



Aboard *Mediterranea*
August, 5th 2014
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Press Release n.14

Mediterranea Project: Greek writers and artists aboard the Italian expedition The cultural programme scheduled for September in Athens

Mediterranea, the Italian sailing cultural scientific expedition, set sail on May 17th from San Benedetto del Tronto and is due to **land in Athens on August 30th**, after four months. There it will held a dense and rich **programme of cultural meetings and events**.

Many representatives of the Hellenic cultural society accepted the invitation sent by the Italian expedition that in its 5-year journey throughout the 29 countries of the region will meet writers, artists, intellectuals of the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea and the Red Sea in the pursuit of ideas to tackle this time of crisis.

With the support of **Professor Silvana Vassilli**, cultural attaché of the Italian Embassy in Athens and Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Athens, the writer **Simone Perotti** and the members of the expedition are going to meet intellectuals aboard the boat, a cutter rigged ketch called *Mediterranea*, and on **September 16th** hold a **press conference on Mediterranean Project** at the Italian Cultural Institute. On that very day and still at the Italian Cultural Institute in Athens, two panels focusing on **“Which Humanism after the crisis?”** and **“Mediterranean Sea and novels: writers in a time of crisis”**.

Here some of the leading figures taking part in *Mediterranea* cultural programme in September:

Petros Markaris, writer and playwright, **Ersi Sotiropoulos**, writer, **Antonio Ferrari**, columnist and correspondent of the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* from the Eastern Mediterranean, **Gerasimos Zoras**: essayist and Director of the Faculty of Italian Language and Literature at the Kapodistrian University in Athens, **Paris Sigalas**, mathematician and wine-maker, **Denys Zacharopoulos**, Director of the “Alex Mylona” Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens, **Maurizio De Rosa**, essayist and translator of contemporary and modern Greek literature, **Nanos Valaoritis**, one of the most distinguished writers in Greece today, **Christos Hadziiosif**, Director of the Department of Contemporary and Modern History at the University of Crete, **Kostas Koutsourelis**, poet and translator of works of the Italian Renaissance, **Vassilis Makios**: Director of Corallia, technology development network promoting innovation in South-East Europe, **Michel Demopoulos**, a cinema and tv critic and producer, **Ioanna Karistiani**, the most important Greek writer of the present times, **Thanassis Valtinos**, writer and playwright, **Katerina Kafentzi**, Radio program manager at LEFKO 87.7, **Kostantinos Tsamiotis**, writer and art critic, **Panagiotis Makris**, Vice-President of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture, **Telemaco Chytiris**: poet, former Minister for Culture in Greece, **Giota Festa**, actress, **Nikos Moschonas**, historian and art critic, **Maria Peteinaki**, architect and co-spokeperson of the green ecologists party in Greece.

*“It is no surprise that our Mediterranean fellow citizens in Greece reacted so positively. Isn't dialogue their own invention? - says Simone Perotti - The enthusiastic response by the most diverse areas of the Hellenic cultural world is significant. It reveals mainly Greek open-mindedness and absence of provincialism. The curiosity towards their neighbours and the confidence in the invitation received. Beautiful people are those who seize the opportunity when they are given a good reason and, just for that, promptly reply "I'm coming!". And when in 2019 *Mediterranea* will be back to Italy and invite the cultural world to meet aboard and discuss our tired times, what will then happen? Wait and see”.*



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Press conference and two panels – September, 16th 2014

On Tuesday, September 16th, at 13.00 local time - **press conference** on Mediterranean Project at the Italian Cultural Institute in Athens, under the aegis and patronage of the Director of the Institute, Professor Silvana Vassilli and her staff.

On September 16th **two panels** with intellectuals and leading figures of the Greek literary and cultural society focusing on:

“Which Humanism after the crisis?”

With the participation of:

- Ersi Sotiropoulos (writer)
- Thanassis Vatinos (writer and playwright)
- Vassilisi Makios (Director of Corallia)
- Paris Sigalas (mathematician, wine-maker)
- Simone Perotti (writer and founding member of Mediterraneana Project).

Chairman: Antonio Ferrari (columnist and correspondent of the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera)

“Mediterranean Sea and novels: writers in a time of crisis”

With the participation of:

- Kostantinos Tsamiotis (writer and art critic)
- Maurizio de Rosa (journalist and translator)
- Kostas Koutorelis (poet and translator)
- Simone Perotti (writer and founding member of Mediterraneana Project).

Chairman: Gerasimos Zoras (Director of the Faculty of Italian Language and Literature at the Kapodistrian University in Athens)





Private meetings aboard Mediterraneo – September 2014

In September a tight schedule of private **meetings with representatives of the Greek cultural world** is taking place. The meetings will be held aboard *Mediterranea*, in cafés and in the Italian Cultural Institute in Athens.

