

Chapter 1 : TOP 25 QUOTES BY NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS (of ) | A-Z Quotes

*report to greco last temptation nikos kazantzakis temptation of christ zorba the greek many years ever read read this book book many soul of kazantzakis spiritual god.*

Simon and Schuster, Translated from the Greek by P. Not a log of places visited, nor a log with specific dates, places and people, nor a log when special events occurred. Not even an autobiography where he purports to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Rather it is the story of his metaphysical and moral journey through life: Rather, he tells us straight out that he has mixed truth with fiction for better effect. He is much less concerned to give us facts of the this and that of his everyday life than he is to give us a picture of his intellectual and moral growth, his vision of the meaning and meaninglessness of human existence. It is the ascent, the hard uphill battle toward some endpoint that is the point of his life, the driving force of his existence. The freedom of mixing fact and fiction allows him the license to make this a rather pure ascent and admittedly aggrandize his person a good deal. But once one accepts this and reads the book as more an historical philosophical journey, the more valuable and believable the book is. The more, too, it is that his fictional account, in an odd and ironic sense, is more real than a non-fictionalized account of his life would be. Rather, what moves Kazantzakis is the fanatical commitment of each man to his respective goal, not the goal itself. Yet in the long-run it is Frederich Nietzsche who claims the primary role of mentor to Kazantzakis. Somehow Nietzsche seems to be the string which binds the quintet together. This is a world of process not achievement. He repeatedly denounces the hope and fear which he sees dominating the people of Earth and which drives them to the fanaticism which cripples them into looking for an ideal heaven or equally despicable, being saved from hell rather than embracing the world as it is. Kazantzakis tells us he actually knew Alexis Zorba. Finally, of course, there is the fiction of the title. Why report to El Greco? There is little in the book of his relationship to El Greco, though the last 20 pages, the Epilogue, is addressed directly to El Greco. Before this he only briefly mentions the painter in four or five passage. El Greco is sort of a special hero, especially since he was born in Crete. El Greco is also close enough to the fictionalized Kazantzakis so that the mirror image tells us how Kazantzakis wishes his own life to have been. Kazantzakis enriches his account with many verbal images and symbols. Reading this book was a deeply personalized dialectic for me. I skipped Buddha and resided in the less Zorba-like Marx rather than Lenin, and later on I took refuge in Zorba himself as a version of my superman figure. Like Kazantzakis Nietzsche has been an important mentor for me and both of us unbelievers share a deep respect for Francis of Assisi. And we deeply share the WISH to be fully and perfectly committed to that goal. However, I have no doubt he knew well where his life lived up to his ideal and where it failed. It was a great moment. This conscience will be able to stand before the Lord as the Last Judgment and not be judged. It will judge, because human dignity, purity and valor fill even God with terror Art is not submission and rules, but a demon which smashes the moulds I especially like his account of asking an elder how he might seek a life of value and success. The Cretan sage responded: The sage them replies: I felt that the Parthenon was an even number such as two or four, Even numbers run contrary to my heart; I want nothing to do with them. Their lives are too comfortably arranged, they stand on their feet much too solidly and have not the slightest desire to change location. They are satisfied, conservative, without anxieties: It is the odd number which conforms to the rhythm of my heart. The life of the odd number is not at all comfortably arranged. The odd number does not like this world the way it finds it, but wishes to change it, add to it, push it further. It stands on one foot. To the following even number, in order to halt for an instant, catch its breath, and work up fresh momentum. As Kazantzakis looks back over his old diaries of youth he realizes he has moved on to different tactics and ways, but he respects the ROLE of youthful passion in its time. As I pore over this ancient diary now in my old age and see our quixotic campaigns of that time -- the ramshackle lance, worm-eaten shield, tin helmet, the mind filled with nobility and wind -- I am unable to smile. Happy the youth who believes that his duty is to remake the world and bring it more in accord with virtue and justice, more in accord with his own heart. Woe to whoever commences his life without lunacy. Kazantzakis allows that two key theses affected him deeply from youth on: Earth is not the center of the

universe. Men are descended from the monkey, not privileged creation. Two more lines that provided me some serious thinking time-outs were: Shame on us if we continue to become intoxicated in the taverns of hope or the cellars of fear. He uses them, is enlightened and changed by them and given momentary clarity even certainty. Then questions arise, limits develop and a new thinker or movement appears to change temporarily his reality. But like Dostoyevsky he tends to think the masses cannot deal with freedom, suffering and doubt and will take refuge in the easy way out. This man was now a Christ, a Red Christ. The essence was the same: Nothing had changed but the names. The people approached the new world they desired to create with the passion of a Nietzschean superman. Each man bears his cross; so does each people. The majority carry it on their shoulders until they die; there is no one to crucify them. Happy the man who is crucified, for he alone shall enjoy a resurrection. Russia was being crucified. As I roamed her various republics and villages, I shuddered from sacred awe. Never had I seen such struggle, such agony upon the cross, never so many hopes. For the first time I realized how difficult it is for a man to decide to take a step forward in order to conquer his former love, former God, age-old habits. Although all these had once been spirit urging him to ascend, they had turned to leaden matter in the course of time and had collapsed halfway along in the journey. Now they kept the new creative breath from passing. This is the law [the dialectic]; only in this way can life renew itself and advance. And a new idea is the most famished and grasping of all beasts. But at the same time another law begins to operate, the pitiless law that by however much the living organism carries out its duty to expand and rule, by so much, and more, does it approach its downfall. Hubris is perhaps the only sin which the universal harmony considers mortal and does not forgive. His course is a red line which perforates men as though they were a chaplet of skulls. I follow this red line; of all things in the world it alone interests me, even though I feel it passing through my own skull, piercing and smashing it. Of my own free will I accept necessity. But let us stop at human boundaries; only inside them can we work and do our duty. Let us not advance beyond them to the brink, because the abyss yawns at the brink, and our blood might run cold. Standing at the brink with his calm, venomous smile is Buddha, the great prestidigitator who blows and makes the world disappear. But we do not want the world to disappear, nor do we want Christ to load it on His shoulders and transfer it to heaven. We want it to live and struggle here with us. We love it just as the potter loves and desires his clay. We have no other material to work with, no other solid field over chaos to sow and reap. Finally are two more sentences which sparked considerable time of reflection in me:

