

## Upcoming Events

### Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland

On Sunday, October 24, 2021 at 3:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dr. Ann Flesor Beck, in an online presentation titled “*Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland*”. The Zoom link for this webinar is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84283601337> and the webinar ID is 842 8360 1337.

Greek immigrants to America came primarily from the Peloponnese, subsistence farmers lured with tales of riches and promises of prosperity. Most of the immigration occurred between 1900 and 1915 where it is estimated that one in four Greek males arrived. They primarily gravitated to urban centers, such as New York, Boston, New Orleans and Chicago. In Chicago, like other cities, rather than working for others in factories or slaughterhouses, the fiercely independent Greeks initially worked as bootblacks and shoeshine operators. Eventually, with the relatively least expensive investment of street selling, they became fruit and vegetable vendors. From that beginning, the next step up was becoming a confectioner, a timely niche in American food history. In Chicago, the earlier settlement of two Greek entrepreneurs who had learned the confectionary trade after the Civil War, taught hundreds of first-generation immigrants to become entrepreneurs. Chicago became known as the “*Acropolis of the Greek-American candy business.*” It is estimated that 70% of Greek candy merchants in America started in Chicago.

Dr. Beck’s book *Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland* moves the narrative from urban centers to the hundreds of small towns across America where Greek immigrants disseminated, often alone, or with few family members. Utilizing her grandfather as the case study in rural America, Ann Flesor Beck draws upon a variety of research methodologies to paint a vivid picture of what first generation Greek immigrants experienced in rural areas, most of whom began as confectioners. Her grandfather, Gus Flesor, passed through Chicago from Ellis Island, and joined a relative in central Illinois to establish his own confectionary and soda fountain. This is a narrative of networking, chain migration, small town distrust and prejudice, conflict with the Ku Klux Klan, and the ability to survive and thrive in a new country.

As a third-generation confectioner, Dr. Beck has taken the research from her dissertation at the University of Illinois to enlighten readers about first-generation Greeks migrating to central Illinois. It is a story that has been replicated throughout the country in multiple small towns and cities.

She invites those of Greek ancestry to explore their own family history and discover how the first generation of Greek immigrants contributed to the richness of American life.

### Climate Change, Extreme Events and Impacts for Greece in the Near and Distant Future

On Sunday, November 14, 2021 at 2:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dr. Giannakopoulos in an online lecture titled: “*Climate Change, Extreme Events and Impacts for Greece in The Near and Distant Future*”. **Please note that this lecture will start at 2:00 pm U.S. Central Time.** This lecture is supported by the Hellenic Foundation, Chicago. Information on how to join the lecture will be provided separately by email and regular mail, and on the website of Hellenic Link–Midwest.

The Mediterranean basin is considered a hotspot for climate change with changes occurring more rapidly than in other parts of the world. Especially the East Mediterranean, where Greece is located, is going to be severely affected by changes in mean and extreme weather events with heatwaves becoming more frequent and severe and precipitation becoming more infrequent and less abundant. These changes will affect other significant sectors such as population health and comfort, agriculture, energy demand, forest fire risk. More specifically, mortality is expected to rise due to population exposure to warmer temperatures, heatwaves and air pollution events. Agricultural productivity will also be affected since many crops will not be able to cope with the new climatic conditions and forest fire risk and fire season length will strongly increase. Energy demand for cooling will also rise. This lecture will investigate climatic changes, extreme events and associated impacts on these sectors for the country of Greece.

Dr. Giannakopoulos is Research Director at the National Observatory of Athens (NOA). His research focuses on climate change modeling of extremes and impacts on various sectors such as energy demand, health, agriculture, tourism, forest fires. He was a lead author of UNEP’s IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) 4th Assessment Report (2007) on Climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. He is NOA’s Principal Investigator in several major climate change related EU projects. He also has experience in the field of global chemical transport models and has participated in the World Climate Research Program. He is Member of the Climate Change Impacts Study Committee (<http://www.bankofgreece.gr/Pages/en/klima/default.aspx>) formed by the Bank of Greece to study the environmental, economic and social consequences of climate change in

Greece and has co-authored the national adaptation strategy for Greece. He is the IPCC National Focal point since 2018 as well as representative of the Mission on Adaptation Sub-Group of the Horizon Europe Shadow Program Committee since 2019. He is the author of over 80 peer-reviewed papers and over 90 publications in conference proceedings.

## ***In Brief***

### **The Decline of Greece's Population**

According to a recent article of the Greek newspaper Ekathimerini, Greece's population is declining in a rapidly aging country. In 2011, a year after a heavily indebted Greece signed the first austerity program with its creditors, deaths exceeded births for the first time in decades – by 4,671. In 2020, there were 85,605 births and 131,839 deaths, a deficit of 46,234.

