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ESSAYS

TOWARD A GREEK AMERICAN CANON

by DAN GEORGAKAS

GREEKS OF THE FORMER USSR SINCE 1991

by DIONYSSIS KALAMVREZOS

THE TWINED MUSES: ETHEL AND JENNE MAGAFAN

by STEVE FRANGOS

BOOK REVIEWS

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The *JHD* welcomes widely ranging approaches that embrace a variety of methodologies and rhetorical perspectives. It accepts articles, review essays, and notes keyed to the Greek experience from the late eighteenth century to the present. The *JHD* carries reviews of books that deal with modern Greece, the Greek diaspora and the Balkan and Mediterranean worlds.

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ESSAYS

Toward a Greek American Canon

by DAN GEORGAKAS

Greek American Studies remains a displaced person in the academic world. A full hundred years after the first massive waves of immigration to America, not a single American university has a chair for Greek American Studies. Most Modern Greek Studies programs still do not regularly schedule classes on Greek America, and the Modern Greek Studies Association has folded its short-lived Greek American Studies Committee into a more general Diaspora Committee. The last major gathering of Greek American scholars took place in 1989, more than fifteen years ago, on the occasion of the opening of the Saloutos archive at the University of Minnesota. Nonetheless, the amount of writing and interest in Greek America is soaring, including increased interest in Greece itself.

Given these realities, anyone wishing a basic grounding in the Greek American experience has no institutional formation to turn to for guidance. Nor does anyone seeking to put together a basic curriculum on Greek America have easily available scholarly guidance. This problem is all the more acute in that the appetite for ethnic history among the Greek American public is immense. This is evidenced by numerous local history projects, ongoing film projects, interview projects, and the establishment of local museums. Jim Lucas, the webmaster of the American Hellenic Heritage site reports 75,000 hits monthly.¹ Steve Frangos has termed this broad range of initiatives the New Preservationist Movement and regularly writes about them in his columns for the *National Herald*.

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To address the gap between the knowledge available in scholarly publications and the Greek American public's desire to know more about itself, I thought it would be useful to poll the leading scholars of Greek America on how they would shape a Greek American historical canon. I approached Chris Ioannides, the Director of the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Queens College and he thought it was a promising initiative that I should undertake as the Director of the Greek American Studies Project at Queens.

I contacted various scholars, graduate students, filmmakers, and activists who have been involved in Greek American projects and asked them not only to list their choices of the top ten resources on Greek America but to offer their observations about this virtual field, its existing literature, and its challenges. No restrictions were placed on the polling in terms of length (books or essays or pamphlets all had equal weight), language (Greek, English, whatever), or academic discipline. Literary works were excluded on the basis that creative art was quite different from scholarship and merited a study of its own.

I have grouped the findings of my polling into three categories. The first lists the ten works most frequently cited and the second lists additional works and authors frequently cited. Beneath each listing in both sections, I have coalesced the comments offered by various participants as to why they judged this a key work in the field and their thoughts about various technical and philosophical issues that making such selections brought to the fore. These commentaries should prove as useful as the listings themselves to teachers, researchers, librarians, project directors, and others interested in ethnic studies. The third section lists all the persons who contributed to what was truly a collaborative project to advance Greek American Studies. It includes a brief description of the past and present work of the responders.

I do not propose that the material that follows constitutes a definitive canon or even a definitive definition of what constitutes Greek American Studies. What it does provide is a highly-informed evaluation of the literature on Greek America produced in the past one hundred years.

Works Cited Most Frequently

Saloutos, Theodore. *The Greeks in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

The landmark work by Theodore Saloutos was cited by nearly every respondent to the survey. Everyone recognized that this was the first work to address the wide experience of the Greeks in America in a manner valued by scholars in the field of ethnic studies and related fields of inquiry. Many of his formulations became and remain the frame of reference for subsequent scholarship. A number of persons lamented that given that this history was written in 1964, a work that would take in the whole century was now overdue. Others noted that Saloutos was indeed the Alpha of Greek American Studies but must not be thought of as the Omega. A frequent observation was that Saloutos seemed leery of writing about anything that might be perceived by the general public as negative to the Greek image. This was due largely to the circumstances that Saloutos was writing at a time when Greek Americans had only recently overcome most of the historic prejudice directed against them. What is most striking about his work, of course, is that Saloutos did not have a huge body of scholarship to draw on for his invaluable history.

Orfanos, Spyros (editor). *Reading Greek America: Studies in the Experience of Greeks in the United States* (NY: Pella Publishing Company, 2003).

This collective work received almost as many votes as Saloutos. Consisting of twenty essays by thirteen² of the top scholars in the field, *Reading Greek America* is distinguished by the breadth of disciplines it covers and is the best single comprehensive work of the post-Saloutos period. Many of the essays, in fact, expand or update topics covered by Saloutos. Other essays venture into areas Saloutos had neglected. Its subject matter ranges from traditional topics such as church history, economics, music, and education to less traditional topics such as Greek American psychology, homosexuality, and labor. My own essay on Greek American radicalism in the twentieth century was independently cited by many scholars for inclusion as a basic work. This was also the case for Charles Moskos' essay on the nature of Greek American Studies. My essay is distinguished by being the only one of its kind and by its refu-

tation of the assertion of earlier historians that Greek America did not produce a significant number of political radicals. The essay by Charles Moskos draws on his extensive knowledge of the ongoing and established research in Greek American Studies. He offers a thoughtful survey of the achievements already in hand and the challenges facing a still nascent field of academic study.

