

JUPITER or ZEUS

Jupiter or Zeus was the Head of Olympus Gods and the father of some of them, such as Athena, Ares and Hephaestus, and was Hera's husband. He was bom in Ideon Andron and grew up in Dikteon Andron, in caves in the Cretan mountains, while drinking the goat Amalthea's milk.He often left Olympus and visited earth, and as a result of these visits to Earth and his relations with mortals, Demigods such as Hercules, Minos and others were bom.

His symbols were the thunderbolt and the eagle. Neither the Greek people nor the Roman people swore in his name. The athletes who competed every four years in Olympia invoked the name of Zeus. The guests of the Olympic Games, who traveled from every corner of Greece to watch the games (the first form of mass tourism in world history) asked for his protection.



MINOS AND THE KNOSSOS PALACE

He was the King of Crete, son of Zeus and Europe. With his wife Pasiphae they had Ariadne, Androgeo, Deucalion, Phaedra and other children. As Minos was the legislator of Crete and founder of the naval supremacy of the island, he dominating the Aegean Sea during his reign. According to mythology, Minos had promised Poseidon to sacrifice in his honor a wonderful bull he had seen to be emerging from the sea. However, he changed his mind and sacrificed another animal instead. Poseidon became enraged and cursed his wife Pasiphae who acquired an inclination towards bestiality. From the mating of Pasiphae and the bull a monster was bom, Minotaur. Minos ordered his palace's chief engineer, Daedalus to construct a complex system of underground corridors and galleries beneath the palace and he entrapped Minotaur there so that no one would find out of that terrible secret. He then kept Daedalus and his son Icarus as prisoners.

The son of Minos, Androgeo participated in competitions organized by the King Aegeus of Athens. As he constantly used to win in all competitions, his opponents murdered him. Minos reacted by declaring war against the Athenians and he only decided to make peace when they promised to send seven young men and seven young virgins to Minos as a penalty, every nine years, in order to feed Minotaur. When Daedalus escaped

from Crete, Minos swore to find him at all costs. He traveled from town to town with a spiral seashell, offering a generous reward to whoever could find a way to measure the length of the internal thread. When he arrived in Sicily, King Kokalos pointed out to Minos that by tying the thread to an ant he could proceed to the measurement. Minos immediately understood that Daedalus was hiding in the court of King Kokalos and requested his surrender. King Kokalos agreed and convinced Minos to remain in the court and rest by taking a bath. During the bath the daughter of Kokalos killed him with scalding hot water. His body was sent back to Crete and placed in a special sarcophagus.

After his death, the gods made Minos a judge in Hades (the Saint

Peter of his era). Aegos judged over the Europeans, Rhadamanthus over the Asians and Minos casted the deciding vote. On a mural of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, a work by Michelangelo, Minos is depicted as a judge in Hades. Also, in Dante's Inferno, Minos is described in the entrance of Hades where he judged over the sins of the incoming souls, deciding about their punishment and to which basement of hell they would descend according to the sins they had committed.

IDOMENEAS

He was the grandson of Minos. The King of Crete during the Trojan War, he participated in the campaign as the leader of the Cretans. Homer describes him as a fearless person, as one of the most important generals of the Greeks in the Trojan War and trusted advisor of Agamemnon. He fought against Hector by fending off his attacks, and he was one of those who entered into the Trojan horse along with Odysseus, which ultimately led to the fall of Troy.

During his return from Troy, his ship faced a terrible storm and he invoked the help of Poseidon. However, after Poseidon saved his life he did not fulfill his oblation to Poseidon and the Gods sent the plague to Crete, and the Cretans sent Idomeneas in exile in Calabria, Italy.In 1780 Mozart wrote his opera Idomeneas, based on the salvation of the hero by the God of the sea and the subsequent breach of his promise to Poseidon.

EPIMENIDES

He was a philosopher and poet of the 6th century BC, bom in Crete and was considered one of the seven greatest savants of antiquity. Also according to the legend, he was gifted by Zeus with the gift of prophecy. Epimenides helped Solon reform the laws of Athens. He was also worshiped in ancient Sparta, as he had prophesied the military glory of the city. In fact the relics of Epimenides were being kept as something holy in the mansion of curators in Sparta.

