



Διάλογοι

Hellenic Canadian Academic Association of Ontario (HCAAO)

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Ελληνο-Καναδική Ένωση Πανεπιστημιακών του Οντάριο

Τεύχος 20, Δεκέμβριος 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Colleagues,

This was yet another productive year for the association as we shifted our attention, together with the rest of the world, to the ongoing and ever deepening crisis in Greece and Europe. As detailed in this newsletter, several of our initiatives last year contributed to the discussion of that crisis, through exploration of its causes and its likely consequences. Moving forward, and as the crisis continues to unfold; this association will also continue to engage in the discussion.

Best,
Theodore Toliás

UPCOMING EVENTS

HCAAO 2011 Annual General Meeting

Our annual meeting will take place on Saturday, December 3, 4:00-7:00pm at the UofT, Dept of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, Wallberg Building, Room 215, 200 College St., Toronto. *If you encounter problems entering the building please call: (905) 510-8591.*

Agenda

- Approval of the 2010 AGM minutes
- President's report
- Treasurer's report
- Planning of activities for 2012
- Election of the new executive council
- Other items

Distinguished Guest Speaker Series 2012 (DGSS 2012)

We are very excited to present the details of our upcoming DGSS. Two events are being planned with historians and social scientists: Professors, Kosta Kostis, Maria Christina Chatziioannou, Dean Kostantaras, Tassos Anastassiadis, Michalis Psalidopoulos, Tom Gallant, Leo Panitch, Sakis Gekas and Yannis Varoufakis.

The first event titled “From Revolution to Regress: Debating the Greek State and economy from the 19th century to the age of global crisis” will take place at the Royal Ontario Museum on **April 7, 2012**. The presenters will reflect on the history of the economic crises in Modern Greek History and situate the current crisis in a historical perspective. The second event will take place at the Greek Community of Metropolitan Toronto on April 6, 2012. This event is being designed to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge about the history of crises in Greece. The Greeks of Toronto and surrounding areas are expected to be the primary audience of this event

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Hellenic Heritage Foundation for their pledge of \$10,000 to go towards the costs of organizing this event. Additional funding will be requested from the History department and the European Union Centre of Excellence at York.

University Studies Orientation Day 2012 (USOD 2012)

This event is scheduled for October 27, 2012.

PAST EVENTS

Get-together Dinner 2011

On Sunday, January 30, 2011 our members gathered for a dinner at the David Duncan House to celebrate the accomplishments of the previous year and to socialize with colleagues and their families. As is customary with this event, the dinner was combined with a presentation. This year, the presentation took the form of a lecture delivered by Prof. Athanasios (Sakis) Gekas, Modern Greek History, York University. Professor Gekas spoke about Greek economic policy from a historical perspective, helping contextualize the current economic crisis in a broader socio-political and cultural context. The talk stimulated a lively discussion that continued until the end of the evening.

Distinguished Guest Speaker Series 2011 (DGSS 2011)

This year's Distinguished Guest Speaker Series was organized in association with the Department of History (Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies) and the Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History and Hellenic Studies at York University. The lecture was delivered by Professor Michael Herzfeld, Department of Anthropology, Harvard University and took place at the Schulich School of Business, on April, 7, 2011

Professor Herzfeld's talk entitled: "The Corruption of the Past: Greek Heritage Politics in Global Perspective" focused on questions of heritage preservation in Greece. The topic was approached from the perspective of (a) Professor Herzfeld's own social anthropological research on Crete and elsewhere and (b) Benedict Anderson's celebrated analysis of nationalism as in part motivated by a collective desire for immortality.

By placing these ideas in a shared framework, and

introducing comparisons with Italy and Thailand, Professor Herzfeld showed how the Greek concern with the ancient past belongs to a broader pattern of Western cultural politics, while characterized by many elements that are distinctive to the Greek case.

The lecture was followed by a reception that was well-attended and allowed participants to continue discussing this intriguing topic with Professor Herzfeld.

University Studies Orientation Day 2011 (USOD 2011)

On October 29, 2011 members of our organization visited Greek Community of Toronto High schools to speak to students about pathways available to them for higher education and offer students the opportunity to ask questions on a wide range of related topics. The purpose of this annual event, organized in cooperation with the Greek Community of Toronto, is to help high school students applying for university studies make better and informed choices.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The past year, Canadians have focused their attention on Europe as economic instability has led to growing political and public unrest in several EU member states, particularly Greece.

Members of the HCAAO were invited regularly by Canadian broadcasters to participate in public discussions. Notably, Professor Sakis Gekas has appeared twice on the CBC on [\(2011/10/12\)](#) and [\(2011/11/02\)](#) and Professor Theodore Toliás was invited to speak on TVO - The Agenda with Steve Paikin on [2011/10/19](#), on the CTV News on [2011/11/02](#) and on CBC Radio 1- The Current on [2011/11/03](#).

