

During the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Greek communities of Pontos which managed to survive from the genocidal policies of the Young Turks regime in the beginning of the 20th Century, were relocated in mainland Greece and in other countries. The memories and experiences of that generation passed on to the younger through oral narratives, creation of archives, personal memoir publications, music, dance, and lectures organized and supported by an extensive network of cultural associations that had been founded in Greece since 1923.

The current generation of Pontian-Greeks, that grew up without having any significant immediate contact with the elder members of the community who were born and raised in Pontos, faces further challenges of memory loss and struggles to maintain a sense of Pontian-Greek identity by making use of all these diverse mnemonic practices. "Learning the history of the ancestors" is central in their attempt to form their subjectivities. The documentary "In the Footsteps of the Argonauts" constitutes such an attempt to learn, to remember, and to belong. This lecture will serve both as an introduction to the documentary and as a presentation of the current quest of younger Pontian-Greeks to form a modern sense of identity that maintains lively links with the past and with a geographic region that has been lost.