

NEWSLETTER

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HELLENIC LINK Midwest

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC
LINK WITH GREECE



Upcoming Events

Lecture - Networking

On Sunday December 10, 2000, Hellenic Link – Midwest in cooperation with the Hellenic Technological Association of Illinois presents Dr. *Panos Evangelou* in a lecture on "*The Contribution of the Greek Economy to the Development of the Balkans*"; 3:00 PM, at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 600 North State Street in Chicago. This event is also intended to provide an opportunity for networking among the members and friends of both organizations.

The Greek economy is by far the most developed and dynamic economy of the Balkans. The Greek government and the Greek private sector have undertaken a strong effort of economic cooperation with the countries of the area to aid their development and integration into the European Community. This lecture will provide an overview of the major economic indices that reflect the strength of the Greek economy, and will discuss investments and plans of investments by Greek companies in different sectors and countries of the Balkans.

Panos Evangelou holds a Ph.D. in Financial Economics from Northwestern University. After teaching Finance at the Graduate School of Business of Loyola University in Chicago for a few years, he went to Greece to work in the Private Banking department of Xios Bank as Head of Research and Investment Strategies. He returned to U.S.A. where he worked in the private sector holding Executive Finance positions, including the position of Chief Financial Officer. Presently, Dr. Evangelou is President of MetroFin, Inc., a Private Banking and Finance Company. Through MetroFin Investment Advisors, Inc. a subsidiary of MetroFin, Inc., he advises clients on portfolio holdings in the Greek Stock market.

Annual Dinner Dance - Scholarship Awards

The 15th Annual Dinner Dance, New Year Celebration, and Scholarship Awards of Hellenic Link - Midwest will be held on Saturday, January 20, 2001, at the Empress Banquets, 200 East Lake Street, Addison, Illinois (just West of the intersection of Route 83 and Lake Street). 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. Our Dinner Dances are distinguished for the excellent food, the unique kefi, and the fine music. For tickets, \$50 for adults, \$20 for children, \$30 for students, and \$25 after 10:00 PM (no food), please call 847 498-3686, or contact any of the Board Members.

In Brief

Suppression of Greek Minority in Albania

On October 18, 2000, "Omonia", the organization of the ethnic Greek minority in Albania, announced that despite protests made for violations in the first round of local elections held in Albania on October 1, 2000, Albanian political parties, the government, and the Central Supervisory Committee in particular, were fully responsible for not taking the necessary measures to ensure "a fair and calm election in the second round of elections for mayor of Himara". The organization criticized the strong nationalism injected into the election campaign by the Socialist Party, and considers it as the source of moral support for violations and violence by the police, intelligence, and the military police during the run up to the elections with the purpose to avert the turnout of voters and create a feeling of panic. "Omonia" said that violence and adulteration reached inconceivable dimensions, and culminated in the beating of the son of mayoral candidate Vassilis Bolanos a day after the elections.

Greece reacted strongly to the unfair treatment of ethnic Greeks in and around the Greek-speaking town of Himara. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe said that there were "serious irregularities" during and before the elections in the area of Himara. On November 19, 2000, Albania pledged to establish legislation that would "improve the rights of all Albanian citizens".

Turkish Cypriots Demonstrate Against Denktash

On Tuesday, October 17, 2000 in the Turkish-occupied areas of Cyprus, some 15,000 Turkish Cypriots, demonstrated against Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash, calling for his resignation and chanting: "This is

our country and we will rule it". Meanwhile, Turkish Cypriot women marched to the Nicosia checkpoint and delivered a petition to the UN Peace-keeping force, denouncing the violence and poverty experienced by Turkish Cypriots under Rauf Denktash's regime. They requested the petition to be conveyed to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The demonstration, organized by 40 Turkish Cypriot organizations, and a general strike declared in the Turkish-occupied areas were front-page stories in the Turkish Cypriot newspapers. It was noted that this was the biggest demonstration ever to take place in the illegal pseudostate in the northern part of the island.

According to the Turkish Cypriot press, barricades were set up in front of the building of the so-called "parliament" of the illegal regime. The crowd was addressed by Turkish Cypriot trade unionists. In a press release, the organizers of the demonstration stressed that Ankara, and not the Turkish Cypriots, is in control of what goes on in the northern part of the island.

