



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*

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### MAIN ARTICLE

On the occasion of completing 140 years from Nikos Kazantzakis' birth and 35 years from the founding, at the University of Geneva, of the International Society of Friends of Nikos Kazantzakis (ISFNK), its members and friends will continue in the coming months, as they always did, to promote the work of the great Cretan through the review, conferences and other activities. In the pages of the information bulletin Synthesis that follow, as well as that of August 2023, you will find explanatory information.

We specifically point out: two conferences in Athens and Thessaloniki, the international youth competition, the international meeting in Heraklion (Crete), the reading Clubs, the International General Assembly in New York. Finally, we welcome the translation to Greek of the last interview of the great Cretan «Kazantzakis-Sipriot: Conversations», a translation by Dr. Maria Fletoridou, Honorary Scholastic Consultant of the French language.



LE REGARD CRETOIS, Η ΚΡΗΤΙΚΗ ΜΑΤΙΑ,  
THE CRETAN GLANCE  
Contents of issue 49 – December 2022

### Texts of Nikos Kazantzakis

Letters: nature, journeys, Nobel prize in Literature.

### No 61 - April 2023

#### Studies and research

- George Stamatou (Spetses): «Kazantzakis' love for mountains» (in French)
- Agathi Markati (Athens): Kazantzakis' Christ recrucified: about the good and the bad or «The closed and the open morality».
- Apostolos Poullos (Pireaus): «The linguistic ideology of Kazantzakis for the language in general: Restrictions and possibilities of words» (in English).
- Pantelis Kogiamis (Vienna): «Nikos Kazantzakis, the Odyssey and the critique» (in Spanish).

#### Books

Critiques, studies, translations

**Reserve now the next special issue of the review.**

### SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

Athens, French Institute of Greece, June 10 and 11, 2023:

«Nikos Kazantzakis and his Greek colleagues: cross influences, relevancies and disagreements». Info: at e-mail [synedrio2023nk@gmail.com](mailto:synedrio2023nk@gmail.com)  
Nikos Chrysos has the responsibility of organising the Conference, writer and 1st Vice president of the Greek chapter of the ISFNK.

The event is under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, the Society of Greek Writers, the French Institute of Greece and the Municipality of Athens.

The participants are: Andreas Prasinos: «The influence of the classical Greek literature on Nikos Kazantzakis' work».

Evrithiki Trichon-Milsani: «Kazantzakis, the journeyman».

Spiros Ntzouropanos, Kleomenis Kalogeropoulos, Andreas Tsatsaris, Ioannis Katsios: «The traveller Kazantzakis: the geography of his cross influences - encounters with other Greek writers/poets».

Antonis Kartsakis: «Nikos Kazantzakis among the colleagues of the birth place».

Nikolas Evantinos: «An iceberg between Alexiou and Kazantzakis: the translation of *Divine Comedy*».

Stefania Kofina: «The portrait of woman for Nikos and Galatia Kazantzaki: the case of the works Daybreak and Women».

Antonis Sanoudakis-Sanoudos: «Elli Alexiou and Nikos Kazantzakis. A relationship of ambivalence».

Dimitris Kokoris: «The Kazantzakis of Varnali: deviation, convergence, criticism, acceptance».

Apostolos Poullos: «Nikos Kazantzakis' relationship with Ionas Dragoumis».

Nikoleta Zampaki: «About literary influences and convergence: Nature in the Mount Athos diaries of Nikos Kazantzakis and Angelos Sikelianos. A phenomenological approach».

Ioannis Solaris: «Kazantzakis and Papadiamantis: an unexpected encounter».

George Dritsas: «Convergence and recriminations in the works of Petros Vlastos and Nikos Kazantzakis»

Nectarios Pavlou: «Images of monastic life: N. Nikolaidis the Cypriot -

N. Kazantzakis, convergence and deviations».

Zografistou Katerina: «George Seferis as a reader of Askitiki. A study in the darkness of his library».

