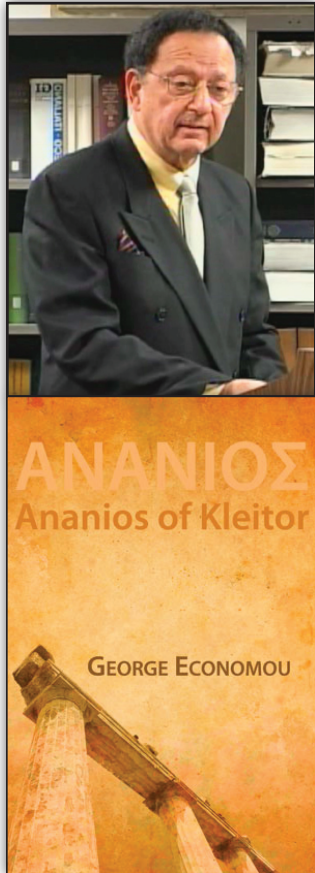


# Greek Poetry Through the Centuries and Across the Continents

by **VASSILIS**Lambropoulos



Modern Greek writers have always been in conversation or competition with their ancestors. For example, among the Modernist poets, Odysseus Elytis translated Sappho, George Seferis quoted Aeschylus, Nikos Kazantzakis wrote a sequel to the *Odyssey*, C.P. Cavafy made up Hellenistic verses, Kostas Varnalis wrote Socrates' "true apology," Yiannis Ritsos composed Iphigenia's monologue upon her return, and Andreas Embirikos praised the living god Pan. Nobody, though, ever went as far as the Greek-American writer George Economou (born of immigrant parents in Great Falls, Montana in 1934), who with a single stroke did all the above in his new work, *Ananios of Kleitor: Poems & Fragments and Their Reception from Antiquity to the Present* (2009).

Here are some of the provocative things Economou did in this book: he invented *Ananios*, a poet from the town of Kleitor in Arcadia who was born in 399BC, the year of Socrates' death; he translated into English his non-existing poetry; he traced its reception through the work of equally invented Hellenistic, Byzantine, and modern commentators; he included relevant correspondence among classical scholars; and provided copious endnotes and an indispensable *Index nominum*. All this has been done with such mimetic attention to detail and precision that most of the time it is hard to know not what or who is real but how much reality is incorporated in every name, date, and title, let alone every quote, since Economou indeed quotes from papyri, manuscripts, letters, documents, academic editions and much else. What do we have here, then: a scholarly hoax, a literary spoof, an academic parody, a bravura composition, a prose poem, a postmodern novel, or a film script? Readers will have to decide for themselves, and they probably won't exclude many of the above options.

Economou, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Oklahoma, spent ten years putting together with great erudition and rigor this exemplary edition of an unknown Greek poet. He mobilized his considerable skills as a scholar of medieval English, translator of Greek literature from Archilochus to Yiorgos Chouliaras, poet, and critic to produce a scholarly work conversant with the highest philological standards. His success was praised in the "Classics" page of the *London Times Literary Supplement* by the Oxford don Tim Whitmarsh, who called the edition a "wonderful book."

Since his first visit to our Modern Greek Program and Papyrus Collection in 2005, Economou has had many opportunities to discuss with Traianos Gagos and myself the many challenges of imaginary documentation, of an empiricism that dispenses with so-called facts. With the book out, he has now donated the archive that comprises all his labor to produce *Ananios* to the U-M Library. This archive constitutes a unique document in that it represents the process of literary creation as a matter not of pure inspiration but of painstaking research and composition. As such, it provides access to the literary workshop of an important writer, even if often we are not sure which one it is!