**Chapter 2 : Book Review: Report to Greco by Nikos Kazantzakis | John Walters**

*This is Nikos Kazantzakis's intellectual autobiography. Not a log of places visited, nor a log with specific dates, places and people, nor a log when special events occurred. Not even an autobiography where he purports to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Rather it is the.*

Biography[ edit ] When Kazantzakis was born in in Kandiye , now Heraklion, Crete had not yet joined the modern Greek state which had been established in , and was still under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. From to Kazantzakis studied law at the University of Athens: Then he went to the Sorbonne in to study philosophy. There he fell under the influence of Henri Bergson. In he met Angelos Sikelianos. Together they travelled for two years in places where Greek Orthodox Christian culture flourished, largely influenced by the enthusiastic nationalism of Sikelianos. Kazantzakis married Galatea Alexiou in ; they divorced in He married Eleni Samiou in Between and his death in , he sojourned in Paris and Berlin from to , Italy, Russia in , Spain in , and then later in Cyprus , Aegina , Egypt, Mount Sinai , Czechoslovakia , Nice he later bought a villa in nearby Antibes , in the Old Town section near the famed seawall , China, and Japan. While in Berlin, where the political situation was explosive, Kazantzakis discovered communism and became an admirer of Vladimir Lenin. He never became a committed communist, but visited the Soviet Union and stayed with the Left Opposition politician and writer Victor Serge. He witnessed the rise of Joseph Stalin , and became disillusioned with Soviet-style communism. Around this time, his earlier nationalist beliefs were gradually replaced by a more universalist ideology. Epitaph on the grave of Kazantzakis in Heraklion. It reads "I hope for nothing. His image is on the obverse of the coin, while the reverse carries the National Emblem of Greece with his signature. In , he became the leader of a small party on the non-communist left, and entered the Greek government as Minister without Portfolio. He resigned this post the following year. In , he lost the Prize to Albert Camus by one vote. Camus later said that Kazantzakis deserved the honour "a hundred times more" than himself. Falling ill on his return flight, he was transferred to Freiburg , Germany, where he died. He is buried on the wall surrounding the city of Heraklion near the Chania Gate, because the Orthodox Church ruled out his being buried in a cemetery. His epitaph reads "I hope for nothing. In Kazantzakis went to Paris for his graduate studies and was deeply influenced by the philosophy of Henry Bergson , primarily the idea that a true understanding of the world comes from the combination of intuition, personal experience, and rational thought. Later, in , he wrote a one-act play titled Comedy, which was filled with existential themes, predating the post-World War II existentialist movement in Europe spearheaded by writers like Jean-Paul Sartre and Camus. Medallion honoring Kazantzakis in the Venetian Loggia, Heraklion Through the next several decades, from the s through the s, Kazantzakis traveled around Greece, much of Europe, northern Africa, and to several countries in Asia. Countries he visited include: These journeys put Kazantzakis in contact with different philosophies, ideologies, lifestyles, and people, all of which influenced him and his writings. While he continued to travel later in life, the bulk of his travel writing came from this time period. Kazantzakis began writing The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel in , and completed it in after fourteen years of writing and revision. Scholar Peter Bein argues that each story explores different aspects of post-World War II Greek culture such as religion, nationalism, political beliefs, the Greek Civil War , gender roles, immigration, and general cultural practices and beliefs. In his letters to friends and correspondents, Kazantzakis wrote that he chose to write in Demotic Greek to capture the spirit of the people, and to make his writing resonate with the common Greek citizen. Or, in his own words, "Why not show off all the possibilities of demotic Greek? Kazantzakis scholar Peter Bein argues that the metaphors and language Kazantzakis used were taken directly from the peasants he encountered when traveling Greece. As a young man he took a month long trip to Mount Athos , a major spiritual center for Greek Orthodoxy. Most critics and scholars of Kazantzakis agree that the struggle to find truth in religion and spirituality was central to a great deal of his works, and that some novels, like The Last Temptation of Christ and Christ Recrucified focus completely on questioning Christian morals and values. In his book, Broken Hallelujah: While the excommunication was rejected by the top leadership of the Orthodox Church, it became emblematic of the persistent disapprobation from many Christian authorities for his