The European Union Centre of Excellence at York, the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies and the Schulich School of

Business IMBA program organized a roundtable discussion featuring York faculty, which explored what the future held for the European Union in light of the economic crisis gripping the region ([press for audiolink](#)). The event took place on March 1st, 2011. The first speaker was Professor Sakis Gekas (Assistant Professor, History) who provided a brief historical overview of how the EU has arrived in its current situation. Theodore Toliaς who pondered the specific roots of the crisis and its potential outcomes followed him. Professor Ulrich Best (DAAD Visiting Professor, Geography) followed Toliaς, and rejected the labeling of the present situation as a “crisis”, arguing that it will not cause major damage to “the European project”. The final speaker was Burkard Eberlein (Associate Professor, Public Policy/Schulich School of Business) who provided insight into the “structural failures” of fiscal policy born out of political, and not economic, considerations.

Professor Sakis Gekas published a review of the book: *This Time Is Different: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly*, by Carmen M Reinhart & Kenneth S Rogoff, Princeton University Press, 496 pp, £ 19.95, ISBN: 978-0691142166I

Professor Gekas writes:

Never has an Irish tragedy so much resembled a Greek one. Millions of Irish, Greeks and shortly other Europeans too are suffering as a result of mismanagement of public finances, lack of regulation in the banking sector and inadequate monetary policy. The EU has been unable to maintain its coherence, often appears divided and fails to demonstrate belief in a European integration project that transcends the accumulation of capital and rigidly defined economic growth...Reinhart and Rogoff's book belongs to the tradition of studies that appear in the middle of a crisis but it manages to keep its spine above water because of its historical depth and systematic rigor. The authors are economists at the University of Maryland and Harvard University respectively and the National Bureau of Economic Research. Their new book puts the current crisis, but also past

ones, into perspective. For the full review: ([see link](#)).

Finally, given the recent developments in Greece and Europe, it is interesting to read an article written in the Fall of 2010 by Professor Theodore Toliaς entitled “Greece and the European Union at the Crossroads” and published online by the World Council For Hellens Abroad (SAE). Using the "rescue" plan signed by the Papandreou government (May 2, 2010) as an entry point, Professor Toliaς discusses the economic crisis and factors that have contributed to it, and offers his perspective of what the future may hold for Greece and Europe. Here is the [link](#) for this article.

DISTINCTIONS

On October 2011 Prime Minister Harper appointed Ontario Appeal Judge Andromache Karakatsanis to the Supreme Court of Canada. Justice Karakatsanis is the first Greek Canadian to be appointed to Canada's top court. As HCAAO members heard of the news, excitement and pride was shared through our list-serve communications. The HCAAO sent Justice Karakatsanis a letter of congratulations, which she has graciously acknowledged with a note thanking our organization and expressing how “humbled and honoured” she feels to be privileged with the task to serve the Canadian public as a judge of the Supreme Court.

The communications are reproduced below as a way to archive this proud moment:

Dear Madam Justice Andromache Karakatsanis,

On behalf of the [Hellenic Canadian Academic Association of Ontario](#), I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada. The great news of your singular accomplishment circulated very quickly among our members across Ontario and I would like you to know that you made us all very happy and proud.

As a citizen of this country, I understand that the people appointed to Canada's top court are people who are demonstrably driven by the kind of values, integrity, humanity and vision necessary to serve the public interest best. In my humble opinion, with your testimony at the parliamentary committee, you demonstrated clearly that you belong to that select group.

At a different level, I dare say that the timing of your appointment had a very positive and valuable effect on all Canadians of Hellenic descent. As Greece is going through the worst economic crisis in its post WWII history, and as much of the media reporting projects a rather negative, often indiscriminate and stereotypical image of Greece and its people, the Hellenic diaspora, and especially their children, are desperately in need of success stories to hung on to, get inspired by, and take strength from. Madam Justice Andromache Karakatsanis, you have just given us one such story and we are thankful for that.

Thank you!

*Theodore Toliás
President
Hellenic Canadian Academic Association of
Ontario (HCAAO)
www.hcaao.org*

*Dear Professor Toliás
Thank you for your very warm and generous
note of congratulations on behalf of the Hellenic
Canadian Academic Association of Ontario.*

*I am indeed very humbled and honored by the
extraordinary privilege of serving the Canadian
public as a judge of the Supreme Court of
Canada.*

*My Greek heritage has always been an
important part of who I am and what I have
accomplished. I am very proud of that heritage
and the contribution it has made to western
civilization.*

*Best regards,
Andromache Karakatsanis*

Renew your membership today!

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