In his epic poem Cretan (Kritika), he describes King Minos addressing his father Zeus. Epimenides is considered as the thinker, who first mentioned the vicious circle, by saying Every Cretan Lies (Pas Kris Psevdeite). But as himself was a Cretan, he also lied, so the definition was not applicable, but as it was not applicable, he was telling the truth; and that get's us back to the same circle.

NEARCHOS

He was bom in the ancient city of Crete Lato in about 360 BC. At a very young age he emigrated to Amphipolis, Macedonia with his family for financial reasons as King Philip of Macedonia had conquered the city in 357 BC and provided financial incentives to new residents to settle in the city. In Pella he entered the circle of young Alexander's close friends together with Ptolemy and others. Philip, who had hired Aristotle as a teacher of his son, was not thrilled about these encounters, and finally, he exiled Nearchos. Nearchos would remain in exile until Philip was murdered and Alexander assumed power.

After his withdrawal and the epic march of Alexander the Great, his close, old friends were especially honored and in 333 BC Nearchos undertakes to be the governor of Lycia, one of the richest provinces of Middle Asia. In 328 BC Alexander invites him accompanied by reinforcements in order to take part in the imminent decisive battle of Bactria. In 326 BC Nearchos is appointed admiral of the fleet which has been constructed on the Hydaspes River of India. At this point the long journey of the Cretan admiral begins, who went down the river to the mouth leading to the Indian Ocean, along with the army of Alexander the Great. After having his damaged ships repaired in the tropical waters, he passes the Persian Gulf crossing the Strait of Hormuz and becomes the first Greek who visits Bahrain. By this visit, the country is rendered part of the Greek world as the residents embrace the Greek religion; they love Zeus, while the upper class starts learning to speak Greek. The country is called Tilos. Many objects of the Greek civilization are nowadays displayed in the national museum of Bahrain.

He meets Alexander the Great in Carmania after he, the army commander, successfully crossed the desert. He was commissioned to sail to the Euphrates River and meets with Alexander again before entering Babylon, where he mentions a prophecy he heard, that he should not enter the city, to his childhood friend. Alexander the Great did not take his words seriously. The death of the great army commander is a landmark for the ancient world. Nearchos had a place in the final plans of Alexander the Great as the commander of the fleet for future operations in the Mediterranean Sea.

In the conflict of the epigones he would support Antigonos, and retire later in order to write his story. He died in 300 BC.

POPE ALEXANDER the 5th

He was bom in Crete in 1339, by unknown parents. He bore the name Petros Filargis and he was adopted by Franciscan monks. Due to his abilities he was sent on a scholarship to study at the best universities of Oxford and Paris. During his studies in Paris, the Western Schism occurred within the Catholic Church. He moved to Lombardy, where thanks to the favor and support of the Duke of Milan he becomes bishop of Piacenza in 1386 and eventually became archbishop of Milan in 1402.Then, in 1405, he becomes Cardinal by Pope Innocent the 7th and makes a lot of effort to reunite the disunited Catholic Church. In recognition of these efforts, during the meeting in Pisa in 1409 the Cardinals elected him as Pope. During his short ten-month tenure he announced reforms which he, however, did not manage to realize.

He died on 4 May 1410 while he was in Bologna with Cardinal Cossa. Rumor has it that he was poisoned by the Cardinal who succeeded him as Pope John 23rd. He was buried far from his birthplace, in the church of St. Francesco of Bologna.

MARKOS MOUSOUROS

He was bom in Rethymnon in 1470. At a young age he was sent to Venice by his wealthy merchant father to continue his studies near Ioannis Laskaris. There he received excellent education.In 1505

he becomes professor of the Greek language at the famous University of Padua. Erasmus, (after whom the student exchange programs financed by the EU are named), who would later on become the famous Dutch Renaissance thinker, attended the classes of M. Mousouros at that university.