It was not difficult to decide what to do with this unique material: we have deposited it in our famous U-M Graduate Library Papyrus Collection to encourage parallel readings between ancient and modern documents as well as comparative readings of different periods of Greek history, from the classical to the Roman to the medieval to the modern era. Neither was it difficult to decide how to thank Economou for his donation: we invited him back to Ann Arbor for a special event in his honor. First, representing the three co-sponsoring entities of the celebration, Gagos (Papyrology), Yopie Prins (Contexts for Classics) and I (Modern Greek) made opening remarks. Next, Whitmarsh spoke on "Fragments of Greek Desire." ("A Nabokov of the Ancient World: What a Millennium of Repressed, Cock-Happy Scholars Can Do to an Obscure Arcadian Poet" is the title of the electronic version of Whitmarsh's *TLS* review.) Economou offered his gracious concluding remarks on the creation and afterlife of his poet. (All texts have been posted on our website under "Lectures at U-M.")

Listening to Economou's remarks, it was interesting to reflect on the relations between the 75-year old Greek American and *Ananios*, two Greek poets from Arcadia separated by 25 centuries—or should we say connected? People often note that in every century of Greek history poetry has been written in the Greek language. What is more remarkable than this continuity is how inventive and irreverent this literary tradition has been. Greek poets have not always treated their forefathers with respect and humility; they have challenged and criticized older authors or, as in the case of Cavafy and Economou, invented new ones. The continuity between *Ananios* and Economou is an invented one, but the invention is so dazzling and convincing that it makes the continuity real, obliterating any difference between fiction and reality.

On November 23, 2009 faculty and students interested in the permutations of the Greco-Roman tradition from antiquity to the present gathered in the U-M Classics Library to celebrate the latest philological invention in the Greek canon. We were all happy to see Economou's *Ananios* added to our scholarly puzzles, interpretive pursuits, and the Papyrus Collection.

## Let the Rebetika Play!

Thanks to the collaboration of the University Library and Modern Greek faculty, a turntable has been purchased to be housed in the Askwith Media Library (in the Shapiro Undergraduate Library building). This turntable was purchased so that students and groups of students would be able to listen to 33 1/3 and 78 rpm records of Greek music. The Modern Greek Collection has a rich assortment of long-playing records—one that is still growing. In addition to music from the 1950s—1980s, the collection contains rebetika, and therefore documents a musical tradition that is rapidly disappearing.

Questions should be directed to either Janet Crayne ([jcrayne@umich.edu](mailto:jcrayne@umich.edu)) or Jeffrey Pearson ([jwpearso@umich.edu](mailto:jwpearso@umich.edu)).





## Κ Π ΚΑΒΑΦΗ

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

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### Acknowledging our Donors

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Foundation for Modern Greek Studies  
c/o John Kaounas  
Dr. Dimitri and Mrs. Irmgard Pallas  
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U-M Graduate Library  
Dr. Ioannis Varvarigos

# Note on Leaving Ann Arbor...

by **PANAGIOTIS PAFILIS**

*Winter 2010 will be Dr. Pafilis's last semester as Lecturer in Modern Greek at U-M. After three years of distinguished language teaching, he is returning to his native Athens as an Assistant Professor of Biology at the University of Athens, starting in the Fall. He will be sorely missed by all. We asked him to reflect on his sojourn in Ann Arbor.*

I was thinking about the proposal to write this article for the "Notes" column of the newsletter on "what brought you to the U.S. and what did you do here?" while crossing the Diag to offer my Goldonian services to my second Master, Biology, after having served my first Master, Modern Greek. So many things to say and yet I don't know how to start...

For several years before I arrived in Ann Arbor in September 2007, I was collaborating with Prof. Johannes Foufopoulos from U-M's School of Natural Resources and Environment. The fruit of this collaboration was an application to the National Science Foundation for a grant that would have brought me into Foufopoulos's lab as a postdoctoral researcher.

Then quite unexpectedly I received another "smile of fortune" as I was waiting for the NSF decision: I learned of the opportunity to apply for the Lecturer post in the Modern Greek Program. In answer to my initial fears when I was offered the position ("what kind of expertise can a biologist bring to a Department of Classical Studies?!"), Prof. Lambropoulos answered in his notoriously calm way: "I know you will manage."