political and religious views. Modern scholarship tends to dismiss the idea that Kazantzakis was being sacrilegious or blasphemous with the content of his novels and beliefs. Secker and Warburg , Death, the Ant, from The Odyssey: Japan, China, translated by George C. Bruno Cassirer , ; London: Faber and Faber, England, translated by Amy Mims, New York: Journey to Morea, translated by F. Little, Brown and Company, ; San Francisco: Creative Arts Books Co. Russia, translated by A. Antonakis, Creative Arts Books Co, Faber and Faber, and New York: Ballantine Books , Bruno Cassirer, ; London: Faber and Faber , The Last Temptation , translated by Peter A. Saint Francis, translated by Peter A. Saint Francis of Assisi, Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, , ; London: Ohio University Press , At the Palaces of Knossos. Adapted from the draft typewritten manuscript. Kathimerini Publications , Serpent and Lily, translated by Theodora Vasils, Berkeley: University of California Press , First staged in Paris, Allen Press , Edition limited to copies. From Odysseus, A Drama, partial translation by M. Sodom and Gomorrah and Comedy: North Central Publishing Co. Avant Books , Memoirs, essays and letters[ edit ] The Saviors of God: Report to Greco, translated by Peter A. Faber and Faber, ; New York: Crowell Company, ; New York: Minerva Press , State University of NY Press, From The Saviors of God: Caratzas Brothers , National Bank of Greece , Burn Me to Ashes: Dallas, " Greek Heritage " 1, No. Hymn Allegorical , translated by M. Byron Raizis, "Spirit" 37, No.

Chapter 3 : Report to Greco - Nikos Kazantzakis - Google Books

*Report to Greco by Nikos Kazantzakis - Disarmingly personal and intensely philosophical, Report to Greco is a fictionalized account of Greek philosopher and.*

Posted on November 25, by plainsmann Nikos Kazantzakis This man is famous. You may know a lot about him, a little, or nothing at all. But when you see how he viewed life and lived his own, I doubt you will ever forget him. Read but a few of his paragraphs and you can see why. The Man There are people whose effect on others is striking. Nikos Kazantzakis was just such a person. This was demonstrably true while he lived and has continued for the nearly two generations since his death October 26, That alone makes him an arresting figure, but when you add to that the unusual nature of his works, it shifts the spotlight to the life of the man behind the writings – turning attention into piqued interest and elevating it into something much more. Why such a striking impact? A natural enough question to ask but a folly for anyone to try to answer, given the myriad reasons people have for turning to books, and the conflicted and contradictory end-results they meet in reading them. But a sweeping generalization can safely be offered here nevertheless: His writings overflow with rare intensity. Only those whose reach is broad enough to embrace all of this can rightly say that they have begun to grasp the fullness of what his writings open up and explore. None of this is treated in the abstract, but as powerful ever-present realities instead – which, as with animals breaking out of their cages, go prowling about wherever they please, free to range the whole world over, night and day. It is the only word of ours big enough to take what we have, what we do, what we are, and bead them together on one string our DNA , to fashion them all into an organic, living whole. Life is what for humans things of the most lasting significance begin and end with. The first is the distinguishing characteristic of something, and the second is the ongoing motion of something. Without the first, the quality, you miss its identity; without the second, the motility, you miss its activity. Every living thing is a specific something, and any living thing is moving, even when just sitting there. These are the two primary aspects of anything alive. To give a name to the quality and to the movement of anything at all is to begin to know it – to start to grasp and take in the full reality of the person or thing that is standing there before you. To come up with names for the specific qualities and movements we see, we each draw on whatever is found in the store of our own experience. For those qualities I see in Kazantzakis, I have come up with some specific names and then matched each of these with certain characteristics. In your own reading of his books, you will, of course, be doing the same, constructing your own picture of him by drawing names from whatever is there in your own experience. And so it goes with human understanding. Here is what I see: That is what I find in his writing. Look and let me know what you see there. When you gather all of these attributes together, a vivid whole emerges. This, then, is the first dimension or aspect of a life: To see the second aspect or dimension, you must then turn to also look into the movement of his life as it stretches across time: The challenge in really knowing and understanding any human being is to come to see both aspects – the shape and the span – of that life as a single form, as the living whole it truly is. This can be done. It is called Report To Greco. The Span Of His Life This is the front and back cover from the very book that introduced me to Kazantzakis almost fifty years ago. The story of how I happened across it is told at the end of this article. When Kazantzakis was born, the old midwife brought him close to the light and examined him with great care. One day this child will become a bishop. So from then on, he set out to do only what he thought a bishop might do – until the day he came to see what bishops really do and changed his mind. And how would he know what was big enough to allow spirit the breathing room without which it will surely die? There was really only one way – risky, but sure; and he set out doing it about as soon as he learned to walk. One day in school we read in our primer that a child fell down a well and found himself in a fabulous city with gilded churches, flowering orchards, and shops full of cakes. My mind caught fire. Running home, I tossed my satchel in the yard and threw myself upon the brim of the well so that I could fall inside and enter the fabulous city. My mother – uttered a cry, ran, and seized me by the smock just as I was kicking the ground in order to hurl myself headforemost into the well. All his life, when there was no one to protect or stop him, Kazantzakis would hurl himself into the deepest wells of humankind: Art, Religion,

