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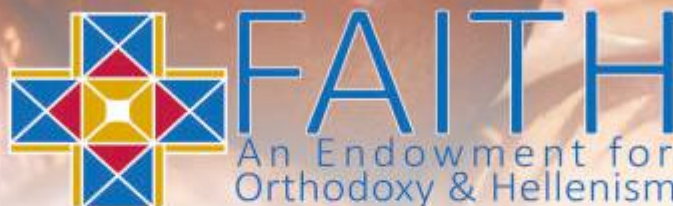
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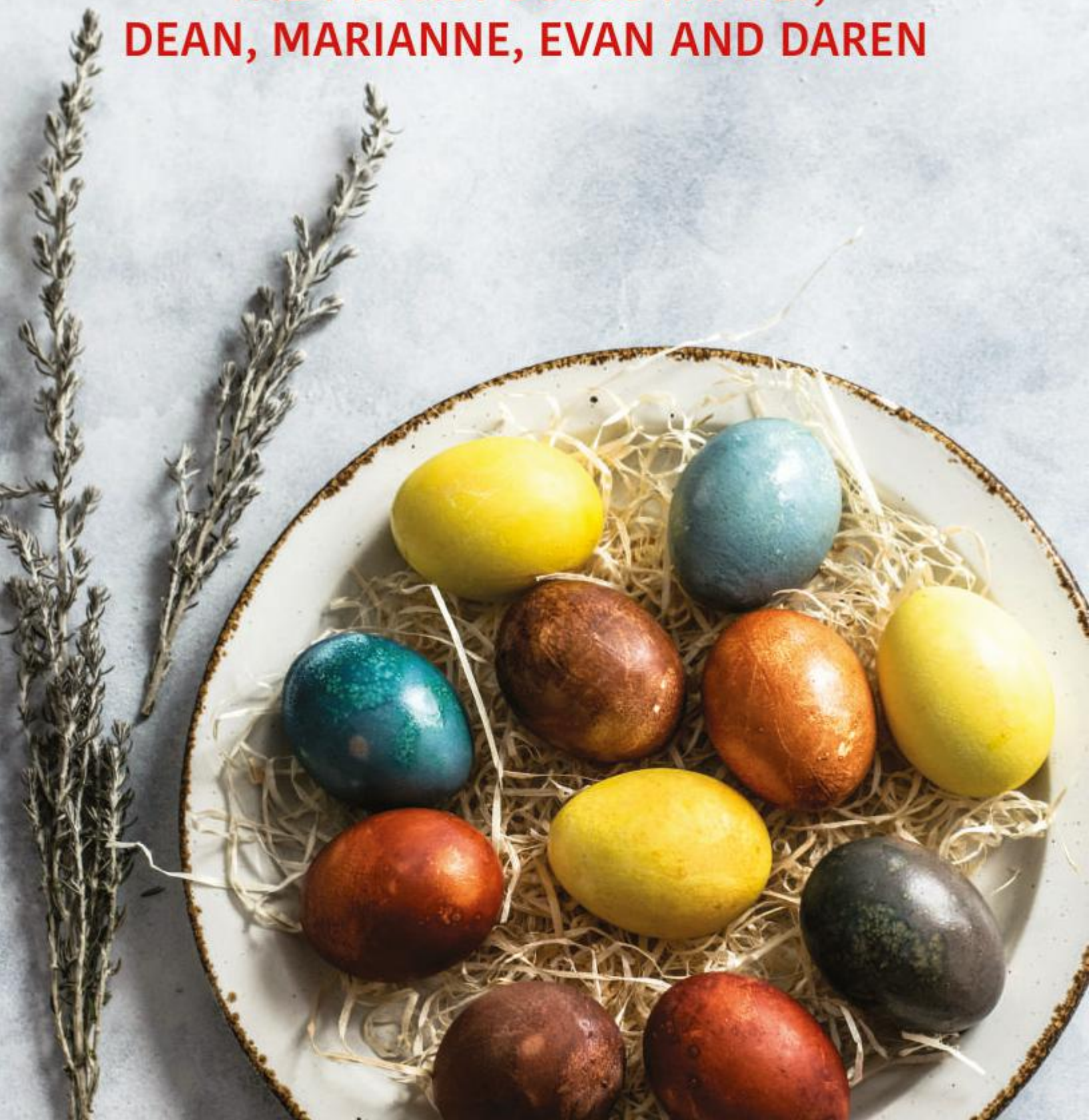
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My life in Chios when I was a little kid revolved around two things: the history of Chios and the Turkish occupation markers everywhere. And the church, which provided a solace and inspiration to the freedom fighters, and a way of life for me growing up.

I remember roaming with the other kids of our neighborhood in Kofinas over the dry river bed, which after a flood, would drain and then unearth all sorts of artifacts: a variety of buttons, rusted old nails, little steel balls that were apparently the lead shot of revolutionary firearms (so my papou assured me, and he was a great storyteller, but owlsh—so you never knew if what he was telling you was true or another of his tall tales). And once we unearthed a scabbard, brown and crusty, but crusty with ornamentation—and it was curved, like the heroes, and Turks, of the revolution carried in all those heroic paintings. Could this belong to one of them—a Greek? a Turk? used in a battle to the death and winding in the river? We kids liked to imagine that violent contest (and searched for the bones of the antagonists), and I kept the scabbard tucked in my grandfather's old metal war chest, cause it had a lock, and I would never trust the scabbard to be out in the open—somehow, despite its rusted state, it still seemed violent—and I imagine it even had dried blood on it.

On Holy Week, of course, we would go to our

little church every night, Agios Mattheos, with the mural of the saint in a flowing beard. I would join my papou on his side of the church, while my yiayia stood with the women on the other side, and I would listen to the service while hanging on the arm of my papou's little one-man pew, with a shelf you could flip down to sit on. The service was long, but the incense smelled good, the priest (who normally would be riding his yaidouraki to the fields to work like everybody else and then wore a plain black monk's hat) now looked resplendent in the sparkle of all his vestments studded with jewels and little mini-icons. And the psalmodia rang throughout the church.

Afterwards, emerging from the glow of the church, like cavemen leaving our fire, and venturing out into the great black dome of the sky, we somehow felt invincible, anyway, because we were part of a great big family protected by an all-mighty God like a papou, and all the panoply of saints, like all your benevolent thious and thitses, who grinned at you with their gold teeth and gave you candy out of their pockets, which always seemed to have candy.

It was a wonderful reassurance to have then, and now.

Have a Happy Easter.

DIMITRI C. MICHALAKAKIS



**Happy Easter  
- Καλό Πάσχα!**

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# The Mistress of Spetses

An excerpt of a historical novel of Laskarina Bouboulina: the nautical leader of the Greek Revolution of 1821

By Nikos Linardakis, M.D.

The Mistress of Spetses is a gripping historical novel, set during the Greek Revolution of 1821, chronicling the adventurous life of Laskarina Bouboulina, who is also a narrator—the fearless sea captain who helped liberate Greece after nearly 400 years of Ottoman rule. Emerging as a symbol of modern Greece, she ended centuries of subjugation and enslavement, and ushered in the rebirth of the Hellenic spirit. Defying societal norms, she amassed wealth through controversial ventures to fund Greece's fight for independence. She financed, commissioned and ultimately led the colossal warship Agamemnon into critical battles. Known for her stern demeanor and commanding presence, donning full battle regalia, she became the local heroine of Spetses and a symbol of Greek valor.



Author, Dr. Nikos Linardakis

(Photo Credit: Nicholas Cotras)

## The Price of Silent Defiance

"One eats, another watches—that's how revolutions are born." Malik spoke calmly, yet his words bore weight of a warning. He had seen the shifting winds, sensed the growing unrest on the island. For three months now, tensions had thickened like a storm gathering on a horizon, inevitable and unrelenting.

He was a mültazim, an Ottoman tax collector. His partner, Hasan, scoffed as he adjusted the folds of his robe, "We see lies inked on ledgers every day—merchants who underreport, businesses that refuse to pay their full dues.

We enforce what obligations demand. Do not stray from your place as well. The Sublime Porte has no patience for treachery."



Laskarina Bouboulina 1821 Oil Painting  
Victor Hofmeister

I held Hasan's gaze without flinching, unyielding, "You know I have always fulfilled my obligations, Hasan." Then, redirected my attention back to Malik. Unlike Hasan, whose loyalty to the Empire was unquestionable, Malik carried something different in his stance—a whisper of doubt, perhaps understanding, or something deeper he dared not name.

For nearly a decade, I provided these men with the capital the Ottoman's demanded. We learned to navigate one another, circling in a delicate dance of necessity and restraint. But now, the floor was beginning to crack beneath us.

Hasan spoke for the elite—the beys, the pashas—the men who dined in gilded halls while the rest starved.

"Yes, perhaps I am among them," I admitted. "But resentment festers in the village streets. The impoverished will not remain idle forever; sooner or later, they will rise to claim this disparity. There are limits to what men can endure before

they decide to take what has been denied. If you wish to avoid an uprising, then keep your demands reasonable."

Malik lowered his voice, as if the walls could listen. "The Ottomans know this, but it is of no concern. The Greeks fill their souls with



Island coast of Hydra

contempt, yet lack obedience and discipline. They manipulate, making us believe their suffering is exceptional. Such is the nature of a fearful, hostile people. They should remain loyal to the Empire. Peace be with you."

I inhaled and then responded sharply, unwilling to let his words settle without contest. My patience was thinning. "These invisible manipulators or 'contemptuous people' provide the Ottomans with everything they need," I countered. "Their prostitutes, their weapons, their bountiful harvests! Who feeds your armies? Who stocks your kitchens with wine and grain? Who embroiders your silks? You embellish with all sides, Malik. And so do I."

I let the words settle before continuing.

"I speak Greek, Turkish, Arvanitika, French, and more—not because I wish to, but because I must. The mystery, or secret, to survival is not loyalty, but pragmatism. You may have noticed, I never speak of myself. I neither deny nor answer accusations. My silence is my shield. I dampen Greek ambitions just enough to keep the Empire satisfied. But, I warn you—this is a transaction for me. It is not for them. I hold them in check, but only so long as they believe there is still something left to lose." I took a

measured breath, "Mind your demands, Malik, as patience has worn thin after four hundred years. They will not accept this situation forever. I can only hold them to their peace—with peace. As I've said, push them further, and they will not respond with submission."

Malik's fingers tightened around the porcelain handle of his demitasse. His lips pressed together as he processed my words, then he took a slow sip



Sweet Freedoms in Nafplion,  
loukoumades with the  
background Venetian Fort





of sweetened Greek coffee.

"These vagabonds you hold in such esteem?" he finally said. "They are scattered, divided, unorganized. They have no future."



"They are desperate," I corrected. "And desperate men do not stay disorganized for long. They will lead as Greeks, and in a direction you will not expect."



