

International Society of Friends of Nikos Kazantzakis

# SYNTHESIS

INFORMATION BULLETIN



Sketch by Takis Kaimouhos, 1929

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*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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No 62, August 2023

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## MAIN ARTICLE

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Since last April, our members and supporters have upheld the celebrations marking the 35<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the foundation of ISFNK by successfully organizing four significant events: - The Scientific Conference in Athens, titled: "Kazantzakis and his Greek Contemporaries: Interactions, Affiliations, and Disagreements" - The global meeting of ISFNK regional chapter leaders, - The international competition in Secondary Education Schools - Various Activities of regional chapters. In the upcoming months, and extending through the year's conclusion, they will be organizing the following events: - The World General Assembly of the ISFNK in New York - A Scientific Conference in Thessaloniki titled: "Kazantzakis and non-Greek Intellectuals," and various other events and activities. Additional details will be provided further. We express our sincere gratitude to them. In conclusion, we acknowledge the commemorative edition of the "The Cretan Glance."



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

Issue # 50 Contents – December 2023

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## TEXTS BY NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS

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- Unpublished texts

## STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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- René Bouchet (Paris): *"The Journey in the Novels of Nikos Kazantzakis."* (In French).
- William Bendel Stanford (Dublin): *Joyce's 'Ulysses' and Kazantzakis's 'Odyssey'.* (In Greek).
- Emmanouela Giannoulidou (Melbourne) *The Third Side of the Civil War in Nikos Kazantzakis's 'Fratricides' and 'Through Fire and Blood: Heroes, Beasts, and Witnesses of Spain' by Emmanuel Chaves Nogales.* (In English).
- Angela Gentile (Buenos Aires): *The Same Sky* (In Spanish).

## BOOKS

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### Reviews

- Katerina Zografistou (Heraklion, Crete): *'The Ascent', Nikos Kazantzakis's Unpublished Novel.*
- Nikos Chrysos (Athens): *Kazantzakis - Sipriòt, Conversations.*

The journal is now available in digital format. You can refer to the link <http://amis-kazantzaki.gr/leregardcretois> for more information, and to the following e-mail address: [le.regard.cretois.siank@gmail.com](mailto:le.regard.cretois.siank@gmail.com)

## HERAKLION, CRETE: GLOBAL GATHERING

For the celebration of the 35th anniversary since the founding of ISFNK, numerous heads of chapters of the Society representing Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, the United States, France, Greece, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Switzerland, and Tunisia gathered in Heraklion on August 2, 3, 4, and 5, 2023.

Together they explored the entire island of Crete, visiting archaeological sites, the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum, and the offices of the Greek Chapter of the ISFNK. Subsequently, they attended an official event at the Kazantzakis Museum, featuring the screening of an interview with George Stasinakis which took place at his residence in Geneva, and his nomination as an honorary member of the Museum's Board of Directors. The introduction was delivered by our friend Stelios Matzapetakis,

former Member of Parliament and honorary president of the Museum. Honors were also bestowed upon Stavros Arnaoutakis, Regional Prefect of Crete, and Varvara Tsaka, former Director of the Kazantzakis Museum.

The musical segment featured the Cretan Folk Opera by Manos Mountakis inspired by Nikos Kazantzakis *Odyssey: A Modern Sequel*. It was a superb performance attended by a large audience. Katerina Zografistou, member of the Coordinating Committee of the ISFNK and President of the Greek Chapter, presented him with a Collector's edition of the epic.

The hall was filled with people, during the final part of the meeting, moderated by Nikos Skenteris, a member of the Coordinating Committee and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of our Greek Chapter. Initially, representatives from various chapters presented the activities of their ISFNK's chapter in their respective countries. The audience was enthused by the significance and quality of these presentations. Nikos Chrysos, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the Greek Chapter, introduced George Stasinakis' book titled: *Paths of Life - In the Footsteps of Nikos Kazantzakis 1989-2019*, featuring a foreword by Peter Bien, one of the most prolific scholars of our author's work (Kapa Editions, Athens, 2020). Katerina Zografistou delivered a speech titled "Kazantzakis and the Youth". Finally, Pantelis Voutsas, an artist from Komotini, Greece, crafted a wooden sculpture portrait of Kazantzakis and gifted it to George Stasinakis. Special distinctions were awarded to schools in Heraklion and to the Local Administration of Heraklion of the International Police Association. Awards were presented to the winners of the international competition in secondary education schools (see below). The award ceremony was preceded by a presentation of the competition by Vanda Papaioannou-Voutsas, a member of the Coordinating Committee and the Board of Directors of the Greek Chapter. We warmly thank all those friends who traveled from four continents, Katerina Zografistou, Sofia Ntalampeki, special Consultant to the Coordinating Committee for technical and electronic means of communication, and Maria Zachariaki, Treasurer of the Greece Branch of ISFNK, for their impeccable organization and execution of these unforgettable days.