The publisher of this volume is the Pella Publishing Company of New York and the sponsor is the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies of Queens College-City University of New York. Pella is a Greek American firm that has published a wide range of books on Greek America over the past three decades. Queens College sponsors a book series published by Pella titled the Modern Greek Research Series. *Reading Greek America* is part of this Queens-sponsored series that now totals thirteen titles, a number of which are on Greek American topics.

Papanikolas Helen, *Toil and Rage in a New Land: The Greek Immigrants in Utah* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1970); *Emily-George* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987); and *An Amulet of Greek Earth: Generations of Immigrant Folk Culture* (Athens, OH: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 2002).

The enormous impact of the life and work of Helen Papanikolas was evident in the selection of three of her works as among the top ten in the field. Several others also were frequently cited. Nearly every scholar emphasized how important Papanikolas' work had been not merely for its own intrinsic value but also as a stimulus to their own thinking. In that regard, those interested in the scope of Papanikolas' influence should consult the special Homage to Helen Papanikolas issue of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* V. 29.2 (2003) in which fifteen scholars discuss her impact.³ The issue also includes a dialog in which Papanikolas discusses her life's work with Penelope Karageorge.

Toil and Rage is vintage Papanikolas in its careful examination of the specific experiences of one region that is so thoughtful that it provides insights into the broader experience of the Greeks in America. Papanikolas does not shun the showing of some of the moles and scars of that experience; and like all her writing this work is infused with a distinctive feminist gaze.

Emily-George represents a transition in Papanikolas' work from

strictly historical essays to the evocative fiction she wrote in her later years. This non-fiction narrative offers a poignant account of the lives of Papanikolas' mother and father, who come to personify the immigrant experience. Again, as in her other work, the story transcends its particulars to offer a vision and interpretation of the entire history of the Greeks in America. *Emily-George* has been reprinted in paperback as *A Greek Odyssey in the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987) and it has been published in Greece.

An Amulet of Greek Earth is the most controversial of Papanikolas' work. What is attempted in this vast collection of stories, songs, images, and mini-histories from scores of sources is an evocation of the culture that was brought to America by Greek immigrants. This is a work that is extremely rich in its particulars.

Karanikas, Alexander. *Hellenes & Hellions: Modern Greek Characters in American Literature* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981).

This landmark work surveys literary works by Greek American authors and literary works by other Americans that feature Greek American characters. Although most titles are only covered briefly, mainly focusing on the plot outline and how Greek identity is rendered, Karanikas has provided a groundbreaking primary reading list on the image of Greek Americans in American literature. Now needed is for someone to step forward to do a follow-up volume that would analyze the many Greek American writers that have emerged since this work was published and the ways Greek Americans are currently rendered in American fiction.

Moskos, Charles. *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction press [second edition], 1989).

This work by Charles Moskos is, by far, the most widely-read and most influential single work on the history of the Greeks in America. Its lively prose style makes it especially appealing to the general public. As the subtitle indicates, Moskos focuses on that part of the community that weathered the problems of pre-World War II America to emerge as a kind of model ethnic community. Moskos summarizes the most salient points made by Saloutos and carries the story two decades forward. This second edition contains important material on Michael Dukakis' campaign for president

and what it revealed about American attitudes regarding Greek Americans. Moskos also includes a family memoir in this history, giving his account a compelling personal dimension. A third edition is now in preparation.

Georgakas, Dan and Charles C. Moskos (editors). *New Directions in Greek American Studies* (NY: Pella Publishing Company, 1991) and *The Greek American Experience*, a special issue of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, Vol. XVI, Nos. 1-4, (1989).

These two publications offer the major presentations made at the historic 1989 conference of the historians of Greek America that was held in Minneapolis in conjunction with the opening of the Saloutos Collection at the Immigration History Research Center of the University of Minnesota. The essays in the two collections cover all phases of the Greek American experience: literature, labor, commerce, religion, notable individuals, business leaders, specific communities, music, etc. Virtually all the major writers on Greek America are represented in the two collections. *New Directions* emphasizes work in new Greek American subject areas while the *JHD* collection offers updates and enrichments on topics previously written about.⁴

The *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* has offered a number of special issues on Greek America and through the years has published more material on Greeks than any other scholarly journal. *The Journal of Modern Hellenism* has also published a significant amount of material related to Greek America. Its winter 2004/2005 is a special issue totally devoted to Greek American topics.⁵ The Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies heads a consortium of four universities that produces the journal. Other partners in the consortium are the Greek Studies Program of Hellenic College, the Program in Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University (Canada), and the Foundation Program in Greek Studies at the University of Missouri—St. Louis. For many years, the third academic publication in the field, the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, the official organ of the Modern Greek Studies Association, did not publish scholarship on Greek America. That is no longer the case, but Greek American material is still scarce in its pages.⁶

Georgakas, Dan. *Greek America At Work* (NY: Labor Resource Center of Queens College and Greek American Labor Council, 1992).

