

RESEARCH ON GREECE: 2nd Annual Student Conference

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2019
York University, Kaneff Tower 519
10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



"A doctor at work in a mobile medical clinic in rural Greece. To maintain these health clinics the Canadian Relief for Greece Appeal is asking the people of Canada for \$2,500,000. All supplies will be purchased in Canada and shipped to Greece through the facilities of the Red Cross Society." 4 July 1947.

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Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History
York University Department of History
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies



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The Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History welcomes you to the **2nd Student conference “Research on Greece”**. The main objective of the conference is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas between upper level undergraduate and graduate students. This year we host papers from students in History, Anthropology and Political Science from York University and the University of Toronto, as well one paper by a Stavros Niarchos Foundation Exchange student visiting from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The event is open to the academic community, media and the general public, and is hosted by The Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History, the Department of History and the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University. The conference will take place on **March 22, 2019, 10am – 4pm at Kaneff Tower, Room 519, York University, 4700 Keele st, Toronto, M3J 1P3**

Rsvp: agekas@yorku.ca

10.00

Welcome and Introduction

Sakis Gekas, Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History

10.10 – 11:45. *Ethnography in Athens*

Alternative Self-Care Rituals Impact on Psychological Harm on the Neoliberal Body and Personal Well Being; Holistic Health and Fortune Telling

Palbi Sharma Bhargava, 4th year, Department of Anthropology, York University

Erisian Mysteries: The art of squatting, resistance and solidarity in Exarcheia, Athens

Katelyn Squires, 4th Year, Undergraduate Student, IBA Anthropology/Philosophy Hons. York University

Sikh Migrants in Greece: The Marginalization of Minority Religious Groups in Athens

Ravneet Somal, 4th year, Department of Anthropology, York University

Greek social housing policy: How is the Athenian municipal government involved in the provision of social housing in Athens?

Lauren Hogan, Master of Arts in European, Eurasian, and Russian Studies
Candidate (2019) CERES, University of Toronto, Canada

11:45-12:00 Coffee break

12:00 – 1:00. *Voices in the ‘diaspora’*

Where is the Ethnic Press Heading?

Peter Milonas, Phd candidate, Social and Political Thought, York University

"Dear Co-Fighters"; the Inter-American Federation for Freedom and Democracy in Greece and its Anti-Junta Campaign

Dimitris Makhlouta, MA candidate, Department of History, York University

1:00 – 1:45: Lunch break

1:45-2:45. *Unknown Histories*

Capital Punishment: State, Executioners and the Crowd in the Kingdom of Greece during the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1844-1862).

Spyros Papageorgakis, PhD candidate, Department of History, York University

The story of a forgotten terrorist attack

Alexander Balassis, 4th Year, Department of History, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

2:45-3:00. Coffee break

3:00 – 4:30 *History and Politics; international perspectives*

Why So Different, Yet So The Same? A Comparison of the Greek and Korean Civil War

Adele Zhang, 4th year, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

The Dawn of Anti-Democracy: Explaining the Rise of the Extreme Right Across Eurasia

Kathryn Kazimowicz, 4th year, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

Defending the Defenders: A Revaluation of Greek Defence Spending

Luka Dursun, MA candidate, University of Toronto

Abstracts

Alternative Self-Care Rituals Impact on Psychological Harm on the Neoliberal Body and Personal Well Being; Holistic Health and Fortune Telling

Palbi Sharma Bhargava, 4th year, Department of Anthropology, York University

ps15@my.yorku.ca

Mental health is important to acknowledge as it affects everyone, and when left untreated it can lead to various health problems. As a result of the economic crisis in Greece, many individuals suffer from stress and anxiety which ultimately affects their mental well-being. Neoliberal markets have assisted in facilitating alternative self-care rituals to help the citizens of Athens take charge of their mental health. These markets provide alternative healing services and products to treat individuals for stresses and anxieties. By utilizing anthropological methods, this research aims to understand how techniques, such as coffee cup readings, healing stones, and evil eye exorcism/merchandise have positive effects on improving one's mental health. The use of these products/services embody a rich cultural history, but over time have been prone to stigma regarding its rationality in relation to scientific advancements. It is important to explore the impact and use of these alternative healing methods within their cultural context in order to understand the value they bring to consumers. Through embracing alternative ways of healing, it sheds a light on the cultural practices of fighting poor mental health and can potentially

contribute to therapeutic practices. Through the indulgence in these practices, individuals experience positive effects in which they feel they have alleviated their concerns. Even those skeptical of these practices have found to understand the impact they have on individuals and their own unique methods for self-care. These findings insinuate mindful practices for individuals to shift perspective towards the healing of mental health. This study is an effort to show despite the stigma towards alternative healing methods, these methods deserve our attention as they report to have a significant impact on consumers lives and identities.

