

HELLENIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION
CHAIR REPORT: 2019-20

THIS IS IMPACT

[THE CAMPAIGN FOR YORK UNIVERSITY]



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professional studies

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THANK YOU!

Thanks to You for 20 Years of Leadership and Generosity

In 2000, the Hellenic Heritage Foundation made a visionary investment to create the HHF Chair in Modern Greek History at York University. Since then, a whole ecosystem of scholarship has arisen with the HHF Chair as its centerpiece. This would not have been possible without the strong partnership that exists between York and the HHF.

In addition to the HHF Chair, you have invested in student awards for graduate and undergraduate students. This year's talented fellowship and scholarship recipients have expressed deep gratitude for the support of the Hellenic Heritage Foundation.

Your generosity is felt by these young people as they worked to develop their language skills, deepen their knowledge of Modern Greek history and further our understanding of the Greek diaspora in Canada.

The pride and enthusiasm that each student brings to this academic opportunity is truly inspiring to us all. York University is grateful to the Hellenic Heritage Foundation for your long-standing and generous support over twenty years of this deeply meaningful initiative.

Sincere thanks,

Jeff O'Hagan

Vice-President Advancement



CHAIR'S UPDATE

2020 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Agreement between York University and the Hellenic Heritage Foundation to establish the HHF Chair in Modern Greek History.

Our long partnership has opened a world of new possibilities for Modern Greek and Greek Canadian Studies in Toronto, and beyond.

The events scheduled for the 2019/20 academic year include:

- Public talks by the Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair
- The 2nd conference on Greek Canadian Studies scheduled for April 2-4, and
- The Hellenic Canadian Academic Association Symposium, an association to which I serve as vice-president

Other projects that can be conducted online or remotely are proceeding and are well underway.

This report starts with teaching, including the summer abroad course in the 2019 Summer term, which at York is part of the Fall and Winter 2019-20 terms.

In May and June, 2019, the summer abroad course on the history of modern Greece ran with 18 students, which has grown more than any other year that the course was offered.

34 students applied and that allowed us to choose the most promising in terms of GPA, major in history, and overall academic interest in the course that included:

- Visits to sites of historical significance for the history of Modern Greece, including research centres, archives and historical walks.
- A four-day visit to the island of Syros and the city of Ermoupoli - with historical walks, trips to historical sites of the island, and a three-day summer school on the economic history of Greece and the Mediterranean in the modern period.

The summer school was organized and supported financially by the National Research Foundation / Institute of Historical Research in Athens, who also kindly offered two dinners to our students.

We plan to offer the course again in the Summer term of 2021, during the months of May and June.

In the Fall term 2019 I offered the following courses:

- "Greeks in the World: Migration and Diaspora in the 20th century", to 35 students (online course)
- A course on Modern Europe to 43 students
- As well as two directed reading courses to graduate students.

Please note: the pandemic has forced us to postpone events, academic activities and projects that were well underway.

CHAIR ACTIVITIES

1

Articles

- 'From the Nation to Emancipation: Greek Women Warriors from the Revolution (1820s) to the Civil War (1940s)', in Boyd Cothran, Joan Judge, and Adrian Shubert (eds.). *Women Warriors and National Heroes. Global Histories*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020, 113-130.
- 'Greece, Uruguay and the British Informal Empire: From national narratives to global history' (with Camila Acosta). *Historein* (forthcoming).

2

Book Reviews

- Review of Evdoxios Doxiadis, *State, Nationalism, and the Jewish Communities of Modern Greece*. Bloomsbury, 2018. *American Historical Review* June 2020 (forthcoming).
- Review of Zanou, Konstantina, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean, 1800–1850. Stammering the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018, ISBN 978-0-19-878870-6; XX, 248 S.; £ 60.00, in H-Soz-Kult

3

Conference Papers

- 'The Greek Revolution War Pensions and the Legitimacy Process of Otto's State (1830s-1850)'. 26th Modern Greek Studies Association Symposium, November 7-10, 2019, Sacramento.
- 'Study abroad programs of Canadian Universities. The York University example.', *Study in Greece Symposium*, Athens, June 22, 2019





THE FUTURE

In May, I was informed that in December 2020 I will be able to spend three weeks at the Ionian University in Corfu with a Fellowship from the Greek Diaspora Fellowship Program. This is a scholar exchange program for Greek universities to host Greek scholars from the diaspora in the areas of collaborative research, curriculum co-development and/or graduate/undergraduate student mentoring and teaching.

