



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

No. 133 October–November 2025

EDITORS: Constantine Tzanos, S. Sakellarides

<http://www.helleniclinkmidwest.org>

P.O. Box 3, Park Ridge, IL 60068-0003



Upcoming Events

A Eureka Moment in Time: The Wonder and Legacy of the Greek Intellectual Revolution

On Sunday, October 19, 2025, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present Dr. Voula Saridakis from the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry in a lecture titled “*A Eureka Moment in Time: The Wonder and Legacy of the Greek Intellectual Revolution*”. The event will take place at 3:00 pm at the lecture hall of The Holy Taxiarchai and Saint Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church, 7373 N Caldwell Ave, Niles, Illinois. Admission is free.

How did early Greek thinkers shift from myth to reason and set the stage for centuries of scientific and philosophical inquiry? This talk will trace the origins and evolution of scientific and philosophical thought in the ancient Greek world, where early thinkers began exploring nature and the cosmos through observation and reason rather than mythology. Figures such as Thales and Anaximander asked bold questions about nature and the universe, laying the groundwork for a rational investigation of the world.

This lecture will explore the key contributions of individuals such as Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Archimedes. Plato focused on abstract thinking and the search for perfect forms, shaping ideas about reality for centuries. Aristotle took a more hands-on approach, combining careful observation with logical thinking to explore everything from biology to physics to ethics. Ptolemy’s model of the universe, with Earth at the center, became the standard view for over a thousand years. Archimedes—famous for shouting “Eureka!”—made major advances in mathematics and physics, laying the groundwork for mechanics and engineering.

This talk concludes with the rich legacy of Greek science and philosophy. Many texts were preserved, translated, and expanded upon by Islamic scholars such as Al-Kindi, Avicenna, and Averroes. These works entered Europe through Islamic and Latin translations, becoming foundational texts in medieval universities and laying the groundwork for the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution. Through this exploration, we will see how ancient Greek thought created intellectual tools that continue to shape scientific and philosophical inquiry today.

Dr. Saridakis is Head Curator at the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry, overseeing the care of over 35,000 artifacts and developing exhibit content, including the recent Henry Crown Space Center. A historian of science and technology and NASA Solar System Ambassador, she holds

a Ph.D. from Virginia Tech and has 19 years of college teaching experience in history and related fields. She has spoken at major conferences, appeared on the History Channel and Atlas Obscura, and has been featured in numerous media outlets such as the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, WBEZ radio, Fox News, NBC and ABC.

In Quest of Eudaemonia in the Age of AI: Perspectives from Theological Bioethics, Science and Medicine

On Sunday, November 16, 2025, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present Professor Constantine Psimopoulos of Harvard University in a lecture titled “*In Quest of Eudaemonia in the Age of AI: Perspectives from Theological Bioethics, Science and Medicine*”. The event will take place at Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park, Illinois (southeast corner of Irving Park Road and Mannheim Road). Admission is free. This lecture is supported by the Hellenic Foundation.

Professor Psimopoulos will address the question: what kind of humans do we want to be with AI? Should conversations in and around bioethics be focusing more on human flourishing or ‘Eudaemonia’ *‘ευδαιμονία’* and if so, why? How do we define each of these terms or fields of inquiry? When we talk about the use of AI in Medicine, is this always something beneficent or ought it be rather worrisome? In bioethics, as well as in all medicine, one of the principles is that of nonmaleficence, or “first do no harm.” How can this be upheld and promoted to future doctors, scientists and clinicians, chaplains in health, healthcare and those in pastoral care, with the advancement of AI, and some of the associated biases that are embedded in its algorithms and Large Language Models? Can we address -and should anyone be concerned about- issues of justice, matters of theology, and eudaemonia when it comes to AI, that are not only important for (us) doctors and scientists but also for theologians and those who see Logos with capital ‘L’ as that Word of God? Character, Virtue, and Phronesis ought to be embedded as aims in our dialogos with AI, considering that those are quintessential and relevant to our humanity and the community at large. This lecture is going to address all of the above and invite further debate welcoming everyone who is curious and wish to learn more, as AI is not only affecting but transforming how we lead our lives, and so it ought to concern everyone.