So, here I am, sharing my days between two clearly distinct disciplines, while I shiver with cold despite my numerous layers of clothes and throw envious glances that reach the level of bigotry against Michiganders, who look so cool wearing just their hoodies and flip-flops. But, I guess, this is all about the famous "Michigan difference" and what makes U-M a world-class, leading educational and research institute. U-M offers opportunities and finds a way to combine seemingly unrelated topics. I myself have had the chance to witness this interdisciplinary spirit, since Modern Greek classes attract numerous students from the biological and social sciences, pre-med, pre-law, and engineering tracks. Many of them have joined the learning of the language with an internship on their scientific interest in Greece. Hence during the years I have been teaching Greek at U-M, our students have already or will participate in research projects in the Natural History Museum of Crete, Greek National School of Public Health, School of Biology at the University of Athens, Medical School at the University of Thessaloniki, Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk Seal, and much more.

At the end of this academic year I am heading back to Greece. I am happy to be returning home and honored that I will teach in my alma mater, the University of Athens, as Assistant Professor of Biology. However it is not without sorrow and nostalgia that I will leave Michigan. I will definitely miss the peerless organization and institutions of this outstanding University (God, what a Library!!!). Being a "hybrid," I have used and appreciated a spectrum of infrastructures that is not accessible to "normal," single-

discipline scientists (e.g. labs, teaching classrooms, seminar rooms, animal houses in Ruthven Museum, and various Library departments—God, what a Library!!!).

But most of all I will miss the wonderful people of Michigan: my colleagues in both departments, who, from the very first day, made me feel at home, embracing me with warmth and friendship; the Classical Studies departmental staff (our dear Caryatids), who so generously helped me solve every problem; the members of the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies, who made the Program possible; all the amazing members of the thriving Greek-American community in this area, who opened their arms and houses to me with no hesitation. I am deeply grateful to

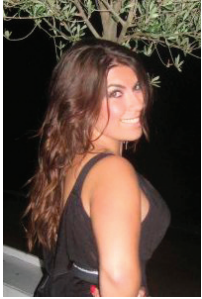
Artemis and Vassilis for the great opportunity they gave me. They trusted me and helped me in every possible way, being there for me whenever I needed them. I am blessed with their valuable friendship. I also wish to thank Ruth Scodel, Chair of the Classics, for all her support. And of course our tremendous Kimberly Johnson, who is taking such good care of all the activities of the Program.

Last but not least, I want to thank my great, one-of-a-kind students. I owe them for many things. For tolerating my Mediterranean accent ("shop," "soap" and "sop" sound exactly identical coming from my mouth) and complete inability to pronounce in an understandable way words like "incessantly" or "ambiguous." For being so enthusiastic and friendly, full of humor and life, making my days brighter. For giving all their best in class and trying hard to learn such a difficult language. For being willing to follow me in that long, hard journey into Greek grammar, with its Accusative reefs, Passive Voice Imperative rocks and Passive Participle skerries. For emailing, texting, writing in facebook and even shooting videos in Greek. And for making me rediscover my own language through their eyes.

I don't feel this is a permanent farewell. I know I will be returning to Ann Arbor, over and over again. So I am not saying «ΓΕΙΑ» but just «ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΕΠΑΝΙΔΕΙΝ» or, in more modern Modern Greek «θα τα ξαναπούμε»...

# MY HYBRIDGREECE

by CHRISTINAGERAZOUNIS



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christina Gerazounis graduated from U-M in 2008 with a B.A. in Modern Greek and Psychology and a Spanish Minor. She is currently working for the National School of Public Health in Athens. In Greece she has encountered many young people like herself—from Vancouver, San Francisco, Miami, New York, and Detroit—who are giving Greece a try. Additionally, at least five people have emailed her for advice on making the move. Her advice: “whether the move is for a brief period, a season, or a lifetime, it will surprise you to discover how much you will learn about yourself.”

Lawrence Durrell, British writer and well-known Philhellene, once wrote, “Other countries may offer you discoveries in manners or lore or landscape; Greece offers you something harder—the discovery of yourself.” He was right. A little over a year and a half has passed since I left my comfort zone in Michigan to explore the exhilarating, exhausting city of Athens. Or so I thought. It turns out what I am really exploring is my own identity.

As U-M graduation approached in April 2008, I was pondering my next steps. Dr. Panagiotis Pafilis of the Modern Greek Program provided me with the guidance that led to one of the most significant chapters of my life. Knowing my passion for my Greek heritage, he suggested an internship tailored to my needs, where I could experience life in Greece first hand while gaining a better perspective on my career goals. The National School of Public Health (NSPH) in Athens seemed the ideal place to pursue my interests, which include Greek, psychology, and public health. My plan was to vacation in Chios for two months, then extend my trip until November to complete a three-month internship alongside Professor Jenny Kremastinou, a renowned epidemiologist in Greece and Europe, who teaches at the NSPH and is Head of the National Reference Laboratory for meningococcal diseases.

The vacation time passed quickly, and before I knew it, I was standing in front of the NSPH on Alexandras Avenue on a hot, sunny day in mid September. Little did I know that at that exact moment I was beginning a journey filled with excitement, confusion, anger, pride, and sometimes disappointment. The guard informed me, most professors and employees were on vacation. “Vacation, in mid September?” I thought. This was the first incident in a long list of things that still don’t make sense to me in this beautiful country.

Eventually I began my internship, and everything fell into place. The department was quick to utilize my native English and fluent Greek. Day by day, as translations and corrections piled up on my desk, I audited classes, where I was put on the spot to translate research concepts in the middle of a lecture, and I grew into the work. I even had the chance to conduct field research on ship sanitation on a cruise ship.

As the weeks passed, I was forced to confront Athens, a sometimes faceless city. I found myself reflecting on my paper, “Living in a City: Antagonistic Athens,” written in a Modern Greek class before the idea of living in Greece even crossed my mind. In 2005, as a Greek girl visiting Athens once a year, I found the sprawling city comforting and warm. Students from Greece who came to study at U-M always conveyed a hint of negativism about the country I adored. I didn’t quite get what they meant until I settled down in Athens myself. Now four years later, as a *protevousiana* (lady living in the capital), as my family refers to me, I contradict my old view. Everything has to do with perspective.

At the end of my internship, the department invited me to stay as an employee in the NSPH to research two topics: ship sanitation and smoking behavior and attitudes in Greece. I decided to sail on through, partly because I believed I would regret it if I didn’t. Thus, a query became an internship, an internship turned into employment, and my employment became a life journey. January 2009 marked my first “real-world” employment and a time of trials in Greece. During this time, I was also applying to the School of Public Health at U-M with a better judgment of my career outlook. Only four months after beginning my new job, I received my acceptance and, yet again, had to make crucial decisions. I loved living in Greece and was by no means ready to leave. And more importantly, how could I leave something before I even had time to fully start? Would I be staying back for something uncertain? Would I return and always wonder what if I had remained? Not being able to come to a clear decision, I deferred for one year, buying myself the time to make a more educated decision about my future. Some days I envision myself living here forever, and other times I wonder, why did I ever leave home? Yet each day is filled with a sense of empowerment. I feel determined to find the smooth co-existence of my two worlds.

“My Greece,” discovered through my present journey, is my view of the world through a new perspective. Previously I had embraced Hellenism so fully that it almost blinded me to my American surroundings. I now understand the American part of my hyphenated, Greek-American identity. This is not to say that I love Greece any less. I simply appreciate not just the Greek and not just the American but the Greek American. It’s the hybrid that infatuates me, and that is what “My Greece” has become.

## CHRISTINA GERAZOUNIS’ FAVORITE MOMENTS IN GREECE:

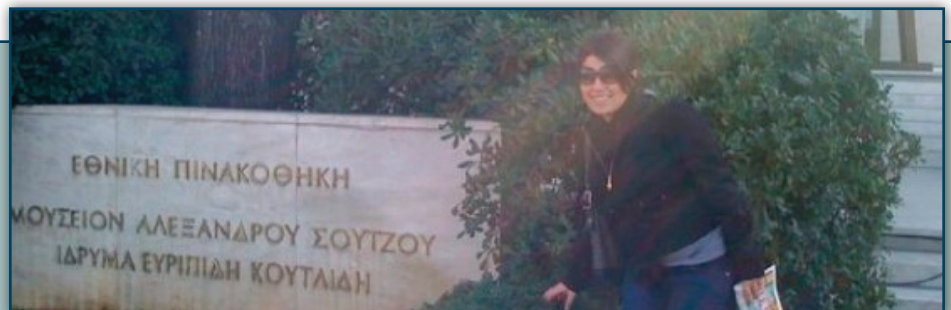
*Standing among the Parthenon sculptures in the New Acropolis Museum. It was just yesterday when I wrote a paper in “Athens Present and Past” on the missing marbles.*

*Experiencing the riot episodes in Greece last year and thinking how ridiculous it is that I grew up in Detroit and had to come to Athens to see this.*

*The Mitropanos/Zouganeli concert in the stadium of Chios; Sakis Rouvas at the Kalimarmaro Stadium; Lefteris Papadopoulos tribute concert with Dalaras, Mitropanos, Haris Alexiou, and Glykeria all in the same place.*

*The Ethniki Pinakothiki (National Gallery), my favorite—it leaves me speechless every time.*

*Getting lost in Athens: taking the wrong bus routes, turning into wrong stena but thus becoming familiar with the city. I love knowing that I KNOW Athens.*



*Checking out the University of Athens Health Behavior Health Education department and really being able to compare European and U.S. institutions.*

*The day I was offered a second job at the cardiology clinic of Dr. Dimitrios Kremastinos, former Minister of Health, to work on an organizational project: I was surprised and thrilled and enjoyed the new challenge.*

*UMICH Alumni Club in Greece, my “home away from home.” It’s interesting being on the flip side. All those years in the Hellenic Student Association I tried to make others feel at home; now suddenly I’m the one looking for comfort.*

*Following a family friend’s advice on working well with Greeks: “Christina, the trick is, don’t go in there as the ‘know it all American’ and they will love you.” So true.*

*Getting together with Greek-American friends and complaining about things that don’t make sense to us in Greece (unnecessary bureaucracy, no clothes dryers, the endless list of small, daily events that make life slightly difficult). We eventually laugh it off and enjoy the fact that every day is a surprise.*

*No matter how bad or stressful the day becomes, knowing that within minutes I can be on the seaside in Marina Floisvou, Mikrolimano or Glyfada somehow makes the pain go away.*

## TEPLYN FOURNIER

Recipient of the First Modern Greek Senior Prize



The Modern Greek Program is instituting an annual Modern Greek Senior Prize for outstanding achievement in the Modern Greek Concentration. The recipient will be honored at the departmental graduation reception for students, friends and family on the day before graduation in April.

This year's prize will be awarded to Teplyn Fournier, an outstanding student overall who has shown exceptional aptitude for Greek, which she began studying in 2006 without any prior knowledge. Teplyn has received either University Honors or citation as a James B. Angell Scholar each term since she arrived at U-M. She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi.

Teplyn was born and raised in a small town in central Maine. On her experience studying Greek she writes, "I came to the University of Michigan not really knowing what I wanted to study. My first semester I signed up for Modern Greek 101 on a whim and fell in love with the language, culture and people in the department here. I am now a double concentrator in Modern Greek and Art History with a minor in Museum Studies." Teplyn was part of the U-M study tour in Athens at the end of the Winter 2008 term and then studied abroad in Athens in Fall of 2008, attending College Year in Athens. During that semester, she had the opportunity to travel throughout the country. She will graduate in Winter 2010. She plans "to pursue a career in museum education, where I hope to integrate my appreciation for Greek culture and history."

## WHAT'S NEW ON OUR WEBSITE!

**America's Relations with Greece to 1945: From Aloof Soft Power to the Onset of Regional Hard Power**  
**The Inaugural Demetrios and Demetra Partalis Kales Annual Lecture in Modern Greek History**

S. Victor Papacosma is Emeritus Professor of History and Director of the Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Union Studies at Kent State University and Executive Director of the Modern Greek Studies Association. Nov., 12, 2009 (pdf)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic)

**Fragments of Greek Desire (lecture)**

Tim Whitmarsh is Fellow and Tutor, University Lecturer (CUF) in Greek, EP Warren Praelector at Corpus Christi College, Oxford University. Nov. 23, 2009 (pdf)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic)

**Displaying Modernity: Cycladic Art as a 20th-Century Cultural Phenomenon (blog)**

Dimitris Plantzos is Professor of Archaeology at the University of Ioannina. Oct. 28, 2009 (link)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic)

**Reflections on a Changing Landscape: Rethinking 'Greece' in a Comparative Frame (lecture)**

Michael Herzfeld is Professor of Anthropology at Harvard University. Oct. 1, 2009 (audio)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/academic)

**Greek News: Author interview on her new book, Culture and Customs of Greece**

Artemis Leontis is Associate Professor of Modern Greek at U-M. Sept. 14, 2009 (link)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/newsevents/press](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/newsevents/press)

**On Some Reasons Why Greek is One of the World's Major Languages**

Brian D. Joseph is Professor of Linguistics at Ohio State University. Sept. 28, 2008 (pdf)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/culture](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/culture)

**The Greek American Image in American Cinema: A Filmography-in-Progress**

Dan Georgakas teaches at Queens-CUNY and Vassilis Lambropoulos is Professor of Classics and Comp. Lit. at U-M. (link)  
[lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/culture](http://lsa.umich.edu/modgreek/wtgc/culture)

## MODERN GREEK Program • Winter 2010 Events

For more on these events, visit our web site: [www.lsa.umich.edu/modgreek](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/modgreek)

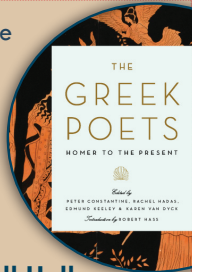
**THE BALKANS IN GREECE, GREECE IN THE BALKANS: OBSERVATIONS THROUGH FILM**  
 A Lecture by Professor Vangelis Calotychos  
 (Hellenic Studies, Columbia University)

**THURS., FEB 4, 2010 • 4PM**  
 3308 MODERN LANGUAGES BUILDING  
 812 EAST WASHINGTON, CENTRAL CAMPUS, U-M

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Dimitri and Irmgard Pallas Lecture  
**The Norton Anthology of Greek Poetry: Translations, Anthologies and their Critical Excess**

A Lecture by **Karen Van Dyck**  
 (Columbia University)

**Mon., Feb. 22, 2010 at 4PM | 3222 Angell Hall**  
 435 S. State St., U-M, Central Campus



**Past (Im)perfect or Present Continuous? The Greek and Spanish Democratic Transitions in Retrospect**



A Lecture by **Konstantinos Kornetis**  
 (Brown University)

**Thurs., March 11, 2010 at 4PM**  
**1636 International Institute**  
 1080 South University, Suite 3668,  
 U-M, Central Campus

Making History Personal:  
**Constantine Cavafy and the Rise of Rome**

A Lecture by **Bruce Frier (U-M)**

**Thurs., Feb. 25, 2010 at 4PM**  
 Rackham Auditorium

915 E. Washington Street, U-M, Central Campus



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