

Upcoming Events

The Political Influence and Pressure of Industry on the EPA to Water Down Critical Protection Regulations

On Sunday, February 20, 2022, at 3:00 pm Central Time, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents *Dr. Evaggelos Vallianatos*, former EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, employee, in an online lecture titled "*The Political Influence and Pressure of Industry on the EPA to Water Down Critical Protection Regulations.*" The Zoom link for this webinar is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83200763383> and the webinar ID is 832 0076 3383.

Dr. Vallianatos worked at the US EPA for 25 years, 1979–2004. He worked as a program analyst at the Office of Pesticide Programs and he briefly served in the assistant administrator's office with a much broader jurisdiction.

He loved the idea of improving the health of the American people and the health of the natural world. EPA came into being in December 1970 to do exactly that. However, after the Agency banned DDT in 1972, the industry used its money and influence to undermine this country's environmental protection. Each administration used EPA slightly differently, but Republican administrations were more vociferous in deregulation, another name for weakening the country's environmental and public health laws and EPA's enforcement of these laws.

Observing these changes was distressing. Many of his colleagues felt the same way. They would pass on to him memoranda and briefings they authored. He created a small library with these documents highlighting political and scientific corruption and the often dramatic decline of standards. He used these documents in writing his book, *Poison Spring*.

His presentation will summarize the evolution of both environmental protection and political corruption at the US EPA up to the present times of dramatic climate change.

Evaggelos Vallianatos studied zoology and ancient Greek and medieval Greek history at the University of Illinois. He earned a Ph.D. in European and Greek history from the University of Wisconsin, and did postdoctoral studies in the history of science at Harvard. He worked on Capitol Hill and the US EPA, and has taught as lecturer and visiting professor at several universities.

He is the author of hundreds of articles and seven books, including *Poison Spring: The Secret History of Pollution and the EPA*, and *The Antikythera Mechanism: The Story Behind the Genius of the Greek Computer and its Demise*.

The Geopolitical Plan of Alexandros Mavrokordatos and the Greek Independence (1820-1832)

On Sunday, March 13, 2022, at 2:00 pm US Central Time (10:00 pm Athens time), Hellenic Link–Midwest presents *Prof. Aristides Hatzis*, University of Athens, Greece, on the occasion of the Celebration of the 1821 Greek Revolution, in an online lecture titled: "*The Geopolitical Plan of Alexandros Mavrokordatos and the Greek Independence (1820–1832).*" This is a lecture 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.

Mavrokordatos was the only one who understood from the very beginning that this Revolution was going to be successful only if the Greeks would attempt and achieve a major geopolitical reorientation. The Greeks should escape from Russia's sphere of influence; they should abolish Russia's monopoly in their "protection"; they should correct a false impression in the West that discredited their revolution: The Greek uprising was not part of a Russian plan to break the Ottoman Empire apart; Greeks were not Russia's pawns. The political goal of the Greek Revolution was not the founding of another autonomous principality, subjugated to the Sultan but under the heavy shadow of Russia. It was much more: the founding of an independent state, governed as a European state, a part of the West. In this lecture professor Hatzis will discuss the development of Mavrokordatos' geopolitical plan from 1820 to 1826 and its political effect on the Greek issues from 1827 to 1832.

Aristides Hatzis is a Professor of Philosophy of Law and Theory of Institutions at the University of Athens (Ph.D. University of Chicago), the Director of Research at the Center for Liberal Studies–Athens and a Fellow of the Institute for Research in Economics and Fiscal Issues–Paris. He is a member of the National Committee for the Celebration for the Bicentennial of the Greek Revolution (1821–2021). His book *The Noblest Cause: The 1821 Greek War of Independence* will be published in the United States in 2022. His op-eds have been published by the New York Times, the Financial Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the CNBC and he has given interviews to major international media outlets

In Brief

Greece to Become an International Student Destination

According to the *Greek Reporter*, Greece may soon become an attractive destination for international students in higher

education, as Greek public universities are launching new competitive undergraduate programs taught entirely in English.

