



HELLENIC LINK – MIDWEST Newsletter

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

Going into Business for Yourself vs. Working for a Company

On Sunday, December 12, at 3pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Peter Parthenis, founder of Grecian Delight Foods, in a lecture titled: “*Going into Business for Yourself vs. Working for a Company– One Man’s Right Choice*”

Peter Parthenis was born in Greece and came to Chicago in 1964, after graduating high school, to further his education. He worked in various restaurants to support himself and fund his schooling. He graduated from the University of Illinois in communication engineering in 1969. That summer, he went to Greece and presented a business plan to Greek companies to manufacture the first audio tape cassettes to record Greek music. Although the companies were eager to proceed, the financial investors in Chicago could not deliver the funds they had promised and the project failed.

Peter then attended graduate school at the University of Illinois and obtained a Masters of Science in Automation Engineering in 1971. After graduate school, he worked with Harshaw Chemical company as an automation engineer, and started the Optimal Automatics company where he designed and built automatic carwashes for Greece. To finance this project, Peter designed and sold gyros vertical broilers which were in high demand by the Chicago restaurant community. Eighteen months later, Peter quit his automation job and started working full time at Optimal Automatics, manufacturing and selling the gyros broilers as the owner and only employee. His creation, the *Autodonor* led to the opening of Gyros Inc. in 1974. Peter’s new company was the first to manufacture gyros cones in the United States. The company then started manufacturing pita bread and other Greek delights, thus originating the name *Grecian Delight Foods, Inc.*

Today, Grecian Delight Foods Inc. is a national company with 200 employees, 400 distributors and a large sales and distribution network in the U.S. and Canada. Grecian Delight exists as a privately held company operating under system-wide commitment to quality and customer service.

Peter will talk about his experience to start and establish a successful company.

Annual Dinner Dance - Scholarship Awards

The 18th Annual Dinner Dance, New Year Celebration, and Scholarship Awards of Hellenic Link–Midwest will be held on Saturday, January 15, 2005, at the Four Point Sheraton Hotel, 10255 West Irving Road at Schiller Park. The proceeds from the Annual Dinner Dance are used to support the scholarships, cultural and educational programs, and all other activities of our organization. The generous support of our members and friends will be greatly appreciated. For tickets (including food and open bar), \$60 for adults and \$30 for children and students, please call 847 498-3686, or contact any of the Board Members.

Soul Murder and the Tragic Art

On Sunday, February 20, at 3pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents drama professor Andonia Cakouros, in a lecture-performance titled “*Soul Murder and the Tragic Act*”. This lecture will be held at the Four Points Sheraton hotel, 10255 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park.

The ancient Greeks captured in the great tragedies the suffering and demise of the soul through their carefully crafted characters. Catharsis, as experienced through these characters at crisis point, allows for the character and the audience the release and liberation congested deep within the soul. Without this release the soul fragments and moves into an abandoned wasteland until retrieved.

Greek Tragedy gives a unique opportunity for exploration of the murdering of the soul as represented through some of the most powerful women of Greek tragedy. Medea, Agave, Elektra are a few of the examples that illustrate soul murder and help to illuminate through the original monologues the search to find fragments of the soul.

The presentation will include explanation of the actor process as well as a comparison of “soul murder” today. The performance part of the presentation will be one or two monologues, including that of Agave from the *Bacchae*—a long, demanding, and quite vocal and physical monologue. Andonia played this role on the stage in 1980 under the direction of Takis Muzenidis, who was the Director of the National Theatre of Greece. There will be plenty of time for comments and questions following the performance.

Andonia Cakouros is a professor of Acting and Recreational Drama at California State University in Sacramento (CSUS). She has been teaching full-time at CSUS for 28 years, with emphasis in Performance. She has taught all levels of acting, movement and oral expression of literature. She has also worked as producer, writer, director, choreographer and actor in Sacramento theaters. In addition to the *Bacchae* performance mentioned above, she has also performed as Eleni Kazantzakis in the *Man of Crete* (1983), which she also choreographed, and as Jocasto and Manto in *Oedipus* (1990). She has written, produced, and directed *Greece: the Soul*, shown on cable television in Sacramento. Her productions at CSUS include *A Thousand Cranes*, *There's a Fence Around My House*, and *Antigone*. She prepared a one-woman show of Greek monologues for performance in Sacramento, New York, and in Athens in honor of the 2004 Olympics.

In Brief

Greek unemployment in 2004

On October 25, the Greek National Statistics Service said that the unemployment rate in Greece jumped to 11.2 percent in the first quarter of 2004 from 10.0 percent in the same period in 2003. It also predicted that the unemployment rate would move higher during the third and fourth quarters of 2004, due to the completion of the Olympic projects.

The unemployment rate for women was more than double the rate for men, 16.8 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively. Young men, 15 to 29, recorded an unemployment rate of 21.3 percent, while for women in the same age bracket the rate was 28 percent. Unemployment was higher for graduates of secondary education than for graduates of either higher or primary education.

