



HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

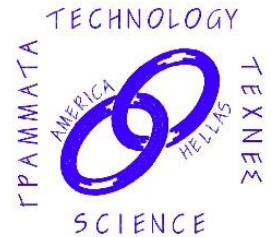
A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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Upcoming Events

A Neolithic “POMPEI”—The Archaeology of Alepotrypa Cave in Diros Bay, Mani

On Sunday, October 20, 2024, at 3:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest will present *Professor William Parkinson* in a lecture titled “*A Neolithic “POMPEI”—The Archaeology of Alepotrypa Cave in Diros Bay, Mani, Greece*”. 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.

Dr. Parkinson will discuss the results of collaborative, Greek and American, archaeological research at Diros Bay, particularly in the massive cave of Alepotrypa, one of the largest Neolithic burial sites and one of the oldest prehistoric villages in Europe. The size of a football field, the cave lay undiscovered until the 1950s, as the entrance collapsed 5,000 years ago. Some archaeologists suggest that this cave with its own underground lake may be responsible for sparking the age-old myth about the Greek underworld god Hades. In this illustrated lecture, *Dr. Parkinson* will discuss the results of the collaborative Greek-American research that has occurred at the cave as well as his current project in southern Mani.

William Parkinson is Curator and Head of Anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History, where he also is Associate Director of Research. Bill also is Professor of Anthropology at University of Illinois at Chicago. He and Attila Gyucha co-direct the Körös Regional Archaeological Project in Hungary. Bill also co-directs the Southern Mani Archaeological Project in Greece with Chelsea Gardner and Rebecca Seifried. His research explores the social dynamics of early village societies and the emergence of early states.

"Cultural Heritage, Human Rights, and Community Sustainability: Turkey's Weaponization of Cultural Heritage Against the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Greek Orthodox Community"

On Sunday, November 10, 2024, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents *Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou*, in a lecture titled “*Cultural Heritage, Human Rights, and Community Sustainability: Turkey's Weaponization of Cultural Heritage Against the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Greek Orthodox Community*”. This lecture is supported by the *Hellenic Foundation, Chicago*. The link to the Zoom webinar is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88387780854>

The twin events of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the centennial of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey provide an opportune, urgent moment for considering the application of a universal human rights framework to cultural heritage protections, most especially with regard to the sustainability of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodoxy community of Turkey (EPGOCT). Although a broad range of international human rights instruments has been developed to address the original deficits in the UDHR regarding the linkages between cultural heritage protection and the sustainability of religious, ethnic, and linguistic minority populations, the Turkish state has architected a cultural heritage policy towards the EPGOCT that functions as a multi-purpose weapon—appropriation, expropriation, erasure, destruction—deployed towards the goal of national homogenization and unsustainability of the EPGOCT. This talk will introduce the linkages between university human rights, cultural heritage rights, and minority communities as a framework for analyzing Turkey's use of cultural heritage policy towards the EPGOCT over the past century. I explore Turkey's “Haghia Sophia fetish” as part of the broader set of tools targeting the tangible and intangible heritage of the EPGOCT, and I suggest that the case of the EPGOCT is paradigmatic and consequential for understanding the vulnerability of the country's other minority communities. I close with some suggestions for efficacious action that combines the work of diplomats, heritage experts, and human rights practitioners, that improves the agency of the EPGOCT, towards improved outcomes in this case and comparative cases.

Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou is Visiting Professor in the International Studies Program at Boston College, and an affiliated faculty member of the Islamic Civilizations and Societies Program as well as the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life. Her research interests and policy work focus on the intersections of geopolitics, religion, and human rights, with particular focus on the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. *Prodromou* served a diplomatic appointment on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (2004-2012), and she was a member of the U.S. Secretary of State's Religion & Foreign Policy Working Group (2011-2015). She is co-editor of two volumes—*Eastern Orthodox Christianity and American Higher Education: Theological, Historical, and Contemporary Reflections*, and *Thinking through Faith: Perspectives from Orthodox Christian Scholars*—and multiple book chapters, and is widely published in academic journals such as *Journal of World Christianity*, *Journal of*

Democracy, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Orbis, and Survival.

She sits on the editorial board of *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* and *The Journal of World Christianity*, and Co-Chairs the Orthodoxy, Politics, and International Relations Group of the International Orthodox Theological Association. Her policy and practitioner appointments include the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center (Non-Resident Senior Fellow), Religions for Peace (Co-President), and the Freedom of Religion or Belief Women's Alliance (Alliance Advisor). She was a member of the delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the Holy and Great Council at Crete in 2016.

Her current research focuses on: religious geopolitics and typologies of power, with a case study of Russian influence-building through religious soft and sharp power; and, the effects of cultural heritage policy on institutional religious freedom and religious pluralism, with comparative case studies from the Near East.

Prodromou has taught at The Fletcher School at Tufts University, where she was the founding faculty director of the Initiative on Religion, Law, and Diplomacy; at Boston University; Princeton University; and, as an invited flying faculty member, at the College of Europe. She earned a Ph.D. and an S.M. in political science from MIT, an M.A.L.D. from The Fletcher School at Tufts University, and a B.A. in history and international relations from Tufts University.

In Brief

The Inefficiency of the Greek Judicial System

The Greek judicial system is infamous for its significant delays and its internal inefficiencies. Court proceedings in Greece are among the slowest in the entire European Union. The average time to resolve civil and commercial cases at first instance courts is 728 days. This official data was released by the European Commission in 2021 and placed Greece at the top of the delays list in the EU. Even more concerning, administrative cases in the Council of State of the country had a disposition time of 1,324 days in 2021.

The inefficiencies of the judicial system coupled with Greece's infamous bureaucracy and dysfunctional administration, have plagued the system for decades.

The European Commission and other organizations have repeatedly expressed concerns over significant delays and backlogs in the Greek judicial system.

Since September 2021, a total of 32 judges and prosecutors have been dismissed in an effort to address the issue of lengthy delays in the Greek judicial system.

In June 2024 (source: *eKathimerini.com*), the disciplinary commission of the Supreme Court ruled to dismiss four judges due to numerous and significant delays in issuing decisions. Among them were a Thessaloniki appeal court judge, two presidents and a judge of the Athens first instance court.

One of those dismissed, a president of the Athens first instance court, had 241 cases pending for 4 years and 5 months and had been the subject of complaints from citizens and lawyers since the start of his career. A second president of the Athens first instance court had 224 pending cases, while 111 cases were removed from her due to unjustified delays in issuing decisions. She claimed that the delays were due to serious health problems of close relatives. (Sources: *Greek Reporter*, *eKathimerini.com*)

Greece's GDP Growth Well Above EU average

According to European Commission reports, the Greek economy was among the most severely hit by the COVID-19 crisis in the EU but it recovered swiftly. After contracting by 9% in 2020, Greece's GDP grew by 8.4% in 2021 and by 5.9% in 2022. In 2023, Greece's real GDP grew by 2%, well above the euro area average. It is expected to pick up slightly to 2.2 percent in 2024, and 2.3 percent in 2025. In 2023, unemployment rate stood at 11.1 percent.

Greece's relatively low research and development spending and skills gaps continue to hamper economic productivity. Despite having increased significantly in recent years, research and development expenditure amounted to 1.5 percent of GDP in 2022. This is well below the EU average of 2.2 percent. In Greece, expenditure on primary through tertiary educational institutions as a percentage of GDP is one of the lowest among OECD countries and partner economies (3.7 %)

Greece lags behind many OECD countries in performance in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) including countries with the same or lower levels of expenditure per student as well as countries with the same and lower levels of economic development. Salary costs per student are above the OECD average, mostly because Greek teachers have less teaching time and Greece has smaller classes. A smaller percentage of students who enter tertiary education complete a first degree within the statutory study time than in any other country in Europe.

Greece's education system's performance is mixed. There are good results in reducing the number of students leaving school early and achieving higher rates of post-secondary educational attainment. However, there are also poor and deteriorating results in basic skills as reflected in the recent PISA survey of the OECD.

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

The First Appearance of the Turks (Continuation from the previous issue)

The extravagance of the rulers in the eleventh century came to be commonplace. The Empress Zoe, Constantine IX Monomachus, and the Paphlagonians were remarkably prodigious in exhausting the imperial coffers that Basil II had been so careful to fill. Also, the tax-yielding provinces in the Balkans and Anatolia were disturbed by other events above and apart from the socioeconomic developments affecting the peasant communities. The numerous rebellions, the countless foreign raids (especially in the Balkans), and the depredations of the mercenaries, kept the provincial tax system out of balance. The economic decline of the eleventh century, though still imperfectly understood, played a serious role in the events leading to Manzikert. Stemming primarily from the social evolution of agrarian society and the grants of excessive immunities to the great landowners, economic conditions were further aggravated by the extravagance of the rulers, and above all by the military rebellions, Patzinak raids, and mercenary rapacity in the provinces which choked off the state tax moneys. Such financial difficulty was of course disastrous for a state that functioned primarily on the basis of a money economy. But there were also serious external developments.

The Ghaznevids first settled Arslan and his Turks in the Khurasan steppe around Sarakhs, Abivard, and Kizil Avrat (Farava), to the east of the Caspian. But no sooner were they installed than their disturbances caused the Ghaznevids to make war upon them, and in the campaigns that followed, the Turkmens were defeated and scattered. One group moved to the regions of Balkhan and Dihistan to the northwest of Kizil Avrat, whereas a second group of perhaps 2,000 tents moved south to Kirman and Isfahan, and by the 1040's was raiding as far west as Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, and Armenia. As a result, by the early years of the third decade of the century, the original body of followers of Seljuk had split into the three following divisions: Balkhan, "Iraqi," and the Seljuks proper (who had remained under Toghrul and Caghri). The first group played little role in the events that followed, whereas the Iraqi Turks served as the advance guard for the Seljuk expansion that was to follow and would in some instances join the main body of Seljuks at that time when they would appear in Iran and Mesopotamia.

It was the third group, that of Toghrul-Caghri, which was to remake the history of the Middle East. For a while they had remained with the Karakhanids at Bukhara, but then moved on to Khwarazm near Shurkhan on the Oxus (Amu Darya) River. By 1034 they had moved into Khurasan and occupied the lands recently vacated by their tribal compatriots, those of Arslan, in the districts of Nesa, Sarakhs, Abivard, Kizil Avrat, and others. As the Ghaznevids had refused to grant these lands to the Seljuks (no doubt as a result of their experiences with the Seljuks of Arslan) Toghrul and Caghri took them by force of arms. In this manner began the final struggle between Seljuks and Ghaznevids as to the fate of the key Muslim province of Khurasan. The issue was decided at the fateful battle of Dandanacian in 1040. This date marks a decisive point not only for the Middle East but also for Byzantium as henceforth the Seljuks became the possessors of an established territorial state won by trial of arms. This first possession of the Seljuks, Khurasan, was on the borders

of the Islamic world, presenting the Seljuk princes with the temptation to enter Persia and the lands to the west. From this time the Seljuks no longer thought of the Jaxartes region, their point of departure, and did not oppose the occupation of these more northerly regions by another Turkic people, the Kipchaks. The great problem now facing the Seljuk princes was that of transforming themselves from war chiefs of nomadic tribes, who were preoccupied with pillage and with procurement of pasturage for their flocks, to monarchs of sedentary, civilized Middle Eastern society. There was the alternative before Toghrul of giving free rein to the Turkmen instinct to plunder the sedentary society, or to protect it from the pillaging of the nomads. Toghrul achieved the latter by sending the Turkmen tribes westward to raid the frontiers of the Christian states of Armenia, Georgia, and Byzantium. By this time (1040) there had occurred a large accretion of Turkmens to the standards of Toghrul and Caghri, attracted by the great victories and the prospects of plundering new lands.

Toghrul's primary concern was the conquest of Persia and Mesopotamia and so it was here that he concentrated his attention and military efforts. By 1055 he had secured this conquest and enjoyed a triumphal entry into Baghdad where took place his celebrated audience with the caliph. But previous to this consolidation of power in Mesopotamia-Iran, there had taken place a rapid expansion northwestward into Adharbaydjan, Transcaucasia, and Armenia, caused by the increasing number of Turkmens either fleeing Seljuk authority or else shunted northwestward by the Seljuks in an effort to save Mesopotamia-Iran from their presence. Their movements are difficult to follow but certain patterns appear. There were actual military campaigns of the sultan or his representatives in these areas in an effort to stabilize the frontiers and to maintain some kind of authority over the tribesmen in the border regions. There were also raids of the sultan's representatives which often had as their primary end the satisfaction of the tribal instincts and appetites for plunder and djihad. Finally, and most important, there were the activities of the Turkmens either in rebellion or simply not recognizing any Seljuk authority.

The political conditions prevailing in these areas of new Turkish expansion greatly facilitated first the Turkish penetration and then the conquest of the Seljuks in Adharbaydjan, Transcaucasia, and Armenia, for in all these areas there were numerous dynasties, both Christian and Muslim, in a state of constant war with one another. Quite often the Muslims hired the services of Turks in this advance guard of raiders, but soon they acquiesced in the political domination of the succeeding waves of Turkish invaders, or submitted to the commanders of the Seljuk sultan. Thus, portions of Adharbaydjan, Kurdistan, Transcaucasia, and the borders of Armenia were saturated by the newcomers, who in the end replaced many of the local dynasties. It was in this manner that the eastern frontiers of Byzantine Anatolia were eventually threatened by a deluge of Turkmens in the reign of Constantine and thereafter. *(To be continued)*

From the Riches of Our Cultural Heritage

Poetry by Odysseas Elytis

From *Axion Esti*, Η Γένεσις

ΑΥΤΟΣ

ο κόσμος ο μικρός, ο μέγας!

«ΑΛΛΑ ΠΡΩΤΑ θα δεις την ερημιά και θα της δώσεις
το δικό σου νόημα» είπε
«Πριν από την καρδιά σου θα 'ναι αυτή
και μετά πάλι αυτή θ' ακολουθήσει
Τούτο μόνο να ξέρεις:
Ό,τι σώσεις μες στην αστραπή
καθαρό στον αιώνα θα διαρκέσει»
Και ψηλά πολύ πάνω απ' τα κύματα
έστησε τα χωριά των βράχων
Εκεί σκόνη έφτανε ο αφρός
άπληρη γίδα είδα να γλείφει τις ρωγμές
με το μάτι λοξό και το λίγο κορμί σκληρό σαν χαλαζίας
Έζησα τις ακρίδες και τη δίψα
και τα τραχιά στις αρμοσιές τους δάχτυλα
χρόνους τακτούς όσους η Γνώση ορίζει
Στα χαρτιά σκυφτός και στα βιβλία τ' απύθμενα
με σκοινί λιανό κατεβαίνοντας
νύχτες και νύχτες
το λευκό αναζήτησα ως την ύστατη ένταση
του μαύρου Την ελπίδα ως τα δάκρυα
Τη χαρά ως την άκρα απόγνωση
Να σταλθεί βοήθεια τότε κρίθηκε η στιγμή
και ο κλήρος έπεσε στις βροχές
κελαρύσανε όλη μέρα ρυάκια
έτρεξα σαν τρελός
στις πλαγιές έσχισα σχίνο και πολύ μύρτο μες στη φούχτα
μου έδωσα
να δαγκάσουνε οι πνοές
«Η αγνότητα» είπε «είναι αυτή
στις πλαγιές το ίδιο και στα σπλάχνα σου»
Και τα χέρια του άπλωσε όπως κάνει
γέροντας γνωστικός Θεός για να πλάσει μαζί πηλό και
ουρανοσύνη
Λίγο μόλις πυράχτωσε τις κορφές
αλλ' αδάγκωτο πράσινο στις ρεματιές το χόρτο κάρφωσε
μέντα λεβάντα λουίζα
και μικρές πατημασιές αρνιών
ή αλλού πάλι από τα ύψη πέφτοντας
οι ψιλές κλωστές το ασήμι, δροσερά μαλλιά κοπέλας που
είδα και που επόθησα
Υπαρκτή γυναίκα
«Η αγνότητα» είπε «είναι αυτή»
και γεμάτος λαχτάρα χάιδεψα το σώμα
φιλιά δόντια με δόντια ύστερα ένας μες στον άλλο
Τρικούμισα
όπως κάβος πάτησα βαθιά
που αέρα πήρανε οι σπηλιές
Ηχώ με το λευκό σαντάλι έπερασε μια στιγμή
γοργά κάτω από τα νερά η ζαργάνα
και ψηλά το λόφο έχοντας πόδι Και τον ήλιο κεφάλι

κερασφόρο

ν' ανεβαίνει Αβάδιστος είδα Ο Μέγας Κριός
Και αυτός αλήθεια που ήμουνα Ο πολλούς αιώνες πριν
Ο ακόμη χλωρός μες στη φωτιά Ο άκοπος απ' τον ουρανό
ψιθύρισε όταν ρώτησα:

– Τι το καλό; Τι το κακό;

– Ένα σημείο Ένα σημείο

και σ' αυτό πάνω ισορροπείς και υπάρχουν

κι απ' αυτό πιο πέρα ταραχή και σκότος

κι απ' αυτό πιο πίσω βρυγμός των αγγέλων

– Ένα σημείο Ένα σημείο

και σ' αυτό μπορείς απέραντα να προχωρήσεις

ή αλλιώς τίποτε άλλο δεν υπάρχει πια

Κι ο Ζυγός που, ανοίγοντας τα χέρια μου, έμοιαζε

να ζυγιάζει το φως και το ένστικτο ήτανε

ΑΥΤΟΣ

ο κόσμος ο μικρός, ο μέγας!

ΕΠΕΙΔΗ ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΩΡΕΣ γύριζαν όπως οι μέρες
με πλατιά μενεξεδένια φύλλα στο ρολόι του κήπου

Δείχτης ήμουν εγώ

Τρίτη Τετάρτη Πέμπτη

ο Ιούνιος ο Ιούλιος ο Αύγουστος

Έδειχνα την ανάγκη που μου ερχόταν άρμη

καταπρόσωπο Έντομα κοριτσιών

Μακρινές αστεροπές της Ίριδας –

«Όλα τούτα καιρός της αθωότητας

ο καιρός του σκύμνου και του ροδαμού

ο πολύ πριν την Ανάγκη» μου είπε

Και τον κίνδυνο έσπρωξε με το 'να δάχτυλο

Στην κορφή του κάβου φόρεσε μελανό φρύδι

Από μέρος άγνωστο φώσφορο έχυσε

«Για να βλέπεις» είπε «από μέσα

στο κορμί σου

φλέβες κάλιο, μαγγάνιο

και τ' αποτιτανωμένα

παλαιά κατάλοιπα του έρωτα»

Και πολύ τότε σφίχθηκε η καρδιά μου

ήταν το πρώτο τριξίμο του ξύλου μέσα μου

μιας νυχτός που εσίμωνε ίσως

η φωνή του γκιόνη

κάποιου που είχε σκοτωθεί

το αίμα γυρίζοντας πάνω στον κόσμο

Είδα πέρα, μακριά, στην άκρια της ψυχής μου

μυστικά να διαβαίνουνε

φάρoi ψηλοί ξωμάχοι Στους γκρεμούς τραβερσωμένα

κάστρα

Τ' άστρο της τραμουντάνας Την αγία Μαρίνα με τα

δαιμονικά

Και πολύ πιο βαθιά πίσω απ' τα κύματα

στο Νησί με τους κόλπους των ελαιώνων

Μια στιγμή μου εφάνηκε θωρούσα Εκείνον

που το αίμα του έδωσε να σαρκωθώ

τον τραχύ του Αγίου δρόμο ν' ανεβαίνει

μια φοράν ακόμη