Constantine or 'Kosti' Psimopoulos is a Kinesiologist by training and a bioethicist. He is a visiting scholar in Medicine and co-Director of the Program on Medicine and Religion at the University of Chicago (2025-2026), he is on the faculty at Harvard's Initiative on Health, Spirituality and Religion, and Senior Program Administrator at the Human Flourishing program. Elected President of Harvard Medical School's Student Council, he gave the valedictorian address at his graduation entitled: *"In pursuit of A Moral Awakening in Medicine & Healthcare: An ethics of Sympraxis."*

Constantine's new bioethics book is the translation into Greek of: *"A Prophet to the Peoples: Paul Farmer's Witness and Theological Ethics."* He holds degrees from Aristotle University, Springfield College, The Ohio State University, Harvard Medical School, and Stritch School of Medicine, Loyola University Chicago. Author of three book chapters, peer-reviewed publications, presentations at National, International and World conferences, including Public Orthodoxy, and the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

His interests in bioethics lie on theological bioethics and AI, and public health ethics. He is the recipient of: National Award by SHAPE America, HMS Dean's Scholarship, International Emerging Scholar Award, Teaching Excellence Award in Bioethics at Johns Hopkins, and perfect score in Harvard Medical School teaching. Prof. Psimopoulos was nominated for the *International Expanded Reason Award, from the Vatican Foundation*. His work, mentorship and advocacy for students was recognized by Harvard Medicine magazine and Harvard Medical School Pulse journal.

In Brief

The Great School of the Nation – Η Μεγάλη Σχολή του Γένους

In September of this year, the new school year began with a great concern for the three remaining Greek schools in Istanbul. At the Great School of the Nation and Patriarchal Academy of Constantinople, the oldest operating Greek school, no new student enrolled in the first grade of high school.

"We are starting with just 30 children this year and without a single new student. The truth is that we are heartbroken and saddened by the development," said the Academy principal Dimitris Zotos.

In the other schools, there were 16 new enrollments: nine at the Zografeion Lyceum, and seven at the Zappeion, the only Greek school offering all levels from kindergarten to high school. In total, now 302 children attend Greek schools in Turkey, including the island of Imvros.

"The glory days of the school, with the large numbers of new students, may be a distant past, but traditionally five to ten new children were enrolled each year. This is the first time that there has not been a single new student enrollment in many years. A similar case occurred 40 years ago, but with the support of the Greek community here we were able to fill

the classes again," Zotos said. The institution has many successes to show for the last 25 years. *"We have produced very good students and we have a very high standard, while all subjects are taught to the children. This is a privilege, because it is difficult to staff the schools here."* The teachers are mainly from Constantinople, while for five years a philologist from Greece has been serving at the Great National School. *"We continue and that is the important thing,"* said the principal who teaches mathematics.

For the director of Zografeion Lyceum, however, the bell has rung a long time ago. *"Eight years ago, I too had only enrolled one student in the first year of high school. Unfortunately, the number of young people of our race is decreasing everywhere, even in Greece. There are 2,000 of us in Constantinople today, and at 65 I consider myself one of the young people of the Greek diaspora here. Only children whose at least one of their parents is a Christian Orthodox Greek, and Turkish citizen, can enroll in our schools. Despite all this, we have not given up, we are still continuing, it is no small thing. It is important, that schools walk together hand in hand for a better tomorrow."*

The Consul General of Greece in Istanbul, Ambassador Konstantinos Koutras, sees the glass as half full. *"Imbros, where there was nothing, now has 50 children in kindergarten, elementary school, middle school and high school...My approach is to see things from the positive side. Indeed, there was no new student enrolled in the Patriarchal Great School of the Nation this year, perhaps we could see how to solve it. But the important thing is not to be disappointed, the candle will stay lit and we will all fight for the flame to flare up even more."* For the school in Imvros, which suffered serious damage from the recent earthquake, Mr. Koutras said: *"Next year there will be a "new" school in its place, exactly like the historic building of 1860, where the Patriarch had studied. I would like to send messages of optimism and hope, without this having anything to do with diplomacy."*

The Great School of the Nation is a historic school—the institution is celebrating its 571st anniversary—and a reference point for the whole of Istanbul. Visitors from all over the world flock to the building to take pictures of it, to see it up close. Many also knock on the door, although it is difficult for the school's managers to welcome visitors while children are studying. *"It is characteristic that on Sunday, during the last day of a very well-known rowing cup that took place in the Golden Horn in Istanbul, with thousands of rowers and spectators, the Great School of the Nation was asked to be illuminated. It is also very important for the Turks."*

"In Romiosyni, every glory has its own Cross," said the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew a year ago, performing the consecration at the Patriarchal Great School of the Nation: *"You here, the students of this blessed school, have the extraordinary privilege of having received the blessing and protection of the Great Church. You are the Patriarchal Great School of the Nation. You are the present and you are*

at the same time its auspicious future. In Romiosyni, every privilege stems from a responsibility. Every high hill and our beautiful world have the fragrance of Golgotha. Your responsibility, therefore, from this high by nature and location place, is to constantly become a "light". The light of the education of our Romiosyni." (Source: Greek Newspaper Kathimerini).

