

Dear E [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of last Friday (you wrote it on Thursday, maybe [this guess at when you wrote it is a typical-of-me assumption about other people's behaviour- maybe, on the contrary, you are a person who lets letters mature, like wine, before sending them - S [REDACTED], my wife, is one of these-])

An assumption I hear in your letter runs something like this: "I have always lived in one place and so my life has been uneventful and ordinary".

Is this an assumption that could do with challenging?

In the case of Thessaloniki I am not sure I really know what you mean by middle class. "Middle" between what and what? In terms of Salonika, where do the the descendants of the merchants and their families that had to flee Anatolia fit in? Has the term : "middle class " modified at all over your lifetime so far?

What would make it hard to live in Athens or Munich? What are the features of Thessaloniki being that are vital to you?

You frustrate me when you let drop that your husband is a painter without saying anything about the sort of stuff he paints. Does he work at home or go off to a studio? What sort of work patterns has he evolved- I am fascinated by people who have completely "free " work: how do they manage the "freedom"? I am using quotation marks because I question the reality of the apparent freedom. (I am freer when I teach, despite timetables, than when I write).

Looking forward to your next letter,

Mario.

ps: how can one translate *matiazó* into English : to curse makes me think of bygone times- (Milton etc). To cast a spell over me this seems to technical, unless your husband is a wizard.

M [REDACTED] is current in Greek thought- neither of the above two verbs are current in main stream English thinking. Thank God I gave up translation which is a bloody bed of Tantalus.