



HELLENIC LINK – MIDWEST Newsletter

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

The Nature of Power in the Graeco-Roman World: Three Moments of Truth

The Department of Classics & Mediterranean Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Hellenic Link–Midwest present the 20th annual Tracy Lecture by John Matthews, John M. Schiff Professor of History & Classics at Yale University, at 3:30 PM, Friday April 4, lecture room of Institute for the Humanities.

The “moments of truth” in question are the Athenian campaign of 415 BC against Sicily as described by Thucydides, the rise to power of Octavian as founder of the Roman Empire under the name of Augustus, as described by Tacitus, and the conversion to Christianity of the Emperor Constantine, seen as an instrument in his rise to power leading to the immense consequences with which we are familiar. The three episodes will be evaluated in the light of Thucydides’ analysis of the nature of power, and the question asked, whether or not they support Thucydides’ description of his History of the Peloponnesian War as a “possession for all time”. A further dimension will be provided by Thomas Hobbes, as translator of Thucydides and commentator on the opening chapters of the Annals of Tacitus.

John Matthews (D. Phil., Oxford 1970) holds a joint appointment in History and Classics at Yale University and is Chair of the Department of Classics. His research has chiefly centered on the interplay of social, political, and cultural aspects in the later Roman west, on Roman historiography and more recently on the promulgation and transmission of Roman law. He is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and the British Academy, and he has been a visiting member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. He is the author, or co-author, of six books and numerous articles and reviews. In 1982 he produced in collaboration with Tim Cornell the widely consulted Atlas of the Roman World, which has been translated and published in nine other languages. His most recent book, *Laying Down the Law: a Study of the Theodosian Code*, was published by Yale University Press in 2000.

Greek Daily Life in the 16th Century Ottoman Empire

On Sunday, April 13 at 3 PM, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dr. Tom Papademetriou, Assistant Professor of Historical Studies at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, in a lecture titled: *The Greek Daily Life in the 16th Century Ottoman Empire*. This lecture will be held at Four Point Sheraton Hotel, 10255 West Irving Road at Schiller Park (corner of Irving and Mannheim by O’Hare airport, phone: 847 671 4230).

This illustrated presentation will describe what life was like for the average Greek living in the Ottoman Empire at the height of Ottoman power and strength. By the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire had become a world power that encompassed most of the Balkans and the Middle East. As a result of this expansion, the Ottoman Empire had to contend with large populations who were diverse in religion, language, and tradition. Among the most important of these populations were the Greek Orthodox people who were prominent not only in the mainland of Greece, but also conspicuous in the capital of Istanbul/Constantinople, spread throughout Anatolia, the islands, and even residing in the Levant and North Africa. The economic activities of Greeks made them extremely useful to the Sultan, but they also were active socially, religiously, and politically in their own right.

Dr. Tom Papademetriou is Assistant Professor of Historical Studies at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. A graduate of both Hellenic College (BA, 1988) and Holy Cross School of Theology (M. Divinity, 1992), Dr. Papademetriou received his Ph.D. in 2001 from Princeton University’s Department of Near Eastern Studies. He was awarded research fellowships by the Social Science Research Council and the American Research Institute in Turkey to conduct research in the Ottoman Archives and the Archives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul, Turkey. His research focuses on the history of non-Muslims under Ottoman rule, and he is currently working on a book on the history of the sixteenth century Greek community in the Ottoman Empire. From 1999 to 2000, he was in residence as a Junior Fellow at Harvard University’s Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Research Center and Library, Washington, DC and from 2000 to 2001 served as Lecturer at the

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI. As a member of the Historical Studies faculty at Richard Stockton College since 2001, he is actively engaged in building a strong Hellenic Studies program in which he teaches courses on the history of the Tourkokratia, Modern Greece, the Balkans, and the Middle East. He lives in Linwood, NJ with his wife Dorrie, and two sons, George and Romanos.

