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A SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL LINK WITH GREECE
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From Subjects to Citizens; the Ionian Islands Path to State formation from Venetian Colony to British Protectorate

On Sunday, December 7, 2025, Hellenic Link-Midwest will present Professor Sakis Gekas, Associate Professor and the HHF (Hellenic Heritage Foundation) Chair in Modern Greek History at York University, Canada in a lecture titled "*From Subjects to Citizens; the Ionian Islands Path to State formation from Venetian Colony to British Protectorate*". The event will take place at 3 pm, 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.

A history of Ionian political identities shows the varied paths to state formation that emerged in the Greek world from the 18th to the 19th century besides the emergence of the post-revolution Greek state (Kingdom after 1833). In the Ionian Islands the arrival of the Republican French in 1797 and the period of the Napoleonic Wars (until 1815) abolished centuries of social hierarchies and ushered constitutional changes that created new hierarchies during the period of the Ionian State under British rule. The talk will trace the legacy of the Venetian period and stress the continuities and changes from the status of the Ionian Islands that defined the political identities of Ionians as colonial subjects to the status of citizens they held under the British protectorate of the Ionian State. These were not theoretical constructs but defined the lived experience of Ionians, allowed for negotiation between those in government and those with the right to vote, and provided an alternative path to state formation.

Sakis Gekas is Associate Professor and the HHF Chair in Modern Greek History at York University. He has published on economic and social history, British colonialism, migration and diaspora, modern Greek and Mediterranean history. His publications include: *Xenocracy: State, Class and Colonialism in the Ionian Islands, 1815-1864* (Berghan, 2016); *Ξενοκρατία* (Εκδόσεις Ανοικτού Πανεπιστημίου, 2021); *Απόμαχοι. Οι αγωνιστές της Επανάστασης του 1821 στο Οθωνικό Κράτος* ("Veterans. The fighters of the 1821 Revolution"), Athens 2021; "Hellenes of Toronto: Proud of Canadianism"; "Commemorating the 1821 Revolution in Canada, 1920s-2021". in Maria Kaliambou (ed.). *Η Επανάσταση του 1821 και οι Έλληνες της Αμερικής. Ασίνη, Αθήνα 2023*.

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