The reason most cited by scholars who opted for this highly readable pamphlet is that it is virtually the only work that follows the history of Greek labor in America from colonial times to the end of the twentieth century. It is written for the general public but with footnotes that direct those desiring to know more about the topic to detailed and specialized scholarly sources.

The Problematics of a Potential Canon

Most interesting for me in orchestrating this discussion were the many interchanges I had with most of the contributors about the various elements that constitute Greek American Studies. Among the major problems noted were language issues, the very definition of Greek American Studies, the value of pioneering historians, the role of community studies, and the various uses of the personal memoir format. Some scholars cited the need for an ongoing bibliographic project, perhaps on the internet, to track not only scholarly works but the considerable amount of material on Greek America that is privately printed or appears in obscure journals in more than one nation. Considerable concern continues to exist about how Greek America fits into the Greek discourse about the diaspora. The majority of scholars thought Greek American Studies was more productively approached from the context of American immigration studies.

The question of language was broached by nearly every respondent. Most noted that Greek language texts, aside from primary sources such as newspapers, were rarely cited in English language essays. This discussion also dealt with the issue of what differentiates a Greek American source from a migratory Greek source or a more general diaspora source. Obviously there is a judgment call to be made on any given work. Some sources, however, are clearly from Greeks who only spent a limited time in America before returning home. Such sources are heavily cited in Ioanna Laliotou's *Transnational Subjects* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), a densely written work that largely ignores Greek American scholarship in favor of repatriated migrants and work written

during the earliest years of massive Greek emigration to America.

Among historical works written in Greek, the one most frequently cited as useful was Babes Malafouris' *Ellines Tis Amerikis: 1528-1948* (NY: Isaac Goldman, 1948). Malafouris is also one of the first writers to deal extensively with Greek American labor practices. For the most part, however, Greek American scholarship, even when carried out by Greeks in the homeland, is almost always rendered in English. Alexander Kitroeff noted that English and Greek did not exhaust the language options. He cited *Griegos en America* (The Greeks in America) published by Fundacion MAPFRE in Madrid, 1992. Scholars of Greek immigration in Latin America have extremely limited contact with their North American colleagues. The actual relationship or interactions between Greek immigrants to Latin America with those in North America generally turn up only as parts of individual narratives involving a stay in Latin America usually before, but sometimes after, residency in North America.

A language issue that may involve a conscious or unconscious perception of the history of Greeks in America involves the scholarly use of *emigration*, *immigration*, and *migration*. Scholars with an American Studies orientation almost always use *immigration* while those who work out of a Diaspora Studies orientation occasionally favor *emigration*. Those who use *immigration* generally see the process as individuals coming to America to live permanently. The subsequent weakening of Greek culture is seen as inevitable and largely voluntary, the main unknown being whether and what kind of meaningful Greek culture can survive past the fourth- or even third generation. A major theme of those who favor *emigration* is the tragic loss of Greek culture in an America that does not foster cultural enclaves such as those in pre-Nasser Alexandria. At its simplest, those who use *immigrant* emphasize the cultural gains a change of citizenship entails for the individuals involved and the United States while those who use *emigrant* are more concerned with the cultural losses a change of citizenship entails for the individuals involved and for Greece.

The use of *migration* is far more problematic and even haphazard, sometimes used without the author thinking too much about the terminology. The American connotation of *migration* is that of continuous movement as in the idea of a migratory worker. That does not seem useful when studying the experience of Greeks in

America as very few move on to a third nation or remain in perpetual motion. After a significant return rate of Greek males during the early decades of the twentieth century, relatively few Greek emigrants return to their birth land and the return of their offspring is even more rare. Nor does the term apply well to the Greek refugees of 1922 who sought a new homeland and unlike many emigrants from Greece harbored no illusions about a return to their birth land. The use of *migration* also suggests wanderers with something of a fixed and transportable culture rather than Greeks adjusting to or rejecting one or another new homeland.

British and Australian writers use *migration* far more often than American or Greek writers, but usually treat it as a synonym for *immigration*. Further complicating the issue is that in the US, the period of 1880-1924 is often referred to as The Great Migration, here in reference not simply to Greeks but to all of those who left their homelands for America in this period.

A number of respondents noted that the earliest scholars of Greek America, although now outdated, had performed pioneering work and should be part of any serious study the Greek American experience. Mentioned as most valuable in this regard were Thomas Burgess' *Greeks in America* (Boston: Sherman, French, and Company, 1913) and J. P. Xenides' *The Greeks in America* (NY: George H. Dorman Company, 1922). Also cited as valuable is Maria Economidhou's *E Ellines Tis Amerikis Opos Tous Eidba* (The Greeks in America as I Saw Them) published in New York in 1916 by Divry Publishing. The work of Henry Pratt Fairchild was thought to be more interesting as an example of a strain of xenophobia and ethno-centrism in American thought rather than accurate observation and commentary on the experiences of the immigrants of the first mass wave.