Stalin's Outcasts

On Sunday, May 18, at 3 PM, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Golfo Alexopoulos, Associate Professor of Russian and Soviet History at the University of South Florida to talk on the subject of her new book, *Stalin's Outcasts: Aliens, Citizens, and the Soviet State, 1926-1936*, published by Cornell University Press. The book is the result of two years of research in Russia and in what used to be secret archives of the former Soviet Union.

The talk will address one of Stalin's earliest and longest campaigns to purge the country of internal enemies of the Soviet state. "Class enemies", as they were called, included priests and former tsarist officials, as well as anyone whose commercial activities condemned them as "bourgeois elements". Many of the Soviet Union's ethnic minorities, including Greeks, became the victims of this purge. The lecture will describe how people lived under Stalin's rule and how they responded to this policy of repression.

Dr. Alexopoulos received her B.A. in Economics and Philosophy from Northwestern University, her M.A. in Russian and East European Studies from Yale University, and her Ph.D. in History from the University of Chicago. She is also the author of several articles on the Stalin period, and has received fellowships from Harvard University, Fulbright, and the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research.

In Brief

Turkey guilty of human rights violations in Cyprus

On February 21, the European Court of Human Rights found Turkey guilty of violating the human rights of Turkish Cypriot doctor Ahmet Djavit to peaceful assembly by refusing him permission to visit Cyprus' southern government-controlled areas and the UN-controlled buffer zone to meet with Greek Cypriots. The Court ordered Turkey to pay 15,000 euros for non pecuniary damages and 4,715 for costs and expenses. The decision about the violation of two articles of the European Convention of Human Rights was taken by six votes to one, that of the Turkish judge sitting at the bench.

The Court said that between March 8, 1992 and April 14, 1998 only six out of 46 requests for such permits were

granted. The applicant complained that the refusals by the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot regime to allow him to cross into southern Cyprus and participate in bi-communal meetings breached three articles of the European Convention for Human Rights.

The Court dismissed Turkish claims that Ankara has no responsibility for events in the areas of Cyprus it occupies and said that it was obvious from the large number of troops engaged in active duties in northern Cyprus that the Turkish army exercised effective control over that part of the island. Such control entailed her responsibility for the policies and actions of the Turkish Cypriot regime.

The Court considered that all the meetings the applicant wished to attend were designed to promote dialogue and an exchange of ideas and opinions between Turkish Cypriots living in the north and Greek Cypriots living in the south, with the hope of securing peace on the island.

Failure of Talks on Cyprus Peace Plan.

On March 11, the governments of Greece and Cyprus and UN secretary general Kofi Annan expressed regret and disappointment at the failure of the UN-brokered talks at The Hague for reuniting the divided island republic of Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot side rejected fundamental points in Annan's peace plan, but pledged to continue their efforts for a Cyprus solution.' 'Regrettably, these efforts were not a success. We have reached the end of the road," Annan said in a statement read out by his special envoy to Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto, after the collapse of the marathon talks between Cyprus president Tassos Papadopoulos, Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash and the UN chief.

According to the Annan statement read out by de Soto, the talks were irrevocably deadlocked by the Turkish Cypriots' rejection of basic points of the UN peace plan. Annan announced that the office set up by de Soto in Nicosia 18 months ago to support the intensified peace effort would close, adding that he was not sure "another opportunity like this will present itself again any time soon", but nevertheless pledged not to abandon the Cyprus issue and to utilize every opportunity arising in the future for resolving the problem.

On March 11, the U.S. State Department expressed its "deep disappointment" over the collapse of the Cyprus peace talks at The Hague and placed the blame mainly on Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash. "We are deeply disappointed over the fact that the Secretary General's talks with the two leaders at The Hague did not end in an agreement ... The U.S. have been supporting for a long time the UN Secretary General's efforts and his initiative for the finding of a viable solution. The fact that Mr. Denktash did not allow the Turkish Cypriots to have the

opportunity to determine their future by voting on such a fundamental issue, is a sad thing."

Britain also agreed with UN Secretary General Kofi Anan that Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash is to blame for the breakdown of the Cyprus peace talks in The Hague.

