



liberal arts &
professional studies



**HELLENIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION CHAIR IN MODERN GREEK
HISTORY AND HELLENIC STUDIES
YORK UNIVERSITY
NEWSLETTER
2015-16**

*Congratulations to our York students!
Recipients of the 2015-16 HHF Undergraduate
Scholarships*

Chris Tarnaris Memorial Scholarship	Yanni Trifonas
Dagonas Family Scholarship	Theodore Tsilfidis
Jimmy the Greek Scholarship	Daniel Pepe
John Alexopoulos Memorial Scholarship	Heleni Singh
Olympia and Spyros Thomas Scholarship	Steven Campbell
Dr Dimitrios Oreopoulos Undergraduate Scholarship	Amanda Mathew
Justice Andromache Karakatsanis Scholarship	Alexina Clements

NEWS FROM OUR FELLOWS

We welcome **Spyros Papageorgakis**, graduate of the University of Athens (BA) and Birkbeck College, University of London (MA), who is the first recipient of the **HHF International Graduate Fellowship** in Modern Greek History. Spyros started his doctoral work in September 2016; as a PhD student at York his aim “is to give emphasis on social history and more specifically to investigate the Greeks' perception of the state, its institutions and their reactions to state policies during the first half of the 19th century”.

Congratulations to **Chris Grafos**, former HHF Fellow, York University, who submitted his dissertation, “*Canada’s Greek moment: Transnational politics, activists, and spies during the long sixties*” in November 2016. Chris will defend his dissertation in December 2016.

TEACHING

- The summer course *Greece, a History since 1800*, an intensive course abroad, run from May 16 to June 30 at York University and Athens. This was the second time the course was organized and taught in Greece with 14 students enrolled (cap at 18), following the very memorable experience of the summer 2015. This year we visited 1. The National History Museum, 2. the Museum of the City of Athens, 3. The Numismatic Museum, 4. The National Parliament, 5. The Benaki Museum of Islamic Art, 6. The Jewish Museum of Greece, 7. the Syros Rebetiko Museum – Markos Vamvakaris, 8. The Syros – Ermoupoli Industrial Museum, 9. The Bank of Piraeus History Archives 10. The Archives of Contemporary Social History, 11. The Centre for Research of Minor Asia Greeks. The Jewish Museum visit combined with the viewing of the excellent and very moving documentary *Kisses to the Children*, about the Jewish hidden children in Nazi-occupied Greece. Trip to the city of Nafplio, 12. visit to the Archaeological Museum, 13. the Folklore Museum and several old churches in the town, the first capital of the Greek state. Students visited many other museums in Athens and enjoyed living and

experiencing Athens life. The course also included historical walks in Athens, Nafplio and Ermoupoli that provide historical content, context and connect the present to the past of Greek cities.

- **Teaching in 2016-17:**

Undergraduate courses: History of Modern Europe; from the French Revolution to the European Union; History of Greek Migration and Diaspora in the 20th century.

Graduate course:

European Encounters: Europeans in the Wider World since 1500

HHF CHAIR PUBLICATIONS

Sakis Gekas. *Xenocracy. State, Class, and Colonialism in the Ionian Islands, 1815-1864*. New York - Oxford: Berghahn Books (December 2016).

Summary:

Of the many European territorial reconfigurations that followed the wars of the early nineteenth century, the Ionian State remains among the least understood. *Xenocracy* offers a much-needed account of the region during its half-century as a Protectorate of Great Britain—a period that embodied all of the contradictions of British colonialism.

A middle class of merchants, lawyers and state officials embraced and promoted a liberal modernization project. Yet despite the improvements experienced by many Ionians, the deterioration of state finances led to divisions along class lines and presented a significant threat to social stability. As author Sakis Gekas shows, the ordeal engendered dependency upon and ambivalence toward Western Europe, anticipating the “neocolonial” condition with which the Greek nation struggles even today.