Erisian Mysteries: The art of squatting, resistance and solidarity in Exarcheia, Athens
Katelyn Squires, 4th Year, Undergraduate Student, IBA Anthropology/Philosophy Hons.
York University
katie.squires6@hotmail.com

This article is guided by the central question: how have the anarchists and residents of Exarcheia in Athens, Greece, manifested, both spatially and socially, forms of resistance to the state in the face of austerity and following the 2008 December riots? Based on ethnographic fieldwork in the anarchist neighbourhood of Exarcheia, located in Athens, this article investigates how anarchist dissent and solidarity have manifested spatially through grassroots organizing, solidarity networks, spatial forms of resistance and other infrastructures of dissent.

Sikh Migrants in Greece: The Marginalization of Minority Religious Groups in Athens
Ravneet Somal, 4th year, Department of Anthropology, York University
somalrav@my.yorku.ca

Space is complex, it provides people a sense of meaning, familiarity, and comfort. It's an idea come to life, a place where people connect with others and become more in touch with themselves. Whether it is a holy space, or a place to simply call home, the concept of space shapes social relations, interactions, and how people come to understand space. This paper covers the members of the Sikh community residing in Athens, Greece and how their worship spaces are compromised and used as a safe place to gather and communicate with members of the same community. The work follows a Sikh family living in Athens and their day to day interactions with the public and their holy space. By utilizing anthropological methods of participant observation, formal and informal interviews, what is revealed is the complicated relationship of minority religions with the state and church. Through an exploration of the Greek law on religion and religious minorities, I examine how it prevents the Sikh community and other minority religions from creating official worship spaces. What arises from this work are questions on state and church separation and how to go about addressing the needs of all populations residing in Greece in regard to worship spaces. How are state regulations influencing the publics perception and tolerance of minority religions?

Greek social housing policy: How is the Athenian municipal government involved in the provision of social housing in Athens?

Lauren Hogan, Master of Arts in European, Eurasian, and Russian Studies

Candidate (2019) CERES, University of Toronto, Canada

lauren.hogan@mail.utoronto.ca

The austerity measures imposed by Greece's creditors, the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and European Central Bank (the Troika) resulted in the curtailment of social housing policy and the elimination of the Workers Housing Organization (OEK) in 2012. With the dissolution of the OEK, the component of Greece's national, social housing policy that was aimed at the direct provision of housing ended. The provision of physical housing was deemed as an unnecessary expenditure according to the Troika and so the program was axed, leaving a gap in the provision of social policy at all levels of Greek government. Nevertheless, the dearth of social housing policy in Greece does not negate the fact that this is an area of social policy that is no longer filled at either the national, regional or municipal level. Municipalities are the order of government that has the most direct contact with citizens and feels the immediate results of policy changes, for this reason, municipal governments have been selected for analysis in this paper in terms of their involvement in social housing and social housing policy. To understand the role of municipalities in the provision of social housing, expert interviews were conducted in the field between May 3rd and 10th, 2018. Stakeholders in Athens were selected in terms of their knowledge of social housing policy. These individuals constitute a degree of representativeness regarding social housing policy discourse. This is because of their backgrounds in academia, the non-profit sector, and both the municipal and central government. These stakeholders' insights into the realities of Greek political machinery have been invaluable as they illuminate a complex policy area. Through these interviews and desk-research conducted in advance of the field work conducted in Athens, it is clear that municipalities have a relatively muted level of involvement in the provision of social housing. This comes as a result of the orientation of overall Greek social policy, the fact that municipalities have restricted authorities and responsibilities, the creation of the 'neo-' and 'invisible' homeless, and changes in homeownership. Nevertheless, there is an array of laws and policies that create an overarching superstructure that deals with social policy in general, and social housing and homelessness policy specifically. Before explaining why municipalities have a relatively limited role in the provision of social housing, it is first useful to briefly review some of these policies and laws. After which, the impediments to municipal provision of social housing policy will be described, and, finally, recommendations on how to address Greece's homelessness and housing insecurity will be provided.

