

THE ODYSSEY OF A MUSEUM

It all began one winter's morning in 1976 when I visited for the first time the 'KAZANTZAKIS ROOM', housed in the Historical Museum of Iraklion in Crete.

There, among the exhibits, I saw a photocopy of Kazantzakis's will: / *request her – he wrote of his wife in April, 1956 – to see that my books and whatever other personal mementoes of mine she shall think fit, such as manuscripts, pictures, my gold ring, my fountain pen, bibelots, etc., are brought together in the projected – if possible in my father's residence - 'HOUSE OF NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS'.* But his sister, Eleni Theodosiadi, had sold the house some time before, and the new owner, to sell it back to Kazantzakis, demanded the crazy sum of 2000 gold sovereigns. So, in a codicil dated 3rd June 1957, Kazantzakis modified the original scheme and directed: *As I have agreed with the Society for Historical Studies of Iraklion in Crete, a new room will be established within the Society's building, whither shall be transported my study from Antibes just as it is. To this room will be transferred the table at which I write and all the remaining furniture as well as my books, all the manuscripts, my correspondence, pictures, my old fountain pen with which I have written my works for 40 years, my silver belt, my gold ring. On the lintel of the room shall be written: "STUDY OF NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS".*

His wish was realised. The objects were transferred and on the lintel there is an inscription: "ROOM OF NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS".

But, despite the fine exhibits, the total impression created in a very limited space cannot, I thought at the time, satisfy visitors who, conditioned by comparable museums devoted to universally recognized masters of the written word such as Goethe, Verne, Hugo, Voltaire, Andersen, must seek a fuller picture of the writer who consumed his life in colossal literary creativity.

Not only did Kazantzakis not repudiate the place of his origins where as a child he used to play tag with the other children, as the older villagers would relate until quite recently – but on the contrary he mentions it at every opportunity. Indeed, in his confessional 'REPORT TO EL GRECO' he notes: *My father's family originates from a village two hours away from Megalo Kastro (i.e. Iraklion) called Varvari.* This same village is also the place of origin of my own father. My forefathers were from Varvari with property consisting of farmland and a two-storeyed house right in the centre of the village, bought from the Turks in 1835.

An arranged marriage brought the Kazantzakis and Anemogiannis families closer together. Kallirroë Kazantzaki, first cousin of Kapetan Michalis, Nikos Kazantzakis's father, married Emmanouel Fioros, my father's maternal grandfather. What the confused relationship was between the children of the two families, I do not think even the children themselves ever really clarified. So, in a letter of 1937, Nikos Kazantzakis calls Antonis Anemogiannis *nephew und uncle*. Apart from all this, although they were not fellow – pupils – Kazantzakis was one year ahead – the two of them were joined by that close friendship which

develops in the schoolroom. This is apparent too in the youthful letters of the 'Student of Law Nikolaos M. Kazantzakis' sent in 1902 to the *Fourth Form Pupil* and later to the *Negotiant Antonios Anemogiannis*.

Several times during the last years of his life the house at Varvari entertained Kazantzakis on flying visits to the village, for in his family house next door, covering scarcely 45 square metres, there had lived permanently for a long time two distant female relatives of his, the Psomopouli. Eleni Kazantzaki mentions in her biography of her husband, 'The Uncompromising One' that *The present inhabitants of Varvari have remembered for years the parties of the "intellectuals" which used to finish up on green banks where everyone finally let their hair down with somersaults on the grass.*

When, in 1975,¹ I acquired full ownership of the two-storeyed building, the councillors of the Community and their President submitted a request to me to hand it over to them, since there was no likelihood of my inhabiting it permanently or occasionally, but without specifying what they would use it for.

I recalled Kazantzakis's unfulfilled wish. Here was an opportunity – bold and ambitious – to realise it. I did not hesitate to assent to the transfer of the building, with the irrevocable proviso that, after alterations and adaptations, the house must be turned into a museum devoted to the great man of the place.

As I had some experience from the Panos Aravantinos Museum in Piraeus which I had organized some years previously, I envisaged manuscripts, books, letters and personal objects being displayed in showcases, while at the same time the arrangement on the walls of boards with details from all over the world of performances of Kazantzakis's plays and works adapted for the theatre would, in my opinion, complete a picture convincing both for our own people and for foreign visitors to Crete who, for years now, after their homage at his tomb, have been making their way up to Varvari in search of his roots. With an official deed of contract I handed over the building to the village Community. For a period Varvari had been renamed "Myrtia", but now it has regained its old name in order to remind people that, as Kazantzakis writes: *When the Byzantine Emperor Nikiforos Fokas reconquered Crete in the tenth century, he rounded up into certain villages those Arabs who survived the slaughter, and those villages were called 'Varvori'.*

Up to this point there were no difficulties. They began to manifest themselves when I decided to take a personal hand in gathering together every kind of Kazantzakian material.

