

Greece

A news review from the Embassy of Greece, Press and Communications Office

PM Kostas Karamanlis Reassures Greeks

Weathering the Financial Storm

Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis, speaking from Paris, where he attended a special euro-zone summit meeting on October 12, called by the French Presidency of the European Council to discuss the current severe world financial crisis, had a clear message for the Greek people: “Greece, especially over the last 30 days of the crisis, has shown reflexes that were much better than in many other countries around the world. From the first moment I stated that the government will guarantee the financial market’s stability and citizens’ deposits. Over the past month, we have developed a comprehensive plan to boost liquidity and capital, a plan that guarantees the Greek banking system and benefits Greek citizens.” The IMF, he also observed, continues to predict economic growth in Greece at around 2 percent, whereas zero growth is predicted for the other countries of the eurozone.

The Prime Minister had the same message to send from Brussels a few days later speaking to the Press after the summit of the European Council (Oct 15-16) by repeating that the real economy and the Greek banks were much less exposed to “toxic” products. He excluded any possibility of raising new taxes and reiterated his government commitment to ensure stability and protect lower income groups. He also underlined the importance of helping small and medium-sized business and provided guaranties that the bank support plan of €28 billion, announced by Minister of the Economy and Finance George Alogoskoufis to effectively shield the banking sector for the financial turmoil, will not become a burden to taxpayers but exclusively to banks.

In the meantime, Mr. Alogoskoufis, speaking at the 2008 World Bank – IMF annual meetings at Washington, DC on October 13, said: “The Greek fi-

ancial system also displays greater resilience. However, there is no room for complacency. Events are running ahead of us. Fiscal consolidation and the structural reforms agenda followed since 2004 must be continued. This is the best shield in the light of the worsening global economic climate.” The Minister expressed his confidence that coordinated policies will be pursued to facilitate global recovery and that all they rise to the task.

It is noted that Minister Alogoskoufis has already tabled in Parliament draft legislation to increase the current €20,000 guarantee of bank deposits up to €100,000—with a continuing “political commitment” to protect all deposits over that amount.

Assurance that the banking system in Greece is stable and will weather the international financial crisis was given by Bank of Greece governor George Provopoulos in his report to the Speaker of Parliament on October 8.

Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis in New York

Facing “Critical Times” Together

Addressing the 63rd UN General Assembly on September 27, Greece’s Foreign Minister, Dora Bakoyannis, spoke of “critical times” and the need to face them collectively, avoiding “narrow self-interests” and the promotion of “nationalist goals to distract our peoples from the world’s dangers.” The Greek people, she said, have chosen a course consistent with their history and character, as “the first society to develop the ideals that free peoples throughout the world now cherish.” After suffering through wars and “bitter poverty and privation,” Greece, Ms. Bakoyannis said, has made its way back to the ideals it first professed.

Turning to current issues of foreign policy, the Greek minister noted with satisfaction the accession of Croatia and Albania to NATO. She said that Greece will also welcome the NATO membership of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) after agreement is reached on a mutually acceptable name for the country, guided by the letter and spirit of Security Council Resolutions on the issue. Addressing a New York gathering of Greek-Americans two days previously, Ms. Bakoyannis urged the neighboring country to “finally actively demonstrate, with realistic proposals, its intention to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution on the basis of a composite name with a geographic qualifier that will

apply for all.” (See page 3 for the latest developments in UN-backed efforts to reach a solve the FYROM name issue.)

On Cyprus and Turkey

On the current efforts to achieve an end to the division of Cyprus, Ms. Bakoyannis welcomed the recent start of a negotiating process, under UN auspices, between President of the Cyprus Republic Demetris Christofias and Mehmet Ali Talat, leader of the Turkish Cypriot community. She said that a solution can be reached by the Cypriots themselves “without artificial deadlines and arbitration.” Nevertheless, in discussing Greece’s support

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U.S. Candidates on Hellenism-related Issues

Senator John McCain sent this letter to President Bush on August 27, 2008

I am writing to express concern regarding the current situation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, located in Istanbul, Turkey. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, the spiritual home to more than 250 million Orthodox Christians living and worshiping throughout the world, stands as a stirring testament to the power of faith in the global community.