A few of these universities have already been successfully operating postgraduate study programs in English and French in recent years. The first undergraduate study degree program offered in English by a public university in Greece was the BA in Archaeology, History, and Literature of Ancient Greece at Athens University's School of Philosophy, which opened its doors to its first students in autumn 2020 and is open only to non-EU residents.

A year later, the prestigious School of Medicine of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki—the largest academic institution in South East Europe—launched its own undergraduate study program in English. A total of 950 applications were submitted from twenty countries—half of them from Cyprus—for just 60 seats in the first year of the 6-year program course taught in the land of the founder of medicine, the great Hippocrates.

More public universities are designing their own undergraduate study programs in the English language, and among them is the University of West Attica (UNIWA), whose premises are adjacent to Plato's Academy and the historic Athens Olive Grove, where ancient Athenian philosophers gave their lectures.

UNIWA plans to announce undergraduate study programs taught in English by the Summer of 2022. The opportunity would be open to both international and domestic students who might want to obtain a degree in English.

Ioannis Kaldelis, the Vice Dean of UNIWA, said that if everything is rolled out correctly, Greece could become not only a regional center for higher education, but also an alternative destination for Europeans who are looking for quality studies in the English language, but are unable to deal with the increased cost of studying in the UK, post-Brexit.

UNIWA, has been a host for undergraduate and postgraduate Erasmus students for many years, and currently offers five postgraduate study programs taught entirely in English, in collaboration with foreign universities.

Kaldelis stated: "There is an ongoing effort to create an undergraduate study program, for instance, which would bring together environmental sustainability and health, thus combining knowledge from the School of Engineering and the School of Public Health. There is nothing similar to this available in Greece; it only exists in a few study programs in Europe, and I believe it would even attract students.

Strategically, we would like our public universities to cover a vast range of programs. We are certainly stricter than the private sector in terms of decision-making for starting new programs, because of the multitude of levels they need to be approved on, but this process secures that the selected

programs to be eventually launched are academically correct.

Public universities are not-for-profit. They aspire to have a fiscal balance, to not burden their budgets excessively. So, in general, they concentrate on high quality and the lowest possible cost for the students."

According to Kaldelis, there is no intention of competition between public universities, or between public and private ones, as each has its own strengths in specific subjects and sectors. On the contrary, there are thoughts about creating trans-university programs in the more distant future. "Creative composition is what we are looking for," he clarified.

At this time, studying in UK universities has become more expensive for European students and Kaldelis sees a unique opportunity for other countries to step in with English-language programs.

"There is a number of people who still want to study in English-speaking universities or study programs. Therefore, Greek universities can cover that gap, if they plan it right and keep the necessary high academic level," he opined.

UNIWA's rich experience with the Erasmus student exchange program over the years has paved the way for creating original foreign language courses.

Erasmus allowed the university to listen to the needs of international students from different backgrounds and understand what they seek when choosing a university. Students from southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean, for example, are usually less financially well-off than their European peers.

Kaldelis noted: "There is an issue of evaluating their abilities and how we could facilitate the presence of these students who want to come to our country for better education, learn in English, and become partakers of the Greek way of thinking, the Greek lifestyle, the Greek culture. Upon returning to their home countries, they could become ambassadors for a closer collaboration of our universities with theirs, so that would be double gain for us."

All that being said, the goal has always been to establish Greece as a center for education, if not for the entirety of Europe, then at least for the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean.

"What we want to create right now doesn't really aim at profit, but rather at making the Greek educational system a source of knowledge for the broader region. Both the educational and research staff in our Universities is highly qualified, with very good knowledge, and many of them have collaborations with acclaimed European universities or institutions, so we definitely have a lot to give. And that would constitute a national gain, because our neighbors would get to know our country better and to love the way we live and operate by," he concluded

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)

RELIGION

As important as the ethnic configuration of eleventh-century Anatolia and, in a sense, more difficult to reconstruct, is the religious and sectarian picture of the peninsula. The history of the Byzantine church in Anatolia as well as a comprehensive history of Anatolian heresies and their significance remain to be written. Paradoxically, Anatolia was at the same time the strength of the Orthodox church during the period between the seventh and the eleventh centuries, and also the nest of a number of smaller and larger heresies. The Greek church of history is in a sense the church of Asia Minor.