Years ago I had found among my father's effects, in a wooden box marked 'N.K. - M.K.', letters from Kazantzakis, exercise books, albums and personal items, as well as title deeds belonging to Michael Kazantzakis. This provided a certain foundation. I embarked on the task of collecting the first editions of the books of the poet of the 'ODYSSEY' as well as texts which had first appeared in periodicals and newspapers.

Completely uninformed as I was then on a matter which, I confess, had never

claimed my attention before, I drew every relevant piece of information from Pantelis Prevelakis's book '400 Letters from Kazantzakis to Prevelakis', and from Katsimbalis's Kazantzakis Bibliography. Using a list which I had compiled, I started by enquiring among close friends and friends of friends, then by searching second-hand bookshops, archives, and the bookshelves of acquaintances and strangers.

My request that I might be offered or might purchase whatever I found began to bear fruit. Copies of 'Noumas' succeeded 'Pinakotheke', and the 'Bulletin of the Educational Circle' followed issues of 'Panathenaia'. The quest continued for many months with the persistence which must characterize pathological collectors and with the indomitable stubbornness of those determined to achieve a purpose. Trunks and boxes were rummaged in, chests and cases were emptied, attics and basements were searched. Friends gave their support, acquaintances and strangers made generous offers, or exchanges. Exceptions were few. Some did not appear keen, others were grudging. They were uninterested or else refused. Perhaps they did not believe that a museum worthy of Kazantzakis could one day become a reality.

With newspapers, then, and with periodicals and books from publishing houses which for the most part only exist in the memories of those who concern themselves with literature, the collection of the first Greek editions was in time completed.

Next I turned my attention abroad. My enquiries in the countries of Europe, Asia and America, both North and South, had two targets: translations of Kazantzakis's books in their many and various editions, and details of performances of his plays or works adapted for the stage.

I may seem to be passing into the realm of the absurd, but it is a fact that unearthing documents from the ends of the earth was easier than finding them in Greece. The foreigners, with greater understanding than our own people in cultural matters or in events concerning persons of international repute, not only gave their assistance, but accompanied whatever they sent with a warm letter expressing their gratitude that the honour had fallen to them of participating in the setting up of the Museum.

- Thus Tatiana Chernyshova writes from Kiev: *We read of your noble effort with emotion and admiration. Both I and my husband, Andreas Bielecki, well-known in our country as a helle'nist, consider it our sacred duty to send you as many translations of Kazantzakis's works into local languages as we can find.*
- From Japan the self-exiled Vietnamese Buddhist monk Nguyen Hii' u Hieu writes: *I consider it my duty to hunt all over the world for translations into Vietnamese. I have placed an advertisement in specialist publications in France, Canada and America. Please accept my admiration and gratitude.*
- Lubos Pozivil, general manager of the State Theatre in Prague, writes: *We are happy to offer to the Kazantzakis Museum material relating to our performance of Zorbas.*

- The French actress Josette Favey who, in the guise of a musical, has made 'Zorbas' known in the larger towns of her country, writes: *I await with impatience the opening of the museum and I am proud of my small contribution. For, like you, I have boundless admiration for Nikos Kazantzakis.*
- Fotios Malleros, a teacher at the School of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies in the University of Chile, writes: *Allow me the satisfaction of knowing that I have done something for the memory of the greatest writer of modern Greece, and also the sense of honour which will be felt by all those who help as much as they can to achieve the best possible realisation of the wonderful task which you have undertaken.*
- Serge Etter, costume designer of the Rouen opera, writes: *It is an honour for me to contribute to the Kazantzakis museum.*
- And Andre Cottavoz, one of the artists who have illustrated the 'Odyssey', says: *Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this event honouring Nikos Kazantzakis.*
- Ladislav Sliva, playwright at the State Theatre in Ostzawa, writes: *It is a great honour for us that material from our performance will enrich the collection of the Kazantzakis Museum.*

Shall I mention others? And yet others?