Many have spoken out in recent years over actions of the government of Turkey against the Ecumenical Patriarchate, including its decision not to recognize the ecumenical status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch and its refusal to reopen the Halki Seminary. I too share many of these concerns and believe that the United States must stand in favor of basic religious rights and freedoms.

The United States and Turkey share an important strategic partnership based on many shared interests and principles. It is important that allies speak candidly not only on issues of agreement, but also on areas of concern. In discussions with the Turkish government, the United States must voice our strong support for the Ecumenical Patriarchate and continue our unequivocal advocacy for the preservation and protection of fundamental human rights, religious liberty, and social justice.

As Americans, I know we share a deep respect for the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and for the Greek Orthodox community worldwide. It is in our interest to work collectively with the Turkish government and our European allies to pursue a course of action that will protect the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and prevent a religious tragedy.

Foreign Minister at the U.N.

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in principle for Turkey's eventual EU membership, she observed that "the peaceful settlement of disputes with other nations" is an essential precondition, and that "the occupation of over one-third of Cyprus is a serious obstacle."

At the Helm of Regional Security

Turning to regional security efforts, Bakoyannis said that Greece will take the chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organization, next January. The organization, she said, "can contribute effectively to such crucial concerns as early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation."

Meeting Ms. Rice

In an extensive and friendly discussion of Greece's foreign policy issues with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Ms. Bakoyannis referred to the continuing efforts to resolve the FYROM issue. She spoke of Greek-Turkish relations, the problems

Barack Obama and Joe Biden: Supporting Greek Americans

The following statement was released on October 16:

Barack Obama and Joe Biden have been true friends of the Greek American community throughout their careers in public service. Obama has worked closely with this community, especially the large constituency in Chicago, Illinois, and always supported the Greek community's participation in the American political process. Obama and Biden greatly respect the major contributions Greek Americans have made to so many aspects of the American experience. They will continue to work closely with Greek Americans at home and reestablish America's strong partnership with Greece and our other European allies abroad.

A Just and Lasting Political Settlement on Cyprus: As president, Barack Obama will show U.S. leadership in seeking to negotiate a political settlement on Cyprus. He believes strongly that Cyprus should remain a single, sovereign country in which each of the two communities on the island is able to exercise substantial political authority within a bi-zonal, bicomunal federation. There must be a just and mutually agreed settlement of difficult issues like property, refugees, land, and security. A negotiated political settlement on Cyprus would end the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus and repair the island's tragic division while paving the way to prosperity and peace throughout the entire region. It would also give Cypriots a firm foundation on which to build their future after many years of division and uncertainty. It would help foster better Greek-Turkish relations, strengthen Turkish democracy, reduce the risk of military conflict, and remove a major obstacle to Turkish membership in the EU.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Barack Obama was one of three original lead co-sponsors of Senate Resolution 300, which urged that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia work with Greece within the framework of the United Nations process to reach a mutually-acceptable official name for that country and achieve longstanding United States and United Nations policy goals. Obama supports the UN-led negotiations and believes that there can and should be an agreement between Skopje and Athens on a mutually-acceptable name that leads to greater stability in the Balkans.

Ecumenical Patriarchate: Barack Obama was one of 73 Senators who signed a letter to President Bush in 2006 urging him to press Turkey to restore the full rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox Christian Church in Istanbul. He has sent Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice a personal letter on the same matter. Senator Obama calls on Turkey to respect the Ecumenical Patriarchate's rights and freedoms, including its property rights. Turkey should allow the reopening of the Patriarchate's school of theology on Halki Island and guarantee the right to train clergy of all nationalities, not just Turkish nationals.

of Georgia and issues of concern in the Middle East. She also described in detail the prevailing situation in efforts to resolve the problem of Cyprus and the strong interest of Greece in the success of the negotiation that has begun between the Cyprus President and the leader of the Turkish-Cypriot community.