In 1516 Pope Leon the 10th invites him to Rome to teach at the Vatican school. At the same time, he establishes the first Greek printing press in Rome and prints the ancient Greek works of authors in collaboration with the famous typographer Aldus Manutius, by contributing to the regeneration of the West through the knowledge of the Greek culture.

In 1517 Marcos Mousouros was appointed Archbishop of Maiasia (Monemvasia) by the Pope, but he dies shortly before leaving to take up his duties.

PETROS THE CRETAN

He was bom in Crete in 1485 and he was the first Greek who arrived at the American Continent. At a young age, being a restless and adventurous spirit, he left for Spain, became a mercenary soldier and got specialized in firearms and artillery. Moreover, he became naturalized as a Spanish citizen obtaining the name Pedro da Candia (it was common for foreigners to take the name of their place of origin) and then by searching his fortune as a conquistador he set sail for the New World. He participated in the conquest of Peru and the dissolution of the Inca's empire by Francisco Pizarro, where he is distinguished. Then, he leads an unsuccessful mission for the discovery of the legendary kingdom of Amabaya with its treasures, an Eldorado in the Amazon valley. After the assassination of Pizarro in 1541, a civil war breaks out between the Spanish conquistadors. He was killed in 1542, by Diego d'Almagro, in the decisive battle near the old capital of the Incas, Cusco.

FRANCESCO BAROZZI

He was a mathematician and astronomer of the Renaissance era.He was bom in Heraklion, in 1537 and was son of a noble Venetian family; he studied mathematics at the University of Padua. With a high income of 4,000 ducats, which he received from his paternal fortune in Crete, Francesco remained in Venice where he translated many ancient Greek writers such as Euclid, Archimedes, Pappus of Alexandria and others.

He was also distinguished as an astronomer. Today the crater of the Moon Barozzius carries his name. In Bologna he published a collection of Nostradamus's prophecies while he gave another collection of his studies of the Byzantine emperor Leo IV the Wise as a gift to the Governor of Crete and later Doge, Giacomo Foscarini. A collection of his copies of ancient texts of Crete can be found at the University of Oxford. He died in 1604 in Venice.



DOMINIKOS THEOTOKOPOULOS (El Greco)

He was bom in the village Fodele, in Heraklion, in 1541, from a wealthy family which, because of a rebellion, had been forced to move from Chania to Heraklion earlier on. His father George Theotokopoulos was a merchant and a tax collector.

In the city of Heraklion, where the post-Byzantine art of painting flourishes, a meeting point of Eastern and Western cultures which co-exist in harmony, he learns the art of painting images. It is noteworthy that in Heraklion, at that time, there were about two hundred painters, many of whom accepted orders for paintings which they then sent for sale in Venice.



In 1567 he left for Venice where he remained for three years and perfected his painting skills, influenced by the Renaissance style of Tintoretto and Tiziano. Another great painter of the era, Clovio while visiting him in his atelier, on a summer day, finds him painting in a dark room as he did not want the daylight to disturb the inner light of his visions.

He left Venice and moved to Rome in 1570. Michelangelo and Raphael had died, but their style is being culminated and there is no space for different approaches concerning painting. El

Greco made a proposal to Pope Pio the 5th to re-paint the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, with a new and more rigorous approach. El Greco, as well as other Greeks, moving to the West at that time, embraced Catholicism. But he still signed his works with his full name in Greek. Furthermore, he maintained close relationships with his birthplace and his older brother Manousos came to visit him and spend the last years of his life at his house in Toledo.

In Rome he opens his own workshop. But his radical perception and criticism about the work of Michelangelo create many eternal enemies in the town, who call him "the foolish stranger". Thus he is forced to immigrate to Toledo, Spain in 1577, where he will live until the end of his life and will paint his most famous works.

At the time he arrives at Toledo, the Escorial, the great palace of Philip II, is still under construction and Philip has a difficulty to find great artists to decorate it with paintings. Tiziano has died; Tintoretto and Veronese refuse to come to Spain. It is the opportunity El Greco was waiting for. With his arrival he had already undertaken to paint the church of Santo Domingo in Toledo and his works, the Holy Spirit and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, make a huge impression. The king assigns him two important orders. But the demanding Philip is not satisfied with the inspiration of El Greco to place people who are alive in religious scenes in the works and their cooperation stops.