Efforts to Change Cyprus' Demographic Character

According to a front-page article in the Turkish Cypriot newspaper "Kibris" (November 6, 2000), nearly forty nine thousand people were given the so-called "citizenship" of the illegal regime in the areas of Cyprus occupied by Turkey since 1974. This backs the position of the Cyprus government that Ankara and its puppet regime are changing the demographic character of the island to serve their interests. "Kibris", which has the highest circulation in the occupied areas, says that, according to figures given by a special investigative committee to the illegal "parliament" in Turkish occupied Cyprus, since 1974, 48,816 people were given the so-called "citizenship" while the report warns that the Turkish Cypriot community may face a number of social, cultural and economic problems if this trend is not stopped. The report, the paper says, is not complete as the investigative committee set up by the illegal "parliament" could not obtain full information on the number of persons given "citizenship". It was estimated that the illegal "council of ministers" in the Turkish occupied areas had given the so-called "citizenship" to about 84 percent of these persons. The seven-page report was approved only by the majority, as two parties disputed the facts given to the committee.

The government of Cyprus has repeatedly expressed its concern over the illegal influx of settlers and it is estimated that over 80 thousand people were brought to occupied Cyprus to change the demographic character of the island.

The increasing number of people illegally brought to the occupied areas, is an issue of concern to Turkish Cypriots, and one of the reasons they are leaving the island for a better future abroad. Sonay Adem, of the Turkish Cypriot

Republican Party, said that "citizenship" was given to people who did not even know where Cyprus was. His position was echoed by Ahmet Kashif, of the Turkish Cypriot Democratic Party, who said it was given to "whoever got off the boat", during the illegal "elections" held in the Turkish occupied areas of Cyprus in 1990. Adem described the figures given to the committee as wrong and fake, noting that at first they were told that until 1983 nearly forty nine thousand persons were given the illegal citizenship, but were later told that this figure applied until 1999.

Current Issues

Image Manipulators and the American Press

Excerpts from a key address by Marjorie Dobkin, Columbia professor (retired) and author of "Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of A City". Her observations are even more relevant today than when they were first delivered in a lecture in Thessaloniki, Greece, on December 1, 1994.

"I have studied the New York Times for many years, but will here restrict myself to the past ten months. The attitudes displayed, respectively, towards Armenia and Greece in the [New York] Times, as in my sampling of the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal, are essentially the same. . . articles originating in America about Greece, in all three papers, were negative, as were editorials and Op Ed articles . . .

As the mania for Bigness has taken hold, media empires have become vast bureaucracies with great concentration of power at the top, which dictate policy on various areas they consider 'sensitive.' But there is an even more dangerous development in American journalism, as executives fall into unhealthy collaboration with public relations companies hired by unsavory foreign governments to promote their clients.

There seems to be little understanding amongst Armenians or Greeks of how public relations work and the extent to which they mold images. The fact is that one cannot speak about the Armenian or Greek image without reference to Turkey and its urge to change its own image at the expense of ours . . .

It may be enlightening for me to quote from an interview given by the head of one of the many companies working to cleanse the image of Turkey . . . James Harff, director of Rudder-Finn Global Public Affairs, and he is here talking about the firm's success in reversing Bosnia's formerly bad image. The interview was conducted in Paris and appeared in a Jewish monthly, Midstream, in its April, 1994 issue . . .

Q: What achievements are you most proud of?

Harff: To have put Jewish opinion on our side. The Croatian and Bosnian past are marked by cruel anti-semitism. Tens of thousands of Jews perished. . . Our challenge was to reverse this attitude and we have succeeded masterfully . . . That was a tremendous coup. When the Jewish organizations entered the game on the side of the Bosnian Muslims, we could promptly equate the Serbs with the Nazis in the public mind. . . Almost immediately there was a clear change of language in the press, with the use of words with high emotional content such as "ethnic cleansing," "concentration camps," that evoked images of Nazi Germany and the gas chambers of Auschwitz. The emotional charge was so powerful nobody could go against it."

Q: But when you did all this, you had no proof that what you said was true.

Harff: Our work is not to verify information. Our work is to accelerate the circulation of information favorable to us . . .

