



The Hellenic Society Prometheas

Newsletter 61

January 2007

Mark your Calendar

Upcoming Events

- **January 11th 2007, from 6:30 – 8:00pm: Book presentation by Dr. George Papavizas, “Claiming Macedonia: The Struggle for the Heritage, Territory and Name of the Historic Hellenic Land, 1862-2004”** at The Embassy of Greece, 2217 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008 [*For more info, click [here](#)*]
- **Παρασκευή, 26 Ιανουαρίου 2007, 8:00μμ:** Ημέρα των Ελληνικών Γραμμάτων (Τριών Ιεραρχών): Ομιλία με θέμα “**Η σημασία των νεοελληνικών σπουδών στις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες**” (“The significance of modern Greek studies in the United States”) με τον Κύριο **Γιώργο Χουλιάρα** (Yiorgos Chouliaras), στην εκκλησία Άγιου Γεώργιου, Bethesda, MD. [*For more info, click [here](#)*]
- **February 10, 2007: Prometheas' Annual Masquerade Dance** at Double Tree Hotel, Rockville, MD. Do not miss this traditional apokriatiko glendi! Buy your tickets early! Special raffle price!!!! Details will be available soon.

Other Events

Hellenic American Career Fair, Saint Katherine’s Church Jan 6, 2007

- The AHEPA Chapter 438 along with the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) are organizing a Career Fair for young GreekAmerican interested to get assistance in selecting a university or get guidance on a career. [*For more info, click [here](#)*].

New Lives in a New Land: Somerville Museum, Sept 10, 06 – March 25, '07

- The Somerville Museum in Massachusetts presents a two-part exhibit on Greek American immigrants. [*For more info, click [here](#)*].

Έκθεση για την Αρχαία Ελλάδα

Το παιδικό μουσείο του Μανχάταν πρόκειται να παρουσιάσει μια μοναδική έκθεση. Για τις ανάγκες της έκθεσης αυτής αναπαράγει Θεούς και μύθους της Αρχαίας Ελλάδας. Η έκθεση θα είναι έτοιμη για το κοινό τον Φεβρουάριο του 2007. Πρόκειται για μια μοναδική παρουσίαση βασισμένη στις τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις που θα μεταφέρουν με την βοήθεια της τεχνολογίας τον επισκέπτη στον κόσμο της Αρχαίας Ελλάδας μεταδίδοντας μάλιστα όχι μόνο γνώση για την εποχή και τον κόσμο της αλλά και συναισθήματα. Παιδιά της Νέας Υόρκης αλλά και της υπόλοιπης Αμερικής θα έχουν έτσι την δυνατότητα να ταξιδέψουν στην Αρχαία Ελλάδα. Μια επανάληψη του ταξιδιού του Οδυσσέα ο οποίος μετά το επικό του ταξίδι έφθασε στον τόπο του, έτσι και οι νεαροί επισκέπτες θα ταξιδέψουν μέσα από τους Θεούς και τους Μύθους της Αρχαίας Ελλάδας μέσα από τις ρίζες του δυτικού πολιτισμού. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί πως το παιδικό μουσείο του Μανχάταν θεωρεί ότι ο Ελληνισμός και το ελληνικό πνεύμα πρέπει να βρίσκεται στην πρώτη γραμμή της εκπαίδευσης στην Αμερική του σήμερα.

Source: Omogeneiaka Nea

The History Channel



Lost Worlds: Athens - Ancient Supercity

Tue December 5th at 12:00am

Tue December 5th at 1:00pm

Sun December 10th at 12:00pm

Sun December 10th at 9:00pm

Sat December 30th at 2:00pm

Wed January 10th at 12:00pm

Wed January 10th at 11:00pm

In this instalment of 'Lost Worlds', a team of field investigators painstakingly reconstruct the city of Athens as it would have looked in the fifth century BC. Using the latest research, expert analysis and cutting edge graphic technology, our experts take us on a compelling journey through Greek history.

Firstly, we embark upon a comprehensive examination of Pericles' life, assessing the leader's role in Athens' ascent to greatness, as well as in the city's eventual undoing. Described by the historian Thucydides as the 'first citizen of Athens', Pericles ruled from 461BC until 429BC. This elected statesman has been credited with leading Athens towards greatness, consolidating the Athenian Empire, and paving the way for western civilisation.

This programme slowly reassembles the city which Pericles presided over, and examines his considerable architectural legacy. The statesman was responsible for masterminding the most costly and ambitious construction campaign which had ever been undertaken in the western world, as he created a model city of temples, houses, market places, civic buildings and a highly innovative sanitation system.

However, Pericles drew the funds necessary to accomplish these feats directly from the Greek alliance's treasury. Widely seen as one of the largest embezzlements in human history, the decision to use money which had been earmarked for the defence of the city states eventually lead to the downfall of Athens, and of Pericles himself.

Two and a half thousand years after Athens was bought down by war and disease, we recreate Pericles' magnificent city. Impregnable fortifications, the first senate house, and one of the most advanced water systems in the world, are all important hallmarks of the 'Age of Pericles.' We also gaze in awe at the Parthenon: a building which is often hailed as the most perfect structure ever completed. An examination of the terrifying power of the Greek navy completes our exciting foray into the breathtaking world of fifth century Greece.



Athens-Sparta' showcase to open at Onassis Center in New York on December 5

Photo: Parian marble bust known as 'Leonidas,' dating from 480-470 BC and found at the Acropolis in Sparta, from the Sparta Archaeological Museum.

At a press conference this week on the exhibition "Athens-Sparta: From the 8th to the 5th Centuries BC," which opens in New York on December 5, the Onassis Foundation's president Antonis Papadimitriou told the journalists, "Churchill once said that reading the Peloponnesian Wars told one all there was to know about the secrets of warfare." The Onassis Cultural Center, a subsidiary of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, is to host the exhibition of 289 artifacts from the two ancient cities that are being shown abroad for the first time. Athens and Sparta

were often at war, but the exhibition shows that even at times of great rivalry, civilization did not stop developing, according to Nikos Kaltsas, director of the National Archaeological Museum of Greece. The exhibition, to which admission is free, will last until May 12, 2007. The cover of the 300-page catalog shows a warrior, his head bent in thought, a detail from a piece of Athenian pottery in the Archaeological Museum. One wonders what the New Yorkers will make of the bust titled "Leonidas," the warrior who fell with his 300 men fighting against the Persians at Thermopylae, exhibited along with arrowheads and spearheads from the legendary battle. "The exhibition is of historic, cultural and artistic interest that closes a cycle of events marking the foundation's 30th anniversary, the 30th anniversary of the death of Aristotle Onassis and the 100th anniversary of his birth," Papadimitriou said. The many valuable artifacts have been brought to New York so that visitors can see the differences between the two Greek city-states at the philosophical and sociopolitical level, whose effects on cultural and human behavior have lasted until this the present.

http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/news/civ_1653479KathiLev&xml/&aspKath/civ.asp?fdate=25/11/2006

Misc news

Bobby revisited

*David
Brooks*

New York Times

"Emilio Estevez's movie, "Bobby," introduces the martyrdom of Robert Kennedy to another generation of Americans, but it was Robert's reaction to his brother's death that is really most instructive to the young.

Robert Kennedy was dining at home on Nov. 22, 1963, when J. Edgar Hoover called. "I have news for you," Hoover began coldly. "The president's been shot" Kennedy turned away from his lunch companions, his hand to his mouth and his face twisted in pain.

In the ensuing months, he was devoured by grief. One of his biographers, Evan Thomas, writes: "He literally shrank, until he appeared wasted and gaunt. His clothes no longer fit, especially his brother's old clothes — an old blue topcoat, a tuxedo, a leather bomber jacket with the presidential seal — which he insisted on wearing and which hung on his narrowing frame."

But during March 1964, he visited Bunny Mellon's estate in Antigua, and spent the vacation in his room, reading a book Jackie Kennedy had given him, "The Greek Way," by Edith Hamilton.

"The Greek Way" contains essays on the great figures of Athenian history and literature, and Kennedy found a worldview that helped him explain and recover from the tragedy that had befallen him. "When the world is storm-driven and the bad that happens and the worse that threatens are so urgent as to shut out everything else from view," Hamilton writes, "then we need to know all the strong fortresses of the spirit which men have built through the ages."

Classical scholars often scorn Hamilton because she wrote in a breathless "all the glory that was Greece" mode, but her book changed Robert Kennedy's life. He carried his beaten, underlined and annotated copy around with him for years, pulling it from his pocket, reading sections aloud to audiences in what Thomas calls "a flat, unrhythmic voice with a mournful edge."

