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## Aphrodite's New Invasion

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FIVE YEARS AGO THE GREEKS CELEBRATED THE CENTENNIAL of Zorba's spiritual father, that is, Nikos Kazantzakis. Since we could not invite Nikos here for a presentation, as long ago as 1957 he went to make a personal report to Greco, we deemed it necessary to invite his wife to report on him and his work. It was then that our tragedy, or better our odyssey, began.

To our request for such a presentation we got an iffy answer from Helen Kazantzakis. Although she did not claim to be as beautiful as the other famous Helen — the face that launched a thousand ships and caused countless deaths — still, she was concerned she might cause an earthquake or two in Washington or California. Thus Helen asked the Delphic Oracle if she should undertake such an expedition to the West. Pythia's answer came in the usual riddle form: "Success in Patroklos' fidelity. Ruin in Paris' infidelity." In response to further questioning, Pythia answered with another riddle: Helen should seek trust and friendship in a relationship from an island as sweet as that of her late husband, starting with the same letter as that of her protector goddess of beauty and lying within a myriad stadii from Troy. There, in a modern labyrinth of power play and plotting, she would find an endangered species: a trusting friend! That symbol of Homeric "filia" would aid her in her quest to the West.

It did not take her long to figure out which was the "sweet island," where "the nightingales do not let you sleep" — the birthplace of beauty. That was certainly Cyprus, sung not only by Homer and Seferis, but also by her own late spouse in his book on "Kypros." Her real problem, however, was to find the living epitome of Homeric friendship, riddled by Pythia. She knew that Patroklos was Achilles' best friend, but there was no Trojan War in our days, nor were Achilles or Patroklos around. On second thought, however, she realized that Pythia was quite right. True, the Trojans were long gone and the charm and fairness of Paris were now replaced by the darkness of the Mongolians of an extinct empire. Moreover, the Greeks for the last ten years



were fighting a new Trojan War against these Neo-barbarians. This new war, however, was more crucial, as the stakes were much higher. At risk was not only the honor of Hellas but also that of Aphrodite, whose island had been invaded by the hordes of Attila. For the Neo-barbarians, who far outnumbered the crazy Greeks, used a dirty trick to invade Aphrodite's sacred island and enslave a great part of its fertile land.

The invasion infuriated the Greeks all over the world and united them for a while. Thus, they convened at the sacred city of Pallas Athene and elected Agamemnon Junior to lead them against the barbarians. This new Trojan War would not only restore the honor of Hellas and Aphrodite, but would also liberate the sacked island. Since Achilles, Digenis Akritas, and Digenis the Cypriot were long gone, and the latter's EOKA B was in utter chaos, the best the Achaeans could now do was to send Patroklos to stem off the tide of Attila.

Indeed Patroklos was chosen as the new sacrificial lamb. As fair Athena, however, did not decree that he die young this time, he went many a time to the battlefield donning Achilles' panoply and routed the barbarians; but CIA in the end tipped them of his true identity . . . Then, with renewed confidence and vigor, the barbarians launched their second cowardly attack: Attila II. Suddenly, Patroklos disappears from the field! Achilles, now enraged, enters the battle to revenge his friend and the island's rape. All in vain, however. The Greeks did not have Herakles' bow with them this time,<sup>1</sup> since Herakles at Zeus' command did not demand from Philoktetes to leave Lemnos and come to the aid of the Greeks. Actually Zeus did not even remain evenhanded or a cool spectator in this war, since Hera, with a hypnotic potion handed to her by CIA, put him into a slumber and stole his thunderbolts. Then, through a hermaphrodite lesser deity, a Messenger Kissinger, she was able to help the barbarians with a bunch of phantom jets and the bolts of napalm bombs. No wonder, then, why the barbarians won this ferocious battle.

In the meantime, Patroklos had mysteriously vanished from the field, while Achilles' body was bitterly mourned by millions of Greeks, Cypriots, and "civilized barbarians."

