



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

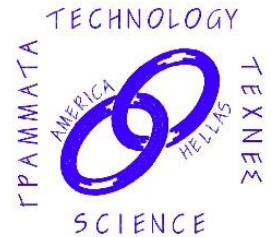
A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War. New Suggestions to Important Problems

On Sunday, April 30, 2023, at 3:00 pm Central Time, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present *Professor Robert Wallace* in a talk titled: “*Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War. New Suggestions to Important Problems.*” The event will be held at the lecture hall of the Holy Taxiarchai and Saint Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church, 7373 N Caldwell Ave, Niles, Illinois.

Thucydides was the author of a famous history of the “*Peloponnesian war*” between Athens and Sparta (431- 404 BC), a history which he rightly called a *κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ*, “a possession for all time”. He lived and worked in Athens in the second half of the fifth century, one of the most creative and productive periods in human history. Perhaps the most striking quality of this era is that many people were active in many different areas, rather than specialized by profession. Thus, while we know most about Thucydides the historian, he was also an elected military general and admiral, expert in current medical knowledge (the age of Hippocrates), a brilliant political theorist (in fact, many regard him as a political theorist more than a historian), a psychologist, and a superb writer (though he too modestly claims he didn't care about writing, it was the power of his ideas that mattered). In his history of the war, his many levels of expertise cross-fertilize in remarkable ways, creating a work of extraordinary complexities that still fascinate his readers today. After hard work on Thucydides for fifty years, professor Wallace is just now finishing a book on him in which he is prepared to claim that his solutions to the complexities he dealt with are entirely new. He will present some of these puzzles and the solutions he is proposing during the course of his lecture.

Robert Wallace is Professor of Classics at Northwestern University. He received a B.A. in Greek from Columbia (NYC), a B.A./M.A. in *Literae Humaniores* from Wadham College, Oxford, and a Ph.D. in Classical Philology from Harvard. He is the author of 98 articles on Greek history, intellectual history, literature, law, numismatics, and music theory. His books include *The Areopagos Council, to 307 BC*, and *Reconstructing Damon: Music, Wisdom Teaching, and Politics in Perikles' Athens*. He has co-authored *Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece* and *Aristotle's Constitution of the Athenians*. He has co-edited four volumes in Greek music theory, drama, history, and law. His current book projects include Thucydides, Sophokles, and Plato as a writer. He has been a visiting professor at the universities of

Pisa, Siena, Trento, Urbino, and Syracuse, and has lectured widely in the US and Europe.

Greek Heritage in Contemporary Turkey: (Dis)Continuities, Discretion, and Anxieties

On Sunday, May 21, 2023 *Dr. Erol Saglam* will deliver an online lecture on *the Greek Heritage in Contemporary Turkey: (Dis)Continuities, Discretion, and Anxieties*. Information on how to join the lecture will be provided separately by email and regular mail, and on the website of Hellenic Link–Midwest

Despite its public invisibility, fragments and transfigurations of Greek heritage continue to permeate and affect the social lives of local communities in northeast Turkey, what is historically known as Pontus. Drawing on an anthropological study in the region, this talk will detail how Romeyka, a local variety of Greek with archaic linguistic features, has survived despite nationalist erasures and anxieties around identity and religion. An examination of the persistence of Greek heritage in Trabzon suggests that heritage should not be sought solely through material traces and remnants: intangible heritages take peculiar shapes in localized contexts in relation to members' wider socio-economic and political engagements in the present, requiring researchers to be attuned to discreet, somewhat spectral, non-public, and elusive aspects of local socialities.

Erol Saglam is a social anthropologist working on reconfigurations of statecraft and the changing parameters of political subjectivity at the intersections of conspiracy theories, collective memory, societal violence, and bureaucratic operations. Following his doctoral studies at Birkbeck, University of London, Saglam worked as a postdoctoral fellow at Stockholm University and Freie Universität Berlin and was a visiting scholar at the University of Cambridge. Saglam's publications deal with everyday configurations of Islamic piety in the Turkish context, everyday dynamics that forge and maintain heteronormative masculinities, ultranationalist vigilantism, bureaucracies, and the challenges facing ethnographic methodology in contemporary world. Saglam is currently a lecturer at Istanbul Medeniyet University.