Katerina Vergetaki-Pirasmaki, Fotini Kallianteri: «Words sing and narrate nature: Reenactment in Kazantzakis' Terzines and the poetic collections of Elitis, *Orientalisms*, *Sun* and a *Song heroic and mournful*. A comparative study - Convergence of the two poets».

Michael Pashalis: «Nikos Kazantzakis, Elias Venezis and the place of birth: the mythology of homecoming and the primordial past».

Nikos Kangelaris: «Shaming and stoning: From Soso (M. Karagatsis, *Colonel Liapkin*) to the widow (N. Kazantzakis, *Zorba the Greek*)».

Agathi Markati: «Farewell to N. Kazantzakis and a postscript». Spiros Katsarapidis: «The Kazantzakian Odyssey: between Greekness and metaphysics».

Theofanis Malkidis: «The extirpation of the intellectual leadership of Pontus in 1921 and the initiative of Nikos Kazantzakis and his colleagues».

Athanasia Psaroulaki: «Nikos Kazantzakis' Odyssey, a controversial subject in the periodicals and newspapers of the era (1938-1958)».

Kostas Akrivos: «Ancestors and descendants: the emotional load of the great Cretan».

Kostas Arkoudeas: «The lost Nobel».

Vangelis Raptopoulos: «It's God's fault when he made the world so beautiful: allegories from Kazantzakis».

Manolis Pratikakis: «Kazantzakis, then and now».

Lefteris Yannakoudakis: «The gate of time: Building a workshop of creative writing for elementary school children, with Nikos Kazantzakis as the hero».

Antonis Nikolopoulos (Soloú): «From the literary to the visual narration. The readings of Nikos Kazantzakis' *Zorba*: additions, adjustments, concealments».

Eri Stavropoulou: «The marital relationship of Nikos and Galatia Kazantzakis and the *Untouchable* of Vangelis Raptopoulos».

Nikos Hrisos: «The spirit of Kazantzakis: echoes of the Kazantzakian work in the novel *The Century of Labyrinths* by Rea Galanaki».

Vangelis Hatzivasilou: *The Fratricides*. Nikos Kazantzakis' conversation with the post-war and post-political prose about the Civil war».

Stavroula G. Tsouprou: «Nikos Kazantzakis' "presence" in the anti junta struggle through his colleague Vasili Vasilikou».

Ioannis Panoutsopoulos: «Nikos Kazantzakis and Kostas Mourselas: The cave of inspiration and the stalactites of writing»

Haroula Verigou-Bantiou: «Responses-relevances of Kazantzakis in the work of Katerina Angelaki-Rouk».

George N. Perantonakis: «Nikos Kazantzakis and Antonis Samarakis, on the path of Existentialists».

Michael Patsis: «Nikos Kazantzakis: on the side of expressionism and dialogicity in Greek literature».

Eva Kokkinidi: «Nikos Kazantzakis as a reader of modern Greek literature».

### ***Thessaloniki, November 25-26 2023: «Encounters and texts of Kazantzakis for non Greek writers and artists»***

Nikos Kazantzakis met with many writers, artists, musicians, translators and generally non Greek intellectuals. The conference will examine his ties with many of those. It has been placed under the aegis of the School of Philosophy of the University of Thessaloniki and the chair of Unesco at the Ionian University. Those who wish to participate can contact [eleavramidou@gmail.com](mailto:eleavramidou@gmail.com).

## ***ACTIVITIES OF THE ISFNK***

### **Greek Chapter**

*Heraklion, January 22, 2023.* In the presence of a numerous and enthusiastic crowd, the Chapter inaugurated its new office. We wish all the best to our friends, especially to Katerina, Sophia and Maria.

### **Steering Committee**

It will meet on September 9 and 10, 2023. You will very soon receive the agenda.

### **International General Assembly**

It takes place every three years according to the Society's constitution. The next one will take place in New York in October of 2023. Kimon Friar, friend and translator of Nikos Kazantzakis work, will be honoured. You will receive the first circular in September.