His workshop receives back-to-back orders from major Spanish citizens, a leading country in the West at that time, as it is experiencing the golden century of its history, with the wealth flowing from the American colonies. In 1586 he creates his masterpiece, the Burial of the Count of Orgaz. Centuries later, his technique will become an inspiration for artists such as Cezanne and Picasso. Also in the works of his mature age he likes to play with light, as each face seems to have its own lighting.

In Toledo he lives a comfortable life. He hires musicians to play at dinners. He meets Jeronima de las Cuevas. He never got married to her but he had his only child with her in 1578, to whom, in honor of his father, he gave the name Georgios-Emmanuel (Jorge Manuel). His son would also become a painter. In April 1614 he got seriously ill and a week later he died. His body is buried in the church of Santo Domingo in Toledo.

VITSENTZOS KORNAROS

He is the greatest Cretan poet of the Renaissance, bom in 1553 by a rich Venetian-Cretan family in Sitia. He lived there, until in 1590 he moved to Heraklion, where he married Marietta Zeno and became member of the Academy of Stravakanti. His monumental work, Erotokritos will be the favorite song of many generations of Cretan, until this day, and he would become a source of inspiration for poets such as Dionysios Solomos and Kostis Palamas. In 1591 Komaros become a health inspector, during the plague epidemic that decimated Crete that year. He died in Heraklion in 1613 and his body is placed in the church of St. Fragkiskos.

DASKALOGIANNIS

His name was Ioannis Vlachos. However he was considered an educated man (during that era), he was being called as teacher hence the name Daskalogiannis. He was bom in a wealthy family in Anopolis Sfakia and as a ship-owner he conducted business in trading. In one of his travels he came in contact with Russian officials who were in the service of Catherine the Great and they agreed to start the revolution in Crete shortly after the start of the upcoming Russian-Turkish war.

In 1770 the war broke out and the revolution was declared in the church of Saint George. The revolution was successful in the beginning, although only Sfakia participated in it. The assistance from Russia never came, and the next year 40,000 Turkish soldiers invaded for the first time in Sfakia burning down villages. Daskalogiannis, in order to save his province from the vengeful fury of the Turks, surrendered in Fragakastelo. The Turks took him to Heraklion and skinned him alive on 17 June 1771 at the central square of the city. The revolution of Daskalogiannis was the first revolution against the Turks, about one hundred years after the conquest by the Turks and the beginning of a series of other revolutions which would lead to the liberation of Crete. Nowadays, the International airport of Chania is named after him.



Statue of Daskalogiannis in Anopolis, Sfakia, Crete

DIMITRIS KALLERGIS

Descending from the famous noble family of Kallergis in Rethymnon, born in 1803, he studied medicine in Paris, when the revolution of 1821 started. He interrupts his studies immediately and goes to Peloponnese. He fights together with Karaiskakis and during the battle of Athens he was temporarily caught prisoner by the Turks. He served as adjutant of the French philhellene Colonel Faviero, as he spoke his language, and later as adjutant of Kapodistrias.

In 1832 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and in 1843 he became commander of cavalry. He led the movement of 1843, which forced Otto of Greece to remove his Bavarian advisers and to grant Constitution to the Greek people.

He became the military commander of Athens and the adjutant of Otto of Greece, but with the fall of the government of Mavrokordatos, in 1845, he was forced to leave in exile in London, where he meets another exile, Prince Louis Napoleon, the future emperor of France, Napoleon III, with whom he became close friends. With the pressure from the Great Powers, especially France, on the eve of the Crimean War, in 1854, he returned to Greece and became the Minister for Military in the new government of Mavrokordatos. He faced the dislike of Otto of Greece and he was forced to resign the following year.

In 1861 he became ambassador in Paris, from where he played an important role in the dethronement of Otto of Greece in 1862. In 1866, with the beginning of the great Cretan Revolution, his name is being discussed in order to take over as leader of this revolution and to persuade Napoleon III to change the hostile attitude of France towards the revolution. He died the following year in 1867.