Silence stretched between us. I reclined in my chair and with deliberate calm, scrawled out the month's tax payment. Then, I handed the grammata script to Malik. He hesitated before taking it, his fingers curling over the parchment's edge—a man gripping a lifeline. He knew as well as I did: life was becoming unbearable. Merchants bled under relentless taxation, the cost of goods soared beyond reason, and trade was strangled. The local people—merchants, farmers, families—all were breaking, suffocating under the weight of these demands. I had seen the faces of the dockworkers, their hands calloused from loading shipments that barely kept them fed. I watched mothers haggle over moldy bread, their voices tight with quiet panic. This was not sustainable.



I pressed forward, my words deliberate. "Malik, consider Sultan Mahmud and his viziers. They believe themselves as clever, untouchable, but they are blind to the truth—they are our oppressors. They demand even more taxes while they massacre our Greek kin. For centuries, have we not provided without altering course? Yet, the cruelty continues. This path cannot last."



Malik's expression darkened. "Laskarina, you make compelling points, but you forget yourself. You are our guest, not the other way around. This is the Ottoman Empire. Where is your loyalty?" He straightened his suit coat, aligned the embroidered cuffs, and curled his mustache—masking the thinly veiled warning beneath his words. It was all to exude a forced confidence. I would not let him have the last word.

I tempered my voice, offering him a measured smile. "I understand your position," my tone restrained, conceding slightly. "But the imperial elites gaze upon their empire and do not see the reality of their people. With each passing year, suffering deepens. Do you think the Greeks have forgotten the past? Do you think they do not hear the whispers of their grandparents—from the mountains, from the villages, from the very homes they now struggle to keep?"

"Even Mehmed Halet Efendi, the great statesman of Istanbul, distrusts all of Europe. And what of Russia? The tsar watches closely. He, too, knows another war is inevitable. The Ottomans are still recovering from the conflicts of the Napoleonic Wars, yet they demand more? I understand losses Malik. Even Bayezid, my dear Ottoman friend, perished at Abukir. War is costly. The French invasion of Egypt is a testament to that. And now, the Empire expects us to give more than what God grants."

In measured defiance, I held his gaze, locked onto Malik's green-hued eyes. Malik studied me, and for the first time, I saw it—something uncertain—that flicker of hesitation. A divided heritage, perhaps. Part Greek, part Ottoman? It did not matter. In his world, he could only be Ottoman.

Malik countered by reciting an Ottoman proverb, his tone unreadable, "Akilli düşmandan degil; salak dosttan kork." Be afraid of a stupid friend, not of a smart enemy.

I pushed forward and answered in kind, "Zaman her seyin ilacidir." Time is the medicine of everything.

I saw it in his expression, he believed their strategy would dull the Greeks' resistance, that they would accept their fate, and continue to pay more. But, I knew better. Time was not their ally; time was the fuel of revolution.

"Beauty fades, but wisdom remains," Hasan interjected with a smirk.

I added, "We age, but experience never leaves us."

Malik nodded slightly, his expression curling into insincere graciousness, "Good day, Laskarina, and thank you for your collection. You see, we Ottomans are very understanding. The money you provide is just enough to help our Ottoman citizens—to sustain our land—which of course, we share with the Greeks." His voice was smooth, but beneath it, there was something rancid, curdling and sour, like the yogurt of his homeland.



He leaned in for the last time, his smile thin. "I can count on you to continue supporting the Ottomans, yes?"

I met his gaze without hesitation and replied, "Of course, Malik. I will do my best to ensure our little village provides all it can."



With a deliberate calm, I closed my ledger, casting a final glance at the remaining balance. It was more than enough to support the Hellenic cause, and I had abundant resources held in my accounts in Russia, France, and Smyrna.

"Of course," I echoed. This time, the words



were meant only for myself.

Hasan rose first, offering a parting nod. "Inshallah. God willing."

Malik lingered for a fraction longer, the weight of something unspoken pressing between us. Then, with a final empty glance, he turned and stepped out. Together, they disappeared from my home.

It would be the last of our friendship. The end of whatever fragile resemblance of trust we once had.

The war had already begun.

The Klephts' Revolt: Freedom or Death

*Author Nikos Linardakis boating in Spetses*



On the mainland, Theodoros Kolokotronis and his men gathered their spoils of war—a bounty of weapons, silver akçe, gold sultani kurus, and supplies looted from their latest raid. The aftermath of their attack left a settlement reduced to ashes, its Ottoman defenders sprawled lifeless across the ground. Their silent corpses bore witness to the storm brewing on the horizon, as victims of the rebel's fury. Word of the klephts—the mountain bandits who had transformed into a revolutionary force—spread quickly.

In Greek, klefti means thief, and in this war, we were all thieves. For centuries, the klephts roamed and retreated into the mountains, waging a relentless resistance against Ottoman rule since the 15th century. They assumed a continuous war for freedom. Klephts survived by stealing livestock, trading goods in the rugged highlands, and ambushing Turkish caravans. But for all their efforts, the klephts had been divided by personal greed and scattered loyalties. Now, for the first time, they would truly unite, bound by a singular purpose, under one banner, and a leader worthy of their cause: Theodoros Kolokotronis had taken command.

When they stormed Turkish compounds, Kolokotronis and his clan left no mercy in their wake. Everything was fair game, they took what they needed, bagged metal tools, fine fabrics, leathers, carpets, ammunition, knives, all weapons of war, and any remaining food. When they returned to their base, they buried the valuables in makeshift basements dug beneath the wood and dirt floors of their

families' homes and businesses. Concealing them under silk rugs and wool carpets, and topped those with wooden furniture, to deceive prying Ottoman eyes. They were no longer mere raiders, they were true revolutionaries, financing their quest for freedom.

Once the killings began, Kolokotronis placed a bounty on Turkish heads, and so did I. Each severed head was worth a few gold kurus, and every death was one less enemy to contend with. At one point, in the year during the siege of Tripolitsa, we stacked over two hundred heads behind our camp. The stench was unbearable to some, but not to us. Flies swarmed, but no bees came—there were no flowers among the dead. This did not symbolize decay to us. Instead, it was a promise of rebirth, a future Greece, free from its oppressors. Every fallen enemy was a step toward a free Greece.

Those who hesitated quickly learned—this was a war of necessity. The Ottomans had pursued us for centuries. Now, we were the hunters. War was our marketplace, and the Ottoman blood was our currency.

I would soon be fighting with every ounce of strength, every resource at my disposal. They called me Kapetanissa, the Female Captain of the Island. I fought alongside my men, and thus, the name carried deeper meaning. It was not just a title—it was an affirmation. I made decisions. I wielded the sword. I led not through words, but through action. Our mission was clear: either the Ottomans would fall or we would. Since there was no retreat and no compromise, our rallying cry was simple and clear, and it persevered—Victory or Death!

Kolokotronis surveyed his men, his face as sharp as steel. Around him, the klephts ran their fingers over their stolen treasures, weighing their newfound wealth, tasting their first bite of freedom. His voice rose in the night, cutting through the firelit darkness with the authority of a seasoned warrior.



*Crystal clear blue waters of Spetses*

He began, stern and determined, "Never forget why we fight!" His voice boomed. "Our enemy is vile. The Ottomans have raped our women, stolen our children, beheaded and enslaved our brothers!" He paused for emphasis. "They dragged our daughters from

our homes and threw our girls into the harems. They sold our sons to the Egyptians and the Arabs! This will not go unavenged."

By habit, he twisted his mustache, and then, allowed the intensity in his words to settle a bit before continuing.



*The Beauty of Spetses*

"My challenge is to keep you motivated—if not by our Greek spirit, by our common goals. If not by patriotism, then let it be for your personal gain. You are no longer peasants. You are warriors! Take your bounty when it is presented. Do not hesitate!"

The men listened intently, their hardened faces became set with determination. They had seen and lost too much, they had endured enough suffering. Now, they were prepared to kill as many Ottomans as it took to build a new Greece. Though the klephts had long been an erratic brotherhood, loyal only to themselves, in this moment, they stood as one. And, so did I.

I had prepared for this war since birth. I knew my worth, what I had to offer, and where to strike first. I was all in—my reputation, my inheritance, my business resources, and my political ties—I would use them all. There would be no mercy, no retreat, we would fight for freedom, or we would die trying. Freedom or death!

Theodoros Kolokotronis stepped forward once more, his voice charged with purpose. His fierce gaze swept over the band of klephts—men forged by duty and hardened by suffering. They sat in silent anticipation, the weight of their mission pressing upon them. As he spoke, his words became their truth: they would reclaim their homeland.

"Let us reflect on the saints and scriptures, for without faith, all this is foolishness! Father Grigorios gave me these words—'Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears.' It is time to prepare. Our tools will no longer serve to till the land, but to spill the blood of those who enslave us. Stop farming and start forging, as the war is upon us!"

He turned to his comrade, Stamatis, a bold and fearless Souliote—a warrior of formidable strength and agility. Tawny-skinned and powerfully built, he moved with the precision of a predator. His distinctive crushed nose and



chiseled jaw bore the scars of countless assaults, each proved his endurance and ferocity. Stamatis was honing the edge of his knife. With a firm grasp, Kolokotronis clasped Stamatis' hand, their fingers tightening around the dagger's hilt. In one fluid motion, they lifted the blade together, hand-in-hand, and thrust it towards the heavens. The firelight caught the steel, making it gleam like a guiding star. The gesture was swift, a deliberate and unspoken oath. A roar erupted from the men, their voices rising in thunderous approval as Kolokotronis cemented his command.

He jolted, "Eleftheria i Thanatos! Freedom or Death!"

The kafeneio, a makeshift campsite, erupted in approval.

Near Kolokotronis stood Dimitrios Plapoutas, a seasoned fighter who represented the Arcadians, and emerged as a natural leader among us. With purpose, Dimitrios swiftly poured white retsina wine into several glasses, handing them to his comrades, and without hesitation, offered one to me. As the drink flowed, he declared, "Freedom. There is no other option."



*Bouboulina Restaurant in Spetses*

A moment later, Dimitrios raised his glass, and with a firm, unwavering voice, emphasized Kolokotronis' call for independence, "To the Filiki Etaireia! To the dawn of our eleftheria freedom!"

A voice broke through the gathering—deep, strong, and boisterous.

"Eleftheria i Thanatos! Freedom or Death!"

It was Father Grigorios Dimitrios Dikaio-Flessas—Papaflessas, as we called him. His voice rang out three times, like a sacred chant invoking the power of the Trinity.

"Freedom or Death! Victory or Death! Freedom or Death!"

The words spread among us like a holy fire, igniting our very souls. Then, from the shadows, a figure emerged. It was Kyriako, a warrior of Mani, a man of unbreakable will. Kyriako lived a harsh childhood, and had seen his father fight in the 1780 Siege of Kastania.

He had met Kolokotronis as a child. Like me, Kyriako had been waiting for this day his entire life. Now, as the owner of the kafeneio where we gathered, he was ready for his next battle.

Stout and tough, he said nothing, but his response to the enthusiasm was unique and one I will always cherish: without a word, he unwrapped a wooden karamouza, a clarinet-like instrument bound in wool. He drew a deep breath and released it into the instrument, playing his response. The sound



*Bust of Georgios Androutsos of Spetses*

that emerged was raw and untamed—like a warrior's call, a challenge, and a solemn promise.