New Proposals for FYROM' s Name It Takes Two to Tango

The long unsuccessful effort to reach agreement on a mutually accepted name for Greece's northern neighbor, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), reached an important stage with the submission of new proposals by the U.N. special envoy, Matthew Nimetz on October 8 at UN headquarters.

While asserting that his proposals are "not the end of the road" and that there is "no timetable" for their consideration, Mr. Nimetz said that they are a "fair basis" for a solution. He expected replies within two or three weeks.

Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis commenting on the latest proposals by Mr. Nimetz noted in an interview on Oct. 12th that Greece is negotiating with "seriousness and goodwill." From there on, of course, "it takes two to tango," she said, in a clear reference to apparent lack of political will on behalf of FYROM' s political leadership to be constructive "Our position is crystal clear," she said, "we will continue our efforts until we reach an honorable and dignified agreement."

A Timely Intervention

In the meantime, US Senators Bob Menendez and Olympia J. Snowe in an article published in *The Washington Times* on Sept. 24 ("Macedonian Quandary") called on Ms. Rice to demonstrate America's opposition to any form of irredentism by FYROM, telling them that unless they accept an international name that describes only its territory, such as "North" or "Upper" Macedonia, to be also used in bilateral relations with the United States, by a time certain, the US will withdraw bilateral recognition of FYROM as "Republic of Macedonia."

"She can thus regenerate the American pressure necessary to resolve the problem, avoid sowing the seeds of another potential conflict in Europe and open the door for FYROM' s accession to the European Union and NATO. This requires engagement, leadership and proactive diplomacy. Such a solution will have bipartisan support in the Congress," the two Senators concluded.

Thank You . . .

At the same time, The National Coordinated Effort of the Hellenes (CEH) in a sponsored public announcement which appeared in *The Hill* and *Politico* (Sept. 23), extended a warm "Thank You" to the 130 Members of Congress who have Cosponsored S. Res. 300 / H. Res. 356 introduced by: Senate European Affairs Subcommittee Chairman Barack Obama, with Senators Robert Menendez and Olympia Snowe, House European Subc. Chairman & Ranking Member, Reps. Robert Wexler and Elton Gallegly, with Reps. Carolyn Maloney and Gus Bilirakis, expressing the sense of the two bodies that FYROM should stop utilizing of materials that violate provisions of the UN-brokered Agreement between FYROM and Greece regarding "hostile activities propaganda" and should work with the UN and Greece to achieve longstanding US and UN policy goals of finding a mutually-accepted official name for FYROM.

Visa Waiver Program Vis-à-Vis

Greek ambassador to the US Alexandros Mallias conveyed to President George Bush Greece's displeasure that the country was not included in the group of countries admitted to the US Visa Waiver Program, before a ceremony at the White House during which Bush formally announced the entry of seven new countries into the program, under which the citizens of countries are not required to have a visa in order to visit the US.

Mallias said it was not a good or happy day either for Greece or the Greek-American community, stressing that "Greece should have been today the first country named for admission into the Program."

Earlier, during a regular briefing, White House Press secretary Dana Perino said: "I think that we're looking towards, by the end of the year, we hope to have that all wrapped up."

In response to a press question during a regular briefing in Brussels on Oct. 17, Michele Cercone, spokesman for EU Commissioner Jaques Barrot, said: "We are waiting for the United States to fulfill this commitment," he said, warning that the Union would consider reprisals, such as mandating the issuance of visas for holders of US diplomatic passports. Greek Foreign Ministry spokesman George Koumoutsakos repeated (Oct. 15) that "the Greek side expresses the hope that this will not be an irreversible decision."

Earlier, on the same issue, FM Bakoyannis had underlined that such a decision was wrong. "We are not a people that fail to honor our traditional friendships," she said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Ike Goulas, National President of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), had addressed a letter (Oct. 7th) to President Bush expressing the organization's discontent by pointing out that "the obstruction in Greece's roadmap to become a visa waiver nation on political grounds is an act by the United States that is unacceptable and extremely disconcerting to the American Hellenic Community."