The Foreign Office official Spokesman told CNA that "it is sad that the attitude of one of the parties forced that decision on the UN Secretary General and we have to agree with Kofi Annan that the blame principally lies with Mr. Denktash". The spokesman added that Denktash rejected the idea to put the UN proposals to a referendum, as well as to continue the work on the legislation committees. "Kofi Annan had no choice but to reach the conclusion that he reached", the British official said, and agreed with Annan, who "made it clear that the attitude of one of the parties to the process makes further progress impossible".

From Our History

From: *Modern Greece – A Short History*
By C.M. Woodhouse

The Dark Age of Greece (1453—1800)

Other forms of taxation were not numerous, though they were supplemented by arbitrary exactions and forced labour. The main tax on non-Muslims was the kharaj or capitation-tax, which literally entitled the tax-payer simply to retain his head on his shoulders. The existence of this tax is itself a refutation of the myth that the Turks attempted forcible conversions to Islam, for if they had done so they would have been depriving themselves of revenue. Two other regular taxes also bore heavily on the Greeks. One was the land-tax, which varied between a tenth and a third of the annual crop. The other was a tax on imports and exports. The significant point about the latter was that the rate of tax was doubled for non-Muslims. In fact few Muslims engaged in trade, which was regarded as an undignified occupation not to be compared with the profession of arms. Trade thus gradually passed into the hands of Greeks, Jews and Armenians, who flourished in spite of the tax, with important consequences in the later stages of the Ottoman Empire.

In return for taxation, the subject peoples enjoyed no services whatever from the Ottoman administration. What they did enjoy, however, which was more important in the long run, was relative freedom to manage their own lives as they thought fit. Since Islam made no distinction between religious and secular law, it was impossible to apply the legal system of the Ottoman Empire in its entirety to the subject peoples. It was tacitly assumed that the same identification of the secular and religious law applied to Greeks, Jews and other non-Muslims, as to

some extent was indeed the case. Each such religious community was regarded by the Turks as an autonomous millet (nation) under its religious leaders, supervised at the top (in the case of all Orthodox Christians, and not merely the Greeks) by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

That the millets were in many respects autonomous did not mean that the peasant was free from oppression. From the impossibility of effective central control of so large an empire it followed that circumstances varied very greatly from area to area. There were some areas where the Turkish administration seldom ventured at all, and failed to impose itself when it did. The most famous were the districts of Souli in Epirus, Maina in the Peloponnese, and Agrapha (which literally means 'unregistered') in the Pindus mountains. Such areas might be considered in a sense to be free, but their freedom might be subject to the domination of a powerful local family, as the Maina became under the clan of Mavromikhalis. Even in areas where the writ of the Ottoman administration still ran, local adventurers might take advantage of Turkish tolerance to acquire fortunes and power, as happened in the Peloponnese, where the local institutions became so strong that they were entitled to send their own ambassadors (*vekils*) to Constantinople to report on their Turkish masters.

Again the Greek peasant did not necessarily benefit from the system. A Greek *kodjabashi* or primate could be as oppressive as a Turkish *pasha*; so could an Orthodox bishop. Probably those who were best off were the inhabitants of areas excluded from the feudal system, either because they belonged to Moslem religious foundations (*vakouf*), of which there were many, or because they were private appanages of the Sultan's family. A most notable example of the latter kind was the island of Chios, which was for centuries the most prosperous and civilized community in the Aegean. Athens and Rhodes enjoyed similar status. It was certainly preferable for a Greek peasant to be under the direct control of the Sultan's house than under a Roman Catholic domination (as in Tinos, Crete, or the Ionian Islands) or at the mercy of some of his own fellow-Greeks. This was the case at any rate in the early years of the Ottoman occupation, before the seeds of corruption which were already latent in the system had begun to sprout. Clear evidence that Ottoman rule was not in itself intolerable is to be found in the large influx into Greece (especially Salonika) of the Jews.