Together with Prof. Maria Damilakou at the Ionian University, we will work on:

- Curriculum co-development for an undergraduate course on history of Greek diaspora in North and South America
- Curriculum co-development for a graduate seminar on Greek migration and diaspora in a comparative approach
- Collaborative research on the history of Greek migration in the first half of the 20th century, and
- Host a one-day workshop on the history of Greek migration to the Americas

Between May and July, I am serving as project supervisor for Georgios Fournaris, who will be assisting me with an exciting project funded by the Dean's Award for Research Excellence. Titled, 'The Greek Revolution War, pensions and the history of the revolution veterans (1830s-1850)', it will involve the transcription of the published registry into a database.

- This work will facilitate a larger book project on the history of the veterans of the Greek revolution and state policy towards them and their families, that I am writing to be published in early 2021.

I am delighted to announce that the next Symposium of the Modern Greek Studies Association will take place at York on October 14-17, 2021. MGSA is coming back to Toronto!

I hope that members of the HHF and York will be able to meet soon to celebrate the achievements of the past twenty years, as we look ahead to the next twenty, and many more.

We are all deeply grateful for 20 years of your support!

Professor Sakis Gekas
Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair

HELLENIC HERITAGE GRADUATE STUDENTS

ALEXANDROS BALASSIS

Admitted to the MA program



I studied history in my hometown Thessaloniki, Greece and graduated from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Today, I work as a researcher on a project for the creation of an oral history archive in Greece called “Istorima”.

I chose York for my graduate studies after being there as an exchange student. I am interested in the Greek community of Toronto, and would like to research their experiences, history of migrating and networks through the archives of the community and oral history.

ANGELO LASKARIS

MA candidate, 2019-20

Admitted to the PhD program



My research focuses on the methodologies of oral, social, and cultural histories, specifically on the 1940s in Greece. This decade is arguably the most turbulent and devastating decade in Modern Greek history. My research question addresses how the 1940s and its lasting memories impacted Greek-Canadians including the Nazi Occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War, which all occurred in the span of ten years. Not only does this address a generational issue but the interviews will also be deposited into the archives here at York University and be a part of The Greek-Canadian History Project. I hope to continue this research in more depth during my doctoral studies and incorporate more interviews from outside the Greek-Canadian Community as well.

JASON RODOPOULOS

Admitted to the PhD program



I hold an MA in Political Science from McMaster University and an Honours BA, Political Science, Major in European Studies, Minor in History from the University of Toronto. For my doctoral studies I intend to focus on the history of state building in twentieth century Greece. Specifically, I would like to focus on 1945 (between the end of the Nazi Occupation and the beginning of the Civil War, which is considered the first major event of the Cold War) until the beginning of the Colonels' Dictatorship in 1967. The methodology I plan to use is a combination of primary and secondary sources, from both Greek and North American archives. I hope the expansion of my academic knowledge and experience, will contribute to Hellenic studies and modern Greek history, and provide me the option to pursue an academic career.

ALEXANDER HARMANTAS

PhD program, Year 2



I will be working on the history of Vlachs in Greece in the 20th century. I have previously done research on Ancient Macedonian Ethnic Identity, with an emphasis on Literary Sources From the 5th c. B.C. to the 2nd c. A.D. I am so grateful for this opportunity. Thank you to the HHF for all of your support.



UNDERGRADUATE RECIPIENTS

KATARINA LUPERT

Olympia and Spyros Thomas Scholarship



I am excited for what the future has in store for me. With a passion for history and languages, I hope to embark on a journey that can combine the two. Perhaps one day I could be working in the Louvre, helming the UN or investigating a dig in Egypt. As an Honours History major at Glendon, I am looking to pursue a future career in heritage conservation. With the help of your generous donation, I was able to lessen my financial burden and spend more time excelling in my studies and making my dreams a reality. I thank you for your sincerely compelling generosity.

