



MY BROTHER GEORGE SEFERIS

*by* Ioanna Tsatsos

The poetry of George Seferis (1900–1971), Greece’s first Nobel Prize winner for literature, has been accessible to English and American readers in excellent translations for over two decades. In the present volume, *My Brother George Seferis*, we have what may be considered the first biography of Seferis in English. It certainly is the fullest and most sensitive record of the poet’s formative years, 1912–1941, written by the one person who knew him best of all—his “little sister” Ioanna, a poet in her own right. The narrative, richly documented with letters which Seferis wrote to his sister throughout the period, concentrates on the young man “born with an open wound of sensitivity with which he faced the difficulties of life.” Thus, as the Greek critic Andreas Karantonis pointed out, this account may be described as the book of “Seferis’s Genesis” which “will forever be the psychological and biographical cornerstone of every type of study which will deal with Seferis’s life and work.”

*My Brother George Seferis* is also a subtle autobiographical portrait of its author, Ioanna Tsatsos, and an intimate and intensely human picture of a talented family which witnessed with agony and a sense of tragedy the fate of twentieth-century Greece. In short, it provides useful insights into modern Greek history and culture as well as into the personality and poetry of George Seferis.

---

Educated in Paris and Athens, Ioanna Tsatsos has dedicated her life to public service and literary pursuits. The fate of Greece and of Hellenism “wounds” her as it did her brother, George Seferis, and this sensibility is reflected in both her writings and public service. She is the author of over ten volumes of poetry and prose, many of which have been translated into French, Italian and English, and for which she has received several literary awards. American editions of her works include *The Sword’s Fierce Edge: A Journal of the Occupation 1941–1944* (1969), and *Athenais: A Humanist Empress of the Fifth Century* (1974). Her poetry has appeared in the *Yale Review* (1973) and the *Southern Humanities Review* (1974). During the forties, she participated in the resistance against the German Occupation of Greece, and worked closely with several relief organizations set up after the Second World War. In the fifties, she was a leader in the struggle for female suffrage and for the training of women for political service. She presently lives in Athens, with her husband Constantine Tsatsos, former president of the Hellenic Republic.