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 Interrelation of Byzantine Decline and Turkish Pressure (1042-1071)
(Continuation from the previous issue)

The first of the important cities to be plundered was the comparatively large and wealthy town of Sebasteia, the location of the famous shrine of the Forty Martyrs. In 1059 the emir Samuh and other emirs suddenly appeared before the unwalled city, but initially they hesitated to attack mistaking the domes of the many churches for the tents of the defending army. They soon realized that the city was defenseless, and so massacred pitilessly large numbers of the inhabitants. The Turks remained in Sebasteia for eight days, reducing it to ashes and taking a great booty and many prisoners. The sultan himself took the field in 1064 with a large army and appeared in Armenia.

Proud of his success, the sultan, this dragon of Persia, that year pounced upon Armenia. Instrument of divine vengeance, his wrath spread over the oriental nation, which he forced to drink the vial of his malice. The fire of death enveloped with its flames the faithful of Christ. The land was inundated with blood, and the sword and slavery spread their ravage here. (quoting historian Matthew of Edessa)

The most important Byzantine city in Armenia, Ani, was taken and many of the inhabitants put to the sword or carried off into slavery.

By reason of the weakened resistance at the end of Constantine's reign, the Turks had become even bolder and so began to push their incursions farther to the west, where the larger towns which had been spared the rigors of siege for centuries now lay defenseless. The urban centers in central and western Anatolia were in a peculiar situation, for though protected from the invaders by a greater distance, they did not have even the protecting forces that the border cities possessed. With the dissolution of the larger part of the thematic armies, the more westerly provinces had little defense; the mercenaries and other available troops were kept on the eastern borders where they often let the Turks pass through unhindered, hoping to attack them in the mountain passes when they were returning from Anatolia in disarray and laden with booty. Thus, once the Turks had overrun the border defenses, they sacked the interior almost freely. The Turks reached the important Cappadocian city of Caesarea after having been let through by the recalcitrant

troops guarding Melitene. They plundered, destroyed, and burned the city, singling out the famous shrine of St. Basil. This they looted, carrying away all the holy items of the church, and attempted to break into the structure housing the saint's remains. The church was desecrated and the inhabitants massacred. In the following year the Turks became bolder, daring to raid, sack, and lead-off captive, the inhabitants of Neocaesarea, even though Romanus was encamped in the eastern theme of Lycandus. The ability of the enemy to sack such an important Anatolian city indicates not only how completely the system of local defense had collapsed, but also the essentially different type of military procedure followed by the Byzantines and their foes. The numerous Turkish bands might strike at any time and in any place, but the Byzantine army was usually in one or two places at any given time. In the same year, while Romanus besieged the Syrian city of Hierapolis, the Turkish bands raided farther into Anatolia, and for the second time in the long history of the Christian-Muslim holy war, the famous city of Amorium was sacked by a Muslim army, and its citizens massacred. Hereafter, the raiders contemptuously disregarded the emperor and his armies in Anatolia. In 1069 while Romanus was in the district of Celtzene, the Turks passed through Cappadocia pillaging it en route and continued westward in the direction of Iconium, the emperor receiving news of this only after he had arrived in Sebasteia. So, he set out in an effort to catch up with the marauders, but upon arriving at Heracleous Comopolis, he was informed that the Turks had already sacked the city.

One year later it was the turn of Chonae, the city sacred to the Archangel Michael. In 1070 Romanus had been forced to remain in Constantinople to keep an eye on the bureaucrats and the Ducas family, so the armies were sent out under the command of Manuel Comnenus. As Hierapolis in Syria was under a severe siege, Comnenus was forced to divide his army and to send a large portion of it to relieve the besieged city. He himself encamped with the remainder of the army at Sebasteia where he was defeated and captured by the Turkish emir Chrysoscule. No sooner had the emperor received this news in Constantinople than an even greater disaster was reported to him, the city of Chonae had been savagely pillaged by the Turks. The famed shrine of the Archangel was profaned and turned into a stable for the Turkish horses, and the raiders *"filled the region with murder."* The inhabitants, who were accustomed to flee to the caverns, where the river went underground in the vicinity of the sanctuary, were all drowned when the river suddenly flooded. The sack of Chonae, and especially the drowning of the fugitives in the underground caverns, were taken by Byzantine society to be an indication of God's wrath. Cedrenus relates that formerly the Greeks had interpreted the devastations and incursions of the Turks in Iberia, Mesopotamia up to Lycandus, and Melitene to be a sign of God's anger with the Armenian and Syrian heretics who inhabited this area. But when the ravages spread to the regions inhabited by the Greeks, they decided that henceforth not only correct belief but also living the faith were necessary.