Politics, Philosophy to find out where it led or drown. He did not calculate shrewdly or bargain like Faust, holding out until the terms were right; instead, he simply handed over his whole existence—body, mind, soul, and spirit—to trying the way of those who have pointed the way for humankind, to see if their paths indeed led to life: Kazantzakis struggled in his spirit to meet theirs in a no-holds-barred confrontation. Few humans treading this earth ever risk the total abandonment a true pilgrimage requires, let alone undergo the dangerous disintegration of a journey so vast in scope as that undertaken by Kazantzakis. Few who set out on such a journey persist to the end, and of these, only a handful produce anything that transcends their personal search and passes on something that others can use to advance further still. Had he been a man of thought or a man of action, he might have chosen to walk either path to distinction—as thousands of other genuinely outstanding people have done. But both strivings were in him, as they are to a degree in everyone, and they turned up early in his life, when he was still a schoolboy. His response hinted even then that he was one who would choose to live them both. So audacious did my mind become, that one day I made the harum-scarum decision that next to every word in the French dictionary I would write the Greek equivalent. You are fortunate in having found your road while so young. Scholarship—that is your road. Out of my sight! Think it over and act. Who was right, what was I to do? Which of the two roads was correct? This question tortured me for years, and when I finally discovered which road was the correct one, my hair had turned gray. When one striving persisted, content in being tended to and followed, then discontent and at times even disease would drive the other one into a resounding lament that soon swelled into a piercing temple-cracking cry that would make him turn and follow it. Thought and action taunted him like two seductive sirens. Untied to any mast, he took the cotton from his ears, and then followed, living the torment of conflicting lures and screams—until he found, amidst the swell of rage and clamor, the still small voice of his own soul. At times the tension nearly tore his life apart. To ease the wrenching pain, most people would let one of these mighty strivings go, and lob it out of awareness, holding from then on with both hands fixed firmly to the other. Like a man trying to tame two steeds, each lunging in a different direction, Kazantzakis held onto both. This guaranteed that his life would thus become a pilgrimage, for that is what a pilgrimage is: He undertook this pilgrimage, persisted in it to the very end, and in so doing created the unfolding journey of his life. And journey he did, starting with. Will I be able to carry it still further and turn it into light? But he rammed ships—What ships are you ramming? Then he stopped to catch his breath from the grueling pace of the spiritual marathon he had been on for forty years. The air he now breathed in blew like wind across a field of grain, and it shook loose the seed of his soul, which fell to the ground within him, took root, and began to sprout. For years he had had a definite aim. And yet I know that this is by no means enough. To attain my aim, I must make a leap. As soon as this leap is accomplished which can only be an example of life and not one of Art and writing, I shall find the expression of my soul—Now that aim took shape. As he began to find his soul, a living form emerged, an actual man. In the fourteen years, he was metamorphosing Odysseus from the issue and happenings of the past, his own substance was transubstantiating itself into the stuff of the future. Sitting down to write out of the odyssey he had lived, he commenced to live the odyssey of which he wrote—and arose a different man. I was twenty-seven, a graduating senior sitting in class in an Episcopal seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, listening as one of our favorite professors expounded on theological matters, scriptural studies, and massive Biblical commentaries. A fellow student had just asked what the single best book on the life of Christ was that we should start saving our money to eventually buy it for our fledgling personal libraries. A tall, angular, quietly intense, always-thinking man with the easy-flowing Mississippi accent, you could see the many wheels of his lifetime of teaching turning as we all waited for his answer. Fifteen, twenty, thirty seconds—only silence. Nikos Kazantzakis has written the most significant life of Christ written in the last fifty years. I forgot all about it. Returning to my home diocese in Florida, I was ordained at the Cathedral in Jacksonville, Florida with three men coming from other seminaries, and we were all sent out with our budding young families to the small congregations of our respective churches to begin our ministries. It got thicker and bigger and moved faster and farther than any who were for, against, or smack dab in the middle of either saw clearly or ever knew just what to do with. And, while not overly affected by any piece of it, I was unmistakably surrounded by it in every direction. I took myself, with no particular agenda, to the smaller cinema I frequented most

because of its array of more interesting films. A great story exists only in being told. It kept on rearranging the furniture of where I lived inside, moving attitudes around and shoving my opinions here and there that I wanted to be left right where they belonged. Stunned at being so startled, I whipped the book over to its cover, my eyes landed on this: Once there, with no intervening ado whatsoever, I plopped myself down in the large, green reclining chair in our living room a recent birthday gift from my wife , opened the book and dove headlong into its pages. When I finally got back up on my feet to stretch and stir a little, my life was not what it was before I sat down. His Legacy Debate, conflict, and bitter controversy have surrounded his life from when he died clear on up to today, and it probably always will. From birth to death he always lived above such matters anyway, and any who think otherwise are grossly mistaken.