Of course my enquiries did not always hit their target because sometimes the recipient of my requests did not have what I was looking for. But even in such cases I would receive information which pointed me in the right direction.

So I found myself in correspondence with the Miasnikian Library of the Republic of Armenia, with the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow and the Bibliotheque de l'Arsenal in Paris, with the Ministries of Culture in Bulgaria and Russia, with the President of the French Stage—designers' Union, with American university professors, with managing directors of State Theatres, with the Reiss Museum in Mannheim, with the marvellous Swiss painter Hans Erni, with bookshops specialising in rare editions, with publishers, with well—known hellenists, with translators of Kazantzakis's works, with Greek communities, with university faculties of modern Greek studies, with Greeks who have distinguished themselves abroad, and with so many others that their enumeration would produce an endless list. The result was impressive. Day by day, month by month, year by year, a unique collection took shape.

Scarce books, copies of books long out of print, were also supplied by people whose addresses I culled from Athenian publications whenever I happened to read something about them. In roughly this way I got into touch with the Hungarian Eva Berecz. Tucked away in an Athenian newspaper I found the announcement that she wanted to correspond with Greeks because she was planning to study archaeology and so acquaintanceships in Greece would be very useful to her. I wrote to her: *You seek contact with Greece and I with Hungary so as to find works by Kazantzakis which have been translated in your country. I cannot offer you the possibility of*

excavations in my country, but the opportunity to make your first discoveries in your own country. The response was not slow in coming in the shape of a beautifully illustrated edition of 'ZORBAS'. The fine design of the cover prompted me to write to the artist Klimo Karoly who had executed it. Twelve sketches for his illustrations are today in the Museum. Nor must I omit the contribution of ordinary Greeks living abroad who, learning from the press of the foundation of the Museum, presented without being asked any books by Kazantzakis which they found in bookshops where they were living.

By these means, but also with the mass of books which Eleni Kazantzaki would add from time to time, translations were gathered together from 46 countries, making a total at present of some 480 books.

Similar operations brought into my hands material from performances of Kazantzakis's plays and adaptations of his novels for the theatre, the opera, cinema and television.

First I got in touch with Athenian specialists in the field of the performing arts and, as usually happens, the response of some was positive and immediate, while from others I am still waiting for the substantiation of grandiose promises....

I collected valuable documents, the first being a programme from 1907 for the play 'DAY IS BREAKING', while, at the same time, from the archives of those who deal with the photography of theatrical performances and from our theatrical Museum, I secured a mass of photographs. The oldest, from 1916, is of the opera 'THE MASTER-BUILDER'.

Once, as I was passing through Germany on holiday, I visited the State Theatre at Mannheim and afterwards the theatrical museum in the same town. It was not easy, but I managed to find the programme for the performance of the play 'SODOM AND GOMORRAH' which was performed there in 1954, together with photographs and reviews, and also the addresses of those responsible for putting on the play. I wrote to them as a colleague and was delighted to receive, from the costume–designer, Gerda Schulte, her designs. These were the first theatrical maquettes which I acquired for the Museum. Later many more were added from various countries.

Eleni Kazantzaki's valuable moral support furnished me with a list which, in time, I was able to amplify with the help of collateral information. A list, that is to say, showing which works had been performed in theatres all over the world. She gave me some addresses, but the majority I owe to the Greek Theatre Centre which unearthed them by sending enquiries to the corresponding centres in the towns which interested me.

In this way I came into contact with European and American impresarios, from Oslo to San Paolo, from Buenos Aires to Goteborg, from Nicosia to London, from Vienna to the East, from Zurich to New York and – you name it. With producers, stage–designers, costume–designers and choreographers, with advertising agencies who produce programmes and posters, with photographers and wig–

makers and make – up artists. With managing directors of state theatres and with backers of private companies. The number of letters which I posted to East and West comes to nearly 3000.

In order to overcome difficulties and bureaucratic formalities, I visited some of them personally. It was not the cheapest, but it was the most effective way to success.