Christianity, brought by such distinguished preachers as Paul and John of the Apocalypse, spread to Anatolia very early. Hellenism had spread on a significant scale in Asia Minor, and in many provinces local culture, the ethnic languages, and memories of ancient independence were so weak that they offered little resistance to Christianization. The presence of the large number of Jewish communities, the mixing of Judaism and paganism in thought, the spread of Greek as a universal medium of communication were all factors that prepared the region for a new religious syncretism. Though there were significant religious cults in Anatolia, they were not serious obstacles to the penetration of Christianity.

The Christianity that emerged in Anatolia, however, bore the marks of the absorptive process. On the one hand, because Hellenism was the dynamic culture of the peninsula, Hellenism and Christianity fused, as is evidenced in the philosophy and theology of the Cappadocian fathers. On the other hand, though paganism seems to have been effaced without too great a struggle, in disappearing it reappeared within the church. Many of the significant developments and struggles of the early church had appeared in Anatolia: the contest between the itinerant and local organization of the church, the struggle with gnosticism, the rise of monasticism, and the development of the metropolitan-episcopal structure. Asia Minor also witnessed a strong development in the cult of the relics.

In the first century of the Christian era, Christian communities arose in such towns as Perge, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Derbe, Lystra; in the regions of Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia; in Ephesus, Colossae, Laodiceia, Phrygian Hierapolis, Smyrna, Pergamum, Sardes, Philadelpheia, Thyateira, Troas, Tralles, Magnesia, Maeandrum, and others. A continuing expansion is observable in the second century, and by the third and fourth centuries Christianity had not only won over the Hellenes and the Hellenized of the towns, but had begun to

absorb the cults of the rural areas. All this is reflected in the complex network of bishoprics and choroepiscopates established on Anatolian soil by the church. Paganism did not completely disappear, and even when it did vanish as the accepted or dominant religion of a particular locality, it quite possibly entrenched itself in some of the heretical or schismatic sects that arose over much of the early Christian world. Some of the sects were indigenous to Anatolia, others were imports from different areas of the empire.

The most important of these early indigenous Anatolian heresies was that of Montanism. Founded in the second half of the second century by Montanus (according to tradition a converted pagan priest, and possibly even a former priest of Cybele), the heresy seems to have incorporated certain religious characteristics generally (though not exclusively) associated with the regions of Phrygia. These included a particular emphasis on the role of ecstatic prophecy, as well as the general emotional or "enthusiastic" approach to religion. The heresy apparently spread most effectively in Phrygia (it was known as the Phrygian or Cataphrygian heresy), Lycaonia, and the environs. This Phrygian heresy continued to exist for a number of centuries, though its vigor seems to have been spent early. The sect is mentioned in the laws of Justinian I, and Procopius records that during the general persecution of heretics by that emperor, the Montanists of Phrygia locked themselves in their churches and set them afire, destroying both themselves and the edifices. A sect that bore the name Montanist existed in the early eighth century, at which time its members refused to be converted and baptized in consonance with the decree of Leo III (721-722), and so once more they locked themselves in their religious buildings and consigned themselves to the flames. The sect had by then probably become insignificant.

The ecclesiastical authors and inscriptions of the fourth and fifth centuries mention numerous less well-known and smaller heresies that had appeared in Anatolia, in the regions of Cilicia, Pisidia, Phrygia, Paphlagonia, and Lycaonia. These included Catharion, Encratitai, Saccophoroi, Apostatitai, Tatiano, Hypsistarion, Euchitai, Novatians, and others. Of these the more important, the Euchitai and Novatians, were examples of nonindigenous heresies, heresies that had entered Anatolia from points farther east and west respectively. It would be a mistake to think of Byzantine Anatolia as the spawning ground of the majority of those heresies that eventually made their appearance there. The Novatian schism, begun in third-century Rome, made its way to Anatolia where its rigorist doctrines may have had some appeal to a portion of the inhabitants. Novatians are mentioned in Paphlagonia, in the towns of Cyzicus, Nicomedia, Nicaea, Cotyaeum, Ankara, and they came to be particularly strong in Phrygia and Paphlagonia, possibly due to the fact that they built on top of the remnants of much of the Montanist heresy. They seem to disappear by the eighth century, at least in the sources.