While understanding that our listing was for a general understanding of Greeks in America, almost all scholars noted that extremely valuable work had been done on specific communities. The most frequently cited were Michael Contopoulos' *The Greek Community of New York City: Early Years to 1910* (New Rochelle, NY: A.D. Caratzas, 1992) and Andrew Kopan's *Education and Greek Immigrants in Chicago: 1892-1973: A Study in Ethnic Survival* (NY: Garland Publishing Co. Inc., 1990). Zoye Martino Filder noted that an invaluable guide in documenting the early history of Greeks in California was *Welfare Activities Among the Greek People in*

Los Angeles a Masters thesis by Mary Antoniou that was written in 1939 but is still available through the University of South California Press. Filder's comment illustrates that the numerous studies of specific communities are the indispensable building blocks drawn on by those involved in more comprehensive projects.

A huge number of community-sponsored projects (usually Church-related) have been launched in the past two decades. The quality of these efforts, particularly the numerous oral histories taken, varies enormously. Very often the projects focus only on the conventionally successful Greek Americans and they often trivialize the difficult early years through quaint and often comical vignettes. Any study or oral history project limited to regular church goers is almost inevitably going to produce a conservative profile and is useful only as a reflection of how regular church goers wish to be seen rather than as a portrait of a whole community or even what the respondents actually believe. The tendency in these instances is to tell the interviewer what the interviewee thinks the interviewer wants to hear or what the community wants to record as its official history.

The division in quality between amateur and professional efforts, however, is not absolute. Some of the community-generated studies have more detail and nuance than works by academics driven by tenure or fellowship concerns. Oral testimonies done on video or sound tape are useful even when self-serving as they reveal much about the culture of any given community at a particular moment. Nicos Alexiou commented on the paucity of studies of second generation Greek Americans born to the immigrants of the second wave of 1960-1980. He underscored the related problem of dealing with the second-generation as a monolithic category of Greek American. Doing so conflates the second generation whose parents arrived during the 1900-1924 period with the very different second generation whose parents were post-World War II arrivals. Another essential element in generational studies is differentiating between those with Greek heritage in both their parents and those with mixed ethnic heritage.

Most problematic in creating a canon of must-read works is the multiplicity of disciplines involved in any mature ethnic study. Karen Van Dyke and Yiorgos Kaloregas rightly noted ten titles could be made strictly from the literary field. Further complicating that observation is the division between the actual cre-

ative works themselves and commentary on said works. Yet another aspect would be finding a way to deal coherently and systematically with literary arts as diverse as poetry, prose, theatrical drama, and scriptwriting.⁷ Such considerations were clearly beyond the dimensions of the recommendations in this project. What is notable is that there are no comprehensive study of Greek American poets or Greek American fiction writers.⁸

More limited discussion of literary figures and other artists, however, are often found in the better anthologies. Generally the anthologies are also the best place to get a taste of a variety of disciplines. In addition to the already-cited *Reading Greek America*, the two most frequently praised collections were *The Greek American Community in Transition* (NY: Pella Publishing Company, 1982) edited by Harry J. Psomiades and Alice Scourby with an important bibliography by John G. Zenelis⁹ and *Greek American Families: Traditions and Transformations* (NY: Pella Publishing Company, 1999) edited by Sam J. Tsemberis, Harry J. Psomiades, and Anna Karpathakis.¹⁰

Charles Moskos noted another problem with listing specific essays or books, even scholarly anthologies. He thought that the cumulative writings of Steve Frangos were essential for nailing down the history of the Greeks in America, but the bulk of Frangos' writing appears in the popular press and is therefore more difficult to access than work published in book form or in academic journals. Frangos, of course, is not the only writer in this category, simply the most prominent.

A topic of enormous pertinence to Greek America is the role of the Greek Orthodox Church. Nearly every anthology of Greek America Studies has at least one article dedicated to Church topics. Complicating this particular area is the need to both document an institutional history of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and to study how Church teachings affect everyday life. Among the titles noted as being pertinent was James Steve Counelis' *Inheritance and Change in Orthodox Christianity* (Scranton: PA; University of Scranton Press 1995). Counelis also is author of a survey of Greek Orthodox Church statistics in America 1949-1989 in the previously cited special issue of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*. A frequently noted work on Greek Americans seeking to establish a Pan-Orthodox community in America is Stephen J. Sfekas and George E Matsouakas (editors), *Project for Orthodox Renewal*

(Chicago: Orthodox Christian Laity, 1993). As with literature, a ten-volume list dealing only with Greek Orthodoxy in America could be drawn up easily.

Labor studies, my own area of academic training, was another topic cited as insufficiently researched and discussed. Among the works cited as particularly insightful were Zeese Papanikolas' *Buried Unsong: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1982) and Gunther Peck's *Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West—1880-1828* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000). Closely related to labor activism is the role of leftists in the Greek American community, a topic rarely touched before the 1980s. In many instances, but far from universally, in pre-World War II labor activism there is often an interaction with radical activism.

Very similar to the paucity of writing on Greek labor is that regarding Greek business. Beyond some excellent studies of specific Greektowns, and outstanding individuals, the literature is light in a concentrated examination of Greek American business practices and industries with disproportional Greek American representations. The scholarly work most frequently cited as the most valuable and ambitious in this area is George Kourvetaris' *Studies on Greek Americans* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1997).