Among the many instances of the unusual which I encountered in my dealings with all these people, perhaps it is worth mentioning the most curious which arose when, from the programme of the musical 'Zorba' on Broadway, sent by the impresario Harold Prince, I learned the name of the stage – designer, Boris Aronson. In order to ask him for the maquettes and photographs of the set which he had designed, once again I requested our obliging Theatre Centre to find me his address. A few weeks later I made the same request to my cousin Giorgos K. Anemogiannis when he told me that the following week he was going to New York for a fortnight. I burdened him with the additional mission of, once he had got the address from the impresario's office, visiting Aronson personally to explain the situation to him and to convey my request. The day after his departure a telephone call from the Theatre Centre informed me of the address. Naturally I wrote the same day to my American colleague. All I had to do now was to sit back and wait for the result of my two – pronged operation. At that very time, browsing in a book about the development of stage design, I chanced on Aronson's biographical details. I read that he was born in Russia in 1889, he emigrated to America and began his career there in 1923. The discovery that he was 80 set me thinking and my hitherto rosy hopes began gradually to fade. They vanished altogether when, at the end of the fortnight, my cousin returned with the news that he had not been successful. It would be an idle dream, he said, for anyone to think of seeking out Aronson who, bedridden now, lived somewhere outside New York, withdrawn from the theatrical world. Having learned the situation I more or less put it out of my mind when, contrary to all reasonable expectation, one fine morning, the post brought me an envelope on whose flap, fair and square, was printed the name of my man – Boris Aronson. The letter was signed by a certain Liza and began thus: *Dear Giorgos, you will think it as strange to receive my letter as I thought it strange to receive yours. My family name is Jalowetz and we were fellow – students at the Rheinhardt School in Vienna very many years ago. Persecuted in Austria in 1939 by the Nazis, she emigrated to America where she met and married Aronson, a Jew like herself. And my old fellow – student of stage design continued with a promise that she would find and send what I wanted. As she told me later, the maquettes had disappeared. But I had rediscovered a friend. It is a small world!*

Zorbas, the Kazantzakian symbol of joy and virility, was for me a source of trouble. A series of strange events accompanied the acquisition of items relating to performances of Zorbas in various theatres, and I ought to add an account of what happened on one of my journeys-in 1979.

I was looking for tape – recordings of Kazantzaki's voice from Paris, translations of his novels from Amsterdam and Brussels, photographs from Antwerp and Linz,

and the programme of the musical 'Zorbas' from Vienna. In the Austrian capital internationally successful musicals are staged exclusively at the Theater an der Wien which, in 1791, saw the premiere of Mozart's 'Magic|Flute'. So it was natural for me, arrived at the old haunts of my student years, to begin my investigations there, but as a consequence I met with my first rebuff. In the secretariat archive there was only one copy of the programme and, of course, they could not possibly let it go. But they promised to send very soon a photocopy to me in Athens. I left my address, even though I did not want the programme, in that form, and continued my search without, however, finding what I wanted either in the Theatre Library or in the Public Library of the city. Hoping that luck would lend some further assistance, I began to make telephone calls: to the person charged with editing theatre programmes, to the office concerned with placing advertisements, to the printing press. One negative reply followed another, there was no sign of an end to this run of bad luck, time was passing and I had to leave. My desire unfulfilled, I returned to Athens. On the very same day I received the photocopied programme sent as promised by the theatre. Glancing at the page with the names of all those who had worked on the performance I had an idea. Perhaps one out of all of them, I thought, might have kept a programme of 'Zorbas?' I decided to write letters, but first I picked out those most likely to respond to my enquiry. These were the assistant producer, the first and second stage—hands, the chief carpenter and the chief tailor, the props man, the man in charge of wigs, masks and make—up, the hairdresser and others — 17 in all. I hunted up the addresses in the Vienna telephone directory which is to be found, along with those of other cities, in a special section of the Telephone Company's building in Athens. I located nine individuals whose first names, surnames and professions, as given, tallied with those who I was hoping would help me. I was not slow in posting off the same number of registered letters and with, I admit, many doubts and fewer hopes I left it to time to complete the experiment. Even though I seemed to be looking for a needle in a haystack, suddenly fortune smiled, the unbelievable happened. The much desired programme arrived enclosed in a letter from Vienna: *Dear Sir, I received the letter which you sent in my name, but from its contents I realise that it concerns somebody who works in the theatre. I do not work in the theatre but, by coincidence, I possess the programme you are looking for. I send it to you with pleasure together with my warm wishes for the success of your venture.* Signed: Tiefenbacher.

There was also a postscript: */ have forwarded your letter to my namesake.* The sequel? A little later I received a second programme! This time from the Tiefenbacher who was a man of the theatre.

So correspondence, personal visits or telephone calls to the ends of the earth to so many specialists helped to assemble a complete series of theatrical advertising material and reviews, photographs and programmes, maquettes for sets, make—up and costumes, scenarios, production books and prompt—books, and also records or tapes of the music which accompanied the performances.