(To be continued)

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Ποίηση Οδυσσέα Ελύτη

Η ΠΟΡΕΙΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΜΕΤΩΠΙΟ

(Ελληνοϊταλικός Πόλεμος 1940 – 1941)

Ξημερώνοντας τ' Αγιαννιού, με την αύριο των Φώτων, λάβαμε τη διαταγή να κινηθούμε πάλι μπροστά, για τα μέρη όπου δεν έχει καθημερινές και σκόλες. Έπρεπε, λέει, να πιάσουμε τις γραμμές που κρατούσανε ως τότε οι Αρτινοί, από Χιμάρα ως Τεπελένι. Λόγω που εκείνοι πολεμούσανε απ' την πρώτη μέρα, συνέχεια, κι είχαν μείνει σκεδόν οι μισοί και δεν αντέχανε άλλο.

Δώδεκα μέρες κιόλας είχαμε μεις πιο πίσω, στα χωριά. Κι απάνω που συνήθιζε τ' αυτί μας πάλι στα γλυκά τριξίματα της γης, και δειλά συλλαβίζαμε το γάβγισμα του σκύλου ή τον αχό της μακρινής καμπάνας, να που ήταν ανάγκη, λέει, να γυρίσουμε στο μόνο αχολόι που ξέραμε: στο αργό και στο βαρύ των κανονιών, στο ξερό και στο γρήγορο των πολυβόλων.

Νύχτα πάνω στη νύχτα βαδίζαμε ασταμάτητα, ένας πίσω απ' τον άλλο, ίδια τυφλοί. Με κόπο ξεκολλώντας το ποδάρι από τη λάσπη, όπου, φορές, εκαταβούλιαζε ίσαμε το γόνατο. Επειδή το πιο συχνά ψιχάλιζε στους δρόμους έξω, καθώς μες στην ψυχή μας. Και τις λίγες φορές όπου κάναμε στάση να ξεκουραστούμε, μήτε που αλλάζαμε κουβέντα, μονάχα σοβαροί και αμίλητοι, φέγγοντας μ' ένα μικρό δαδί, μία μία εμοιραζόμασταν τη σταφίδα. Ή φορές πάλι, αν ήταν βολετο, λύναμε βιαστικά τα ρούχα και ξυνόμασταν με λύσσα ώρες πολλές, όσο να τρέξουν τα αίματα. Τι μας είχε ανέβει η ψείρα ως το λαιμό, κι ήταν αυτό πιο κι απ' την κούραση ανυπόφερτο. Τέλος, κάποτε ακουγότανε στα σκοτεινά η σφυρίχτρα, σημάδι ότι κινούσαμε, και πάλι σαν τα ζα τραβούσαμε μπροστά να κερδίσουμε δρόμο, πριχού ξημερώσει και μας βάλουνε στόχο τ' αεροπλάνα. Επειδή ο Θεός δεν κάτεχε από στόχους ή τέτοια, κι όπως το 'χε συνήθειο του, στην ίδια πάντοτε ώρα ξημέρωνε το φως.

Τότες, χωμένοι μες στις ρεματιές, γέρναμε το κεφάλι από το μέρος το βαρύ, όπου δε βγαίνουνε όνειρα. Και τα πουλιά μας θύμωναν, που δε δίναμε τάχα σημασία στα λόγια τους – ίσως και που ασκημίζαμε χωρίς αιτία την πλάση. Άλλης λογής εμείς χωριάτες, μ' άλλω λογιώ ξινάρια και σιδερικά στα χέρια μας, που ξορκισμένα να 'ναι.