ELEFTHERIOS VENIZELOS

He was born in 1864 in Mournies, an area near the city of Chania. His father was a merchant in Chania and was forced to move to Syros at the beginning of the revolution of 1866 in order to save his family. Venizelos went to school in Syros and then studied Law at the University of Athens.

He returned in Chania in 1886 and worked as a lawyer, while also working in journalism. In 1891 he married Maria Katelouzou and lived in the suburb of Halepa. Maria died giving birth to their second child, and since then Venizelos has had a beard.

In the revolution of 1897 against the Turks he plays a decisive role as a rebel in the camp of Akrotiri, which is bombarded by the fleets of the Great Powers. There he carries out his first diplomatic steps by negotiating with the admirals of the Great Powers.

The following year, in 1898 Crete becomes independent, commanded by Prince George and Venizelos became Minister of Justice. Soon he comes into a conflict with the Prince, as he was continuously putting pressure on him for a faster union with Greece. George fires him. Venizelos issues his own newspaper, Kirikas, and in 1905 he starts the revolution of Therisos, which the next year led to the resignation of Prince George and his departure from Crete.

In 1910, while Crete is still an autonomous state, he is invited to

Athens and becomes the Prime Minister of Greece. He creates the Liberal Party and wins the elections with a vast majority against the conservative rival. He applies a modernization program to the country, distributed land to the landless, implemented measures to boost the economy and the army - navy.

In 1912 he comes to an alliance with Serbia and Bulgaria by convincing them about the necessity of a Greek fleet and they jointly declare the First Balkan war against Turkey. Turkey is defeated but the allies get in conflict as Bulgaria claims the largest part of the liberated territories. Greece and Serbia win the Second Balkan War in 1913 and limit Bulgaria's claims. The result of these two victorious wars was that Greece doubled its extent and its population by freeing and annexing Northern Greece, Epirus, the islands and Crete. Prime Minister Venizelos became extremely popular.

In 1915 while the First World War breaks out, he gets in a conflict with King Constantine, the Kaiser's brother-in-law and resigns. The reason of the conflict that would lead to national disunity is Venizelos's will for Greece to participate on the side of the allies of the Entente opposed to the neutrality the King wishes for. When Bulgaria, Germany's ally occupies Greek territories, Venizelos goes to Thessaloniki in 1916 and creates a government independent from the one in Athens. The following year, 1917 Konstantinos was forced into exile and Venizelos returned to Athens. Greece enters the First World War.

By the end of the war, Venizelos participates in the winners' meeting in Paris in 1919, and with his diplomatic skills he manages to distract Eastern Thrace and the area of Smyrna which was being claimed by the

Italians. Upon the disembarkation of the army in Smyrna in 1919, Greece was involved in a conflict with Turkey which culminates in 1920. Despite the assassination attempt against Venizelos in Paris, immediately after signing the Treaty of Sevres, he returns to Athens as a winner. However, he loses the elections of 1920 in the same way Churchill would lose in 1945, despite being at the peak of his fame, and goes abroad, where in 1921 in London he got married to Elena Skylitsi, a rich Greek-American. The king returns to Greece. The war in Asia Minor progresses in a tragedy with disastrous errors that lead to the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922. Over two million Greeks of Asia Minor, where they had been living for more than 3000 years, came to Greece as refugees in their attempt to escape from the vengeful fury of the Turks who were burning Smyrna to the ground. After that disaster, the king left the country for a second time to go in exile.

Venizelos returns and he is elected prime minister in 1928 and remained in office until 1932, taking a series of measures for social benefits, for the recovery of the economy and for the promotion of education. At the same time he develops good neighborly relations with Bulgaria, Italy, and Yugoslavia and restores the relations with Kemal's Turkey, signing a friendship pact in 1930 while visiting Ankara.

However, the international recession of the early 30s claims Venizelos's Government, as a victim too and he loses the elections of 1932.



