CHAPTER SEVEN

CHRIST RECRUCIFIED AS AN ALLEGORICAL
RECONSTRUCTION IN THE CREATIVE
UNDERSTANDING MODE

"We are the aroma of Christ to God among those who
are being saved and among those who are perishing"
(II Cor 2:15)

7.1. Born on February 18, 1883 in Heraklion, Crete, Nikos Kzantzakis had a tumultuous life producing literary creations, indulging in political activities and participating in wars. His experiences extended far beyond Greece Commissioned by various Athenian newspapers, he travelled throughout Europe and the Near East. His output includes numerous novels, plays; a volume of tersest dedicated to figures he admired; treatises on Nietzsche and Bergson; The Saviours of God, which is a lyrical statement of his own philosophical position; The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel; a history of Russian literature; film scenarios; encyclopaedia articles; children’s stories; travel books; translations into modern Greek of Faust, The Divine Comedy, The Iliad and novels in French and Greek. His novels have been translated into all the European languages. They have been widely praised for their spiritual depth, for their amalgamation of sophisticated philosophical argument with the exuberant simplicity that characterises the peasants of Greece, their poetic mode and content and the vision and the understanding of basic human problems. The focus of the present analysis, Christ Recrucified has all these qualities Also it reaches
out much further. The whole story of mankind and the Son of God is foregrounded against a Greek Village ruled by the Turks. Thomas Mann praises it as a work of high artistic order formed by a tender and firm hand and built up with strong dynamic power. The poetic tact in phrasing the subtle yet unmistakable allusions to the Christ Passion Story is particularly admired by readers. They provide it with the mythical background that is a vital element in its epic form.

7.2.1. In this novel *Christ Re crucified* Kazantzakis tells the Jesus story in the allegory of a group of ordinary Greek Christians who are appointed to perform the ‘Passion play’ in connection with their next Easter celebrations. Usually it begins on Palm Sunday under the porch of the church and ends in the gardens on Holy Saturday at midnight, with the resurrection of Christ. Kazantzakis opens the story with the description of the selection process of the actors for the ‘Passion play’. It happens on an Easter Tuesday, in Ly covri ss i (Wolf’s Fountain), a village of Greek peasants ruled by the Turks. It is a serene but jovial atmosphere. On that morning the village elders, George Patriarcheas, the archon, Ladas the miser and the richest man in the village, Captain Fortounas and Hadji Nikolis, the school master, gather in the house of pope Gregoris, the country priest of the Greek Orthodox Church to decide about next years’ mystery play of the Passion of Christ. Through the following words of the parish priest, Pope Gregoris, Kazantzakis introduces the allegory and the theme of the novel:

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1 All further quotations from this novel will be provided from the following edition: Nikos Kazantzakis *Christ Re crucified* Trans Jonathan Griffin 1954 Rept London Faber and Faber, 1985

2 Hereditary leader of a Greek village
It is an old custom, transmitted from father to son in our village, to name, every seven years five or six of our fellow-citizens to revive in their persons, when Holy Week comes round, the passion of Christ. Six years have passed; we are entering upon the seventh. We must today — we, the heads of the village — choose those who are worthiest to incarnate the three great Apostles Peter, James, John, Judas Iscariot and Mary Magdalene, the prostitute. And above all, Lord forgive me, the man who, by keeping his heart pure throughout the year, may represent Christ Crucified.

The usual routine of this ritual is explained in the following speech by the pope:

The words become flesh, we see with our eyes, we touch the passion of Christ. From all the villages around, the pilgrims come flocking; they pitch their tents around the church, groan and smite their breasts all through Holy Week, then begin the festivities and dancing to the cry of ‘Christ is risen’... Many miracles take place during those days, as you will remember, brother councillors, many sinners shed tears and repent.

7.2.2. Manolios, the shepherd in the service of the archon, is nominated as the worthiest person to impersonate Jesus Christ. The following attributes supports his selection: Like Jesus, the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 37) he is mild as a lamb. He can read. He has blue eyes and a short beard 'as yellow as honey'. He has been in the Ai Panteleimon monastery of father Manasse till the archon has brought him out to be his shepherd. All these makes the pope view him as "a real Christ like an icon"
While he has been in the monastery, his Superior Father Manasse had told him about the golden legend of martyrs. It has inscribed a longing in his mind to follow in the footsteps of the martyrs and the saints, to pare away his flesh, to go to his death for his faith in Jesus Christ, and to enter Paradise bearing the instruments of martyrdom: the crown of thorns, the cross and the five nails. The Gospel Jesus had the same longing for the cross (Matt 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34). The appointment produces so much divine fear in Manolios and his three companions that on listening to it they "were bathed in a cold sweat; their knees gave; dread hovered over their heads; their hands fumbled for one another and joined; they formed a chain, united in danger" (27). The following blessing of the pope produces a transformation in Manolios:

You are the one whom God has chosen to revive by your gestures, your voice, your tears, the Holy Passion... It is you who will put on the crown of thorns, it is you who will be scourged, it is you who will carry the Holy Cross, you who will be crucified. From today till Holy Week next year you must think only of one thing, Manolios, one thing only: how can I become worthy to bear the terrible weight of the cross (27).

This event parallels the Baptism of Jesus, where Jesus identity as the Son of God is proclaimed to the world through the mysterious voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt.3. 13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22).

7.2.3. Like John the Baptist who has directed disciples to follow Jesus (John 1:35-49), pope Gregoris sends the following disciples to
Manolios: Yannakos, the carrier as Peter; the archon’s son, Michelis as the beloved disciple John; Kostandis, the cafe proprietor, as James, Panayotaros, the saddler as Judas and widow Katerina as Mary Magdalen. According to the author Yannakos has the following Peter-like characteristics: narrow forehead, grey curly hair, a short chin, loose temper and a good heart (19-20 = Matt.14. 28-32; Matt.26: 69-70; Mark 8.32, 14 66-68; Luke 22:55-57; John 13:8-9,18: 17, 21:3,8). Panayotaros has got red hair and beard that are traditionally considered as the identification marks associated with Judas. Further, he is described as a real gorilla, spotted with the smallpox.

And like Mary Magdalene, widow Katerina is a prostitute with golden hair that reaches down to her knees. Following Jesus who has taught his disciples during his continuous wanderings around the sea of Galilee and river Jordan, immediately after their election, Manolios takes his disciples out for a teaching journey along the road by the small lake of Voidomata, to ease the tension of their new existence as Christ and His disciples (30) There, they discuss the initial steps to imitate Christ. They conduct an in-depth analysis of their inner persons. Yannakos confesses openly that it is very difficult to remove his two prominent bad-habits, giving short weight and reading other people’s letters. He believes that as a carrier who buys and sells things, he can make profit only by giving people less than what they really deserve for the amount paid. And as a single man, his only amusement comes from reading other people’s letters before delivering it to the addressee. He equates the process of self-transformation to the impossible process of converting a crow into a dove. Even though
Michelis has expressed his self-righteousness by the words, "The pope told me I needn't change any of my habits: as I am I shan't dishonour the Apostle," Manolios suggests the changes necessary in Michelis to become worthy to be the beloved disciple of Jesus. He should eat less, leave luxury and high-cost dress and give to the poor from his cellars and larders. Kostandis admits the need to keep quiet before his hot-tempered wife. Ultimately their discussion leads them to the realisation that the Gospel is the road that will take them to Christ and His disciples (30-35). This scene reminds the reader of the Gospel Jesus who goes for prayer and relaxation in the company of the three disciples, Peter, John and James (Matt.17: 1, 26:37; Mark 9:2, 14:33; Luke 9:28). But all those who are elected to play the Gospel roles in the Mystery play become allegorical Gospel figures under unimagined circumstances.

7.2.4.1 Kazantzakis introduces a common experience of his childhood in Crete as the foreground for the identification of Manolios and his friends with Jesus and His disciples. A group of Greek Christian refugees, who have been persecuted by the Turks, come to seek asylum in Lykovrissi, under the leadership of their priest pope Fotis. Their procession is described in the following words,

...at its head, a thin pope with sun-tanned face and flaring black eyes under bushy eye brows and with a sparse pointed beard, quite grey. He clasped in his arms a great Gospel with a heavy binding in chased silver. He wore his stole. At his right hand, a giant with black, drooping moustaches bore the old Church banner on which was embroidered a tall Saint George in gold. Behind them, five or six
gaunt old men carried huge icons, holding them dead straight. Then followed the flock of women and men accompanied by children crying and weeping. The men were laden with bundles and tools, shovels, spades, picks, scythes; women with cradles, stools and tubs (36).

7.2.4.2. The following interaction between the two popes, pope Gregoris and pope Fotis awakens the Christ consciousness, which demands to share one’s possessions with those who are in need (Matt.5: 42), in Manolios and his three friends. Pope Fotis pleads with pope Gregoris and the people of Lykovrissi, “We have heard tell that you have waste land, for which you have no use: give it us, we will share it out, we will sow it, we will harvest it, we will make bread for all these starving people to eat (48).” But Pope Gregoris reproaches him, by asking him to confess the sin for which God has sent the present punishment to him. While they are arguing like this, a woman has falls down dead due to starvation. Pope Gregoris makes use of this chance-given opportunity and turns the people of his parish against the refugees by saying, “Look at that woman, go near, take a good look: distended belly, swollen feet, face gone green-cholera!” (50). This produces panic among the villagers of Lykovrissi and they become hard hearted enough to wave the refugees away. Before leaving Lykovrissi, pope Fotis begs them to give something — “a piece of bread, a bottle of milk for the children, a handful of olives. We are hungry!” (52). Two men undo a blanket and spread it out in front of them. Widow Kateriena, as befitting to her role as Mary Magdalen is the first to rush forward. She places the new shawl that she has been wearing, a small mirror and a bottle
of scent inside the blanket. When Kostandis remembers his role as the Apostle James, he opens his shop and disposes a packet of sugar, a tin of coffee, a bottle of brandy, some cups, and a piece of soap in the blanket. Then Manolios and the three disciples drag four full baskets of things from the archon’s storerooms and give it to the refugees. Manolios directs the refugees to the caves in Mount Sarakina. Thus the refugees become the people of Sarakina.

7.2.4.3. The same incident provides Panayotaros with the opportunity to identify with the Judas of the Jesus story. Panayotaros gets angry with Manolios and his friends just because they have been given respectable roles while he has been made Judas. He says, “you’ve stuck a dagger in my heart. My wife calls me Judas, the kids in the street make long noses at me; the women bolt their doors when they see me pass. Plague take you, you’ll make me into a Judas for ever!” (161) And as revenge, he betrays the charitable acts of Manolios and his group to pope Gregoris, to the archon and to Kostandis’ wife. All three of them turn against the respective compassionate helpers of the accursed people. The archon is furious against Michelis and Manolios and sends Manolios to the mountain with a warning that if he doesn’t marry Lenio, the archon’s illegitimate daughter in the current month, he will throw him out of his service and will find another husband for Lenio.

7.2.4.4. Meanwhile Ladas, unknowingly, creates an atmosphere for revealing Yannakos’s Peter identity. He invests three Turkish pounds in gold with Yannakos on condition that he has to collect all the Jewels which
the Sarakina people still have with them in exchange for corn, barley, oil, and wine from Ladas’ cellar and later divide it between them both on a half-half basis. But when he reaches the Sarakina, the ‘Peter’ in Yannakos rises up with repentance and he confesses the whole treachery to pope Fotis with tears. And as reparation he gives the three pounds to the Sarakina community. Pope Fotis consoles him saying, “Be forgiven, Yannakos! Peter also denied Christ, three times, and three times was saved by tears” (99).

7.2.4.5 Her Magdalene consciousness inspires widow Katerina to give the Sarakinian’s some clothes for the children and her milking ewe with these words,

Patriarcheas, the old lecher made me come and see him the day before yesterday, and told me the Council of Notables had decided I should be Mary Magdalen, next year. I’ve heard tell of what Mary Magdalen was That’s what I’ve come to — the village Mary Magdalen! ...When he told me that, I was ashamed; but now, Yannakos, I’m not ashamed any longer If I met Christ, and if I had a bottle of lavender water, I’d empty it out to wash His feet and then I’d wipe them with my hair... I think that is what I’d do, and I’d stay by the side of the Virgin Mary without feeling ashamed And she wouldn’t be ashamed, either, seeing me beside her... (102).

7.2.5.1. The widow’s Magdalene identity has a different type of influence upon Manolios. When he has been elected the to be Christ his first thought has been that he is unworthy as he is betrothed to Lenio and he is expected to be married to her within a few days’ time (26) But later
whenever the thought of Lenio comes to him, he tells himself, "This body isn’t mine any longer now; it belongs to Christ." (104) But the thought of the widow haunts him night and day under the guise of his desire to save her. As he is not able to distinguish whether it is from God or the devil, he takes it as an inspiration from God to save the widow and as a result starts a journey to visit her. But on half way he feels that

his head was buzzing; the veins of his neck swelled. He could feel flaming blood mounting to his head. His temples were throbbing violently, his eyelids grew heavy, there was a prickling all over his face, as though thousands of ants were biting his cheeks, his chin, his forehead, and were devouring his flesh.... Again he passed his hand over his cheeks, his lips, his chin: they felt swollen. His lips were so distended that he could not open his mouth... He turned back and climbed the mountain at a run, as though he were pursued (118-19).

7.2.5.2. At first he becomes worried about his face and he prays to God, "O God kill me if Thou wilt, but do not humiliate me before men..." (119) But later he realises it as a means given to him by God to save himself from women. Lenio as well as the widow. He invites Lenio through Nikolio and shows his face to her so that she leaves him to marry Nikolio, his shepherd boy. Later he goes to the widow’s house and shows to her his face with the marks of leprosy. Though she does not despise him for his sickness, she is redeemed when he calls her ‘sister’. And she pledges, "I shall not open my door to no one now" (167). This conversion of the prostitute shows similarity with John 8:1-11, in which Jesus forgives a woman caught in adultery. When Panayotaros happens to know that the
widow who is the only person in the world with whom he has some affinity, has a meeting with Manolios and has been converted from her old ways, he gets all the more furious and cries aloud, “I will kill him!” (162)

7.2.6.1. And on a particular night, during which their Turkish ruler Agha’s favourite boy attendant, Youssoufaki, is being murdered in his bed, Panayotaros is seen wandering around the locality shouting these threats. So the takes him along with the elders to his house as substitutes for the real murderer. Later the Agha announces his intention to hang them one by one till the real culprit is found. Panayotaros is the first one selected for being hanged. When Manolios comes to know about the crisis he takes it as an opportunity to identify with Christ who has sacrificed His life for others. With a sparkle in his eyes he says to himself, “Now’s the moment to show you have an immortal soul!” (211) And he puts on his festival clothes, slips the Gospel into his waistcoat and goes to the Agha's house telling Yannakos that he knows the assassin. On the way his face gets healed miraculously. When they reach the plane tree everything is ready for the hanging of Panayotaros. Just before the hanging, Manolios confesses before the Agha that he is the murderer. Here Panayotaros becomes the allegorical Barab’bas (Matt 27: 15-26) who is liberated from the prison by Pilate in the place of Jesus. As the widow and the three friends of Manolios shout, “He is innocent”, the Agha orders Hussein, his squire and bodyguard to imprison Manolios along with the elders and Panayotaros. He adds, “At the hour of sunset you will hang him from the plane-tree” (231). The people disperse with a feeling of relief. Though they are sure that Manolios is innocent, they feel happy that he is dying instead of all the people of
Lycovrissi. It equals the Biblical statement, "...it was expedient that one man should die for the people (John 18:14).

7.2.6.2. The widow, Katerina, on the other hand feels sad. She dresses in her best dress and goes to the Agha and tells him that it is she who has actually killed Youssoufaki. She admits that she has killed him out of jealousy, for the Agha has refused to see her after the arrival of that boy. She cries out to him, "Agha, kill me! What’s the use of life to me? Kill me!" (235) and she shows a knife telling that it is with that knife that she has killed him. The Agha gets enraged. "He throws himself upon her, seizes the knife she is holding out to him, brandishes it in the air and, with one blow, plants it full in her heart, to the hilt. Then, with a kick, he sends her rolling to the bottom of the stairs" (236). Thus the widow becomes a real martyr for the sake of Jesus.

7.2.6.3. The widow’s blood ignites the fury of the Agha and he orders Hussein to arrange Manolios’ hanging immediately. The guard blows his trumpet. All the village people assemble around the plane tree. Manolios is brought out to the site with blood dripping from his face and arms. Thus Manolios gets a chance to identify with the Jesus of the ‘Acce Homo’ scene (John 19.5) The Agha arrives and without even turning to look at Manolios orders “Hang him!” (239) At that instant old Martha, the Agha’s Christian cook comes running with the blood stained dress of Hussein. The Agha turns to Hussein yelling, “Hussein Moukhtar!” The three companions untie Manolios and take him away. Thus Manolios gets
the resurrection experience. And the Agha orders the Christians away and executes Huessein in the most hideous manner.

7.2.7.1. This death and resurrection of Manolios produces a transforming effect on the four friends. Michelis says,

Manolios, from today, from the moment I saw you come out through the Agha’s doorway with your hands tied behind your back and walk calmly, serenely, out to be hanged to save the village, I felt there was about you a new air, a strange brightness; it was as if you’d grown taller, as if you’d got thinner, as if you’d become flame. From that instant I took a decision: wherever you go, I will follow you. Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you tell me, I will do (253-54).

He even adds that he has a conviction that he is more bound to Manolios than to his father. It is not to him that he owes his obedience, but to Manolios (254) Yannakos and Kostandis also feel the same. Manolios says, “Brothers, I have taken a decision to change my life completely, to reject the past, to welcome Christ by the way side.” (255) This transformation of Manolios and his friends can be equated with the transformation of the Apostles on the Day of the Pentecost (Acts 2).

7.2.7.2. In parallel vein to Jesus’ ‘Sermon on the Mount’, Manolios addresses the village people with the permission of pope Gregoris, on the mountain festival of Prophet Elijah. At the sight of Manolios, the villagers remember with tender emotion that this young man has dared to give his
life to save the village. Manolios turns to the East, makes the sign of the cross and speaks like this:

Brothers, I want to speak to you of Christ, you must excuse me, I’m not educated and I can’t make fine phrases. But t’ other day, sitting in front of my sheepfold at the hour when the sun sets, Christ came and sat beside me on the Bench simply and quietly, like a neighbour would. He was carrying an empty sack and giving a sigh, he let it fall to the ground. His feet were covered with dust. The four wounds the nails had made on Him were open; He was bleeding... Go and say to them that I am hungry, that I knock at their doors, that I am holding out My hand, crying: charity, Christians (278-79).

The country people of Lycovrissi listen to him open-mouthed and they remember the uncharitable way in which they have driven pope Fotis away. On the other hand pope Gregoris, old Patriarcheas and father Ladas get irritated. Manolios requests the people to support the refugees of Sarakina for one year by sharing their harvest with them and by allowing them to cultivate in their wastelands. Adonis, the barber and many others of the simple village people promise to do so.

7.2.7.3 But pope Gregoris gets angry and reminds the people not to play with the four pillars of the society: faith, country, honour and property. And as a result the two groups: the Lycovrissiots and the Sarakinians depart in a bad mood. Later at his house the archon orders his son, Michelis to choose between Manolios and his father. He says,
I’ve decided, and you can decide too either me or Manolios, choose. Either you will leave Manolios and his band or else you’ll leave my house.

“I shall leave your house,” replied Michelis

The old man rolled his eyes with amazement.

“You love the valet more than me, your father?” He cried

“I don’t love Manolios more, no; what has Manolios got to do with it? It’s Christ I am choosing That’s what you’ve asked me, without realising. And you have my answer” (297)

And thus Michelis leaves his father’s house to follow Christ ‘who had no place to lay down his head’ (Matt.8: 21; Luke 9.58). When he reaches the mountain with his bundle, Michelis feels exhausted and “It’s the end of everything,” he mutters, “and the beginning of everything. Christ, you have marked out the path, help me to go to the end of it. You are there, I know, at the end of the path and are waiting for me”(300). And he finds consolation in the Gospel passage, “If any one comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).

7.2.7.4 Meanwhile, the archon calls Manolios to his house and asks him who has given him those revolutionary ideas that he spoke on the feast of the prophet Elijah “Christ,” answers Manolios. For this the archon replies,

The Devil take you! What Christ, eh? Yours, not mine You’ve invented a Christ Who’s the spirit and image of you, a lousy,
famished rebel; a Bolshevik, that’s it! You’ve put into His mouth whatever pleased you and then raised Him up like the Church’s banner, howling: ‘We all have the same father, so down with inheritance, let’s share it out. We are all brothers, so bring the roast and let’s eat it!’ Well, no, you shan’t eat it!” (304).

Then the archon dismisses him from his service and joins pope Gregoris in cursing Manolios as the Antichrist. And Manolios leaves them with the reply; “It is you, the popes who crucified Christ If He came down upon earth again, you would crucify Him afresh. Goodbye”(305) The author describes Manolios who is climbing up the mountain with a decision to leave the mountain for the Sarakina, “He had already forgotten archons and popes, got rid of vain cares, passed beyond petty joys, petty sufferings; he had attained the greatest joy and the greatest suffering, that which is above all joy and all suffering; he was face to face with his God” (306). On the next day he leaves Michelis on the Mountain, asking him to wait patiently till his hour comes, and joins the people on the Sarakina to share their hunger and thirst. While the archon is waiting anxiously for the return of his son, Michelis, Panayotaros informs him that Manolios is a Bolshevik agent sent by the Muscovite to preach revolution in Lycovrissi and the people of Sarakina are sent by Moscow on the invitation of Manolios The archon on his part communicates this information to the pope and they begin to think about ways to get rid of Manolios.

7.2.8.1. Then Old Patriarchaes dies of a stroke and Michelis gives all his property to the Sarakina community. Pope Gregoris becomes angry and returns the engagement ring given by Michelis to his daughter, Mariori.
And he makes an agreement with Panayotaros, “Keep your eyes open, Panayotaros. Go from time to time and have a look at what’s happening on the Sarakina, manage somehow to find out what they’re doing and what they’re saying, and let us know. We’ve the same enemies, and as you’re no weakling we may soon need you” (340).

7.2.8.2. On the next Sunday after Mass, Manolios is excommunicated on the basis that he was receiving orders from Moscow to overthrow religion, country, the family and property, the four great pillars of the world. Immediately after the anathema, the three friends: Michelis, Yannakos and Kostandis proclaim aloud their unity with Manolios. They leave the Church with Adonis, the barber and Dimitros, the butcher towards the mountain. Panayotaros feels happy that “the manoeuvre’s successful, I’ll have ’em all, yes, all, Christ and apostles and all, the Devil take them!” (347) When he goes to the Sarakina to spy on them he becomes unhappy that they are enjoying the life there. From an old man he gets the news that on the next day they are intending to harvest the vineyards that are given to the Sarakina community by Michelis. As soon as he reaches Lycovrissi, he runs to pope Gregoris’ house and informs him about it. The pope on his part meets the Agha and requests his help to throw away the Bolsheviks. And he gets it on the condition that the girls of the village will dance one day under the plane tree so that Brahimaki, the new boy attendant of the Agha can make his choice. Then the pope calls all the village bigwigs and tells the following words to them:

Tomorrow those louse-carriers will turn up to harvest the vineyards of that poor madman Michelis... But all of us here can bear
witness—and even swear if necessary—that Michelis, from a small child, was never normal, understand? That he sees things, he's crazy, how shall I put it?

Unbalanced. A cunning man—pope Fotis for instance—could easily entangle him and make him sign anything he wanted... In consequence, the gift is not valid, the vineyards do not belong to the Sarakina vagabonds, no more do the fields, the gardens and the houses... Patriarcheas had no other children, so all his goods will go to the community, to us... Agreed? (358).

They agree. And he asks them to support the Agha with their servants, dogs, and sticks to send the Sarkinians away. He then sends for Panayotaros and asks him to kill Manolios if he comes with the people of Sarakina. Thus, when the Sarakinians come to do the vintage, there arises a fight between the two villages. The schoolmaster who attempts to appease the two groups accidentally gets wounded. Then the Agha comes on his horse and disperses them, the Sarakinians to the mountain and the Lykovrissiots to their houses.

7.2.9.1. When the Bishop in the town rejects pope Fotis’ appeal to help them, the Sarakinians decide to fight for their rights. They take a decision to descend on the village of Lykovrissi on December twenty second with whatsoever weapons that they have and to take charge of the property given to them by Michelis. The death of Mariori revives the anger and hatred in the heart of pope Gregoris. He goes round the village and invokes the people to take up arm against the Sarakinians who are responsible for the death of Mariori and all the misfortunes occurred in their
village. So when the Sarakinians reach St. Basil’s well on the twenty second, armed Lykovrissiots meet them there. When pope Fotis defeats pope Gregoris in the duel between them, Panayotaros falls on pope Fotis and there arises a fierce fight between the two groups. The schoolmaster who tries to reconcile the two groups is stamped to death. Yannakos sets fire to the house of old Ladas and Lukas sets fire to some of the houses of the villagers. In the meantime, Manolios and his companions break open the house of the archon Patriarcheas and the Sarakinians occupy it. And on the next morning they takes charge of the gardens, vineyards and orchards.

7.2.9.2. On hearing about it from the beadle, pope Gregoris takes him as a witness to prove Manolios as the murderer of his brother, the schoolmaster and goes to the Agha and demands to deliver Manolios to him so that he may judge him. Old Ladas also gives witness that he has seen Manolios setting fire to his house. When the Agha doubts, the pope reminds him that he has to give account to his august Government regarding the Muscovite mission to set ablaze the Turkish Empire! Panayotaros adds, “I saw Manolios with my own eyes smash in the schoolmaster’s head with a huge stone. I saw him, saw him with these eyes, give the can of petrol to Yannakos; I heard him say to him: Set fire first of all, Yannakos, to the Agha’s house; burn him too, the dog; let our village be set free from the yoke of the Turks!” (450) Then all the Lykovrissiots shout in unison to the Agha, “Kill him! Kill him!” (450) This scene identifies completely with the trial scene of Jesus where the elders and priests of the Jews force an unconvinced Pilate to sentence Jesus to death (John 19:4-6).
7.2.10. Similar to the case of Pilate, whose view has been changed by the use of Caesar, these accusations bring out a change in the Agha. He begins to view Manolios as a danger to the Ottoman Empire. And he orders, "Get out, all three of you, leave me alone; the matter is grave, I shall think it over... Off with you, to blazes!" (451) The three conspirators go out to the village, gather all the villagers and the pope informs them of the situation. He convinces them of the dangerous role played by Manolios in connection with the Sarakinians and persuades them to go to the Agha and demand the life of Manolios. Through this action the pope and old Ladas fulfil their 'Passion Play' roles as the chief priests and the elders of the Jews who has organised their people against Jesus (Matt.27:20). Meanwhile, Sensing the dangerous situation, Kostandis advises Manolios to hide himself as pope Gregoris is rousing the villagers to demand the arrest of Manolios by shoving everyone's crimes on to him, and condemning him as robber, incendiary, murderer and above all as a Bolshevik. But Manolios views it as his golden opportunity to actualise his long-term dream of becoming a martyr for Christ and he goes straight to the Agha so that his companions may be spared. Here he parallels the Jesus who has asked the soldiers to spare his companions (John 18:8) On their way Kostandis acts like the disciple who has followed Jesus when he has been taken of by the soldiers and later runs away when they try to catch him (Mark 14:51-52) When they meet Panayotaros who comes with two aids to take Manolios to the Agha, he goes off at a run (455).

7.2.11. Manolios at length in a calm voice asks Panayotaros, "do you then hate me so much that you want my death? Why? What have I done to
you?'"(456) This reminds the reader of Jesus who asks, "Judas, would you betray the Son of man with a kiss?"(Luke 22:48) When they reach the square the crowd hurls itself upon Manolios shouting, "Robber! Assassin! Bolshevik!" And when the people shout, "Manolios! Manolios! Give us Manolios!" the Agha thinks, "He's innocent, poor fellow; a bit crazy, but he never did anyone any harm" And he gives him to them with the words "...There he is take him, you blessed roumis, and enjoy your meal! I wash my hands of it"(457) This hand washing has an original in the Gospel according to Matthew, "So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying "I am innocent of this man's blood" (27:24). Similarly like Jesus who asks the crowd who comes to arrest him, "let these men go"(John 18:8), during his interrogation by the Agha, Manolios requests the Agha to punish him and "let no-one else be touched" (458). And the Agha gives him to the crowd with the words, "Take him, kill him, tear him to a thousand pieces, the devil take you all!"(461)

7.2.12 The journey from the palace of the Agha to the persecution spot, the church also bears similarities to Jesus' 'way of the cross'. The pope clutches Manolios by one shoulder and Panayotaros takes the other and the crowd throws itself upon him, howling. They strike him and spit in his face (461) producing a parallel to the persecution of Jesus in the hands of the Roman soldiers. "They spat in his face, and struck him" (Matt 26. 67-68, 27:30; Mark 14:65; John 18:22-24). The crowd carries him towards the church. After they enter the church, the pope holds Manolios by the neck with both his hands and drags him to the choir, throws him to the
ground and sets him on his knees before the archangel of death. Panayotaros kicks him and old Ladas spits on him. When the pope asks him to confess that he is a Bolshevik, Manolios replies, "If Bolshevik means what I have in my spirit, yes, I am a Bolshevik, father; Christ and I are Bolsheviks" (463). Upon hearing this old Ladas stands up and shouts, "Let's kill him! Let's kill him! We have no need of other witnesses; he's confessed. Let's kill him" (463). This statement has a parallel in the 'Passion' story. During the interrogation of Jesus the high priests says, "Why do we still need witnesses?" (Matt. 26. 65). They bolt the door and crowds around Manolios. At that moment there comes the shouting of the Sarakinians to open the door. Pope Gregoris gives his command in a hurry to Panayotaros to execute Manolios. And Panayotaros draws his dagger and attacks him along with the crowd, the blood spurts, sprinkles their faces and some drops even fall, warm and salty, on the lips of pope Gregoris. Then the voice of Manolios rises, "Brothers..." By addressing his murderers 'brothers' Manolios is placed in the same level with Jesus who prays for His murderers from the cross (Luke 23.34). Then Pope Gregoris bends down to fill the hollow of his hand with blood and sprinkles the crowd with it uttering the well known Biblical statement made by the Jewish people before Pilate: "May his blood fall upon the heads of us all!" (465=Matt. 27.25). Though the Jews actually used this statement to claim the responsibility of Jesus murder, later the Christian theologians extend its meaning to highlight the redeeming power of Jesus' sacred Blood.

7.2.13. Thus the characters of the novel become allegorical representatives of Biblical personages of the Passion of Christ. Manolios is
the Jesus figure. Michelis becomes the tender, loving beloved disciple, John. Yannakos through his momentarily varying temper repeated betrayal and repentance fits into the framework of the 'Big Fisherman', Peter and Kostandis function as the silent and gentle James Panayotaros is the Judas. Widow Katerina actualises Mary Magdalen. The Agha is the Pontius Pilate. Pope Gregoris and old Ladas perform the roles of the priests and the elders. The people of Lykovrissi represent the Jews and the Sarakinians stand for the human race.

7.3.1. Kazantzakis describes his creative process in his autobiographical novel, *Report to Greco*³: “In what I wrote, I often took my pretext from ancient times and legends, but the substance was modern and living, racked by contemporary problems and present-day agonies” (450). In this novel, *Christ Reconciled*, he provides a fusion of the characteristics of the Biblical Jesus and that of a Modern Greek Christian leader. Manolios, his Jesus figure is an ordinary Greek shepherd.

7.3.2.1. There are a number of Jesus parallels in his experiences. He has undergone some years of hidden life in a monastery similar to Jesus' life from the age of twelve to thirty that is unknown to the public. He is attributed with the qualities of Jesus as the 'Lamb of God' who takes away the sin of the world. He is described by the pope as one who “is mild as a lamb” (19). The Gospel Jesus is described by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). When old Ladas

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³ Kazantzakis, Nikos *Report to Greco* Trans P. A Bien 1965 Rept, London Faber and Faber, 1983 In further references this work will be mentioned as *Report.*
says that he is a little crazy, the pope counter argues that as his soul is pure it doesn’t matter. The Gospel Jesus also is described as crazy by the Jews (John 10:20). According to the schoolmaster he is a shepherd like Christ who is the shepherd of the human flock (John 10:11). Like Jesus he has an epiphanic experience (27), in which his identity as the ‘chosen Christ’ is revealed to the world. Similar to Jesus’ baptism experience, in which He was granted a sign from heaven to start His public ministry, Manolios was elected to play the role of Jesus in the Passion play by the pope and the elders of the village. From that moment of transformation onwards he thinks that he is not merely Manolios, but something deeper and greater. And this feeling emboldens him to teach Michelis and the other two disciples who are superior to him in social status. The same mental attitude gives him courage to address the crowd at the feast of Elijah. Like Jesus he is tempted by the devil (113-14). Like Jesus, his interaction transforms peoples’ lives. He teaches his disciples and changes their lives: Michelis becomes a dedicated disciple (254) and Yannakos repents of cheating others in his profession as a carrier (131). Like Jesus he liberates the prostitute from the way of the world and Widow Katerina says goodbye to her life as a prostitute (167). The villagers feel remorse for their lack of charity on listening to his ‘Sermon on the Mount’ (285).

7.3.2. Manolios takes upon himself the sins of the village, especially the murder of Youssoufaki, and lays down his life to save the village from the anger of the Agha. He sets aside his safety, the prospects of a happy married life and goes to the Sarakina to share the suffering and poverty of the Sarakinians. He preaches to the village people and shares the message of
God with them as if he is an anointed prophet. He preaches the kingdom of God. He gives a Sermon on the Mount. The priest and the elders plot against him. They produce false witnesses. He is being deserted by his disciples and undertakes a last journey with his hands in the shape of the corpse like Jesus. He becomes the innocent victim sacrificed for others.

7.3.3. As a Modern Greek shepherd, Manolios is not the Son of God or the long prophesied Messiah with divine attributes. He does not perform any superhuman signs or miracles. While Jesus is mission-oriented from his birth onwards, Manolios is granted the mission to be the Christ one fine morning as he has been leading a life planned with a marriage to Lenio. The announcement of his election to be the Christ in the Easter ‘Passion Play’ and the pope’s prayer over him produce a sudden transformation in him. Lenio asks, “Manolios, look me in the face, don’t lower your eyes. What’s the matter with you? In a single day you’ve changed. What have they done to you?” (83) Unlike Jesus who has defeated the devil, God has to interfere in the form of leprosy to save him from the devil. While practising Jesus’ teaching ‘to turn the other cheek’ (Matt 5:39), he encourages the oppressed to fight for justice. He leads the Sarakinians to Lykovrissi to take possession of Michelis’ property. Pope Gregoris and the elders of the Lykovrissi conspire against Manolios on the basis that he is leading the people astray. They produce false testimony against him before the Agha. Still the Agha admits his innocence and gives him to the accusers after washing the responsibility off his hands. They strike him, spit in his face and ultimately murder him in the Church on the Christmas Eve. The people of Sarakina and his disciples took his body off and buried him. Unlike the Biblical Jesus
story *Christ Recrucified* ends on a note of despair and futility: After the burial of Manolios old Martha comes and warns pope Fotis that the Agha has already sent a messenger to the town with an urgent request for the aid of a regiment of infantry and horse to turn the Bolsheviks out of Lycovrissi. Then pope Fotis realises the futility of the martyrdom,

Dear Manolios, you’ll have given your life in vain.” he murmured, “they’ve killed you for having taken our sins upon you,...“In vain, my Christ, in vain,” he muttered. “two thousand years have gone by and men crucify you still When will You be born, my Christ, and not be crucified any more, but live among us for eternity? (467)

7.4.1.1 Kazantzakis’ family background has played an important role in shaping his Jesus interpretation. His Jesus figure, Manolios is a mixture of saint and hero. He states that he was born from two unreconcilable ancestral families. His father was Arab and mother Greek (*Report* 30) “On my father’s side my ancestors were blood thirsty pirates on water, warrior chieftains on land, fearing neither God nor man; on my mothers drab, goodly peasants who bowed trustfully over the soil the entire day, sowed, waited with confidence for rain and sun, reaped, and in the evening seated themselves on the stone bench in front of their homes, folded their arms, and placed their hopes in God”(*Ibid* 24) His father hated priests. “Whenever he met one on the street, he crossed himself to exorcise the unfortunate encounter, and if the frightened priest greeted him with a ‘Good day, Captain Michael,’ he replied, ‘give me your curse!’ He never attended Divine Liturgy- to avoid seeing priests But every Sunday when the service was over and everyone had left, he entered the Church and lighted a candle
before the wonder-working icon of Saint Minas.’”(Ibid 32) His mother was a saintly woman He admits, “Both of my parents circulate in my blood, the one fierce, hard, and morose, the other tender, kind, and saintly”(Ibid 49). He recognises the impact of these twin currents of blood in his vein, Greek from his mother and Arab from his father as positive and fruitful (Ibid 30)

7.4.1.2. School and teachers also functioned as a strong formative influence that shaped his outlook on religion and Jesus. At the elementary school, Paterópoulos, his teacher in the first grade who thrashed the students pitilessly taught him the lesson “that suffering is the greatest guide along the ascent which leads from animal to man” (Ibid 53). This later led him to view Jesus as the Overman and the image of the perfect man.

7.4.2.1 Kazantzakis believed that his Jesus would have acquired a different face if there had no struggle between Crete and Turkey: “But what influenced my life incalculably – far more than schools and teachers, far deeper than the first pleasures and fears I received from viewing the world – was something which moved me in a truly unique way: the struggle between Crete and Turkey” (Ibid 67). This struggle created in him the yearning for freedom To gain freedom first of all from the Turk and after that to gain freedom from the inner Turk– from ignorance, malice and envy, from fear and laziness, from dazzling false ideas, and finally from idols, all of them. even the most revered and beloved (Ibid 68). His second great desire was the desire for sanctity (Ibid 71).
7.4.2.2. Even when he was a child he had fixed the hero together with the saint as mankind’s supreme model. A saint is someone who is strict with himself, hard in self control, patient, scorns happiness, has no fear of death, looks beyond this world to the supreme good and longs for martyrdom (Ibid 72) He never uses oil or wine (Ibid 71). He continuously bows his head before God and says yes (Ibid 78). A hero, on the other hand, is one who resists, struggles and is not afraid to say no, even to God, in time of great need (Ibid) Kazantzakis as a young boy visualised the hero as a great military leader like his paternal grand father or a vehement knight on horseback the crusader or a great explorer like Columbus. He has nothing but courage, trust and fruitful action (Ibid 78-79).

7.4.2.3 His childhood atmosphere induced him to view the perfect man as a blend of these two contradictory ideals. He says, “In those days everybody in Megalo Kastro had roots deeply sunk in both earth and heaven” (Ibid 71). When he grew up he had a presentiment that the true man is he who struggles, and is not afraid, in time of great need, to say no, even to God. The new saints, about whom he read in the pamphlets were different from the saints of the ‘Lives of the Saints’ which he read in his childhood. They did not beg for arms. Whatever they desired they took by the sword. He found the submission of the individual to an end that transcends the individual as the only means to elevate oneself and as the only essence of life. To the children of Crete in those era words such as freedom, Saint Minas, Christ and revolution were words upon which an entire people were crucified.
7.4.3.1. Kazantzakis' personal philosophy also has played a prominent role in shaping his Jesus story. Nietzsche and Bregson stand as the two main streams of Kazantzakis' philosophical thought. When he was in Paris, an unknown university student introduced him to Nietzsche on the reason that he had some physical resemblance to the philosopher. He found Nietzsche as an Antichrist and recognised the fact that the Antichrist struggles and suffers just as Christ does and that sometimes, in their moments of distress, their faces look the same (Ibid 319) Though he felt Nietzsche's pronouncements as impious blasphemies and his superman as the assassin of God, he was drawn to the conclusion that good and evil are identical He was fascinated by Nietzsche's philosophy of slave morality and master morality (Ibid 328) Kimon Friar states in his introduction to the English translation of The Saviors of God, “But from that Nietzsche who pronounced the death of the dogmatic Christian God, Kazantzakis learned, as Zarathustra said, that ‘only that life is worth living which develops the strength and the integrity to withstand the unavoidable sufferings and misfortunes of existence without flying into an imaginary world” (37).

7.4.3.2. From Henri Bergson, his philosophy professor in Paris, “he learned that all of nature, all of the pluriverse, all of life was the expression of an evolutionary drive, an élan vital, an inconceivable energy which ceaselessly renews itself, a continual creativity, a leap upward, not toward a fixed, predetermined, final end, but within a teleology immanent in the life force itself, which was creating its own perfectibility as it evolved eternally This creativity toward a perfectibility never reached but always postulated, this agonised transmutation of matter into spirit, is what Kazantzakis meant
by God” (Friar 37). Kazantzakis admits his indebtedness to these philosophers “Bergson,” he wrote, “disburdened me from unresolvable agonies which tormented my early youth. Nietzsche enriched me with new agonies and taught me to transubstantiate unhappiness, sorrow, and uncertainty into pride” (Ibid 38)

7.4.3.3. In Berlin he was introduced to Lenin and Karl Marx by an enthusiastic group of rebels and his heart began to throb for the hungry and oppressed. An invitation to represent Greek intellectuals at the great tenth anniversary of the revolution completed his conversion to Marxism (Report 392). He found Marxism as the new religion fit for the New World and Russia as the torchbearer. He viewed Lenin as the saviour of the New World order.

7.4.3.4 For Kazantzakis Buddha was the “last man” of Nietzsche who represented complete nihilism. He writes in Zobra the Greek, “Buddha is the last man. That is his secret and terrible significance. Buddha is the ‘pure’ soul, which has emptied itself, in him is the Void; he is the Void. ‘Empty your body, empty your spirit, empty your heart,’ he cries” (134). He was so carried away by Buddha’s teachings that “he struggled to exorcise him from his own flesh and mind by trapping that ‘enlighted one’ in a verse drama and thus annihilating him” (Friar 34). But finally he rejected nihilism, by interpreting it as freedom. He argued that as everything is a shadow and “empty air”, and fantasy, one can do away with life, death, hope and fear. This, according to him, is the real freedom/liberty (Ibid 34-35). According to Friar, throughout his life he struggled to free himself. Kazatzakis wrote to
Prevelakis: "The simplest plan which I found was this. Until 1923 I passed through Nationalism, all feeling and flame.... From 1923 to about 1933 I passed with the same feeling and flame the left-wing line-up, ...Now I am passing through the third- ...I call it freedom. No shade accompanies me. Only my own, long, drawn out, deep black, ascending" (Ibid 33). From Nietzsche, who pronounced the death of God, he learned that the capacity to withstand the unavoidable sufferings and misfortunes of existence with integrity and without escaping into an imaginary world make life worth living. He considers it better to have no God to reward us so that one can defeat the greatest of temptations, hope. To be able to fight with the full knowledge that there is no one to give reward is the true heroism and the greatest achievement of man (Ibid 24). In his view, God is the supreme expression of the struggling man (Ibid 13) On his tombstone in Herakleion, Crete, it is engraved, "I do not hope for anything. I do not fear anything. I am free" (Ibid 36)

7.4.3.5 Providence provided him a chance to become himself a saviour The ministry of Social Welfare in Athens requested him to undertake the Ministry's General Directorship, with the specific mission of going to the Caucasus to save the Greeks in danger there. He consented out of pity for his eternally crucified race. Along with ten selected companions he successfully completed this duty.

7.4.3.6. Kimon Friar calls Kazantzakis' attitude to life as "heroic pessimism" and "Dionysian nihilism" (37). To him, "Every living thing is a workshop where God, in hiding, processes and transubstantiates clay"
God has enabled man to enter God's workshop and labour with him. The more flesh he transubstantiates into love, valour, and freedom, the more truly he becomes Son of God" (Ibid 24). In his autobiographical novel, *Report to Greco*, Kazantzakis states:

Every man worthy of being called a son of man bears his cross and mounts his Golgotha. Many, indeed most, reach the first or second step, collapse pantingly in the middle of the journey, and do not attain the summit of Golgotha, in other words the summit of their duty to be crucified, resurrected, and to save their souls. Afraid of crucifixion, they grow fainthearted; they do not know that the cross is the only path to resurrection. There is no other path (15).

Manolios' story is formulated in such a way that he becomes an example to prove this philosophy. He opts for the path of the cross proclaiming that it is the only desirable course for earthly life.

7.4.3.7. He describes his life as an 'ascent' in search of God's face. And he admits that in his last years he sensed in his desperation that God is a 'dark bulk' without a face and so he gave it his own face (Ibid 18) "I possessed the Lord's omnipotence. I created the world as I wanted it."(Ibid 44) He describes the method in which he confronted reality. "I recreate it—brighter, better, more suitable to my purpose. The mind cries out, explains, demonstrates, protests; but inside me a voice rises and shouts at it, "Be quiet, mind; let us hear the heart" (Ibid 45) He adopted the teaching of one of his favourite Byzantine mystics, "Since we can not change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality. He confirms, "I did this when a child; I do it now as well in the most creative moments of my life"(Ibid). He was joining truth and falsehood indissolubly together to fashion reality, as he
should have liked to be-, as it should have been. He felt intoxicated by this struggle between reality and imagination, between God-the-creator and man-the-creator. He affirms again, "I never saw the same thing twice, because I gave it a new face each time and made it unrecognisable" (Ibid 48). So his Jesus figure becomes a combination of the Gospel and his own vision of Christ.

7.4.4. Different image-shattering discoveries of science also have affected his vision of Jesus Christ. He describes how as a teenager, he was wounded by two secrets imparted by his physics teacher. The first wound was inflicted by the realisation produced by the discoveries of Galileo, that the earth, contrary to traditional teaching, is not the centre of the universe. She is only an insignificant star thrown into the galaxy to circle the sun slavishly. It raised questions regarding the teaching that the sun and moon are created as ornaments to the earth. The second wound was created by Darwin's theory of evolution. According to it man is not God's darling, his privileged creature. "The Lord God did not breathe into his nostrils the breath of life, did not give him an immortal soul. Like all other creatures, he is a rung in the infinite chain of animals, a grandson or great-grandson of the ape" (Ibid 15). Both these revolutionary pieces of scientific information shattered his life and produced bitterness and indignation in him.

7.4.5. He clearly states that his purpose in writing was not beauty but deliverance (Ibid 452). "But no matter what I wrote - poems, plays, novels - the work always acquired, without conscious effort on my part, a dramatic élan and form - full of mutually clashing forces, struggle, indignation.
revolt, the pursuit of a lost equilibrium; full of portents and sparks from the
approaching tempest. No matter how much I struggled to give a balanced
form to what I wrote it quickly assumed a vehement dramatic rhythm. In
spite of my wishes, the peaceful voice I desired to emit became a cry” (448-
49). In Christ Recrucified Manolios becomes a cry to the world requesting
not to crucify the prophets and Christs who preach the kingdom of love and
protection to the weak and the meek. He longed to transmute the word
directly into flesh that flesh might in time be transubstantiated into
something more refined than either words or flesh. According to him the
only purpose of human life is “to transubstantiate matter and to turn it into
spirit” (Kazantzakis, Saviors of God 17). According to him true heroism
and the highest human achievement is obtained when one can fight without
the hope for even heavenly reward. His dedication was not to men, but to
man, to the betterment of such material and spiritual conditions as might
make the Overman of Nietzsche possible Nietzsche’s Übermensch is
translated by Kazantzakis as the ‘Overman’ instead of the commonly
accepted translation the ‘Superman’. He views the “Overman”, who
struggles to overcome man’s limitations, for man, as a bridge and not an
end. He tries to raise himself above the animal level and the all-too-human
level. He tries to overcome inertia and cultural conditioning to strive upward
to the highest level that is God. He highlights five cycles to this journey:
Ego, Humanity, Earth, the Universe and God (Ibid 66-95). This theory of
Man’s journey is a result of his life long struggle to find out a thought which
might be able to give a new meaning to life. He views this upward journey
in search of God as the purpose of the universe. To him, the greatest glory of
man is that he can set himself his own purpose and through this he can
control and direct the mysterious forces which create him and which might one day destroy him as a species. He expresses this purpose in one sentence. "If we are to set a Purpose, it is this to transubstantiate matter and to turn it into spirit (Friar 21).

7.4.6. The modern age in which Kazantzakis was born and brought up also has effected a formative power on his Jesus reconstruction. "Dramatic form makes it possible for creative literature to formulate the unbridled forces of our times and of our souls by incarnating them in the work's vying heroes. As faithfully and intensely as I could, I attempted to experience the important age in which I happened to be born" (Report 449). He describes the twentieth century as "an important age full of kaleidoscopic experiments, adventures, and clashes, not only between the virtues and the vices, as formerly, but rather—and this is the most tragic of all—between the virtues themselves. Scientific revolution, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment induced a questioning attitude in human minds that people started to question all traditional foundations: social, geographical and religious. On the social level authority is questioned. In the geographical level, the prominence of mother earth is questioned and on the religious level, God's existence is questioned. The old, recognised virtues have begun to lose their authority, they are no longer able to fulfil the religious, moral, intellectual, and social demands of the contemporary soul. Man's soul seems to have grown bigger; it cannot fit any longer within the old model" (Report 449). In this novel, Kazantzakis transubstantiates all these questions into flesh through the medium of the Christ story. Manolios leads the struggling people of Sarakina to rise against the social authority of Lycovrissi.
leaves the earth considering it as an insignificant place. He meets his God on his way to the mountain after his rejection by the archon, his master

7.5.1. Through out his life Kazantzakis had been obsessed with heroes who met the Tempter, resisted him, and transformed flesh into spirit. Three great figures - Odysseus, Nicephorus Phocas, and Christ- struggled within him to become the dominant face in him. As he read the lives of the saints passionately in his childhood and devoted himself to the books about heroes- conquerors and explorers - his whole life was dominated by figures who combine heroism and sanctity. When he was in Mount Athos he felt, "The time has arrived for the Jewish Christ to become a Greek" (Report 208). He was attracted by the way in which a person who found the meaning of life in Christ set out to reach God and merge with Him, so that the two might become indissolubly one. He was convinced that there is no other way to reach God but this "Following Christ's bloody tracks, we must fight to transubstantiate the man inside us into spirit, so that we may merge with God." (Ibid 289) He considered the mystery of Christ not as a mystery for a particular creed but as universal in that every man is half God and half man. He had brooded long on the ultimate spiritual significance and martyrdom of Christ stripped of dogmatic and ceremonious ritual, had written a verse play, Christ (about 1921), a novel, Christ Recrucified (written in 1948, published in the United States as The Greek Passion, and later made into the French Film He Who Must Die), and The Last Temptation of Christ (written in 1950-51). While The Last Temptation represents a modernised reconstruction of the Jesus story, Christ Recrucified, as proved in the preceding discussion, comes out as a reconstruction in the creative understanding mode.
7.5.2. Manolios resembles the Gospel Jesus in that he becomes a model for man to imitate and follow in the same manner as Jesus is placed in the Gospels as a model for the fallen humanity to follow. Jesus Christ restored to humanity their human image that is identical to God's own image which they lost after Adam's fall. He attained it through Kenosis and self-emptying unto death on the cross. And thus he became the way that leads to God and salvation. Manolios becomes a redemptive figure among the selfish Greeks by helping the refugees who were waved away empty handed by the Lykovrissiots. As Kazantzakis equates God with the suffering/struggling man, Manolios becomes the way to that God. Contrary to the traditional Christian teaching of passive suffering Kazantzakis propagates an active resistance to injustice and evil in this novel. The hierarchy of the Church is questioned, bishops and priests are ridiculed, anathema and traditional piety is put to laughter and the death of the real Christian is equated with the birth of Christ. In spite of all these critical handling, the novel provides an overall impression that each human being can become Christ by taking his everyday cross and following Jesus through suffering and self sacrifice. Each Christian is called to reincarnate Christ in the space and time where he is placed Thus Kazantzakis succeeds in reconstructing the Jesus figure who is apt for the modern world.