In Brief

ECHR convicts Greece for violating former head statistician's right to fair trial

On Tuesday March 14, 2023 the **European Court of Human Rights** (ECHR) ruled that Greece had violated the right of Andreas Georgiou, the former head of the Hellenic

Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), to a fair hearing, when a top local court denied his request to refer a legal question concerning his case to the EU Court of Justice. The Court stated: *“The court unanimously declares the application admissible; holds that there has been a violation of Article 6 § 1 of the Convention,”* and Greece must take the necessary measures *“to ensure that the proceedings before the Court of Cassation are reopened, if requested”* to *“redress for the violation of the applicant’s rights.”*

Georgiou was hired in 2010, to head the newly established independent Greek national statistics agency, ELSTAT. His main task was to bring the country’s official statistics in line with EU rules. When Georgiou revised the 2009 Greek fiscal deficit from 13.6% to 15.4% of GDP, the establishment in the statistical agency and Greek politicians accused him of deliberately “inflating” the deficit to trap Greece into successive bailouts under harsh conditions. A summary of the chronology of the events demonstrates the deep and widely spread roots of the corruption that generated them.

In September 2011, the Prosecutor of Economic Crimes initiated an investigation to examine accusations that Georgiou and two senior ELSTAT managers conspired to artificially inflate the 2009 government deficit to the detriment of Greece. **In January 2013**, the Prosecutor of Economic Crimes concluded that charges should be pressed against Georgiou and his two senior managers for inflating the 2009 deficit, causing damage amounting to €171 billion to the Greek economy, and against Georgiou for repeated violation of duty. **In July 2013**, the Investigating Judge concluded that the case should be dropped. However, following many objections by political and other interest groups it was decided to re-open the case and a Prosecutor of the Appeals Court was assigned to conduct further investigations. **In May 2014**, the Prosecutor assigned to the case recommended to the Appeals Council that all charges should be dropped. This again resulted in forceful public objections from political and other interest groups, who demanded that the Prosecutor’s recommendation be rejected. Subsequently, the Council of the Appeals Court issued an Ordinance ordering a further major interrogation *“...to exhaust every possibility to investigate all aspects of the case on the basis of which a sufficiently founded judgement of the court could be formed”*.

May 2015–July 2015: the Prosecutor assigned to the case commended to the Council of the Appeals Court to drop all charges. This again resulted in public protestations. The Council of the Appeals Court issued an Ordinance acquitting Georgiou and his two co-accused of the criminal charge of conspiring to falsify the deficit figures. However, the Ordinance decreed that Georgiou should be put on trial for the misdemeanor charge of violation of duty on three counts: not putting up the 2009 deficit figures for approval by the ELSTAT Board; not convening the Board after October 2010; and not being fully and exclusively occupied at ELSTAT for the initial three months of his term of office

pending the formal termination of his employment in the IMF in November 2010. **September 2015:** The Deputy Prosecutor of the Supreme Court issued an annulment against the Appeals Court Ordinance that dropped the criminal charges against Georgiou and his co-accused for falsifying the deficit and causing damage to the Greek economy. **November 2015–August 2016:** The Supreme Court examined the annulment proposal of its Deputy Prosecutor and instructed the Council of the Appeals Court to re-examine its acquittal ordinance, thus re-opened the entire proceedings to fresh investigations.

