



# HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

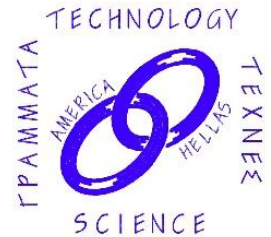
A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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## Upcoming Events

### The Next Twenty Years in Greek America

On Sunday, December 10, 2017, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dan Georgakas in the *Hellenic Foundation* lecture titled: “*The Next Twenty Years in Greek America.*” This lecture is funded by the *Hellenic Foundation, Chicago*. The event will take place at 3:00 pm in Room 1610, at the Oakton Community College Des Plaines Campus, 1600 E. Golf Road Des Plaines, IL 60016. Admission will be free.

Dan Georgakas will discuss how the Greek America that will exist twenty years from now will be significantly different from the Greek America of today, or the Greek America of fifty years ago. The major difference is demographics. Due to the high rate of outmarriage to non-Greeks, the vast majority of Greek Americans in 2037 will be of mixed ethnic heritage. Greek identity will increasingly be more a matter of personal choice rather than family tradition. Competing ethnic heritages will be in play. Georgakas will outline the basic challenges this reality poses for the continued viability of Greek America. How other ethnic groups have dealt with multi-ethnicity, their successes and failures, will be examined as possible guidelines in shaping our own agenda. Although Greek America has never been more prosperous than at present, there are numerous shortcomings in our present thinking regarding the future. Alongside those weaknesses, are numerous positive trends and actions in place that need to be vigorously reinforced. The future is always unpredictable. Domsday scenarios are easy to imagine, but rational planning can result in a future Greek America that would be as viable as today’s Greek America - however different in its specifics.

*Dan Georgakas* is Director of the Greek American Studies Project at the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Queens College (City University of New York). He is editor of the American Hellenic Institute’s policy journal, executive editor of the *Journal of Modern Hellenism*, and columnist for *The National Herald*. His most recent book is *My Detroit: Growing Up Greek and American in Motor City*.

### Annual Dinner Dance -- Scholarship Awards

The *Annual Dinner Dance, New Year Celebration, and Scholarship Awards* of Hellenic Link–Midwest will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2018, at the Four Points

Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Road at Schiller Park, starting at 6:00 pm. The proceeds from the Annual Dinner Dance are used to support the cultural and educational program, the scholarships, and all other activities of our organization. The generous support of our members and friends will be greatly appreciated. For tickets, at \$80 per person (\$40 for children up to 12 years old, from the special menu), please call 847-612-2202, or contact any of the Board members. Tickets can also be purchased at the door the night of the event, but purchase of tickets in advance will greatly facilitate the planning of the event, and it will be greatly appreciated.

## In Brief

### Greece will Continue to Face Risk of Bankruptcy

<http://www.ekathimerini.com/223015/article/ekathimerini/business/bankruptcy-risk-without-debt>

Greek Parliament’s State Budget Office (PBO) warned recently that the country will continue to face the risk of bankruptcy unless there is a serious easing of the national debt. The tax policy needs to change because it is hampering growth. Lightening of the debt is necessary because interest payments will soar after 2020. According to data from the Public Debt Management Agency, in the six years from 2021 to 2026, 84.3 billion euros will be required for interest payments alone.

On Dec 6, 2017, the PBO’s head, Professor Panagiotis Liargovas, said “*Without a serious lightening of the debt Greece will be bankrupt.*” The obligation of high primary budget surpluses are asphyxiating the economy, and may lead to a vicious cycle of recessions. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is persistently stressing that the imposed primary surplus is unrealistic.

The report concludes that “*the tax policy implemented in recent years, based on increases in taxation, is hampering growth in the country. The continuation of the tax-centered policy increases the economy’s suffocation, while on a practical level a large part of the taxes are not collected.*”

It is also noted that “*the distribution of the tax burden among citizens is not balanced, with a large section of taxpayers paying minimum taxes – which highlights the high rate of tax evasion and the high rate of poverty – and relatively high incomes are taxed excessively, creating counterincentives for labor.*”

Total tax revenues as a percentage of the gross domestic product climbed from 30.8 percent in 2009 to 36.4 percent in 2015, while during the same period, on the average, in the European Union this rise was from 25.1 percent to 26.9 percent.

Referring to the end of the bailout program and Greece's return to the markets, the report says: "Even a 'clean' return to the markets does not entail an exit from all supervision," and economic supervision will be required for "a possibly necessary precautionary credit line, not to mention the measures to lighten the public debt." Despite the recent improvement in the macroeconomic figures, the signs of the crisis are evident in the business activity, while business prosperity is necessary for the country to return to growth.

