

MODERN GREEK PROGRAM

A Gift to the University Library

Artemis LEONTIS



The memory of Gwen Stavros (1938-1981) lives on in the University Library through a gift by Dr. Denny Stavros honoring his late wife. The gift will be used to purchase Modern Greek materials for the library for a period of ten years from 2005 to 2014.

Mrs. Stavros loved many things, from cooking to playing music to spending time in Athens with her husband and two children, Jack and Margo. Her talents were impressive. An

accomplished violinist, she was a member of the Dearborn, Plymouth, and other community orchestras. Her recipe for baklava found its way into Daniel S. Cutler's *The Bible Cookbook* (New York, 1985) as "Gwen's Baklava." She learned Greek in preparation for her stay in Athens during her husband's sabbatical in 1967-8 and kept it up for each new visit. Active in community affairs, she was Chair of the Educational and Cultural Committee of the Hellenic American Congress, for which she organized book parties and receptions, and was involved in the Detroit Ethnic Music Tour of the Smithsonian Institute.

But a big part of her heart belonged to libraries. Mrs. Stavros was an educator active in school library and nutrition education programs in Wayne County. She earned her B.S. in Education and Masters in Library Science from Wayne State University. She worked as Library Media Specialist and Adult-Continuing Education teacher with the Redford Union School District before becoming Project Director of Nutrition Education and Training, a program she established as part of the Wayne County Intermediate School District. She published and presented papers on language arts, reading, and the training and work of school librarians. The Gwen Stavros Award for good nutritional practices was posthumously established in acknowledgement of the quality of workshops in nutrition education that Mrs. Stavros presented at the Detroit Public Schools Head Start Project. At each annual community volunteer reception, a Head Start mother was chosen to receive the year's Award.

Gwen Stavros died on December 22, 1981 at age 43 from Acute Leukemia. Purchases made for the Modern Greek Collections in the University Library will bear a bookplate recognizing the gift in her memory.

Athens Study Tour

April 28-May 12, 2008

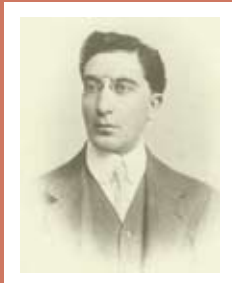
19 undergraduates traveled with Professor Artemis Leontis on the Athens Study Tour, a 2-credit Modern Greek course offered in Winter 2008. The study tour is part of the Office of International Programs Integrating Study Abroad in the Curriculum (ISAC) initiative funded in part through a gift from LSA alum Beverly Lannquist Hamilton. Students took walking tours and visited sites in Athens, Epidaurus, Nafplion, Mystra, Aegina, and Sounion. Panagiotis Pafilis and Yona Stamatis provided some of the trip's highlights. Dr. Pafilis introduced students to lizards living by Lake Stymphalia in the wetlands near Corinth. Yona Stamatis, a PhD candidate in the U-M School of Music, arranged for students to hear her play with leading exponents of rebetika at "Rebetiki Istoría," as Pavlos Vasiliou, owner of the club, spoke to the group about the qualities of this music. Dr. Fani Mallouchou-Tufano of the Acropolis Restoration Service and Nikos Toganides, architect

in charge of Parthenon restorations; Mrs. Efi Spyropoulou of the Museum of the City of Athens; Nikos Liaros, archaeologist; Pavlos Vasiliou of "Rebetiki Istoría"; and Evridiki Ambatzí,

Director of the Library of Hellenic Parliament, all gave of their expertise, time, and services to make this an extraordinary trip. The Modern Greek Program expresses its gratitude to them.



C. P. Cavafy



Κ. Π. ΚΑΒΑΦΗ

PROFESSORSHIP IN MODERN GREEK
ENDORSED BY THE FOUNDATION FOR MODERN GREEK STUDIES

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A Note from the Director

Vassilis LAMBROPOULOS

In July 3-5, 2008, the 1st World Congress of Modern Greek Studies took place at the Athens Concert Hall (Megaro Mousikis), convened by the City of Athens, four Greek Ministries, and various government centers and institutes. Its purpose was to examine the current state of Modern Greek Studies outside Greece. Speakers did not present their own scholarship but discussed how the field is represented in universities around the world.

The American delegation of the Modern Greek Studies Association consisted of twelve faculty members who teach at Arizona, Columbia, Haverford, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio State, San Francisco State, and Yale. Other participants came from universities as diverse as Montreal, Birmingham, Oxford, Berlin, Munich, Gent, Strasbourg, Malaga, Granada, Ca' Foscari (Italy), Novi Sad (Serbia), Bucharest, Bulgaria, Vienna, Latvia, Kiev, Masaryk (Czech Republic), Saint Petersburg, Cyprus, Bosphorus, Ankara, Sydney, and Flinders. A number of practical difficulties made it impossible to have representation from several other countries (such as Chile, China, and Egypt), but the hope is that in 2011, the Congress is going to be even more inclusive when it reconvenes.

There were many things that made this event a fascinating experience and a great success. It was wonderful to hear specialists from so many countries conversing in Greek and using their adopted language with a command that overwhelmed the Mayor of Athens and the other officials. It was interesting to learn about college systems in different countries and the place of Modern Greek in each one of them. It was rewarding to see close to a thousand people attending the proceedings over three days, meeting the participants from abroad and making them feel welcome.

The overall picture that emerged was quite encouraging. In a rapidly changing world, all academic fields need to adapt. Everything changes as we speak: the way we learn, communicate, work, travel. The teaching of a language, a culture, a history must keep up with these changes. Some Modern Greek Programs have been more in tune with our times than others. In some cases, especially in Western Europe, courses have been cancelled, positions have been eliminated, and Programs have been merged. In other places, like Eastern Europe, where Greek business has been expanding, there is increasing student interest in Greece. On balance, the place of Modern Greek may not be the strongest possible but it seems to be both secure and well respected.

For a number of reasons, the field seems to be doing best in the U.S. In my presentation at the Congress, I tried to explain why. The American campus is very flexible and adaptable and encourages innovation. It promotes cross-over work that brings many fields together and exposes students to a variety of topics. Modern Greek faculty learned early on not to rely on ethnic Greeks to fill their classes. They introduced new methods and materials in their teaching. They also broke new ground in their scholarship by drawing on cutting-edge approaches to the humanities.

The Greek authorities in charge of the Athens Congress, who showed exemplary hospitality, have committed themselves to organizing a second one in three years to make sure that some lessons we have all learned are put into practice. In the meantime, they are posting papers from the Congress on their website, trying to disseminate its findings as broadly as possible. (You may access the papers on <http://www.elladastonkosmo.gr>.) In this way, the self-evaluation of Modern Greek becomes an open, on-going project.

Donor Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the following individuals for their support: **Professor Mimis Cohen** (University of Illinois-Chicago) for energetically helping our library enrich its holdings on Greek Jews; **Dr. Evaggelos Vallianatos** for donating 300 books from his collection on Greek history and culture to the U-M Library, an addition that has significantly enriched our holdings. Dr. Vallianatos received his

Ph.D. in History from the University of Wisconsin with a dissertation that was later published by the Academy of Athens in an expanded form as *From Graikos to Hellene: Adamantios Koraios and the Greek Revolution* (1987); **Evangelos Gegas, Esq.** and **Janet Gegas**, both graduates of The Ohio State University, who with strong interest and commitment regularly contribute to our collection of films and documentaries related to Greek themes and issues.

MY GREECE

David HALPERIN

...it was all a feast for the senses as well as the mind.

Your first glimpse of Athens is always thrilling, no matter how many times you have seen the city before.

In early June, I made the short flight from Paris, less than three hours by air. The plane came down slowly over the water and the islands, ignored the old airport sitting idly by the Saronic Gulf, and took a long detour over the tawny, rugged landscape, dotted with talismanic olive trees, to land at the new airport on the far side of Mount Hymettos, more than halfway to the eastern coast of Attica and the Aegean Sea.

From the vast, accommodating air terminal I caught the new metro—a luxurious, gleaming affair—which took 45 minutes to deliver me to the center of Athens. And then I had the sort of experience that only Athens affords: three sets of escalators take you from the train line deep underground, up through a series of wide marble hallways, into the entrance of the Monastiraki station, from which you emerge onto the street, turn right, and suddenly see—the entire Acropolis soaring in front of you, bathed in light: an indescribable sensation.

Athens has now turned at least partly into a civilized city—in its comfort, safety, ease of movement, sophisticated Greek restaurants (other cuisines, too, are available, but who

cares?), modern designer style, and even relative lack of pollution—without losing any of its liveliness or charm. Despite all the tourism in early summer, there were still simply not the numbers of visitors one encounters in Paris or Italy. Which meant that, thanks to a sudden and unseasonable thunderstorm, my friends and I had the Acropolis to ourselves for much of an afternoon. And we got to spend lots of time alone with some of the masterpieces in the National Museum. All incredibly intimate and rewarding.

It has become fashionable of late for progressive, left-wing, anthropologically-minded classicists like myself to minimize the glory that was Greece, to resist the Western, Eurocentric cultural chauvinism that has attached to the monuments of Hellenic civilization (whether literary or archaeological), and to treat the ancient Greeks like any other remote civilization—a social world to be studied in all its strangeness and distance, its own internal logic and cultural systematicity, and with healthy doses of skepticism, relativism, comparativism, and scholarly disengagement.

Standing on the Acropolis, however, trying simply to picture the size of the thirty-foot statue of Athena Promachos that once stood at its entrance (the light glinting from the point of her spear could be seen by ships approaching Athens from as far as Cape Sounion, thirty miles away, according to Pausanias, though he might have been exaggerating), it is hard to maintain one's stylish and cool indifference. It may be unprofessional to lapse into breathless schoolboyish enthusiasm, complete with

inflated, boosterish language, before the magnificence (see, I just did it) of the Propylaeion, but it is also irresistible. When one begins to imagine how the gigantic stone column drums for the Parthenon were measured, quarried, moved up the hill to its building site, tailored to their exact size, lifted on top of one another, and fitted so securely as to withstand two thousand years of wars and earthquakes before being blown up during the Venetian shelling of the city in 1687, it is hard to remain unmoved by the magnitude of the achievement. And that's not even considering other ancient Greek breakthroughs in the arts, metallurgy, science, philosophy, poetry, and history.

They were good, those Greeks. You have to admit it. No wonder people keep making such a fuss over them.

But life in modern Athens isn't so bad, either, at least for those with time on their hands. The food, the outdoor living, the lazy lunches of *horiatiki* (Greek salad) with fresh olive oil and Mythos beer, watching the light fade on the Acropolis from various rooftops at the cocktail hour, lounging over dinner under the stars in the warm air until late in the night, the trendy gay bars and cafes in and around Gazi, the youthfulness and energy of the population, and the sense that never before had I known what truly good weather felt like—it was all a feast for the senses as well as the mind. I went back to damp, gray Paris clutching a bottle of ouzo and a bag of pistachio nuts to cushion my return to a northern climate. Luckily, I didn't manage during my short visit to catch the extraordinary bronzes—including an extremely rare larger-than-life-size archaic bronze statue of Apollo—in the Piraeus Museum, so I will have to go back.



David Halperin is W. H. Auden Collegiate Professor of the History and Theory of Sexuality, Professor of English, Professor of Women's Studies, Professor of Comparative Literature, Adjunct Professor of Classical Studies

AWARDS

Helen Zaharopoulos & Dean Fefopoulos
Modern Greek I translation Award

Amalia Tolios & Penelope Papalambros
Modern Greek II translation Award

Amalia Tolios
Contexts for Classics Award for her translation of poems by Sakis Serafas

GRANTS FOR SUMMER STUDY AND RESEARCH

Scott Brenton (Undergraduate, Modern Greek Minor)
Demetrios and Demetra Partalis Kales grant for and internship at the Natural History Museum in Irakleion, Crete (DNA sampling and sound recording of bats). Scott also went on a sampling trip with Dr. Pafilis to Piperi island in the Sporades.

Peter Milonas (Undergraduate, Modern Greek Concentration)
Demetrios and Demetra Partalis Kales grant to attend the Modern Greek Language Program at the Institute for Balkan Studies (IMXA).

Maria Hadjipolycarpou (Doctoral Student, Comparative Literature)
Foundation for Modern Greek Studies grant for summer research in Paris and Cyprus.

Pantelis Polychronidis (Doctoral Student, Musical Arts in Performance: Collaborative Piano)
Foundation for Modern Greek Studies grant for summer research in Greece.

OUR GRADUATES

Christina Gerazounis (BA Modern Greek and Psychology, Spanish Minor) "In the fall I will be living in Greece and interning at the School of Public Health (Public Hygiene Section), University of Athens, in preparation for graduate school."

Eleni Gouvas (BA Modern Greek, History, and Political Science) "I will be attending Law School at Wayne State University. In my spare time I hope to work on transportation issues in Detroit."

Anastasia Kaounas (BA Modern Greek and Sociology)

Anastasia Karabina (BA Physics, Modern Greek Minor) "I will be studying at Boston University in the Graduate Division of Medical Sciences, working towards my biophysics PhD, for the most part doing lab research."

Lena Mortis (BA Modern Greek, English, and History) "I will be working as an editorial assistant for South-Western Cengage Learning (a publishing company) in Cincinnati."

Eleni Roumanis (BA Political Science, Modern Greek Minor)

Katherine Stefanou (BA Modern Greek and History) "I will be attending Brooklyn Law School in New York in the fall."

Andrew Wilkinson (BA Modern Greek and Linguistics)

MODERN GREEK Program • Fall 2008 Events

For more on these events, visit our web site: www.lsa.umich.edu/modgreek

September 23rd
4pm-6pm
2163 Angell Hall

Modern Greek Program
Student Reception



The 7th Annual Platsis Symposium on the Greek Legacy

"UNCOVERING GREEK SCIENCE
WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGIES"

Sunday, September 28th | 2pm-6pm

Rackham 4th Floor Amphitheatre
915 E. Washington



November 17th at 3pm
2175 Angell Hall

Radical Byzantium:
American Archaeology in
Greece between the Wars.

Prof. Kostis Kourelis,
Art History, Connecticut College

Co-sponsor
Kelsey Museum of Archaeology



October 16th at 7pm
Shaman Drum Bookshop

311-315 South State St

Author Reading
and Signing:

Alexis Stamatis
American Fugue
A Novel



Conversations on Europe

Prof. Gelina Harlaftis, Ionian University, Corfu

October 30th at 4pm

1636 International Institute
School of Social Work Building
1080 S. University Avenue
Co-sponsor: CES-EUC