Unemployment among foreigners living in Greece was smaller than the average unemployment rate. The unemployment in the different regions of the country was: Ionian islands 18.7 percent, Western Macedonia 16.2 percent, Eastern Macedonia-Thrace 13.9 percent, Peloponese 9.9 percent, Thessaly and Attica 9.7 percent each.

Greece's population may drop to 7 million

The latest population census of Greece (2001) indicates that the country's Greek population will drop to seven million in thirty years, from 10,900,000 presently.

According to National Statistics Service of Greece, the birthrate index is currently at 1.4, and for the Greek population to be maintained at the present level, the index should have been between 2.1 and 2.2. However, if the

birthrate of persons with foreign nationality is included, presently this index reaches between 2.1 and 2.2.

From Our History

Empire and the Price of Arrogance and Greed

From Thucydides History of the Peloponnesian War

During the same winter the Athenians conceived a desire of sending an expedition to Sicily to conquer the island. Of its great size and numerous population, barbarian as well as Hellenic, most of them knew nothing, and they never reflected that they were entering on a struggle almost as arduous as the Peloponnesian War.

They (Athenians) virtuously professed that they were going to assist their own kinsmen and their newly acquired allies, but the simple truth was that they aspired to the empire of Sicily. They were principally instigated by an embassy which had come from Eggesta and was urgent in requesting aid. The Eggestaeans had gone to war with the neighbouring city of Selinus about certain questions of marriage and about a disputed piece of land.

The Athenians passed a vote that sixty ships should be sent to Sicily; Alcibiades, Nicias, and Lamachus were appointed commanders. Five days afterwards another assembly was called to consider what steps should be taken for the immediate equipment of the expedition, and to vote any additional supplies which the generals might require. Nicias, thought that the people had come to a wrong conclusion, and he came forward and admonished them in the following terms:

“I know that we are assembled here to discuss the preparations which are required for our expedition to Sicily, but in my judgment it is still a question whether we ought to go thither at all; we should not be hasty in determining a matter of so much importance, or allow ourselves to rush into an impolitic war at the instigation of foreigners. Yet to me personally war brings honour; and I am as careless as any man about my own life: not that I think the worse of a citizen who takes a little thought about his life or his property, for I believe that the sense of a man's own interest will quicken his interest in the prosperity of the state. But I have never been induced by the love of reputation to say a single word contrary to what I thought; neither will I now: I will say simply what I believe to be best. If I told you to take care of what you have and not to throw away present advantages in order to gain an uncertain and distant good, my words would be powerless against a temper like yours. I would rather argue that this is not the time, and that your great aims will not be easily realised.

“I tell you that in going to Sicily you are leaving many enemies behind you, and seem to be bent on bringing new

ones hither. You are perhaps relying upon the treaty recently made, which if you remain quiet may retain the name of a treaty; for to a mere name the intrigues of certain persons both here and at Lacedaemon have nearly succeeded in reducing it. But if you meet with any serious reverse, your enemies will be upon you in a moment, for the agreement was originally extracted from them by the pressure of misfortune, and the discredit of it fell to them and not to us. In the treaty itself there are many disputed points; and, unsatisfactory as it is, to this hour several cities, and very powerful cities too, persist in rejecting it. Some of these are at open war with us already; others may declare war at ten days' notice; and they only remain at peace because the Lacedaemonians are indisposed to move. And in all probability, if they find our power divided, they will eagerly join the Sicilians, whose alliance in the war they would long ago have given anything to obtain. These considerations should weigh with us. The state is far from the desired haven, and we should not run into danger and seek to gain a new empire before we have fully secured the old. Sicily is a populous and distant country, over which, even if we are victorious, we shall hardly be able to maintain our dominion. And how foolish is it to select for attack a land which no conquest can secure, while he who fails to conquer will not be where he was before!

"I should say that the Sicilians are not dangerous to you, certainly not in their present condition, and they would be even less so if they were to fall under the sway of the Syracusans. At present individuals might cross the sea out of friendship for the Lacedaemonians; but if the states of Sicily were all united in one empire they would not be likely to make war upon another empire. For whatever chance they may have of overthrowing us if they unite with the Peloponnesians, there will be the same chance of their being overthrown themselves if the Peloponnesians and Athenians are ever united against them. The Hellenes in Sicily will dread us most if we never come; in a less degree if we display our strength and speedily depart; but if any disaster occur, they will despise us and be ready enough to join the enemies who are attacking us here. We all know that men have the greatest respect for that which is farthest off, and for that of which the reputation has been least tested; and this, Athenians, you may verify by your own experience. There was a time when you feared the Lacedaemonians and their allies, but now you have got the better of them, and because your first fears have not been realised you despise them, and even hope to conquer Sicily. But you ought not to be elated at the chance mishaps of your enemies; before you can be confident you should have gained the mastery over their minds

"We must remember also that we have only just recovered in some measure from a great plague and a great war, and are beginning to make up our losses in men and money. It is our duty to expend our new resources upon ourselves at home, and not upon begging exiles who have an interest in successful lies; who find it expedient only to contribute words, and let others fight their battles; and who, if saved, prove ungrateful; if they fail, as they very likely may, only involve their friends in a common ruin.