Reacting to the report, Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said that the PBO report is based on "outdated figures" leading to the "wrong conclusions." House speaker Nikos Voutsis, who is responsible for the PBO, said: "Reinforcement and support of the need for debt restructuring, and this at a crucial time when the Greek government has initiated the relevant negotiations with the institutions and is expecting positive developments soon, cannot be done with inflated data from tables using 2013 figures and with threats of bankruptcy. I am surprised at the use of invalid data and the ensuing public relations stunts."

### **Leader of Terrorist Group is Granted Temporary Leave from Jail**

Dimitris Koufodinas, a leading member of Greece's most deadly guerrilla group, November 17, began a two-day leave from prison on Thursday November 9, 2017. In 2003, 15 people, including Koufodinas, were found guilty for 23 killings and dozens of bomb attacks claimed by the guerrilla group. The targets of the guerrilla group ranged from businessmen to diplomats. Its first victim was a CIA station chief in 1975, and its last a British embassy defense attaché in 2000.

Koufodinas, an amateur beekeeper known as 'poison hand' for the precision of his aim, is serving 11 life sentences for his role in the murders committed by the Marxist group and has been kept at a high-security jail in Athens for 15 years.

The parole board ruling has triggered a storm of protest and expressions of regret from Britain and the United States.

A government official said: "I am not going to defend the practice, the deeds, nor the ideology of Mr Koufodinas. What I can say as a comment is that in this specific case the law was applied to the letter, and the preconditions were met for granting leave."

The release comes at a time when the Greek government is frequently accused of being soft on anti-establishment groups with roots in leftist radicalism and anarchy.

Conservative lawmaker Dora Bakoyannis, whose husband Pavlos Bakoyannis was gunned down by November 17 in 1989, told Skai TV: "He isn't just any terrorist. He was a leader, the ideological guide, the guy who wrote a book, who said that after the murder (of Bakoyannis) he went to a tavern and celebrated. While my children were crying."

Greece has a history of political violence and still has urban guerrilla groups, though none as deadly as November 17.

The law that provides for the temporary leave of Koufodinas was introduced in 2015 by the justice minister Nikos Paraskevopoulos of the SYRIZA government.

According to the Greek newspaper *Kathimerini*, this law has led to the temporary, or permanent, release from prison of individuals who either played a prominent role in the commission of crimes, or returned to crime after they were given a second chance.

Since the law was introduced many of those who were granted furloughs violated the terms of their parole, while a number of inmates who benefited from the law, and were released early, were later convicted again of serious felonies.

### **Prices Particularly High in Greece**

According to the Greek newspaper *Kathimerini*, after eight years of a deep financial crisis Greece remains an expensive country.

Eurostat data shows that Greeks pay more than all other European Union citizens for their telephony and postal services - almost 40 percent above the EU average - and even higher than in Switzerland. Food prices are above the bloc's average by about 4 percent, even though per capita gross domestic product in Greece is 67 percent of the EU average. Food prices in Spain and Portugal are below those of Greece or below of the EU average. Prices for alcoholic beverages and tobacco products are also considerably higher than in other EU countries. Passenger transportation is more expensive than in Italy and Spain, and even Luxembourg. Furniture are more expensive than in Germany and France.

### **From Our History**

#### **Some of the Critical Developments that Led to the Division of Cyprus.**

(Source: U.S. Consul General Charles W. McCaskill, July 7, 1993, Interview for Foreign Affairs Oral History Project)

I arrived in Cyprus almost exactly one month before independence, which occurred on August 16, 1960. I went as Economic/Commercial Officer

Q: Can you describe Cyprus at the time you arrived, what the political/economic situation was?

McCASKILL: The London-Zurich Agreements establishing the new Republic of Cyprus had been signed in February, 1960, and there was some relief (obviously premature) among all parties concerned (except the Greek Cypriots) that the Cyprus Problem was "settled". Athens was truly anxious to put the Cyprus Problem to rest, to get on with solving some of Greece's problems. It should be kept in mind that Greece was at war longer than any other single European country—from October 28, 1940 to the end of the Civil War in 1949—and the Greek Government wanted to get on with rebuilding the country. The Greeks had been completely preoccupied with Cyprus from the early 1950s and time and energy that should have gone into reconstruction of Greece were devoted to Cyprus. The international community was fed up with Cyprus, which had been at the center of the world stage for some years. So the feeling in Greece, at least in Thessaloniki, was one of relief that the problem was settled. It was our perception that the Greeks were relieved.

When I arrived in Cyprus I was surprised to find a general feeling among the Greek Cypriot community -- which was 80% of the population -- that the London-Zurich Agreements would not work, that the safeguards written into the agreements for the Turkish Cypriots were extreme, that the agreements were "*not fair*", and on and on.

