



HELLENIC LINK – MIDWEST Newsletter

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

Poetry Reading

On Sunday, February 22, at 3:00 PM, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents George Economou, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Oklahoma in a poetry reading titled: “*Won In Translation: A Reading Of Poems And Translations*”. This lecture will be held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 10255 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park (corner of Irving and Mannheim by O’Hare airport, phone: 847 671 4230).

Economou will read original poems of his and numerous translations from Ancient and Modern Greek as well as from other languages. Among the selection from his own poetry of the last forty years will be excerpts from *Ameriki*, a long historical work; poems from the book *Century Dead Center*, including “*An Evening in Kingfisher*” and “*Nashvillanelle*”; and from his current project “*The Poems & Fragments Of Ananios Of Kleitor*”. Readings from his translations of Cavafy, Seferis, and Sinopoulos, and several classical poets from *The Greek Anthology* will complete the program. Economou will offer a running commentary during the reading in order to provide the audience with an appropriate background of some of these works. At some point, probably at the beginning, he will explain the title of this reading, which seems to contradict the well-known phrase and its implications, “lost in translation.”

George Economou is the author of seven books of original poetry, the latest of which is *Century Dead Center* (Left Hand Books, 1997), and numerous translations from ancient and modern Greek and medieval European languages, the most recent of which is *I’ve Gazed So Much*, translations from the poetry of C. P. Cavafy (Stop Press, London, 2003). A well-known critic and scholar of medieval literature, he was also a founding editor of *The Chelsea Review* and co-founder of *Trobar* and *Trobar Books*. Economou has given many readings of his poems and translations at American universities, including Colgate, Columbia, Harvard, Michigan, Penn and Princeton and at other literary and poetry forums throughout the United States; he has also read abroad in Athens, London, Paris, and Oxford. He has been awarded fellowships from the Rockefeller and other foundations and has been named twice as an NEA Fellow in Poetry. He recently retired after 41 years of teaching, and now lives in Philadelphia and Wellfleet, Massachusetts.

George Economou earned his A. B. at Colgate University, his M.A. and Ph.D. at Columbia University, and taught at

The Brooklyn Center of Long Island University, Columbia, and the University of Oklahoma, where he is Professor Emeritus of English.

Celebration of Greek Independence Day

In celebration of the Greek Independence Day, Hellenic Link–Midwest, will present on Sunday, March 21, 2003 Maria Foustalieraki in a program titled “*Highlights from the Greek history - poems and songs from the struggles for freedom*”. The program starts at 3 PM and will take place at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 10255 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park (corner of Irving and Mannheim by O’Hare airport, phone: 847 671 4230)

Dr. Foustalieraki will present poetry and songs from the Greek folk tradition, as well as poems written by Rigas Feraios, national poet of Greece Dionysios Solomos, Nikos Gatsos, and others, and set to music by Nikolaos Mantzaros, Yiannis Markopoulos, Manos Hadjidakis, Christos Leontis, and other Greek composers.

Dr. Maria Foustalieraki was born in Thessaloniki, Greece to Cretan parents. She studied advanced music theory, music education, and piano at the Public Conservatory of Thessaloniki and holds a B.S. in Economics from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. After a year of musicology studies at same University, she came to the US in 1986 to pursue graduate studies in music education. She earned a Master’s degree and a Ph.D. in Music Education at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, and an Orff-Schulwerk Certification at Hamline University. Maria has received scholarship awards for academic excellence by several organizations both in Greece and the USA.

Maria has extensive performing experience as a singer, pianist, and choir director in both Greece and the U.S. In the Chicago area, she has been an active presenter of musical programs to the Greek and Greek-American Community (for the Hellenic Cultural Organization, the Hellenic Link, the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago, and the Consulate General of Greece).

In Brief

Greece Shows Strong Economic Growth

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in its semi-annual report made public on November 10, 2003, states that in the first half of 2003 the Greek economy grew about 4.5 per cent on an annual basis, while the forecast for the entire year is a 4.0 per cent growth, much higher than the eurozone average. The forecast

for 2004 is 4.1 per cent, with a drop to 3.6 per cent in 2005. The labor market is expected to show a further improvement with a drop in unemployment to 9.3 per cent in 2003, 8.9 per cent in 2004, and 8.8 per cent in 2005.

To ensure a reduction in the high debt to GDP ratio, stricter controls on primary spending are required. For long-term growth and competitiveness, a more resolute action to tackle inflexibility in the labor market is needed. Also, telecoms and energy firms should open to competition. Although inflation has declined from a peak early in 2003, the average consumer price index stood at 3.6 per cent in the first eight months of the year, exceeding the eurozone average by 1.5 percentage points.

The public sector deficit for 2003 was estimated at 1.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), with a forecast of 1.6 per cent in 2004 and 1.5 per cent in 2005.