Capital Briefing at Capitol Hill

Ambassador to the US Alexandros Mallias briefed (Oct. 3) a number of the most influential legislative assistants in the Congress that handle U.S. policy toward Greece and the region.

During a 90 minute roundtable discussion on October 2, Ambassador Mallias led a very detailed discussion on many of the issues of importance to Greece, including among others, the FYROM's name issue, the Cyprus issue, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Greece's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program, and Greece's leadership in the Balkans.

"The participation of this unusually high number of those charged by the U.S. Congress with the responsibility of developing policy for the key Committees and Subcommittees, is very helpful to America's understanding of Greece's important role in that region and the issues Greece faces there," said Andy Manatos, President of the National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH).

This presentation by Ambassador Mallias, the fifth in a series of such briefings, was attended by more than 35 high-level assistants.

Cultural Kaleidoscope

Greece in America ...

EXHIBITIONS

The Greek Book From Papyrus to Printing

Princeton University Library, New Jersey, Sept. 8 – Dec. 7

Some of the Princeton University Library's greatest treasures are on display in an exhibition that traces the long cultural history of the Greeks through books. "The Greek Book From Papyrus to Printing" focuses on the Greek book as a physical object and a repository of Western civilization over three millennia.

The exhibition includes important ancient papyri of Homer and the Bible, as well as other examples of ancient writing, chiefly from Roman Egypt; illuminated Gospels and devotional manuscripts, once in monastic libraries of the Byzantine Empire; manuscripts and early printed editions of classical texts, formerly in private libraries and in several cases annotated by leading Renaissance scholars; and illustrated liturgical books, travel guides and other manuscripts produced for Greek communities in the Ottoman Empire. Also on view will be Greek antiquities and icons from the Princeton University Art Museum, and a series of photographs by Bruce White taken in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai in Egypt.



Defending Democracy: US and Greece in World War II

Maliotis Cultural Center, Boston, September 25 - October 16

In February 1943, at the height of the Second World War, the Greek "Government in Exile," sought help from the US military in support of the Greek Resistance against the German Occupation. The Office of Strategic Services formed top-secret Greek Operational Groups (OGs) with volunteers of the 122nd Infantry Battalion ("Greek Battalion").

From April to September 1944, these teams (consisting of 147 men) were inserted into Nazi Occupied Greece to work with the Greek Resistance in fighting occupying forces. An important objective was to harass and slow down the German withdrawal, and kill and wound Germans and destroy their equipment, to reduce their effectiveness in the defense of Germany. The story of the Greek-American OGs was highly classified for more than 40 years. They returned home never knowing the enormous impact their mission had on events in Greece and most never spoke of their experience with the OSS for many years, even to their families. Sixty-four years later, Greek-American Veterans of Greek Operations Group II, were awarded Bronze Stars during a ceremony on Sunday, May 18, 2008, at the Federation of Hellenic Societies of Greater New York.

"Defenders of Democracy: The American Response to Greece's Role in World War II," an exhibition of photographs, memorabilia, newspapers, magazines and ephemera from the private collection of Gregory C. Pappas—including the largest known collection of authentic Greek War Relief Association propaganda posters, which were printed in the 1940s to rally support for Greece from the American public (http://maliotis.org/events_defenders.asp)—was hosted in Boston by the Maliotis Cultural Center between September 25-October 16, and sponsored by the Greek America Foundation and *Greek America Magazine*.

FESTIVALS

2nd Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

New York, October 3 - October 16

The 2nd annual New York City Greek Film Festival was presented by the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce between October 3–16, (<http://www.hellenicamerican.cc/FilmFest2008.htm>).

The revived Greek Film Festival in New York comes at a time of change in contemporary Greek cinema. Just as the studio era of 1950-70 gave way to the director's cinema of the post-junta era, that cinema now is giving way to a hybrid cinema that seeks to combine the virtues of its predecessors.

Among the award-winning films shown was "Eduart", a Dostoevskian story of a killer's struggle for personal redemption.