Q: Are you aware that you took on a grave responsibility?

Harff: We are professionals. We had a job to do and we did it. We are not paid to be moral. . .

Blatant distortions are increasingly being found inserted in supposedly respectable newspapers and journals. A sinister aspect behind these is the growing number of chair professorships in Turkish history at major universities including Princeton, UCLA, and Harvard, some of them already filled by propagandists. Using their academic credentials and connections, these mercenary academics are legitimizing their propaganda in the name of scholarship.

The major effort . . . is to change history; to make Turks, for instance, alleged victims of Armenian killings in 1915 . . . There is also a noticeable effort to appropriate the ancient Greek presence in Anatolia and call it "Turkish" . . .

The media blitz by Turkey and its P.R. firms threatens to accelerate with few the wiser, thanks to an acquiescent American press that in its arrogance has lost sight of its mission to enlighten and evidently doesn't care whence its items originate. Editorial opinion is more and more being imposed on news stories, and whether wittingly or not, the top brass have allied themselves with shady interests and slick operators whose function is not to enlighten, but to obfuscate. Speaking now not as a person of Armenian ancestry, or as a friend of Greece, but as an American, I am horrified and outraged by this state of affairs, which does not bode well for democracy.

But I must tell you that to some extent it has been brought about because, until now, Greece, and Armenia, have been so obviously unconcerned about their respective images in the American press."

From The Riches Of Our Cultural Heritage

Year 2000 - Seferis Year

In celebration of one hundred years from the year of birth of the great poet of Modern Greece George Seferis, Greece has proclaimed year 2000 as Seferis Year. In participation to this celebration, we present the first paragraph and first entry from the "Politiko Hmerologio" (Political Diary), and two poems of George Seferis.

«...η πολιτική με τη στενή της έννοια, δέ μ' απασχόλησε ποτέ, σαν σκοπός ζωής. Αργότερα, όταν μπήκα στο υπουργείο και βρέθηκα εξαρτημένος από την πολιτική, πάλι δε μου πέρασε από το νου πως θα μπορούσα να γίνω ποτέ, σαν πολίτης, περισσότερο από ένας τίμιος οπαδός, και σαν υπηρέτης του κράτους περισσότερο από ένας ικανός βοηθός. Είχα άλλα ενδιαφέροντα, που τα τοποθετούσα ψηλότερα από τις πρόσκαιρες αυτές ασχολίες και πού ήταν η ζωή μου. Όμως, κρίνοντας αυστηρά τον εαυτό μου, δε νομίζω πως πήρα από κανένα τον καιρό που αφιέρωσα σ' αυτά τα ενδιαφέροντα... Νομίζω πως έκανα το χρέος μου στην υπηρεσία με την προσήλωσή οποιουδήποτε συναδέλφου που εκτιμώ. Η ανάγκη να υπηρετώ δύο κυρίους και η αποστροφή μου γενικά για την ερασιτεχνία με βασάνισαν αδιάκοπα. Κάποτε ήταν ένα μαρτύριο. Αλλά από μία ορισμένη στιγμή και πέρα, αφού δεν είχα τα μέσα να ζήσω τη ζωή που θα ήθελα, παραδέχτηκα πως ήταν καλύτερα έτσι...Εξ' άλλου, φαντάζομαι πως η συνείδηση της πνευματικής υπόστασής μου με βοήθησε να υπηρετήσω τον τόπο με μεγαλύτερη φροντίδα και γνώση της παράδοσής μας και του λαού μας...Έτσι, έκανα, ως τα σήμερα, όσο μπορούσα το υπηρεσιακό μου χρέος, και προσπάθησα, όσο μπορούσα, να μην έχω καμιά ιδιαίτερη εύνοια η απολαβή από τους ανθρώπους που μας κυβερνούσαν...»

G. S. *Χειρόγραφο Σεπ. '41*

1938

Τετάρτη, 5 Γενάρη

Τηλέφωνο: ο καθηγητής Αγγελόπουλος από το Παλάτι μιλά για τους γάμους του Διαδόχου: «Δεν είναι πράγματα αυτά διά να περάσουν απαρατήρητα. Απήτησαν σκέπιν πολλήν (sic), κόπους πολλούς. Δείχνουν ότι το Κράτος δύναται να οργανώσει κάτι (ξανά—sic).»