(To be continued)

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Poetry by Dionysios Solomos

Η ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΗ ΤΩΝ ΨΑΡΩΝ

Στων Ψαρών την ολόμαυρη ράχη,
περπατώντας η δόξα μονάχη
μελετά τα λαμπρά παλικάρια
και στην κόμη στεφάνι φορεί
γινωμένο από λίγα χορτάρια
που 'χαν μείνει στην έρημη γη.

THE DESTRUCTION OF PSARA

On the charred earth of Psara,
Glory roams alone,
musing on her warrior-heroes,
wearing a wreath on her hair
made of a few dry weeds
left on the desolate earth.

ΣΧΕΔΙΑΣΜΑ Α'

(από το *Ελεύθεροι Πολιορκημένοι*)

1

Τότες εταραχτήκανε τα σωθικά μου και έλεγα πως ήρθε ώρα να ξεψυχήσω· κι ευρέθηκα σε σκοτεινό τόπο και βροντερό, που εσκιρτούσε σαν κλωνί στάρι στο μύλο που αλέθει ογλήγορα, ωσάν το χόχλο στο νερό που αναβράζει· ετότες εκατάλαβα πως εκείνο ήτανε το Μεσολόγγι· αλλά δεν έβλεπα μήτε το κάστρο, μήτε το στρατόπεδο, μήτε τη λίμνη, μήτε τη θάλασσα, μήτε τη γη που επάτουνα, μήτε τον ουρανό· εκατασκέπαζε όλα τα πάντα μαυρίλα και πίσσα, γιομάτη λάμψη, βροντή και αστροπελέκι· και ύψωσα τα χέρια μου και τα μάτια μου να κάμω δέηση, και ιδού μες στην καπνίλα μία μεγάλη γυναίκα με φόρεμα μαύρο σαν του λαγού το αίμα, όπου η σπίθα έγγιζε κι εσβενότουνε· και με φωνή που μου εφαινόταν πως νικάει την ταραχή του πολέμου άρχισε:

«Το χάραμα επήρα
Του Ήλιου το δρόμο,
Κρεμώντας τη λύρα
Τη δίκαιη στον ώμο
Κι απ' όπου χαράζει
Ως όπου βυθά.

Τα μάτια μου δεν είδαν τόπον ενδοξότερον από
τούτο το αλωνάκι»

2

Παράμερα στέκει
Ο άντρας και κλαίει·
Αργά το τουφέκι
Σηκώνει και λέει:
«Σε τούτο το χέρι
Τι κάνεις εσύ;
Ο εχθρός μου το ξέρει
Πως μου είσαι βαρύ.»

Της μάνας ω λαύρα!
Τα τέκνα τριγύρου
Φθαρμένα και μαύρα
Σαν ίσκιους ονείρου·
Λαλεί το πουλάκι
Στου πόνου τη γη
Και βρίσκει σπυράκι
Και μάνα φθονεί

3

Γρικόουν να ταράζει
Του εχθρού τον αέρα
Μιαν άλλη, που μοιάζει
Τ' αντίλαλου πέρα·
Και ξάφνου πετιέται
Με τρόμου λαλιά·
Πολληώρα γρικιέται,
Κι ο κόσμος βροντά.

4

Αμέριμνον όντας
Τ' Αράπη το στόμα
Σφυρίζει, περνώντας
Στου Μάρκου το χώμα·
Διαβαίνει, κι αγάλι
Ξαπλώνετ' εκεί
Που εβγήκ' η μεγάλη
Του Μπάιρον ψυχή.

5

Προβαίνει και κράζει
Τα έθνη σκιασμένα.

6

Και ω πείνα και φρίκη!
Δε σκούζει σκυλί!

7

Και η μέρα προβαίνει,
Τα νέφια συντριβει·
Να, η νύχτα που βγαίνει
Κι αστέρι δεν κρύβει.