The next year the second assassination attempt against him took place in Athens. In March 1935 he is accused of being an instigator of the failed movement and was forced to move in exile in France. Democracy is repealed in October 1935 and King George II returns.

A year after his exile, deeply distressed, he suffers a stroke on 19 March 1936 and died five days later in his apartment in 22 Bouzon Street in Paris. His body was transported from Paris with honors appropriate for a Head of State. He is being transferred to Chania with a torpedo boat, avoiding Athens in order not to cause riots against the Metaxas regime. He was buried in Akrotiri (where his tomb still is today), the place where he fought and from where he had started his great career.

EMMANOUIL TSOUDEROS

He was born in Rethymno in 1882; he studied economics in Athens and abroad. When he returned to Crete, he was elected a member of the Cretan parliament. With the inclusion of Crete to Greece in 1913, he is elected a member of the Greek parliament. He becomes a minister in the government of El. Venizelos and later minister of finance in the government of Themistoklis Sofoulis. In the late 1930s he became governor of the Bank of Greece.

In April 1941 he becomes the Prime Minister of Greece in turbulent times, as the Germans are at the gates of Athens and the Prime Minister Alexandras Koryzsis has committed suicide. Along with King George II he descends to Crete and organizes the defense of the island. He leaves again during the Battle of Crete in Egypt, where he remains the prime minister of the exiled Greek government in Cairo until 1943. During his premiership he will accompany George II on his trip to the USA and to his meeting with the president Fr. Roosevelt. After the war he serves in various government positions until his death in Italy in 1956.

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS

The most translated modern Greek writer, was born in Heraklion in 1883. In 1902 he starts his studies at the School of Law at the University of Athens and he continues in Paris in 1907 where he studies philosophy. After his studies in Paris in 1910 he writes his first work "the master builder", based on a folk legend. In 1922-24 he moved to Berlin and started writing the Odyssey, a huge epic poem that will take years to be completed. He became an admirer of Lenin and in 1925 he visited the Soviet Union, where he keeps track of the rise of Stalin to power. He became a citizen of the world by traveling to Spain, Egypt, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, China, and Japan, and finally arrives in the French Antibes where he bought a house near the sea.

In 1945, as the head of a small left non-communist party he enters the Greek parliament, but soon

he feels disappointed and withdraws from active politics. He devotes himself to writing by creating masterpieces like Zorba the Greek in



1946, Christ Crucified in 1948, Captain Michael in 1950, the Last Temptation in 1951, the God's Pauper (St. Francis of Assisi) in 1956 and Report to Greco, containing autobiographical and fictional elements.

The influence of the German philosopher Nietzsche in Kazantzakis's work is seen through the harsh criticism towards the church, a fact that leads many conservative parties to condemn his work and excommunicate him in 1955.

In 1957 he is proposed for the literature Nobel Prize but he loses it by one vote to Albert Camus. In the same year, 1957, while he is on his last trip to the Far East, he suffers from leukemia and he takes the plane back home. He is being transferred to the hospital in Freiburg, Germany where he dies. His tomb is located on the southern ramparts of the Venetian walls of Heraklion, indicating "I hope for nothing, I fear nothing, I am free", thus expressing his indomitable spirit.

SOFOKLIS VENIZELOS

He was the second son of Eleftherios Venizelos, born in Chania in 1894 when Crete was still under Turkish (Ottoman) rule. He served in the Greek Army as an officer in the First World War and in the first phase of the Asia Minor campaign, where he is distinguished and promoted to the grade of the Captain of artillery. In 1920 he resigned from the army and was elected as a member of parliament for the first time.

In 1941 he became ambassador of the exiled Greek government of Cairo in the US. Two years later, he undertakes a ministerial position and in 1944 he becomes the Prime Minister of the exiled government.

After the liberation of Greece he becomes a minister in the first post-war government with G. Papandreou as the Prime Minister. In 1948 he assumes the leadership of the Liberal party founded by his father in 1910, by succeeding Themistoklis Sofoulis. During 1950-51 he becomes the prime minister, succeeding Nikolaos Plastiras.