"I dare say there may be some young man here who is delighted at holding a command, and the more so because he is too young for his post; and he, regarding only his own interest, may recommend you to sail; he may be one who is much admired for his stud of horses, and wants to make something out of his command which will maintain him in his extravagance. But do not you give him the opportunity of indulging his own magnificent tastes at the expense of the state. Remember that men of this stamp impoverish themselves and defraud the public.

"The youth of whom I am speaking has summoned to his side young men like himself, whom, not without alarm, I see sitting by him in this assembly, and I appeal against them to you elder citizens. If any of you should be placed next one of his supporters, I would not have him ashamed, or afraid, of being thought a coward if he does not vote for war. Do not, like them, entertain a desperate craving for things out of your reach; you know that by prevision many successes are gained, but few or none by mere greed. On behalf of our country, now on the brink of the greatest danger which she has ever known, I entreat you to hold up your hands against them. Do not interfere with the boundaries which divide us from Sicily. I mean the Ionian gulf which parts us if we sail along the coast, the Sicilian sea if we sail through the open water; these are quite satisfactory. The Sicilians have their own country; let them manage their own concerns.

Such were the words of Nicias. Most of the Athenians who came forward to speak were in favour of war, and reluctant to rescind the vote which had been already passed, although a few took the other side. The most enthusiastic supporter of the expedition was Alcibiades; he was determined to oppose Nicias, who was always his political enemy and had just now spoken of him in disparaging terms; but the desire to command was even a stronger motive with him. He was hoping that he might be the conqueror of Sicily and Carthage; and that success would repair his private fortunes, and gain him money as well as glory. He had a great position among the citizens and was devoted to horse-racing and other pleasures which outran his means. And in the end his wild courses went far to ruin the Athenian state. (*to be continued*)

From The Riches Of Our Cultural Heritage

Fragments From Sappho's Poetry

Her translator, Guy Davenport, says of Sappho:

Neither Sappho nor Botticelli separated beauty from the intelligence. Bright eyes, bright mind; balanced walk, balanced nature. The perfect unity of strength and grace in horse, ship, and javelineer underlies her sense of the beautiful, and immediately she demands the enveloping appetite that identifies and completes the beautiful, the untranslatable *imeros*, that yearning which was at once love, sexual longing, adoration, and fascination. Never has a poet been so clear about predilections and attractions. A man should have something of tree, of horse, of a god about him; a girl should have the elegance of the rose and the accomplished Graces. Music, water, air, voices, wine, they must be of a crystal clarity. Sexual frenzy was as respectable a passion to her as rapacious selfishness to an American. Few societies have been as afraid of the body as ours, and in the West none has, within history, been as solicitous as the Greek of its beauty. It was for the Greek to see the natural growth of the body in full health as a beautiful.

I

Come out of Crete
And find me here,
Come to your grove,
Mellow apple trees
And holy altar
Where the sweet smoke
Of libanum is in
Your praise,

Where leaf melody
In the apples
Is a crystal crash,
And the water is cold.
All roses and shadow,
This place, and sleep
Like dusk sifts down
From trembling leaves.

Here horses stand
In flowers and graze.
The wind is glad
And sweet in its moving.
Here, Kypris
Pour nectar in the golden cups
And mix it deftly with
Our dancing and mortal wine.

II

Raise the ridge-pole higher, higher,
O marriage night O binding god
Carpenters! Make the roof-tree taller,
O marriage night O binding god
He comes, the husband, and walks like Ares,
O marriage night O binding god
He's taller by far than a tall man,
O marriage night O binding god.

III

He seems to be a god, that man
Facing you, who leans to be close,
Smiles, and, alert and glad, listens
To your mellow voice

And quickens in love at your laughter.
That stings my breasts, jolts my heart
If I dare the shock of a glance. I cannot speak,

My tongue sticks to my dry mouth,
Thin fire spreads beneath my skin,
My eyes cannot see and my aching ears
Roar in their labyrinths.

Chill sweat slides down my body,
I shake, I turn greener than grass.
I am neither living nor dead and cry
From the narrow between.
But endure, even this grief of love.

IV

Percussion, salt and honey,
A quivering in the thighs;
He shakes me all over again,
Eros who cannot be thrown,
Who stalks on all fours
Like a beast.

V

Eros makes me shiver again
Strengthless in the knees,
Eros gall and honey,
Snake-sly, invincible.