

## Upcoming Events

### How Much Greece and Cyprus Can Count on the EU, U.S., and their Regional Allies in Countering Turkish Aggression ?

On Sunday, January 16, 2022, at 2:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Prof. Dimitris Kairidis, Panteion University, Greece, and member of the Greek Parliament, in an online lecture titled “*How Much Greece and Cyprus Can Count on the EU, U.S., and their Regional Allies in Countering Turkish Aggression ?*” Information on how to join the lecture will be provided separately by email and regular mail, and on the website of Hellenic Link–Midwest.

There is an old and well-established mantra in Greek foreign policy: Greece has succeeded whenever it has been aligned with other powers and has failed whenever it was left alone as in 1922 or in 1974. Recently, Greece has signed a number of agreements with Arab countries, France and the United States. What is their use in deterring Turkish aggression and what do they mean for Greece's position in a rapidly changing world of shifting balances and power transitions? Professor Dimitris Kairidis will explore Greece's recent foreign policy initiatives in light of its past history and current Turkish problems.

*Dimitris Kairidis* is a member of the Greek Parliament, representing Athens–North for the center-right party of New Democracy. He is Vice Chairman of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Member of the delegation of the Hellenic Parliament to the Conference on the Future of Europe. He is a Professor of International Politics at Panteion University of Athens and the Founding Director of the Navarino Network in Thessaloniki. He has taught at many universities in Greece and abroad and is a regular TV political commentator. He has published extensively on international politics, including books on nationalism and ethnic conflict, US foreign policy and Greek-Turkish relations.

### December 2021 Lecture

Our December 2021 lecture had to be cancelled because our lecturer had to take immediate care of a health problem. The lecture was moved to April 2022.

### In Brief

#### UNESCO Ups Pressure for Return of Parthenon Sculptures to Greece

According to the Greek newspaper *Ekathimerini*, Greece's culture minister Lina Mendoni, a day after the 22nd session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting

the Return of Cultural Property ended in Paris last September, stated:

*“The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has taken an important step further from a recommendation by passing a decision urging the return of the Parthenon sculptures from the British Museum. Together with the recommendation that was issued – referring to the poor conditions of exposure that the sculptures are kept in at the British Museum – Greece also achieved a decision from the Intergovernmental Committee that pertains specifically to the return of the Parthenon sculptures. The committee urgently calls on the United Kingdom to review its position and enter into a discussion with Greece, recognizing that the issue is of an intergovernmental nature – in contrast to claims from the British side that it is a matter for the British Museum – and mainly that Greece has a valid and legal claim to demand the return of the sculptures to their place of birth.”*

The minister described the decision as a “*particularly significant development.*” Greece's petition to have the “Parthenon Marbles” returned to Greece to be exhibited at the Acropolis Museum has gained additional urgency after reports of water leaks and mold at the gallery where they are kept in the British Museum.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis raised the issue of the return of the Parthenon Sculptures to Greece in his speech at the November 12, 2021, event celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of UNESCO. The Prime minister said: “*There cannot be a dialogue between nations, without a dialogue amongst cultures. Something which presupposes respect for the history, heritage, and identity of each nation. To my mind that means that emblematic monuments, inherently connected to the very identity of a nation, should be a matter for that nation. Take the Parthenon Sculptures, which (are) a hugely significant piece of the world's cultural heritage and are perhaps the most important symbolic link between modern Greeks and their ancestors. Most of that collection can be found on display in the Acropolis Museum, a few hundred meters from the Parthenon. However, while a part of that collection remains exiled (at the British Museum) in London, that impact can never be fully appreciated. That is why I believe it is essential that the Parthenon marbles in London should be reunited with the majority of the Parthenon Sculptures in Athens.*”

#### Delignification of Electricity Production in Greece.

In 2020, Greece produced 36.8 percent of its electricity from natural gas, 15.3 percent from lignite, 12.0 percent from oil

and 35.9 percent from renewable resources (wind 18.4%, hydro 7.8%, solar 9%, biomass 0.7%). This is a significant development in the efforts of Greece to decarbonize its energy production.

The Greek government has decided to switch its only new lignite plant to natural gas in 2025 and shutdown all of its older lignite plants by 2023. In an interview to the Greek newspaper Kathimerini last July, Frans Timmermans, executive vice president of the Commission responsible for the European Green Agreement, said that Greece is setting an example for other countries of what can be achieved if there is the necessary political will to transition to green energy. Greece, he noted, has moved quickly to develop solar and wind energy production infrastructure.