He paused, let out a sharp whistle summoning his comrade over. Kyriako brought forth a daouli drum, its twin sides stretched with fresh goatskin. With a nod, he passed it to his comrade. The first strike echoed into the night—then another, and another. The rhythm took hold, and soon, the courageous men of the revolution stood shoulder-to-shoulder, locked together in a defiant dance of unity. The music swelled, feet pounding the earth in unison, as voices rose in an unrelenting war cry and refrain.

"Freedom or Death! Victory or Death! Freedom or Death!"

*Bouboulina legacy seen at a restaurant in Spetses*



*Seaside Canon remnant of history of Spetses*



The struggle for Greece's freedom pulsed with rhythm and song, the Hellenic spitha ignited, awakening the spirit of generations past.

(Excerpted from the novel, *The Mistress of Spetses*. Copyright ©2025 Nikos Linardakis. All rights reserved)

Dr. Nikos Linardakis serves as President and Co-Founder of The Bène Baby Company, a goat-milk based infant and toddler formula company headquartered in Nekoosa, Wisconsin. Nikos is a first-generation Greek-American author whose work captures the resilience, courage, and timeless values of his Hellenic heritage. Born in Chicago, IL, he grew up inspired by the strength and leadership of the remarkable Greek women in his life, particularly his mother and aunts. Their vivid stories of bravery and sacrifice during World War II in Greece shaped his appreciation for the unyielding spirit of Greek women.

Dr. Linardakis earned his undergraduate degree from Benedictine University and completed his medical education at the University of Health Sciences/The Chicago Medical School. His own life journey is a testament to perseverance and shaped by grit. After losing his father to colon cancer as a young teenager, he and his three brothers supported their family by performing in a Greek-American band. Meanwhile, their mother, a woman of extraordinary fortitude, guided and pushed them through these challenging times. This upbringing instilled in him a deep appreciation for diligence, faith, and the power of familial bonds.

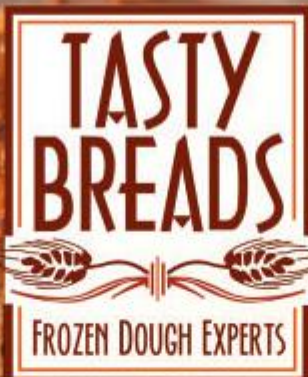


*Home of Dimitrios Ypsilantis in Nafplion*

*Laskarina's home in Nafplion which she forfeited upon being exiled to Spetses after the War*

In addition to his literary pursuits, Dr. Linardakis has an impressive professional background. As Editor-in-Chief, he published eleven medical textbooks with McGraw-Hill Companies and contributed to works by Gibbs-Smith Publishers, Random House Prima Publishing, and Harvard Medical School's *The Natural Standard*. His expertise in sleep, nutrition, and health earned him recognition with appearances on CBS, NBC, Fox News, and the Discovery Channel as a trusted health and nutrition professional. His debut novel, *The Mistress of Spetses*, is a fascinating historical tale that chronicles the life of Laskarina Bouboulina, an indomitable woman and spirited leader who changed the course of Greek history. Currently residing in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, he leads The Bène Baby Company, creators of the first American-made goat milk-based baby formula. *The Mistress of Spetses* is his first novel, and marks the beginning of his journey as a novelist.





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# PERFORMING THE AUTHENTIC VOICE OF A REVOLUTIONARY HERO

by Dimitri C. Michalakis

Years ago, the distinguished Yale-trained actor and director Yannis Simonides was reminded by a friend about the Memoirs of Makriyannis.

"I had read it when I was young in Greece," he says, "and I read it again now and fell in love with it all over again."

So much so, that he began to read dramatized excerpts from 900-page-or-so memoirs and has been doing them ever since in colorful one-man performances.

"I don't see myself as an actor," says Simonides (who's also done countless performances of Plato's *The Apology*). "When I do these things, I employ my skills and what I've learned all



Yannis Simonides

these years. Once more I feel like a privileged vessel to be able to bring to some kind of immediacy and life these fantastic texts that are alive, have been alive, and will be alive."

He says, "If you read Makriyannis he makes perfect sense about today's world.

You want to run out in the street and run for office on his simple and eternal truths."

But there is also the language. "It's not just what he says, it's how he says it," says Simonides of the Memoirs, which mostly recount Makriyannis' experience fighting in the Revolution. "Makriyannis was a brilliant fellow." He was not only a general in the Greek revolution at 22, a self-made millionaire and a legendary klepht singer, he may have been the founder of modern Greek prose."

"And this from a man who didn't know how to read and write!" says Simonides. "He taught himself to read and write in three months. And then he sat down and wrote the Memoirs—which is massive—in the most wonderful language. It's so fantastic. I can only describe it as Seferis has described it—it's poetry. Imagine this fellow, illiterate, wrote just one thing, and it's considered a masterpiece."

Simonides' dramatization is astonishing because he seems to channel the authentic voice of Makriyannis (who was from Roumelis) and Kolokotronis from Moria and Kapodistrias from the courts of Europe, though he did nothing to study the accents.

"It was fun when I read it recently," he says, "and I had a distinct voice for Kapodistria, high-toned, and another for Makriyannis,

Roumeliotikia, and another for Kolokotronis, choratikia. And people rushed up to me and said, how did you manage to have a Moriatiki Peliponnisiaki voice for Kolokotronis and Roumeliotiki for Makriyannis?—and I hadn't! There was no difference—but they thought so."

What he hopes stands out in his readings from Makriyannis, says Simonides, is the authentic voice of the man himself, who, he says, was "legendary for his purity, his integrity, his extraordinarily leadership and his care for the people of Greece."

So much so that Makriyannis stayed active 40 years after the revolution, stayed a democrat to the end, and was imprisoned as an old man by King Otto for his outspoken opposition to what he saw was the autocratic ways of the monarchy.

"He became a main proponent for the constitution and over the course of his life he became one of the major reasons for the downfall of Otto and the adoption of a constitutional monarchy," says Simonides. (In the end, Makriyannis won and Otto was shipped back to Bavaria.)

**What makes Makriyannis unique among the revolutionary heroes?**

They were great heroes but they did a lot of this stuff, they wanted something in return. He was legendary in how he treated his soldiers and his companions in arms, they worshipped him, and when the revolution was over Kapodistrias asked him to be one of the major people running Arcadia and the Peloponnese and he was stationed in Argos, and he felt there wasn't much for him to do—this administration business was just a few hours of day. So he taught himself to read and write—in three months. And then he sat down and he wrote the Memoirs—which is massive. He was barely 30.

**How would you describe it?**

It's in the most wonderful language. It's so fantastic. I can only describe it as Seferis describes it—it's poetry. He's considered one of the greatest figures of the Greek literary world—imagine that, this fellow, illiterate, wrote one thing, and it's considered a masterpiece.

**How often do you perform your interpretation?**

I do it once or twice a year, I don't promote it; people approach me. I belong to this

organization called The Readers of Homer: I'm one of the founders, and we go around this country and around the world and select about 100 people at a time and we do marathon readings of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* all night long, all night long. We come together for dinner and then read assigned passages. Here done in English, with some ancient Greek, if someone from certain part of the world read first few lines in their own tongue.

**How did your Makriyannis readings start?**

It just happened a few years ago. We were talking with a friend and he suggested I take a look at it and I reread it, I had read it when I was young in Greece, and I fell in love with it all over again. Makriyannis I've been doing for many years around the country. Really, I read passages: I give the background historical and literary and when I read the passages I dramatize them and I do them in English.

**And you include other Revolutionary figures in your dramatizations.**

It's fun when I read Kapodistrias and I have a distinct voice: high-toned. And another for Makriyannis, Roumeliotiki, and the same for Kolokotronis, Choriotiki. And people rush up to me and say, How did you manage to have a Moriatiki Peliponnisiaki foni for Kolokotronis and Roumeliotiki for Makriyannis! But it's really not much difference: Kolokotronis is a lion and Makriyannis is sweeter.

**What do you think the Memoirs bring to modern audiences?**

They're timeless. And it's not what he says, it's also how he says it. Makriyannis was a brilliant fellow: he was a millionaire by the standards of those years, who started out as a poor boy. By age 22-23 he was a general. One of the kindest, most inspired, most gifted leaders of the revolution. He was also a great klepht singer. He improvised. At the end of the battle at night they

would eat and bury their dead. And they would say, Eh, Makriyannis, tragoudisemas, and he would improvise klephtika song on what had happened on that day.

**And this is a man who didn't know how to read or write.**

But the man didn't know how to read and write. He put all his money in the Revolution. But the key thing about him is that he's legendary for his purity, his integrity, his extraordinarily leadership and his care for the people of Greece, not so much for the warlords. They were great heroes but they did a lot of this stuff, they wanted something in return. He was legendary in how he treated his soldiers and his companions in arms: they worshipped him.





### **How did an illiterate man teach himself how to read and write and write a masterpiece?**

That is the miracle. He wrote a 900-page memoir, after teaching himself how to read and write in three months. And it's a literary masterpiece: he created modern Greek prose. It immediately became a bible.

### **What is the style?**

Makriyannis was a poet and his language is that of a Homeric palikari unspoken centuries before Homer. A few months after winning the Nobel Prize Seferis characteristically said, Since 1926, when I first held in my hands the Memoirs of General Makriyannis, down to this very day, no month has passed without my reading some of its pages. No week without me thinking of some of the exquisitely vital passages which I have found in them. These pages have been my companions for voyages and peregrinations, in joys and sorrows they have been sources of illumination and of consolation. In this country of ours where we are so cruelly self-taught, Makriyannis has been the humblest, but also the steadiest of my teachers.

### **How do you compare Makriyannis with your other readings of Socrates?**

Socrates and Makriyannis are both plain in their language, but also very complex, and Makriyannis the man was even more humble.

Socrates had a dose of arrogance, because from age 20 he knew he was considered the wise man of Athens—he was it—he was Socrates. For 50 years he ruled with his mind. Makriyannis was humbler. He was one of those fantastic simple souls who had a lot in common with Socrates, in the sense that they were not interested in money, and if they made any they gave it all away. They were beloved by the younger generation, and they had an extraordinary amount of integrity. And their lives were ruled by an unconditional acceptance and love of the country and its laws and its people.”

### **And besides the Memoirs, Makriyannis was creative in other ways.**

He made paintings of different battles of the Revolution. The siege of the Acropolis, for example. He hired an old veteran who was a primitive painter and worked with him and paid him good money and they would go to the location of the battles and he would say, Here is where I was and here is where the general stood and here's how it happened. He made about 27 paintings.

### **And his political life?**

He became a main proponent for the constitution, and over the course of his life he became one of the major reasons for the downfall of Otho (he was exiled) and the adoption more of a constitutional monarchy.

Makriyannis is very Socratic. He loves unconditionally, unconditionally his land and his comrades and his people. He has no prejudices; he has no enemies that he has created, and he fought against Otho and anybody he felt was against the best interests of Greece. Otho had brought him to trial for treason and had put him in prison, as a very old man, which broke his health. But then he commuted it and let him out, and eventually, when Otho was thrown out, the first man leading the people into the palace was Otho Makriyannis, his godson.