#### ***ISFNK INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS***

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We have already mentioned in "SYNTHESIS" the significance we assign to promoting the work of Nikos Kazantzakis among the youth through the organization of exhibitions, lectures, screenings, and competitions. The participation and quality of the entries in this year's competition exceeded our expectations.

Participation: 204 students from 49 schools in Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Greece, and Uzbekistan.

Written Works: Prose: 41 (38 in Greek, 2 in French, 1 in English), Poetry: 55 (50 in Greek and 5 in French), Painting: 108.

#### **Winners**

Poetry: Michael Magafosis, Anavryta Gymnasium, Athens. Title of the poem: "The Traveler of Words" (in French).

Prose: Thaddée Meurant, French Lyceum Jean Monnet, Brussels. Title: "I Have Not Yet Finished My *Odyssey*" (in French).

Painting: Maria-Penelope Paspatis, General Lyceum of Mytilene, University of the Aegean.

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The ISFNK offered this trip to the winners, who were accompanied by their parents.

#### **Honorable Mentions**

Poetry: Panagiotis Katzanas, General Lyceum of Mytilene, University of the Aegean. Title of the poem: "My Kazantzakis."

Prose: Eleni-Anastasia Menyta, Gymnasium of Domenika (near Patras). Title: "The Old Pedagogy."

Painting: Maria Avanesian, Gymnasium Maria A.H. Geritsian, Armenia.

The ISFNK plans to publish all of the students' work (96 literary works and 108 paintings).

#### ***SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES***

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##### ***Athens, June 10-11, 2023: "Nikos Kazantzakis and His Greek Contemporaries: Interactions, Affinities, Disagreements."***

The list of speakers was published in "SYNTHESIS," issue No. 61, of April 2023. It was organized by Nikos Chrysos in collaboration with Dioptra Publications. The event was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, the Hellenic Authors' Society, the French Institute of Greece (IFA), and the Municipality of Athens, with the support of Kastaniotis Publications, Niki Stavrou (The Nikos Kazantzakis Estate), and the electronic magazine "Χάρτης." It was a resounding success. We would like to express our gratitude to the speakers, the aforementioned organizations, and especially to Nikos Chrysos. ([synedrio2023nk@gmail.com](mailto:synedrio2023nk@gmail.com)).

##### ***Thessaloniki, November 25 and 26, 2023: "Kazantzakis and Global Intellectuals."***

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Nikos Kazantzakis met and interacted with numerous non-Greek writers, artists, musicians, translators, and intellectuals. The conference schedule will be announced in early October 2023. Those interested are welcome to contact the conference organizer, Professor Elena Avramidou of the University of Shanghai, via email: [eleavramidou@gmail.com](mailto:eleavramidou@gmail.com).

#### ***CULTURAL ROUTES "KAZANTZAKIS-ZORBAS"***

In June 2022, the ISFNK published *Cultural Routes: Kazantzakis (1883-1957) - Zorbas (1865-1941)*. The network of sites-landmarks in Greece, the Caucasus, and North Macedonia of two free spirited men." It includes our initiatives and those of other organizations in honor of the two friends. The publication was warmly received.

The Greek Ministry of Culture has recommended that we submit a formal letter to the Council of Europe, requesting the inclusion of the aforementioned cultural routes, along with the ISFNK for all its endeavors and accomplishments, in the Cultural Routes Program.

Furthermore, we were informed by Alexandra Gouta's article in the Athens-Macedonian News Agency of July 2023 that the Mayors of Velvento and Aristoteli are planning specific development initiatives for Katafygi, Zorbas' birthplace, as well as for Paleochori, where Zorbas resided for two decades.

In conclusion, a pilgrimage to Zorbas' tomb in Skopje is scheduled for November 24, 2023. Those interested in

participating may send a message to the following email address: [eleavramidou@gmail.com](mailto:eleavramidou@gmail.com)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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### **Studies**

Kostoula Perraki, *Kazantzakis and Zorbas*, Heraklion 2022.

Maria Angeli, *Madam Ortans: A Literary Portrait...*, Agrinio 2023.

Panagiotis Asimeonoglou, *Live Like Zorbas: The Ultimate Freedom as a Way of Life*, iWrite Publications, Thessaloniki 2023.

Conference Proceedings, Komotini, *Nikos Kazantzakis: From the Vastness of the World to the Courtyard of his Work*, Stamoulis Publications, Thessaloniki 2023.

### **Speeches and Articles**

Katerina Zografistou, *Crete in the Works of Kazantzakis: 'Captain Michalis', 'Report to Greco', and 'The Life and Polity of Alexis Zorbas'*, 2nd Scientific Conference of the Art School of Heraklion, May 3, 2023.