Greece Lags in Research and Innovation Indices

According to data released by the European Commission on November 27, 2003, Greece is lagging in the European Union in nine out of sixteen innovation indices, while it holds an average position in another four. Among the lowest indices were: public spending on education as a percentage of GDP; total spending on research and development as a proportion of GDP; and internet access by individuals as a percentage of households. No data are available on postgraduate degrees in science and technology.

CoE Welcomes Successful Outcome of Loizidou Case

On December 2, 2003, the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE) announced that "Turkey executed today the judgment of July 28, 1998 in the Loizidou case by paying to Mrs. Titina Loizidou the sum that had been awarded to her by the European Court of Human Rights: an amount of 450,000 Cypriot pounds for damages, costs and expenses as just satisfaction on account of the violation of the applicant's right to peaceful enjoyment of certain properties located in the northern part of Cyprus."

CoE said, "The conclusion of this case, which is the result of efforts by all member states, demonstrates the effectiveness of the right of individual appeal available to 800 million Europeans before the Strasbourg Court."

CoE's Secretary General said: "today represented a significant moment for Council of Europe's system of collective enforcement of human rights."

Loizidou and her lawyer, Achilleas Demetriades, hailed Turkey's decision: Loizidou stressed that Ankara shows in practice that it accepts that it is violating her human rights in Cyprus. Turkey still has a long way to go to fully comply with the European Court of Human Rights judgment. It has

to comply with the December 1996 Court ruling regarding access and peaceful enjoyment of her property.

US State Department's 2003 Report on Religious Freedoms Released

On December 19, 2003, the US State Department released its 2003 annual report on International Religious Freedoms. It includes a 12-page chapter on Greece that presents a positive picture, although it notes that some religious groups faced difficulties in their operation, and in contacts with the authorities. The report noted that: "The Constitution (of Greece) establishes the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ (Greek Orthodoxy) as the "prevailing" religion, but also provides for the right of all citizens to practice the religion of their choice; however, while the Government generally respects this right, non-Orthodox groups sometimes face administrative obstacles or encounter legal restrictions on religious practice. The Constitution prohibits proselytizing and stipulates that no rite of worship may disturb public order or offend moral principles. The generally amicable relationship among religions in Greek society contributed to religious freedom. Non-Orthodox citizens have complained of being treated with suspicion, or told that they were not truly Greek when they revealed their religious affiliation.

The report notes that approximately 97 percent of citizens "identify themselves at least nominally with the Greek Orthodox faith" and that the Orthodox Church "exercises significant political and economic influence", while it also pointed out that the conscientious objector provision in the Constitution and an effective, well-run Ombudsman's office, which successfully handled an increasing number of cases, fostered government tolerance of minority religions.

The report also notes an increase in Muslim immigrants to Greece, adding that some 500-800 Old Calendarists, 98,000 Muslims, 50,000 Jehovah's Witnesses, 50,000 Catholics, 30,000 Protestants and 5,000 Jews live in Greece today.

In the chapter on Turkey, the report noted that: "The authorities continue to monitor the activities of Eastern Orthodox churches but generally do not interfere with their activities. The Government does not recognize the ecumenical authority of the Greek Orthodox (Ecumenical) Patriarch, acknowledging him only as head of the country's Greek Orthodox community; however, the Government does not interfere with his travels or other ecumenical activities. The Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul continues to seek to reopen the Halki seminary on the island of Heybeli in the Sea of Marmara. The seminary has been closed since 1971, when the State nationalized all private institutions of higher learning." The request for reopening of the Halki seminary is supported by the US government.

In the chapter on Albania, the report noted that: "Representatives of the country's Orthodox Church have noted that some churches and other buildings have been the targets of vandalism; however, these incidents were isolated

and believed to be the result of the country's weak public order rather than due to religious intolerance."

The British Public Wants Parthenon Marbles in Greece

The British public overwhelmingly supports the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece, according to a recent opinion poll conducted in the country and officially released on January 14, 2004. Some 80 per cent of those questioned support the return of the marbles, compared to 50 per cent only three years ago, the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times* reported. It should also be noted that the *Sunday Times'* report stressed that some 90 per cent of British museums' personnel supports the return of the marbles, as the opinion poll showed.

From Our History

From Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War*

—*The Speech of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian Congress*

"Surely, Lacedaemonians, neither by the patriotism that we displayed at that crisis, nor by the wisdom of our counsels, do we merit our extreme unpopularity with the Hellenes, not at least unpopularity for our empire. That empire we acquired by no violent means, but because you were unwilling to prosecute to its conclusion the war against the barbarian, and because the allies attached themselves to us and spontaneously asked us to assume the command. And the nature of the case first compelled us to advance our empire to its present height; fear being our principal motive, though honor and interest afterward came in. And at last, when almost all hated us, when some had already revolted and had been subdued, when you had ceased to be the friends that you once were, and had become objects of suspicion and dislike, it appeared no longer safe to give up our empire; especially as all who left us would fall to you. And no one can quarrel with a people for making, in matters of tremendous risk, the best provision that it can for its interest.

