

MINOANS IN MODERN GREEK LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on literary appropriations of the Minoan past, chosen from the work of major Greek authors active between the early 20th and the early 21st century. Kazantzakis in his *Odyssey: A Modern Sequel* (1938) depicts Minoan society as terminally depraved and (following Evans) as utterly un-Hellenic; later, in *Report to Greco* (1955-7), the same author took a mellower view, acknowledging the Minoans among his own spiritual ancestors. A similar process of gradual assimilation of the Minoans into a Hellenic continuum continues through texts of the mid-century by Ritsos, Elytis, and Diktaios, and is taken further by the postmodernist writers Dimitris Kalokyris and Rhea Galanaki in work published during the last twenty years. It is concluded that these literary constructions of the Minoan past contribute to consolidation and redefinition of a national Greek identity, rather than a specifically Cretan regional one.