

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## CRITICAL PRAISE FOR *ARCADIA, MY ARCADIA*

By Nicholas D. Kokonis

(466pp, St. Basil's Publishers, \$25, plus \$6 s/h,  
P. O. Box, 1155, Deerfield, IL 60015.)

[WWW.MYARCADIABOOK.COM](http://WWW.MYARCADIABOOK.COM)

*ARCADIA, MY ARCADIA* chronicles the personal odyssey of a bright, sensitive and determined country boy, Angelos Vlahos, from the dusty poverty of his nameless village in the folds of the somber Arcadian mountains to the big city and beyond. Atlas carried the world; Angelos must carry his whole family across the Egypt of their misery to the new Promised Land.

The author shows an overwhelming compassion for people and the need to celebrate the cause and dignity of ordinary man. He has stated: "In praise of the common men and women of the world, the cry of *Arcadia, My Arcadia* speaks with a strong cultural voice but one that has a universal tone. Clear and vital, it sounds through every culture, inspiring tears of hope that are part of the eternal human condition."

"It has a strong, haunting, literary quality...Reminds me a lot of a Greek Steinbeck...Brilliant!" —Betty St. John, Jack Scagnetti Literary Division

"*Arcadia, My Arcadia* is a marvelous book, one that keeps the reader thoroughly entranced from the first page. Nicholas Kokonis has the unusual and unique ability to reveal a human soul's elation and torture, the conflict between hope and despair. His writing, reminiscent of the classic authors, has an ability to touch our hearts with an endearing story that will long be remembered after the last page is read. *Arcadia, My Arcadia* is a novel that should be on everyone's reading list, and I highly recommend it for teenagers who would certainly identify with Angelos' struggles." —Linda Morelli, Award-winning author of *Fiery Surrender*

"...Kokonis' ability to record life—to find the remarkable in the ordinary and the spontaneous while maintaining a firm sense of structure—is impressive, and to this reviewer reminiscent of Willa Cather. Like Cather too, Kokonis is canny in discovering and shaping symbols that seem to emerge naturally from skillfully presented realistic details.

The novel has continued to percolate in my mind since my first acquaintance with it. It easily enters part of an ongoing dialogue with classic initiation works such as *Catcher in the Rye*...and serves as a stimulating companion text to books like Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* and Richard Wright's powerful self-portrait, *Black Boy*.

Ultimately, Kokonis' worth as a writer lies in the way he sees. Poet and translator Richard Wilbur, in a brief lyric simply called "Objects," praises the Dutch painter Pieter de Hooch for his "devout intransitive eye." That phrase comes close to defining the quality of Kokonis' vision.

"Intransitive" does not mean either disinterested or passive. It is a moral, but not primarily judgmental, way of seeing. It eschews pity but does empathize, and doing so, it humanizes both good and all but the most frightening forms of evil. Ultimately, it may not be the vision without which we perish, but its lack guarantees our own, and countless others', impoverishment." —William Graddy, Ph.D., Professor of English, Trinity University

—Betty St. John, Jack Scagnetti Literary Division

"It touches deeply." Nicholas Gage, *Eleni*

"It will haunt its readers long after they have finished it," Viveka Neveln, Managing Editor, *Edgde Dining and Doing Guide*

"We owe gratitude to the author because he took the common life of our country and its scenes and made them a blessing through the literary process and projected them on the international horizon for all the world to view and admire." —Photis Fourndavlos, Philologist, Univ. of Athens

"In today's world of the Internet and cell phones, we rarely see a book that tells a simple story of life and the struggles we undergo to achieve something more for ourselves...*Arcadia, My Arcadia* is a wonderful and beautiful story, without any pretensions or falsehoods, but carrying you into a world very different from your own on the winds of Greece, and capturing the soul of a country, as well as your own, in the process." —Sarah McKeever, Bennington Banner

"Quite honestly, I could not put it down...So well-written and compelling. A must read."—Mary Papoutsy, *Hellenic Communication Service*

"Nice job! I like your analogy to a Greek *Angela's Ashes*...I care a lot about your characters."—Caroline Dubois Hutton, *Hutton and Hutton Agency*

"Through this work we have the opportunity to understand the making and the soul of the Greek immigrant who carries within himself /herself the entire Greece. It is a document of life of the ordinary people of the countryside." —Constantine Kousiouris

Editor's Note: *Arcadia, My Arcadia* can be purchased for \$25, plus \$4 shipping and handling, from St. Basil's Publishers, P. O. Box, 1155, Deerfield, IL 60015.