"You, at all events, Lacedaemonians, have used your supremacy to settle the states in Peloponnesia as is agreeable to you. And if at the period of which we were speaking you had persevered to the end of the matter, and had incurred hatred in your command, we are sure that you would have made yourselves just as galling to the allies, and would have been forced to choose between a strong government and danger to yourselves. It follows that it was not a very wonderful action, or contrary to the common practice of mankind, if we did accept an empire that was offered to us, and refused to give it up under the pressure of three of the strongest motives, fear, honor, and interest. And it was not we who set the example, for it has always been the law that the weaker should be subject to the stronger. Besides, we believed ourselves to be worthy of our position, and so you thought us till now, when calculations of interest have made

you take up the cry of justice—a consideration which no one ever yet brought forward to hinder his ambition when he had a chance of gaining anything by might. And praise is due to all who, if not so superior to human nature as to refuse dominion, yet respect justice more than their position compels them to do.

"We imagine that our moderation would be best demonstrated by the conduct of others who should be placed in our position; but even our equity has very unreasonably subjected us to condemnation instead of approval. Our abatement of our rights in the contract trials with our allies, and our causing them to be decided by impartial laws at Athens, have gained us the character of being litigious. And none care to inquire why this reproach is not brought against other imperial powers, who treat their subjects with less moderation than we do; the secret being that where force can be used, law is not needed. But our subjects are so habituated to associate with us as equals, that any defeat whatever that clashes with their notions of justice, whether it proceeds from a legal judgment or from the power which our empire gives us, makes them forget to be grateful for being allowed to retain most of their possessions, and more vexed at a part being taken, than if we had from the first cast law aside and openly gratified our covetousness. If we had done so, not even would they have disputed that the weaker must give way to the stronger. Men's indignation, it seems, is more excited by legal wrong than by violent wrong; the first looks like being cheated by an equal, the second like being compelled by a superior. At all events they contrived to put up with much worse treatment than this from the Medes, yet they think our rule severe, and this is to be expected, for the present always weighs heavy on the conquered. This at least is certain. If you were to succeed in overthrowing us and in taking our place, you would speedily lose the popularity with which fear of us has invested you, if your policy of today is at all to tally with the sample that you gave of it during the brief period of your command against the Medes. Not only is your life at home regulated by rules and institutions incompatible with those of others, but your citizens abroad act neither on these rules nor on those which are recognized by the rest of Hellas.

"Take time then in forming your resolution, as the matter is of great importance; and do not be persuaded by the opinions and complaints of others to bring trouble on yourselves, but consider the vast influence of accident in war, before you are engaged in it. As it continues, it generally becomes an affair of chances, chances from which neither of us is exempt, and whose event we must risk in the dark. It is a common mistake in going to war to begin at the wrong end, to act first, and wait for disaster to discuss the matter. But we are not yet by any means so misguided, nor, so far as we can see, are you; accordingly, while it is still open to us both to choose aright, we bid you not to dissolve the treaty, or to break your oaths, but to have our differences settled by arbitration according to our agreement. Or else we take the

gods who heard the oaths to witness, and if you begin hostilities, whatever line of action you choose, we will try not to be behindhand in repelling you.”

Such were the words of the Athenians. After the Lacedaemonians had heard the complaints of the allies against the Athenians, and the observations of the latter, they

made all withdraw and consulted by themselves on the question before them. The opinions of the majority all led to the same conclusion; the Athenians were open aggressors, and war must be declared at once.

(To be continued)

From The Riches of Our Cultural Heritage **Poetry of Constantine Kavafis**

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sa? ep? ?pt??ta? ta sp??dast?? µa?)
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‘? ??? de? ta??e??e s’eu?? a?t?.
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RETURN FROM GREECE

So we are about to arrive, Hermippus.
The day after tomorrow, I think, so the skipper said.
At least we are sailing on our own sea; waters of Cyprus, of
Syria, of Egypt,
beloved waters of our countries.
Why so silent? Ask your heart,
weren’t you also rejoicing as we were going
further away from Greece? Is it worth deluding ourselves?
Of course this would not be worthy of a Greek.

Let us finally accept the truth;
we too are Greeks—what else are we?—
but with loves and emotions of Asia,
but with loves and emotions
that sometimes astound Hellenism.

It doesn’t become us, Hermippus, us philosophers
to resemble some of our petty kings
(remember how we used to laugh at them
when they visited our study halls)
who beneath their showy Hellenized exterior
and (what word!) Macedonian
a bit of Arabia nosed out every so often
a bit of Media which cannot be restrained,
and with what comical artifices the poor things
try hard not to be observed.

Ah, no? these things do not become us.
For Greeks like us, such pettiness is unbecoming.
Let us not be ashamed of the Syrian and Egyptian
blood that flows in our veins.
Let us honor it and boast of it.