Greece's population peaked in 2011 at 11,123,000 people, and since then it has shrunk by 405,000 to an estimated figure of 10,718,000.

Despite not experiencing other countries' post-war baby boom and with a steady stream of emigration to Europe, North America and Australia, Greece's population grew steadily, if slowly, once the 1946–49 civil war was over. From 7.63 million in 1951, it reached 8.36 million in 1961, 8.81 million in 1971, 9.69 million in 1981 and 10.27 million in 1991.

But Greece is rapidly aging: the over 65s, 6.8% of the population in 1951, have now shot up to 22.8%. And the under-14s have correspondingly decreased, from 28.3% to 14.3%. Partly, this is because people are now dying older. But fertility rates are very low and the exceedingly high unemployment among the young means that many people stay with their parents even past 30 and delay forming families, if they do at all. And out of wedlock births are also very low.

### **Revisions in Classics at Princeton University**

Last April, Princeton University faculty approved curriculum changes in the department of classics including elimination of the requirement of intermediate proficiency in Greek or Latin to enter the concentration, and the requirement for students to take Greek or Latin. Josh Billings, director of undergraduate studies and professor of classics said: *"Having people who come in who might not have studied classics in high school and might not have had a previous exposure to Greek and Latin, we think that having those students in the department will make it a more vibrant intellectual community."*

On September 9, 2021 the Greek newspaper Kathimerini interviewed Dan-el Padilla Peralta a Dominican-born associate professor of Classics at Princeton. He has been portrayed in the media as the chief advocate for the revisionist movement, sweeping US universities, which draws a link between Classical studies, as they are taught today, and racism and the construction of "white

supremacy." He was asked if he would consider himself a skeptic toward Classical studies. *"I think that is fair,"* he said. *"My approach to Classical studies is, in general terms, that of a skeptic...The reckoning that interests me is in the fields of historical entanglements with the architecture of race and specifically the architectures of white supremacy. To that end I think it is important to emphasize as I have regularly in the past few years that the invitation to that reckoning is the invitation to become better researchers."*

Asked what he believes is wrong with the current teaching of Classical studies, he responded: *"What I see as problematic is the incredible unwillingness to take seriously the provocation that there is a history of race and racism within Classics and that Classics as a discipline is very much a part of broader constructions, Euroamerica and global constructions of white supremacy....all we need to do is simply say that there were bad things in the past and then just move on and pretend as if nothing has happened. This is ineffectual at best and deeply corrosive at worst... the continuing inability of the field to recruit and maintain scholars of color is a direct consequence of micro and macroaggressive encounters that people of color experience. I would be very happy if we could stop that."*

John McWhorter, professor of linguistics at Columbia University, in an article in *The Atlantic* last June, titled *The Problem with Dropping Standards in the Name of Equity*, said: *"By ending a requirement that classics majors learn Greek or Latin, Princeton risks amplifying racism instead of curing it... A justification of Princeton's policy change on the basis of countering white supremacy is gravely thin."* He pointed out that the Princeton classics decision, to the extent that the change is racially focused, deprives Black students in particular of the challenge of mastering Latin or Greek and this can be interpreted as racist itself.

All classicists recognize that, really, you need to know the languages to fully understand the texts. This is also true of other literatures. Princeton's *"new position is tantamount to saying that Latin and Greek are too hard to require Black students to learn. But W. E. B. Du Bois, who taught both Latin and Greek for a spell, would have been shocked to discover that a more enlightened America should have excused him from learning the classical languages because his Blackness made him "vibrant" enough without going to the trouble of mastering something new."*

## ***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)*

There is also the question of the body of Neo-Phrygian inscriptions. These are the latest texts of the Anatolian languages (third century of Christian era), which have survived. As of 1956 the known and published number of such inscriptions was an even 100,236 and practically all

these have been dated to the third century. What is the significance of this material? Would it justify the proposition that Neo-Phrygian underwent a renaissance and that it was the living language of the people in a limited area of Anatolia? The majority of these inscriptions contain the epitaphs and names in Greek, with a curse on the would-be violators of the tomb written in Phrygian. Though a very few of the epitaphs are in Phrygian, they are usually in Greek, and in both cases the Greek alphabet of the period is employed. The curses themselves seem to be rigidly formulated with little variation. Thus Neo-Phrygian survives in these third-century monuments for the most part in fixed ritualistic, formulaic curses. One is not convinced, as a result, that Phrygian existed as a vital living language among the people. W. M. Calder, the foremost student of these inscriptions, has at one point stated that these inscriptions "*represent an artificial revival of the epigraphical use of the Phrygian language by the Tekmoreian Society.*" The powerful influence of Greek is evident in these inscriptions. Aside from the alphabet, there is the fact that most of the epitaphs are in Greek, as are most of the names. Though the number of these Neo-Phrygian inscriptions is in itself considerable, one should keep in mind the fact that in eastern Phrygia alone there were some 1,076 inscriptions found. Of these, 18 are in Latin, 38 in Neo-Phrygian (or Greek and Phrygian), and 1,020 in Greek. Certainly some knowledge of Neo-Phrygian existed in the mid-third century. But there is some evidence for the assertion that it was artificially revived and that Greek probably was, already in the third century, decisively victorious in Phrygia.