Western Macedonia is the region of the largest coal operation in Greece. Last October European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Elisa Ferreira said “*Western Macedonia could be a global paradigm of what we can do with the right tools and the right people,*” in the context of phasing out lignite dependency for power production and the transition towards a carbon neutral economy. Visiting the region, she called on local government officials in western Macedonia, and Greece at large, to prepare “*well-thought-out, viable projects*” for funding from the EU’s Just Transition Fund. Speaking in the city of Kozani, she urged regional mayors and representatives to “*all think together how we can best reshape this economy. Let’s sit down and prepare.*” She described the transition as not simply necessary, but inevitable.

Last September, it was announced that two EU-backed projects in Greece, White Dragon and Green HiPo, had been approved by a joint decision of Greece’s Development and Investments Minister Adonis Georgiadis, and Environment, Energy, and Climate Change Minister Kostas Skrekas.

The White Dragon project is coordinated by the Greek company DEPA (ΔΕΠΙΑ) Commercial, in collaboration with Advent Technologies, Damco Energy, PPC, DESFA, Hellenic Petroleum, Motor Oil, Corinth Pipeworks, TAP and Terna Energy. It is an investment proposal that exceeds 8 billion euros aiming to replace the coal-fired power plants in the region of Western Macedonia, and transition to clean energy production and transmission in the context of Greece’s ultimate goal to completely decarbonize its energy system.

The project seeks to use electricity produced in large-scale renewable solar energy parks to produce “green” hydrogen by electrolysis in Western Macedonia. Stored hydrogen, through high temperature fuel cells, will provide the country’s power grid with electricity as a fixed base load co-generation unit of electricity and heat. The heat, as a by-product of green electricity production, can be used for heating in West Macedonia, as well as in industrial applications.

DESFA’s natural gas pipelines will be used for the transport of green hydrogen for other uses, as well as for its indirect storage. The transport of hydrogen through TAP (Trans

Adriatic Pipeline) can connect Greece to European energy markets. TAP brings annually 10 billion cubic meters of natural gas from the Shah Deniz offshore field in the Caspian to consumers in the EU and the Western Balkans.

Another goal of the “White Dragon” project is the development, by the cooperating companies, of an integrated Hydrogen Industrial Research Center in West Macedonia.

The aim of the Green HiPo project is the development, design, and manufacturing of HT-PEM fuel cells for the production of heat and power.

## *From Our History*

### **Excerpts from the monumental work of the Byzantine historian, Speros Vryonis:**

#### ***“The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century”***

*(continuation from the previous Newsletter issue)*

But when he marched against the Arabs with his armies, 20,000 of these Slavs deserted to the enemy. Justinian was so infuriated that on his return he slew the remainder of the Slavs with their women and children at Leucate on the Gulf of Nicomedia. The largest Slavic or Bulgaro-Slavic colonization in Asia Minor seems to have occurred during the eighth century. In the reign of Constantine V many Slavs fled the Balkans and were allowed to settle in the region of the Atarnas River not far from the Bosphorus. Nicephorus mentions that their number was 208,000. Though this figure is doubtlessly exaggerated in the manner of medieval chroniclers, nevertheless after one has allowed for the exaggeration, this must have been the largest Slavic settlement in Asia Minor.

That the Slavs were still to be seen as an ethnic group in this north-western corner of Anatolia in the ninth century is recorded in Theophanes Continuatus. These are the last references to major Slavic settlements in Anatolia prior to the Turkish invasions. Constantine Porphyrogenitus does mention the presence of Sthlavesianoï in the Opsicion theme in the tenth century, for in his reign they furnished 220 men for the expedition to Crete. Their numbers are comparatively small as revealed in this text, for they furnished much smaller numbers of troops than the Armenians in western Anatolia. After this their presence is no longer noted, and it is quite probable that they were Christianized and Hellenized.