Hereby a list of people invited who have already largely confirmed their participation:

- **Petros Markaris**, writer and playwright, cooperated with Theo Angelopoulos in a number of film scripts. One of the few Greek writers very well known in Italy together with the protagonist of his novels, the genuine and contemporary police investigator Charistos. Smart and sharp essayist, polyglot and cosmopolitan, Markaris belonged to the Greek community in Istanbul, his father was Armenian and he studied in Germany. He declares himself Greek, but he was born in Istanbul, *the City* as still called by the Greeks who are born there.
- **Ersi Sotiropoulos**, writer. Born in Patras, she studied anthropology. She long lived and studied in Italy before moving back to her homeland. Since her debut in 1980 she wrote a number of novels. Some were translated into Italian including *Zigzag Through the Bitter-Orange Trees*, a novel of balancing acts and scrappy lives in the continuous pursuit of love.
- **Antonio Ferrari**, journalist and correspondent of the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* from the Eastern Mediterranean. He is the killjoy memory of the Mediterranean, “he remembers and writes what others forgot or ignored”. Ferrari met the protagonists of Middle East history and most of them had the honour to be the subjects of his interviews. He lives and works in Athens.
- **Gerasimos Zoras**: director of the Faculty of Italian Language and Literature at the Kapodistrian University in Athens. He wrote *Risonanze Italiane nel Mar Ionio (Italian resonance in the Ionian Sea)*, linguistics essay on Italian literature in the Renaissance.
- **Paris Sigalas**, mathematician and wine-maker. From teaching mathematics at school to the hundred-years-old vineyards in Santorini, where he founded his winery, one of the best and most internationally-awarded of Greece. The old vines are all ungrafted as this is one of the few phylloxera-free vineyards in the world. Thus, Sigalas' wine may rightly be described as “the wine of gods”.
- **Denys Zacharopoulos**, director of the “Alex Mylona” Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens. An expert of the *Arte Povera* movement and of contemporary art, he was artistic director of many international museums and institutes, from New York to London, from Geneva to Vienna and Amsterdam.
- **Maurizio De Rosa**, essayist and translator of contemporary and modern Greek literature. He made the best translations of the works of Ioanna Karistiani and Maro Duka. He cooperates with the Hellenic centre for translation. He lives and works in Athens.





- **Nanos Valaoritis**, one of the most distinguished writers in Greece today, with a life troubled by exile during the Second World War and under the Greek military junta. He lived in Egypt, the United States, Switzerland, Paris.... A self-described “surrealist”, Valaoritis expresses the depth of his mind and thoughts in works filled with parody, absurdity and metaphors. The Athens Academy of Letters and Science awarded Nanos Valaoritis the prestigious prize for poetry, and the President of Greece presented him with the Gold Cross of Honour. He is 93 years old.
- **Christos Hadziiosif**, Director of the Department of Contemporary and Modern History at the University of Crete. He is an expert of economic and social history of the Mediterranean and wrote a number of essays on the economic history of the Mediterranean and Greek region.
- **Kostas Koutsourelis**, poet and translator of works of the Italian Renaissance. Among others he translated the poetry of Michelangelo Buonarroti.
- **Vassilis Makios**: Director of Corallia, technology development network promoting innovation in South-East Europe.
- **Michel Demopoulos**, a cinema and tv critic and producer. Born in Paris, he studied film-making, classical literature and linguistics and, in 1995, he oversaw a Greek cinema retrospective at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.
- **Ioanna Karistiani**: she is the most important Greek writer of the present times. In Greece she is very well-known and was awarded national and international prizes. She wrote screenplays for films directed by Costa Gavras and Martin Scorsese. In Italy her most popular book is *The Jasmine Island*.
- **Thanassis Valtinos**: born in the Peloponnesus in 1932, he is an acknowledged and honoured writer and playwright. He is author of many novels and short stories and wrote film scripts in collaboration with film director Theo Angelopoulos, most notably the award-winning *Voyage to Kythira*.
- **Katerina Kafentzi**: Radio program manager at LEFKO 87.7. Dj and contemporary music expert.
- **Kostantinos Tsamiotis**: writer and art critic. He worked at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.
- **Panagiotis Makris**: Vice-President of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture, reference centre for cultural and art events, and the training, teaching and promotion of the Greek language.
- **Telemaco Chytiris**: poet, former Minister for Culture in Greece.
- **Giota Festa**: actress. She worked with Sotiris Goritsas, a successful film director in Greece.
- **Nikos Moschonas**: historian and art critic. Emeritus Research Director of the Section of Byzantine research, Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation.
- **Maria Peteinaki**, architect, co-spokesperson of the Green environmentalist party in Greece, founder of Alternative Tours Athens, member of Falafel Network, and promoter of the urban agriculture movement.