In truth, the agreements were an extremely complicated set of agreements which did, in my opinion, give the Turkish Cypriots too many safeguards. Former Under Secretary of State George Ball described the Agreements as an "*impressive diplomatic tour de force*" which were "*too complex to be workable*". Most objectionable to the Greek Cypriots, Turkey could, under the Treaty of Guarantee, intervene in Cyprus. The Turkish Cypriot community's vetoes, legislative and executive, could bring the government to a standstill; the Turkish Cypriots, 20% of the population, were given 30% of the civil service and the legislature. The Greek Cypriots vigorously opposed the concept that the two communities on the island were equal partners, that there was no majority community and no minority community, that they were both equal participants in the government.

The Greek Cypriots, including Makarios, felt that the agreements had been imposed on Cyprus by circumstances, that Makarios had been "*forced*" to sign; no Greek Cypriot was present when the Greeks and the Turks reached agreement. Makarios stated later that he signed because the British threatened to partition the island if he did not agree to the agreements, and he feared that intercommunal fighting like that of 1958 would begin again. Moreover, Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis rebuked Makarios rather strenuously at the first meeting in London and threatened to withdraw Greek support if Makarios refused to sign the agreements.

Makarios had indicated in 1958 that he could accept a solution of an independent Cyprus rather than insisting on union with Greece. Great Britain by 1958 had reviewed its security position and had decided that bases on the island would satisfy its security requirements and that it did not need to hold the entire island. All of this led to the conference in Zurich and later in London.

I've gone beyond the political/economic situation on the island when I got there but this does give a little flavor of what we were hearing when I arrived. I might add that I have thought about the London-Zurich Agreements over the years, and I have concluded that it was probably impossible for a small group of Greek and Turkish diplomats to work out, even in outline, such complicated agreements, and I have wondered if the agreements were drafted in London and slipped to the Turks who then put them on the table in Zurich. You may recall that they met in Zurich for less than a week and drew up an outline of the agreement; they then met in London a few days later to sign them. Many of the provisions had been contained in previous British proposals -- most recently the MacMillan Plan —but one still has to wonder if the Greeks and Turks had the diplomatic expertise for such an undertaking.

Speaking of the pressures on Makarios, Ambassador Nikos Kranidiotis - the Cyprus Ambassador in Athens for many years - in his book entitled *Difficult Years* says that Makarios anguished all night over whether or not to sign. He received calls from Queen Frederika in Athens, from former Governor of Cyprus Hugh Foot, and from the leader of the British Labor Party, all urging him to sign. As a footnote, I asked Frederika, whom I came to know fairly well when I was Consul General in Madras, if the story were true and she said her husband spoke to Makarios. The King only called, she said, because they were afraid that the Karamanlis government would fall if Makarios refused to sign. She indicated that fear that the government would fall justified what otherwise could have been termed "intervention" in Greek internal affairs. I believe Kranidiotis' version, and have always felt, that for whatever reason, Frederika was dissembling with me. Cyprus was dubbed by some over the years as "*The Reluctant Republic*", since it was felt that the solution really desired by the majority Greek Cypriots was union with Greece rather than independence, and that independence was "*forced*" on Makarios ...

I rode around Nicosia, the capital, a good bit on independence day, and I saw Greek flags in the Greek quarter and Turkish flags in the Turkish quarter. This is what a former governor referred to as "*the flag nuisance*" in Cyprus. Under the British occupation, the Greek Cypriots traditionally brought out the Greek flag on holidays, rather than the Union Jack. This tended to grate on British nerves but they never found a way to counter it.

(*To be continued*)

## *From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage*

### **Ποίηση του Γιώργου Σεφέρη**

RAVEN

Χρόνια σαν τα φτερά. Τι θυμάται τ' ακίνητο κοράκι;  
τί θυμούνται οι πεθαμένοι κοντά στις ρίζες των δέντρων;  
Είχαν ένα χρώμα τα χέρια σου σαν το μήλο που πέφτει.  
Κι αυτή η φωνή που ξαναγυρίζει πάντα, χαμηλή.  
Εκείνοι που ταξιδεύουν κοιτάζουν το πανί και τ' αστέρια  
ακούνε τον αγέρα ακούνε πέρα απ' τον αγέρα την άλλη  
θάλασσα

σαν ένα κοχύλι κλειστό κοντά τους, δεν ακούνε  
τίποτε άλλο, δεν ψάχνουν μέσα στους ίσκιους των κυπαρισσιών  
ένα χαμένο πρόσωπο, ένα νόμισμα, δε γυρεύουν  
κοιτάζοντας ένα κοράκι σ' ένα ξερό κλωνί, τι θυμάται.

Μένει ακίνητο πάνω στις ώρες μου λίγο πιο ψηλά  
σαν την ψυχή ενός αγάλματος που δεν έχει μάτια  
είναι ένα πλήθος μαζεμένο μέσα σ' αυτό το πουλί  
χίλιοι άνθρωποι ξεχασμένοι σβησμένες ρυτίδες  
ερεπωμένες αγκαλιές και γέλια που δεν τέλειωσαν  
έργα σταματημένα σιωπηλοί σταθμοί  
ένας ύπνος βαρύς από χρυσά ψιχαλίσματα.

Μένει ακίνητο. Κοιτάζει τις ώρες μου. Τι θυμάται;  
Είναι πολλές πληγές μέσα στους αόρατους ανθρώπους, μέσα του  
πάθη μετέωρα περιμένοντας τη δεύτερη παρουσία  
επιθυμίες ταπεινές που κόλλησαν πάνω στο χόμα  
σκοτωμένα παιδιά και γυναίκες που κουράστηκαν την αυγή.  
Τάχα να βαραίνει πάνω στο ξερό κλωνί τάχα να βαραίνει  
πάνω στις ρίζες του κίτρινου δέντρου πάνω στους ώμους  
των άλλων ανθρώπων, τις παράξενες φυσιογνωμίες  
που δεν τολμούν να γγίζουν μια στάλα νερό βυθισμένοι στο  
χόμα

τάχα να βαραίνει πουθενά;

Είχαν ένα βάρος τα χέρια σου όπως μέσα στο νερό  
μέσα στις θαλασσινές σπηλιές, ένα βάρος αλαφρύ χωρίς  
συλλογή

με την κίνηση κάποτε που διώχνουμε την άσκημη σκέψη  
στρώνοντας το πέλαγο ως πέρα στον ορίζοντα στα νησιά.

Είναι βαρύς ο κάμπος ύστερ' απ' τη βροχή· τι θυμάται  
η μαύρη στεκάμενη φλόγα πάνω στον γκριζό ουρανό  
σφηνωμένη ανάμεσα στον άνθρωπο και στην ανάμνηση του  
ανθρώπου

ανάμεσα στην πληγή και το χέρι που πλήγωσε μαύρη λόγχη,  
σκοτείνιασε ο κάμπος πίνοντας τη βροχή, έπεσε ο αγέρας  
δε σώνει η δική μου πνοή, ποιος θα το μετακινήσει;  
ανάμεσα στη μνήμη, χάσμα — ένα ξαφνισμένο στήθος  
ανάμεσα στους ίσκιους που μάχονται να ξαναγίνουν άντρας  
και γυναίκα

ανάμεσα στον ύπνο και στο θάνατο στεκάμενη ζωή.

Είχαν μια κίνηση τα χέρια σου πάντα προς τον ύπνο του  
πελάγου

χαϊδεύοντας τ' όνειρο που ανέβαινε ήσυχα τη μαλαματένια  
αράχνη

φέρνοντας μέσα στον ήλιο το πλήθος των αστερισμών  
τα κλεισμένα βλέφαρα τα κλεισμένα φτερά...

*Κοριτσά, χειμώνας 1937*

Years like wings. What does the motionless raven remember?

What do the dead remember near the roots of trees?

Your hands had the color of the falling apple.

And this voice that always returns in a low tone.

Those who travel focus on the sail and the stars  
hear the wind and beyond the wind the other sea  
like a closed conch near them, they hear nothing  
else, they don't search among the shadows of  
the cypresses

for a lost person, a coin, they don't question  
looking at the raven on a dry tree branch what it remembers.

It stays motionless over my hours a bit higher  
like the soul of an eyeless statue

a huge crowd has gathered inside this bird  
a thousand people forgotten, vanished wrinkles  
vacant embraces and laughter never completed  
works stopped halfway, silent stations  
a heavy slumber of golden drizzle.

It stays motionless. Stares at my hours. What does it remember?  
There are many wounds in the invisible people,  
inside it

suspended passions yearning for the Second Coming  
humble desires glued on the ground  
children killed and women tired of the daybreak.

Does it weight down the dry branch, does it weigh down  
the roots of the yellow tree, over the shoulders  
of the other people, the strange faces  
who don't dare touch a drop of water though  
sunken in the ground

does it weight down anywhere?

Your hands had the weight of hands in the water  
in the sea caves, a light weight, without  
thought

with the motion that we suddenly push away an ugly thought  
laying the pelagos to the far end of the horizon to the islands.

The plain is heavy after the rain; what does the motionless  
black flame remembers against the gray sky  
wedged between man and the memory of man  
between a wound and the hand that injured it black  
spear

the plain darkened drinking the rain, the wind subsided  
my own breath isn't enough, who will shift it?

Within the memory, a chasm— a startled breast  
between the shadows struggling to become man  
and woman again

between sleep and death motionless life.

Your hands always had a movement toward the sleep  
of pelagos

caressing the dream that slowly ascended the silky  
spider web

bringing into the sun multitude of constellations  
the close eyelids the folded wings...

*Koritsa, winter 1937*