Katerina Zografistou, *Nikos Kazantzakis: Ecumenical and Current. Why?* Kryoneri (Nikos Kazantzakis' mother's birthplace), August 19, 2023.

Michail Paschalis, *Nikos Kazantzakis: 100 Years of 'Saviors of God- Spiritual Exercises'*, Newspaper "Ta Nea," Athens, August 5-6, 2023.

### **Translations**

In Japanese, *The Master-BUILDER* by Kosuke Fukuda.

In Italian, *Travelling Japan-China* by Gilda Tendorio, published by Crocetti, Milan, 2023.

In Greek, *Kazantzakis - Sipirot: Conversations*, translated from the French by Maria Fletoridou, and published by Kastaniotis Publications, Athens, 2023.

## **ISFNK OPERATIONS**

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### **Coordinating Committee**

A meeting is scheduled for *September 9 and 10, 2023*, where the Society's functions and operations will be addressed, and appointments for Chapter Leaders will be formally announced.

### **The well-established Worldwide General Assembly**

The Worldwide General Assembly will take place in New York via Zoom on *October 14, 2023*. A special tribute will be paid to Kimon Friar, a friend and primary English translator of *Saviors of God – Spiritual Exercises* and *The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel*. Our members will receive the agenda in early October. We extend our gratitude to Manolis Vellivasakis, Matina Demeli, and Nicholas Alexiou for their invaluable support in organizing this significant meeting.

## **EVENTS: FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY**

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## **Reading Clubs for Nikos Kazantzakis's Works**

### **Local**

In the upcoming months, Katerina Zografistou will curate two Reading Clubs in Crete, specifically, in Heraklion and Anogeia. Furthermore, Apostolos Zois will be organizing a Reading Club at the Oichalia Primary School in Trikala.

### **Global**

*October 25, 2023: Journeying through Spain*. The presentation will be conducted by Vanda Papaioannou-Voutsas.

*Spring 2024: Kazantzakis and Sports* by Spyros Kokolakis, PhD in Sports Management and a member of the French Chapter of the ISFNK.

### **Other events**

**Albania, Tirana, November 2023: International Book Festival**. Thanks to Maklena Nika, **President** of the ISFNK Albania Chapter, we will be present and attending.

**Germany, Hamburg, November 2023**: The Cretan Association in collaboration with ISFNK, will organize a series of events dedicated to our author.

**Argentina, Buenos Aires, University, School of Philosophy, December 2023: Kazantzakis's Theatrical Works**.

**Australia**, Three lectures were organized by the Melbourne Chapter, president of which is Giannis Milidis: On *June 21, 2023*, Professor Vrasidas Karalis, of the University of Sydney, presented his lecture on 'Saviors of God – Spiritual Exercises'; On *July 4, 2023*, Professor Giorgos Kechagioglou delivered a lecture titled: 'Nature in Kazantzakis's Journeys'; On *August 9, 2023*, Professor Alfred Vincent, University of Sydney, delivered a speech titled: "Nikos Kazantzakis and his Connections with France." In collaboration with the University and the Association of Greek Students, the local Sydney Chapter, headed by Vasilis Adrachtas, will organize a roundtable discussion on *November 8, 2023*, titled "Kazantzakis's Enigma: Author, Poet, Philosopher, or Theologian?" The participants will include Alfred Vincent, Maria Zarimi, and Vasilis Adrachtas. The event will feature a screening of Menios Karagiannis' documentary titled '33,333: The Odyssey of Nikos Kazantzakis'.

**Austria, Salzburg Festival, August 13-27, 2023**: Four performances of Bohuslav Martinu's opera "The Greek Passion," inspired by Nikos Kazantzakis' *Christ Crucified*. *University of Vienna, September 11-14, 2023: European Congress of Modern Greek Studies*: university scholars from Greece, Poland, and Latvia will explore various facets of the work of the great Cretan author.

**Canada, Toronto, September-October 2023**: Voula Vetsi, president of the local chapter, informed us that her team will organize two meetings to discuss the proceedings of the conference "Kazantzakis and Greek Authors" which was held on *June 10-11, 2023*, in Athens.

**Greece, Heraklion, Municipality, May 31, 2023**: Lecture by Katerina Zografistou, titled "*Friendship and Animosity in the Fictional Works of Nikos Kazantzakis*." *Hydra, Festival, July-August 2023*: Organized by the Historical Archive-Museum of Hydra in collaboration with the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum, featuring Niki Stavrou, the intellectual heir of Kazantzakis, with the support of the ISFNK. It featured an remarkable exhibition designed by Niki Stavrou titled "Nikos Kazantzakis, 140 Years of Light" (with manuscripts and items from the life of Nikos and Eleni Kazantzakis). Katerina Zografistou explained the significance of the word "Light", which holds a special place in our author's oeuvre, its global impact, and the efforts of the

ISFNK, which has been steadily promoting it across five continents for the past 35 years. We wholeheartedly congratulate the directors of the Historical Archive-Museum of Hydra and the Kazantzakis Museum, Dina Adamopoulou and Marilena Miliathianaki respectively, Niki Stavrou, Katerina Zografistou, and our representatives from the “Modern Greek Studies Foundation” in California. *Thessaloniki, October 18, 2023*: Lecture by Elena Avramidou on Kazantzakis’ unpublished novel, *The Ascent*.