Sakis Gekas. “For better or for worse? A counter-narrative of Corfu Jewish history and the transition from the Ionian State to the Greek Kingdom (1815-1890s)”. Anna Mahera & Leda Papastefanaki (eds.). *Jewish communities between East and West, 15th-20th centuries: Economy, society, politics, culture*. Proceedings of the International Conference (Ioannina, 21-23 May 2015), Isnafi Publications, Ioannina 2016.

PUBLIC TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

March 4, 2016. Conference (series of panels) “*Reflections on the Crises in Europe*”, York University. The event generated acute interest among York students and scholars during a period of multiple crises that challenge the project of European integration. Speakers: Leo Panitch, York University, Thabit Abdullah, York University, Sakis Gekas, York University, Feyzi Baban, Trent University, Christopher Kyriakides, York University, Phil Triandafilopoulos, University of Toronto, Heather MacRae, York University.

March 31, 2016. Sakis Gekas and Chris Grafos, “From Difference to the Danforth: The Long History of Greeks in Toronto”. Terraview-Willowfield Public High School, Toronto presentation of the **Greek Canadian History Project**. We presented to students, parents and teachers a history of the Greek presence in Toronto before and after the Second World War.

April 28, 2016. Public lecture: Haci Veli Aydin, York University Visiting Professor, Namik Kemal University, Turkey: “A nation between language and religion: The Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox Community (Karamanlides) in the Ottoman Empire”. Visiting Professor Aydin presented to York students, faculty and to an audience of Greek Canadians his research on the language and culture of the Greek-Orthodox of Cappadocia and Istanbul.

May 13, 2016. Sakis Gekas and Haci Veli Aydin, Visiting Professor, York University: “Between Athens and Istanbul, Hellenism and Ottomanism. Historians of the Greek and Ottoman past from the nineteenth century to the Balkan Wars”. 12th Annual Great Lakes Ottoman Workshop, York University, 13-15 May 2016. This is the annual event of historians of the Ottoman Empire, where Professor Aydin and Sakis Gekas presented their joint research on historians of the Ottoman Empire from Athens and Istanbul during the late Ottoman period.

June 10, 2016. Sakis Gekas. ‘Regimes of Territoriality in the Ionian Islands. Colonial and National Constructions of Insularity in the Ionian Islands during the Nineteenth Century’ in *Insularities Connected* Conference 10-12 June 2016, Rethymno, Crete.

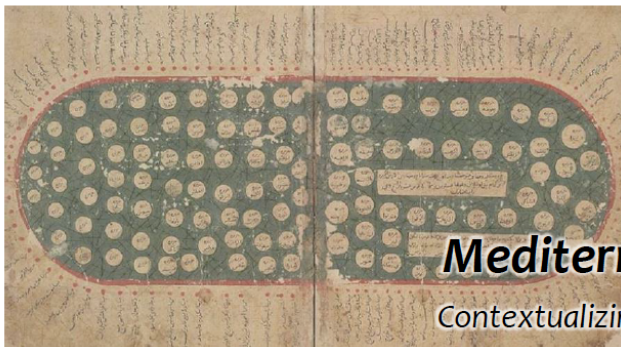
July 27, 2016. Sakis Gekas. ‘Public History and the Remaking of Urban Heritage: Historical Walks and On-site Teaching in Greek cities’ , in IASCC Conference 2016: *Heritage in Transition*, July 27-29, Syros.

October 15, 2016. Sakis Gekas. ‘This is not about lazy Greeks and Nazi Germans; Greece, Germany and the search for the lost legitimacy of the E.U.’, at ‘Germany, Balkans and the European Union’ workshop, University of Toronto.

November 11, 2016. Professor Thomas Maloutas, Harokopio University, Athens: ‘The Social Geography of Athens and the impact of the crisis’, York University.

CO-ORGANIZATION OF CONFERENCES

1. ‘Insularities Connected’ Conference in Rethymno, Crete, **10-12 June 2016** and ‘Heritage in Transition’ Conference, Ermoupoli, Syros **24-26 July, 2016**.