**Chapter 4 : Second-Hand: "Report to Greco", Nikos Kazantzakis - King's Review Magazine**

*Report to Greco is a fictionalized account of Greek philosopher and writer Nikos Kazantzakis's own life, a sort of intellectual autobiography that leads readers through his wide-ranging observations on everything from the Hegelian dialectic to the nature of human existence, all framed as a report.*

When I was a young man obsessed with becoming a writer, I read *Zorba the Greek* more than once. It was a germinal book for me. I identified with the withdrawn, cautious, timid writer who had to be lured out of his shell by the robust, tempestuous Zorba. I wanted to step out and live life so I could write about it, but it took a lot of effort to get me started. Maybe it was because I was already so fed up with the church at that point. In other words, kind of but not really. In fact, Henry Miller immediately came to mind as I began to read. Both Miller and Kazantzakis write from the gut and from the emotions. Both use extremely flamboyant and flowery language. Both are blunt in their honesty, and both suddenly go off on intellectual tangents, describing dreams, visions, and other emotional intricacies without warning. Miller reacts to poverty and hard times with joy, dancing, and sexual liberality. Kazantzakis reacts with angst, despair, and celibacy. His main concern is his spiritual odyssey, though, not the countries he is visiting. He goes on and on, page after page, describing his feelings and sensations upon abandoning Christ and taking up Nietzsche. To be honest, this got extremely boring after awhile. I kept reading because I wanted to find out if he would eventually describe his beginnings as a writer. And he does, sort of, at the very end of the book when he recounts meeting the character who inspired Zorba. In Vienna, he leaps from Nietzsche to Buddha. In Berlin, he leaps from Buddha to Lenin. In the end, after numerous adventures, he returns to Crete, holes up alone in a cottage by the sea, and writes. At one point, Kazantzakis is telling anecdotes of his encounters with common people that are so touching they move me to tears. At other points, he goes off into philosophical rants that are irrelevant and annoying. When I took up the book, I supposed that Kazantzakis was like Zorba, full of life and zest and enthusiasm, but as I read I realized that he was actually like the writer who meets Zorba: He writes a lot about fear, especially when he describes himself as a youth, but also on into adulthood. The translation, by the way, is a good one as far as I can tell. In the end, it is what it is, and all I can say is that parts are sublime and parts are very slow.

Chapter 5 : Report to Greco - calendrierdelascience.com

*A friend of mine who is a serious writer told me that Nikos Kazantzakis is her absolute favorite writer. Report to Greco wasn't in our local library and I had to have it.*

Nikos Kazantzakis in Antibes, Photograph by Henri Chaillet I rose and held out my hand to the rain like a beggar. I suddenly felt like weeping. Some sorrow, not my own but deeper and more obscure, was rising from the damp earth: I wanted to utter a cry, knowing that it would relieve my feelings, but I was ashamed to. The clouds were coming lower and lower. I looked through the window: What a voluptuous enjoyment of sorrow those hours of soft rain can produce in you! All the bitter memories hidden in the depth of your mind come to the surface: My misery lasted for years, perhaps even to this day. I was born, after all, on Friday the eighteenth of February, the day of souls, a very holy day indeed, and the old midwife clutched me in her hands, brought me close to the light, and looked at me with great care. She seemed to see some kind of mystic signs on me. And came Nikos Kazantzakis, the one who stared back at the abyss with unflinching courage. It was the seventh day of November, I was sitting quietly in my room, looking through the window, watching the red dot disappear behind the snow clad mountains. While browsing the web, I came around a breath-choking prologue: I return like a mole to my home, the ground. Not because I am tired and cannot work. I am not tired. But the sun has set. The words stunned me. I looked for the author and the book. The moment I started reading Greco, I was transported into a different realm of writing. It was like reading something written with blood. The central theme of all his writings is the battle between soul and flesh; the unaccommodating ascent to the summit. All of his works speak of harmonizing the two forces that are fighting within each human being. He writes about real freedom; to hope nothing, to deliver man from man, to deliver god from god, to erect our personal bridges and jump over the abyss. Nikos Kazantzakis was born in Herakleion, Crete, on February 18, He had his secondary education in Herakleion and then moved to Athens to study law. The quest for the supreme essence took him to every corner of the world " thus started the battle between soul and flesh, the holy ascent. He dedicated all of his life writing the many themes that tormented him day and night. He did his duty. He remained faithful to the flame. His monumental works are Odyssey: I am reading Greco for the third time. In the introduction to Report to Greco, Helen Kazantzakis writes: Now I remember another crucial moment in our lives, another hospital, this time in Paris. Nikos gravely ill again with a temperature of , the physicians all in turmoil. Everyone had lost hope; only Kazantzakis himself remained unperturbed. I said to the almond tree, Sister, speak to me of God. And the almond tree blossomed. In my thirty years by his side I cannot recall ever being ashamed by a single bad action on his part. He was honest, without guile, innocent, infinitely sweet towards others, fierce only toward himself. If he withdrew into solitude, it was only because he felt the labors required of him were severe and his hours numbered. Nikos Kazantzakis asked his God for ten additional years, ten additional years in which to complete his work " to say what he had to say and empty himself. He wanted death to come and take only a sackful of bones. The Report is a mixture of fact and fiction " a great deal of truth, a minimum of fancy. A quarter of an hour from each of you. Oh, for a little time, just enough to let me finish my work. Afterwards let Charon come. The Last Temptation took such a step. The new book must advance yet another stride. And this responsibility is a very heavy one. The life of St. Francis is soul shattering. Each word written by Kazantzakis, retelling the story of St. Francis, is embedded in fire. The reader is consumed by this fire. Francis walks through the conflagration, taking the uphill path, bridging the abyss at Mt. Alvarnia and jumps across. Kazantzakis writes this on the struggle of mankind, on the meaning of life Report to Greco: It is extremely dangerous to lean over and see. You may be terror stricken then, because you will discover an appalling secret: His course is a red line which perforates men as though they were a chaplet of skulls. I follow this red line; of all things in the world it alone interests me, even though I feel it passing through my own skull, piercing and smashing it. Of my own free will I accept necessity. But let us stop at human boundaries; only inside them can we work and do our duty. Let us not advance beyond them to the brink, because the abyss yawns at the brink and our blood might run cold. Let the world remain here to struggle with us. We have no other material to work with, no other solid field over chaos to sow and