## ***YOUTH***

One of the ISFNK's missions since its inception, is to make known, by various means, the work of the great Cretan. Here are our latest activities.

### **International competition in schools of secondary education**

#### **Under the aegis of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs-General Secretariat of Hellenism Abroad and Public Diplomacy.**

The first submissions we have received (prose, poetry and paintings), are impressive. Firstly, concerning the number of participants: 75 schools and 20 individual students. Secondly, concerning the high quality of the texts (29 in number and 23 works of painting). The competition will conclude at the end of May 2023. The results will be announced at the end of June 2023. The prizes will be awarded to the winners on August 5, 2023, in Heraklion (see below).

We thank and congratulate the students, the teachers and the parents.

### ***Tri-continental discussion***

The Steering Committee, in cooperation with various chapters, is looking into the possibility of organizing a youth meeting on December 14, 2023 (the ISFNK's date of founding) in order to discuss Nikos Kazantzakis' work. Additional information will be available in the next issue of *Synthesis*.

## ***INTERNATIONAL MEETING FOR THE ISFNK'S 35 YEARS: A HOMAGE TO THE GREAT CRETAN***

For the celebration of the 35th anniversary from the founding of our Society at the University of Geneva, the Steering Committee is organizing a meeting in Heraklion (Crete) on August 3rd through the 5th, 2023. The following events are planned:

A soirée at the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum (Mirtia) and the showing of a George Stasinakis interview, president of the Steering Committee, ambassador of Hellenism, and his nomination as an honorary member of the Board of Directors of the Museum.

- a soirée with a popular opera based on our writer's Odyssey
- a liturgy at his grave
- a showing of a video based on George Stasinakis' book «Life's paths, 1989-2019, in the footsteps of Nikos Kazantzakis» (journeys in the five continents), Kapa Publications, Athens, 2020
- round table on the international impact of Kazantzakis' work
- a soirée dedicated to the youth: lecture, awarding of prizes to the winners of the international competition in secondary education schools and schools of Heraklion.

## TRANSLATION

*Kazantzakis-Sipriot. Conversations*, Kastaniotis publications, Athens 2023. Artful translation from French to Greek by Dr. Maria Fletoridou. Prologue by Athina Vouyouka, a specialist on Kazantzakis. This is the last interview that Kazantzakis gave to the French National radio in 1957, in Antibes, his last place of residence, and which was published by Éditions du Rocher, Monaco 1990. The Greek reader will have the opportunity to discover our writer's concerns: «From the *Last Temptation* up to *Christ crucified*», the novelist and the Greek soul, the psychology of the novel, the novelist and the myths, the hero and the conflicts of the ideal, Saint Francis of Assisi, the franciscan vision and love.

It's an essential book for those interested in the work of Nikos Kazantzakis.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### International Thessaloniki Book Fair 2023

Like each year, the ISFNK will be present at this fair. The United States of America will be the honoured country. On May 6, 2023, Nikos Chrisos, writer, 1st Vice President of the Greek Chapter will introduce the ISFNK and its activities. Katerina Zografistou, member of the Steering Committee and president of the Greek Chapter will give a talk on Kazantzakis' relationship with the United States of America. Vanta Papaioannou-Voutsas, member of the Steering Committee and the Board of Directors of the Greek Chapter will moderate the discussion.

### International Reading Club of the works of Nikos Kazantzakis

The Club was founded by Katerina Zografistou, Sofia Ntalampeki and Maria Zahariaki and operates on a local as well as on an international level. We are happy that others followed our example. The club has been included in the program EU-Reading Circles. It's also a member of the Network of Book Clubs of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture. On March 19, 2023, an online international club reading was organized with subject *The Fratricides*. On April 1, 2023, at Sisarha, a small village near Psiloritis (Crete) a hybrid club reading took place with the presentation of *Captain Michalis*. On April 4, 2023, in the offices of the Greek Chapter, a soirée was organized dedicated to the novel *Report to Greco*, with the participation of students from the Esperinos General Lyceum of Heraklion. The event was organized by Katerina Zografistou. The next international Book Club reading will take place at the beginning of November 2023, with subject «Kazantzakis and Spain».