*Japan, Meisei University, Hino (near Tokyo), August 5, 2023*: Screening of the film by Jules Dassin, “He Who Must Die,” inspired by *Christ Recrucified*. A discussion will follow. Our congratulations to Kosuke Fukuda, a member of the Coordinating Committee, and to his team for their outstanding efforts to keep the work of Nikos Kazantzakis alive in Japan.

*United Kingdom, Queens’ College, Cambridge, June 30 - July 1, 2023*: Conference on the Centennial Celebration of *Saviors of God – Spiritual Exercises*. The ISFNK was represented by Professors Vasileios Groen (Austria) and Giannis Sakkas (Greece).

*Switzerland, Geneva, November 30, 2023*: To celebrate the 35th anniversary of the ISFNK, the Chapter will host a symposium dedicated to the epic poem *The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel*. Rozmi Pahlisch Tzanou, Chapter President, will present the epic poem, while actors Ann-Lise Fritz and Michel Kuhn will recite excerpts, accompanied by saxophonist Raphael Daniel. The event is held under the auspices of the Municipalities of Geneva and Heraklion, and the Consulate General of Greece in Geneva.

#### ***A TEXT BY NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS***

“Kazantzakis - Sipriòt. Conversations”, Éditions du Rocher du Rocher, Monaco, 1990 (excerpt).

*I remember two succinct lines from a poet whose name escapes me: “While we were fighting, Nature was welcoming Spring.”*

*I sense, behind the tragic fate of the contemporary human, Nature, beautiful and eternal, remaining utterly indifferent to our fleeting tragedies. Anxiety overwhelms us; we dim, feeling more than ever the need to open a window to glimpse, in the brief moment of a flash, the sky, the stars, the sea, spring; suddenly, though, the window closes, and we find ourselves once again facing the demons of darkness that besiege us. To cast a brief and intense gaze upon nature, amidst the cries of struggle and anguish, becomes, increasingly, I believe, a necessary escape to a lost paradise. Yet, this glance must be very brief, for we no longer have the time to linger in detailed descriptions.*

#### ***NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS MUSEUM (MYRTIA, CRETE)***

The Museum was founded by George Anemogiannis, a founding member of ISFNK, and, this year, it is celebrating its 40th year of operation. To honor this significant milestone, they are organizing various events, including musical performances, lectures, exhibitions, theater productions, trips, and a conference. We wish them longevity and extend our congratulations to both past and present administrators.

Please note that the Museum will remain closed until the spring of 2024 for building maintenance.

#### ***DONATIONS***

**Switzerland Chapter:** M. Comte, Ph. Girard, W. Griffiths, M. Hahnloser, E. Jaton, D. Koutoulakis, Ch. Sirisin, M. Stamm, G. Stasinakis, D. Tzanos, J. Von Burg.

**Greece Chapter:** M. Antoniou, A. Markati, M. Panagiotou, M. Paterakis, M. Patsis, I. Spiliopoulou, G. Stasinakis, K. Zografistou.

“**Le Regard crétois/The Cretan Glance**”: Cyprus, France and Switzerland Chapters, K. Dimitriou, P. Markopoulou, K. Monastirli, G. Paganellis, A. Papadopoulos, G. Tentorio, F. Trevezas, Manolis Velivasakis.

#### ***IN MEMORIAM***

It is with deep sorrow that we received the news of the passing of three esteemed members of the ISFNK: Dr. Andreas Poulakis (United States of America), A. and G. Lecomte (Geneva). Our sincere condolences go out to their bereaved families.

#### ***ISFNK: CONTACT***

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[www.amis-kazantzaki.gr](http://www.amis-kazantzaki.gr)  
[www.amigos-kazantzaki.org](http://www.amigos-kazantzaki.org)

##### **Facebook**

En grec : <https://www.facebook.com/amis.kazantzaki.gr/>

In French:

<https://www.facebook.com/Soci%C3%A9t%C3%A9-Internationale-des-Amis-de-Nikos-Kazantzaki-379350352815580>

In English:

<https://www.facebook.com/The-International-Society-of-Friends-of-Nikos-Kazantzakis-2358603970881508>

In Spanish:

<https://www.facebook.com/siank.mx>

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