reap. On the simplicity of his life and on the indifference of the world: Why, you come home early every evening, you never receive visitors, either men or women, you keep your light on past midnight. You are hiding something. Such decorum, such isolation and silence â€” without a woman, good gracious, without a friend! You must be sick. When a person is orderly and quiet in a society which is unruly, immoral and boisterous, when he welcomes neither men nor women into his room, he infringes the rules. He is not, and cannot be, tolerated. One night I was sitting in the yard gazing at the stars. For me the star-filled sky had always been the most heart-rending, the most disquieting of sights. It gave me no joy whatsoever, nothing but fright; I could not look at it without panic invading my heart. My friend came out into the yard. He burst into guffaws. He had discovered the grand purpose of his individual life: How difficult, how extremely difficult for the soul to sever itself from its body the world: The soul is an octopus and all these are its tentacles. No force anywhere on earth is as imperialistic as the human soul. It occupies and is occupied in turn, but it always considers its empire too narrow. Suffocating its desires to conquer the world in order to breathe freely. I did not know what I was going to do with my life; before anything else I wanted to find an answer, my answer, to the timeless questions, and then after that I would decide what I would become. If I did not begin by discovering what was the grand purpose of life on earth, I said to myself, how would I be able to discover the purpose of my tiny ephemeral life? And if I did not give my life a purpose, how would I be able to engage in action? Whether or not this purpose was the true one did not, at that time, have any great significance for me. The important thing was that I should find should create a purpose congruent with my own self, and thus, by following it, reel out my particular desires and abilities to the furthest possible limit. For then at last I would be collaborating harmoniously with the totality of the universe. I just finished reading his biography containing hundreds of letters written by the author to his wife and friends. The letters provide a deep insight into his life and works. Each letter is a piece of literature filled with human struggle. The book is divided into four parts: The Seed ; Part Two: The Odyssey ; Part Three:

Chapter 6 : Essay: Nikos Kazantzakis "Life and Works |

*Nikos Kazantzakis was born in Crete in He studied literature and art in Germany and Italy, philosophy under Henri Bergson in Paris and received his law degree from the University of Athens.*

This column offers a breathing space, by focusing each week on a single second-hand book. The focus of this column is on chance encounters, revisionary readings of classic novels, and on the margins of the literary canon. This column embraces the physical conditions of a text as part of the experience of reading. Both of those works were made into successful films, and the latter, adapted for the screen by Martin Scorsese, provoked outcry with its depictions of Jesus Christ as a sexual being. I therefore know a little of what to expect from this book. We begin, and the authorial voice is dying. But before he can die, he must narrate the events of his life: This copy, translated for Faber by P. Bien, was printed in , a half-century ago. From this view at the threshold of life and death, Kazantzakis conveys us back to the Crete of his childhood in the late s, before it was taken in by Greece. Greece is a constellation of highlights in the Aegean, and Crete shines brightest at its southern edge, as a barrier between the Hellenic world and the world at large. His mother, by distinction, is his caring and loving complement. Thus, in the tradition of the Bildungsroman, we follow the growing Kazantzakis as he leaves behind Ottoman rule, and embarks upon extensive travels across the globe. And, oh, how he travels. These journeys last years. He describes, too, the sense of sickness that, for him, follows publication: There are themes of becoming and self-overcoming, along with mountainous metaphors of ascension, and the very prose in such passages strikes a Nietzschean tone: Here, mixing truth with fancy, I should like to represent this ascent, together with the red footprints I left as I mounted. It is therefore pleasing that his wife, Helen, should have both the first word " within the introductory space of this Faber edition " and the last word temporally, as she writes after his death. Kazantzakis ends with his own imagined death, and he greets El Greco: Despite the appearance of El Greco in the closing passages of the work, I did not immediately realise that it was one of his paintings that had been chosen for the cover of this copy. I had wondered who it could have been " it looks nothing like Kazantzakis, but it appeared fittingly like a melange of Christ and some sallow-faced, Dostoevskian anti-hero. El Greco explained it. Bartholomew, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, was alleged to have been skinned alive. He is often shown in artworks holding his own skin, but El Greco chose to portray him in more tranquil light: How to read this? If the monkey is an aspect of Bartholomew himself, then it might represent self-discipline, self-mastery, self-control. He is ready, with pen, to document his life and himself. And Bartholomew, who, after the ascension of Christ, is supposed to have travelled extensively as a missionary in Europe and Asia, looks beyond our gaze, to whatever might come next. Read this way, it could well be a portrait of Kazantzakis; the cover suddenly seems richer, more fitting as the clothing for such a work. He writes broadly on literary history and the arts.

