

# The poets of Lemnos The poetry of exile

**Workshop on Literature** 

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#### Aris Alexandrou

- Born in St Petersburg, Russia in 1922
- Died in Paris, France in 1978
- He had Esthonian ancestry
- Besides Greek, he also spoke fluently in French and Russian
- In times of need he also worked as a translator

- He was involved in numerous resistant organisations during the occupation. He also got arrested quite a few times and was sent abroad (El Damba, Libya). During the Greek civil war, it was known that he left his "house" only when there was an emergency.
- One of these times he was arrested (1948) and was casted from Athens. He was imprisoned in Moudros, then in 1949 in Makronisos and finally, in Agios Efstratios in 1950. When he returned to Athens, he immediately escaped to Paris in 1967, where he rose as an author.
- His poems were characterised as "ironic" or "sarcastic" by the media of that time.
- He translated texts from famous Russian authors, such as Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy and Chekov.
- He is mostly known for his novel "Το κιβώτιο" ("The box").
- > He had a great desire to preserve human dignity as a moral value.

#### **Yiannis Ritsos**

- Born in Monemvasia in 1909, Greece
- Died in Athens in 1990
- He also worked as a director, actor and even as a dancer
- Due to the war ,he decided to be part of a party of the left and the "National Liberating Front"
- Later on, around 1940 he was casted to Lemnos, Makroniso and Agios Efstratios
- In 1956 he travelled to the Soviet Union an Cuba and in the same year he was casted again in Yaros and Leros
- After the post-war era he became widely known to the public and a lot of his poems were translated in numerous languages.



- He himself has translated work of famous authors, such as Nazim Hikmet and Vladimir Mayakovski.
- Interesting is that he only finished elementary school, while although his family was rich, faced a lot of problems.
- During his time here he wrote "Καπνισμένο Τσουκάλι"
- He has numerous awards such as The Lenin peace award, 1977 and the international award "Georgi Dimitrov", Bulgaria 1975

#### Tasos Livaditis

- Born in 1922 in Athens
- Died in 1988 in Athens
- He studied Law in The Kapodistrian University but chose literature, in particular Poetry
- He got involved with politics and that is what got him arrested and casted from the capital to Lemnos, Agios Efstratios and Makronisos (he was released in 1951)

He was introduced to the public through a newspaper called " Elefthera Grammata"

 His poems were used as lyrics by Mikis Theodorakis, Manos Loizos and Vasilis Papakonstantinou

Also his poems were translated in : Russian, Serbian, Hungarian, Swedish, Italian, French, Albanian, Bulgarian, Chinese and English

He has also won the 1<sup>st</sup> award in the International Poetry Festival and numerous awards given by the State

### A wall on Syria: "know this, before I left I tried very hard to stay"



## Erasmus+ Together: equal in dignity and rights