The festival also paid tribute to Jules Dassin, while other special events included a tribute to Greek American filmmaker Richard Ledes, and the screening of "Song of Life," a documentary on saving the Jews of Zakynthos during the German Occupation.

THEATRE

Shakespeare Theatre Company:

The (Appeal) Trial of Socrates

Sidney Harman Hall, Washington DC, September 16

In 399 B.C., the Athenian Assembly found Socrates guilty on two charges: (i) corrupting the youth of Athens, and (ii) impiety, i.e., failure to respect the City's gods. Socrates was sentenced to death, but he is now appealing his conviction; the appeal, while long overdue, appears timely, not least because of the many open and hidden issues posed by the most famous free-speech case of all time, still tantalizing modern society.

The Shakespeare Theatre Company organized the Appeal Trial, under the auspices of the Ambassador of Greece and Mrs.

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Alexandros Mallias. The event was sponsored by the Doric Column—a partnership supporting Greek culture at the Theatre.

The Honorable Bench consisted of Justice Samuel Alito, presiding, Chief Judge Paul R. Michel, Judge Rosemary Collyer, Judge Brett Kavanaugh, and Judge Richard Leon. The counsels for Socrates were Abbe David Lowell, Esq., (McDermott Will & Emery), and Abe Krash, Esq., (Arnold & Porter) while the counsels for the City of Athens were Pantelis Michalopoulos, Esq., (Steptoe & Johnson LLP) and Betty Jo Christian Esq., (Steptoe & Johnson LLP). The panelist was Dr Alfonso Gomez-Lobo, professor of Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy at Georgetown University.

For the presentation of their arguments to the audience/court, the advocates relied on the version of events presented by Plato in the “Apology of Socrates and Crito” and by Xenophon in the “Apology of Socrates and Memorabilia of Socrates.”

After listening attentively to both sides, the jury, i.e., the audience themselves, issued their verdict by an overwhelming majority: Not Guilty.



Ancient Greek Plays Resonate with Marines

San Diego, August 13, 2008

At a conference in San Diego dedicated to finding new ways to help soldiers recover from post-traumatic stress and other disorders after serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, military personnel and healthcare professionals looked to an ancient source: the plays of Sophocles.

Sophocles (circa 496 BC to 406 BC) was an elected general of the Greek forces during decades of constant war. Military service was compulsory. As a result, almost all the men in his audiences were combat veterans.

An audience of about 300 people, including Marines, their families and combat trauma specialists gathered to hear a dramatic reading from Sophocles’ two plays “Ajax” and “Philoctetes,” which center on the physical and psychological wounds inflicted on the warrior. The readings—part of the US Marine Corps’ annual Combat/Operational Stress Conference—were conducted by actors of the New York-based Philoctetes Project (www.philoctetesproject.org) David Strathairn (“Good Night and Good Luck”), Bill Camp, Jessie Eisenberg (“The Squid and the Whale”) and Iraqi-American actress Heather Raffo.

As translator-director Bryan Doerries pointed out, theater has a way of initiating conversations and exposing torments that otherwise might never be revealed. As a core influence, Doerries cited psychiatrist and MacArthur fellow Dr. Jonathan Shay, who used theater as a way to reintroduce combat-shattered Vietnam war veterans into society through the plays of Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides and others. Shay’s book, *Achilles in Vietnam*, is an account of trying to help a group of Vietnam vets rediscover a character and humanity flayed beyond recognition by the trauma of combat and

its long stretches of numbing tedium.

On September 16, the group also conducted a reading at the Julliard School for an audience of combat veterans and civilians. The performance was followed by a discussion which included Dr. Jonathan Shay.

EDUCATION

Greek High School Team Excels in Debate in Washington, DC

Greece was the best performing English as a Second Language team, winning 3rd place at the recent World Schools Debating Championships (WSDC) that took place in Washington, DC.

The WSDC is an annual English-language debating tournament for high school-level teams representing different countries. Special awards are presented at each year’s Championships event to the best-performing English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teams.

