

Upcoming Events

The Role of the Americanization Movement and the Ku Klux Klan Revival in Shaping U.S. Greek Identity (1900–1920s)—100 Years Since the Founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA)

On Sunday, October 9, 2022, at 3:00 pm US Central Time, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Professor Yiorgos Anagnostou, in an online lecture titled “*The Role of the Americanization Movement and the Ku Klux Klan Revival in Shaping U.S. Greek Identity (1900s-1920s)*”. This lecture is supported by the [Hellenic Foundation, Chicago](http://www.hellenicfoundation.org).

The Zoom link for this webinar is

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83359893166>

This talk explores the ways in which early 20th century Greek immigrants negotiated two powerful cultural and political forces at the time, the Americanization movement, and the nativist/racist movement, led by the Ku Klux Klan. These two forces permeated the fabric of their daily lives, ranging from which part of a city they could live—or even to which city they could live—to where they could seat in theaters, to whom they could date. Both aggressive assimilationism and racism found expression in mainstream media and magazines disparaging immigrants from southeastern Europe—including the Greeks—as inferior and a national threat. Anti-Greek expressions involved mob assaults in Greek neighborhoods (Omaha, Nebraska) and businesses (Toronto). Boycotts enforced by the Klan ruined several immigrant businesses. Both physical and symbolic violence were a norm in some cities.

This presentation situates these experiences within the U.S. system of racial hierarchies at the time and identifies the strategies that the immigrants deployed to cope with the post-World War I escalation of anti-immigrant violence. It will use photos, autobiographies, as well as newspaper and magazine articles and headlines to animate a dramatic and traumatic period for the immigrants. It will also discuss insights from Greek American studies scholarship. It will explore the scarce evidence we have available about the ways in which individual immigrant men and women experienced racism personally and how these phenomena shaped collective immigrant identities. The conclusion will ask: what does it matter to know about these events today? How does this knowledge matter? And what are the implications of these experiences in post 1930s Greek America well into the Civil Rights movement era and beyond.

Yiorgos Anagnostou is the Miltiadis Marinakis Professor of Modern Greek language and culture at The Ohio State University. His interests include diaspora and American

ethnic studies, with a focus on Greek America. His published research covers a broad range of subjects, including film, documentary, ethnography, folklore, literature, history, sociology, and public humanities. He is the author of *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America*. He is a co-editor of *Redirecting Ethnic Singularity: Italian Americans and Greek Americans in Conversation*. Since 2017 he is the editor of the online journal *Ergon: Greek/American Arts and Letters* (<http://ergon.scienzine.com/>).

The Real Oxi Day: Freeing the Greco-Italian War of 1940-1941 from Myth and Misunderstanding

On Sunday, November 13, 2022, at 3:00 pm US Central Standard Time, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Professor Alexandros K. Kyrou in an online lecture titled *The Real Oxi Day: Freeing the Greco-Italian War of 1940-1941 from Myth and Misunderstanding*.

Greece was forced to enter World War II on October 28, 1940, when an Italian army launched an invasion of the country from positions in Albania. The Greco-Italian War of 1940-1941 would have significant strategic, moral, and ideological implications for the course of the wider, gargantuan conflict throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. Although the rout of Italy’s army by the Greeks in late 1940 marked the first Allied victory in Europe and at the time became a world sensation that crystallized global perceptions of the war, its importance has been largely omitted from mainstream Western historical writing and memory of the war.

The English-language histories of World War II, dominated largely by British authors and uncritically reproduced by American scholars, have led to a distorted view of the war, one which elevates Britain’s role in the conflict and largely ignores the contributions and importance of smaller Allied powers. Because of this tendency, most histories treat Greece as merely a peripheral theater of operations for a minor British expedition culminating in an interesting but tangential German airborne assault against Crete. In this common account, the Greco-Italian War is often entirely omitted from the historical record. Conversely, in reaction to such treatment, a fantastical, hyperbolic counter-narrative has emerged among some circles who claim that Greece’s successful resistance against the Italians—which provoked the subsequent German invasion of the country in 1941—was the decisive determinant factor in the outcome of the Axis war against the Soviet Union, and hence the ultimate Allied victory.

