-Herbert (Paris). Correspondence: Case postale 2714, CH-1211 Genève 2 dépôt, Suisse.

Price: 2 euros