I must single out for special mention the original costumes — not to mention the wigs and head—coverings — for the tragedy 'MELISSA' sent by Geneva Television

at the instigation of the producer Roger Burckhardt responsible for televising the play – a splendid pioneering achievement.

In the course of conversation about these wonderful costumes, Eleni Kazantzaki mentioned to me that television crews from Belgium, France and Saarbrücken had dealt with Kazantzakis making films in, respectively, 1964, 1968 and 1973 about his life and work. They went to the places where he had lived and written his works – Crete, Athens, Antibes and elsewhere – and people who had studied him, who knew him, relations, friends and acquaintances, spoke about the giant who resembled the mythological giants, related as much as they remembered, as much as they knew.

Here begins a whole new chapter because, in the belief that it would be interesting for the Museum to include these testimonies for special showings to visitors, I resolved to try to obtain them. Armed with the address of the Belgian producer Jean Antoine, I started with Brussels. Fortunately he was still living at his old address. He readily agreed to help and began telephoning all over the place to television people to establish whether, from the series 'European Library', there still survived the film which had been made 25 years ago. The answer was inconclusive. The film was not in its proper place, but there was a withdrawal slip which indicated that it had not been destroyed. They would have to hunt in order to find it, but as I was leaving in a few hours, all I could do then was to note addresses and names of officials in various departments, in the hope of achieving something by writing to them. Later, then, from Athens, I wrote to the directors of programmes, of foreign relations, of productions, and to the General Manager of Belgian Television. These multiple contacts resulted in the discovery of the film. Once I had learnt the good news, my new desire – to have a copy prepared on 16mm. film with integral soundtrack – posed no problem and did not delay the technical experts. After a three month wait I was informed that the head librarian had my order ready for me. I returned to Brussels and took receipt of it. Employing the same method, I added the French film too to my acquisitions. This effort in the audiovisual field enriched the Museum with taperecordings and video–cassettes from various places abroad. Some of these are recorded broadcasts of works by Kazantzakis on radio or television, and in others he himself explains and analyses his texts. An important acquisition was a three minute, 8mm. film, made in France, of Kazantzakis and Eleni. Important also has been the assembling of machines with a tape in three languages which accompanies the projection of 160 transparencies in order to present to the visitor the 'rough going of the ascending carer' of the world–renowned writer. The informative and excellent commentary was written by Patroklos Stavrou, Deputy Minister to the Presidency of the Republic of Cyprus, a knowledgeable student of Kazantzakis. He has also helped me in many other matters on many occasions. So, then, it is true that 'he who seeks, finds'.

But 'he who seeks' was not only myself. There was a multitude of friends who, whenever I learnt that they were about to travel abroad, I would beg, for my sake, to seek out and to bring me back some document or object useful for the Museum. A

striking example was a captain of the marine company 'Captain Z.D. Kritsas' who, finding himself at Nice, 'popped over' to Antibes in order to take delivery from the sculptress Alice Laurant and to bring back to Athens a bust of Kazantzakis executed in 1957.

But affairs were not always rosy and success did not crown every attempt. Failure and bad luck are included in the rules of the game, so I did not repine when, despite many days' hard effort, I could get nowhere with the matter of Sbarounis's library. It was known to me that Kazantzakis used to send to Dr. Sbarounis a copy of every book of his which was translated into a foreign language, and I set myself the task of tracking them down. I started out with the optimistic preconception that, if I explained matters to their present owner, they would hand over the books to the Museum which would be the ideal place for them.

From neighbours of the now abandoned Sbarounis Clinic in Harilaos Trikoupi Street I learned that for years all its property has belonged to the Geroulanos Foundation, and that the library occupied one floor of a block of flats a few streets away. I tried in vain to get hold of somebody in charge. If I went during normal working hours I would find the door shut. The telephone remained stubbornly silent, but stubbornly I too telephoned again and again at suitable and unsuitable times until eventually somebody answered only to say that there were nothing but medical books. He had no idea about literary texts. There was certainly no question of Kazantzakis in translation. He did not know, he had never heard anything about them, perhaps they had been stolen in transit, perhaps I ought now to enquire after them from Sbarounis's heirs. He told me names, he gave me a telephone number. The treasure-hunt could begin.