Δώδεκα μέρες κιόλας, είχαμε μεις πιο πίσω στα χωριά κοιτάξει σε κατρέφτη, ώρες πολλές, το γύρο του προσώπου μας. Κι απάνω που συνήθιζε ξανά το μάτι μας τα γνώριμα παλιά σημάδια, και δειλά συλλαβίζαμε το χέιλο το γυμνό ή το χορτάτο από τον ύπνο μάγουλο, να που τη δεύτερη τη νύχτα σάμπως πάλι αλλάζαμε, την τρίτη ακόμη πιο πολύ, την ύστερη, την τέταρτη, πια φανερό, δεν ήμασταν οι ίδιοι. Μόνε

σαν να πηγαίναμε μπουλούκι ανάκατο, θαρρούσες, απ' όλες τις γενιές και τις χρονιές, άλλοι των τωρινών καιρών κι άλλοι πολλά παλιών, που 'χαν λευκάνει απ' τα περίσσια γένια. Καπεταναίοι αγέλαστοι με το κεφαλοπάνι, και παπάδες θεριά, λοχίες του '97 ή του '12, μπαλτζήδες βλοσυροί πάνου απ' τον ώμο σειώντας το πελέκι, απελάτες και σκουταροφόροι, με το αίμα επάνω τους ακόμη Βουργάρων και Τούρκων. Όλοι μαζί, δίχως μιλιά, χρόνους αμέτρητους αγκομαχώντας πλάι πλάι, διαβαίναμε τις ράχες, τα φαράγγια, δίχως να λογαριάζουμε άλλο τίποτε. Γιατί, καθώς όταν βαρούν απανωτές αναποδιές τους ίδιους τους ανθρώπους πάντα, συνηθάν εκείνοι στο Κακό, τέλος του αλλάζουν όνομα, το λεν Γραμμένο ή Μοίρα – έτσι κι εμείς επροχωρούσαμε ίσια πάνου σ' αυτό που λέγαμε Κατάρα, όπως θα λέγαμε Αντάρα ή Σύγνεφο. Με κόπο ξεκολλώντας το ποδάρι από τη λάσπη, όπου, φορές, εκαταβούλιαζε ίσαμε το γόνατο. Επειδή, το πιο συχνά, ψιχάλιζε στους δρόμους έξω, καθώς μες στην ψυχή μας. Κι ότι ήμασταν σιμά πολύ στα μέρη όπου δεν έχει καθημερινές και σκόλες, μήτε αρρώστους και γερούς, μήτε φτωχούς και πλούσιους, το καταλαβαίναμε. Γιατί κι ο βρόντος πέρα, κάτι σαν καταγίδα πίσω απ' τα βουνά, δυνάμωνε ολοένα, τόσο που καθαρά στο τέλος να διαβάζουμε το αργό και το βαρύ των κανονιών, το ξερό και το γρήγορο των πολυβόλων. Ύστερα και γιατί, ολοένα πιο συχνά, τύχαινε τώρα ν' απαντούμε απ' τ' άλλο μέρος να'ρχονται οι αργές οι συνοδείες με τους λαβωμένους. Όπου απιθώνανε χάμου τα φορεία οι νοσοκόμοι, με τον κόκκινο σταυρό στο περιβραχιόνιο, φτύνοντας μέσα στις παλάμες, και το μάτι τους άγριο για τσιγάρο. Κι οπού κατόπι, σαν ακούγανε για που τραβούσαμε, κουνούσαν το κεφάλι, αρχινώντας ιστορίες για σημεία και τέρατα. Όμως εμείς το μόνο που προσέχαμε ήταν εκείνες οι φωνές μέσα στα σκοτεινά, που ανέβαιναν, καυτές ακόμη από την πίσσα του βυθού ή το θειάφι: «Οϊ Οϊ, μάνα μου», «οϊ οϊ, μάνα μου», και κάποτε, πιο σπάνια, ένα πνιχτό μουσούνισμα, ίδιο ροχαλητό, που 'λεγαν, όσοι ξέρανε, είναι αυτός ο ρόγχος του θανάτου.

Ήταν φορές που εσέρνανε μαζί τους κι αιχμαλώτους, μόλις πιασμένους λίγες ώρες πριν, στα ξαφνικά γιουρούσια που κάναν τα περίπολα. Βρομούσανε κρασί τα χνότα τους, κι οι τσέπες τους γιομάτες κονσέρβα ή σοκολάτες. Όμως εμείς δεν είχαμε, ότι κομμένα τα γιοφύρια πίσω μας, και τα λίγα μουλάρια μας, κι εκείνα ανήμπορα μέσα στο χιόνι και στη γλιστράδα της λασπουριάς. Τέλος, κάποια φορά, φανήκανε μακριά οι καπνοί που ανέβαιναν μεριές μεριές, κι οι πρώτες στον ορίζοντα κόκκινες, λαμπερές φωτοβολίδες.