But the subject peoples were never allowed to forget that they were, in the eyes of their conquerors, simply 'cattle'. They had to dress differently from the Turks; they could not bear arms or ride a horse; they paid higher taxes; they might not build their houses higher than their Muslim neighbours; they could not repair their churches or ring

their bells without official permission. At least two Sultans contemplated exterminating the Greeks altogether. They were subject to mass-deportations in the early days of Turkish rule, though not later. Hence came the movement of Greeks out of the towns, the renewed influx of Albanians into Greece (which had already begun in the 14th century), and the re-population of Constantinople itself from Serbia, Albania and Greece. These movements were in part enforced and in part spontaneous but caused by the conditions of life under Ottoman rule. For if not systematically oppressive, its total indifference to the welfare of its subjects was itself productive of discontent and even despair. Ottoman administration was never a settled system, only a by-product of war, and war was virtually continuous from the 14th century, when the occupation of Greece began, to the 19th, when it ended.

The Greeks as a people were seldom directly involved in this unending procession of wars. For three centuries they were a people without history, whose fortunes fluctuated

with the ebb and flow of Ottoman warfare. During the early period, when the Ottoman armies were advancing on all fronts, the state of Greece was relatively secure. The people were demoralized but not oppressed. There followed a period when the tide of conquest was contained and the latent seeds of decay began to do their inevitable work. In this period the Greeks suffered from mis-government, depopulation and economic depression, without yet enjoying any compensatory improvements. Then came the period of headlong decline of the Ottoman Empire, which the Greeks exploited to the full. They both accelerated the decline and profited from it. On the Turkish side, vindictive oppression alternated with sudden relaxation. It is impossible to assign precise dates to these tidal movements; nor was their effect on the condition of the Greeks instantaneous. But the ebb and flow of Ottoman warfare was the decisive factor in determining the context of their lives. From 1453 to 1821, it was never wholly static

From The Riches Of Our Cultural Heritage
From the "Axion Esti" by Odysseas Elytis

PSALM XVII

Now I'm marching on to a distant and sinless land.
Now imponderable beings follow me
with polar iridescence in their hair
with a pure golden glaze over their skin.
I cut through grasses with my knee for prow
and my breath blows away from the earth's face
the last cloud-fluffs of sleep.
Trees march by my side, against the wind.
I gaze on mysteries great and paradoxical:
Helen's crypt is a fountain.
The shape of the cross a trident entwined with dolphins.
Unholy barbed wire a white portal
through which I shall pass in glory.
The words that betrayed me the slaps I've endured
have turned into myrtles and palms:
pealing out hosannas for my coming!
I see scarcity as sensuous fruit,
slanting olive trees with azure between their fingers
like years of fury behind prison bars.
And an endless shore, wet with the enchantment of lovely
eyes:
the sea-depths of Marina.
Where I shall walk in purity.
The tears that betrayed me and the humiliations endured
have turned into breezes and hovering birds:
pealing out hosannas for my coming!
Now I'm marching on to a distant and sinless land.

PSALM XVIII

Now I'm marching on to a distant and unwrinkled land.
Now azure girls follow me
and stone ponies
with the sun's wheel on their wide brows.
generations of myrtles recognize me
from the time I trembled on the iconostasis of water,
crying out to me, holy, holy.
He that defeated Hell, he that liberated Love
he is the Prince of Lilies.
And for a moment I was once more painted
by those same zephyrs of Crete,
that crocus yellow might receive justice from the
empyrean.
Now in whitewash I enclose and entrust
my true Laws.
Blessed, I say, are the strong who decode the Immaculate,
for their teeth alone is the grape-nipple that intoxicates
on the breasts of volcanoes and the vineshoots of virgins.
Behold, let them follow in my footsteps!
Now I'm marching on to a distant and unwrinkled land.
Now it is the hand of Death
that bestows Life,
and sleep does not exist.
The churchbells of midday are ringing
and slowly on sunhot rocks are engraved these words:
NOW and AYE and WORTHY IT IS
Aye aye and now now warble the birds.
WORTHY is the price paid.