

# HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

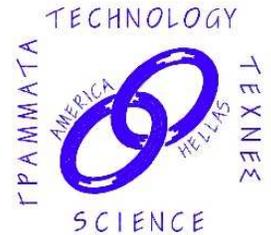
A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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## Upcoming Events

### Reimagining Φιλοξενία: The Nation-State, Immigration, and the Politics of Hospitality

On Sunday, February 21, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Professor Frank Hess of Indiana University, in a lecture titled “*Reimagining Φιλοξενία: The Nation-State, Immigration, and the Politics of Hospitality*”. The event will take place at 3 pm at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park (southeast corner of Irving Park Road and Mannheim Road). Admission is free for HLM members and \$5 for non-members.

For over a century, from the economic crisis of 1893 through the 1970s, Greece was a net exporter of human capital as emigrants left the homeland to pursue brighter economic futures in the United States, Australia, Germany, Canada, and a variety of other countries around the world. With the demise of the Eastern Bloc and the admission of Greece to the Economic and Monetary Union of the European Union, however, this state of affairs began to change. Greece began to experience increasingly high levels of immigration, initially from former satellites of the Soviet Union and later from countries that are experiencing economic and social upheaval as a result of globalization such as Pakistan, India, and Egypt. Statistical analysis of the 2001 census revealed nearly 800,000 immigrants living in Greece. Most analysts believe, however, that the census significantly undercounted the number of immigrants, and that the actual number is over 1,000,000, making Greece one of the per capita leaders in Europe.

Greece’s rapid transition from a net exporter to a net importer of immigrants has resulted in considerable social tension as immigration has altered employment patterns, changed the composition of neighborhoods, and altered the character of life in both the countryside and the city. Predictably, the debate about immigration in Greece has become extremely polarized and polemical. In his presentation, “*Reimagining Φιλοξενία: The Nation-State, Immigration, and the Politics of Hospitality*,” Franklin Hess will examine the immigration debate in Greece through the lens of popular culture. Specifically, he will examine how assumptions about the nation-state as an institution shape current understandings of immigration to Greece and explore the attempts of films such as Sotiris Goritsas’s *Braziliero* and Constantine Giannaris’s *Omiros* to transcend this debate by articulating new, transnational

visions of Greek identity. The presentation will also discuss the limits of such emerging paradigms, concluding with a proposal for a new model of *φιλοξενία* or hospitality that draws on an alternative usable past: the intimate connection between *παιδεία* or education and citizenship that existed in the Byzantine Empire.

Franklin L. Hess is the Coordinator of the Modern Greek Program at Indiana University and a lecturer in Western European Studies and American Studies. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Iowa in American Studies, writing a dissertation that focused on the influence of American television programming on Greek culture. His current scholarly work examines 20th- and 21st-century Greek popular culture—cinema, television, and popular music—exploring the economic, geopolitical, and geocultural contexts of its production. He has published on topics including early Greek cinema, the role of popular culture in Modern Greek Studies, and the poetics of Greek rap music. Other scholarly interests include the pedagogy of Modern Greek, immigration and transnationality, and the cinematic representation of violence. Hess is also a member of the Executive Board of the Modern Greek Studies Association and currently serves as the organization’s secretary. In addition to his teaching duties and scholarly activities, he also coaches tennis. He has served as the volunteer assistant coach for the men’s teams at both Indiana University and the University of Iowa.

### Independence Day Celebration

In celebration of the Greek Independence Day, Hellenic Link–Midwest, in cosponsorship with the National Hellenic Museum, presents on Sunday March 21 at 3 pm, Professor Menelaos Christopoulos in a lecture titled “*The Greek Revolution of 1821: What made a Philhellene?*”. The event will be held at the *National Hellenic Museum*, 801 Adams Street, 4th floor, Chicago. Admission is free.

This contribution tries to focus on the stream of Philhellenism manifested during the Greek Revolution of 1821 by examining in particular the personality of some eminent philhellenes who played an important role in the Greek War of Independence. What is extremely interesting in this survey is the diversity of origins, professions and ideologies characterizing these people. Military officers (Gaillard, Hesaia, Touret, Favier, Hastings), poets (Byron, Pushkin), painters (Krezeisen, Dupré), kings and aristocrats (Ludwig of Bavaria, Duchess of Piacenza), archaeologists (Casson), lawyers

and politicians (Finley, Canning), priests (King), doctors and social reformers (Gallina, Howe) compose an unexpected and impressive team of inspired fighters to whom the Greek War of Independence became the major and common priority. And the question rises: what made a philhellene after all? Was it revolutionary spirit? Was it military ambitions? Was it artistic sensibility? Was it personal impasses? Or was it a more urgent concern to build up the modern world on the secure basis of old tested social and cultural prototypes which, therefore, should be by all means kept alive?

