



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST
A SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL LINK WITH GREECE
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΣΥΝΔΕΣΜΟΣ
P.O. Box 3, Park Ridge, IL 60068-0003
Phone (847) 644-3500 and Fax: 847-498-0421
www.helleniclinkmidwest.org
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On Sunday, October 15, 2017, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dr. Ioannis Tsekouras, in a lecture titled: “*Singing and Remembering Pontos: the tradition of Parakathi in contemporary Greece.*” Admission will be free.

The event will take place at the Oakton Community College Des Plaines Campus, Room 1610. The address is 1600 E. Golf Road Des Plaines, IL 60016. Please park in the Faculty/Staff parking lot C and enter through door entrance #37.

Program: Arrival 2:30PM

Lecture 3 to 4:30PM

Dialogical singing and improvisatory poetry, especially the traditions of the Aegean islands and of Crete, have a special place in Greek culture. The poetic genre of “mantinades” and the Cretan “glendi” are highly celebrated in the context of various popular music movements—the post-1950s “entechno-music” and the 1990s continuing urban revival of Cretan music being the two most characteristic cases. In this lecture, a case of Greek folk dialogical singing will be presented that for a variety of reasons has escaped the attention of the broader public. This is the “epitrapezia” repertoire of the Pontic *parakathi* or *muhabeti*. Similarly to the Cretan and Karpathian glendi, Pontic parakathi describes practices of nightlong intimate socialization, social drinking, and most importantly dialogical singing of short poetic forms performed on the sounds of the Pontic lyra or kemence. Drawing from more than 16 months of fieldwork in Greek Macedonia during 2012 and 2014, Dr. Tsekouras will present the main characteristics of parakathi poetry and music repertoire (epitrapezia), the general norms that regulate parakathi socialization, and the ways that all these relate to the performers’ lives and to Pontic collective memory and identity. The lecture will conclude with a presentation of the dilemmas that the Pontians face in their effort to popularize the parakathi repertoire and of the puzzlement that the epitrapezia cause to Greek folklorists.

Dr. Ioannis Tsekouras studied in the National Conservatory of Athens, where he received a diploma on flute performance, and in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens from where he received his bachelor’s in music studies and musicology. He completed his graduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, School of Music, from where he holds both a Master’s of Music and a Doctorate on the Philosophy of Music, with a specialization in the anthropology of music or ethnomusicology. His dissertation, entitled “*Nostalgia, Emotionality, and Ethno-regionalism in Pontic Parakathi Singing*” is a musical ethnography of the dialogical singing practices of the Pontic Greeks, the descendants of the 1922 Greek-Orthodox refugees from the Black Sea region of Turkey. His dissertation research won the 2012 Tulia Magrini Prize from the University of Bologna. Currently, Dr. Tsekouras teaches courses on music and culture at Columbia College Chicago and at Oakton Community College.

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