### **What are the years of his life?**

He was born in 1797 and died in 1864.

### **What is your own personal fulfillment from these readings?**

I don't see myself as an actor. When I do these things, I employ my skills and what I've learned all these years. Once more I feel like a privileged vessel, to be able to bring to some kind of immediacy and life these fantastic texts that are alive, have been alive, and will be alive. They will always be contemporary: if you read Makriyannis he makes perfect sense about today's world. You want to run out in the street and run for office and apply the simple truths that are timeless in his writing and thinking about the world.



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# Divine Art: Fr. Anthony Salzman, Priest and Artist

By Nikos Linardakis, M.D.

In the charming town of Watkinsville, Georgia, nestled next to Athens, Georgia, is the modern St. Philothea Greek Orthodox Church (GOC). This place of worship holds a secret—a hidden treasure of art and faith. Stepping into the church, your eyes are immediately drawn to the icons and murals, where each stroke is a gracious testament to its own parish priest, Father Anthony Salzman, and his devotion and talent. If providence is on your side, you may find them creating a biblical story or image, or perchance, painting an angel in heaven or a patron saint.



The term iconography (εικονογραφία) originates from two Greek words: eikona (icon or image worthy of veneration) and graphy (to write). Hence, an iconographer is an “image writer,” who bears the sacred duty of revealing or translating scripture and the lives of our saints into visual form. They do this by “writing” or painting icons according to the Byzantine technique which is the heavenly reality on earth. Every step in the creation of an icon is a religious experience and action. This is also part of the reason why we are so moved by the spiritual depth of the images, and are touched by the artist’s work. In this way, we “read” the written icons, and uncover the significant spiritual messages or theological meanings.

After someone commissions an icon, the religious art is not supposed to be sold, or made into a profit. Because of their spiritual significance, icons are intended to be passed down to future generations—from one family to the next—as a gift.

A few years ago, I commissioned two icons: one of St. Michael the Archangel, and later, an icon of St. Paisios of Mount Athos. They were both created by the exceptional iconographer Veryl Lynn Cox. Her journey in the arts began in my high school hometown area of Hinsdale, Illinois. Through her work and the creation of these icons, I discovered the deeply religious and rigorous spiritual practices that iconographers adhere to so that the icons created are not just an artistic endeavor. The artists do not merely paint; they follow Byzantine traditions, involving prayer, fasting, and solitude.

Historically, icons were created anonymously; but today, iconographers may humbly sign their work, with “Through the hands of... (the iconographer’s name).” Beyond visual appeal and as reminders of our celebrated liturgy and saints, many icons have been known for their miracles.

After Veryl Lynn Cox completed the St. Michael the Archangel icon, I wanted to have it formally blessed for forty days and venerated in a local Greek Orthodox Church. Remarkably, just a few miles from Cox’s home studio, we discovered another source of inspiration—Fr. Anthony Salzman. As COVID-19 subsided, new acquaintances and icons emerged. Today, I want to highlight this renowned contemporary iconographer, Father Anthony Salzman, who has been a priest for 25 years, an iconographer for 35 years and a lifelong artist.

His work appears tireless, but surely, he unceasingly asks for God’s help in the process, painting numerous icons, and church murals across the country as well as printing icon Christmas cards for thousands of people. His contributions include mural icons for chapels and churches in Toluca and Mexico City, Mexico; St. Andrews Orthodox Church in Pensacola, Florida; St. Sophia GOC in New London Connecticut; the Assumption GOC in Pawtucket Rhode Island; the Annunciation GOC in Cranston RI, Prophet Elias Orthodox Church in Atlanta, and his own St. Philothea GOC, among others. These are just a few examples. His company, Image and Likeness Iconography, designs and prints Nativity Triptych cards used by churches all across the United States. The triptych cards, each featuring three leaves, are opened with care and often displayed, much like examining ancient writing tablets.

Ordained in 1999 by Metropolitan Alexios at the Atlanta Cathedral, Fr. Anthony has served St. Philothea for the past 25 years. His influence as a spiritual leader of his flock has

inspired three priests, five presbyteres, four theologians and five seminarians from his parish. Married to Presvytera Christine, with two sons and two grandchildren, Fr. Anthony’s legacy echoes that of other iconographers in history. Most iconographers were called or influenced into this art. St. Andrew Rublev, Russia’s greatest iconographer, was guided by St. Sergius and learned iconography by Theophanes the Greek and the monk-ascetic Daniel. St. Luke the Evangelist was considered the first iconographer, and Andrew Rublev was born sometime around 1360-70 in Moscow and canonized a saint in 1988 by the Russian Orthodox Church. Together with Theophanes and Prochorus, Rublev painted the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Moscow Kremlin, and then with Daniel, the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir, Russia. St. Andrew’s most well-recognized icons are the Holy Trinity and the St. Michael icons. Many icons



since that time have followed this study. My own icon of St. Michael the Archangel, completed by Veryl Lynn Cox, was based on the work of St. Andrew Rublev.

Fr. Anthony Salzman’s unique Byzantine-renaissance style distinguishes his work, blending tradition with a modern touch. His technique and form built a reputation over the years. His icons are not merely “works of art,” but vehicles of Christian worship and faith. They convey profound spiritual truths, and it is apparent that he uses the icons as artistic expressions of the Orthodox Christian message of salvation. It is as if these paintings want to achieve more, to expand their colors, and yet they know they must remain restrained and subdued—out of humility. Unlike other icons, I recognize his swirling patterns, almost decorative, imbued with a faithful loyalty to God’s plan. They are complex compositions.

“This ancient process makes the invisible



visible,” explains Fr. Anthony. “By revealing more than the physical world, they portray the illumined or transformed spiritual world.”



“Byzantine and Russian Iconography use reverse perspective. In traditional western art, depth of perspective makes it seem that the picture is going back into space. It creates atmosphere which is an illusion and turns you into a spectator. Reverse perspective, however, has the viewer as the focal point so that it appears that the image comes out to meet you, the viewer; thus, making you a participant. In an icon, you may notice that you can sometimes see the sides and the top of a building at the same time. This has the theological significance of ‘participation’ with the image. The faithful are not mere spectators, but actively involved, in a personal way. If the image is of Jesus Christ, then the participation is in the form of worship. If the image is of the Virgin Mary or the saints, the participation is in the form of honor and emulation.”

When asked about how he generates inspiration, Fr. Anthony shared his journey from fine art to theology. “It has to do with becoming Orthodox and giving up my identity as a fine artist.” He studied printmaking and painting at the University of Minnesota and out of college was living the dream as an artist with a studio on the Mississippi River, exhibiting and selling his art work. Everything changed one Sunday, “God asked me: is art God or am I God? That question led me to seminary. It was like a knife through my heart, because my whole identity was ‘artist.’ So, I eventually submitted and confessed that God is God.”

He continues, “I said to myself, I guess I have



to apply to seminary then. I had an application sitting on my counter for months, so I sent it in. My thought was if I get accepted, it will be God’s will, and I will go to seminary. I got

accepted, gave up my identity as an artist, and went to study theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.” After his first year at Holy Cross, he met an iconographer, Nick Fotios, who led Fr. Anthony to assist in painting Saints Constantine and Helen GO Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts for the next three years. He graduated summa cum laude from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in 1989. After seminary, he married Christine Paninos and moved to Greece.

“There I met a monk and studied in the shadow of the seventh-century Church of Hagia Sophia, in Thessaloniki.” He studied with this monk for three years and then three more years with master iconographer Kosta Photiadeis. Fr. Anthony also studied Byzantine Art History at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece for three years.



Fr. Anthony’s creative process is a blend of discipline and divine inspiration. “Iconography is a way of looking at the world,” he says. “It is a whole way of perceiving and understanding this perfect liturgical art form.”

He views iconography as a transcendent art form, connecting heaven and earth. This invites the viewer to actively participate in a divine experience. “When we look at and venerate an Icon, guided by the Holy Spirit, we are encountering our Lord and Savior or a saint. We are not passive observers of something happening,” he explains, “We are active participants in a heaven and earth experience—the eternal ‘Now’ of God. There are canons in iconography that help us keep on track. Just like a train has

railroad tracks that don’t prohibit its freedom, but allow it to go places, so do canons of iconography help us to create within the



tradition. But as iconographer George Kordis says, ‘if Icons are not personal, in other words, involve the artist in the creative process, then they are not fully Icons.’ We are not merely scribes, copying ancient prototypes, but we are engaging the modern world with the foundation of the past, making the invisible visible for our contemporary society.”

I wanted to understand how Fr. Anthony’s beliefs influenced his own art. He shared, “My personal and spiritual beliefs are directly connected to my art.” Fr. Anthony gave up Fine Art to study Theology in Boston, and began learning Byzantine iconography as an apprentice for three years in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He then studied under Fr. Paul Politis in Greece for three years, followed by Politis’ teacher, Kosta Photiadeis for another three years as already stated.

After he married and moved to Greece to study, Fr. Anthony asked his spiritual father for permission to pursue fine art again. “He gave me his blessing and told me just don’t draw or paint naked women. I said OK. So, I began a sketchbook based on reading the Psalms.” Over many years, he compiled numerous sketchbooks. “I quickly realized that my art was too literal, evangelical, and bordered on proselytization. So, I began to investigate and explore more freely, the idea of the human and divine. In other words, I wanted honest and true insights and encounters as a human being, without having an agenda. It seemed more authentic and genuine, and I enjoyed this new approach to fine art.” These new pieces are what Jonathan Pageau calls “Narthex Art,” art that isn’t inside the Church, but points you towards it and helps you enter it.

Over time, this artwork developed to be both modern and spiritual, adding little sayings and quotes to his art, inspired by the work of Brian Andreas and StoryPeople, which reflect his playful approach to creating art. “I call these Whimages, i.e. Whimsical Images. I am working on a book called Learning to Play. Through play, I find that the artist that I am shapes images in unique ways as I explore and play. My wife calls it ‘doodling,’ but it is more than that. This approach makes me think of how God, the consummate Artist, must have created. For example: He brought forth the



angelfish and many other creatures through play, there is no other explanation for the depth of creative beauty that we witness in the world. When we approach the creative act without a set destination or predetermined expectations, we are often led to astonishing results.”

“When I studied fine art in college, I wasn’t taught how to paint. I was told to just express myself. But that is like going into a German class and having the teacher tell you to just express yourself. I have nothing, I have no tools, I need syntax, grammar, vocabulary, in order to express my thoughts and feelings in a foreign language. It was when I began to learn the visual language of Byzantine Iconography that I began to learn how to paint and express theology in color.”

Byzantine art arose from the Greco-Roman times, flourished for a millennium during the Byzantine Empire era, between the fourth and fifteenth century (from 330 C.E. until 1453 C.E.). In these Middle Ages, many people became Christian, and icons strengthened their faith and will, even as the Ottoman Empire took over. The icons portrayed the divine Holy Spirit and grace of a saint. They provided a visual form, not to aim as an exact portrait, but instead as a holy representation. Each focusing on the divine essence or likeness of the individual. Thus, each icon has a deep symbolic meaning and tells some form of a biblical story in a historical yet timeless

context. The icon shows us not just material reality, but also spiritual reality, depicting life transfigured by God’s love.

Fr. Anthony’s creative process, driven by faith and freedom, embodies the divine inspiration he sees in all of creation. What is truly inspiring is his tireless dedication to sharing his craft. He also is the President of The Liturgical Arts Academy, which is a one-week intensive training program of Byzantine Chant and Iconography. If you would like to learn more about TLAA, visit their website at <https://www.theliturgicalarts.org>

I’ve admired the work of notable modern-day iconographers like Georgios Chirakakis from Heraklion, Crete and Dimitri Kolioussis from Santorini, Greece. Fr. Anthony Salzman is a talented, faithful and serving man, fully armed with respect and devotion to this sincere and relevant art form. Fr. Anthony has worked within the Church, producing beautiful art that I believe will endure for another millennium.

Countless hours are spent on creating each masterpiece. Some are sold to and commissioned by private collectors, churches and monasteries. His life has evolved from a freelance artist to becoming a renowned iconographer. Although Byzantine in tradition, his work also expresses Orthodoxy today. He says, “These icons are part of our church and our worship experience. They

draw us closer to God and His saints. As we kiss the feet of Christ on the Cross, it is as if kissing our most loving Lord.”

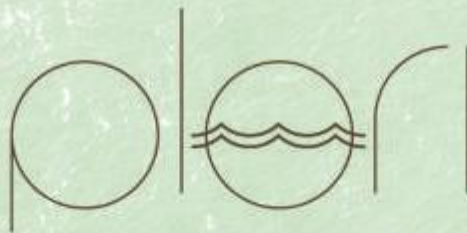
His journey from fine art to theology, his dedication to iconography, and his unique creative vision have made him a beacon of art and faith for others. Through iconography, Fr. Anthony helps bring the Divine closer to us. His work offers a window into the sacred life, a window into Heaven, and reveals the enduring power of our Orthodox faith.

To commission an icon or to purchase icon greeting cards, please visit:

<https://www.imageandlikeness.com/> and on Instagram @frantonios

Photo Credits: Blaine Cox and Fr. Anthony Salzman

Dr. Nikos Linardakis is president of The Bène Baby Company. The published author of several medical and trade books, he is currently completing a historical fiction novel about the naval heroine Laskarina Bouboulina in the Greek Revolution of 1821, The Mistress of Spetses.



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# Hellenic Classical Charter School Celebrates 20 Years of Academic Excellence

by Athena Efter

The Hellenic Classical Charter School (HCCS), a National Blue Ribbon School, will celebrate 20 years this fall of providing students with a high performing, rigorous, standards-based curriculum rooted in the classics. What started back in 2005 as a vision has come to fruition. After its first location opened in the Park Slope area of Brooklyn, NY, HCCS has, in recent years, replicated its model into a second campus on Staten Island.

NEO magazine caught up with Superintendent Christina Tettonis and Chief of Operations Joy Petrakos whose enthusiasm, commitment, and shared passion for their school continues to be a driving force of unstoppable progress.

What makes these two charter schools unique is their mission to provide students with the linguistic foundations of Latin and Greek

languages, a curriculum immersed in the classics with courses in Greek mythology, history and culture, as well as an education system of paideia, based on the Socratic method of engaging students in critical thinking, questioning, and dialogue that fosters debate and respect of different viewpoints. Joy Petrakos added that “the student voice matters. Through the paideia model of Socratic seminars, we engage students in student led instruction, facilitated with teachers, starting as early as kindergarten.”

The study of Ancient Greek Theater also plays a role in the curriculum, where students study Ancient Greek literature and perform Ancient Greek plays annually. This year’s theater highlight will be Euripides’ Iphigenia, which will be performed in May. Students are further acquainted in Greek culture and

history by taking an annual trip to Greece where they research various topics. Students also participate in the annual NYC History Day Fair, and compete on city, state, and national levels. Visual arts, like music, dance, theater, and art, as well as sports, also play a role in student enrichment. Sports include soccer, basketball, and a running club.



Cathy Kakleas, HCCS-SI Principal, Christina Tettonis, Superintendent of Schools, Joy Petrakos, COO of Schools, Natasha Caban, HCCS-PS Principal

Science, math, and technology also figure prominently in the curriculum, with students learning how to build a car through the STEM based program Soap Box Derby. In fact, students as early as pre-k are introduced to computer science and programming by learning all about coding. Chess is also included as a supplemental enrichment program.



This year, the HCCS marching band participated at the Flag Raising Ceremony at Bowling Green in Manhattan, and students marched in the annual Greek Independence Day Parade on March 30th.





*Natasha Caban, Cathy Kakleas, Christina Tettonis, Charles Capetanakis, Esq., Spiros Moustakas, Esq., Nick Leonardos, Dena Capetanakis, Joy Petrakos*



*Joy Petrakos, Christina Tettonis, Cathy Kakleas, Katerina Petrakou (Greek Teacher), Kindergarten Student, Nura Yasin (Kindergarten Teacher)*



*Natasha Caban, Erik Joerss, Joy Petrakos, Father Damaskinos Ganas, Kamilah O'Brien, Karen Daniels, Christina Tettonis, Dena Capetanakis*



*Joy Petrakos, Valentina Vargas (Natasha's daughter), Christina Tettonis*



*Natasha Caban, Christina Tettonis, Joy Petrakos*

HCCS has an ongoing relationship with the Greek government, which was very instrumental in helping with the founding of the school, as well officials coming to visit the school. Apart from being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School, as one of 19 schools selected for this honor from NY state and one 362 schools nationally, HCCS has earned the NY state distinction of a Recognition School for its high academic achievement, student performance, and graduation rate. When it comes to the Greek regents, students receive a 100% passing rate. And, as a true testament to the school's educational excellence, school leaders from Dubai were referred to HCCS for observation and learning.

With a combined enrollment of 1000 students and a diverse student body, starting with pre-k through grade 8, the Staten Island School has recently built a new building for its current grades 2-6. The school will add a grade each year, based on the charter, to eventually enroll students through eighth grade, like its sister school in Brooklyn.

According to Superintendent Christine Tettonis "the focus is on strong, effective teaching, collaboration, and shared vision. We want students to come to school and love learning." The school has an open door policy, where parents are very involved and viewed as partners, which creates a collaborative atmosphere and feeling of unity among teachers, students, and families. Joy Petrakos calls it "joyful learning", and to celebrate







Spiros Moustakas, Esq., Bianca Rajpersaud, Anastasia Etimos, Joy Petrakos, Christina Tettonis, 8th grade graduate, Charles Capetanakis, Esq., Natasha Caban



Anastasia Etimos, Natasha Caban, Christina Tettonis, 8th grade Valedictorian, Salutatorian and Honorable Mentions, Joy Petrakos, Charles Capetanakis, Esq.



student learning, student work is displayed throughout the school. Teachers also experience this sentiment of "joyful learning" by being strongly supported in professional development that helps them achieve their teaching goals.

HCCS, with its emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills, has prepared

students well through its motto of "wisdom, knowledge, truth". Students consistently receive acceptance into top tier public, private, and specialized high schools throughout the city.

While we did not get to speak to the principals of each school, we wanted to mention Natasha Caban, principal of HCCS Park Slope, and

Cathy Kakleas, principal of HCCS Staten Island. They, along with Christina Tettonis and Joy Petrakos, form a dynamic team of women overseeing both schools.

For more information about the HCCS schools, their website is <https://www.hccs-nys.org/>



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# BEYOND MAGIRITSA

by Dean Kalimniou\*

"You will forgive me If I light up a cigarette," the polite old man asked as he reached for his lighter with gnarled, trembling hands, as we stood outside the church toilets. His bulbous bald head, covered in liver spots, fringed with just a wisp of hair, glowed in the morning sun. His suit, a deep, striped purple, hung loosely in folds around him like an ancient chiton, the tell-tale signs of a person who had lost a lot of weight since the time he had first purchased the garment.

"I haven't eaten any magiritsa yet, this year," he confided.



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"Ever since my wife became bedridden, my sister makes the magiritsa, but this year my wife took a particularly bad turn and I stayed up most of the night nursing her. It's hard. I had just finished my third round of chemotherapy when we found out that she too has been afflicted by the "κακία αρρώστια." All I had time to do, was to drive past my sister's after Anastasi, and pick up a pot. It's waiting for me in the fridge. Hopefully I'll eat it today when my son comes over. He..."

At that moment, the old man's telephone rang. Gesturing to me to wait, evidently wishing to complete his narration, he lifted the phone to his ear. Between pauses in order to hear his interlocutor's responses, the old man spoke:

- Έλα Χριστός Ανέστη.
- Τι; Δεν θα έρθεις; Γιατί;
- Έχει football το παιδί; Σήμερα; Μα είναι Λαμπρή.
- Ας μην πάει. Χάθηκε ο κόσμος αν δεν παίζει σήμερα;
- Γιατί βρίζεις; Μια ερώτηση κάνω. Κακό είναι;
- Όχι δεν επιμένω. Αλλά τον περιμένει και η μάνα σου.

- Τον έχει ανάγκη το team? Και εμείς τι είμαστε δηλαδή; Τημ δεν είμαστε κι εμείς;
- Πατί νευριάζεις; Πάσχα είναι, τι ήθελες να σου πω;
- Μα έχουμε μαγειρίτσα.
- Για βάλ' τον να του μιλήσω.
- Ετοιμάζεται; Καλά θα περιμένω.
- Καλά, αφού είναι έτσι, άλλη φορά.
- Πότε θα περάσεις;

The old man shuffled nervously from one foot to the other. As he held his hand to his head, his fingers began to scratch the back of his ear. I watched as the ear turned angry shades of deeper and deeper red.

- Καλά, μη φωνάζεις. Πού είναι η μικρή; Δώσ' τη μου να της μιλήσω.
- Γλύκα μου Χριστός Ανέστη!
- Χάπνυ Easter, darling μου. Τι κάνεις;
- Χάβαγιου, good?
- Ο παππούς είναι. Is rappou.
- Η γιαγιά κοιμάται και πήγα λίγο στην εκκλησία.

Yiayia sleep en ai go to the tserts.

- Πήγες χθες το βράδυ στην Ανάσταση; Που γκο to the tserts last nai for the Ista?
- Όχι. Γιατί μάνα μου;
- Γουάι γιου no go to the tserts for the Ista?
- Ποιανού γενέθλια; Ποιος γιορτάζει τέτοια μέρα;
- Χου μπερντάι γιου γκο;
- Εντάξει. Θα 'ρθεις το μεσημέρι;
- Που κάμιν for lunts?
- Δεν θα έρθεις; Γιατί;
- Γουάι γιου no καμ;
- Τι πελάτες; Δεν καταλαβαίνω τι μου λες.
- Γουάτ πελάτες;
- Pilates γυμναστική; Μα σήμερα είναι Λαμπρή.
- Τπελάτες. oday no Ista.
- Μα σε περιμένει η γιαγιά.
- Yiayia wait for you.

At this point, the old man's voice wavered, ever so slightly. Still he persisted.

- Μα είναι άρρωστη. Κάνε μια προσπάθεια.

Δεν ξέρουμε αν θα την έχουμε μαζί μας του χρόνου.

- But γιαγιά sick. Maybe die.

- Δεν μπορείς να χάσεις το μάθημα; Λίγο αργότερα;

- Που καμ later?

- Εντάξει κουκλίτσα μου. Κάνε όπως καταλαβαίνεις.

- Ok λαβ. No γουόρις. You do what you understand.

The old man limply began to lower his arm, and it appeared that the telephone conversation had reached its terminal point. All of a sudden, angry, staccato tones began to emanate from his device. The man started and his body jerked as if he had received an electric shock.

- Χριστός Ανέστη λένε πρώτα, νύφη.

- Τι πρέσα; Ποιος έκανε πρέσα; Μια απλή ερώτηση της έκανα. Δεν την πίεσα.

- Μα την περιμένει και η γιαγιά.

- Μα έχουμε και μαγειρίτσα.

- Τι θα πει δεν τρώνε μαγειρίτσα;

- Να της πω sorry? Μα τι της έκανα; Χριστός Ανέστη, της είπα.

- Δεν της κάνω έλεγχο αν πάει στην εκκλησία. Όχι δεν την μάλωσα. Μια μικρή κουβέντα κάναμε. Ναι το αν πάει εκκλησία είναι δική της δουλειά, συμφωνώ μαζί του. Μα δεν μπορώ κι εγώ σαν παππούς....

- Μα δεν την κορόιδεψα. Πού να ξέρω εγώ γέρος άνθρωπος, τι είναι pilates? Σάμπως είχα και στο χωριό μου;

- Όχι δεν της είπα να μην πάει. Το ξέρω ότι δεν μου πέφτει λόγος.

- Μα η γιαγιά δεν είναι καλά. Να ξεχάσει κι αυτή λίγο. Να χαρεί.

- Από πού κι ως πού ψυχολογική πίεση;

- Δεν τα καταλαβαίνω εγώ αυτά τα γκιλτ τρύπια.

- Θέλει να της ζητήσω συγγνώμη;

- Μα γιατί;

- Καλά, δωσ' τη μου αφού επιμένεις και θα της ζητήσω εγώ συγγνώμη.

Blood began to flow from the tip of the old man's ear, where his nail, compulsively scratching against the skin, had opened up a small wound.

- Γλύκα μου, σου ζητώ συγγνώμη, αν σε πίεσα.

- Sorry πρέσα. No μπι for the λαβ upset.

- Δωσ' μου τη μαμά. Θα σε δω άλλη φορά.

- Give me mum. See next γιου τάμι.

The indistinguishable tones emanating from the speaker this time were the dynamic spiccato of one who was master of the discourse. Mopping the blood with a folded handkerchief, the old man responded in antiphon.

- Έλα. Εντάξει τώρα;



- Εσύ δε θα περάσεις καθόλου;
- Ε πέρνα για λίγο, έστω.
- Ποιος θείος Πασχάλης; Πρώτη φορά ακούω για θείο Πασχάλη.
- Μετά από τους γονείς σου, μετά από τον θείο σου, πέρνα.
- Μα δεν χρειάζεται να μαγειρέψεις. Έφτιαξε η θεία μαγειρίτσα.
- Τι θα πει δεν τρώτε μαγειρίτσα;
- Να πω της θείας να φτιάξει κάτι άλλο. Μπορώ να πάρω και κάνα sausage.
- Vegan? Τι είναι τούτο πάλι.
- Ναι μα τώρα που τελείωσε η Σαρακοστή θες να νηστέψεις κι εσύ;
- Ποιος σε πιέζει; Δεν κατά...

Abruptly, the telephone conversation came to an end. Defeated, the old man slipped his telephone into his pocket and a long, drawn out sigh emanated from the depths of his chest. His watery blue eyes looked through me, away towards the street and I immediately understood that I had tarried too long. Overstepping the bounds of propriety, instead of discretely removing myself from the vicinity, I had remained and thus witnessed the old man's loss of dignity. Now, I was convinced, he was safeguarding his shame and setting things aright by pretending that I wasn't there.

"I was telling you about the magiritsa," the old man unexpectedly broke the silence. "Did you have some this year? Where are you spending Easter?"

"To my infinite regret, both my wife and my mother are sworn enemies of magiritsa and as a result, the indignity of an extremely delicious chicken soup is forced upon us instead," I informed him.

"Chicken soup?" the old man scoffed. "How are you supposed to herald in Easter with chicken soup?"

"I agree wholeheartedly," I concurred. "Even with enough avgolemono to make your heart curdle with joy, it truly is a poor substitute for the real thing."

"So what is your programme for today?" the old man enquired.

"A very long lunch consisting of a vast number of courses at my parents' home," I replied.

"Do you live close to your parents?" the old man asked.

"Yes, most of my family live in the same suburb," I informed him.

"And where is that?" the old man asked again.

Upon processing my response, he commented: "That's about half an hour away from where we live.

Because, well I mean to say, solely as you seem to like magiritsa so much, if you are not doing anything after lunch, you are more than welcome to come past and taste some of ours. Did I mention, my sister made it, to an old Messenian recipe. No pressure. Only if it's convenient. No, it's no trouble for us. Bring the whole family. My wife will be happy to meet you."

And that is the story of how, for the first time in Australia, I came to become enmeshed in the throes of piping hot magiritsa-consuming ecstasy, and in the recesses of some of the warmest hearts I have ever had the honour to meet, last Easter.



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# Kieran Culkin

## 2025 Academy Award winner for 'Best Supporting Actor' for 'A Real Pain'

by Markos Papadatos

PHOTO: TRAE PATTON, THE ACADEMY



Kieran Culkin spoke about his Academy Award win for “Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role” for “A Real Pain” at the Oscars Press Room. The movie was written and directed by Jesse Eisenberg, who also stars as David Kaplan, and Culkin plays the role of the free-wheeling Benji Kaplan.



Culkin continued, “It just felt like it was the first time I ever read something and went, I fully understand this guy. I don’t even want to read it again. I wanna show up on the day and go, what scene are we doing? Oh yes, this one. And the words got in here really quickly because they were so well written.”

“So that was a fun new approach,” he admitted. “It felt like I knew who this guy was, but I couldn’t identify it and I didn’t want to analyze it because right away upon reading it, I went, I know who this guy is. I’m just gonna leave it and just do it.”

“It wasn’t until almost a year later when I watched it that I was like, oh my God, I know someone exactly like this, and I didn’t realize I was doing that,” he acknowledged.

Aside from Eisenberg and Culkin, the film features Will Sharpe, Jennifer Grey, Kurt Egyiawan, Liza Sadovy, and Daniel Oreskes.

The synopsis is: Mismatched cousins David (Jesse Eisenberg) and Benji (Kieran Culkin) reunite for a tour through Poland to honor their beloved grandmother. The adventure takes a turn when the odd-couple’s old tensions resurface against the backdrop of their family history.

For Culkin, when he was filming this movie, this role “felt different” than any other role he has previously done. “It definitely felt different,” he admitted. “The script was incredibly tight, I didn’t want to rehearse it or talk about it or anything.”

“The moment I realized it my wife leaned over—it was at like a theater—she leaned over and said his name in my ear. And I was like, ‘you’re right,’

I’m totally doing him and I didn’t even know. Oh, that kind of unusual experience, I’ve never had that before,” Culkin explained.

Particularly impressive about Culkin is that he went from almost saying “no” to the role to becoming a first-time Academy Award winner.

On this feeling, he remarked, “I don’t know. I’ve already been asked that about three or four times in whatever span of minutes. I’m not

fully inside my body right now. I’m trying my best to be present. I don’t know.”

“The thing with almost saying ‘no’ to the movie, it wasn’t for any creative reason. It was just the way the schedule changed right before we started. It was taking me away from my kids for almost a month, and I was like, well, I don’t want to do that,” he explained.

“Then, I got talked into it, which, obviously I’m very glad that I was. I have no idea how I’m feeling,” he added.

When asked by this journalist what the role and movie taught him about himself, Culkin responded, “Oh God, that’s too heavy a question. I don’t know. I feel like whenever I’ve worked on something important I end up taking things with me.”

Culkin continued, “Like sometimes people will say like, ‘oh you’re a lot like that character.’ I’m like, ‘I wasn’t until I did it,’ and now, I feel like I took something with me.”

“I would like to think that I’m a little more together than that guy. I would like to think that I’ve figured some stuff out, but I don’t. That’s my terrible answer to your otherwise excellent question. Sorry,” Culkin elaborated.

In other Kieran Culkin news, he will star as Richard Roma in the new Broadway production of David Mamet’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play “Glengarry Glen Ross,” which was directed by Tony winner Patrick Marber.

*Markos Papadatos was credentialed for the 2025 Academy Awards and participated in the Press Room interviews with the 2025 Oscar winners following their wins.*





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# The Academy of Hellenic Paideia Presents the 8th Annual TIMARETE Hellenic Arts Festival



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Under the auspices of the Consulate General of Greece in New York The Academy of Hellenic Paideia proudly presents the 8th Annual TIMARETE Hellenic Arts Festival, a celebration of Greek culture, art, and heritage. This year's festival will take place from May 3 to June 15, 2025, featuring a diverse program of film, theater, music, and dance. The festival aims to promote Hellenic art and culture while contributing to the Academy's expansion into elementary grades. Additionally, it supports the Hellenic American Project (HAP) at Queens College, CUNY.

The TIMARETE Hellenic Arts Festival is an opportunity to experience the richness of Greek culture while supporting the expansion of the Academy of Hellenic Paideia. The community is invited to participate, enjoy, and contribute to this meaningful cause. For further information, reservations, or sponsorship opportunities, you can contact: 917-603-4437, 516-637-6807 \* Konstantinos Doikos, Artistic Director of Timarete.

Their websites are: [timarete.com](http://timarete.com) and [hellenicpaideia.com](http://hellenicpaideia.com)

## TIMARETE

### 2025 FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

#### DRAMA INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

**SATURDAY, MAY 3**

1st Screening at 4:00 p.m. / 2nd Screening at 6:00 p.m.

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For all Festival info/details, please visit: [timarete.com](http://timarete.com)

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# Mnemosyni's Musings...

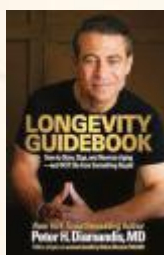
You've heard of Mnemosyni, the Greek goddess of memory. Mythology buffs will know that she's also the goddess of storytelling—and mother of the Muses! So, it's only fitting to name a literary column in her honor. Here, you'll learn about authors, poets, books, and all things "Greek" literary.

by Maria A. Karamitsos

## New Releases

Here are some new and upcoming releases to check out.

a testament to human resilience and the perseverance needed for survival.



**Longevity Guidebook: How to Slow, Stop, and Reverse Aging — and NOT Die from Something Stupid** by Peter H. Diamandis, MD

Ethos Collective (January 3, 2025)

The Greek-American engineer, physician, and entrepreneur is the author of several books about science and business. He is best known as the founder and chairman of the XPRIZE Foundation.

The author states that we're in the midst of a healthspan revolution that will enable us to live vitally beyond 100 years old. Advanced diagnostics are now able to catch any disease at inception, while advanced therapies in clinical trials have the potential to reverse disease while also slowing, stopping, and potentially even reversing aging. This practical reference guide can help to shape your longevity mindset and prepare to intercept the next wave of healthspan-extending breakthroughs expected during the decade ahead.

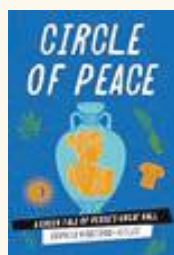


**A Journey from Darkness to Sunlight** by George Kakridas

Businessrise, Inc (February 25, 2025)

From the author of Growing Up Under the Nazi Boot (Independently published, 2020), comes another memoir about his life growing up in Sparta, Greece during the Nazi occupation, followed by the Greek Civil War.

The author shares his story through hunger, famine, and a constant fear of death and then his subsequent move to America. Despite the darkness of those years, his journey from darkness to sunlight led him on a path to making hopes and dreams come true. The story is

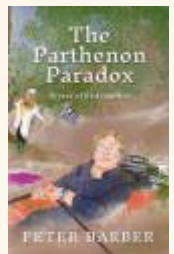


**Circle of Peace: A Greek Tale of Perse's Great Hall** by Sophia Kouidou-Giles

She Writes Press (March 11, 2025)

Kouidou-Giles is the author of An Unexpected Ally: A Greek Tale of Love, Revenge, and Redemption (She Writes Press, 2023), reimagined from a classic Greek myth. She's back with another take on myth, a sequel to 'Ally', but it's easily a standalone. This time, Circe's father Helios asks her mother Perse to help his troubled sister Selene, who's angered Zeus by her affair with a mortal. In exchange, Perse demands the construction of a grand hall in her honor. She gets her wish, but her plans take a back seat when Clymene and Helios' son Phaeton dies, plunging the entire House of Helios into mourning.

While the family deals with their grief, war erupts outside the palace walls. But Perse rises up in the face of tragedy. While the House of Helios works to turn tragedy into a movement for peace, others prefer to sow the seeds of war and unrest, leading to a battle of wills of mythic proportions.



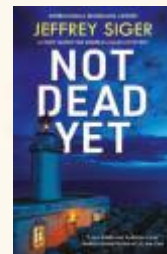
**The Parthenon Paradox: Rivers of Redemption** by Peter Barber

Independently Published (March 14, 2025)

Peter Barber, a Brit married to a Greek who between London and Greece, is back with the third and final installment in 'The Parthenon Series'. The laugh-out-loud memoirs recount true tales from Peter's life married to a Greek, integrating into a Greek society, and dealing with the infamous Greek bureaucracy.

When Peter and his fiery Greek wife,

Alex, trade the rainy skies of England for a sunlit village in Greece, they believe they've found paradise. But their dream life turns into a nightmare. Caught in a whirlwind of legal battles, village gossip, and cultural clashes, Peter and Alex must navigate the absurdities of Greek bureaucracy, rebuild their lives, and face the ultimate question: will they seek revenge or choose forgiveness?



**Not Dead Yet** by Jeffrey Siger

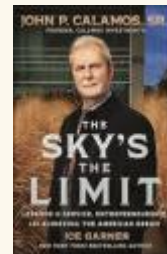
Seyn House (April 1, 2025)

The international bestselling author who splits his time between New York and Mykonos is back with book 14 in

the Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis Mystery Series.

Wealthy Greek businessman Dimitris Onofrio is corrupt to the core, but the police have never been able to make his crimes stick. Powerful, influential, and extremely dangerous, Onofrio is not a man to cross, and every witness prepared to come forward against him has died before they could testify.

So when Onofrio's private jet crashes, seemingly with no survivors, the police breathe a sigh of relief—quickly replaced by horror when Onofrio is found alive but catatonic on a remote Ionian beach, beside the body of his beloved wife. Was the crash an accident . . . or sabotage? Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis, head of Athens' Special Crimes Unit, knows that unless he can discover the truth before Onofrio recovers, the tycoon will be out for bloody revenge on all involved. Including Kaldis' own beloved wife, who is more mixed up in the accident than anyone would ever have suspected.



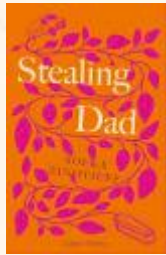
**The Sky's the Limit: Lessons in Service, Entrepreneurship and Achieving the American Dream** by Joe Garner and John P. Calamos, Sr.

Wiley (April 22, 2025)

A real life rags-to-riches tale, this biography of Greek-American John P. Calamos, Sr., founder, chairman and COO of Calamos Investments is an inspirational story of an American



trailblazer, self-made success story, and living legend in the world of investing. The book contains stories and business lessons he learned along the way. From a stock boy in his parents' grocery store on Chicago's West Side, to 400+ combat missions in Vietnam, to launching his own firm which now has upwards of \$35 billion in assets, the success he's enjoyed through that career have been built on taking risks and being resilient.



**Stealing Dad by Sofka Zinovieff**

Corsair (May 8, 2025)

The forthcoming novel by the Athens-based author of the acclaimed *The House on Paradise Street* (Atria books/Marble Arch

Press, 2013) explores what happens when children are not allowed to attend their father's funeral.

Alekos, a successful, if controversial sculptor, passes away in London. His last wife and now widow is determined that his far-flung children from other

marriages stay away, but for the first time, all the sisters and brothers meet and plan to take matters into their own hands.



**Under the Lemon Tree by Emma Cowell**

Avon (May 8, 2025)

The Cornwall-based author of *The Island Love Song* (Avon, 2024) and *The House in the Olive Grove* (Avon, 2023) returns with another novel set in Greece.

Shattered by the sudden loss of her twin, Kat is lost in grief. The comfort of family feels both soothing and suffocating, but everything changes when she inherits a house from a mysterious uncle. Arriving on the island of Agistri, Kat is mesmerized by its crystalline waters, lush pine forests, and the citrus-scented air. Among the white-washed houses and warm, welcoming locals, she begins to feel her heart heal. The island offers more than solace, sparking courage in Kat to face her loss. But as she unearths her family's buried past, Kat must also

confront her own fears of belonging, forgiveness—and the possibility of rediscovering happiness in the shadow of heartbreak.

Happy reading! See you next time for more of Mnemosyni's Musings.

--  
*Maria A. Karamitsos is a journalist, author, and poet. She's the founder & former publisher/editor of WindyCity Greek magazine and former associate editor & senior writer for The Greek Star newspaper. Maria also contributes to Greek City Times and TripFiction. Her work has been published in The Magic of Us-A Moms Who Write Poetry Anthology, The Pen Poetry Magazine, Voices of Hellenism Literary Journal, Highland Park Poetry, Recipes & Roots, GreekCircle magazine, The National Herald, GreekReporter, Harlots Sauce Radio, Women Who Write, KPTH magazine, and more. Maria has contributed to two books: Greektown Chicago: Its History, Its Recipes and The Chicago Area Ethnic Handbook. She's currently editing her 1st novel. mariakaramitsos.com*



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*Fr. Konstantinos and the village's teacher Giota Diamanti*

# Reviving Fournia: How a Facebook Appeal Brought New Life to a Greek Village

*People who decided to move there speak to NEO*

**By Kelly Fanarioti**

The decreased number of births, an aging population, and the concentration of residents in large urban centers are among the key challenges Greece has faced in recent years. As a result, schools in mountainous regions and remote islands are closing due to the lack of children, with the remaining residents mostly being elderly. A striking example is the village of Fournia in the prefecture of Evritania, where the kindergarten remained closed for the first time this year, and the primary school has only two pupils—one of whom will graduate this summer. In an effort to attract new families with children, the village's teacher and priest launched a Facebook appeal in August, offering free housing for a year, financial support, and job search assistance to two couples.

The post gained significant attention, with more than 1,000 people expressing interest in moving to the mountainous village in central Greece within just a few days. "We made the post in mid-August, and even now, two and a half months later, we are still receiving calls from families. Many people are looking for a better quality of life for their children and a lower cost of living, which is exorbitant in big cities," says village teacher Yanna Diamanti.

Two families have now settled in the

village—one with six children and the other with three—leading to a fourfold increase in the number of primary school pupils. As a result, the kindergarten is expected to reopen next year to accommodate the needs of the new families. "If these families hadn't come, the village primary school would have been left with just one pupil next year and would have eventually closed. We selected families who best fit the village's profile and who wouldn't have difficulty finding work here," the teacher explains.

Thirty-six-year-old Vasiliki, a mother of six, has been living in Fournia with her family since September 7. "There is kindness, care, and solidarity among the residents—something that is hard to find in big cities. For example, a neighbor might go to collect eggs and then knock on my door to offer me some too. These small acts create a sense of security and unity," she says.



Her husband will work at the local timber cooperative and take on other manual jobs, while the 36-year-old mother plans to open a bakery—something the village has been without for 25 years. As for their children, they are embracing the village's quality of life. "A few days ago, my eldest son, who is 14, said to me, 'Mum, I am finally alive.' In the afternoons, they play ball with the other village children, explore the area, or go chestnut picking. In Athens, these



opportunities didn't exist—after school, they would just spend hours on their mobile phones," she explains.

In the coming days, another family is set to move to the village—that of Dimitris Tasoulas, nephew of the President of Greece

minutes from Fourná, so no, it doesn't stress me out," he stresses emphatically.

"New Life in the Village"

The overwhelming interest sparked by the teacher's post led to the creation of the Non-

from France recently visited Fourná to explore ways to develop the village's mountainous landscape.

"When the priest and I decided last summer to make the post in hopes of saving the school and bringing Fourná back to life, we never



Konstantinos Tasoulas. Speaking to NEO, he explained that he and his wife made the decision to relocate so their three children could have a better quality of life. Currently working in a catering business in Athens, he plans to shift to agrotourism once they settle in Fourná.

"This move will completely change our lives, but I'm certain it will be for the better. Life in Athens is stressful, with constant pressure," he says.

Referring to his uncle, who was sworn in as President of the Republic just a few days ago, Dimitris Tasoulas suggested that he should lead a program to provide financial support for families looking to move to the country's villages.

"Many villages are at risk of being wiped off the map, as soon there will be no residents left. The state must take action. There are jobs in the villages, but no residents to fill them," he says.

When asked if the lack of a doctor in the village makes him nervous, Dimitris Tasoulas answered no. "I live in Kolonos. If something happens to one of the children and I need to go to the Children's Hospital, it takes at least 40 minutes without traffic. With traffic, it takes over an hour. Karpenisi Hospital is just 30

Governmental Organization (NGO) "New Life in the Village". Its goal is to raise funds to help the village welcome and support more families.

"In addition to those wanting to move here, businesses and individuals have also stepped forward to contribute to Fourná's revitalization. It's incredibly moving, and I believe that in the near future, we will be able to welcome more families who are waiting," the teacher says.

The success of this initiative has also inspired residents from other deserted villages across Greece to seek advice on how to attract new inhabitants. Meanwhile, a research team

expected such a response. German media have already visited us to cover what happened and speak with the families who settled here, and in a few days, we are expecting journalists from New York Times. I hope this marks the beginning of a true renaissance for our village," concludes Giota Diamanti.





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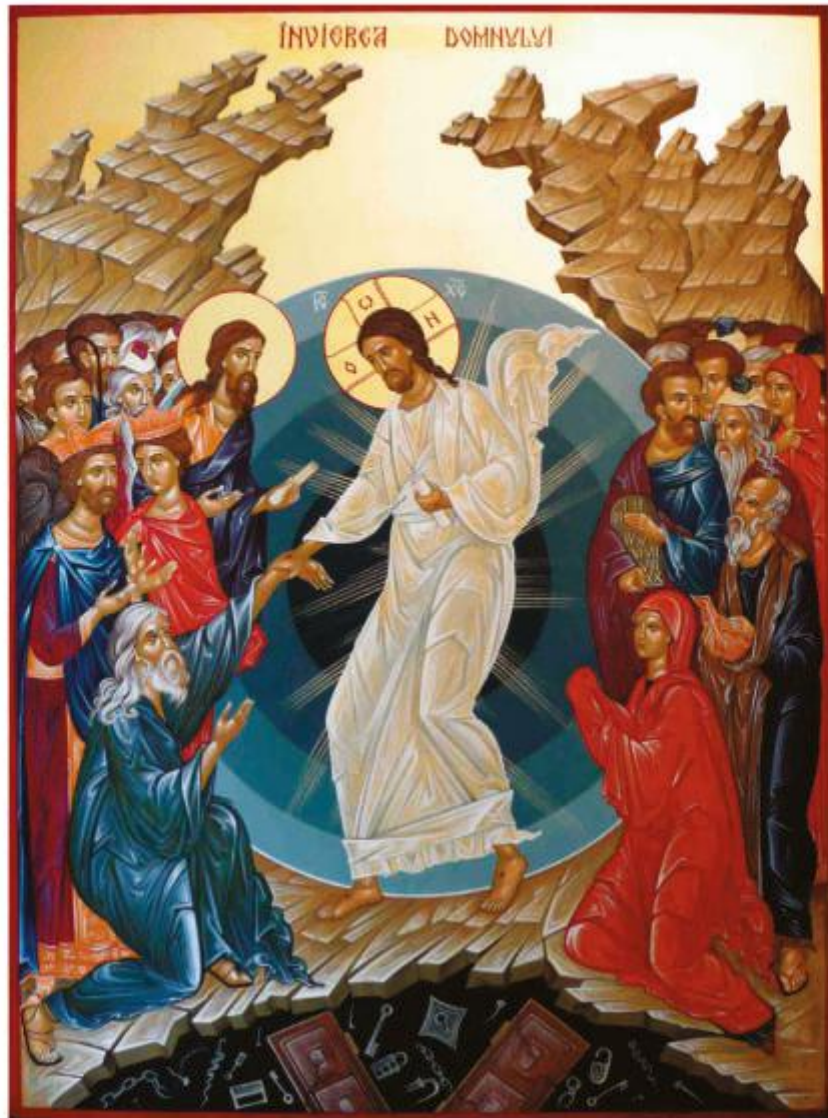
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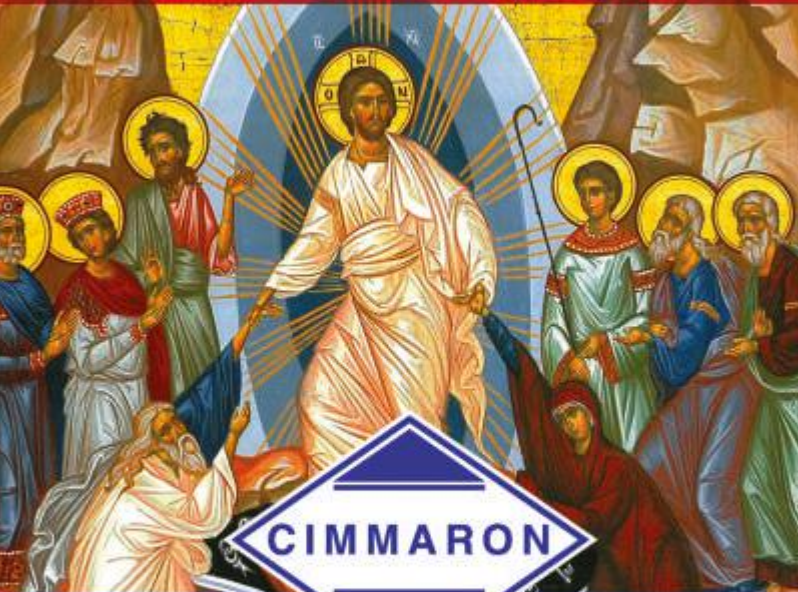
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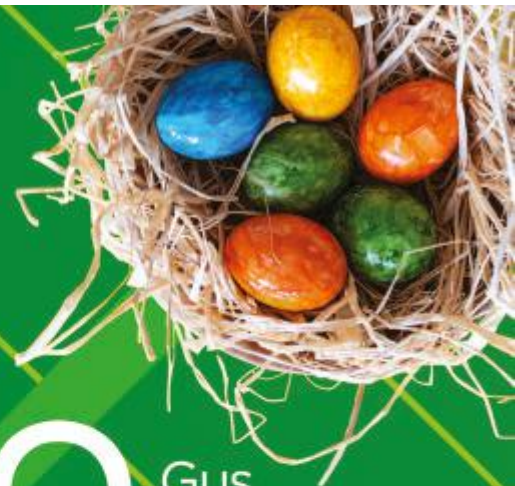
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The experience of our cheese-makers lasting for over three generations and the biodiversity of the local flora cannot but be reflected in the unique flavors of VERGINiS cheese products. Specifically, in the historic area of North-Western Macedonia the white color **Feta P.D.O.** - famous for its exceptional taste - is produced, while in the unique scenery of the **Cretan land** the "Queen" of semi-hard cheeses, the **Graviera Kritis P.D.O.** with its rich aroma and sweet taste is prepared. Among many others, you can enjoy the ripen **Kefalotiri**, the **Kefalograviera P.D.O** with the great aroma, and the **Kaseri P.D.O** with its soft texture.

Stay tuned, as new products are to be launched soon, as a result of our "meraki" for innovative blends in harmony with the Greek tradition.



[www.eurofoodquality.gr](http://www.eurofoodquality.gr)

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## *Happy Easter - Καλό Πάσχα*

Filippatos PLLC is a leading employment law firm representing hardworking employees against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace. We treat you like family in your time of need and are dedicated to securing you the justice you deserve. Happy Easter from all of us at Filippatos PLLC!

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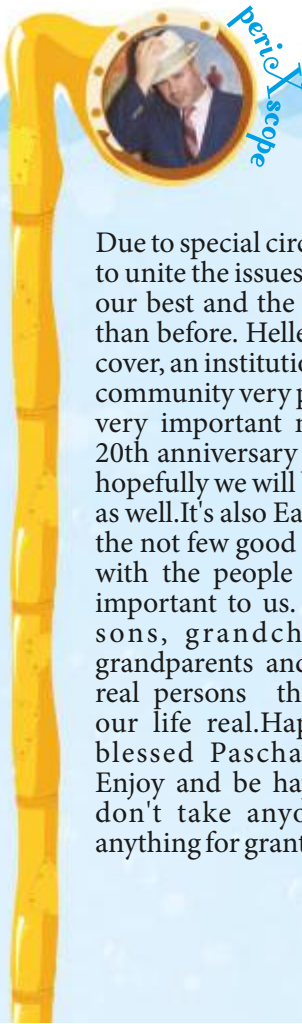
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199 Main St., White Plains, NY 10601

Phone: (914) 984-1111

Email: [advice@filippatoslaw.com](mailto:advice@filippatoslaw.com)





## *Happy Easter - Καλό Πάσχα!*

Due to special circumstances - my father passed - we had to unite the issues of March and April this time. We tried our best and the magazine is out again more beautiful than before. Hellenic Classical Charter School is on the cover, an institution with a proven record that makes our community very proud. It's also their 20th anniversary, a very important milestone that coincides with NEO's 20th anniversary (in October)! Good luck to them and hopefully we will be here to celebrate their 40th and ours as well. It's also Easter time, an opportunity to rejoice for the not few good things in our lives and pass these days with the people that are important to us. Parents, sons, grandchildren, grandparents and all the real persons that make our life real. Happy and blessed Pascha to all. Enjoy and be happy and don't take anyone and anything for granted!



by *Demetrios Rhompolis*  
[dondemetrio@neomagazine.com](mailto:dondemetrio@neomagazine.com)

**Happy Easter - Καλό Πάσχα!**

from

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# Integrity, Experience & Expertise with Emmanouela Kompa Solomin



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In the world of real estate, the need for a trusted, knowledgeable advisor who truly understands the market and the unique needs of each client is vital. Emmanouela Solomin, an Associate Broker at the Queens offices of Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty and recently recognized as one of the Top 3 Unit Leaders of the Astoria office, offers a level of service that is both elevated and strategic. Her commitment to providing exceptional results is built on a foundation of care, transparency, and precision, ensuring that every aspect of a client's journey is met with the highest standards.



Emmanouela grew up in Vouliagmeni, a seaside suburb of Athens, while her family roots are found in the Ionian island of Lefkada and Peiraias. Having lived in four countries — Greece, France, Canada, and the United States — Emmanouela brings a global perspective to her work. After settling in Queens, New York, over a decade ago, she gained valuable insights into the local real estate market, making her uniquely positioned to guide clients through its complexities.

Licensed to practice real estate in both New York and Greece, Emmanouela offers a comprehensive understanding of international real estate dynamics. Fluent in Greek, French, and Italian, she enhances her ability to serve clients from diverse backgrounds, ensuring clear communication and a culturally

sensitive approach, whether working with international investors or first-time homebuyers and sellers.

Certified as a Real Estate Negotiation Expert (RENE), Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA), and in the Advanced Digital Marketing Techniques of Today (E-Pro), Emmanouela is committed to staying ahead of industry trends and continuing professional development. With a degree in Communication, Media and Journalism and experience in Insurance and Risk Management, she takes a forward-thinking approach to every transaction, mitigating risks, foreseeing challenges, and guiding clients through the complexities of selling and investing.

Emmanouela's mission is to ensure that your real estate experience is more a transaction— it is a rewarding journey of confidence, care, and integrity.

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The background of the image is a dark, textured surface, possibly a rustic metal or stone. Scattered across this surface are several red Easter eggs. Each egg is decorated with white, hand-painted floral or leaf patterns. The patterns vary, with some showing large, stylized leaves and others showing more intricate, branching designs. The lighting is soft, highlighting the glossy finish of the eggs and the texture of the background.

*Happy Easter!*  
*Καλό Πάσχα!*  
*Χρόνια Πολλά!*

*Michael*  
*and*  
*Robin*  
*Psaros & Family*



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