*As more and more of Kazantzakis' work is made available in translation, it becomes increasingly clear that his is the one true epic talent among the recent moderns.*

She seemed to see some kind of mystic signs on me. The author of *Zorba the Greek* perhaps was meant to launch his professional life as a lawyer, and not as author or journalist. Nikos was to excel in his legal studies, and then pursue a career in the turbulent world of Greek politics. Educate yourself in order to help Crete gain her freedom. Let that be your goal. Otherwise, to the devil with education! It was first dawn and a gruesome sight awaited little Nikos: I looked up toward the plane tree and uttered a cry. Three hanged men were swinging there, one next to the other. They were barefooted, dressed only in their nightshirts, and deep green tongues were hanging out of their mouths. But he grasped my head with his hand and rotated it toward the plane tree. My eyes filled with hanged men. Nikos Kazantzakis demonstrated his spiritual nature from an early age. He was enthralled by the idea of the hero-saint, the man who forsakes all earthly pleasures and possessions to pursue higher ideals. Each evening I sat on my little stool amid the basil and marigolds of our courtyard and read out loud all the various ordeals the saints had endured in order to save their souls. The neighbors congregated around me with their sewing or work – some knitted socks, others ground coffee or cleaned mustard stalks. Just my son trying to convert the neighbors. The world seemed false, unjust, and dishonest to us. We undertook to save it – we three. Between the years , Nikos Kazantzakis received his basic schooling in Heraklion and in , after the new Cretan Revolution against the Turks, he was registered by his father in the Catholic School of Trade on the island of Naxos, where he vigorously studied Western Literature, French and Italian. He was an outstanding student, industrious and conscientious, laboring over his courses as if his life or dignity rested upon his academic performance. Since I was a Cretan and Crete was at that time fighting the Turks, I considered it my duty not to disgrace my homeland. I had a responsibility to be first in my class. This conviction, which I believe sprang not from individual pride but from a sense of national obligation, increased my powers. I was wearing a broad scarlet biretta with a silk fringe, and as I looked at the middle finger of my right hand, I spied the mystic amethyst glimmering in the darkness. The fierce Cretan jumped out of bed and roused several boatmen and fishermen he knew. Lighting torches and taking along a can of gasoline, as well as crowbars and pickaxes, they ascended the road to the citadel. There they began to beat on the school door, howling that they would set the place on fire. The monks were panic-stricken. He seized me by the nape of the neck and banged me against the ground three times. Then he turned to his companions. Between the years and he studied at the School of Law of the University of Athens, from where he graduated with the highest honors and a doctoral degree in Law. The book bears the dedication: The truth is that the book was inspired by none other than Kathleen Forde, the English teacher of his youth, the Irish lass, his first love, and with whom he experienced a brief but definitional love affair. Nikos Kazantzakis spent the years in Paris as a graduate student in Literature and Philosophy, under French philosopher Henri Bergson, a prominent thinker of the 19th and 20th centuries. Friedrich Nietzsche and the Philosophy of Law and the State for the position of Lecturer at the University of Athens, which was published in Heraklion, and was re-printed and published with a rich commentary and relevant information in February by the Kazantzakis Publications in Athens. In , what started as a fiery and loving union with Galatea Alexiou , ended up in divorce in While married, they published literary texts under the pseudonyms Petros and Petroula Psilorites, they mingled with the intelligentsia of the time, but ultimately their common life proved sorrowful and unfulfilling for both. Eventually, Nikos Kazantzakis found happiness and marital bliss in his second wife and life partner, Eleni Samiou, the woman who afforded him the peace and support he needed to create some of his greatest works. On May 4, , approximately six months before his death, Kazantzakis wrote to his friend Pantelis Prevelakis: We met on a field-trip to Penteli in We were married on November 11, To Eleni I owe the entire daily happiness of my life; without her I would have surely died many years ago. A courageous companion, devoted, proud, ready for any action that requires love. He traveled extensively within Greece, on the mainland and the islands, to gain intimate knowledge of Greek nature and culture, to find