The first telephone call was answered by a niece of the doctor, she referred me to other nephews and nieces, they to their cousins, and one of them, to a relative who taught literature. When I spoke to her she promised to help because, as she said, she had a certain understanding of a matter close to her speciality, but she added that, for better or for worse, it might not be a bad idea for me to speak to an uncle of hers who, in his turn, recommended me to communicate with another aunt. Mrs. Staikou. She, he assured me, would solve my problem. He gave me her telephone number. As he was so positive there was no reason for me to have doubts so, full of hope, I telephoned. A man's voice answered. He asked why I wanted the lady. As best I could I explained my business, but the voice demanded more clarification. Who had given me the telephone number, and where was the Museum to be, in Athens or elsewhere, and when would it be open, soon or later, because there should be no delay in an enterprise of this kind, and how did I know about the books, and how many translations were there, and was I asking for some of them or all of them, because all of them together would provide a complete picture of Kazantzakis's worldwide success, and so and so on?

I had no difficulty in recounting more or less the story of my life, but every so often the voice would interrupt to ask with greater insistence for more and more details. What else would the Museum have, had I found photographs and if not I ought to find some, had I the support of Kazantzakis's family and if not I ought to seek it

and had I any of his personal possessions, because if I had not their absence would be conspicuous. I resolved to put an end to the garrulous inquisition with its pointless pieces of advice and I curtly asked once more if I could speak to Mrs. Staikou.

Then it was that the lightning flashed out of a clear sky! The voice quite unexpectedly explained: *'It's impossible. She died two years ago...'*

The failed attempt is one side of the coin. The chance success is the other side, and this I encountered when I discovered a lot of children's books translated by Kazantzakis in 1933 for the publishing house of Eleftheroudakis. I had asked friends whether they happened to have kept the books along with their childhood memories, and I had ransacked all the second-hand bookshops I knew, from Monastiraki to Harilaos Trikoupi Street and from Solonos Street to Hippokratous Street and its side-streets.

Somewhere round there is also the barber's shop which I visit regularly. The barber knew about the Kazantzakis Museum. He took an interest in the progress of assembling the exhibits, and he would sigh when I told him about the various obstacles which arose from time to time, and on each of my visits to him, between shave and shampoo, he considered it his duty to enquire whether there had been any recent developments and to give, with the absolute certitude of one who knows, advice which, he said, I absolutely must follow.

On one of the many occasions that the conversation turned around the same subject, I complained that I had been all round Athens two or three times without managing to find the children's books which Kazantzakis had translated. Even though he did not really understand what I was looking for, he did not hesitate to tell me, with the wise assurance of a specialist, that the place where I ought to search was the neighbouring arcade. In the basement.

I had nothing to lose. The shop where he had sent me, buried at the end of a badly lit passage, was unknown to me. But there, in that hole, whose existence God himself was unaware of, I succeeded in unearthing what I had been unable to find in dozens of other bookshops – six copies, in mint condition, of the books which I was after.

Now that I am recounting everything that took place in order that my daringly ambitious dream might assume shape, form and existence, without doubt I have not mentioned, as I would have wished, everyone, but everyone, Greeks and foreigners, with such varied racial characteristics, of whom some knowingly and others by chance, some ignorant of the subject and others well informed, some belonging and others not belonging to the sphere of literature, all assisted in the struggle and the strain of assembling the rare collection which comprises the Museum. To these people the KAZANTZAKIS MUSEUM owes its existence. A Museum which is a creation of admiration, veneration and infinite love, which is an attempt to bring Kazantzakis, as he himself wished, to the roots of his own kith and kin.

In July 1940 he wrote to my father: *I shall never forget the days I spent at the roots of our kith and kin, at Varvori, and may your presentiment come true that, in 30 years' time, I shall come to Varvori to smoke a narghile with you and to return to my ancestral soil, the soil which has been entrusted to me.*

As from 27th June 1983 the KAZANTZAKIS MUSEUM has become a place of pilgrimage. Within its walls wanders the shade of Kazantzakis, and every visitor confirms the great worth, the uniqueness, the universality of Nikos Kazantzakis who made it the aim of his life to attain that which is impossible to attain! To grow beyond his own stature. Concerning the other aspect of the completion of the Museum, time-consuming, multi-dimensional, and full of troublesome episodes, how, that is to say, from individuals or state bodies, the necessary funds were gathered, and how important donations of money, works of art or machinery came about, I will not speak now.

That is another story...

Another Odyssey...

GIORGOS ANEMOGIANNIS

Athens, 1983

Translated
Roger Green, Oxford

by: