



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

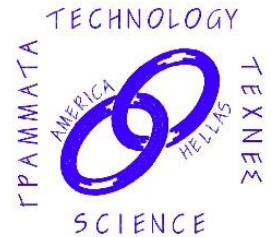
A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

“Toil and Rage in a New Land”: Greek Immigrants in the US Mining Industry (1900–1924)

On Sunday, April 21, 2024, at 3:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present *Professor George Anagnostou* in a live lecture, titled: “*Toil and Rage in a New Land*”: *Greek Immigrants in the US Mining Industry (1900–1924)*. The event will take place at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park, Illinois (southeast corner of Irving Park Road and Mannheim Road). This lecture is supported by the Hellenic Foundation.

Early 20th century Greek immigration in the United States is inextricably linked with the industrial history of the country. Overwhelmingly male in the beginning, it was part of a mass wave of immigrants from Southeastern Europe who were purposefully recruited as inexpensive labor in the mines, railroads, smelters, lumber yards, hydroelectric plants, and textile manufacturing. While a sector of this work force made the move to small-business ownership, others remained in industrial jobs for their entire lives. A high percentage returned to Greece, while thousands were killed in industrial disasters or confrontations with authorities and militia.

This talk will foreground the experience of Greek immigrants in the US mining industry (1900–1924). Drawing from the few available diaries, eyewitness accounts, biographies as well as testimonies of descendants, newspaper articles, photographs, and historiography, it will place the lives of the miners in relation to Americanization, nativism, and the labor movement. The presentation will connect the reality which the miners negotiated with the emotions—anger, fear, fury, defiance—they felt in negotiating that reality. The life and labor activism of Louis Tikas (1886–1914), a Cretan immigrant who was murdered during the infamous Ludlow Massacre in Ludlow, Colorado, will be a focal point.

The history of the Greeks in the mining industry leads us to rethink how we understand Greek American history. The experience of the early 20th century immigrants was far from uniform—an apprentice in the confectionary business in Chicago had a radically different experience than an itinerant industrial laborer in Carbon County, Utah; the wife of a vendor in New York City did not share the same concerns

with the wife of a miner in Helper, Utah. The talk will emphasize the importance of situating immigrant lives in the context of particular regions and occupations. Building on the case of the miners, it will make a broader point: Greek American histories are many and diverse.

George Anagnostou is the Miltiadis Marinakis Professor of Modern Greek language and culture at The Ohio State University. His interests include diaspora and American ethnic studies, with a focus on Greek America. His published research covers a broad range of subjects, including film, documentary, ethnography, folklore, literature, history, sociology, and public humanities. He is the author of *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America*. He is a co-editor of *Redirecting Ethnic Singularity: Italian Americans and Greek Americans in Conversation*, which was awarded the Modern Greek Studies Association Vassiliki Karagiannaki Best Edited Book Prize, 2022. Since 2017 he is the editor of the online journal *Ergon: Greek/American and Diaspora Arts and Letters* (<http://ergon.scienzine.com/>).

Legacies of the Lausanne Treaty

On Sunday, May 19, 2024, at 3:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present Professor *Michelle Tusan*, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in a live lecture titled “*Legacies of the Lausanne Treaty*.” The event will take place at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park, Illinois. This lecture is supported by the Hellenic Foundation.

In this presentation, Professor Tusan will talk on the lasting legacy of the destruction of Smyrna and explore the peace process between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War that culminated with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne. It will reveal the plight of Greek, Armenian, Assyrian, and other minority populations who survived nearly ten years of uninterrupted war when peace finally came in 1923 and why this matters today.

Michelle Tusan is Professor of History at the University of Nevada Las Vegas where she writes and teaches about human rights, genocide and the history of war. Her latest book is “*The Last Treaty: Lausanne and the End of the First World War in the Middle East*.”

In Brief

The Case of Fredi Beleri

Albania's Court Against Corruption and Organized Crime in Tirana, Albania, on March 5, 2024 convicted and sentenced to two years in prison, Fredi Beleri, the ethnic Greek mayor-elect of the town of Himara. Beleri was arrested and imprisoned two days before local elections in May 2023 on charges that he attempted to buy eight votes by offering 40,000 Albanian leks (390 dollars) in cash.

On January 29, 2024, Albania's Court of Appeals Against Corruption and Organized Crime dismissed Beleri's request to take the oath of office as mayor of Himara. Beleri's defeated opponent, from Prime Minister Edi Rama's ruling Socialist Party, has been performing the duties of mayor of Himara. Beleri's lawyer, Geni Gjyzari, said the ruling was "*political and had been ordered by Albania's prime minister*" and he would appeal it.

According to the *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)*, the prosecutor in Vlora sought Beleri's pretrial detention by arguing that he had a prior penal offence in his record that justified pretrial detention and the court agreed. The court's decision states: "*It has been proved that the arrested person poses a danger for society...so he must be remanded in custody because the acts show he had a prior conviction.*" The court's decision was upheld by the Court of Appeals. However, the record of his criminal offence should have shown that he was not convicted of a crime. Following the defense's complaint, prosecutors opened an investigation into Ledion Jonuzaj, an IT expert who retrieved Beleri's record. Jonuzaj, told the court that he did a search of Beleri's name in the system provided by the Ministry of Justice and printed the results. He was placed under investigation and prosecutors ordered him to rerun the search and print again the record, which this time showed Beleri as "not convicted".

Aurel Zarka, Vlora's Chief Prosecutor, whose office charged Beleri, told *BIRN* they were unable to change the data provided by the system. Adnan Xholi, the Special Prosecutor in the case against Beleri, didn't respond to *BIRN's* request for comments. The Minister of Justice, Ulsi Manja, whose ministry handles the system of crime certificates, also did not respond to *BIRN's* request for comments. Beleri's defense lawyer, told *BIRN* that the inaccurate certificate was based on the fact that Beleri was convicted years ago for inciting ethnic hate. However, because a long time has passed since the conviction, he is legally considered rehabilitated. This is also supported by the fact that, as a part of the documents he filed for his candidacy, he also obtained a certificate showing that he had "not been convicted" of a crime. That certificate had been issued from the same authorities three months earlier. The defense argued that the use by the authorities of a certificate with inaccurate information is another indication of procedural wrongdoing.

Beleri has insisted that the reason behind his arrest and the case against him was initiated by the government because he opposed lucrative developments on coastal areas in the Municipality of Himara.

According to *The Greek Reporter*, Beleri, in his final statement to the court insisted that "*the prosecution's conclusions are lies and political*". He added that "*all the prosecution's allegations were disputed by my lawyers in detail*".

Beleri's lawyer insisted that the prosecutor's office in Vlora was not empowered to carry out such investigations, which should be done by the Special Anti-Corruption and Organised Crime Service instead, and police investigations were carried out before an order was issued by the prosecutor's office. Beleri's defense also claimed the police framed him using an undercover agent to entrap him, and Beleri is bringing a lawsuit against the police chief of Himara and the informer on whose testimony the police based the charges in the case.

Beleri's lawyer, Gjyzari, said "*The police followed [Beleri] for four days without prosecution supervision,*" and claimed that the two witnesses in the case, brothers Arsen and Avdul Rama, gave contradictory or false statements. Gjyzari also insisted that the fact that witness Arsen Rama was paid by the police constituted a criminal offence, because an associate of the prosecution cannot be paid. He said only police informants are paid, not witnesses. He argued that the actions of the police and of the Vlora prosecutor's office were aimed at preventing Beleri from winning the local elections in Himara.

Greece had previously called on the Albanian government to drop the charges against Beleri and warned that it would block EU accession talks with the country over the case. Greece's foreign ministry said the court decision "*increased the concern already expressed on the objectivity of the judicial process,*" and the sentence is "*clearly disproportionate to the alleged offense. The selective implementation of court rulings and the prejudging of court decisions do not conform with the rule of law. The Greek government will closely follow the case and hopes to see a fair and objective ruling at the appeal trial.*"

Greece has already submitted a written statement that accompanied the European Council's letter on the opening of negotiations with Albania, setting three basic conditions for promoting Tirana's accession. These are the swearing-in of Beleri, his fair trial, and respect for the presumption of innocence.

After his sentencing, Beleri stated: "*With a fake criminal record, no evidence, no other witnesses except one who was bribed by the police, with an 'appointed' judge, in a glass cage without communication with my lawyer, the Albanian court sentenced me today to two years in prison. My crime is that we, Himarans, want to be masters of our ancestral land.*"

My crime is that my countrymen elected me mayor against the plans of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama. Sooner or later, I will find justice. I have as much patience as it takes to get to the bottom of this case."

From Our History

Excerpts from the monumental work of the Byzantine historian, Speros Vryonis:

"The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century"

POLITICAL AND MILITARY COLLAPSE

Events Leading to Manzikert – Byzantine Internal Developments (1025–71)

(Continuation from the previous issue)

The extravagance of the rulers in the eleventh century came to be commonplace. The Empress Zoe, Constantine IX Monomachus, and the Paphlagonians were remarkably prodigious in exhausting the imperial coffers that Basil II had been so careful to fill. Also, the tax-yielding provinces in the Balkans and Anatolia were disturbed by other events above and apart from the socioeconomic developments affecting the peasant communities. The numerous rebellions, the countless foreign raids (especially in the Balkans), and the depredations of the mercenaries, kept the provincial tax system out of balance. The economic decline of the eleventh century, though still imperfectly understood, played a serious role in the events leading to Manzikert. Stemming primarily from the social evolution of agrarian society and the grants of excessive immunities to the great landowners, economic conditions were further aggravated by the extravagance of the rulers, and above all by the military rebellions, Patzinak raids, and mercenary rapacity in the provinces which choked off the state tax moneys. Such financial difficulty was of course disastrous for a state that functioned primarily on the basis of a money economy. But there were also serious external developments.

The First Appearance of the Turks

The first appearance of the Turkish raiders in the district of Vaspuracan (1016–17) struck terror in the Armenians who dwelt there. According to Matthew of Edessa (an Armenian historian of the 12th century): *In the beginning of the year 465 a calamity proclaiming the fulfillment of divine portents befell the Christian adorers of the Holy Cross. The death-breathing dragon appeared, accompanied by a destroying fire, and struck the believers in the Holy Trinity. The apostolic and prophetic books trembled, for there arrived winged serpents come to vomit fire upon Christ's faithful. I wish to describe, in this language, the first eruption of ferocious beasts covered with blood. At this period there gathered the savage nation of infidels called Turks. Setting out, they entered the province of Vaspuracan and put the Christians to the sword... Facing the enemy, the Armenians saw these strange men, who were armed with bows and had flowing hair like women.*

At the time of this Turkish appearance in Vaspuracan the empire was extending its power in the East and its armies inspired fear in the hearts of its enemies from the Danube to the Euphrates. The Greek chroniclers took almost no notice of this first appearance of the Turks in Armenia; Cedrenus merely remarked that the Armenian prince Senecherim, being under pressure from his Agarene neighbors, abandoned Vaspuracan to Basil II and settled in Cappadocia (1021) at which time the Turkish raiders appeared in the Armenian district of Nig. Though the Byzantines and Armenians had seen Turkish slave troops and generals in the Arab armies and had had contact with Patzinaks and Khazars, the Turks of 1016-17 were as yet unknown to them.

Nevertheless, in half a century from the first appearance of these Turks in Vaspuracan, the Seljuk nomadic raiders would have established an empire reaching from Afghanistan into Anatolia, and would have begun the last major ethnographical alteration of the Near East. It is obvious from the Christian sources that the Byzantines knew very little as to the origins and history of the Seljuks, but the Muslim authors seem not to have known a great deal more. What the Seljuks themselves purported to believe about their origins was not committed to writing until the latter half of the twelfth century and this work, the *Malikname*, has not survived. These Seljuk tribes entered the Middle East via the steppe regions to the east and northeast of the Caspian Sea. This area had begun to be occupied by Turkic peoples as early as the sixth century of the Christian era and the Oghuz Turks, to whom the early Arab geographers refer, were probably their descendants. After the breakup of the great Turkic empire in Mongolia, the history of the Oghuz Turks concentrated increasingly, from the eighth and ninth centuries, on the northeastern borders of the Islamic world. The Seljuks were of these Oghuz Turks. According to their traditions, a certain Dudak and his son Seljuk, of the Kinik tribe of the Oghuz, were vassals of a "Khazar" khan in the Asiatic steppe. Seljuk then broke away from the khan, established himself with a modest following in the regions of the Jaxartes River where he was converted to Islam, and henceforth fought his pagan "compatriots" as a ghazi defender of the Islamic border lands. In this region and toward the end of the tenth century, Seljuk and his followers were called in by the Samanids against the power of the Turkish Karakhanids; they were thereafter employed by the latter and so became a permanent part of the political scene in the Islamic world. But by 1025 the followers of Seljuk had split into two separate groups, the main body (under Toghrul and Caghri) remaining in the service of the Karakhanids for a period, and a second group of 4,000 tents under Arslan which broke away and took service under the Ghaznevids in Khurasan. Henceforth these two groups had different historical experiences, but nevertheless, complementary to each other. This second group of Arslan constituted the advance guard of the Seljuks into the Islamic world, and as they advanced, those places that they had temporarily settled, plundered, and abandoned were occupied by the larger group of Toghrul and Caghri. *(To be continued)*

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Poetry by Odysseas Elytis

From *Axion Esti*, Η Γένεσις

ΑΥΤΟΣ

ο κόσμος ο μικρός, ο μέγας!

ΑΛΛΑ ΠΡΙΝ ακούσω αγέρα η μουσική
που κινούσα σε ξάγναντο να βγω
(μιαν απέραντη κόκκινη άμμο ανέβαινα
με τη φτέρνα μου σβήνοντας την Ιστορία)
πάλευα τα σεντόνια Ήταν αυτό που γύρευα
και αθώο και ριγηλό σαν αμπελώνας
και βαθύ και αγάραγο σαν η άλλη όψη τ' ουρανού
Κάτι λίγο ψυχής μέσα στην άργιλο
Τότε είπε και γεννήθηκεν η θάλασσα
Και είδα και θαύμασα
Και στη μέση της έσπειρε κόσμους μικρούς κατ' εικόνα
και ομοίωσή μου:
Ίπποι πέτρινοι με τη χαιτή ορθή
και γαλήνιοι αμφορείς
και λοξές δελφινιών ράχες
η Ίος η Σίκινος η Σέριφος η Μήλος
«Κάθε λέξη κι από 'να χελιδόνι
για να σου φέρνει την άνοιξη μέσα στο θέρος» είπε
«Και πολλά τα λιόδεντρα
που να κρησάρουν στα χέρια τους το φως
κι ελαφρό ν' απλώνεται στον ύπνο σου
και πολλά τα τζιτζίκια
που να μην τα νιώθεις
όπως δε νιώθεις το σφυγμό στο χέρι σου
αλλά λίγο το νερό
για να το 'χεις Θεό και να κατέχεις τι σημαίνει ο λόγος του
και το δέντρο μονάχο του
χωρίς κοπάδι
για να το κάνεις φίλο σου
και να γνωρίζεις τ' ακριβό του τ' όνομα
φτενό στα πόδια σου το χώμα
για να μην έχεις που ν' απλώσεις ρίζα
και να τραβάς του βάθους ολοένα
και πλατύς επάνου ο ουρανόσ
για να διαβάξεις μόνος σου την απεραντοσύνη»

ΑΥΤΟΣ

ο κόσμος ο μικρός, ο μέγας!

«ΚΑΙ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟ ΑΥΤΟΝ ανάγκη να τον βλέπεις και
να τον λαβαίνεις»
είπε: «Κοίταξε!» Και τα μάτια μου έριξαν τη σπορά
γρηγορότερα τρέχοντας κι από βροχή
τα χιλιάδες απάτητα στρέμματα
Σπίθες ρίζα μες στο σκότος πιάνοντας και νερών άξαφνων
πίδακες
Η σιγή που εκχέρσωνα για ν' αποθέσω
γόνους φθόγγων και χρησμών φύτρα χρυσά
Το ξινάρι ακόμη μες στα χέρια μου

Να το σπαράγγι να ο ριθιός
να το σγουρό περσέμολο
τα μεγάλα είδα κοντόποδα φυτά, γυρίζοντας το πρόσωπο
άλλα υλακώντας άλλα βγάζοντας τη γλώσσα:το
τζεντζεφύλλι και το πελαργόνι
ο στύφνος και το μάραθο
Οι κρυφές συλλαβές όπου πάσχιζα την ταυτότητά μου ν'
αρθρώσω
«Εύγε» μου είπε «και ανάγνωση γνωρίζεις
και πολλά μέλλει να μάθεις
αν το Ασήμαντο εμβαθύνεις
Και μια μέρα θα 'ρθει βοηθός ν' αποκτήσεις
Θυμήσου:
τον αγχέμαχο Ζέφυρο
το ερεβοκτόνο ρόδι
τα φλεγόμενα ωκύποδα φιλιά»
Και ο λόγος του χάθηκε σαν ευωδιά
Η ώρα εννιά χτύπησε πέρδικα τη βαθιά καρδιά της
ευφωνίας
αλληλέγγυα στάθηκαν τα σπίτια
και μικρά και τετράγωνα
με καμάρα λευκή και λουλακι πορτόφυλλο
Κάτω απ' την κληματαριά
ώρες εκεί ρέμβασα
με μικρά μικρά τιτιβίσματα
κοασμούς, τρυσμούς, το μακρινό κουκούρισμα:
Να το πιπίني να το λελέκι
να το γυφτοπούλι
ο νυχτοπάτης και η νερόκοτα
ήταν και ο μπόμπιρας εκεί
και το αλογάκι που λεν της Παναγίας
Η στεριά με τα σκέλη μου γυμνά στον ήλιο
και πάλι δύο οι θάλασσες
και η τρίτη ανάμεσα -λεμονιές κιτριές μανταρινιές-
και ο άλλος μαϊστρος με τ' απάνω του αψηλό μπογάζι
αλλοιώνοντας τ' οζόνιο τ' ουρανού
Χαμηλά στων φύλλων τον πυθμένα
η τριβίδα η λεία
τ' αυτάκια των ανθών
κι ο θαλλός ο αδημονώντας και είναι
ΑΥΤΟΣ
ο κόσμος ο μικρός, ο μέγας!

ΥΣΤΕΡΑ και τον φλοιόσβο ενόησα και τον μακρύ ατελείωτο
ψίθυρο των δέντρων
Είδα πάνω στο μόλο αραδιασμένα τα κόκκινα σταμινιά
και πιο σιμά στο ξύλινο παραθυρόφυλλο
κει που κοιμόμουνα με το 'να πλάι
λάλησε πιο δυνατά ο βοριάς
Και είδα
Κόρες όμορφες και γυμνές και λείες ωσάν το βότσαλο
με το λίγο μαύρο στις κόχες των μηρών
και το πολύ και πλούσιο ανοιχτό στις ωμοπλάτες
να φυσούν όρθιες μέσα στην Κοχύλα.