himself close to its people, and to discover its history, myths and tradition. The Earth itself was an ever-replenishing source of inspiration for his writing, and his symbology reflects a profound, mystical bond with Nature. He was bestowed with the great task of heading the Mission which would travel to Caucasus, to organize the process of repatriation for thousands of persecuted Greeks, after the establishment of communism in Russia in Kazantzakis, after a grueling and arduous journey, led approximately , deracinated Greeks to Macedonia and Thrace, where they resettled into a new life. Even though Kazantzakis was an ascetic at heart, he was actively involved in civic affairs, all the more so, in the tumultuous political arena of midth century Greece. He served as city councilor in the Municipality of Athens and as Department Head of UNESCO in Paris , from where he also resigned, despite the substantial political and financial advantages accompanying the position, so that he might devote himself wholly to his pure, albeit less profitable, intellectual endeavors. During the Nazi occupation of Greece, a time when almost , Greeks died of starvation, he was living on Aegina Island off the coast of Piraeus. He and his wife, along with the other inhabitants of the island, also suffered from starvation. His pen produced all genres of literature. He wrote poetry The Odyssey , of His exceptional gift for languages allowed him access to Ancient Greek, Latin, Italian, French, English, German, Russian and Spanish texts, and broadened his vista of world literature. Three of his novels were adapted and made into films: Zorba the Greek , directed by Michael Cacoyiannis, won three Oscars in and made its central character a household name across the world. The film, which has been characterized as one of the most brilliant feats in cinematic history, roused quite a stir among various Christian groups “ even before its official release “ and raids were organized and carried out against the Movie Theaters where it was being played. Martin Scorsese, A Journey, 3 Martin Scorsese stated that making this film had been for him like praying. Nikos Kazantzakis revealed that he was so deeply moved while writing the book that his tears soaked the paper, making it difficult to continue writing. Another novel which exemplified his profound love for Christ is Christ Recrucified, which was adapted into film by Jules Dassin, and which premiered in at the Cannes Film Festival, under the title: The fervor with which this timid and kindhearted man was persecuted by both Church and State is unwarranted. Government officials intervened so that he would not be awarded the Nobel Prize he so rightfully deserved. As Nikos Kazantzakis searched for God, church officials searched his books for phrases which strayed from doctrine. They always found something, on one occasion, without even having to open one of his books. Their disapproval, however, was also directed or, rather, misdirected to another book titled: Kazantzakis responded with a letter to the Index Committee of the Vatican City with a quote by Tertullian: The Greek Orthodox Church had already launched its own relentless persecution against him long before that, since , with the publication of his Saviors of God 6. The rumors that Nikos Kazantzakis has been excommunicated endure and propagate to this day. In a letter to the Holy Synod Nikos Kazantzakis replied to these allegations: A Modern Sequel 7 in English: His works will always be a heresy to any political or religious faith which exists today or which may be formulated in the future, for in the heart of his spiritual exercises lies a bomb, timed to explode all visions which are betrayed into the petrification of ritual, constitution, or dogma. His works are not solid land where a pilgrim might stake his claim, but the ephemeral stopping stations of a moment where the traveler might catch his breath before he abandons them also, and again strives upward on the steep ascent, leaving behind him the bloody trail of his endeavor. He believed that all roads lead to God: One claimed that God was fire, the other that He was a honeycomb. Though they shouted themselves hoarse, neither was able to bring the other over to his side. Finally, the first pointed in exasperation to the mountain opposite them. But the other shrugged his shoulders. At that exact instant Elijah was passing by heaven. Seeing God laughing, he approached and asked: Down below on earth I see two men talking, and they are my true sons. On November 4, his body was escorted to Heraklion by his grieving widow and a few bosom friends and was then laid out in the Metropolitan Church for public viewing. On his tombstone, which today is a destination of spiritual pilgrimages from across the world, the words that he had chosen have been engraved: On a small Catholic church in the United States some years ago, a banner was raised; it was made with deep blue silk and was embroidered with branches of an almond tree. On it, with golden letters, one could read the words of Nikos Kazantzakis: Sister, speak to me of God.

## Chapter 8 : Nikos Kazantzakis - Wikipedia

*Nikos Kazantzakis (Greek: Νίκος Καζαντζάκης, [Éˈnikos kazaɛ̃ˈdʒizacis]; 18 February - 26 October ) was a Greek calendrieldelascience.com considered a giant of modern Greek literature, he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in nine different years.*

As a young man, he spent a summer in a monastery during which he had a series of conversations with an old monk. One day he asked the old monk: I leave him alone and he leaves me alone. In the normal pattern of things, we spend the first-half of our lives struggling with sensuality, greed, and sexuality, and spend the last half of our lives struggling with anger and forgiveness – and that anger is often, however unconsciously, focused on God. In the end, our real struggle is with God. But wrestling with God has another aspect. It invites us to a certain kind of prayer. We see this in the prayer of the great figures in scripture: Abraham, Moses, Jesus, the apostles. Abraham argues with God and initially talks him out of destroying Sodom; Moses at first resists his call, protesting that his brother is better suited for the job; the apostles excuse themselves for a long time before finally putting their lives on the line; and Jesus gives himself over in the Garden of Gethsemane only after first begging his Father for a reprieve. As Rabbi Heschel puts it, from Abraham through Jesus we see how the great figures of our faith are not in the habit of easily saying: The Book of Genesis describes an incident where Jacob wrestled with a spirit for a whole night and in the morning that spirit turned out to be God. What a perfect icon for prayer! A human being and God, wrestling in the dust of this earth! We would do well to integrate this, the concept of wrestling with God, into our understanding of faith and prayer. We honor neither ourselves nor the scriptures when we make things too simple. God, who built us, understands this and is up to the task of wrestling with us and our resistance. After you have been friends with someone for a long time, you can be comfortable with expressing your needs to him or her and in the context of a long, sustained relationship unquestioning reverence is not necessarily a sign of mature intimacy. Old friends, precisely because they know and trust each other, can risk a boldness in their friendship that younger, less mature, friendship cannot. That is also true in our relationship with God. God expects that, at some point, we will kick against his will and offer some resistance. But we should lay out our hearts in honesty. God expects some resistance. As Nikos Kazantzakis puts it: The struggle between God and humans breaks out in everyone, together with the longing for reconciliation. Most often this struggle is unconscious and short-lived. A weak soul does not have the endurance to resist the flesh for very long. It grows heavy, becomes flesh itself, and the contest ends. But among responsible persons who keep their eyes riveted day and night upon the supreme duty, the conflict between flesh and spirit breaks out mercilessly and may last until death. The stronger the soul and the flesh, the more fruitful the struggle and the richer the final harmony. The spirit wants to have to wrestle with flesh which is strong and full of resistance. It is a carnivorous bird which is incessantly hungry; it eats flesh and, by assimilating it, makes it disappear.

## Chapter 9 : Book review -- REPORT TO GRECO. Nikos Kazantzakis

*Cartile de care nimeni nu-si mai aminteste, cartile care s-au pierdut in timp traiesc pentru todeauna asteptand sa ajunga intr-o buna zi in mainile unui nou cititor, al unui nou spirit.*