One may assume that by the sixth century the Greek language had triumphed over the various indigenous tongues of western and central Anatolia (to the regions of Cappadocia). At least references to these early languages are, so far as it has been possible to ascertain, lacking in the sources. It is true, however, that in the easternmost parts of Anatolia, Armenian, Syriac, Kurdish, Georgian, Arabic, and possibly Lazic not only survived but were spoken by the overwhelming majority. Political factors in the Byzantine period contributed to the victory of the empire's language. In contrast to the Balkan peninsula, which from the sixth century and even earlier, received large numbers of migrations and settlements, Asia Minor was shielded from such large ethnic movements of peoples who might have changed the linguistic pattern, until the migrations of the Turks in the eleventh century. Perhaps this was partially due to the fact that there was in existence a relatively strong and organized state to the east, first the Sassanid monarchy and later the caliphate, so that Anatolia had something of a buffer against the peoples of central Asia.

Though there were no large migrations of new peoples into Anatolia from the East, the Byzantine emperors over the centuries introduced non-Greek, as well as Greek, populations into their Anatolian provinces on numerous

occasions. The reasons for this transplanting of peoples were closely linked to state policy. In some cases the foreigners brought to Anatolia had been causing trouble for the empire in other provinces. Hence they were removed from their familiar social and ethnic environment, placed in a strange one, and subjected to Hellenization (often indirectly) and to Christianization (or in the case of heretics, to Orthodoxy). On other occasions the transferred populations were brought for military purposes, or were Christians fleeing the conquests of the Arabs. In this way the Goths were settled in Phrygia in the fourth century, the Greek Cypriots were moved to Cyzicus by Justinian II, and the Mardaites were sent to Attaleia. Similarly, odd groups of Armenian soldiers were settled in various parts of Asia Minor. Constantine V settled one group on the eastern borders—seventh-century Pergamum possibly had an Armenian colony—but the emperor Philippicus expelled a considerable number of Armenians from Byzantine Anatolia, causing them to settle in Melitene and Fourth Armenia.

The settlements of Armenians were most numerous in the easternmost regions of Byzantine Anatolia, as in the regions of Coloneia and Neocaesarea, where by the latter part of the seventh century they must have existed in considerable numbers. Probably there also was settled a number of Armenian soldiers in the Armeniac theme, and it was customary to post Armenian contingents in various parts of western Anatolia. In an expedition against the Arabs of Crete during the reign of Leo VI, there were mustered 500 Armenians from Platanion in the theme of Anatolicon and 500 more from Priene. Under Constantine VII the tagmata of the east were bolstered, for another Cretan expedition, by the addition of 1,000 Armenian troops, whereas Armenians (possibly those of Priene) were also used to guard the shores of the Thracian theme. All these references, however, are to scattered contingents of soldiers posted on the shores of the western Anatolian coast or on the eastern borders to fight the Muslims. Most of the large scale transplanting of Armenians from their homeland by the Byzantine emperors, at least up to the tenth century, seems to have been made to the European provinces.

Other groups were sent to Anatolia, such as the several thousand Persian soldiers who deserted to Byzantium in 834 and were then settled throughout Asia Minor. In the course of the seventh and eighth centuries, the emperors transplanted considerable numbers of Slavs to the northwesternmost corner of the peninsula. There are references to the presence of Slavs in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. The first such mention would seem to be the 5,000 Slavs who deserted to the Arab invaders of Anatolia in 665. Almost a quarter of a century later, in 688, Justinian II sent the Slavs, whom he had taken prisoner in Europe, to the theme of Opsicon, and in 692 he was able to raise a military force of 30,000 from among them.