September 2016: The Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme Court (formerly the Deputy Prosecutor) ordered a new (parallel) preliminary criminal investigation, akin to the one initiated in September 2011, to examine media allegations that there was a conspiracy between EU, IMF and Greek officials to artificially inflate the 2009 government deficit. **In November 2016**, the new Prosecutor appointed by the Council of the Appeals Court to re-examine the case recommended again to the Appeals Court to drop the charges. **In December 2016**, the three misdemeanor charges of violation of duty against Georgiou were unanimously rejected by three judges of the Court of First Instance at a trial on December 6th. The same month the decision of the Court of First Instance to acquit Georgiou for the misdemeanor charges was annulled by another prosecutor and the case was referred to the Appeals Court for re-trial.

In May 2017, once again the Council of the Appeals Court acquitted Georgiou and his co-accused of the criminal charges of falsifying the 2009 deficit figures. **In July 2017**, for the second time, the Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme Court proposed to annul the acquittal decision of the Council of the Appeals Court and recommended that the case be re-examined again by the Council of the Appeals Court with a different composition. **On 1 August, 2017**, the Court acquitted him on two counts: for not convening the Board of ELSTAT after October 2010; and of not being fully and exclusively occupied at ELSTAT for the initial three months of his term of office. The Court, however, convicted him on the third count of not putting up the 2009 revised deficit for Board approval, even though EU rules specify that head statisticians *“have the sole responsibility for deciding on statistical methods, standards and procedures, and on the content and timing of statistical releases.”*

In May 2018, the Supreme Court accepted the proposed annulment by its Chief Prosecutor of the acquittal ordinance of the Council of the Appeals Court and referred the case back to the Council for re-examination. **In June 2018**, the Supreme Court rejected Georgiou’s appeal against his conviction, and two-year suspended prison sentence, by the Appeals Court on the misdemeanor charge of not putting up the 2009 deficit figures for approval by the ELSTAT Board. **In February 2019**, Georgiou was again acquitted of the charges of deliberately “inflating” the deficit, but the conviction on “breach of duty” for not putting up the deficit

and debt figures for approval by the ELSTAT board was upheld.

In 2014, a civil case for criminal slander was brought against Georgiou, by the former director—2006 to 2010—of national accounts of the Greek statistics office. **In 2017**, the First Instance Civil Court decided that Georgiou had committed a “*simple slander*” in a press release, meaning that what Georgiou said was true but had hurt the plaintiff’s reputation. The Court decided that Georgiou told the truth but he should not have made the statement, and imposed the penalty of a 10,000 euro payment to the plaintiff and the publication of an apology in the Greek newspaper, Kathimerini, by publishing large parts of the court decision against him. **In January 2021**, the Civil Court of Appeals upheld Georgiou’s conviction for defamation. **In January 2023** the Supreme Court held a hearing on Georgiou’s appeal against his civil conviction for “simple slander.”

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”
(“POLITICAL AND MILITARY COLLAPSE” chapter—continuation from the previous Newsletter issue):

Events Leading to Manzikert

BYZANTINE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS (1025–71)
If one glances, even cursorily, at the intricate events in the internal and external history of Byzantium in the half century prior to Manzikert, he will realize that the Byzantine prostration in 1071 was the result of prolonged developments and not of a single isolated event, that is, the Turkish victory at Manzikert. When one looks at the whirlwind that struck the empire in the eleventh century, he is not surprised that it collapsed before the Seljuks, but rather that it did not disappear completely from the pages of history. Instead, the empire made a partial recovery from these catastrophes and survived for three and one-half centuries. Among the developments that led to Manzikert was the vicious struggle for supreme political power in the state between bureaucrats and the military, a struggle related to the process of expansion of the landed magnates by which the latter sought to absorb the free peasantry and the free landholdings. The economic difficulties of the eleventh century, though not known in sufficient detail, are nevertheless manifest in the rise of tax farming, sale of offices, debasement of the coinage, appearance of the Venetians as the merchants of the empire, and the granting of exousia (power) and privileges. All these factors led to the breakdown of the Byzantine military, naval, and administrative systems in varying degrees. The empire, polyglot and multisectarian in nature, and stretching from the Danube to the Euphrates, had the double liability of nonhomogeneous populations and extensive, widely separated frontiers. Thus, ethnic and religious difficulties, some of which became critical in the eleventh century, plagued Byzantium throughout this period.

All were of an internal nature, having arisen within the borders of the state, but external events, equally alarming, occurred at this time. In the west, Norman adventurers laid the foundations of a new kingdom in Italy and Sicily, and the mercantile endeavors of Venice began to attain a commercial and political crescendo. Both polities were in a sense Constantinople-oriented. The Normans had set their Italian state in Byzantine ground on a Byzantine foundation, and their gaze and desires came to be fixed upon Constantinople itself. The Venetians, closely associated with the East in the past, now became so preoccupied with their commercial interests in Constantinople and in the other emporia of the empire, that they were to play a role of the first order in the decline of Byzantium during the twelfth century. Onto the northern and eastern borders were the spill of tribal hordes of the Ural-Altai in one of those many migratory waves that since the beginning of the empire had threatened to inundate the civilization of New Rome. These tribes, members of the same great linguistic family and the products of the same harsh steppe environment, made their way to Byzantium by separate routes. The Patzinaks, Uzes, and Cumans traveled across the Russian steppe and around the northern shores of the Black Sea to the Danube. The Seljuks came down into the Islamic world via Khurasan, subjugating Baghdad and a large part of the lands of the caliphate, during which process large numbers of Turkmen tribes made their way or were intentionally sent to the eastern Anatolian borders of Rum.

The most significant factor among all these developments was the convulsion of eleventh-century Byzantine society arising from the violent struggle between the representatives of the civil bureaucracy in the capital and the military magnates in the provinces. The party of the bureaucrats in the eleventh century included certain aristocratic families (such as those of Ducas and Monomachus) who came to be associated with the Central administration in Constantinople and a portion of the senate. It also included the professors and many of the graduates of the refounded University of Constantinople, people such as Psellus and Xiphilenus who had risen to prominence in the government because of their intellectual brilliance. Finally, the bureaucratic party embraced all those who had entered the administration and risen through the ranks, such as Philocales, John Orphanotrophus, and Nicephoritzes. The basis of bureaucrat power lay in a number of items, including the fact that the bureaucrats were located in Constantinople, the center of the empire and its political life. Here they were close to the emperor, could influence and control him, and could isolate him from the provincial militarists. In Constantinople they were in virtual control of the imperial navy and troops stationed in that area and were in possession of an impregnable city. They also presided over the vital domain of finances. Because of all this the civil administrators were possessed of real power and they were able to control the flow of internal politics for a great part of the eleventh century. The magnate-generals from the provinces were able to remove this element from power only after a long, violent, and exhausting struggle.

(To be continued)

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

ΗΡΘΑΝ

Ἦρθαν ντυμένοι «φίλοι»

αμέτρητες φορές οι εχθροί μου
το παμπάλαιο χώμα πατώντας.

Και το χώμα δεν έδεσε ποτέ με τη φτέρνα τους.
Ἐφεραν τον Σοφό, τον Οικιστή και τον Γεωμέτρη
Βίβλους γραμμάτων και αριθμών
την πάσα Ὑποταγή και Δύναμη
το παμπάλαιο φως εξουσιάζοντας.

Και το φως δεν έδεσε ποτέ με τη σκέπη τους.
Ούτε μέλισσα καν δε γελάστηκε το χρυσό ν' αρχινίσει
παιχνίδι,

ούτε ζέφυρος καν, τις λευκές να φουσκώσει ποδιές.

Ἐστησαν και θεμελίωσαν

στις κορφές, στις κοιλάδες, στα πόρτα πύργους
κραταιούς κι επαύλεις ξύλα και άλλα πλεούμενα
τούς Νόμους, τούς θεσπίζοντας τα καλά και συμφέροντα
στο παμπάλαιο μέτρο εφαρμόζοντας.

Και το μέτρο δεν έδεσε ποτέ με τη σκέψη τους.

Ούτε καν ένα χνάρι θεού στην ψυχή τους σημάδι δεν
άφησε, ούτε καν ένα βλέμμα ζωθιάς τη μιλιά τους
δεν είπε να πάρει.

Ἐφτασαν ντυμένοι «φίλοι»

αμέτρητες φορές οι εχθροί μου
το παμπάλαια δώρα προσφέροντας.

Και το δώρα τους άλλα δεν ήτανε παρά μόνο
σίδηρο και φωτιά.

Στ' ανοιχτά πού καρτέραγαν δάχτυλα

μόνον όπλα και σίδηρο και φωτιά.

Μόνον όπλα και σίδηρο και φωτιά.

ΤΗΣ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ ΑΙΜΑΤΑ

Της αγάπης αίματα με πορφύρωσαν
και χαρές ανείδωτες με σκιάσανε
οξειδώθηκα μες στη νοτιά των ανθρώπων
μακρινή μητέρα ρόδο μου αμάραντο.

Στ' ανοιχτά του πελάγου με καρτέρεσαν
Με μπομπάρδες τρικάρτες και μου ρίζανε
αμαρτία μου να 'χα κι εγώ μιαν αγάπη
μακρινή μητέρα ρόδο μου αμάραντο.

Τον Ιούλιο κάποτε μισανοίξανε
τα μεγάλα μάτια της μες στα σπλάχνα μου
την παρθένα ζωή μια στιγμή να φωτίσουν
μακρινή μητέρα ρόδο μου αμάραντο.

Κι από τότε γύρισαν καταπάνω μου
των αιώνων όργητες ξεφωνίζοντας
ο που σ' είδε, στο αίμα να ζει και στην πέτρα
μακρινή μητέρα Ρόδο μου Αμάραντο.

Της πατρίδας μου πάλι ομοιώθηκα
μες στις πέτρες άνθισα και μεγάλωσα
των φονιάδων το αίμα με φως ξεπληρώνω
μακρινή Μητέρα Ρόδο μου Αμάραντο.

Poetry by Odysseas Elytis

THEY CAME

They came dressed up as "friends,"
came countless times, my enemies,
trampling the primeval soil.

And the soil never blended with their heel.

They brought

The Wise One, the Founder, and the Geometer,
Bibles of letters and numbers,
every kind of Submission and Power,
to sway over the primeval light.

And the light never blended with their roof.

Not even a bee was fooled into beginning the golden game,
not even a Zephyr into swelling the white aprons.

On the peaks, in the valleys, in the ports

they raised and founded
mighty towers and villas,

floating timbers and other vessels;

and the Laws decreeing the pursuit of profit
they applied to the primeval measure.

And the measure never blended with their thinking.

Not even a footprint of a god left a man on their soul,
not even a fairy's glance tried to rob them of their speech.

They came dressed up as "friends,"
came countless times, my enemies,
bearing the primeval gifts.

And their gifts were nothing else
but iron and fire only.

To the open expecting fingers

only weapons and iron and fire.

Only weapons and iron and fire.

THE BLOOD OF LOVE

The Blood of Love has robbed me in purple
And joys never seen before have covered me in shade.
I've become corroded in the south wind of humankind
Mother far away, my Everlasting Rose.

On the open sea they lay in wait for me,
With triple-masted men-of-war they bombarded me,
My sin that I too had a love of my own
Mother far away, my Everlasting Rose.

Once in July her large eyes
Half-opened, deep down my entrails, to light up
The virgin life for a single moment
Mother far away, my Everlasting Rose.

And since that day the wrath of ages
Has turned on me, shouting out the curse:
'He who saw you, let him live in blood and stone'
Mother far away, my Everlasting Rose.

Once again I took the shape of my native country,
I grew and flowered among the stones.
And the blood of killers I redeem with light
Mother far away, my Everlasting Rose.