A group about which comparatively little is known, but which was no doubt of commercial importance in Anatolia, was that of the Jews. By the time of the Roman Empire, the Diaspora of the Jews had resulted in Jewish establishments in over sixty Anatolian cities and towns. From the seventh to the eleventh centuries there are references to Jews in Nicaea (tenth century), Abydus (1096), Pylae (eleventh century), Ephesus (eleventh century), Mastaura in the regions of the Maeander (eleventh century), Amorium (ninth century), Cappadocia (seventh century), Neocaesarea

(eighth century), and in the border town of Zapetra (ninth century). Five more Anatolian towns are mentioned as having settlements of Jews during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and it is probable that Jews had lived in some of these towns even earlier. These include Chonae, Strobilus, Seleuceia, Trebizond, and Gangra. The reference to the Jews in these Anatolian towns is quite important, especially when one recalls the Constantinopolitan nature of the Byzantine sources. It is highly probable that there were many more such towns but they simply have not been mentioned. In most cases they must have been in direct line of descent from the communities founded during the Diaspora, though a number of arrivals probably entered the empire during the late tenth century, following the Byzantine expansion to the east and the religious persecutions of the eleventh-century caliph al-Hakim. These Jews were settled primarily in the towns along the great roads of Anatolia along which flowed the commerce of the empire, and it is clear that they were actively engaged in commerce and the crafts. There is, however, no indication as to their numbers.

The practice of settling foreign military contingents (Mardaites, Slavs, Armenians, and Persians from the seventh through the ninth century) in Anatolia not only continued in the tenth and eleventh centuries, but the military troops settled increased in ethnic variety. It is not always clear, however, if these tenth- and eleventh-century groups were permanently settled in an area, or were simply temporarily quartered in Anatolia during the period of their military service. Contingents of Russ were sent to the regions of Trebizond in the region of Romanus I, and in the mid-eleventh century one tagma of Russ had their winter quarters in northeast Anatolia, as did two tagmata of Franks. The eleventh-century documents list a bewildering variety of ethnic military groups in the various provinces of the empire—Russians, Kulpings, English, Normans, Germans, Bulgars, Saracens, Georgians, Armenians, Albanians, Scandinavians, and others. It is very difficult to ascertain the numbers of these groups, their location, and whether they were permanent or temporary settlers.

It was, however, the eastern regions of Byzantine Anatolia which contained the majority of the non-Greek populations—Kurds, Georgians, Lazes, Syrians, and Armenians. The eastern expansion of the tenth and eleventh centuries incorporated areas into the empire which were non-Greek in speech and non-Chalcedonian. The Kurds were numerous in such regions as Amid, Mayaferrikin, Chliat, Manzikert, Ardjish, and in the regions to the northeast of Lake Van. Georgians and Lazes were to be found in the southeastern districts of the Black Sea coast. Of these eastern peoples in eleventh-century Anatolia, the most important were the Syrians and the Armenians. In the tenth century the emperor Nicephorus Phocas, in an effort to revive the city of Melitene which had been incorporated as a result of the Byzantine reconquest years earlier, asked the Syrian Jacobite patriarch to repeople the areas of Melitene and Hanazit with Syrians and to establish his patriarchal seat in that area. In this manner an extensive emigration of

Jacobite Syrians to these regions took place. By the eleventh century they seem to have come in considerable numbers and possessed bishoprics in a large number of the eastern and southeastern towns. They spread as far north as the Armenian town of Erzindjan where they possessed a monastery. Active in Anatolian commerce, from which they acquired considerable wealth, the radius of their caravans comprehended the lands of the Turks in the east and in the west Constantinople itself. They were also important as physicians and in the translation of the Greek texts.

The most significant movement of peoples into the Anatolian provinces of the empire was, however, that which brought in the Armenians during the tenth and eleventh centuries. This transplanting of large numbers of Armenians is closely connected with the Byzantine eastern expansion and the somewhat later western movement of the Seljuks. As a result of these two converging forces, Byzantium annexed Taron, Taiq, Vaspuracan, Ani, and Kars. The expansion of Byzantium into the east was accompanied by a large-scale emigration of Armenian princes, nobles, and their retinues to the lands of the empire. There had previously existed settlements of Armenians in these provinces between Tephrike and Melitene, and the Armeno-Byzantine general Melias had organized the newly formed theme of Lycandus in the early tenth century and colonized it with Armenians. As a result of the Byzantine conquest of Cilicia and northern Syria, the government brought large numbers of Armenian colonists to both regions. The newer emigrants were often posited upon the older stratum of Armenian population. In the tenth century the Taronites family received estates in Celtzene; the nobility of Taiq, after its absorption, acquired lands at Labaca, Arnasaciou, and Martisapao in the theme of Armeniacon. In 1021, Basil II transplanted the population of Basean to Chaldia, and the annexation of Vaspuracan led to a significant emigration of Armenians. When Senecherim-Hohvannes and his son David received landed possessions in Sebasteia, Larissa, Abara, Caesareia, Tzamandus, and Gabadonia in the theme of Cappadocia, they were accompanied by 14,000 men (and presumably by their families). In 1045-46, Gregory Bahlavouni exchanged his lands for estates in the province of Byzantine Mesopotamia and in the same year Kakig of Ani gave up his kingdom and settled within the empire, acquiring estates in the themes of Cappadocia, Lycandus, and Charsianon.