After this crucial battle and setback, the Greeks retreated to mourn and bury all their dead. It was during this mourning period that they got quite angry against Zeus. Their cries for his unfairness and switch

<sup>1</sup>According to an ancient oracle, the Greeks could not take Troy without the bow and arrows of Herakles that belonged to Philoktetes. The Greeks finally convinced Philoktetes to leave Lemnos, where he was abandoned, and come to Troy so that the oracle could be fulfilled.

of camps shook up the world and woke Zeus from his hypnotic state. When he regained consciousness and saw the carnage of his thunderbolts on the youth, women, old men, and innocent children, he became furious. He dismissed from his Snow-White House his Messenger Kissinger and severely scolded the heresy of his consort Hera-Cia or simply CIA, for the dirty trick she played on the Greeks. In order to avoid a repeat of this scenario, Zeus locked his thunderbolts in a safe place and punished the barbarians with an arms' embargo.<sup>2</sup>

The Greeks seemed pacified for a while, but they could not forget the rape of what is most sacred to them: Beauty and Harmony. Thus, they asked for revenge, but Zeus was not ready for a new round of Ares' death dance. He had so many worries, so many headaches all around his realm. Taking advantage of his tolerance and inaction, rapists around the world were emboldened and rape became the "in" thing that spread like an epidemic around the realm of Almighty Zeus. Barbarians of various colors and creeds went into a raping spree around the globe with victims, all kinds and colors of beauties. Thus there was the rape of the hot Latin beauty Chili, another named Argentina, and that other peasant girl called Afganistani by her giant neighbor Ivan. And then there was an endemic incestuous rape in the House of the Arabos, above and beyond the occasional rape from their neighbors, the Juices.

Everybody was blaming Zeus for his actions. All the rapists sang in chorus:

Almighty, almighty Zeus!  
 You taught us the daring deed!  
 You taught us that  
 With your many overt and covert "operations."  
 From your transformation into a swan to rape Leda  
 To the rape of the slanted-eyed beauty of Southeastern Asia  
 Whom you, like Danae, raped  
 Taking the form of an Agent Orange Rain.<sup>3</sup>  
 Almighty, almighty Zeus:  
 You are our Prime Mover!  
 You are our true source of inspiration!  
 You are our One and only Father!  
 You are the Almighty Zeus!

Faced with such an anarchy and pandemonium, in an attempt to

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the United States' embargo imposed on Turkey, after her invasion of Cyprus in 1974.

<sup>3</sup>An indirect reference to the Vietnam War.



pacify Athena, Zeus decided to keep his arms at arm's length from the barbarian enemies of the Greeks and throw to Tartaros, their chief, Eçevit.<sup>4</sup> That, he thought, would bring some semblance of peace and justice on Olympos. But the Greeks were not satisfied with his amends. They reminded him of the many sacrifices they had offered him for so long. They reminded him of their hecatombs to support him in his clash with the Northern Titans. They reminded him of their crucial aid in dethroning Kronos. "Long gone stories of a long gone era," Zeus replied. Then the Greeks became more furious. They pointed out that their alliance with him had cost them the holocaust of Kalavryta, the famine of Athens, and the rape of Crete by the Nibelungen Titans.<sup>5</sup> Zeus still remained aloof. The Greeks then were enraged and started cursing him openly. To further show their displeasure, they stopped worshipping and sacrificing to him and nulled their Nato Alliance with him. At this point, Zeus got angry and retaliated! He lifted his arms embargo against the barbarians and resumed his covert and overt assistance to them. Now the Greeks became truly enraged. They wanted to totally banish Zeus' worship from their land, but Agamemnon Jr. told them: "Calm down, my Greeks. We need unity and sophrosyne to beat the barbarians and save the honor of our raped goddess." But they did not want to listen to him. They were so enraged that they asked for a "Here and Now Change!,"<sup>6</sup> to be able to castrate Zeus, just as Kronos had castrated Uranos. Within the same context, they also demanded from him to remove from Crete Zeus' beloved base-balls — bats and nuclear bolts. Moreover, in their blind rage, they voted to replace Agamemnon with a younger leader, by the name of Andreas Polytropos. With the fury of Achilles and the audacity of Alkibiades, Polytropos boasted and promised the Greeks to cut off Zeus' balls and cast them into the Cretan Sea.<sup>7</sup>

Seeing this rapid deterioration of the situation, Zeus called a mini-assembly of the other gods to his Snow-White House. A long discussion ensued in that assembly of the immortals. It will take a generation for the mortals to fully find out what was said in that assembly. Through certain leaks in the plumbing system of Zeus' Watergates, however, we got word that the immortals could not agree on almost anything.