*Menelaos Christopoulos* (Degree in Classics, University of Thessaloniki, MA in Philosophy, University of Paris X-Nanterre, PhD in Classics, University of Paris IV-Sorbonne) is Associate Professor of Ancient Greek Literature at the Department of Philology of Patras University. He has worked as Research Fellow at the Research Centers of the Academy of Athens, as Assistant Professor at the University of Cyprus and as Adjunct Professor at the Greek Open University. He has published several books and articles on Homeric epic, ancient Greek drama, second sophistic, the sea in the ancient Greek world, and, mainly, ancient Greek myth and religion. He is directing the Centre for the Study of Ancient Greek and Roman Mythology and Religion at the University of Patras

## ***In Brief***

### **Citizens' Faith in Greek Institutions**

According to a survey carried out by the polling firm Public Issue for the Greek newspaper Kathimerini, and published by the paper on January 4th, 2010, there is a deep crisis in the trust of Greek citizens towards their state institutions. *Public Issue* rated 48 different institutions, including political parties, state bodies and independent organizations, based on the response of 1,001 citizens. The rating of an institution is presented as the "confidence index" (CI) value, which is the percentage of respondents that had a positive opinion for that institution.

At the top of the index was the National Meteorology Service with a CI of 95 (trusted by 95 percent of the people). The Fire Department received a CI of 94. The President of the Republic Karolos Papoulias, was ranked third in the public's trust, the highest ranking of a government institution with a CI of 91. The Army holds the sixth place with a CI of 83. The State Government, despite the recent change in ruling party, was rated 48<sup>th</sup> (last place) with a dismal CI value of 12, the political parties were placed in the 47th position with an equally dismal approval rating of CI equal to 13, and the government ministries received a CI of 25 (43rd place). The Parliament was graded 30th with a CI of 43. The municipal governments received a CI of 48, and the provincial governments a CI of 43. The Courts received a

CI of 48 and the Police received a CI of 55. The Church received a CI of 52. The Office of the Citizens' Advocate received a CI of 84 (5th place), the Council of Public Service Employee Selection received a CI of 61, the authority for the protection of private information received a CI of 58, and the Commission on Competitiveness received a CI of 38. Among the media, Radio received the highest rating, a CI of 67, while the Internet received a CI of 66, and the Press received the very low rating of a CI equal to 34 (44th position).

The European parliament received a CI of 72 and the other institutions of the European Union received a CI of 65.

Among private institutions the ratings were: insurance companies, CI of 22; banks, CI of 27; food companies, CI of 28; advertising companies, CI of 33; information technology companies, CI of 74. Within the health system, private hospitals and clinics received a CI of 65 (15th place), while the National Health System held the 36th place. The Central Bank of Greece received a CI of 58, while the Athens Stock Exchange received a CI of 18.

## **Greece in Deep Economic Crisis**

On December 8, 2009, *The Fitch Ratings* downgraded Greece's long-term foreign currency and local currency Issuer Default Ratings below grade A. According to *Newsweek*, December 14, 2009, in Greece the share to the public debt for every man, woman, and child is \$27,746. For other countries having high public debts this share is: Belgium, \$27,023; Austria, 26,502; Ireland, 24,247; Norway, \$21,402; Italy, \$21,089; Holland, \$20,412; France, \$18,946; Germany, \$15,574; and the U.S.A, \$11,094.

## ***From Our History***

### **Bloody December**

*From the book "Red Acropolis, Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of the Soviet-American Rivalry, 1943-1949" by Professor Andre Gerolymatos*

During the harsh winter of 1942, when most Greeks were trying to survive the famine, some of the fashionable homes in Kolonaki hosted parties for the newly established EAM. At one such event:

The mistress of the house, one of the daughters of the Papastratou (the owner of a major tobacco company), was open and "sympathetic" to every ideological current that appeared progressive. This particular party attracted the "reactionaries"—the children of the major Right-Wing families of Athens, who did not go hungry and the occupation had not interfered with their preoccupations. Now, however, that they saw that their class offered approval, the road to EAM was open. In a short while,

accordingly, EAM became a fad. Kolonaki, Psychiko as well as other wealthy districts were filled with male and female EAM members.

With the assistance of these new recruits, EAM succeeded in seizing control over most of the relief work in Athens and permeated all the professional guilds and student organizations. Invariably, for many of the sons and daughters of the Athenian establishment EAM served as a transition step to the KKE. EAM also attracted a large number of professionals, particularly among the ranks of university professors, who used their influence with the student body to secure the election of EAM candidates in the various university societies.

Between 1943 and 1944, EAM and the antileft groups at the University of Athens and the Polytechnic School fought bitterly over control of the student societies in the Greek institutions of higher learning. These battles took place in the streets, in coffeehouses, and in back alleys. The various anti-left forces could count on the indirect support of the German authorities and the puppet government, and some did not hesitate to collaborate with the occupation security services in their common struggle against communism. Occasionally, the Athens Security Battalions raided the university, arresting dozens of students; some of the unfortunate young men and women underwent extensive interrogation and torture in the dungeons of the Greek Special Security Service, while a lucky few escaped, but only after their parents used bribes to secure their release.

At other times, the battles between left- and right-wing organizations revolved around a cycle of killing, revenge, and counterrevenge. For example, in 1944, a few months before liberation, the KKE assassinated a member of the far-right-wing X organization just as he was about to board a bus. In retaliation, X dispatched six teams of five men each to terrorize EAM-ELAS and KKE groups. At 10:00 P.M. the teams broke into the usual haunts of the left shouting, "Hands high in the air." They proceeded to search all those present and severely beat anyone caught with weapons. In one place they found a couple of groups with red paint in their possession for writing slogans on walls. The X team forced them to drink the red paint and then proceeded to dynamite two KKE offices in the neighborhood. Afterward they dragged ten of the communists to the square, forced them against a wall, and went through the motions of a mock execution.

In response to the arrest of its followers and those of EAM, the KKE broadened the mission of OPLA (Organization for the Protection of the People's Struggle), originally established as an intelligence unit in the winter of 1942-1943, to carry out assassinations. The scope of OPLA was further expanded after liberation to include torture and executions of the KKE's Marxist rivals, collaborators, and reactionaries. In the countryside and some neighborhoods of Athens, OPLA members also

served as officers in the KKE's National Civil Guard (Ethniki Politophilaki). Although former police and gendarmes filled the ranks of OPLA, the communists also preferred to employ local cadres from the neighborhood of a designated assassination. This had the advantage of making identification of the prospective victim easier as well as binding the newer members of the KKE closer to the party by implicating them in the killing. As the day of liberation approached and the grip of the German occupiers weakened, Athens was quickly transforming into a battleground.

In this context, the KKE pursued narrow goals dictated by Stalinist principles such as purging of collaborators, rivals, potential rivals, and particularly members guilty of apostasy - even at the expense of the party's broader interests. One example is that of the ill-fated Kitsos Maltezos, a young Athenian poet, a representative of the intellectual and cultural elite, and also the last living relative of Ioannis Makriyiannis, one of the heroes of the Greek War of Independence. Although Maltezos fell victim to the KKE's assassination units in the last months of the occupation, the manner of his murder was used against others during the December Uprising and provides a rare insight into the tactics of the communists.

When Maltezos joined the youth wing of the KKE, he was more than just a trophy convert, as his connection to the legendary Makriyiannis gave the KKE another avenue for associating the EAM movement with the Greek War of Independence. Consequently, when Maltezos decided to leave the Young Communists in 1943, it constituted not only betrayal of the movement but a dangerous precedent. Making matters worse, Maltezos openly condemned the communists and went over to the anti-KKE forces that had sprung up in reaction to EAM-ELAS.

In early 1943, the KKE held a secret trial of Maltezos in absentia and condemned him to death; the execution was to take place at the first opportunity. On 1 February 1944 at 9:30 A.M., Maltezos left his apartment and was making his way to Panepistimiou Street to the nearest tram stop. As he walked across Sygrou Boulevard to Amalias, four men came behind him and followed discreetly. When he passed the statue of Lord Byron and was about to board the tram, two of the men pulled out their guns and yelled, "Now." One of the assassins then called out his name, "Kitsos," and when Maltezos turned, the first bullet struck him on the right temple, followed by several more in the chest. In the midst of so much killing, the demise of Maltezos, albeit tragic, hardly seemed unusual in a city fraught with death.

Yet this talented young man became a tragic symbol of his generation and a metaphor for the fratricide that had infected Athens and in a short time would consume Greek society. Although the KKE ordered his execution, it had done so with the cognizance and at the urging of young men, classmates, and even friends of Maltezos, who had

grown up in the neighborhood and until the occupation had shared the same values. Adonis Kyrou, the son of the publisher of Estia (one of the oldest conservative Greek newspapers) and the scion of a powerful Athenian family, was a member of the KKE. In 1943, Kyrou was instrumental in the KKE's decision to condemn Maltezos to death. The primary executioner, Mikes Kouroniotis, had been Maltezos' close friend in university and a classmate of Andreas Papandreou (Greek prime minister in the 1980s) when they both attended the American College before the war. Like Kyrou, Kouroniotis came from a well established and prosperous family and had joined the KKE in university during the occupation.

In the eyes of his family, Kouroniotis had abandoned and betrayed his class, and they were anxious to avoid a scandal. The old establishment quickly sprang into action to protect one of their own. The Greek Special Security Service, which had apprehended Kouroniotis and conducted extensive interrogations that had revealed the names of others connected to the crime, received orders to hand the young man over to the Germans. Kouroniotis' family preferred that he be executed by the Germans for carrying a weapon (an offense punishable by death) to his going through the motions of a trial that would have revealed his membership in the KKE and of course, implicate other sons and daughters of prominent Athenian families.

On 21 March 1944, Kouroniotis, along with eleven others, was executed by firing squad. His family was spared further scandal, and the occupation regime was spared the embarrassment of appearing helpless in failing to protect so prominent an Athenian. The KKE and OPLA were also relieved by the quick elimination of Kouroniotis rather than having their secrets exposed during the course of a public trial.

For most Athenians, the terror of the December Uprising was not of ideology but of fear exacerbated by the misery of a general strike that for the next thirty-three days paralyzed the city. The KKE and EAM organized the strike as a means of placing additional pressure on the Papandreou government over the issue of the new army. Electricity, water, and gas supplies ceased, and for the duration of the fighting only a few telephones remained in operation. Once all workers went on strike, theaters, stores, hotels, and restaurants closed. Transportation came to a halt, as did the work on the docks, which prevented, for the duration of the fighting, the unloading of ships that carried foodstuffs, medicines, and other critical supplies needed by a desperate and hungry population. The strike spread to Attica and Thessaloniki, thwarting the first attempts to revive the economy. During the occupation daily hardship as well as violence had unfolded in a constant and predictable pattern, but people had learned to adapt to the new realities and adjusted their lives accordingly. Now, though, the random nature and

intensity characteristic of urban warfare compounded the chaos and street-to-street gun battles of December. Suddenly firefights erupted, and then, just as quickly, the streets came under long periods of sniping, forcing people to remain indoors.

The Athenians endured the December Uprising, isolated in their homes, hungry, cold, and in the dark. For most people, the Battle of Athens was not a terrible spectacle of war but short vignettes of bitter street fighting and long hours of sniper fire. Many were also fully cognizant that a knock on the door could come from the police searching for communists or a visit by the KKE security forces hunting down suspected collaborators. In either case, the issue of guilt and innocence was hostage to the whims of the grim visitors. Mostly accusation was tantamount to condemnation, and nondescript men anxious to take vengeance in the name of ideology, nationalism, God, king, country, or simply to settle old scores, often delivered justice in a seedy basement or back alley. For weeks following liberation some Athenians indulged in an exorcism of guilt by placing blame on each other. It became common practice to denounce individuals for collaboration. Denunciation, therefore, became the ideal means of settling many irrelevant private grudges and vendettas.

During the course of the December Uprising the consequences for those denounced were often lethal. OPLA, the KKE secret police, and the Communist National Civil Guard generated lists of names of current and potential enemies as well as of those accused of collaboration with the Germans or, for that matter, with the British. On the whole, OPLA agents were less concerned about accuracy than about simply purging large numbers of suspects. Similar conditions applied in the Greek and British security services, but they had more flexibility, and as Ward states, "While the civil war in Athens was raging ... it was decided to ship away all detainees, as and when they were arrested, to Tobruk where they could be interrogated at leisure and out of the way."

On both sides, self-serving individuals exploited the chaos to satisfy greed or ambition or to cover up their own crimes. Kaiti Economou fell into this category. Economou was a young actress in the Greek National Theater and during the occupation had lost little time coming to terms with the new order. In the fall of 1941, she married Kostas Petrotsopoulos, a notorious traitor and agent of the German secret police. Petrotsopoulos served his German masters by posing as an enthusiastic anglophile, anxious to render assistance to the Allies, but in reality he was working to betray Athenians hiding British soldiers. Occasionally, Economou also played the role of informant for the Axis at the expense of her compatriots, all the while pretending she was a patriot. In time, Athenians saw through the charade spun by the couple

and used every opportunity to heap scorn and abuse during Economou's performances. Theater audiences often assailed her with verbal abuse and obscene gestures and by sending her threats.

At the end of the occupation in October 1944, Petrosopoulos left with the Germans, but Economou remained in Athens and, to squelch the stigma of collaboration, became an enthusiastic supporter of EAM. She took part in demonstrations against the monarchy and the Papandreou government and styled herself a leftist liberal as well as anti-British. It was not enough, however, to dispel completely the aura of traitor and, like others of her ilk, Economou chose to mask her past by denouncing Eleni Papadaki, another actress, as a collaborator. Papadaki had emerged in the 1930s and particularly during the occupation was one of the best actresses in Greece.

In the charged atmosphere following the liberation of Athens, the National Theater mirrored the divisions of Greek society, and some of the actors carelessly flung accusations of treachery and betrayal at each other with little regard for the consequences. The actors, the managers, and even the stagehands had to distance themselves from the potential charge of entertaining the enemy during the occupation. After the war, many flocked to radical and antiestablishment organizations, partly because all of the puppet governments had sprung from the right-wing spectrum of society, and partly to retroactively acquire bona fide resistance credentials. Most chose the mass-based EAM.

On 20 October, Economou joined the other EAM members of the National Theater Actors Guild in purging from the organization a number of actors, including Papadaki, suspected of collaboration and treason during the occupation. However, the actors were hardly in a position to differentiate between traitor and patriot—they did not conduct even a cursory investigation, and some exploited the chaos and cacophony of accusations to eliminate rivals. Katina Paxinou, Papadaki's older rival, allegedly played a key role in the arrest and subsequent execution of the younger actress. Paxinou, according to this claim, had been the leading actress in the theater until Papadaki surpassed her during the occupation, and thus she took advantage of the December Uprising to get rid of her rival.

Papadaki's crime was twofold: She had had a relationship with Ioannis Rallis, the last puppet premier, and she had quickly emerged as the most popular and successful actress in the theater, peaking during the occupation. Years later, Rallis' son, George, declared that Rallis was convinced of an Axis victory, but during the first years of the occupation he did little else but express this point of view. In 1941, the Axis had first offered Rallis the opportunity to form a government and only turned to General Tsolakoglou when he refused. Ironically, Ioannis

Rallis slid into the vortex of occupational politics and collaboration in the spring of 1943, when it had become obvious even to the most obtuse sympathizers with the Third Reich that the Germans were facing defeat. Yet, according to his son, Rallis believed he could save Greece from the clutches of the left and ensure that the country would pass from Axis rule to liberation with little upheaval.

After the outbreak of hostilities in December, despite her close association with Rallis and the label of collaborator, Papadaki refused to leave her home in Patisia for the safety of the British zone in Kolonaki. In the early afternoon of 21 December, Kostas Bilirakis, a medical student, and two other men from the EAM chapter of Patisia came to pick her up for questioning. The next morning, two men transported the unfortunate actress in a black Ford taxi to Galatsi, a modest settlement nestled on the outskirts of Athens that served as one of the KKE's slaughter centers.

Fresh victims came almost every hour and at all times of the day and night. The communist leadership served makeshift justice from a duster of ramshackle houses, unfettered by legal procedure or rules of evidence. A typical trial consisted of a brief interrogation, usually taking less than a quarter of an hour, and those found guilty of an ever-growing list of crimes were sent to the grounds of the oil refinery less than 100 yards from the "court." There hundreds of luckless people, including a large number of police and gendarme officers, were executed after being tortured.

The standard means of execution was the axe. Each victim had to undress and kneel with the head resting on a large stone. The executioner could decapitate the condemned man or woman (occasionally even a child), slice his or her throat, or hack away with the axe, reducing the individual to a heap of flesh and bone. Gendarmes and police officers usually suffered ghastly and extensive torture just prior to execution, but exceptions were made for well-known members of the right or collaborators.

Upon arrival in Galatsi, Papadaki was taken to one of the houses expropriated by the KKE that served as a holding area for the accused. The commander of the unit, Captain Orestes, was a twenty-two-year-old sadistic killer who was less interested in Papadaki's guilt or innocence than in her fur coat, or at least this is how he was later portrayed by the KKE. The "trial" of Papadaki along with that of seven officers of the gendarmerie was quick and decisive. Captain Orestes, followed by two of his henchmen, approached the accused and brusquely, in the name of the people, collected all their valuables: jewelry, watches, and money.

At first, he decreed that Papadaki be held as a hostage and then moved on to the next batch of prisoners. A little

later, he remembered Papadaki and, turning to one of his colleagues, inquired, "What did she say her name was?" and "Isn't she the one denounced by the actors' union?" After these queries, Orestes changed his mind and condemned Papadaki to death, specifying the use of the axe for the execution.

Once again, she was hustled into the same black Ford taxi and in a few minutes covered the 100 yards to the oil refinery. Vases Makaronis, a former grocer and the one charged with killing the actress, recalled at his trial a few months later, "She arrived in a car squeezed between two members of the Civil Guard. She was clutching her fur coat to ward off a devil of a cold day." Orestes arrived in another ear and ordered her to hand over the fur coat; she meekly complied, but when he demanded all her clothes, Papadaki finally realized that the end was near, broke down, and started to scream.

The guards then seized the poor woman and dragged her a few yards to the side of an open pit. There, they tore off the rest of her garments and for a few minutes left Papadaki; shivering and whimpering, waiting for the inevitable blows from the axe. At his trial, Makaronis testified that he felt sorry for the actress and decided not to use the axe. Instead, he sat her down at the edge of the open grave and fired one bullet into her right temple. Seconds after the shot rang out, Papadaki's body slid effortlessly into the improvised tomb.

Whether this version of Papadaki's end is true or just the killer playing on the court's sympathy is not certain, just as it is not completely certain which person or persons were in fact ultimately responsible for her death. More than a month later, on 26 January, Papadaki's remains were uncovered in one of a series of shallow graves, not too far from the place of execution. Papadaki's body was found buried with those of four other victims in the garden of a small villa. All her clothes were gone except for a silk slip that was raised to her chest and a garter belt still fastened about her waist, suggesting sexual assault. According to the autopsy report, in addition to extensive trauma, large parts of her skin had been ripped off before or after decapitation.

North of Athens in the suburb of Peristeri clusters of people hung about the edge of a mass burial site that stretched across an empty field along a rocky hillside. A desperate few strayed onto the field to pick through the decomposing human fragments in a valiant effort to identify fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, and children and at least spare them the indignity of a common grave. Approximately 1,500 victims of the KKE's pogrom were discovered there. The victims, according to witnesses, had been executed mostly with axes and knives. Some of the women and girls had been sexually violated, and most had been mutilated. The bodies had been dumped in trenches 200 yards long, and during the course of the exhumations the coroners and

their workers came across an extraordinary sight: a bucket filled with gouged-out human eyes.

Many of the dead were military and police officers, but the Peristeri mass burial site also included a good cross section of Athenian society and members of the intelligentsia. "If there ever was a scene straight from hell, this was it," wrote Kenneth Matthews, the BBC correspondent in Athens.

Evidence of further atrocities materialized when the British, joined by newly recruited Greek national guard forces, drove ELAS away from the parts of Athens they had controlled. Each new discovery of executions and mass burial sites underscored the random and indiscriminate nature of the killings. Many of the KKE's victims were ordinary people who had, at one time or another, made disparaging comments about EAM or with whom a neighbor had simply exploited the circumstances to settle a vendetta. In many such instances, the accused were apprehended late at night and dispatched with machine guns, and their bodies thrown down the nearest well.

One such victim was a twenty-seven-year-old gardener, Charilaos Karlis, who remarkably survived execution and entombment in a well. The knock on the door for Karlis came at 3:00 A.M. on 25 December 1944, and when he answered a group of men burst into his home, dragging him outside along with his two sisters and a brother. Out in the street, more people were being rounded up from the neighborhood. The ELAS detachment finally led thirty five men and women first to the bank of the Ilisus River and from there to a partially built church in the area. The ELAS men found a small house beside the church and decided to use it for the interrogations. They forced the occupants, a family of four, to leave and proceeded to question the prisoners. According to Karlis:

First, they took our clothes and after some perfunctory questioning they marched us in single file for about fifteen minutes to the edge of a large well. At that moment, they fired on us with automatic weapons. A few jumped into the well to avoid the gunfire, most, however were killed or wounded. My brother and I survived because we played dead. I had thick and long hair, which made my head appear larger, so that when an ELAS fired three shots in the direction of my head he missed and I was only grazed by one bullet. I continued to pretend I was dead. The executioners dragged the bodies to the edge of the well, stripped them and tossed them into the hole. When my turn came I could hear them saying "take off his shoes they are new and should not go to waste." I was thrown ten or twelve meters down into the well, my body and face hitting its sides but the corpses of those tossed earlier broke my fall. For a few minutes I kept being struck by the other bodies they were throwing into the well. Not all of them were dead and I could hear a few still moaning. When the ELAS men finished, they tossed

stones, pieces of wood, empty cans and other trash in order to fill and cover the well. I was fortunate because I found a curved piece of metal that I held over my head to protect me. After two hours I managed to climb to the top and with considerable effort I moved one of the large stones that had covered the top of the well.