Finally in 1064, Gagik-Abas of Kars received lands in Tzamandus, Larissa, Amaseia, and Comana. So extensive was the number of Armenians in this diaspora that by the middle of the eleventh century there were three Armenian military corps stationed in the cities of Sebasteia, Melitene, and Tephrike. One of the principal Byzantine sources of the eleventh century, Michael Attaliates, remarks, "*the Armenian heretics have thronged into Iberia, Mesopotamia, Lycandus, Melitene, and the neighboring places.*" Michael the Syrian confirms this in remarking that once Senecherim-Hohvannes had been installed in Sebasteia, the Armenians "*spread throughout Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Syria.*"

(To be continued)

## *From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage*

### **Poetry by Odysseas Elytis**

#### ΤΟΥ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ

Ο έρωτας  
Το αρχιπέλαγος  
Κι η πρόρα των αφρών του  
Κι οι γλάροι των ονείρων του  
Στο πιο ψηλό κατάρτι του ο ναύτης ανεμίζει  
Ένα τραγούδι

Ο έρωτας  
Το τραγούδι του  
Κι οι ορίζοντες του ταξιδιού του  
Κι η ηχώ της νοσταλγίας του  
Στον πιο βρεμένο βράχο της η αρραβωνιαστικιά προσμένει  
Ένα καράβι

Ο έρωτας  
Το καράβι του  
Κι η αμεριμνησία των μελεμιών του  
Κι ο φλόκος της ελπίδας του  
Στον πιο ελαφρό κυματισμό του ένα νησί λικνίζει  
Τον ερχομό

Παιχνίδια τα νερά  
Στα σκιερά περάσματα  
Λένε με τα φιλιά τους την αυγή  
Που αρχίζει  
Ορίζοντας—

Και τ' αγριοπερίστερα ήχο  
Δονούνε στη σπηλιά τους  
Ξύπνημα γαλανό  
μες στην πηγή  
Της μέρας  
Ήλιος—

Δίνει ο μαϊστρος το πανί  
Στη θάλασσα  
Τα χάρδια των μαλλιών  
ξεγνοιασιά του ονείρου του  
Δροσιά—

Κύμα στο φως  
Ξαναγεννάει τα μάτια  
Όπου η Ζωή αρμενίζει  
Προς τ' αγνάντεμα  
Ζωή—

Φλοίσβος φιλή στη χαϊδεμένη του άμμο – Έρωτας  
Τη γαλανή του ελευθερία ο γλάρος  
Δίνει στον ορίζοντα  
Κύματα φεύγουν έρχονται  
Αφρισμένη απόκριση στ' αυτιά των κοχυλιών

Ποιος πήρε την ολόξανθη και την ηλιοκαμένη;  
Ο μπάτης με το διάφανό του φύσημα  
Γέρνει πανί του ονείρου  
Μακριά Έρωτας την υπόσχεσή του μουρμουρίζει –  
Φλοίσβος.

#### OF THE AEGEAN

Eros  
The archipelago  
And the prow of its foams  
And the gull of its dreams  
On its highest mast the sailor waves  
A song

Eros  
Its song  
And the horizons of its voyage  
And the echo of its nostalgia  
On her wettest rock the betrothed awaits  
A ship

Eros  
Its ship  
And the nonchalance of its summer winds  
And the jib of its hope  
On its highest undulation an island cradles  
The coming

The playing waters  
In shady passages  
Speak the dawn with their kisses  
Which begins  
Horizon—

And the wild doves vibrate  
A sound in their cave  
Blue waking  
in the fount  
Of day  
Sun—

The northwester gives the sail  
To the sea  
Caresses of hair  
To the carefreeness of its dream  
Dew—

Wave in the light  
Again gives birth to the eyes  
Where Life sails toward  
Far-seeing  
Life—

Sea surf kiss on its caressed sand—Eros  
The gull gives the horizon  
Its blue liberty  
Waves go come  
Foaming answering in the ears of shells

Who took the blond sunburnt girl?  
The sea breeze with its transparent blowing  
Tilts the sail of dream  
Far out  
Eros murmurs its promise—Sea surf.