This lecture will present a corrective to these competing approaches, will discuss and make clear the actual significance and major consequences of the Greco-Italian War of 1940-1941 for the wider World War.

Dr. Alexandros Kyrou is Professor of History and Director of the Program in East European and Russian Studies at Salem State University, in Salem, Massachusetts, where he teaches on the Balkans, Byzantium, and the Ottoman Empire. Professor Kyrou's many book chapters, journal articles, and review essays focus on famine relief in Axis-occupied Greece, Greek America and Balkan Diasporas, Orthodox Christianity and the origins of international humanitarianism, war and peace in Byzantium, and US foreign policy in Southeastern Europe.

Dr. Kyrou has written more than eighty essays, commentaries, and book reviews on Greek history, Byzantine civilization, and Ottoman history and Turkish politics, as well as the Armenian and Greek Genocides for cultural, civic, and popular publications. He has guest lectured at Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and Oxford Universities, and has been interviewed and quoted in several major media publications, including *The New York Times* and *Vanity Fair*. He holds a Ph.D. in East European History from Indiana University.

In Brief

Super-Rich Buying Up Greece's Luxury Real Estate

According to the Greek-American newspaper *The National Herald* the Greek luxury real estate market is red hot, with the wealthy around the world eager to buy villas and even inner-city properties with an eye toward investing in short-term rentals.

The sale of high-end properties and real estate is breaking records during the waning COVID-19 pandemic with Greece one of the world's hottest tickets and on a path to set new numbers in tourist arrivals and revenues too.

Greece Sotheby's International Realty said sales are soaring for those with very deep pockets and for whom money is no object, ironically pricing out Greeks in their own country especially on islands such as Mykonos, Syros and Lefkada.

Mykonos had the highest ever price for a sale, a buyer not named purchased a second home on the island for \$22.89 million although Corfu is the island most desired.

The so-called Athens Riviera, where many public beaches have been taken over by private enterprises, the stretch from Piraeus past the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, and the ongoing \$7.96 billion development of the abandoned Hellenikon International Airport are hot too.

Then come the islands of Paros and Rhodes in the top five areas in Greece that the super-rich are eyeing for properties, second homes and investments, which ironically is leaving Greeks out of their own islands in spots.

In July, wealthy foreigners were just as keen on buying properties in the Greek capital in areas seen as up-and-coming, including the anarchist stronghold of Exarchia where a metro stop is being built.

The phenomenon was expanding with rich investors turning to platforms for short rentals at prices up to \$20,000 a week and more to recover investments that run into the millions for choice properties.

Coupled with investors and companies also buying properties in best locations to build high-end resorts, the market in Greece is becoming even more oriented toward the super-rich. Investors can also benefit from the Golden Visa program that gives them residency permits and European Union passports if they buy property of at least 250,000 euros (\$250,914) which is pocket change for most of them.

The paper noted that a German businessman not identified, who makes solar-powered yachts, is moving into the area of Preveza in northern Greece to develop more super-luxury properties for the uber-rich.

East Med Especially at Risk as World Heats Up

According to AP News, a recent report published in June in the journal *Reviews of Geophysics* and authored by an international group of scientists overseen by The Cyprus Institute's Climate and Atmosphere Research Center and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, underscores the impact of climate change in the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. According to the report, the region is warming almost twice as fast as the global average, with temperatures projected to rise up to 5 degrees Celsius (9° F) by the end of the century if no action is taken to reverse the trend.

The region will experience unprecedented heat waves, more severe and longer-lasting droughts, dust storms and rainfall shortages that will compromise water and food security for the region's 400 million people.

The eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East are more susceptible to warming trends because of their unique natural characteristics, like large desert expanses and lower water levels.

Arid climate zones will expand northward, and snow-capped mountains in more northern climates will diminish during this century, said Dr. George Zittis, who co-authored the report. Although the sea level in the region is projected to rise at a pace similar with other global estimates, many Mediterranean countries are unprepared to deal with it, he said. This would imply severe challenges for coastal infrastructure and agriculture and can lead to the salinization of coastal aquifers. Saltier water from rising sea levels and low rainfall can severely damage crops and fisheries.

The region's most vulnerable groups, including the elderly, children and pregnant people, will face major health challenges, said Max Planck Institute Director Jos Lelieveld, who was part of the study.

The region is rapidly overtaking the European Union as a source of greenhouse gases. China, the U.S., India and the E.U. are currently the world's largest emitters.

If the Paris Agreement target of limiting warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F) is met, it would limit the temperature increase in the region to about 2°C (3.6°F).

The study's projections for the region are in line with other scientific studies, including a major report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change earlier this year. The U.N.'s climate report termed the Mediterranean as a climate change "hotspot" which is vulnerable to droughts, coastal erosion and heat waves.

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)

The most important influx of heretical Christian populations occurred in the latter part of the tenth and in the eleventh century. These were largely composed of Armenians and Syrian Monophysites, who came in to the eastern Anatolian provinces as a result of the Byzantine policies of transferring populations. It is possible that the Thondraki may have come in at this time, and that heretical Jewish Keraites entered Anatolia in the tenth century. Attaliates remarked upon the influx of Monophysites, relating that the Byzantine districts of Iberia, Mesopotamia, and Melitene were full of them. The important city of Melitene and its surrounding territories became the center of the Syrian Jacobites, whereas the Armenians had come as far west as Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Armeniacon. The Monophysites constituted by far the majority of the heretical population of Byzantine Anatolia in the eleventh century, and, of course, here linguistic differences coincided with heresy or religious differences.

The narrative at this point has focused on the two cardinal points of the languages and religions of Byzantine Anatolia. As these were the salient aspects of cultural differentiation, it is by their definition that the cultural character of Anatolia can best be described. Unfortunately, many of the smaller details of this cultural picture have disappeared. There is every reason to believe that in the late tenth and the early eleventh century, prior to the transplanting of the bulk of the Armenians and Syrians, Asia Minor to the eastern portions of Cappadocia, Trebizond, and to the northern confines of Cilicia was predominantly Greek-speaking and of the Chalcedonian rite. But Anatolia had not been so in late Roman and early Byzantine times. How, then, did such a cultural transformation come about? The processes operative had, to a certain degree, come into being before the foundation of the Byzantine Empire. Hellenism, either as a linguistic or institutional phenomenon, had by the time of Constantine I existed in Anatolia in one form or another for

over a millennium. During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the Hellenic tradition had struck profound roots in Asia Minor and the local languages and cults were strongly affected. By the time of Constantine I, Anatolian city life, within the above-described geographical boundaries, was largely Greek. The native languages had either died, by the sixth century, or would soon expire.

Christianity had also made considerable progress in Anatolia by the time that Constantinople was founded. It had come to be one of the most extensively Christianized of all the Roman provinces. Again, it was in the towns, apparently, that the new religion first spread and conquered. When Christianity expanded it came into contact with two general cultural milieus. First, it encountered the Hellenic or Hellenized urban population, and then, gradually, it spread to the less Hellenized, rural population. Though Hellenism had partially penetrated the rural areas, these latter remained far less affected than the towns. It was here, quite often, that the local cultural forms struggled the longest against both Hellenization and Christianization. The development of Christianity in Anatolia from the second to the sixth century reflects the product that resulted when Christianity confronted these two cultural types, the urban and the rural. In the case of the former, Hellenism and Christianity fused, producing the Cappadocian fathers, Amphilochius of Iconium, and others. In the case of the latter, though Christianity triumphed in the rural areas, the local cultural traits on some occasions reappeared within triumphant Christianity. The most spectacular example of this phenomenon may perhaps be seen in the emergence of Montanism, the greatest of the early local Anatolian heresies. One may generalize that subsequent Anatolian history is to a certain degree characterized by these two traditions right up to the eleventh century—the Hellenic tradition as typified by the Cappadocians, and the local heretical tradition exemplified by Montanism. But the point has already been made that this is a great oversimplification of the problem and stands in need of rigorous qualification. Though this Christianizing process did absorb local cultural variety, Montanism is the only really striking heresy to result from it; most of the local heresies were not so vital. Second, heresy often came into Byzantine Anatolia from the outside, and though one could argue that it prospered there because of local receptivity, it is in a sense different from the phenomenon just described. Third, there is evidence that even in the case of a supposedly local variety of "native" religious phenomenon such as Montanism, the heretics had been Hellenized linguistically.

After the move of the capital to Constantinople, Anatolia came increasingly within the focus of forces working for the transformation of the non-Greek speaking and non-Chalcedonian elements of the population. The emperors and patriarchs were most often Greek-speaking, Orthodox, and resident in a city, which though cosmopolitan and polyglot, was predominantly Greek. They formed the apex of Byzantine society, toward which the consciousness of all was focused.

(To be continued)

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Poetry by Giorgos Seferis

ΛΙΓΟ ΑΚΟΜΑ

Λίγο ακόμα θα ιδούμε
τις αμυγδαλιές ν' ανθίζουν

Λίγο ακόμα θα ιδούμε
τα μάρμαρα να λάμπουν
να λάμπουν στον ήλιο
τη θάλασσα να κυματίζει

Λίγο ακόμα,
να σηκωθούμε λίγο ψηλότερα.

ΑΓΙΑ ΝΑΠΑ 2

Κάτω απ' τή γέρικη συκομουριά
τρελός ό άγέρας έπαιζε
μέ τά πουλιά μέ τά κλωνιά
καί δέ μās έκραινε.

Ώρα καλή σου άγέρα τής ψυχής
άνοίξαμε τόν κόρφο μας
έλα νά μπεις έλα νά πιεις
άπό τόν πόθο μας.

Κάτω απ' τή γέρικη συκομουριά
ό άγέρας σηκώθη κι έφυγε
κατά τά κάστρα του βοριά
καί δέ μās άγγιξε.

Θυμάρι μου και δεντρολιβανιά,
δέσε γερά τόν στήθος σου
καί βρες σπηλιά και βρες μονιά
κρύψε τόν λύχνο σου.

Δέν είναι άγέρας τούτος του Βαγιοῦ
δέν είναι τής Ανάστασης
μά είναι τής φωτιάς και του καπνοῦ
τής ζωής τής άχαρης.

Κάτω απ' τή γέρικη συκομουριά
στεγνός ό άγέρας γύρισε
όσμίζονταν παντού φλουριά
καί μās έπούλησε.

ΣΧΕΔΙΑ ΓΙΑ ΕΝΑ ΚΑΛΟΚΑΙΡΙ [ΑΝΘΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΕΤΡΑΣ]

Άνθη τής πέτρας μπροστά στην πράσινη θάλασσα
μέ φλέβες που μου θυμίζαν άλλες άγάπες
γυαλίζοντας στ' άργό νιχάλισμα,
άνθη τής πέτρας φυσιογνωμίες
που ήρθαν όταν κανένας δέ μιλούσε και μου μίλησαν
που μ' άφησαν νά τις άγγίξω ύστερ' άπ' τή σιωπή
μέσα σε πεῦκα σε πικροδάφνες και σε πλατάνια.

JUST A LITTLE MORE

Just a little more and we will see
the almonds in bloom.

Just a little more and we will see
the marbles glitter,
glitter in the sun
and the waves of the sea.

Just a little more, so we can rise
a little higher.

AYIA NAPA 2

Below the ancient sycamore
madly the wind was playing
with the birds with the twigs
and did not master us

Fare thee well, wind of the soul
we opened our bosoms up
come inside, come to drink
from the urge we had.

Below the ancient sycamore
the wind rose up and left
by the castles in the north
and did not reach us here.

Thyme of mine and rosemary,
tighten tight your chest
and find a cave and find a church
cover up your lamp.

No Passion Sunday wind is this
it is not of Easter Day
but of the fire and of the smoke
of the thankless life.

Below the ancient sycamore
drily the wind swirled
sniffing all over for gold
and has sold us off.

PLANS FOR SUMMER [FLOWERS OF STONE]

Flowers of stone facing the green sea
with veins that reminded me of other loves
shining from the halting shower,
flowers of stone taking life
that came as no one was speaking and spoke to me
that left me to touch them later in silence
in the pines in the oleander and in the plane trees.