Kennedy found in the Greeks a sensibility similar to his own — heroic and battle-scarred but also mystical. He shared the awful sense of foreboding that pervades the work of Aeschylus and Sophocles, and that distinctly Greek awareness of the invisible patterns that connect events to one another, how the arrogance men and women show at one moment will twist back and bring agony later on.

Hamilton is at her best describing the tragic sensibility, the strange mixture of doom and exaltation that marks Greek drama. It was based on the conviction that good grows out of bad, virtue out of hardship, and that wisdom is born in suffering. Kennedy memorized a passage from Aeschylus, which Hamilton quotes twice in her book;

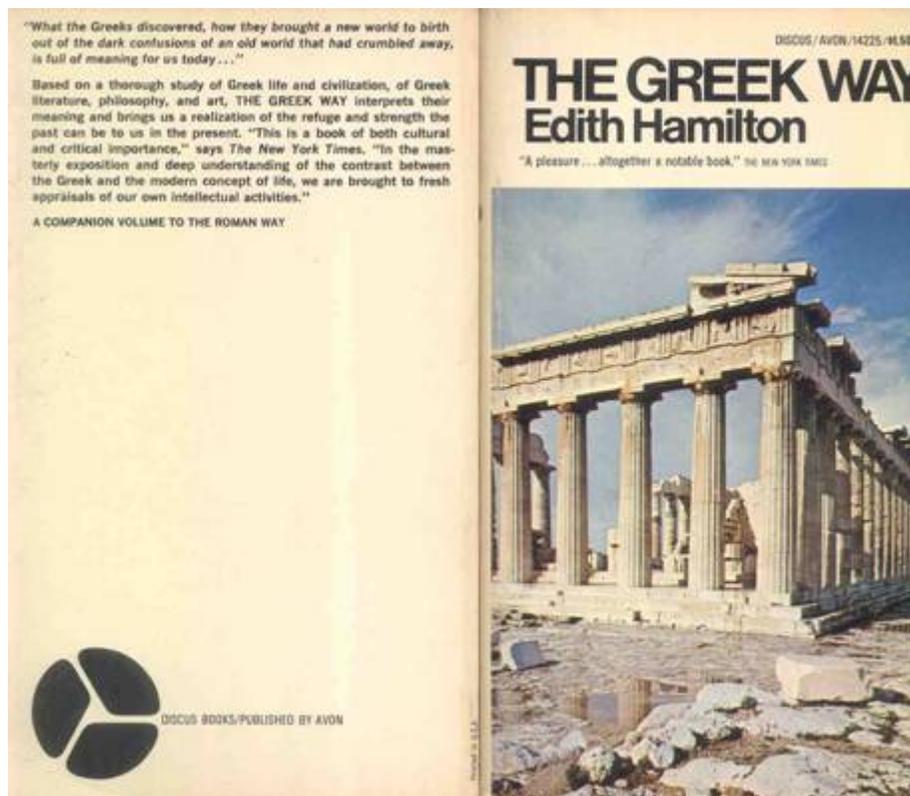
"God, whose law it is that he who learns must suffer. And even in our sleep pain that cannot forget, falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despite, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God."

Kennedy, recovering from his brother's murder, found in the ancient Greeks a civilization that was eager to look death in the face, but which seemed to draw strength from what it found there. The Greeks seemed more convinced of the dignity and significance of life the more they brooded on the pain and precariousness of it.

Kennedy underlined a passage of Hamilton's book in which she summarizes the rippled nature of Greek optimism: "Life for him was an adventure, perilous indeed, but men are not made for safe havens. The fullness of life is in the hazards of life. And, at the worst, there is that in us which can turn defeat into victory" If they were doctors of the spirit, the Greeks' specialty was to take grief and turn it into resolution.

The story of Kennedy's grief is the story of a man stepping out of his time and fetching from the past a sturdier ethic. He developed a bit of that quality, which greater leaders like Churchill possessed in abundance, of seeming to step from another age. Kennedy became a figure in the 1960s, but was never really of the '60s.

And the lesson, of course, is about the need to step outside your own immediate experience into the past, to learn about the problems that never change, and bring back some of that inheritance. The leaders who founded the country were steeped in the classics, Kennedy found them in crisis, and today's students are lucky if they stumble on them by happenstance."



Κάρπεντερ: Αξιέπαινες οι προσπάθειες της Ελλάδας για τη σταθεροποίηση των Βαλκανίων

Ζωή Λεουδάκη
Ουάσιγκτον
29-11-2006

Επίλεκτο κοινό από τον πολιτικό χώρο της Ουάσιγκτον συγκέντρωσε το περιοδικό Mediterranean Quarterly στο Κόσμος Κλαμπ, την παλαιότερη λέσχη της αμερικανικής πρωτεύουσας, για να γιορτάσει τα 18 χρόνια λειτουργίας του.



Αλέξανδρος Μαυρούδης

Κύριος ομιλητής της εκδήλωσης ήταν ο πρέσβης της Ελλάδας στις ΗΠΑ, Αλέξανδρος Μαυρούδης, ο οποίος αναφέρθηκε στον πολυδιάστατο ρόλο της Ελλάδας στα Βαλκάνια και το διεθνή χώρο. «Η Ελλάδα αποτελεί μία πετυχημένη περίπτωση» είπε ο κ. Μαυρούδης. «Είμαστε η πιο πετυχημένη ήπια δύναμη στη νοτιοανατολική Ευρώπη και την ευρύτερη περιοχή της ανατολικής Μεσογείου».

Ο κ. Μαυρούδης επεσήμανε ότι η Ελλάδα έχει φτάσει σε σημείο εξέλιξης που επιθυμούν να μιμηθούν όλες οι γειτονικές της χώρες και γι' αυτό αναλαμβάνει ηγετικό ρόλο στη περιοχή. Συγκεκριμένα συνέτεινε στη διαμόρφωση της πολιτικής της ΕΕ για την περιοχή και στην ένταξη και άλλων χωρών της περιοχής στην κοινότητα.

Επίσης με τις επενδύσεις της στα Βαλκάνια, η Ελλάδα προωθεί και διαμορφώνει μία αγορά 120 εκατομμυρίων καταναλωτών ενώ έχει δημιουργήσει πάνω από 200 χιλιάδες νέες θέσεις εργασίας.



Τρεντ Γκάλεν Κάρπεντερ

Τη θετική και αποφασιστική επιρροή της Ελλάδας στα Βαλκάνια τόνισε και ο υποδιευθυντής του τμήματος άμυνας και εξωτερικής πολιτικής του Ινστιτούτου CATO, Τρεντ Γκάλεν Κάρπεντερ. «Η Ελλάδα είναι αξιέπαινη», τόνισε ο κ. Κάρπεντερ, «για τις προσπάθειες που κατέβαλε για τη σταθεροποίηση των Βαλκανίων και για την οικονομική ανάπτυξη της περιοχής».

Η Ελλάδα όμως δεν δραστηριοποιείται μόνο στην περιοχή της Μεσογείου αλλά και στο διεθνή χώρο μέσω του εμπορικού της στόλου. Ο πρέσβης της Ελλάδας στις ΗΠΑ μας εξηγεί: «Τα ελληνικά πλοία μεταφέρουν το 35% του παγκόσμιου εμπορίου που διακινείται δια θαλάσσης και αυτό που είναι ακόμα πιο εντυπωσιακό είναι ότι το 50% των εμπορευμάτων της Κίνας μεταφέρονται από ελληνικά πλοία».

Ολοκληρώνοντας ο κ. Μαυρούδης επισήμανε ότι η ασφάλεια σε θέματα ενέργειας είναι πολύ σημαντική για τις ΗΠΑ και ότι η Ελλάδα είναι σε θέση να βοηθήσει. Συγκεκριμένα, ο έλληνας πρέσβης τόνισε ότι ο ελληνικός εμπορικός στόλος διαθέτει το μεγαλύτερο αριθμό δεξαμενόπλοιων με τα οποία διακινεί καύσιμα και αργό πετρέλαιο σ' ολόκληρο τον κόσμο. Το περιοδικό Mediterranean Quarterly εκδίδεται από το Πανεπιστήμιο Ντιούκ και είναι το μόνο περιοδικό στις ΗΠΑ που ασχολείται διεξοδικά με την εξέταση και ανάλυση των εξελίξεων στην Μεσόγειο και τις διεθνείς τους προεκτάσεις.

Greek to Me

A year ago I began to learn a dead language, and it has subtly changed my view of life. Yet no one seems to believe me. When I say I'm studying ancient Greek, people usually respond, with a cocked eyebrow and a heavy diphthong of mistrust, in one of three ways. "Building your vocabulary?" Or: "Why don't you just read translations?" Or, most damning of all, "A dead language?"

These are all fair questions, and at times, caught in a bruising clinch with Attic grammar, I ask them of myself. By the standards of my native English, Greek is fabulously—some might say perversely—complex. In college Latin I learned the joys of a synthetic language, in which words are modified ("inflected") to mark their tense, voice, number, gender, and other grammatical attributes, and even proper names have multiple forms. But nothing had prepared me for the Greek notion of dual number, which is neither singular nor plural but applies to eyes, friends, and other pairs that belong together. After almost a year of study I am still grappling with the vagaries of accentuation, the protean use of participles, and the mysteries of the Greek middle voice, which is neither active ("I lead") nor passive ("I am led") but an indefinable, reflexive middle ground ("I lead to or for myself"). And then there are the verbs, those fearsome verbs. In English, verbs have a manageable four main forms: yodel, yodels, yodeled, yodeling. Spanish verbs have about 50. Classical Greek? Three hundred and fifty. "They might yodel (in the past) for themselves" (the first aorist middle optative third person plural) and "You are about to be having been yodeled" (the second person singular future perfect passive) are but two of the ways one can yodel in Greek. And just about the time you've memorized all the rules of verb formation, you discover that many Greek verbs are irregular anyway and recklessly break them.

Some of the best Greek of all is still denser and stranger. The reason I started learning the language in the first place was to read *The Iliad*, the most famous and influential poem in Western culture, in the original. In fact "Homer" may well be a collective pseudonym for many generations of wandering bards, whose slowly evolving oral "text" was only written down circa 700 B.C., several centuries after they had begun to sing it. Their *Iliad* is a linguistic fossil bed, crammed with archaisms and odd dialects that the Greeks of the fifth century B.C. already found tough going. So imagine me. As I do battle with Book I, reaching the end of each line looking through my ear-hole, as my high-school football coach used to say, I begin to see why "Greek to me," for Shakespeare, meant gibberish.

Yet in the end, these oddments and complexities are precisely what fuel my efforts. They remind me just how different the people must have been who used this language—people who sang their heroes and their myths, creating them anew at each performance instead of reading them, unchanging, from the page. In them I sense a whole new world-view. Which, after all, is among the best reasons going to learn a new language. Or to read. Or to think at all.

So no: To get back to the first of those nagging Whys, I'm not doing this to build my vocabulary or for mental calisthenics. As a word buff I'm naturally delighted by my new X-ray view of English, which reveals the Greek bones under the skin of familiar friends like *psychology* (*psyche*, "breath, life, soul" + *logos*, "word, discourse, reason" = the reason of the soul) and *dinosaur* (from *deinos*, "terrible, fearful, great" + *sauros*, "lizard") and helps me understand lingo in medicine and natural history that I'd never encountered before. If getting pages of strange runes down by heart improves my memory, or if I feel a certain cryptographic kick in discerning meaning in what at first glance seems an impenetrable waterfall of words,

that's grand. But more than words themselves, what interests me is the Greek thought that underlies them.

So why not just read translations? Bookstores are filled with polished renderings by people whose Greek is far better than mine will ever be. What's wrong with those? Absolutely nothing, of course. Yet the more Greek I read in the original, the more translations seem a pale two-dimensional shadow of a shapely, muscular, three-dimensional body whose form and content are one. Take the first few words of *The Iliad*. The superb Robert Fagles translation runs:

*Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles,
Murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses ...*

A no less distinguished rendering, by the eminent classicist Richard Lattimore, has it quite differently:

*Sing, Goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians ...*

Fagles begins in rage, Lattimore in song; for one it is "Achilles" who is "murderous, doomed," while for the other anger itself is the active force. Which is it? In the original it is both, and a good deal more besides.

In Sophocles' *Antigone*, the chorus sings of mankind's ambivalent greatness: "*polla ta deina kouden anthropou deinoteron pelei*." The phrase can be translated in two very different ways, because of the inherent ambiguity of the adjective *deinos* (as in *dinosaur*), which may be positive ("great") or negative ("fearful," "terrible"). So as the chorus sings "many things are terrible, but nothing is more terrible than mankind," it is also singing "many things are great (clever, able ...), but nothing is greater than mankind." Compare a line from Pericles' famous funeral oration to the Athenians killed in the first year of the Peloponnesian War:

"*philokaloumen te gar met'euteleias kai philosophoumen aneu malakias*." The Penguin translation reads: "Our love of what is beautiful does not lead to extravagance; our love of the things of the mind does not make us soft." This is a fine rendering, but it cannot measure up. The music of the line is inevitably lost: the satisfying echo of *philokaloumen* and *philosophoumen*, the singular sing-song beauty of the word *eleuteleias*, meaning "thrift" or "economy," the rhythmic tension of the whole line that makes the English seem fussy and verbose. Translation has once again compressed original meanings: *Philokaloumen* means "love of the beautiful," but it could just as easily be rendered "nobility." *Malakias* is "softness," but also "cowardice." Each word has a whole series of associations, a vast bubble chart of intersecting meanings shimmering in the mind as one reads.

When the translator makes his fatal choice—one word only, please—all but one of the beautiful bubbles burst. Put another way, the result is a black-and-white photo of an orchid grove: satisfying in its own way, perhaps, but nowhere near as perfumed and animate as the original. Of course this impoverishment happens, in varying degree, every time one language is forced to flow into the conduit of another. Last December, in a German-speaking village in the Swiss Alps, I bought a packet of paper tissues emblazoned, in German, with the proud marketing boast *Durchschnupfsicher!* As often happens in Switzerland, the package was multilingual, and the term was variously rendered in English, Italian, and French, as "three-ply," *assorbente*, and *résistent*; the English stressed the product's structure, the Italian its absorbency, the French its toughness. But the German term contained all three: Compounded of three separate words, it literally means "sneeze-through-proof." A concept of singular power.

Distinguished linguists and cognitive scientists argue convincingly that words themselves do

not circumscribe reality—that different languages don't create different mentalities (the Eskimos, it turns out, actually do not have 20 different words for snow). Still, a concept like *Durchschnupfsicher*-ness is nothing to sneeze at. Wherever in this chicken-or-egg world they come from, different mentalities do exist in various lands, and local languages do mirror them. Hence the old Italian proverb *traduttore traditore* is entirely justified: “The translator is a traitor.” Reading texts in the original is the only hope of a direct approach to the people who wrote them.

And here, another chorus of objections. Many people question pointedly whether we have any business getting to know the ancient Greeks better in the first place. Broadly speaking, these critics fall into two camps, which cast the Greeks as either benign or malignant. The former, following the “dead language” line, question whether books written 2,500 years ago can really contain anything that is still relevant today. Surely their thought has long ago been superseded? It's true in hard science, where Ptolemy's astronomy, Aristotle's physics, and the medicine of Galen and Hippocrates have been bettered by several centuries of scientific method. Yet in a wide range of other fields, including philosophy, architecture, sculpture, religion, and literature, the Greeks remain seminal. They invented democracy, pioneered concepts of the citizen and the state. Some of our most basic social and political concepts—private property, civil liberties, and free speech—and our most frequently capitalized ideals—Justice, Beauty, Morality, Free Will—appear first among the Greeks, who wrote about them with a clarity and insight that richly repays attention to this day. Even where modern science has outstripped them, the Greeks remain sharp-eyed and sharper-tongued in the background. Doctors in many countries still take the oath ascribed to Hippocrates, and with good reason, for in a few pithy lines it considers topics such as euthanasia, abortion, and the delicate nature of the patient-doctor relationship. Here, as in the many spheres of knowledge where science loses its hard edges and grades into the nebulous realms of ethics and law, the Greeks excel. They were remarkably astute students of humanity.

Statements like this draw the loudest hoots and jeers of all, of course, from people who consider the Greeks not just irrelevant but downright dangerous, members of a slave-owning, xenophobic, misogynist society who don't deserve our attention in the first place. They are, according to this reasoning, the leading figures of that most loathsome group, the Dead White Males, who have twisted the Western cultural canon to serve their none-too-hidden political agendas.

Call me a dupe, but when I read Aristotle's *Physics* or *Poetics* I'm not focusing on the fact that he defended slavery, any more than I reject the U.S. Constitution because the Founding Fathers themselves owned slaves and would have been thunderstruck by women's suffrage, or allow memories of Mozart's smutty letters to his cousin Maria Anna Thekla to sully the pleasure of his horn concertos. Maybe I'm an apolitical nincompoop, but I believe in great books and read them for the same reasons that I look at paintings by Picasso and sculpture by Praxiteles, stare long and silent at Notre Dame's façade in dawn light, and listen to the chaconne from Bach's violin concerto in D-minor at full, thorax-thrumming volume: to celebrate and heighten my humanity, to drink deep of life, and to partake in mysterious pleasures that I (quite obviously) can't capture in words, but recognize when they happen ... in the immortal words of Hallmark, to Take Joy.

This is not string theory, but common sense: In art as in life, some things are more complex, stimulating, enduring, and ultimately more rewarding than others. Over the ages a few painters, sculptors, architects, and, yes, a few writers too—some of whom were dear, sweet-natured souls, others master manipulators or thoroughgoing bastards—have by talent, elbow grease, or

pure luck arrived at a deeper perception of human existence than is vouchsafed to most of us. They have crystallized this perception in their art, an art whose force, elegance, and economy speaks to all people in all times (or more so than most). This, in fact, is how we know an artist's work is universal: when it passes through the sands of Time, the most effective filter of wheat and chaff there is. Not to belittle contemporary writers—I wouldn't give up my Banville and Proulx and Hamsun and Heaney for any money. They may even turn out to be among the Greats. Just that it's too early to say. Only with time will we see whether their works age like a legendary Bordeaux vintage or like cheap plonk. Jane Austen, whose writing has held up marvelously for more than two centuries, we can be a little more confident about. Dante, with another 500 years of fame under his belt, is a safe bet. Virgil is a sure thing. Homer is a lead-pipe cinch.

And the closer I can come to meeting them on their home turf—to conversing with them in their native languages—the more I may be able to learn from them. Or so I believe. Which is why I labor over my flash cards and conjugations, seeking elusive communion with Homer and the Greeks. For 25 centuries now people have turned to their writings, 75 generations of readers with vastly different expectations and outlooks, who have found there something pure and profound, a new way of seeing the world that streams by them. It's time I saw for myself.

Tom Mueller speaks six languages fluently but wishes ancient Greek were his mother tongue.

Reading List

What are our writer's top 10 must-reads in the original Greek?

- 1 / *The Iliad* Homer
- 2 / *The Odyssey* Homer
- 3 / *The Symposium* Plato
- 4 / *Fragments of Heraclitus*
- 5 / *Fragments of Sappho*
- 6 / *The Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle
- 7 / *Antigone* Sophocles
- 8 / *The Philippics* Demosthenes
- 9 / *The History of the Peloponnesian War* Thucydides
- 10 / *On the Sublime* Longinus

Source: <http://www.hemispheresmagazine.com/nov06/firstperson.html>

UN unanimously adopts 'cultural property return' Resolution tabled by Greece NEW YORK, 6/12/2006 (ANA-MPA/P. Panagiotou)

Greece's culture minister George Voulgarakis called for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece late Monday night, speaking at the UN just after the General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution tabled by Greece last month on the return or restitution of cultural property to their countries of origin. He also welcomed the adoption of the resolution by the plenary session as "exceptionally important".

"The Greek initiative for the Resolution that has been unanimously adopted by the United Nations, which concerns the reunification of antiquities, is an exceptionally important event," Voulgarakis said after the adoption of the resolution, adding that "this result is the outcome of the efforts we have made recently to enable the antiquities to return to their places of origin".

"The adoption of this resolution in itself signals and guides the countries to help so that the antiquities from all over the world will return to their homes. Greece will always seek and strive, in that direction, for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to their rightful place".

Addressing the General Assembly, Voulgarakis explained that "the uniqueness of the Parthenon, as a monument-symbol of the global civilization, is the decisive factor that renders the demand for their return universal, but also more timely than ever, particularly now, when we are in the final stage of completion of the New Acropolis Museum" in Athens.

The draft resolution on "The Return or Restitution of Cultural Property to their Countries of Origin" had been tabled at the UN by Greece's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Adamantios Vasilakis, on November 3.

Addressing himself to the president of the UN's 61st General Assembly and the representatives of the UN member countries, Voulgarakis said:

"I thank you for the opportunity you have given me to address the General Assembly, to express the sincere gratitude and appreciation of the Greek government, for the unanimous adoption of the resolution on the return and restitution of the cultural treasures to their countries of origin. The adoption of the resolution, with a 'consensus', and its endorsement by the majority of the representatives, clearly states its importance for the international community, and the clear intentions of all of us to proceed with bilateral and multilateral collaborations so as to resolve these matters."

Noting that "UNESCO's systematic and hard work is at the core of these efforts for the protection of cultural heritage", Voulgarakis also conveyed the Greek government's appreciation to UNESCO director-general Koichiro Matsuura.

Voulgarakis further noted the immense legal dimensions of antiquities smuggling, stressing that "the illicit trade in antiquities is included in the same category as the illicit trade in weapons, narcotics and people. It constitutes a form of organized crime that is directly linked with the mafia and money laundering. It is a crime against all of us. Not only against the States whose cultural heritage is being decimated, but also against all of humanity, because the monuments are destroyed, information is lost, the artifacts are cut off from their historical and physical environment".

He also spoke of the value of heritage, stressing that "a person without history and a cultural identity becomes poorer as an existence and substance; he is cut off from his natural and cultural environment, and is deprived of his ability to explain the phenomena of his evolution".

However, Voulgarakis continued, "a new wind has been blowing in recent years".

"An increasing number of museums are adopting strict ethical codes in the acquisition of cultural property. The international scientific community and the archaeologists, regardless of nationality, are raising their voices for the protection of the world cultural heritage and demanding that an end be put to the looting and smuggling of cultural artifacts. New, more stringent legislation is being adopted in this direction, such as recently in Switzerland and Britain. But the global public opinion, too, and the media, have been sensitized, particularly after the destruction of cultural properties in Afghanistan and Iraq," he explained.

Voulgarakis stressed "we hear this necessity, and we are giving it flesh and blood with today's Resolution".

"Greece took the initiative to introduce this Resolution, which is greatly important to the protection of cultural heritage and signals this new era. It reflects the initiatives that have been taken at international level through international conventions, resolutions and initiatives by UNESCO, and other international initiatives. It advances the cooperation among the countries, in the framework of the UN and UNESCO, in order to protect humanity's cultural heritage and its values. It ensures the advancement of the return and restitution of the cultural properties that have been illegally removed from their countries of origin, and stressed the need for their return to those countries," he said.

"In the age of globalization, the peoples must be able to preserve their historic and cultural identity and, at the same time, communicate and collaborate amongst themselves without the barriers of the past. But this cooperation and movement of cultural properties must abide by ethical codes and rules," he added.

Noting the recent positive developments in this area, Voulgarakis stressed: "Greece, through its collaborations with other states and museums, has already succeeded, in this past year, to repatriate some of its antiquities. Two important antiquities have been returned by the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, while discussions are pending for the return of two more antiquities by the same museum. Also returned to Greece were two fragments from the Acropolis, one of which was from the Parthenon. The one fragment was returned by the University of Heidelberg, while the other was returned by Sweden. These returns were made in the framework of the need for restitution of a monument which, although it is situated in Greece, belongs to the entire world."

However, the Greek culture minister continued, "the Parthenon Marbles remain 'divided' between Athens and London".

"The uniqueness of the Parthenon, as a monument-symbol of world heritage, is the decisive factor that renders the demand for their return universal, but also more timely than ever. Particularly now when we are at the final stage of completion of the New Acropolis Museum. This Museum will house all the remaining parts of the Parthenon and is expected to also include the Marbles we seek back from the British Museum," Voulgarakis said.

"The reunification of antiquities signals the completion of civilisational mosaics which, for the time being, are gapingly incomplete, the completion of a fragmented image which, precisely due to the looting of its basic pieces, is distorted and misleading. If we succeed in completing the cultural image of each country with the repatriation of those antiquities that have been removed, illegally or unjustly, from their countries of origin, we will be creating steady foundations not only for the present, but also for the generations that will follow," the minister stressed.

"The cultural heritage of every country is the cultural heritage of all of humanity. All of humanity bears the burden and responsibility for the protection of this cultural heritage," the Greek culture minister concluded.

December 11, 2006

Getty Museum Is Expected to Return Gold Wreath to Greece

By [HUGH EAKIN](#) and [ANTHEE CARASSAVA](#)

After nearly a year of negotiations, the [J. Paul Getty Museum](#) in Los Angeles has agreed in principle to return a rare fourth-century B.C. gold funerary wreath to [Greece](#) that cultural officials there contend was illegally removed from Greek soil, an expert briefed on the talks said Sunday.

The museum, which bought the artifact in 1993, reached its decision in recent days after new information came to light about the wreath's likely origin, the expert added. He said he was speaking on condition of anonymity because of an agreement on both sides not to speak with the news media until an announcement could be made.

Reached late yesterday, an official at the Greek Culture Ministry in Athens said that a "very positive development" regarding the talks with the Getty would be made Monday at a news conference at noon Athens time, or 5 a.m. New York time. She declined to say whether a decision had been made on returning the wreath.

Ron Hartwig, a Getty spokesman, declined to comment.

The anticipated accord would come after weeks of growing scrutiny of the museum's acquisition of the wreath, to which Greece first sought claim in the late 1990s. In November, Greek prosecutors opened a preliminary investigation of Marion True, the former antiquities curator at the Getty, focusing on her involvement in the purchase.

For years the precise site of the wreath's excavation had been unclear. But this month Greek officials sent the Getty a new dossier of evidence, including documents and photographs, to support their claim that it was found in Greece.

The Greek police say they now have evidence that the funerary wreath was dug up by a farmer in 1990 near Serres, in northern Greece, and passed on to the art market through Germany and Switzerland before being sold to the Getty in 1993.

A Getty Museum catalog identifies the delicate floral decorations on the wreath as “plants that grow profusely in Northern Greece,” suggesting it may have been created in the region, although such information alone cannot determine where and when it was excavated in modern times.

It remains unclear how a resolution of the claim for the wreath could affect the Greek legal investigation of several people involved in the sale of the wreath, including Ms. True, the former Getty curator.

In an interview last week in New York, the Greek culture minister, Georgios A. Voulgarakis, stressed that the Greek judiciary is independent from the government, and that his talks with the Getty and other museums did not hinge on any legal proceedings in progress. Nevertheless, he said that once the negotiations are resolved, “we can discuss everything.”

It is also unclear whether the new accord will address a sixth-century B.C. marble kore, or statue of a young woman, acquired by the Getty that Greece has also claimed. That object is believed to have been made on Paros, a Greek island, but Greece’s request for its return had been complicated by its appearance on a separate list of 52 objects that Italy asked back from the Getty in January.

(In November the Getty unilaterally decided to return 26 of the 52 objects to Italy after talks between the two sides broke down.)

In recent weeks Italian officials have indicated that they are prepared to drop their competing claim for the kore. More generally, Mr. Voulgarakis said in the interview, Greece and Italy now plan to forge a formal alliance to seek the return of ancient artifacts from museums in the United States and Europe.

That pact, which he said he expected to complete early next year, would cement recent collaboration between the countries as both pursue increasingly muscular campaigns to retrieve prized Greek and Roman antiquities.

Outlining that strategy in the interview last week, Mr. Voulgarakis said his country wanted to benefit from the Italians’ growing expertise in

tracking antiquities and mixing carrot-and-stick diplomacy with criminal prosecutions.

“The Italians are very well organized very, very well organized,” Mr. Voulgarakis said. “Every country has its own policy and priorities, but we can help each other.”

Ionnis Diotis, a Greek prosecutor who has worked on the Getty investigation, said that after discussions with Getty lawyers in the spring, he and the head of Greece’s art-theft police went to Italy to seek help in investigating the wreath and other antiquities issues. He said he had weighed the possibility of investigating Getty board trustees who reviewed the purchase of the wreath and other objects because final decisions on acquisitions rest with the board.

For countries seeking the repatriation of antiquities in foreign collections and museums, the threat of legal action has become a crucial tool. In 2005 Italy put Ms. True on trial on charges of conspiring to import looted artifacts, and in recent weeks Italian officials have made it clear that the outcome of her ongoing trial in Rome could depend partly on the Getty’s willingness to meet the Culture Ministry’s demands.

The accord between Italy and Greece outlined by Mr. Voulgarakis would include provisions for enforcement and cultural diplomacy. Because of their common interests and shared classical heritage, he said, the two countries might pursue some claims jointly, and then determine which objects should go to which country.

In recent weeks, Italian officials have acknowledged sharing information with their Greek counterparts and have indicated that they plan to extend the collaboration.

Mr. Voulgarakis said he hoped to follow Italy’s strategy of pressing art-market countries like the United States for bilateral import bans of classical archaeological material. He also said he would open an office in the Greek Culture Ministry to compile an inventory of Greek antiquities in foreign collections and museums.

Mr. Voulgarakis described the accord with Italy as part of a broader effort to repatriate antiquities of “national importance.” Above all, he said, Greece is strengthening its campaign to win back the Elgin Marbles from the [British Museum](#) in preparation for next year’s inauguration of an Acropolis museum that has been specially designed to house the marble works with other Parthenon sculptures. The marbles, sent to Britain by the diplomatic emissary Lord Elgin two centuries ago, include much of the Parthenon frieze and other statuary.

“We do not intend to empty museums around the globe, but the Parthenon frieze has to be reunified, otherwise it has no historical value,” Mr. Voulgarakis said in the interview.

For years the British Museum has firmly and repeatedly rebuffed Greek demands for the return of the marbles, which were removed well before the modern Greek state existed. In the 1980s, Mr. Voulgarakis acknowledged, it was possible to argue that the sculptures were better housed in the British Museum than at the original site in Athens, where remaining parts of the frieze suffered from corrosive air pollution.

But international support for returning the marbles to Greece has grown, Mr. Voulgarakis said, and the new Acropolis museum would allow all surviving Parthenon sculptures to be reunited and protected in situ in what he called “one of the most advanced archaeological museums in the world.”

Toward this goal, Mr. Voulgarakis is also trying to retrieve 18 Parthenon fragments in the collections of other European institutions, including the National Museum in Copenhagen, the Vatican Museums in Rome and the [Louvre](#) in Paris. In September, the University of Heidelberg returned a small fragment, and he said that discussions were progressing with several other museums, although he declined to name them. Many of these pieces were also removed from Greece in the early 19th century or even earlier.

Mr. Voulgarakis likened the Elgin Marbles’ situation to the Mona Lisa’s being cut up into pieces. “Imagine if you have the face in Sweden, one

hand in the United States, the breasts in Japan, and the other hand in Italy,” he said.

Invoking the Mona Lisa’s Italian title, he said, “What kind of Gioconda is that?”

He did not mention that the Mona Lisa fully intact is in France, not in Italy, where it was originally created centuries ago.

Hugh Eakin reported from New York and Anthee Carassava from Athens.

Greeks Hail Getty Museum's Pledge to Return Treasures

By [ANTHEE CARASSAVA](#)

Published: December 12, 2006

ATHENS, Dec. 11 — Resolving a decade-long dispute, the Greek government and the [J. Paul Getty Museum](#) in Los Angeles announced Monday that the Getty had agreed to hand over an ancient gold funerary wreath and a marble statue that were illegally excavated and removed from Greece.



A sixth-century B.C. marble kore.

Culture Ministry/ Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Orestis Panagiotou/European Pressphoto Agency

The decision was hailed here as a major triumph against antiquities smuggling, the capstone of a recent campaign by Greece — with significant help from Italy — to put public pressure on some of the world's top museums and private collectors.

“This is a glorious moment,” Culture Minister Georgios A. Voulgarakis said at a news conference in Athens. “It shows that serious work can produce serious results.”

In a telephone interview from London, where he arrived on Monday, Michael Brand, the Getty Museum’s director, said, “Both sides wanted to get it right.”

“There was a disturbing element regarding its provenance,” he said. “But we needed to feel absolutely sure about returning it to the right place.”

The pivotal factor leading to the pact, Mr. Voulgarakis said, was a dossier of evidence presented to the Getty’s lawyers in October indicating that the statue and wreath were illegally spirited out of Greece before the museum bought them in 1993 for about \$4.4 million.

In recent days Greek cultural officials have cited testimony by tomb raiders, money transfers and a photographic paper trail that they said detailed how the fourth-century B.C. wreath and sixth-century B.C. kore, or statue of a woman, were dug up and transported to middlemen before they were sold to the Getty.

The wreath and statue were among five ancient works that Getty trustees agreed to purchase on the recommendation of Marion True, who was then the museum’s antiquities curator. (Ms. True is now on trial in a separate case in Italy on charges of conspiring to acquire illegally excavated artifacts. She maintains she is innocent.)

At the news conference Mr. Voulgarakis praised Nikolas Zirganos, an investigative journalist, for his help in the inquiry. After the news conference Mr. Zirganos said much of the new evidence poured in over the summer from Italy, which has waged its own battle to win back artifacts from the Getty.

But he said he himself led Greek investigators over the summer to a German citizen of Greek origin who acted as a middleman in the sale of the wreath, unearthed in the early 1990’s and believed to have been

executed by the craftsman who forged the royal wreath of Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great.

“The middleman testified before Greek authorities, producing picture-perfect images of the wreath at the site of the tomb that it was dug up from” in northern Greece, he said.

Investigators also interviewed the two tomb robbers, he said.

The middleman, whom Mr. Zirganos did not identify, tried first to sell the wreath to Gianfranco Becchina, a well-known Sicilian antiquities dealer. Mr. Becchina declined to buy the object, but Italian investigators found Polaroid photos of it in raids of his studio and home that they relayed to the Greek investigators, Mr. Zirganos said.

Mr. Zirganos said the middleman had testified that he also approached Ms. True about buying the wreath for the Getty. She referred the middleman to Christoph Leon, a Munich antiquities collector from whom the Getty eventually purchased it, Mr. Zirganos said, citing the man’s testimony.

“With such evidence in hand,” he added, Greece’s case “became too powerful to challenge.”

Reached by telephone on Monday, Ms. True’s lawyer in Los Angeles, Harry Stang, said, “There’s no truth to the notion that she referred anyone to this dealer.”

He added that in recommending the purchase of the wreath to the Getty’s board, “she complied entirely with the existing protocols” at the museum, “which provided that if an item was determined to have been looted, it would be returned to the source country.”

He said that Getty officials had confirmed to him “that decisions to return objects do not reflect a judgment of culpability on Dr. True’s part.”

To step up the pressure on the Getty, the Greek legal authorities opened an investigation of Ms. True and four other people involving

the wreath acquisition in November. All face summonses to testify before an Athens prosecutor.

Last spring police raided a villa owned by Ms. True on Paros, a Greek island, and removed more than a dozen antiquities that officials said had not been registered with the authorities as required by Greek law.

Through her lawyers Ms. True has said the artifacts were in the villa when she purchased it and that she had informed local officials of their presence. It is unclear how the return of the wreath and kore will affect the Greek investigation of Ms. True: whether the Getty's decision will appease the Greek government, for example, or simply strengthen the prosecutors' resolve.

Mr. Brand said "there was no set agreement" related to Ms. True and declined to comment further.

Mr. Voulgarakis said the two matters were unrelated. "What the judiciary does is independent of our work to reclaim stolen treasures," he said.

Neither Mr. Leon nor the seller of the kore, the London-based dealer Robin Symes, have been charged with any crime in Greece.

But Greek and Italian investigators have been closely examining Ms. True's relationship to Mr. Symes, who sold millions of dollars of antiquities to the Getty during her tenure as antiquities curator. (She resigned last year amid accusations that she failed to disclose details about a loan she received for the purchase of her Greek villa.)

Italian investigators have shared a photograph of a youthful Ms. True with Christos Michaelides, Mr. Symes's companion, on the island of Paros, where both Mr. Symes and Ms. True own vacation homes.

Paolo Ferri, the prosecutor leading Italy's investigation into the antiquities trade, said last month that because of "new documentation," Mr. Symes's position would "soon be clarified."

At the news conference Mr. Voulgarakis insisted that Greece had promised the Getty “nothing in return” for the wreath or kore.

But a statement issued by the two sides said they would soon sign a formal accord on the two artifacts that would provide for cultural collaboration between the Getty and Greece.

Mr. Brand said the resolution of the dispute could open the way for long-term loans from Greece and joint exhibition projects.

In pursuing the antiquities issue on both the legal and diplomatic fronts, both Italy and Greece seem to have found a successful formula.

In July the Getty returned two other objects that Greece had sought: a large stele, or grave marker, acquired in 1993, and a small marble relief from the island of Thassos bought by the museum’s founder, the oil magnate J. Paul Getty, in 1955.

The museum’s negotiations with Italy have stalled, but the Getty has pledged unilaterally to return 26 artifacts sought by its government.

“The whole field of antiquities has museums around the world debating about provenance,” Mr. Brand said. “There are many objects that have perfectly good provenance.” Asked to elaborate, he declined.

Greek Orthodox church destroyed in Sept. 11 attacks sets up again for a day

The Associated Press

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

NEW YORK

Hundreds of faithful from the tiny St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, which was wrecked along with the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, gathered in a makeshift canvas sanctuary at ground zero, where they marked St. Nicholas Day and the 90th anniversary of their parish.

"We have constructed a church for a day," said Peter Drakoulis, a church board member, before the service began at about 2:30 p.m (1930 GMT) Wednesday.

A mammoth photograph of the small white church filled a wall of the tent behind the altar — a reproduction of the original — for the service celebrated by Archbishop Demetrios, the New York-based head of the Greek Orthodox Church in America. Artifacts and memorabilia saved from the debris were brought there for the rite, which drew worshippers from Boston, New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

"A tent was among the first types of religious temples — like the one in which Abraham worshipped," Demetrios told several hundred people in attendance. "This will be a center open to people regardless of faith."

With unaccompanied voices chanting ancient Byzantine hymns, the archbishop blessed 20 loaves of bread distributed among worshippers "as a symbol of the sustenance of life," he said after reading the names of some Greek-Americans who died in the 2001 terror attacks.

Among them was John K. Katsimatides, an employee of the Cantor Fitzgerald bond brokerage whose sister, Anthoula Katsimatides, is an executive of the Lower Manhattan Development Corp., the agency planning rebuilding at ground zero.

"Once a week, my brother used to stop by this church, light a candle and pray," she said after the service.

The Sept. 11 attack decimated the landmark church in Manhattan's financial district that was once a refuge for everyone from Wall Street traders on their lunch break to Greek sailors who believed St. Nicholas, their patron saint, would keep their ships from sinking.

The 22-foot-by-56-foot (6.7-meter by 17-meter) church with barely enough seating for 100 people also drew some of the world's rich and famous, including shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis and actor Telly Savalas.

Parishioners have raised more than \$4 million (€3 million) to rebuild the house of worship at or near its original site, an area just south of the one-time trade center location, where officials are now preparing to dismantle a damaged skyscraper that housed the Deutsche Bank.

The church site is also one of several areas city officials have chosen to search again for human remains. The search of that location has not yet begun.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the 16 acres (6.5 hectares) of the World Trade Center site, has yet to approve a final plan for rebuilding St. Nicholas.

But PA Executive Director Kenneth Ringler, who appeared at the service, said Wednesday that the agency and the church would launch a collaborative effort to rebuild the church by 2011 — including the division of some engineering and design work involving PA experts.

"This was a beacon before 9/11, and it will be an even more important beacon now as a site for reflection," Ringler said.

Lorraine Romas, wife of St. Nicholas pastor John Romas, greeted the news with emotion: "I can't wait until it's rebuilt. It's like our second home, and we miss it something awful."

Before the terrorist attack, most of about 300 parishioners would travel from outside the neighborhood to attend Sunday services, said Lorraine Romas, who lives north of the city in New Rochelle.

"It was like a family getting together for Sunday dinner," she said.

On Wednesday, she and other families celebrated the name day of St. Nicholas — commonly known as Santa Claus — who was born in the third century to a wealthy family in the village of Patara, in what is now Turkey. He became a bishop and lavished his inheritance on the needy, especially children.

The congregation has worshipped in a cathedral in Brooklyn while awaiting the rebuilding.

"We're just a little church, a small piece of the reconstruction, and we're being patient," said Drakoulis.

On the Net: St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church: <http://www.stnicholasnyc.com>

IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

Myron Edwards
December 6, 2006

They say the cradle of civilization began to rock in Ancient Greece; Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Hippocrates, all stamped their names indelibly into the Greek civilization and culture which resonates throughout our languages of today.

Greek, is the language of the poets and the language of the philosophers, but above all it is a language of the people, no matter where they live.

Yiassoo.com the real time instant messenger is launching this week to celebrate the Greek language in the technology age, by providing a platform in which Greeks from all over the world can chat or converse with their family and friends in their own language.

"Yiassoo" the word means Hello is being introduced by Yiassoo Media a Greek Cypriot based company who see a real opportunity in developing a product that talks directly to the people in their own language. More importantly it allows them to talk and write in their own language.

Aside from the obvious ease of communication, the one thing that having a system like this does is keeping language alive. The easy to download and installation process, together with a Greek and English interface are designed to make the process of communication simpler so that Greeks can keep ahead of what is happening in their world, whether locally or internationally.

Yiassoo.com real time messenger is cheaper than a phone call and has no time limitations, talk for two minutes or two hours it makes no difference, you can even talk to more than one person at a time, good for developing community spirit.

Above all Yiassoo.com real time messenger puts the Greek language back

in the forefront of communication, the Ancients would be proud of that. Sign up for Yiassoo.com

ΕΡΕΥΝΑ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΟΣΜΟΥ

Η Kapa- Research σε συνεργασία με το Κέντρο Ελληνικών Σπουδών του Harvard και με χορηγό επικοινωνίας την EPT , πραγματοποιεί μία μεγάλη παγκόσμια έρευνα στους Έλληνες του Κόσμου με στόχο να καταγραφούν οι σκέψεις, οι απόψεις, ο τρόπος ζωής και οι συνήθειες των Ελλήνων κάθε γενιάς.

Τώρα και για πρώτη φορά έχετε, τη δυνατότητα να πείτε την άποψή σας , ενώνοντας τη φωνή σας με χιλιάδες έλληνες από όλον τον Κόσμο.

Με την παρούσα επιστολή θα θέλαμε να ζητήσουμε και τη δική σας συμμετοχή και υποστήριξη στην πρωτοβουλία αυτή, ενισχύοντας με τον τρόπο αυτό την προσπάθεια που πραγματοποιείται για πρώτη φορά, να ενώσουμε τη φωνή, των όπου Γης, Ελλήνων.

Πιστεύουμε πως θα έχετε τη διάθεση και τη θέληση να ενισχύσετε αυτή την πρωτοβουλία με την προβολή του προγράμματος αυτού και την πρόσκληση προς όλους τους έλληνες της περιοχής σας για συμμετοχή .

Ακολουθώντας, απλά, τη διεύθυνση <http://www.kapa-research.com> ή καλώντας το 0030 210 4895000 μπορείτε τώρα να συμμετάσχετε στην έρευνα.

Σας ευχαριστούμε εκ των προτέρων για τη συμβολή σας στην προσπάθεια αυτή.

Attention Greek-American High School Juniors!

Apply for the opportunity to be one of 150 Greek-American high school students selected from all over the country to participate in AHEP Academy, an intensive, academic and interactive program to be held on the campus of George Mason University outside Washington, DC from June 24-30, 2007.

Graduates of AHEP Academy are eligible for further mentoring, access to a nationwide network of internships, and participation in continuing internet-based networking and learning opportunities throughout the end of high school, college, graduate school, and beyond. AHEP Academy provides instruction and inspiration by prominent Greek-American and Philhellene instructors from the academic, professional, and public service fields across the United States.

AHEP Academy is looking for exceptional Greek-American high school juniors with top grades (minimum 3.5/4.0 GPA or equivalent), who exemplify scholarship, leadership, character, participation in extracurricular activities, community service, and involvement in the Greek-American community to apply for selection in next summer's AHEP Academy on Campus program.

AHEPAcademy is sponsored by the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) through its network of over 300 local Chapters across the United States. Each active AHEPA Chapter is eligible to sponsor one student for participation in this program next summer.

Interested in applying for AHEPAcademy?

Would you like to receive more information on AHEPAcademy?

Need help contacting your local AHEPA Chapter?

Don't have an AHEPA Chapter in your local area?

Would you like to receive an AHEPAcademy Application directly from AHEPAcademy?

Write to info@AHEPAcademy.com and please include your name and address, the name of your high school, the name of your local AHEPA Chapter, and the name of the Greek Orthodox Church that you attend. You will receive an email from AHEPAcademy with instructions on who to contact and how to apply for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Applications for AHEPAcademy will be available on December 1, 2006 through your local participating AHEPA Chapter. Completed applications must be submitted to your local Chapter no later than March 1, 2007. Contact your local AHEPA Chapter for more details. Some AHEPA Chapters have yet to decide whether they are interested in sponsoring a student from their local communities for next summer's program, so please contact AHEPAcademy at info@AHEPAcademy.com and your local AHEPA Chapter to indicate your interest in applying as soon as possible.

AHEPAcademy is a program that identifies, educates, inspires, mentors, advances, and networks exceptional Greek-American high school students as they progress through their high school, college, graduate and professional careers. The program includes a one-week AHEPAcademy on Campus session that invites one Candidate (a Greek-American high school junior selected and sponsored by a local AHEPA Chapter) each summer to participate in an intensive academic and interactive program in the Washington, DC area, facilitated by prominent Greek-American and Philhellene instructors from the academic, professional, and public service fields. AHEPA is the largest and oldest American-based Greek heritage grassroots membership organization, promoting the ideals of Hellenism, education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, family, and individual excellence.

Learning Greek through a Computer Game

BreezeWorks Media has made learning Greek fun and entertaining by creating an animated computer game that teaches the Greek language. Anyone who is interested in the language can benefit from this innovative software that utilizes an alternative approach to language study through animated games.

EXPLORING GREECE

Lefkos Pigassos (www.white-pegasus.com), a business based in the village of Papigo, one of the 46 villages of Zagorochoria, offers visitors the chance to come into contact with some of the most beautiful regions of Epirus, Northern Greece through organized horseback expeditions. Papigo, is located at the heart of the National Park of the Northern Pindos Mountain range. It can serve as a starting point for horseback exploration trips to one of the most beautiful parts of Pindos among them the spectacular Drakolimni lake.

More Suggestions: www.agrotravel.gr

Exhibition in Vienna of post-Byzantine icons VIENNA, 14/12/2006 (ANA-MPA)

Vienna's History and Art Museum is exhibiting tens of historic Greek icons of the post-Byzantine era, which originate from the famed collection of Emilios Velimezis (1902-1946).

The exhibition, titled "The Brilliance of Heaven", was inaugurated on Tuesday night and will last until February 25, 2007.

The exhibition was organized in cooperation with the Benaki Museum and the Foundation of Greek Culture in Berlin.

Greece - Books and Writers

When it comes to Greece, there is a wide variety of reading options, from translated poetry to history and politics, which offer insight into the country, its people, its eventful past and its vibrant present. The following suggestions comprise not only standard "Classical writing" but a gamut of different approaches to Greece and the Greek world.

In the last decade, interest in Greek literature on the part of foreign publishers has increased significantly. Greek Government funding of translations, collaboration with foreign publishers, and a broad burst of literary initiatives add a considerable boost to the existing trend.

National Book Centre of Greece, "Greece - Books and Writers"

A Picture of Modern Greek Writing

In his *Modern Greek Writing: An Anthology in English Translation* (2006), David Ricks showcases fifty of the most important writers since 1821; Greek men of letters ranging from Cavafy, Seferis and Elytis to Kazantzakis and Papadiamantis.

A Century of Greek Poetry

The bilingual anthology "A Century of Greek Poetry 1900-2000" (2004) by Edmund Keeley, Peter Bien, Peter Constantine & Karen Van Dyck, presents the achievements of Greek poetry in the 20th century. Included are 109 poets and 456 poems, with the Greek original and the English translation on opposite pages.

Short Stories

A new collection of Greek short stories in English translation demonstrates the vitality of the genre. "Angelic and Black: Contemporary Greek Short Stories" (2006) [from George Seferis' "Light, angelic and black..."] is a collection of short stories first published in Greek between 1976 and 2004, translated by David Connolly.

Greek Literature Goes International

The Ministry of Culture has a special funding program to encourage foreign publishers to bring out translations of contemporary Greek literature. Applications can be downloaded from:

www.culture.gr/2/20/201/2011/e201120c.html

Ithaca Online (www.ithacaonline.gr) is a monthly electronic magazine that presents the pick of Greek publishing to foreign publishers, agents & the public.

"GreeceInPrint.com" (www.greeceinprint.com) is the Hellenic Literature Society's electronic forum where people can find books and other Greek educational material.

National Book Centre of Greece - Account of the Greek Books Industry

BIBLIONET - Books-in-Print Database

Modern Greek Studies

Modern Greek Studies cover the Greek world, including the Diaspora, from the fall of the Byzantine Empire to the present. Interdisciplinary programs pertaining to the language, literature, culture, history and politics of modern Greece have been established worldwide. Many of these programs sponsor regular conferences, graduate fellowships, translation prizes, and lectures, as well as publish Greek Studies journals and books.

Modern Greek Studies Association:

www.mgsa.org

European Society for Modern Greek Studies: www.eens.org

Journal of Modern Greek Studies:
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_modern_greek_studies/

WEBTIPS

National Book Centre of Greece

www.ekebi.gr

Thessaloniki Bookfair

www.thessalonikibookfair.com

European Center for the Translation of Literature and the Human Sciences

www.ekemel.gr

Hellenic Authors' Society

www.dedalus.gr

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON GREECE

Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: The Mass Expulsions that Forged Modern Greece and Turkey*, Harvard University Press, 2006

Averil Cameron, *Byzantines*, Blackwell, 2006

Anastasios Foivos Christidis (ed), *A History of Ancient Greek: From the Beginnings to Late Antiquity*, Cambridge University Press, 2007

Peter Bien, *Kazantzakis: Politics of the Spirit*, Princeton University Press, January 2007

Camille Cusumano, *Greece: A Love Story: Women Write about the Greek Experience*, Seal Press, 2007

Kyriakos Koutsomallis, *Picasso and Greece*, Umberto Allemandi, 2007

Huge aquarium set for Athens

The Development Ministry has given the green light for the construction of a new aquarium, described as being the biggest in the Mediterranean area, to be built in Palaio Faliron, in southern Athens.

The president of the Hellenic Center for Marine Research (HCMR), Giorgos Chronis, told Kathimerini yesterday that the marine park will be built along the beachside district that accommodates Olympic Games venues.

"We are aiming at informing and making people more aware of the importance of the world of water, the dangers that it faces and the possibilities of protecting it. There will not only be sea organisms but we will also reproduce ecosystems from rivers and lakes," Chronis said.

The aquarium park will cover 6,500 square meters and will include 100 tanks that will contain 4 million liters of water, three times more water than that contained in HCMR's other aquarium in Crete, east of Iraklion, called Thalassocosmos.

Funds from the European Union's Fourth Community Framework will pay for the Athens project, estimated to cost 27 million euros.

It was not clear when construction of the aquarium will be completed.

Based on approved plans, there will also be a 4,000-square-meter park which will recreate offshore, river and sea ecosystems.

Officials are optimistic about the success of the water park given the number of visitors that have attended Thalassocosmos.

Figures showed that 350,000 people have visited the aquarium in Crete since it opened in December last year.

The Cretan aquarium will get a boost with the arrival in of two bull sharks, considered to be one of the most dangerous types of shark in the world.

Useful web sites

People of Ideas in

ANCIENT GREECE **(1500 to 325 BC)**

- <http://www.newgenevacenter.org/reference/greece2.htm>
- Perseus is an evolving digital library, engineering interactions through time, space, and language. Our primary goal is to bring a wide range of source materials to as large an audience as possible. We anticipate that greater accessibility to the sources for the study of the humanities will strengthen the quality of questions, lead to new avenues of research, and connect more people through the connection of ideas. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>
- The Greek Constitution <http://www.parliament.gr/politeuma/default.asp>

Joe Coscia Jr./Onassis Cultural Center

The “Persian Wars” section of the “Athens-Sparta” exhibition.



December 29, 2006

ART REVIEW | 'ATHENS-SPARTA'

Their Rivalry Was Bitter, Yet Beauty Still Emerged

By **GRACE GLUECK**

There wasn't much love lost between Athens and Sparta, the two most important city-states of ancient Greece. At the height of its influence, Athens was the glittering cultural capital of the classical age, celebrated for its art, its theater, its writers and philosophers, its architecture, its love of luxury, its democracy.

Sparta, on the other hand, was devoted to military matters, and its put-upon male citizens were forced to be soldiers most of their lives. The Laonians, the people of Sparta's region, didn't lack artistic talent or appreciation. But the austerity of their world view relegated creativity to activities associated with the gods and the cult of ancestors. Their way of life was, well, spartan.

At the Onassis Cultural Center, however, the show “Athens-Sparta” throws a new light on Laconian achievements in the arts by bringing together artifacts from both city-states. The exhibition suggests that Sparta was not as artistically backward as tradition would have it; that

although Athens far outshone Sparta in its proliferation of great buildings, monuments and sculptures, the Laconians fashioned fine works in metal, pottery and ivory, at least during the Archaic Period (650-480 B.C.), when Greece was in its heyday.

Painted vases, pottery, sculptured steles, tiny carved figures, writings inscribed on stone and a selection of coins are among the nearly 300 objects on view. They are on loan from several museums in Greece; the [Vatican](#); the [Museum of Fine Arts](#), Boston; and the American Numismatic Society in New York. The show was organized by Nikos Kaltsas, director of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.

The first section of "Athens-Sparta" begins with objects from both cities during the Geometric Period (1050-700 B.C.), which took its name from the geometric motifs that decorate its pottery. The show's other two sections deal with the on-again, off-again relationship between the cities in the fifth century B.C., Greece's glory years, and with the wars they fought: the Persian Wars (about 500-449 B.C.) and the Peloponnesian War (431 to 404 B.C.), in which Sparta defeated Athens, only to fade itself not long after.

On many fronts, the Geometric was a highly productive era. A script for the Greek alphabet, based on that of the Phoenicians, was established; the poets Hesiod and Homer fashioned a pantheon from myths about many of the Greek gods; and the Olympic Games are traditionally dated from 776 B.C. Important works of architecture and sculpture were not yet in evidence, but vases with geometric motifs and small figures of bronze and clay, mostly votive offerings in sanctuaries, were fairly plentiful.

A handsome cylindrical amphora (a tall, two-handled jar with a long, narrow neck) from a Laconian workshop in the second half of the eighth century B.C. is one of the attractions. Its decoration of concentric circles on the neck and shoulders, with painted parallel bands around the body, bears the motifs characteristic of the period.

By contrast, Attic, or Athenian, clay work is somewhat more complex, at least as seen in a small burial urn from 740-735 B.C. ascribed to the

Hirschfeld Painter, one of the first painters of vases used as grave markers. The vase was probably an urn for ashes; it is decorated with many bands of geometric motifs, except for a narrative section devoted to the deceased, who lies on a high bed watched by female mourners, and another beneath it, showing helmeted, spear-bearing warriors who presumably guarded the corpse. In this period cremation was common in Athens; no evidence of it has been found in Sparta.

More interesting are the small Laconian figurines of pottery, clay and bone. Among them a tiny bronze figure of a male flute player or cupbearer is surprisingly alive, despite his skinny, rubbery body, arms and legs. Seated on a stool, his hands carrying an object (possibly a flute or cup) to his unformed mouth, he is no more than an emblem of a seated man, but there are echoes of his cursive shape in 20th-century sculpture.

By the first half of the sixth century B.C., Sparta was in fact one of the most important bronze-working centers, producing lively small pieces that included male and female figures in daily pursuits, as well as resplendent warriors, animals, demons and mythical creatures. Many of these small works are shown here, among them a very modern-looking figurine of a barefoot girl runner (550-540 B.C.) with firm, muscular calves, revealed by a very short skirt; and an athletic-looking later statuette (early fifth century B.C.), thought to be the figure of a male trumpeter. (The trumpet, or possibly javelin, is missing.)

By the Archaic Period, as society evolved from tribal to civil and felt the first stirrings of democracy, art had changed radically. Rigid geometrical motifs were succeeded by more human forms, like the kouroi and korai, the stone or bronze statues, sometimes life-size, representing young men and women, and symbolizing a new emphasis on the individual. Usually they bore relief images of the deceased and were set on graves as markers and memorials.

On view from the sixth century B.C. are two small Attic representations of kourai, dressed statues of maidens, said to represent the Athenian aristocracy in rites celebrating the goddess Athena. Carved in stone,

with long, braided hair (one is headless, but her braids are visible) and beautifully articulated drapery that clings to their bodies, they disappeared as a type after the Persian wars.

Laconian stone sculpture in general does not measure up to Attic work in the medium, but a powerful exception — one of the stars of the show — dates from the time of the Persian wars, in which Athens and Sparta played crucial roles in defending Greece against the Persian empire. What is thought to be a statue of Leonidas (only the upper part remains), the hero-king of Sparta, was probably made by a skilled Laconian sculptor in 480-470 B.C. Full of life and energy, it shows the king in a running position, wearing a high-crested helmet as he leads his small army in defense of the pass at Thermopylae, where he was overwhelmed by Persian forces but chose to die fighting rather than flee.

Another fine Laconian stone piece is a fifth-century grave stele of a young man, from about 475-450 B.C., as he sits in mourning, apparently on his own tomb. One hand supports his bent head, the other holds a fruit symbolic of the underworld: a touching image of sorrow over the shortness of his life.

At vase painting, it's evident that Athens is the winner hands down, as shown by the beautiful examples here of black and red figure styles, pictorial narratives painted in black on a red ground, or vice versa. No subject was left untouched in the vase paintings, but prime themes were chariot racing, dance, ceremonies, battles and scenes from mythology. One standout here is a large red-figure pelike (430-420 B.C.), a big-bellied cinerary urn with two handles, the work of a painter known as Polion. The main face shows a warrior departing from his aged father, as his mother stands sorrowfully by.

As Mr. Kaltsas says in his catalog introduction, the exhibition does not try to prove that “the art of both cities had the same gravitas.” The art of Sparta may not equal that of Athens, at least on the basis of what's known today. But it's an art that this illuminating show won't let us overlook.

“Athens-Sparta” continues through May 12 at the Onassis Cultural Center, 645 Fifth Avenue, near 52nd Street; (212) 486-4448.

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