The sponge-diving community of Tarpon Springs is the great exception to the general lack of detailed business and labor studies of specific communities and industries. The Tarpon Springs Greeks are the most studied of any Greek American community in the nation. Monographs, books, musical recordings, and films by folklorists and regional historians more than match the considerable work produced on Tarpon Springs by scholars of Greek America. A number of commercial films and novels also use the Tarpon Springs community as a focus.¹¹

Steve Frangos, among others, noted how important personal memoirs were in constructing histories of eras and specific regions. He also noted that the yearly calendars put out by Church groups, ethnic societies, and cultural groups are invaluable for identifying the professions of those involved, their business and/or home addresses. They frequently include poems, photos, vignettes, and other art reflecting the daily lives and aspirations of those issuing the publication. The single memoir cited most often was Harry Mark Petrakis' *Stelmark* (1970) which is combined with another

Petrakis memoir in *Reflections: A Writer's Life, A Writer's Work* (Chicago, Lake View Press, 1983). Also cited was Nicholas Gage's *A Place For Us* (Boston; Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989). Hundreds of memoirs by lesser known persons offer a bedrock for determining the attitudes and experiences of individuals. The earliest known diary by an immigrant during the Great Migration period is *Pages of My Life and Various Poems: My Leaving Greece for America and My Sojourn in America* written by Haralambos Kambouris between 1912-1915. Sections of this diary appear in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, V. LXXXII, No. 1 (Spring, 1981).

Feminism was another theme scholars considered extremely important yet insufficiently investigated. Although feminist consciousness is evident in numerous works, the single volume with a specific feminist focus most cited was Constance Callinicos' *American Aphrodite* (NY: Pella Publishing Company, 1991). While many writers commented that they did not agree with the author's method or conclusions, they thought it refreshing that issues of feminism had been addressed so forthrightly. A more conventional approach to documenting the lives of women is found in Elaine Thomopoulos (editor) *Greek Pioneer Women of Illinois* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing 2000). An important essay in that volume deals with the writing and life of Theano Papazoglou-Margaris, a writer who continued to write her short stores in Greek and usually published in newspapers rather than literary journals.¹² Cited most often as a scholar with a consistent feminist perspective was Alice Scourby. Her *The Greek Americans* (Boston: Twayne Press, 1984) was cited as her most influential work.

Mary Lefkarites and Chrysie Constantakos observed that despite constant references to Greek family values, there was a dearth of quality studies in that area. The nature and source of male sexual attitudes was an example of the topics they cited as more or less missing in action. Other scholars spoke of a general tendency to avoid studies of socially negative behavior such as spousal abuse, alcoholism, and homophobia. Spiros Orfanos noted that Greek Americans were far more reluctant to deal with psychological issues than were their contemporaries in Greece. Hampering all work in these areas is that funding is usually so sparse, if it exists at all, that studies usually are extremely limited in terms of the geographic area being taken into consideration and the total number of participants.

Still other concerns about what a canon should contain were raised by Yiorgos Anagnostou, Constantine Hatzidimitriou, and Chris Ioannides. Anagnostou thought more attention had to be paid to theory. He was particularly enthusiastic about the work of Phyllis Pease Chock on the anthropology of identity. He also thought it important to differentiate between a set of books that would indicate prime sources for the public and books more suitable for undergraduates and books essential for researchers and scholars. Only a few titles might be on all three lists.

Chris Ioannides thought it crucial to determine in what ways and why the Greek ethnic experiences in America differed from or were parallel with experiences in other countries, particularly English-speaking lands with an immigrant history: Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.¹³ He also thought it essential to note the slightly different experiences of Greek Cypriots in terms of when they immigrated, how they were perceived by other Greeks, and how they perceived their own identity. An issue regarding Canada is families with branches on each side of the border. Interesting as well would be studies showing if assimilation in Canada and Australia is slowed or is different from the United States due to governmental programs that support biculturalism.

Constantine Hatzidimitriou noted that an important area of study consisted of how the American establishment has regarded Greeks during various time periods. His own efforts in that regard includes the authoritative *Founded on Freedom and Virtue: Documents Illustrating the Impact in the United States of the Greek War of Independence, 1921-1829* (New Rochelle, NY: A.D. Caratzas 2003). Illustrative of the richness of material in this area is the recently translated memoir of one of the Greek orphans who settled in America: Christopher Plato Castanis, *The Greek Exile* (NY: Chain Federation, 2002) and the writings of Constantine Evangelides found in the *Journal of Modern Hellenism* Number 21-22 (Winter 2004-2005).

Conclusion

The works chosen by the majority of scholars in this project offer a valid starting point for any individual or institution wishing to build a basic library of Greek American texts. The various titles and problem areas that have been identified also should be

instructive for those wanting to build collections with a more specific focus. The trouble areas suggest topics that need to be taken up in future essays and symposia. Adding considerable value to all of the works cited, especially those in the top ten list, is that they contain extensive bibliographies that can guide general readers and scholars toward more specialized material. The list should also prove useful to individuals and organizations wishing to support Greek American Studies in an immediate and practical manner. Local university and public libraries can be canvassed to see if at least the top ten titles herein identified are part of their collections. If not, friendly pressure for their purchase or outright donation of the titles is a relatively low-cost means of making our story readily available in the facilities of public institutions. Such an initial outreach can also be a first step in assisting librarians to build up resources on Greek America. This would be an ideal project for a national organization, but the history of Greek Americans suggest that it is not national but regional, local, and individual initiatives that are usually the cutting edge of activism.

The works cited in this survey are only the tip of a huge body of scholarship. This body of knowledge has been produced, for the most part, with minimal public or private institutional support. Most of the authors who have undertaken this task have done so out of their own personal passion for the topic and usually at their own expense. We remain in what I have previously termed the heroic age of Greek American scholarship. Ultimately, however, the Greek American community, especially its educational institutions, needs to step up to the plate. Professional-quality work can only be sustained in the long run by scholars supported by endowments and institutions. Lacking that, there is an inevitable moment in which our best minds will be forced by economic and scholarly necessity to turn to other topics.

Participants

ALEXIOU (NICOS) is a Research Associate in the Department of Sociology at Queens College-CUNY. He has done considerable basic research on the Greeks of Astoria and has taught courses on Greek America for the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Queens.

ANAGNOSTOU (YIORGOS) is Asst. Professor in the Modern Greek Studies Program of Ohio State University. Some of his most recent essays on Greek Americans have appeared in *Diaspora* and *Gramma: Journal of Theory and Criticism*.

CONSTANTAKOS (CHRYSIE M.) is Professor Emeritus of Child and Family Studies at Brooklyn College. Her research has focused on the areas of lineage, family therapy, and ethnic identity.

COUNELIS (JAMES STEVEN) writes on the Greek Orthodox Church. Among his work that relate specifically to education see his *Higher Learning and Orthodox Christianity* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 1995).

DEMAS (LANE) is a graduate student who has written an important study of the Greek business community in Chicago that was published in the *Journal of Modern Hellenism*, Number 21-22 (Winter 2004-2005).

DICKSON (PETER) has served as a political-military analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency and has authored a biography of Henry Kissinger. His work in Greek American Studies has focused on Greek immigrants from the region of Sparta who journeyed to Chicago and the American Midwest in the 1890s.

DOULIS (TOM) is a novelist whose most recent work is *The Open Hearth: The First Generation*, an epic novel about the gradual Americanization of a Greek American family set in the early part of the twentieth century. Other novels include *Path for Our Valor* and *The Quarries of Sicily*.

FIDLER (ZOYE MARINO) is president of the Greek Heritage Society of Southern California. She is producer and director of a film project titled *The Greeks of Southern California Through the Century*. The first film in the project which has the sub-title *The Pioneers: 1900-1942* was completed in 2002 and features narration by Olympia Dukakis and John Kapelos.

FRANGOS (STEVE) writes weekly about the Greek American historical experience in the *National Herald*. Recent publications

include *Greeks in Michigan*, which is part of a monograph series published by Michigan State University. He also did archival work and wrote the historical section of a volume commemorating the Greeks of Pueblo, Colorado, 1905-2005.

HATZIDIMITRIOU (CONSTANTINE) has written frequently on Greek American topics, particularly on events in the nineteenth century. He is currently at work on a definitive essay on the career of pioneer journalist and feminist Maria Ekonomidou.

IOANNIDES (CHRISTOS P.) is Director of the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Queens College-CUNY and editor of *Greeks in English Speaking Countries; Culture, Identity, Politics* (New Rochelle, NY: A. D. Caratzas, 1997).

KALOGERAS (YIORGOS) is Professor of American Ethnic and Minority Literature in the English Department of Aristotle University (Thessaloniki). He is completing a book on Greek American identity tentatively titled *Ethnic Geographies*. Recent essays have focused on the fiction of Konstantinos Kazantzis and the films and fiction of A.I. Bezzerides.

KARANIKAS, (ALEXANDER) is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Illinois-Chicago. He has written for the popular as well as the scholarly press. He also is a poet and a screenwriter. His Greek-themed *Merika* was a prize winner at the Moondance International Film Festival (2003).

KARPOZOLIS (KOSTIS) is a graduate student now using Crete as his academic base who has written a landmark study on Greek immigrants involved in the Socialist Labor Party of Daniel De Leon and other pre-Communist radical formations in America. He is currently working on the links between the Greek Communist movement of the 1930s and its American counterparts.

KITROEFF (ALEX) is a prolific author on the Greeks of the diaspora. He is one of the long-time editors of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*. Among his more recent publications is *Wrestling with the Ancients: Modern Greek Identity and the Olympics* (NY: Greekworks.com, 2004).

KLIRONOMOUS (MARTHA) is Director of the Center for Modern Greek Studies at San Francisco State University. Her program includes a Greek American Oral History Project.

KOPAN (ANDREW) is an expert on the Greeks of Chicago and has been a mentor to scholars interested in Greek Orthodoxy in America. He has donated his invaluable personal papers and archival materials to two Chicago institutions: De Paul University and the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center.

KOURVETARIS (GEORGE) is Professor of Sociology at Northern Illinois University. In addition to his writing on Greek Americans, he has written about the Balkans and modern Greece. He has published a book of poetry and co-edited readers and special issues of the *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*.