*Germany, Hamburg, November 2023*. The Cretan Society of Hamburg and the ISFNK, in cooperation with other bodies, are preparing various events. We will touch upon these in the next issue of *Synthesis*.

*Belgium, Brussels*. Under the aegis of the Greek Embassy Paulina Markopoulos, president of the Belgian Chapter of the Society, organized two events: *February 12, 2023*, the purpose being for the

youth to get to know the work of our writer and *March 10, 2023*, dedicated to the presentation of the unpublished book of Kazantzakis *The Ascent*. Speakers: K. Papadopoulos, publisher, M. Milathianaki, Director of the N. Kazantzakis Museum and L. Kouloumparitsis, Professor Emeritus at the Free University of Brussels.

*Bulgaria, Plovdiv, University of Philippopolis, January 10, 2023*. Professor Velichka Grozdeva, member of the Steering Committee has informed us that she organized a reading workshop with the participation of her students, with subject «One of Kazantzakis' works that you liked very much».

*United States of America*. Establishment of the program «Nikos Kazantzakis» at Berkeley University. We will come back to this subject in the next issue of *Synthesis*.

*France, Marseille, Greek Association, May 3, 2023*. Lecture by Allain Glykos, co-author with Antonin of the graphic novel «From the Cretan Glance to international recognition». This novel will be published shortly in Greek by Dioptra Publications, Athens.

*Greece, Chios, April 3, 2023*. In the framework of the International Day of Children's Book, Vanta Papaioannou-Voutsas moderated a discussion at a secondary education school, concerning excerpts from Kazantzakis' works, which are included in books of Modern Greek Literature Texts.

*Chania, May 3, 2023*: Talk by Sifis Miheloyannis, member of the Steering Committee, with subject «The fighting spirit of Crete in the life and work of Nikos Kazantzakis». *Heraklion City Hall, May 31, 2023*: Lecture by Katerina Zografistou with subject: «Friendship and enmity in Nikos Kazantzakis' novelist work».

*Japan, Kyoto, March 24, 2023*. Kosuke Fukuda, member of the Steering Committee, was formally awarded his Ph.D. diploma for his thesis, that had subject «Nikos Kazantzakis and the countries of the East - Japan -Russia, Pontus and other countries». Our sincere congratulations. He has been at the University of Osaka since April, where he will continue his studies in Greek literature.

*Qatar, Doha, March 18, 2023*. In the framework of the events «Days of Francophonie», organized by the French Institute of Qatar, a film was shown on the life and journeys of Nikos Kazantzakis. We would like to thank the Institute for this amazing initiative.

*United Kingdom, London, March 18, 2023*. The head of the local chapter of the ISFNK, Katerina Monastirli, organized successfully in cooperation with the Greek Library, a significant event with main speaker professor Elena Avramidou, member of the Steering Committee and president of the Chinese Chapter of the ISFNK. *The Ascent* was presented online. It was followed by readings of excerpts from works by Kazantzakis, showing of a video of an interview of George Stasinakis, presentation of Kazantzakis' work *The Ascent* and the documentary «The last journey of Kazantzakis in Japan» by Aris Hadjistefanou.

*Switzerland, Geneva*. For the celebration of the 35th anniversary from the founding of the ISFNK, the Swiss Chapter is preparing two events: *November 30, 2023*, reading from the Odyssey, accompanied by music, and beginning of *December 2023* showing of the documentary «The last journey» by Aris Hadjistefanou. These events will be organized by the Swiss and Greek authorities. More details will be published in the next issue of the *Synthesis*.

*Canada, Montreal*. The local Chapter with president Chrysoula Petineza, is enthusiastically continuing its activities.

*March 5, 2023*: Election of the new Board of Directors and a lecture by Artemis Lagapoulos with subject «The woman in the works of Kazantzakis».

*April 30, 2023*: Support for showing the film «Zorbas» by Bambi Tsokas with a large participation of the public.

*May 15, 2023*: Soirée with subject «Valour in the work of Kazantzakis».

*Toronto*: During the first half of the year the Chapter, with

president Voula Vetsi, will organize a discussion about the Larissa conference «Nature in the work of Kazantzakis», considered very special; the first critiques of the novels *Zorba the Greek*, *Christ crucified* and the book *The Ascent*.

May 28, 2023: Elena Avramidou will present online *The Ascent*.  
Ottawa, January 20, 2023: Cathy Dimitriou, coordinator of the local Chapter, presented a discussion on Kazantzakis' work.

April 7, 2023: Lecture by Father Michael Kokkaliari with subject «Kazantzakis and Orthodoxy».

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

Finishing, Cathy Dimitriou has established the «Nikos Kazantzakis Public Library» at the premises of the Greek Community.

*Ukraine, Kiev, University April 6, 2023.* Two Ph.D candidates of the Institute of Modern Greek Literature took part in a conference presenting Kazantzakis: Nt. Nevmerzhytska with subject «The existential patterns in Nikos Kazantzakis' *Zorba the Greek*» and N. Novinska «The function of the poetic neology in the works of Nikos Kazantzakis». Andriy Savenko, member of the Steering Committee, was the panel coordinator.

## TESTIMONY

Abbot Arthur Minieux was famous for his participation in the social and literary scene of Paris. He left a «Diary», which he kept from 1879 till 1939, and in which he describes his connections with writers, artists and members of the high society of «Goths» of his era and of the great urban class.

The «Diary» is kept at the National Archives of France and «Mercur de France» publications published it in 1985. Avas makes an entry in his «Diary» on April 29, 1930: «In the morning (I received) a letter from Nikos Kazantzakis, an amazing man who enchants me. He was, he says, influenced by me. Ah! I had almost no doubt about that at all».

In the notes (note 191) of the «Diary», the publisher writes: «Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957) is the most significant personality of Greek literature in the 20th century. During a life particularly unstable and risky, he was involved with almost all literary genres, writing novels and essays as well a poetic work larger than 30,000 verses, the *Odyssey*. But above, all thanks to his novels especially *Christ crucified*, he became famous worldwide. He had the time, before he passed away, to publish a sort of spiritual testament, the novel *Report to Greco* (1956)».

Mrs. Fletoridou clarifies that at the end of the first conversation «Kazantzakis - Sipriot» with the title «From the *Last Temptation to Christ crucified*» Nikos Kazantzakis says for Abbot Arthur Minieux.

Nikos Kazantzakis: I remember some beautiful words that I heard from the lips of Abbot Minieux: I met this amazing Abbot in Crete; I met him again after many years in Paris. One day he said to me: The day before yesterday, I went to the home of my beloved friend Bergson and I said to him: «Henri, I don't have time to read your works; could you tell me all your philosophy, in one word, in just one word?» Bergson remained silent for a few moments and then he suddenly cried out:

«Mobilization! Mobilization! Mobilize, in every critical moment, all your powers, all your virtues». This cry: *Mobilization, deeply optimistic, is the voice of my hero, all the heroes'. You ask me on whose side I'm on; I'm on the side of this Cry, I'm trying to follow this Cry. And everything that I created -novels, tragedies, poems- is nothing more than a comment on this Cry.*

## IN MEMORIAM

It's with great sadness that we were informed of the deaths of two significant members of the ISFNK:

Athens: Petros Panayotopoulos, ex ambassador of Greece.

Geneva: Olga Tuscher-Karageorgi, ex president of the Greek Community of Geneva.

We express our sincere condolences to their loved ones.

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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. 61, April 2023. ISSN1764-6103.

Publishing manager: Yvette Renoux-Herbert (Paris). Postal address: B.P. 45, F-01633 Saint-Genis-Pouilly Cedex, France.

Price: 2 €