MIA VARDOUNIOTIS

**The John Alexopoulos
Memorial Scholarship**



I aspire to become a Speech Pathologist and hope to pursue an MA in Communication Sciences and Disorders this fall. I became a member of the Hellenic Students Association and was also elected President this past year. I'm proud to say I'm now a member of the HHF's Next Generation committee - where I can continue to grow as a leader and work with talented individuals. I cannot begin to express my gratitude to the HHF for both the scholarship and the work they do in maintaining Hellenism for future generations. Thank you for inspiring me to give back to the community.

KASSANDRA SAVRAMIS

The Jimmy the Greek
Scholarship



What is especially important to me is regaining my language. I'm the daughter of two Greek immigrants, and Greek was the first language I spoke, but this was eventually lost to English. The Greek language course allowed me to reconnect to this neglected part of me and I am forever grateful to everyone that assisted me in being able to do that. Thank you! I also had the opportunity to connect with other students who shared similar experiences to mine, and I felt I was part of a community. My goals for the future are to teach in a high school, and to travel the world.

BOHDANA PANCHYSHYN

Dagonas Family
Scholarship



I am very grateful to the HHF for being selected as the recipient of this scholarship. I'm a History major and Classical Studies minor, and have been accepted into the Public History Certificate Program. I plan to graduate in winter 2021. I hope to work as an archivist and help people on their own academic journeys. I have always been interested in myths, legends, and classical society. This scholarship has helped me focus on my classes and learn about modern Greek history and the Greek Diaspora. The course has helped me to be more aware of current affairs and world history.

NICOLETTA KAPETANIOS

**Dr. Dimitrios Oreopoulos
Undergraduate Scholar-
ship in Hellenic Studies**



I am majoring in French and minoring in Hellenic Studies, and I'm planning to become a teacher. Education is very important to me and I understand the importance of hard work and dedication to succeed in school. I devote a lot of time and energy to my academics, and for this reason I can only work part-time during the school year to help pay for my education. I would like to thank the HHF and the Oreopoulos family for creating this scholarship. It has made a great contribution to my education and has allowed me to continue to focus on my studies. Thank you so very much.

SAFIYA PATHAN

**The Chris Tarnaris
Memorial Scholarship**



I am very grateful to have been chosen for The Chris Tarnaris Memorial Scholarship. I graduate this year as a registered nurse and this scholarship has been a big help towards my tuition, textbooks, and materials. I took the Greek migration and diaspora in the 20th Century course. This new knowledge will help me when taking care of patients that are of Greek background in my career as a registered nurse. Once again, I thank you for this scholarship, and am proud to be graduating this year from York University with knowledge about Greek migration, heritage, and culture.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: THANKS TO YOU

Student experience during the Summer Abroad course on the History of Modern Greece is deeply enhanced by the Museum Pass that students received through the Canadian Institute in Greece. This allows them to experience for free all state museums in the country.



Visiting the **Tower of the Winds** located in the heart of Agora provided me with a true connection to the importance of the exchange of goods and ideas of the Greek people, showing how trade is one of the defining factors of Mediterranean life. This site has allowed for the understanding of how blended the city is and how it has been enriched by hundreds of years of history.

Connor



The **Centre for Asia Minor Studies** improved my understanding of the Asia Minor Catastrophe as well as the lives of those involved in the population exchange. I was also able to overcome my historical biases and notice how complex Greco-Turkish relations were in the 1920s through the stories of the refugees who took part in it. Overall, I gained an appreciation for the struggles endured by refugees coming into Greece and how they impact the modern Greek narrative going forward.

Timothy

Students visit the Archives of Contemporary Social History in Athens



Nafplio. The city really allowed the multifaceted layers of Greek history to come alive through the experience of Greek life under different ruling bodies. Although Nafplio spent a large amount of time as a city under the control of others, it was still able to develop a unique and uniquely Greek identity based on its mix of different cultures and traditions.

Rebecca



This **Nazi Occupation Memorial**, Kaisariani, was by far one of the most powerful in my experience. It was surreal to be in a place where so many Greeks were killed. This was so hard hitting for me because there is a recognition of human rights alongside a disregard for human life. Not only did it highlight a narrative that is often glossed over, but it made the event real to be there in person. I can better understand Greece's political climate and the resistance at the time.

Emily



Students visit the Greek Parliament during the 2019 Summer Abroad course.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:**

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