KYROU (ALEXANDER) is author with Steve Frangos of the Greek American section of the invaluable *Greece in Modern Times*, a bibliography edited by Stratos E. Costantinidis (Landam, MA: Scarecrow Press, 2000). This publication was a special project of the Modern Greek Studies Association.

LEFKARITES (MARY) is Assoc. Professor in Curriculum & Teaching at the School of Education at Hunter College-CUNY. Her research focuses on the Greek American family. Her recent work has focused on sex education among third generation Greek American males.

LEONTIS (ARTEMIS) is Adj. Assoc. Professor of Modern Greek Studies at the University of Michigan. In addition to her considerable writing on Greek America, she has curated exhibitions of Women's Fabric Art in Greek America and is video-taping in-depth interviews with prominent Greek Americans for a university archive.

MOSKOS (CHARLES) was for many years Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University and is widely recognized as America's preeminent military sociologist. The fate of Greek Orthodoxy in America is a topic he has often written about. Moskos served on the Archdiocesan Commission on a Theological Agenda for the Third Millennium.

ORFANOS (SPYROS) is Clinical Professor of Psychology at Long Island University and Supervisor of New York University's Post-doctoral Program in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. His *Reading Greek America* flowed from the many years he taught a course on Greek America at Queens College-CUNY.

PAPANIKOLAS (ZEESE) teaches in the Liberal Arts Department of the San Francisco Art Museum. His *Buried Unsong: Louis Tikas and the Ludlow Massacre* had been published in Greek by Katari Editions (Athens) as *Amoiroloitos*.

PSOMIADES (HARRY) was the founder of the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Queens College-CUNY and its long-time director until his retirement. He is co-founder of the *Journal of Modern Hellenism* and a leading figure in promoting Greek American Studies.

RIGOPOULOS (TASSOS) is the writer/director of the landmark, bilingual *Greeks and Americans* which has been featured on national Greek television. He is currently working on a film about Lucas Samaras.

SAVVAS (MINAS) recently retired from teaching English and Comparative Literature at San Diego State University. He has been a columnist for *The GreekAmerican* and *The Greek American Review*. His translations of four volumes of the poetry of Yannis Ritsos are highly regarded.

SCOURBY (ALICE) is now retired, but served for many years as Professor of Sociology and Coordinator of Women's Studies at the C.W. Post Center of Long Island University. Scourby has been a prominent figure in organizations of Greek women and has been a consultant on innumerable projects involving the Greek American community.

TSEMBERIS (SAM) is Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at New York Medical Center and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at New York University.

THOMOPOULOS (ELAINE) is past president of the Greek Women's

University Club where she directed a number of research projects focused on Greek American women of Illinois. She is working currently on a research and exhibition project involving the Greeks of Berrien County in southwestern Michigan.

TOPPING (EVA) is best known for her work regarding women in the Orthodox tradition. She has been a Fulbright Scholar and has taught Greek and Latin at Wheaton College and the University of Cincinnati. Her best-known work is *Holy Mothers of Orthodoxy: Women and the Church*.

TSELOS (GEORGE D.) is Supervisory Archivist and Head of Reference Services at the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island National Monument. He previously served as archivist for the Edison Museum in New Jersey.

TSCHICLIS (MICHAEL) is currently engaged in a project to gather a variety of oral and written data related to the history of the Greeks in the metropolitan St. Louis area. The resulting archive will be housed at the Hellenic Culture Center on the campus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

VAN DYKE (KAREN) teaches Greek and Greek American literature at Columbia University where she is Kimon A. Doukas Professor of Literature. She is an often-cited author on literary subjects and has served as an advisor for Columbia University graduate students dealing with Greek America topics.

Notes

¹Lucas is videotaping five people a month and plans a conference/workshop to deal with the problems of documenting parish histories.

²Chyrsie M. Costantakos, Leah M. Flygetakis, Steve Frangos, Dan Georgakas, George A. Kouvetaris, Charles S. Moskos, Spyros D. Orfanos, Yiota Papadopoulou, Helen Papanikolas, Harry J. Psomiades, John N. Spiridakis, Sam J. Tsemberis, and Maria Vouyouka-Sereti.

³Contributors to the homage were Richard Clogg, Tom Doulis, Steve Frangos, Dan Georgakas, Alexander Karanikas, Andrew Kopan, Mary Kotsaftis, Artemis Leontis, Linda Manney, Charles, Moskos, Philip Notarianni, Spyros

Orfanos, Zeese Papanikolas, and Alice Scourby. In addition to his essay on Helen Papanikoas, Steve Frangos contributed a detailed annotated bibliography of Papanikolas' writing.

⁴The contributors to *New Directions in Greek American Studies* are Constance Callinicos, Helen Geracimos Chaplin, Peter W. Dickson, Dan Georgakas, Yiorgos Kalogeras, Alexandros K. Kyrou, Charles C. Moskos, G. James Paterson, Gunther Peck, Ole L. Smith, and Rudolph J. Vecoli. Contributors to the *JHD* collection are James Steve Counelis, George P. Daskarolis, Vasilikie Demos, Dan Georgakas, Yiorgos A. Kourvetaris, Andrew T. Kopan, Louise Martin, Charles C. Moskos, Helen Papanikolas, George Tselos, and Ourania H. Tsorvas.