*(To be continued)*

## *From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage*

### **Poetry by Odysseas Elytis**

#### Η ΜΑΡΙΝΑ ΤΩΝ ΒΡΑΧΩΝ

Έχεις μια γεύση τρικυμίας στα χείλη —Μα πού γύριζες  
Ολημερίς τη σκληρή ρέμβη της πέτρας και της θάλασσας  
Αετοφόρος άνεμος γύμνωσε τους λόφους  
Γύμνωσε την επιθυμία σου ως το κόκαλο  
Κι οι κόρες των ματιών σου πήρανε τη σκυτάλη της  
Χίμαιρας  
Ριγώνοντας μ' αφρό τη θύμηση!  
Πού είναι η γνώριμη ανηφορία του μικρού Σεπτεμβρίου  
Στο κοκκινόχωμα όπου έπαιζες θωρώντας προς τα κάτω  
Τους βαθιούς κυαμώνες των άλλων κοριτσιών  
Τις γωνιές όπου οι φίλες σου άφηναν αγκαλιές τα  
δουσμαρίνια  
—Μα πού γύριζες;  
Ολονυχτίς τη σκληρή ρέμβη της πέτρας και της θάλασσας  
Σου 'λεγα να μετράς μες στο γδυτό νερό τις φωτεινές του  
μέρες  
Ανάσκελη να χαίρεσαι την αυγή των πραγμάτων  
Ή πάλι να γυρνάς κίτρινους κάμπους  
Μ' ένα τριφύλλι φως στο στήθος σου ηρωίδα ιάμβου  
Έχεις μια γεύση τρικυμίας στα χείλη  
Κι ένα φόρεμα κόκκινο σαν το αίμα  
Βαθιά μες στο χρυσάφι του καλοκαιριού  
Και τ' άρωμα των γυακίνθων—Μα πού γύριζες  
Κατεβαίνοντας προς τους γιαλούς τους κόλπους με τα  
βότσαλα  
Ήταν εκεί ένα κρύο αρμυρό θαλασσόχορτο  
Μα πιο βαθιά ένα ανθρώπινο αίσθημα που μάτωνε  
Κι άνοιγες μ' έκπληξη τα χέρια σου λέγοντας τ' όνομά του  
Ανεβαίνοντας ανάλαφρα ως τη διαύγεια των βυθών  
Όπου σελάγιζε ο δικός σου ο αστερίας.  
Άκουσε ο λόγος είναι των στερνών η φρόνηση  
Κι ο χρόνος γλύπτης των ανθρώπων παράφορος  
Κι ο ήλιος στέκεται από πάνω του θηρίο ελπίδας  
Κι εσύ πιο κοντά του σφίγγεις έναν έρωτα  
Έχοντας μια πικρή γεύση τρικυμίας στα χείλη.  
Δεν είναι για να λογαριάζεις γαλανή ως το κόκαλο  
άλλο καλοκαίρι,  
Για ν' αλλάξουνε ρέμα τα ποτάμια  
Και να σε πάνε πίσω στη μητέρα τους,  
Για να ξαναφιλήσεις άλλες κερασιές  
Ή για να πας καβάλα στο μαϊστρο  
Στυλωμένη στους βράχους δίχως χτες και αύριο.  
Στους κινδύνους των βράχων με τη χτενισιά της θύελλας  
Θ' αποχαιρετήσεις το αίνιγμά σου.

#### MARINA OF THE ROCKS

A taste of the storm on your lips — but you,  
You wandered all day the harsh dream of stone and sea.  
The eagle-bearing wind laid bare the hills;  
Stripped your desire to the bone:  
Your eyes, the chimera's eyes,  
Scoring memory with the spume of the sea.  
There, in short September's waning,  
As you played in the red earth you looked down the long  
bean-rows  
To where the other girls, your friends, left armfuls of  
rosemary.  
—But you wandered  
All night the harsh dream of stone and sea.  
I told you to measure its bright days as you lay  
In the naked water: to welcome the dawn of things  
Or again to wander yellow plains  
Clover-light on your breast, iambic heroine.  
A taste of the storm on your lips  
And a blood-red robe  
Deep in the gold of summer,  
The scent of hyacinth — but you wandered  
Down to the pebbled shores  
The cold salt seaweed  
But, deeper, the hurt that bled.  
Astonished, you opened your arms, spoke its name,  
Gently rising through the clear deep  
Where your own star shone.  
Listen: words are the wisdom of the old  
And time a passionate sculptor of men  
And the sun stands above, wild thing of hope  
And you, nearer, cling to a love  
With the bitter taste of the storm on your lips.  
It is not for you to consider, blue to the bone,  
another summer  
For the rivers to change their course  
And take you back to their mother;  
Not for you to kiss, again, other cherry-trees  
Nor to ride the North-West Wind  
High on the rocks, no yesterday, no tomorrow,  
Perilously, on the rocks, combed by the storm,  
You will leave at last your enigma.