<sup>4</sup> Prime Minister of Turkey during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

<sup>5</sup> This is a reference to the German occupation of Greece during World War II and the heavy price that Greece paid — i.e. burning of Kalavryta and of other places, the famine of Athens where almost half a million died of starvation, etc. — for the victory of the Allies.

<sup>6</sup> A slogan of Papandreou's party (PASOK) in the 1981 elections.

<sup>7</sup> A reference to the important American naval base of Suda and other military installations in Crete.

As usual they were divided into two camps, one supporting the Greeks, the other, the barbarians. However, they all agreed not to get overly involved in mortals' affairs, lest in a moment of rage Zeus might use his latest lasers to blow up the mortals to pieces — à la Beirut! At the end of this Olympian meeting, the immortals agreed on some basic principles. First, they would adopt a "wait-and-see" policy towards the combatants. Second, they would promote their favorite recipe of the "status-quo." Third, they would apply the famous Olympian treat of "the carrot and the stick!"<sup>8</sup> Last, they agreed to hold a new assembly, if this new Trojan War would show any signs of flaring up again.

After discussing and deciding on these principles at the Snow-White Palace of Zeus, each immortal went on his own merry way. Poseidon went on a short excursion to the Falkland Islands,<sup>9</sup> where he tested his new Trident and caused a havoc to their shores. Apollo went to the sand dunes of Sahara to test his new deadly arrows against a braggart Libyan Prince Kadhafi.<sup>10</sup> Athena went into self-seclusion into the Swiss Alps, Ares began a seemingly endless tour in the fertile crescent of Iran/Iraq,<sup>11</sup> while Hephaestos rushed back to his atelier to execute the latest order of Zeus' new thunderbolts: The Per/i/shings and the Cruises.

In the meantime, with much prodding from the Furies, the Greeks gave full power to Andreas Polytropos, since he seemed to be the only answer to their plight. Polytropos, like his Homeric namesake, had spent many years traveling, plotting, planning, running from state to state, from school to school, from office to office. This was Odysseus incarnate. He even originated from a city near Ithaca itself! In one of his long journeys into adventure, Polytropos went hunting into Zeus' own abode. There he had the audacity to steal the forbidden fruit from "The Tree of Knowledge." Upon his return to Greece, Andreas started spreading new radical ideas and worshipped gods that the Greeks did not believe in. He spread, for example, the rumor that Zeus was not invincible! He also intimated that the Greeks could easily beat the barbarians, if they played the immortals' game of "Divide and Conquer" among other things. In short, this new and irreverent ruler convinced the crazy Greeks that they could — with Aphrodite's assistance, since her sacred island was sacked — castrate Zeus! The Greeks got overly

<sup>8</sup> A reference to the American economic and military aid given annually to Greece and Turkey.

<sup>9</sup> This refers to the brief British-Argentinian War over the Falkland Islands in 1982.

<sup>10</sup> A reference to the French involvement in the civil war of Chad, where France sent troops to stop a Libyan invasion from the North.

<sup>11</sup> That is, the Iran/Iraq war that is still going on.



excited about this prospect, since sex and violence have always been an appealing subject. With renewed confidence and vigor, our new Ulysses-politician sent this cable to Zeus: "With us Great with the Barbarians Castrated!"

When Zeus received the cable, he asked our well-known Hera-Cia to decipher the meaning of this cryptic message. It did not take long to find out that the castration meant elimination of Zeus' bases from Crete. Nobody likes to be a eunuch, especially our Almighty Zeus with his long history of illegal sex and violence. Burdened with a heavy record of illegitimate — overt and covert — operations, from Leda, to Io, to Semele, to Danae,<sup>12</sup> to Irani, Zeus thought it would be better for him to "buy time" in discussing this matter with that upstart Greek.

Thus, through Hermes, Zeus sent a message that he was ready for talks with Polytropos. Soon the talks began. It was then proved that both Zeus and his opponent knew every trick or treat related to talks. All the rules of fair and unfair play were employed. The long-drawn discussions were almost equal to another Trojan War and worthy of another Homer. Finally, after two years of negotiations<sup>13</sup> and with the inspiration of Bacchos and Athena, the two sides reached an acceptable solution: Andreas would not incite the Greeks to revolt against Zeus or kick his bases out of Greece and Zeus would not support the barbarians in their fight against the Greeks. On the issue of the sack of Aphrodite's island, Andreas gave Zeus some time to find a solution acceptable to all parties concerned. Furthermore, both sides agreed to employ their best services to resolve the crisis. However, both knew they were "buying time." Zeus had so many headaches with mortals and immortals, while Andreas had an equally challenging task in uniting the ever-divided Greeks against the barbarians.

And life goes on. The new Trojan War is now in its fourteenth year. The Greeks rest their hopes on Andreas to save Aphrodite, while the barbarians rest theirs on the covert aid of Zeus. As for Aphrodite and her island, they both suffer. In her despair, Aphrodite sent, via Pythia, our modern Helen to campaign to the West to save Love and Beauty from the barbarians. Indeed Helen Kazantzakis came to the West and crisscrossed the kingdom of almighty Zeus. She even reached the mythical state of California that was given to Apollo by Zeus. There, through

<sup>12</sup>Zeus was notorious for his love affairs with mortals. Through various ingenious transformations, i.e. into a swan, lightning and golden rain, with Leda, Semele and Danae, respectively, he became the father of Helen of Troy and Klytemnestra, their brothers Kastor and Pollux, Dionysos and Perseus. Finally, through his divine touch to Io, he begot Epaphos, the founder of the city of Paphos in Cyprus.

<sup>13</sup>An indirect reference to the Greek-American negotiations regarding the status of the American bases in Greece that concluded in 1983.

Pythia, Apollo had decreed that there should be a place of worship for him and Athena, a place that would be the symbol of love and wisdom, the life-giving forces of the universe. Pythia's oracle — "success in Patroklos' fidelity" — seemed so clear now, for the mysteriously vanished Patroklos had been transported by Apollo in a cloud to his summer palace in the Alps and there he was transformed into the Cypriot Minister Patroklos Stavrou. In that form Patroklos met Helen Kantantzakis by Lake Geneva and a great friendship ensued. With that warmth of friendship and support, our new Helen came to California to lay the foundations of Apollo's temple at the San Francisco State University.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, thanks to the brotherly love exuded by Helen and Patroklos and imitated by the Greeks and other citizens of that warm state, a temple to Apollo and Athena was quickly built, bearing on its metope the name of a great Greek hero, Nikos Kazantzakis, a high-ranking priest of Apollo and Athena. Many barbarians and Greeks started their regular worship there, bringing thus a boon to themselves, the state of Apollo, and the realm of Zeus.

That was, then, the hidden message of Pythia's oracle to Helen Kazantzakis about a victorious campaign to the West. Indeed as the temples of Apollo and Athena multiply, more light and love will reach the mortals' hearts. Sooner or later these temples will encircle the entire globe, including the land of Barbary. And when the barbarians experience the embrace of Aphrodite and Apollo, they will never want to let them go, and as a small token of their love to the goddess of Love and Beauty, they will return to her her beautiful and sacred island. Then a new Trojan War will be incomprehensible, as Athena, Aphrodite, and Apollo will unite Greeks and Barbarians, will unite the Arabos and Juices, will unite the Eastern and Western Nibelungen, will unite the Eastern and Western Titans,<sup>15</sup> in a huge circling dance of love that will encircle the entire realm of Zeus, that will unite all races and sexes. THEN, there will not be Barbarians and Greeks, there will not be Arabos and Juices, there will not be blacks and whites, there will not be poor and rich, there will not be fighting eagles and fearsome bears, or roaring lions and flying dragons,

BUT THERE WILL ONLY BE  
Children of Aphrodite  
Children of Athena  
Children of Apollo

Children of Almighty Zeus  
Children of All-loving God!

<sup>14</sup>The Kazantzakis Chair was established there in 1983.

<sup>15</sup>The Eastern and Western Titans are NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries.