



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

Thinking about Gender in the Greek Theater: From Medea to Lysistrata

On Sunday, October 21, 2018, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents *Professor Angeliki Tzanetou* in a lecture titled: “Thinking about Gender in the Greek Theater: From Medea to Lysistrata” The event will take place at 3:00 pm in Room 1610, at the Oakton Community College, 1600 E. Golf Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016. Admission will be free. The event is co-sponsored by the Greek Women's University Club.

Though Athenian women were not granted the privilege of citizenship, they served important roles in Athenian society, serving the city and the family in a variety of roles. Their standing was further limited by Athenian norms and ideology which assigned women a shadowy existence, relegating them to a life of silence and seclusion. Athenian tragedy and comedy, on the other hand, endowed female characters with a far greater degree of agency, freedom, and power than was allotted them in their everyday lives. This lecture aims to outline the distinctive roles female characters discharged onstage alongside their male counterparts and discuss the disjunction between the powerful, vindictive, and self-sacrificial portraits of female figures onstage, viewing them against the social, political, and religious realities of Athens in the fifth century B.C.E. The talk will explore select examples from tragedy, focusing on the powerful portraits of Aeschylus’ Clytemnestra, Euripides’ Medea, and Sophocles’ Antigone as well as some of those of their comic counterparts in Aristophanes’ plays, especially Lysistrata. Emphasis will also be placed on interpreting male-female antagonism, women’s religious and social networks in the ancient city, and the relevance of gender for understanding politics in Athenian drama.

Angeliki Tzanetou is Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the Editor of the academic journal, *Illinois Classical Studies*. She has served as Co-Director of the program in Modern Greek Studies and as Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of the Classics.

Angeliki Tzanetou is the author of *City of Suppliants: Tragedy and the Athenian Empire* and co-editor of *Finding Persephone: Women’s Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean*. She has edited two volume issues, one on ancient drama and performance for *Illinois Classical Studies* and a second one for *Classical World* in 2017,

and co-edited *on Gender, East, and West*. Her primary areas of expertise lie in ancient drama and performance, politics, religion, and ancient gender studies. She is currently at work on a book, titled, “*Mothers’ Toil: Motherhood and the Body Politic in Athenian Drama*.”

Myths, Monuments, and Early Greek History: Excavations at the Mycenaean Capital of Iklaina

On Sunday, November 11, 2018, Hellenic Link–Midwest, presents *Professor Michael Cosmopoulos* in a presentation titled “*Myths, Monuments, and Early Greek History: Excavations at The Mycenaean Capital of Iklaina*”. The event will be held at 3:00 pm at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park (southeast corner of Irving Park Road and Mannheim Road). Admission is free for HLM members and \$5 for nonmembers.

The systematic excavations at the site of Iklaina, in the region of Pylos, have brought to light a major capital city of the Late Bronze Age, a period also known as Mycenaean and famous for such mythical sagas as the Trojan War (ca. 1600-1200 BC). Massive “*Cyclopean*” structures, monumental buildings decorated with beautiful wall paintings, advanced urban infrastructures, and the earliest known records of state bureaucracy in Greece provide new insights as to how states and governments were born in the western world. Because Iklaina is also mentioned in Homer’s “*Iliad*”, the excavations also allow a better understanding of the processes that led to the creation of the Homeric epics. In this illustrated lecture, Professor Cosmopoulos will present the exciting archaeological discoveries at Iklaina and discuss their significance for Greek history.

Michael Basil Cosmopoulos is Professor of Greek History and Archaeology and holder of the Endowed Professorship in Greek Studies at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. He is an anthropologically trained classicist and archaeologist, specializing in the political and cultural history of ancient Greece, with special focus on: state formation; secret cults; and social memory. He has excavated many sites in Greece and Ukraine and currently directs the excavations of the Athens Archaeological Society at Iklaina, in Pylos. He is an elected Fellow of the Academy of Science St. Louis, of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and of the Royal Society of Canada. A National Geographic Society Explorer, he is also the recipient of the

Excellence in Teaching Award of the Archaeological Institute of America.

In Brief

Taxes in Greece

According to a recent OECD Report (*Tax Policy Reforms 2018, OECD and Selected Partner Economies*), between 2015 and 2016, Greece held the first place among the organization's 34 member-states in the tax-to-GDP ratio increase, due to higher revenues from taxes on income and taxes on goods and services. Over-taxation is considered to be a primary factor hindering the recovery efforts of the Greek economy. In the 2007–2016 period, taxation in Greece, as a percentage of GDP, increased by 7.4 percentage points—the greatest increase in the developed economies of the world. Despite the tax hikes, the quality of public services provided by the Greek State has worsened, especially in the health sector.

Promises Reminding the Sinful Past

On August 21, 2018, Greece's prime minister Tsipras—announcing from Ithaca the end of bailouts—promised a phased reduction of corporate tax to 25 percent from 29 percent from next year, an average 30 percent reduction in the property tax (*ENFIA*), and a 50 percent reduction for low-income families, and a reduction of the value-added tax by two percentage points.

He pledged to reinstate labor rights and increase the minimum wage, to reduce or subsidize social security contributions for certain sections of the workforce, and retroactive pay rises worth €1bn for university professors, the police, military and judiciary. He promised rent subsidies from euros 70 to 200/month to at least 300,000 families, starting 1/1/2019, and to further fund and make permanent the Program “*Help at Home*” for old people and people with handicaps.

Tsipras said because Greece was “*outperforming all fiscal targets*” his government would not only meet the new goals, but the other cuts his government has committed to were no longer necessary. His government has agreed to further scale back pensions in January 2019.

He pledged that his government will maintain a primary budget surplus at the equivalent of 3.5 percent of GDP without the need for further pension cuts.

The Response of the Creditors

As reported in the Greek newspaper Kathimerini, Klaus Regling, the head of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), in an interview with Austrian newspaper Die Presse said that ESM could freeze Greece's debt relief measures if the government starts rolling back reforms.

He said: “*Greece needs to continue the reforms. We are a very patient creditor. But we can stop debt relief measures that have been decided for Greece if the adjustment programs are not continued as agreed. The debt level appears to be frighteningly elevated but Greece can live with that as the loan maturities are very long and the interest rates on the loans are much lower than in most other countries.*”

Regling, referring to Portugal, Spain, Ireland and Cyprus, said four of the five “*crisis countries*” are “*in better shape today than most of the other euro-area countries due to economic reforms. Hopefully, Greece will also become a success story.*”

As foreign auditors returned to Athens for the first assessment of Greece's finances since the country exited its international bailouts last month, a top European official stressed that debt relief will depend on the continuation of economic reforms.

These assessments come in the wake of pledges made by Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras for cuts in taxes and social security contributions as well as rent subsidies for poor households and other benefits.

Tsipras also vowed to press European officials to suspend a further round of a cuts to pensions, due to come into effect in January, claiming that the measure is not necessary for Greece to hit a primary surplus target of 3.5 percent.

From Our History

The Cyprus Tragedy and the Culpability of the British

(*Excerpts from: The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The Turkish Pogrom of September 6-7, 1955, and the Destruction of the Greek Community in Istanbul, By Speros Vryonis*)

On September 6 and 7, 1955, a Turkish mob carried out a pre-planned pogrom against the Greek community of Constantinople. The Turks destroyed 71 churches, 41 schools, 4,008 stores, the offices and printing presses of eight newspapers, and approximately 2,100 dwellings, all the property of the Greeks and their communities.

They killed 28 Greeks, carried out rapes of Greek women, smashed and dug up the graves in Greek cemeteries, and forcibly circumcised some elderly priests on the streets.

Some explained the pogrom as the consequence of the relative economic affluence of the Greek minority of Istanbul in contrast to the relatively penurious underclass of the city that, jealous of its more prosperous Christian fellow citizens, spilled out into the streets in a paroxysmic and “*spontaneous*” rage, and looted the property of the Greeks.

There was the official accusation by the Menderes government that the crimes were actually organized and carried out by communists. According to many observers, this "*solution*" was suggested to the Turkish government by Allen Dulles, the director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, who had been attending an international congress on criminology in Istanbul at the time.

More generally, there has been a tendency to look at the crescendo of Greek-Turkish crises as something in the very nature of things, and of the political life of the Balkans and the Middle East, and thus to be viewed as inescapable and fated. This type of reasoning, of course, conveniently avoids placing "*fault*," or even a degree of fault, in one or another party. Hence, not only are all parties guilty, but they are equally so, or *since these confrontations are ostensibly "rooted" in "age-old hatreds"* and therefore inevitable, no one is at fault. In the event, moral issues are irrelevant since what matters solely is political interest or concern. This has been, and remains, the view of the U.S. State Department and British Foreign Office.

Unfortunately, the historical evidence is quite different. Whereas it is true that the Cyprus issue eventually became the pivot on which Greek and Turkish national interests and activities turned, this was not the case for some two and a half years following the onset of the drive for self-determination by the Greek Cypriots. Britain's concern was manifest, however, as the anticolonial agitation obviously affected its control of the island.

What began as a Greek-British dispute over the island's future, gradually evolved into a trilateral issue that increasingly included Turkey. **Current research based on an ever-widening basis of new documentation has come back to the role of the British government in inducing a fundamental change in the Turkish government's disinterested status in the dispute.** Reference has already been made to Turkish foreign minister Mehmet Fuat Köprülü's official statement that the Cyprus issue **involved only Greece and Britain and not Turkey.** Obviously, as time passed, the Menderes government radically altered its stand; the replacement of Köprülü with Fatin Rüştü Zorlu as minister of foreign affairs brought in someone who, as a product of the foreign service, supported a much more aggressive Cyprus policy that agreed with the new policy of Menderes himself. Menderes's relations with his former foreign minister—both of them very active politicians and among the founders of the Demokrat Parti (DP) — became further strained given their growing alienation over Cyprus and following the pogrom of September 6–7, 1955. In the extraordinary meeting of the Grand National Assembly—Turkey's parliament—held on September 12, 1955, Köprülü declared that the

government had known ahead of time about the riots. In 1959, Köprülü formally removed his son Orhan from the DP's rolls and inscribed him on the list of the opposition Republican People's Party. The culmination came during the Yassada trials of 1960–1961, however, when Köprülü openly condemned Menderes as the pogrom's instigator and organizer. Clearly, along with its other consequences, the pogrom also had a catastrophic effect on the DP's future disarray and final dissolution.

This radical reorientation of the Menderes government's foreign policy, which actually preceded Köprülü's replacement as foreign minister, was to bring other modifications in the DP's command structure. Most notable was the temporary suspension of the authority and initiatives of Fahrettin Kerim Gökay, the vali (governor) of Istanbul. Menderes placed his minister of the interior, Namik Gedik, in charge of Istanbul's security, and Gedik was actually to control and execute the pogrom. What led Menderes to this radical alteration from non-involvement in the Greek-British imbroglio to direct and aggressive participation in 1954 and 1955?

An immediate factor seems to have been Great Britain's weakening position on the Cyprus issue, and the corresponding British need for vigorous support from the Turkish side. A second consideration was very probably the stiffening opposition to Menderes's internal policies. In regard to the latter, a number of Turkish analysts as well as the Yassada proceedings attributed the change in policy to Menderes's need to divert the attention and passions of the public to Cyprus so as to distract it from socioeconomic matters. Ahmer Hamdi Başar, a former member of both parliament and the DP wrote the following during the 1960 tribunals:

From the first day it had become clear that the events of September 6-7 had been organized by those who governed. Only they had not reckoned that the results could be so horrendous. What was the purpose of this clever exploitation of the masses supposedly over the Cyprus issue? It is dear from these rebellious events this was exploited so as to strengthen the powers of Menderes and to enforce his dictatorship with its resort to violent measures in the realm of internal policy.

From the outset, Greek analysts have pointed an accusatory finger at Britain's role in provoking Turkish intervention on the Cyprus issue during the years 1954–1955. Although there was not much proof originally to substantiate such a charge, the evidence is somewhat more compelling today regarding a prominent, if not dominant, role for British policy in dragging the Menderes government into a "*violent*" intervention during the London tripartite conference in late August to early September 1955, much to the shock of the Greeks. In the beginning, the available proof was circumstantial. Subsequent research and publications, however, have shed some light on the British effort. (*To be continued*)

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Ποίηση του Γιώργου Σεφέρη

ΜΥΘΙΣΤΟΡΗΜΑ Ι΄

Ο τόπος μας είναι κλειστός, όλο βουνά
που έχουν σκεπή το χαμηλό ουρανό μέρα και νύχτα.
Δεν έχουμε ποτάμια δεν έχουμε πηγάδια δεν έχουμε πηγές,
μονάχα λίγες στέρνες, άδειες κι αυτές, που ηχούν και πού
τις προσκυνούμε.

Ήχος στεκάμενος κούφιος, ίδιος με τη μοναξιά μας
ίδιος με την αγάπη μας, ίδιος με τα σώματά μας.
Μας φαίνεται παράξενο που κάποτε μπορούσαμε να χτί-
σουμε

τα σπίτια τα καλύβια και τις στάνες μας.
Κι οι γάμοι μας, τα δροσερά στεφάνια και τα δάχτυλα
γίνονται ανίγματα ανεξήγητα για την ψυχή μας.
Πώς γεννήθηκαν πώς δυναμώσανε τα παιδιά μας;

Ο τόπος μας είναι κλειστός. Τον κλείνουν
οι δυο μαύρες Συμπληγάδες. Στα λιμάνια
την Κυριακή σαν κατεβούμε ν' ανασάνουμε
βλέπουμε να φωτίζονται στο ηλιόγεμα
σπασμένα ξύλα από ταξίδια που δεν τέλειωσαν
σώματα που δεν ξέρουν πια πώς ν' αγαπήσουν.

ΜΥΘΙΣΤΟΡΗΜΑ ΙΑ΄

Το αίμα σου πάγωνε κάποτε σαν το φεγγάρι,
μέσα στην ανεξάντλητη νύχτα το αίμα σου
άπλωνε τις άσπρες του φτερούγες πάνω
στους μαύρους βράχους τα σχήματα των δέντρων και
τα σπίτια
με λίγο φως από τα παιδικά μας χρόνια.

ΜΥΘΙΣΤΟΡΗΜΑ ΙΒ΄ — *Μποτίλια στο πέλαγο*

Τρεις βράχοι λίγα καμένα πεῦκα κι ένα ρημοκλήσι
και παραπάνω

τὸ ἴδιο τοπίο ἀντιγραμμένο ξαναρχίζει
τρεις βράχοι σὲ σχῆμα πύλης, σκουριασμένοι
λίγα καμένα πεῦκα, μαῦρα καὶ κίτρινα
κι ἓνα τετράγωνο σπιτάκι θαμμένο στὸν ἀσβέστη
καὶ παραπάνω ἀκόμη πολλὲς φορὲς
τὸ ἴδιο τοπίο ξαναρχίζει κλιμακωτὰ
ὡς τὸν ὀρίζοντα ὡς τὸν οὐρανὸ πὸν βασιλεύει.

Ἐδῶ ἀράξαμε τὸ καράβι νὰ ματίσουμε τὰ σπασμένα κουπιά,
νὰ πιούμε νερὸ καὶ νὰ κοιμηθοῦμε.

Ἡ θάλασσα πὸν μᾶς πίκρανε εἶναι βαθιὰ κι ἀνεξερεῦνητη
καὶ ξεδιπλώνει μίαν ἀπέραντη γαλήνη.

Ἐδῶ μέσα στὰ βότσαλα βρήκαμε ἓνα νόμισμα
καὶ τὸ παίξαμε στὰ ζάρια.

Τὸ κέρδισε ὁ μικρότερος καὶ χάθηκε.

Ξαναμπαρκάραμε μὲ τὰ σπασμένα μας κουπιά.

MYTHISTOREMA 10

Our country is closed in, all mountains
that day and night have the low sky as their roof.
We have no rivers, we have no wells, we have no springs,
only a few cisterns — and these empty — that echo, and that
we worship.

A stagnant hollow sound, the same as our loneliness
the same as our love, the same as our bodies.

We find it strange that once we were able to build
our houses, huts and sheep-folds.

And our marriages, the cool coronals and the fingers,
become enigmas inexplicable to our soul.

How were our children born, how did they grow strong?

Our country is closed in. The two black Symplegades
close it in. When we go down
to the harbours on Sunday to breathe freely
we see, lit in the sunset,
the broken planks from voyages that never ended,
bodies that no longer know how to love.

MYTHISTOREMA 11

Sometimes your blood froze like the moon
in the limitless night your blood
spread its white wings over
the black rocks, the shapes of trees and houses,
with a little light from our childhood years.

MYTHISTOREMA 12— *Bottle in the Sea*

Three rocks, a few burnt pines, a solitary chapel
and farther above

the same landscape repeated starts again:
three rocks in the shape of a gateway, rusted,
a few burnt pines, black and yellow,
and a square hut buried in whitewash;
and still farther above, many times over,
the same landscape recurs level after level
to the horizon, to the twilight sky.

Here we moored the ship to splice the broken oars,
to drink water and to sleep.

The sea that embittered us is deep and unexplored
and unfolds a boundless calm.

Here among the pebbles we found a coin
and threw dice for it.

The youngest won it and disappeared.

We put to sea again with our broken oars.