Where is the Ethnic Press Heading?

Peter Milonas, Phd candidate, Social and Political Thought, York University and journalist

peter@yorku.ca

Toronto's Greek-language media is declining now that its audience needs it most. Even though Greece is a small part of the European Union, the international media has been closely focusing on the country's social, political, and economic developments since the financial crisis broke in 2008. The Canadian media is no exception, especially the country's Greek-language press. But, not everyone in the Greek Diaspora is satisfied with their work. Today, the Greek ethnic media includes print, online, radio, and television. In spite of their important role in the Diaspora, the

Greek-language media are criticized for their lack of original reporting from the homeland – this mainly is due to budget constraints. Furthermore, new technologies cover the need for up to date Greek news. However, they are able to do original reporting on community news in Canada. This is important. The historical role of ethnic media was always to help new immigrants to integrate into the host country, to connect the members of the community, to tackle various issues that the newcomers were encountering, and, lastly, to function as a liaison between the community and the outside. So, ultimately, has the Greek-language press in Canada been successful in its mission?

"Dear Co-Fighters"; the Inter-American Federation for Freedom and Democracy in Greece and its Anti-Junta Campaign

Dimitris Makhoulta, MA candidate, Department of History, York University

dimitris.makhoulta@gmail.com

In September 1967 nineteen anti-junta committees from USA and Canada joined to form the Inter-American Federation for Freedom and Democracy in Greece. They elected an executive body aiming to provide communication and coordination among the various regional committees that had been previously established across North America and begun a campaign of denunciation of the Military Regime that came to power in Greece on April 21, 1967. Among a wide range of practices implemented by the Federation in order to achieve its goal, targeting specifically a North American public, was the Anti-tourism campaign that attempted to discourage North Americans from visiting Greece and thus boycott the Military Regime and deprive it of revenues from the tourism sector. The range of the Federation's activities also extended more broadly to political and social goals. Attempts were made to influence the U.S. Democratic Party towards its position regarding Greece's Military regime and through the collection of petitions a campaign was orchestrated to achieve the release of political prisoners from Greece. The membership of the Inter – American Federation consisted of both Greeks and North American individuals, the majority of which tended to be university professors: Adamantia Pollis, Helene Zographos-Meynaud, Melina Mercouri, George Blanksten and Stephen Rousseas were some of them. The core of the research comes from the private archival collection of Helene Zographos-Meynaud, who, while based in Montreal, played a major role in the Inter-American Federation and represented North American committees at the Preparatory Conference of Greek Anti-Dictatorial Committees Abroad held in Paris on Nov. 4-5, 1967. The paper presents the activities of the coordinating committee until May 1969, when a new executive board of the Inter-American Federation was elected, and resulted to a change of political direction towards a more pro-US stance. This research contributes to the emerging historical interest about the political activism of Greeks abroad and to the historiography of the Greek anti-dictatorship struggle. The Inter-American Federation was a cornerstone in the perceptions and the outcome of the development of anti-Junta activism in North America.

Capital Punishment: State, Executioners and the Crowd in the Kingdom of Greece during the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1844-1862).

Spyros Papageorgakis, PhD candidate, Department of History, York University

sp.papageo@gmail.com

This paper is based on research for a project on the history of the criminal justice system in the kingdom of Greece (1844-1862). The paper investigates the authorities' quest for the monopoly of violence and for acquiring political legitimacy under the reign of the Bavarian king Otto. The paper considers the death sentence as a field of negotiation between state authorities and citizens and presents a close examination of legislation around capital punishment and the different actors involved: the state authorities, the executioner and the crowd. Although the topic of capital punishment has drawn some attention in the past as an aspect of the history of brigandage in Greece, these themes have not been the subject of meticulous research for the period under study. The main argument of this paper is that the death penalty was a problematic form of punishment because it failed to gain legitimacy and because there was a gap in the application of the law. While historians have discussed the death penalty in the context of banditry, this project seeks to establish the relation between capital punishment and premeditated murder, a felony that was also punishable by death. The research questions I attempt to examine include how this aspect of criminal repression was reconstructed after the constitutional revolution of 1843, what was the rationale behind the way state authorities functioned, and who were at the receiving end of capital punishment. Finally, the paper will highlight the few cases, when the crowd actively expressed its anger and hatred towards the state apparatus and therefore exerted agency in negotiating the extent of the punishment's application. This paper is based on the archives of the ministries of Interior, Military and Justice in the Greek General State Archives and on Senate proceedings and travelers' journals.