The KKE leadership was appalled by Papadaki's death but made no apologies for the other killings and atrocities. A few days later, Orestes, the sadistic commandant of the Galatsi execution center, was arrested and after a summary trial faced a public execution in Athens. A firing squad also dealt with some of his close associates not too far from the oil refinery, where he had arbitrarily and casually dispensed pain and death, often for no other reason than to claim the clothes or jewelry of the accused. Nikos Zachariadis later denounced the execution of Papadaki, and in the decades following the civil war the KKE absolved itself from all responsibility for Papadaki's execution by continuing to blame the entire episode on Orestes. Phoibos Grigoriadis, an officer in ELAS and one of the early left-wing historians of the Greek civil war, however, admitted "that the murders such as those of Papadaki could not be covered up under any circumstances."

While the KKE punished Orestes, it did not disown Makaronis, the man who either tortured Papadaki to death or, moved by pity, simply shot her. He, along with all the other executioners from the oil refinery, were arrested a few months after the end of the December Uprising and eventually condemned to death. Remarkably, following the cessation of the city's hostilities, they had resumed their civilian vocations. One, employed as a ticket

collector, was wearing the sweater of one of his victims, and a relative of the victim identified the garment.

Makaronis was a humble grocer, typical of the thousands of loyal communist cadres, who followed the KKE's directives to the letter, and one of the functionaries who undertook the party's dirty work. In this respect, he was little different from some of the men who filled the ranks of the Security Battalions and was practically identical to those who later tortured confessions and declarations of repentance out of suspected communists. Men like Makaronis who had resented serving at the beck and call of wealthy neighbors or prosperous farmers, or who harbored a grudge against civic officials or had been awed by the expertise of professionals, suddenly were in a position to humble, humiliate, and destroy their "betters."

Such individuals, for the first time in their lives, could exercise power by exploiting the chaotic conditions that prevailed in Athens, but others only did so at the behest of the KKE, which instituted a reign of terror against the wartime collaborators that quickly expanded into a general purge of all vestiges of the political, economic, educational, professional, and cultural establishment of Athens. Astonishingly, the KKE took the decision to implement such a radical and brutal course of action after the tide of battle had turned against ELAS. Part of the motive was revenge; the KKE was striving to punish collaborators and opponents while it still had the ability to do so. The executions also indicated the outline of a clumsy attempt at social revolution by trying to decapitate the old order through the elimination of its current and prospective leaders.

*(to be continued)*

## *From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage*

### **Poetry by Nikos Engonopoulos**

#### **Υμνος Δοξαστικός για τις Γυναίκες π' Αγαπούμε**

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε σαν τα ρόδια  
έρχονται και μας βρίσκουνε τις νύχτες όταν βρέχει  
με τους μαστούς τους καταργούν τη μοναξιά μας  
μες' τα μαλλιά μας εισχωρούν βαθειά  
και τα κοσμούνε σα δάκρυα  
σαν ακρογιάλια φωτεινά σα ρόδια

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε κύκνοι  
τα πάρκα τους ζουν μόνο μέσα στην καρδιά μας  
ειν' τα φτερά τους τα φτερά αγγέλων  
τ' αγάλματά τους είναι το κορμί μας  
οι ωραίες δεντροστοιχίες ειν' αυτές οι ίδιες  
ορθές στην άκρα των ελαφρών ποδιών τους  
μας πλησιάζουν κι' είναι σαν να μας φιλούν  
στα μάτια κύκνοι

#### **Hymn of Praise for the Women we Love**

the women we love are like pomegranates  
they come and find us at night when it rains  
with their breasts they end our loneliness deeply they  
penetrate into our hair  
and adorn it like tears  
like luminous shores like pomegranates

the women we love are swans  
their parks live alone in our hearts  
their wings are angels' wings  
their statues are our bodies  
the lovely lines of trees are their very selves  
erect on the tips of their light feet  
they approach us and it is as if we are kissed  
on our eyes by swans

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε λίμνες  
 στους καλαμιώνες τους  
 τα φλογερά τα χείλια μας σφυρίζουν  
 τα ωραία πουλιά μας κολυμπούνε στα νερά τους  
 κι' ύστερα σαν πετούν τα καθρεφτίζουν  
 —υπερήφανες ως είν'—οι λίμνες  
 κι' είναι στις όχθες τους οι λευκές λύρες  
 που η μουσική τους πνίγει μέσα μας τις πίκρες  
 κι' ως πλημμυρούν το είναι μας χαρά γαλήνη  
 ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε λίμνες