In 1961 together with George Papandreou he founded the Centre Union which wins the elections and he takes office as the vice president of the government, when he suddenly dies from a heart attack on 7 February 1964. He is buried next to his father in Akrotiri, Chania.

ODYSSEUS ELYTIS

Descending from a rich family of Lesbos; he was born in Heraklion in 1911. His family soon moves to Athens, where the young Odysseus was registered at the University of Athens. In 1935 he published his first poetry collection and in 1937 he fulfilled his military service. The Greek-Italian war of 1940 finds him as a lieutenant in the front line in Albania.

After the war he left for long periods to France, Paris, in 1948-1952 and 1969-1972 (during the junta). There he socializes with important personalities of Literature and Art such as Matisse, Picasso, Chagall, Axel, Jean Paul Sartre and others. His poetry is internationally known and Mikis Theodorakis melodizes his most famous work "Axion Esti".



In 1979 he was awarded the Nobel Prize of Literature by the Swedish Academy of Sciences and he is recognized as one of the foremost expressers of the romantic modernism in poetry. He dies at the age of 85 in 1996.

MIKIS THEODORAKIS

His origin is from Crete, his father originating from the area of Chania and his mother from Asia Minor, he was born in Chios in 1925. He studied music in Athens and then in Paris during the 1954-1959 period, with intense artistic creation.

In 1957 he wins the gold prize at the Moscow music festival. He returns to Greece and his musical works, Epitaphios, Epiphania, Small Cyclades, Axion Esti, Mauthausen, Romiosini have their roots in the authentic Greek music. He quickly becomes internationally known.

At the same time he is involved in the political affairs of the country after the assassination of the member of parliament Grigoris Lambrakis in 1963. He founded the Lambrakis Democratic Youth to which he becomes the chairman and in 1964 he elected as a member of parliament with the United Democratic Left (Eniea Dimokratiki Aristera). His left wing beliefs lead to his songs not being played on radio stations.

In 1963 he writes the music for the film Zorba the Greek. Through the film the syrtaki dance is registered as the trademark of Greek music with roots in the traditional Cretan dances.

In 1967 during the junta in Greece, his songs were banned and he is arrested and imprisoned for five months. He is released in 1968 and is held in captivity along with his family in Oropos. Personalities such as Arthur Miller, Shostakovich, Bernstein, Harry Belafonte and others, manage to liberate him in 1970, when arrives in Paris with a chartered plane. Melina Merkouri, Kostas Gavras, Jules Dassin welcome him but after that he is being hospitalized as he has been infected by tuberculosis.

For four years he fights to overthrow the junta from abroad by giving hundreds of concerts all over the world. He meets personalities such as Pablo Neruda, Allende, Nasser, Tito, Arafat, Mitterrand, and Palme. For millions of people he becomes the symbol of resistance against dictatorship.

He returns to Greece in 1974 after the restoration of democracy and continues his work with concerts in the country and abroad. He is elected as a member of parliament again with the Left party and in 1990 he becomes Minister in the Mitsotakis government. Besides his artistic talent, he is distinguished for the love for his country, human rights, internationalism, ecology and Peace.



FAMOUS CRETAN PEOPLE

Through 18 short biographies of famous Cretan people from the antiquity up to this day, an attempt has been made so that the visitor can have a better understanding concerning the place and the people who inhabit it. Emphasis is given to their specific characteristics, the unconquered soul, love for freedom, justice, science, arts and literature.

The most famous Cretan is Jupiter or Zeus, the father of the Olympian gods. He is considered to be Cretan as he was born at the Ideon Antron on Psiloritis, Ida (2456 meters), the highest mountain of Crete, and grew up drinking the milk of the goat Amalthea in another cave, at the Dikteon Andron on the Lassithi plateau.

It is no coincidence that Zeus, except from being the leader - president of the gods, also was the protector of travelers and the god of hospitality, hence the well-known name Xenios Zeus. This locution expresses the importance the ancient Greeks gave to hospitality, a principle always abided by as inviolable through the centuries in Crete, where the foreigner, the traveler, was considered a holy person, was very welcome and always enjoyed the hospitality and protection of the locals.