Τ' απόγευμα στο Αυλαρχείο, γιά να μάθω τι αποφασίστηκε γιά να παρακολοθήσουν οι ξένοι ανταποκριτές τους γάμους του διαδόχου. Ο Μερκάτης στο γραφείο του, πλάι του κρεμασμένο στην κρεμάστρα ένα παλτό με μεταξωτή φόδρα κι ένα πλατύ σκίσιμο κάτω από το εσωτερικό κουμπί. Λιγνός, ψαρό μουστάκι, οικόσημα στα δαχτυλίδια και στις μανσέτες, ζακέτα. Όλοι φορούν ζακέτες, ο Υψηλάντης, ο Σταθάτος. Χτυπά η πόρτα. Ο Υψηλάντης

λέει : «Εμπγός» με μιά προφορά δεν-ξέρω-τι. Κοροϊδεύουν και σνομπάρουν τούς Έλληνες—«Είνα ανόητοι οι Έλληνες.» Δεν τους αρέσουν. Τηλεφωνούν από κάποιο χωριό της Αττικής παρακαλώντας να σταματήσει το πριγκηπικό τρένο, γιά να ζητωκραυγάσει ο λαός. Ο Μερκάτης απαντά: «Να τους κόψει το τρένο, όλους! όλους! Μήπως θέλουν να ζητωκραυγάσουν Αρβανίτικα!;» Είναι πολύ ευχαριστημένος από την εξυπνάδα του.

STRATIS THALASSINOS AMONG THE AGAPANTHI

There are no asphodels, violets, or hyacinths;
how then can you talk with the dead?
The dead know the language of flowers only;
so they keep silent
they travel and keep silent, endure and keep silent,
beyond the community of dreams, beyond the community
of dreams.

If I start to sing I'll call out
and if I call out—
the agapanthi order silence
raising the tiny hand of a blue Arabian child
or even the footfalls of a goose in the air.

It's painful and difficult, the living are not enough for me
first because they do not speak, and then
because I have to ask the dead in order to go on farther.
There's no other way: the moment I fall asleep
the companions cut the silver strings
and the flask of the winds empties.
I fill it and it empties, I fill it and it empties;
I wake
like a goldfish swimming
in the lightning's crevices
and the wind and the flood and the human bodies
and the agapanthi nailed like the arrows of fate
to the unquenchable earth
shaken by convulsive nodding,
as if loaded on an ancient cart
jolting down gutted roads, over old cobblestones,
the agapanthi, asphodels of the negroes:
How can I grasp this religion?

The first thing God made is love
then comes blood
and the thirst for blood
roused by
the body's sperm as by salt.
The first thing God made is the long journey;
that house there is waiting
with its blue smoke
with its aged dog
waiting for the homecoming so that it can die.
But the dead must guide me;
it is the agapanthi that keep them from speaking,
like the depths of the sea or the water in a glass.

And the companions stay on in the palaces of Circe:
my dear Elpenor! My poor, foolish Elpenor!"
Or don't you see them
—"Oh help us!"—
on the blackened ridge of Psara?

OUR SUN

This sun was mine and yours; we shared it.
Who's suffering behind the golden silk, who's dying?
A woman beating her dry breasts cried out: "Cowards,
They've taken my children and torn them to shreds, you've
killed them
gazing at the fire-flies at dusk with a strange look, lost in
blind thought."
The blood was drying on a hand that a tree made green,
A warrior was asleep clutching the lance that flared against
his side.

It was ours, this sun, we saw nothing behind the gold
embroidery
Then the messengers came, dirty and breathless,
stuttering unintelligible words
Twenty days and nights on the barren earth with thorns only
Twenty days and nights feeling the bellies of the horses
bleeding
And not a moment's break to drink the rain water.
You told them to rest first and then to speak, the light had
blinded you.
They die saying: "We don't have time," touching some
rays of the sun.

A woman howled "Cowards", like a dog in the night.
Once she would have been beautiful like you
With wet mouth, veins alive beneath the skin,
with love.

This sun was ours; you kept all of it, you didn't want to
follow me.
And it was then I found out about those things behind the
gold and the silk:
We don't have the time. The messengers were right.