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε σαν σημαίες  
 στου πόθου τους ανέμους κυματίζουν  
 τα μακρυνά μαλλιά τους λάμπουνε τις νύχτες  
 μεσ' στις θερμές παλάμες τους κρατούνε τη ζωή μας  
 ειν' οι απαλές κοιλιές τους ο ουράνιος θόλος  
 είναι οι πόρτες μας τα παραθύρια μας οι στόλοι  
 τ' άστρα μας συνεχώς ζούνε κοντά τους  
 τα χρώματά τους είναι τα λόγια της αγάπης  
 τα χείλη τους είναι ο ήλιος το φεγγάρι  
 και το πανί τους ειν' το μόνο σάβανο που μας αρμόζει  
 ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε σαν σημαίες

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε δάση  
 το κάθε δέντρο τους ειν' κι' ένα μήνυμα του πάθους  
 σαν μεσ' σ' αυτά τα δάση  
 μάς πλανέφουνε τα βήματά μας  
 και χαθούμε τότες ειν' ακριβώς  
 που βρίσκουμε τον εαυτόν μας  
 κι' όσο από μακρυνά ακόμα νάρχωνται οι μπόρες  
 ή και μας φέρνει ο άνεμος  
 τις μουσικές και τους θορύβους της γιορτής  
 ή τις φλογέρες του κινδύνου  
 τίποτε – φυσικά – δε μπορεί πιά να μας φοβίση  
 ως οι πυκνές οι φυλλωσιές  
 ασφαλώς μας προστατεύουν  
 μιά που οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε είναι σα δάση

ειν' οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε σαν λιμάνια  
 (μόνος σκοπός προορισμός των ωραίων караβιών μας)  
 τα μάτια τους ειν' οι κυματοθραύστες  
 οι ώμοι τους ειν' ο σημαιφόρος της χαράς  
 οι μηροί τους σειρά αμφορείς στις προκυμιαίες  
 τα πόδια τους οι στοργικοί μας φάροι  
 —οι νοσταλγοί τις ονομάζουν K a t e r i n a—  
 είναι τα κύματά τους οι υπέροχες θωπιείες  
 οι Σειρήνες τους δεν μας γελούν  
 μόνε μάς δείχνουνε το δρόμο—φιλικές—  
 προς τα λιμάνια: τις γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε

έχουνε οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε θεία την ουσία  
 κι' όταν σφιχτά στην αγκαλιά μας τις κρατούμε  
 με τους θεούς κι' εμείς γινόμαστ' όμοιοι  
 στηνόμαστε ορθοί σαν άγριοι πύργοι  
 τίποτε δεν είν πιά δυνατό να μας κλονίση  
 με τα λευκά τους χέρια αυτές  
 γύρω μας γαντζώνουν  
 κι' έρχονται όλοι οι λαοί τα έθνη  
 και μας προσκυνούνε φωνάζουν  
 αθάνατο στους αιώνες τ' όνομά μας  
 γιατί οι γυναίκες π' αγαπούμε την μεταδίνουν  
 και σ' εμάς αυτή τη θεία τους ουσία

the women we love are lakes  
 on their reeds  
 their ardent lips whistle to us  
 our beautiful birds bathe in their waters  
 and then when they fly up they are mirrored - proud as  
 they are - by the lakes  
 and on their shores the poplars are lyres  
 whose music drowns all bitterness within us  
 and as they inundate our being with joy, with peace  
 the women we love are lakes

the women we love are like flags  
 flying in desire's breezes  
 their long hair shines at night  
 in their warm palms they hold our lives  
 their soft bellies are the celestial vault  
 they are our doors, our windows, fleets  
 our stars live forever beside them  
 their colors are love's words  
 their lips are the sun the moon  
 and their linen the only shroud befitting us  
 the women we love are like flags

the women we love are forests  
 their every tree is a message of passion  
 as if in those forests  
 our steps deceive us  
 and we get lost; it's then precisely  
 that we find ourselves and live  
 and while from afar we hear the rains coming  
 or the wind brings us  
 the melodies and noises of the festivity  
 or the pipes of danger  
 nothing – of course – can frighten us any longer  
 as the dense foliage  
 naturally protects us  
 since the women we love are like forests

the women we love are like harbors  
 (the one goal the destination of our fine ships)  
 their eyes are breakwaters  
 their shoulders are the semaphore of joy  
 their thighs a line of amphorae on the wharves  
 their legs our loving beacons  
 —the more nostalgic call them K a t e r i n a—  
 their waves are wonderful caresses  
 their Sirens do not deceive us  
 but - friendly as they are - show us the way  
 to the harbors: the women we love

the women we love are divine in essence  
 and when in our embrace we hold them tight  
 we too become like to gods  
 we stand erect like frightful towers  
 nothing can now shake us  
 with their white arms  
 they clasp us all around  
 and all peoples and nations come  
 and worship us they cry  
 our name immortal forever  
 for the women we love impart to us too  
 that divine essence of theirs