Events in recent years have included teams from approximately 35 nations. The Championships take place each year in a different country. Recent venues include Cardiff, Wales (2006), Seoul, South Korea (2007), and Washington DC, United States (2008). The next WSDC will take place in Athens, Greece, between February 9 -19, 2009.

EVENTS

Capitol Hill Event in Commemoration of the Smyrna Catastrophe

Giles Milton, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna, 1922*

On September 24, the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) in cooperation with *Greek America Magazine*, hosted a Capitol Hill event in commemoration of the Smyrna catastrophe of 1922, featuring as guest speaker English journalist and best-selling author Giles Milton, who presented his book *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922*, which revolves around the events leading to Smyrna’s destruction in 1922, and what the author refers to as “one of the greatest humanitarian disasters of the twentieth century.”

Smyrna was the richest and most cosmopolitan city in the Ottoman Empire, where Levantine dynasties, Greeks, Armenians, Turks, and Jews, had created together, a majority Christian city that was unique in the Islamic world. This harmony came to an abrupt end on September 9, 1922, when it witnessed the terrible backlash of Turkey’s brutal three-year war with Greece.

Paradise Lost is based heavily on the Levantines account of the destruction of the city, as, according to the author, they would have

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been the most politically neutral people living in Smyrna. The Levantines were of British and European decent but had been in the land since the reign of George III. They were the wealthiest and most business savvy people living in the city, and did not care whether the city was ruled by Greeks or Ottomans, as their main interest was financial. Their unpublished letters and diaries provided the author with a new source of information to retell the tragic story of Smyrna.

Milton describes how two million innocent civilians were caught up in the conflict as victorious Turkish troops entered Smyrna. The port was ransacked and looted for days, women were raped, men tortured and hundreds of thousands deported or killed. *Paradise Lost* is a timely reminder of the appalling cost of expansionist political ambitions; it tells a fascinating story with clarity and insight. Review: *The Economist: Smyrna, 1922 - End of an Era* (1/5/2008)



Book Presentation: *American Fugue*, by Alexis Stamatis

September 18th, 2008, Embassy of Greece, Washington, D.C.

Greek author Alexis Stamatis read from his recently translated into English novel *American Fugue*, at a book presentation event at the Embassy of Greece in Washington, DC. The novel has been awarded the National Endowment for the Arts International Literature Award.

Born in 1960, Stamatis is the author of eight novels and novels, as well as six collections of poetry. He has worked as a journalist, literary critic, and architect. Stamatis has been hailed as one of the most gifted writers of his generation (Francoise Noiville, *Le Monde*) in both Greece and Europe.

American Fugue examines the basic themes that are persistent in all of Stamatis' works of fiction: an all-consuming past, the flight to escape one's personal demons, and the search for identity, which is ultimately revealed through what is unknown to the self.

America in Greece . . .

Here and There: Photographs of the Acropolis and Central Park, Tod Papageorge

Xippas Gallery, September 25 – November 15

Tod Papageorge, head Yale University's photography department, is a Greek-American art photographer whose career began in the New York City street photography movement of the 1960s. He exhibits images from the "Passing Through Eden: Photographs of Central Park" and "The Acropolis" se-

ries at the Xippas Gallery in Athens (http://www.xippas.com/en/artist/tod_papageorge). The exhibition is part of the Athens Photo Festival 2008.

Papageorge started taking photographs in 1962, as an English literature major at the University of New Hampshire. He is the recipient of two Guggenheim fellowships and his work is in public collections including the Museum of Modern Art and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Since 1979, Papageorge has directed the graduate photography department at the Yale University School of Art, influencing the perspective of many of his students, who include Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Abelardo Morell, Gregory Crewdson and Anna Gaskell.



The Harvard-Nafplio connection

The Harvard's University Centre for Hellenic Studies (CHS) in Nafplio has acquired a high-tech device called "The Cradle" which snaps digital camera images of old manuscripts. It was used last summer at Venice's Marciana Library for the digital imaging of two of the earliest versions of the *Iliad* in the world. Now housed at Harvard University's Centre for Hellenic Studies new branch in Nafplio (http://chs.harvard.edu/chs/chs_home), the device was created by Graz University Library expert Manfred Mayer, after the university decided to create digital images of 2,000 treasured books. Mayer, CHS Professor Chris Blackwell and British Library conservator David Jacobs were recently in Nafplio to discuss how the cradle could be used to digitally back up Nafplio's archives, which was modern Greece's first capital.

Harvard University's Center for Hellenic Studies, located in Washington DC, was founded by means of an endowment made "exclusively for the establishment of an educational center in the field of Hellenic Studies designed to rediscover the humanism of the Hellenic Greeks." This humanistic vision remains the driving force of the Center for Hellenic Studies.



Nick Nolte Explores Greece's Rugged Nature in "Arcadia Lost"

Two-time Oscar nominated actor Nick Nolte has been cast as a lead in "Arcadia Lost," an independent film from Chambers Productions that began shooting in September on the mountains of Arcadia in the Peloponnese in Greece. The story of the movie refers to two teenagers traveling to Greece to discover themselves, where, along the way, they meet and follow a strange traveler, a character played by Nick Nolte. According to the producers, it's a coming-of-age road movie with a mystery at its heart; "Arcadia Lost" explores Greece through the

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eyes of teenaged Americans, mapping materialism and innocence onto timelessness and spirituality. Film locations include the Mani peninsula in the Peloponnese, Mount Parnassus in central Greece and the River Mornos Reservoir

The film is directed by Greek-American Phedon Papamichael, cinematographer of "Sideways", "Walk the Line" and "W", the Oliver Stone's biopic of President George W. Bush.

Filming will take advantage of Greece's ancient and modern landscape, which is expertly captured by Papamichael, who used to spend his holidays as a youth in the Arcadian town of Leonidio, near which there is a cave, where Nolte's character lived.

BOOKS

Maria Koundoura, *The Greek Idea: The Formation of National and Transnational Identities*

The Greek Idea offers a new critical paradigm from which to explore the national and transnational identities formed by those living in diaspora. Drawing upon postcolonial theory, Associate Professor in the Department of Writing, Literature and Publishing at Emerson College (http://www.emerson.edu/writing_lit_publishing/faculty.cfm?facultyID=345) Maria Koundoura, addresses and analyzes the cultural material that produced Greece's representation as both Europe's origin and "other." She examines the long association of Greece and English Literature, which began with the "discovery" of Greece in the late-eighteenth century by English travelers and the reinforcement of the myth which placed Greece as the location of Western culture.

☆☆☆

George Pelecanos, *The Turnaround*

Greek-American by descent and Washington, DC born George Pelecanos's new book, *The Turnaround*, is an urban noir, in which Pelecanos explores the possibility of making the turnaround, of starting over and building a new life, regardless of the past.

The Turnaround revolves around a lethal event that has cast a long shadow and shaped the lives of its survivors for decades, an ugly race-baiting incident from 1972 which has irrevocably damaged six of the teenage boys who were involved.

According to the *New York Sun* ("The Crime Scene: George Pelecanos' *The Turnaround*," August 20) Pelecanos' prose has become more sanded and polished in recent works, the understanding of human nature more profoundly and empathetically developed, with events leading to almost unbearable suspense, as it is impossible not to become deeply involved with the threatened individuals who populate his superb books, concluding that *The Turnaround* may not be Mr. Pelecanos's best mystery, but it is his best novel.

John Chrysochoos, *Beyond the Blue Ikarian Sea*

The innocent, early childhood of the author, on a beautiful and serene Greek island, was painfully interrupted by World War II. The occupation, famine, the subsequent civil war but also the author's struggle to pursue his career as a university professor in North America, are all realistically depicted in John Chrysochoos' latest book "Beyond the Blue Ikarian Sea," (www.amazon.com/Beyond-Blue-Ikarian-John-Chrysochoos/dp/0805986960).

The author was born on the Greek island of Ikaria in the mid-thirties. In 1964 he settled in the United States as educator and researcher and is currently professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Toledo, Ohio.