Mediterranean Insularities:
Contextualizing the island in time and space

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
INSTITUTE FOR MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES/
FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY, HELLAS
AND
YORK UNIVERSITY, CANADA

‘Insularities Connected: Bridging the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and the Indian Ocean’ is an international conference that took place on 10-12 June 2016 at the Institute for Mediterranean Studies in Rethymno, Crete. The conference is part of a Marie Curie Actions-funded project in partnership with Koc University in Turkey. The Hellenic Heritage Foundation supported the conference with \$2,000, the York University Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies with \$2,500 and the Department of Humanities with \$500. The HHF Chair is grateful for the generous support, which will be dutifully acknowledged at the conference and in subsequent publications.

2. ‘Heritage in Transition’ Conference, Ermoupoli, Syros 24-26 July, 2016



<http://www.cultureofcities.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Conference-Program-2016.pdf>

The HHF Chair co-organized with the Culture of Cities Institute in Toronto an international conference funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Grant (\$24,918) in Ermoupoli, Syros on ‘*Heritage in Transition; scenes of urban innovation*’. The conference looked at the different uses of urban heritage in various cities around the world and took place at the Municipality of Ermoupoli Cultural Centre.

RESEARCH

Sakis Gekas received a York University Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies Minor Research Grant of \$3,600 for the project titled “The first Greek Canadians. Immigration from the Ottoman Empire and Greece, 1890s-1930s”, that will analyze the 1921 Census and other sources from Greece and Canada for the history of Greek immigration to Canada before World War II. This research project will examine the data recorded in the 1921 Census that concern Greek immigrants, as part of the larger project on the history of Greek immigration to Canada in the period 1890s-1940. The 1921 Census information was digitized and made available in 2013 and includes information on language, literacy, place of origin, nationality and ethnicity, income and household members and this is the first time it will be used in this detailed way for the study of the first decades of Greek immigration to Canada.

I am delighted to announce the **Stavros Niarchos Foundation Research grant: *Immigration and Language in Canada: Greeks and Greek-Canadians*** project to begin end of 2016. This is a two-year long and possibly longer collaboration with the Universities of McGill, Patras and Simon Fraser. The grant of total \$1,000,092, of which \$165,000 will come to York for the study of Greek immigration and language in Toronto / Ontario and Manitoba, is the first large-scale research project that will map the history of language and immigration in Canada. Historians and linguists from the four universities will record and study the memories and stories of Greek immigrants who came to Canada between 1950s and 1970s. The project will address three main issues in Greek Canadian history and the deliverables of the project are expected to raise public interest in Greek Canadian history connection to the social and cultural history of Canada:

- The question of language;
- The transformation of ethnic communities over time;
- The multiple social and cultural worlds of the immigrant experience.

This is a long overdue project and its findings and results will contribute to our understanding of Greek Canadian history in major and innovative ways. Initiated by

Angelliki Ralli, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Patras, the project will be carried out through research in Canada by teams at York University, McGill and Simon Fraser. The linguistic component will be mostly researched and analyzed by the University of Patras with the support of Simon Fraser University. The historical component will be primarily researched and analyzed by McGill and York Universities. The project that will also lead to the creation of a virtual museum of Greek immigration to Canada will contribute to the history and understanding of the ethnically diverse Canadian society. The project confirms the strong partnership with and the continuing support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for our teaching and research activities; it will also confirm the leading role of York and the HHF Chair as one of the places that do innovative work on the history of Greeks in Canada. The project will also train and benefit from the research assistance of two former HHF Fellows, Elaina Lampropoulos (MA in History) and Peter Milonas (PhD student in Social and Political Thought), and Hellenic Studies Major and President of the Hellenic Students Association Christina Ioannides.

November 2016. Sakis Gekas received a Fellowship from the **Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program** of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation to spend four weeks in Spring 2017 in the History Department at the University of Crete to collaborate with Professor Sokratis Petmezas on developing a curriculum and teaching a graduate course in Mediterranean and Global History, co-authoring a research article on Greek economic history, and mentoring graduate students on opportunities for academic exchange with York University.