The story of a forgotten terrorist attack

Alexander Balassis, 4th Year, Department of History, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

alexanderbal196@gmail.com

With Prespa agreement only in its first months into force and the Macedonia naming dispute practically resolved, this presentation will narrate the forgotten story of a terrorist attack and the first steps of a nationalist organization, that during the end of 19th century fought for an independent Macedonia. Thessaloniki was where this organization was founded and a city-trophy for the neighboring countries that were antagonizing for Macedonia's post-Ottoman fate. A multicultural city and an important port, where Jews, Muslims and Orthodox lived side by side for centuries, it had to find balance in the changing status quo. With a population uneasy, new states in the region and the Ottoman sovereignty being questioned, Thessaloniki had a perfect combination of factors, which led to the emergence of nationalist circles. The city was targeted in order for the Great Powers to be embroiled and more actively involved in the Macedonian issue. By examining the radical actions of this organization, resulting in the first terrorist attack in Thessaloniki's history, one can gain a better understanding of the beginning of Macedonian issue and clearly comprehend the claims of both North Macedonia and Bulgaria for the heritage of the first fighters for an autonomous or independent Macedonia.

Why So Different, Yet So The Same? A Comparison of the Greek and Korean Civil War

Adele Zhang, 4th year, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto
adele.zhang@mail.utoronto.ca

Abstract: This research engages in a comparative analysis of the Greek and Korean civil war. The methodology I use is J.S Mill's Most Similar Systems Design to identify the contributing factor that causes the difference in outcome between these two cases. I decided to compare these two civil wars, because they share numerous contextual similarities including geographic proximity to communist vs Western powers, and the international context during their civil war time frames. I argue that the role of foreign intervention is one of the most influential factors in impacting the outcome of a civil war. Through my studies I gather that the primary divergence between the two civil wars is the intensity of foreign intervention in each case, and how the outcome of both civil wars correlates with the dedication from the two foreign intervening powers (communist vs Western).

The Dawn of Anti-Democracy: Explaining the Rise of the Extreme Right Across Eurasia

Kathryn Kazimowicz, 4th year, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto
kathryn.kazimowicz@mail.utoronto.ca

Following the atrocities of the Second World War, it may have seemed reasonable to believe that the extreme right would never again rear its ugly head; however, against all odds, such radical parties have re-emerged in the present day. This paper focuses on the factors that have led to this alarming resurgence, examining the circumstances of various countries in which the trend has appeared and others in which it has failed to do so. In particular, the cases of Golden Dawn in Greece and Shas in Israel provide examples of successful extreme right parties, in contrast to Spain and Latvia, where the extreme right has been unable to gain traction despite seemingly suitable conditions. It is found that extreme right parties gain representation when the institutional frameworks of a country interact with the crises of society in a manner that allows discontent to manifest in electoral success. In other words, social, economic, or political dissatisfaction provide necessary but insufficient conditions for the rise of the extreme right; the additional factor of institutional opportunity leads to realization. These findings matter because they demonstrate that many of the current explanations for the rise of the extreme right, which often focus on a single issue such as economics, immigration, or political dissatisfaction, are insufficient.

Defending the Defenders: A Revaluation of Greek Defence Spending

Luka Dursun, MA candidate, University of Toronto
luka.dursun@mail.utoronto.ca

Following the economic crisis in Greece, apparent examples of irresponsible overspending have become emphasized by international media sources, commentators, and analysts. Greek military spending is one such target. As this article argues, not only are Greek fears of a powerful and revisionist Republic of Turkey justified, Greek military spending has persisted only in proportion to this growing threat. Moreover, the mechanics of military spending reveal that any instances of inefficiency or corruption are not the fault of the Hellenic Armed Forces, but of a bloated and dysfunctional Greek political system. This article investigates the specific factors driving Greek military spending, through both interviews with relevant military and non-military experts, as well as through a perusal of the relevant literature.