☆☆☆

Charlotte Higgins, *It's All Greek to Me*

Why are some laws draconian? What is an Achilles heel? Why were the Spartans spartan? How does ancient Greece's influence surround us? Charlotte Higgins (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/oct/01/philosophy.history>), chief arts writer of the *Guardian*, offers a guide into how ancient Greek culture has moulded modern thought and shaped our world, from Homer to the Hippocratic Oath, from Pythagoras's theorem to Oedipus and his complex, to Margaret Thatcher and Thucydides.

☆☆☆

Greek American Artist Ted Giavis: An Obituary

Ted Giavis, who passed away at the age of 88 on September 27, 2008, showed up on a 1997 list compiled by the University of Brighton School of the Arts as one of the top 12 American realist artists.

Giavis grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts, the son of a Greek grocer. As a child, he once fell from a horse and badly broke a leg. He took refuge in drawing. The Army quickly spotted his talent, and ordered him to draw on company time. Mr. Giavis happily obliged, painting portraits of generals and filling up sketch books with scenes from Guam and Japan in World War II. He drew soot-stained military planes, rutted streets where villagers lived and bombed-out landscapes. He also painted gleaming trucks and swimming pools and loaves of bread. Mr. Giavis wielded his brush like a powerful magnet, attracting every particle of life through its fibers.

After the war, Mr. Giavis worked for the *Boston Globe*, then the Rahl Studios in New York, supplying commercial art for Fortune 500 companies. Sometimes, his work landed on national magazine covers.

Briefly . . .

As in most European cities, there has been unprecedented interest in Athens in the run up to the U.S. presidential elections on November 4. A standing-room only meeting on October 4, at the Constantine Karamanlis Institute for Democracy, was addressed by four American and Greek-American political commentators.

Olympic Airlines, Greece's national carrier, is to be re-launched. Transport Minister Kostas Hatzidakis said that the European Commission approved the Greek government's rescue plan. "The state-owned company will be privatized" said the minister, explaining that the company at its present status will be liquidated and some of the company's assets will be transferred to a new private company, which will keep the name and the logo of its predecessor.

The new Acropolis Museum, which has already been visited by particular groups and individuals, will probably open to the general public with an official ceremony next March. Announcing the event after viewing the museum's newest galleries, Culture Minister Mihalis Liapis said tenders are to be invited in Greece and abroad to organize the promotion of the opening, with events to be staged throughout Europe. Those events, the minister said, especially those organized in London, will exert further pressure for the return of the Parthenon Marbles from the British Museum.

On the occasion of the World Shipping Congress organized in Athens by the Financial Times, a Greek Ship Finance Forum was held at an Athens hotel on October 9. Shipping carries 90% of world trade, contributing over \$380 billion to the world economy every year. The Conference debated and examined where the global shipping market is headed, and how to managed risk and raise financing for future development.

The Taxation Committee of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce organized a one day conference with luncheon guest of honor Mr. Antonis Bezas, Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance, which took place in Athens on October 9.

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A first "Green Design Festival" was celebrated in the central Constitution Square of Athens for three weeks. It was billed as "a unique, outdoor and free cultural initiative" aimed to make the congested capital "greener and more liveable." A visiting EU Commissioner was briefed on the modernization of urban transport and the introduction in Greek cities of bicycle paths.

The 2008 Defendory International, the "15th Specialized Exhibition of Conventional Systems for national Defence on Land-Sea-Air" was inaugurated in Athens on October 7 by Deputy Defence Minister Yiannis Plakiotakis. Thirty eight countries and NATO as well as representatives from 50 countries participated in the Exhibition. Mr. Plakiotakis will be on a working visit to Washington between 20 and 24 of October.

Despite the current international economic problems, tourism has been broadly holding its own, with the number of arrivals only slightly lower than last year's. Occupation rates in the three-star hotels of Athens reached record levels. There was a notable increase in visits by Russian tourists, expected to reach 350-400,000 this year compared with last year's 270,000. Arrivals of tourists at Greek airports in the January-August period of this year were slightly down, by 0.78%.

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