⁵The contributors to the special issue are Eleftheria Arapoglou, Lane Demas, Dan Georgakas, Philia Geotes Hayes, Constantine Hatzidimitriou, Yiorgos Kalogeras, Archibald Menzies, Victoria Foth Sherry, and Anastasia Stefanidou.

⁶The six issues published between 2003-2005 had a single essay, two book reviews, and a book review/essay. A fourth book review dealt with transnational identity.

⁷The best effort in recent years to sample numerous Greek literary arts was a special issue of *The Charioteer*, No. 43, 2005 which mixed short stories, extracts from novels, and poems with essays on filmmakers, theater personalities and actors.

⁸The best single volume of Greek American writing today is found in the double issue of *Mondo Greco* 6/7, 2001 The issue had fiction by Lili Bitá, Ioanna Carlsen, Margot Demopoulos, Jeffrey Eugenides, Dan Georgakas, Stratis Haviaras, E.D. Karampetsos, Kostas Myrsiades, Eleni Paidoussi, Jim Panos, Helen Papanikolas, Nick Pappas, Harry Mark Petrakis, David Sedaris, and Constance Stellas. Poets in the issue were Olga Broumas, George Giannaris, George Kalamaras, Penelope Karageorge Dean Kostos, Anna Moschovaki, Stephanos Papadopoulos, Nicholas Samaras, Eleni Sikelianos, and Mia Tsiamis. Non-fiction narrative was offered by Elaine Antonakes, Joanna Panagiota Angelides, Andy Dabilis, Tom Doulis, George Economou, Nick Gage, Thea Halo, John C. Kallas, Joan Marinakis Kaufman, Marianthe Karanikas, Artemis Leontis, Paul Mitarachi, Nick Papandreou, Minas Savvas, and Kelly St. John.

⁹This volume includes a number of essays on Greek Orthodoxy in America and bilingualism in America. Contributing to the volume are Vivian Anemoyanis, Stella Coumantaros, Chrysie Costantakos, Athena Dallas-Damis, Emmanuel Hatziemmanuel, Manos M. Lampidis, Charles C. Moskos, Peter Marudas, Nicon D. Patrinos, Eva E. Sandis, Alice Scourby, and Theoni Vellispyropoulos.

¹⁰This volume tries to show continuity and change from Byzantine traditions to the present day. Contributors are Paul Sant Cassia, Peter D. Chimbos, Demetrius J. Constantelos, Dan Georgakas, Perry N. Halkitis, Euthymia D. Hibbs, Anna Karapathakis, Alexander P. Kazhdan, Susan Buck Statton, and Sam J. Tsemberis.

¹¹*Beneath the Twelve Mile Reef* (1953) is particularly interesting in that it deals specifically with the dangers of diving, the economics of diving, and the tension between Greek immigrants and native-born American sponge divers.

¹²Her first known published work was in *Phoni tou Ergatou* (The Voice of the Worker) in 1924 when she was only 18 years old. She died in 1991 at age 85 while working on a column for *Ethnikos Kyrix* (National Herald). She was also involved in theater and kept a decidedly left-wing sensibility. Although she wrote on all variants in the immigrant experience, she is exceptional in Greek American literature for her frequent portrayals of working class Greeks. Theona Papazoglou-Magaris won the Greek National Literary Award in 1963, the first author outside of Greece to receive the award.

¹³A little known book that focuses on Greek immigrants to Nova Scotia is *Greeks* written by Geraldine Thomas and published by Four East Editions of Nova Scotia in 2000 as part of the Peoples of the Maritimes series. Such regional studies probably exist for other small Greek communities in Canada, but they are rarely cited in articles published United States.

Greeks of the Former USSR Since 1991

by DIONYSSIS KALAMVREZOS

Greece and Russia

For more than ten centuries the relations between Greeks, Russians, and the rest of the people of the Russian Empire, were fraternal. These strong relations were rooted in their common history. In antiquity, particularly in the 8th and 6th centuries BC, scores of Greek colonies were established along the shore of the Black Sea (*Euxeinos Pontos*) expanding the Greek world to the lands that would become Russian after many years. In the 10th century AC the Byzantium spread the gifts of Greek civilization and Greek Orthodoxy to the Russians. The Russian leader Vladimir in 988 AC converted to Orthodox Christianity and married Anna, sister of the Byzantine Emperor Vassilios II.¹ According to the *Primary Chronicle*, the most important source for the birth of the Rus (the first Russian) state, Vladimir's emissaries to Byzantium stated: "The Greeks led us to the buildings where they worshipped their God, and we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss to describe it."²

Some writers theorize that a certain continuity exists between the ancient inhabitants of the Greek colonies and the contemporary Greek population in Russia and former units of the USSR. Many Greeks emigrated to Russia after the fall of the Byzantine

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empire in 1453 and soon became important factors of Russian religious, cultural, economic, military and diplomatic life.³ Other Greeks in this region are descendants of the 18th century immigrants who were invited by Catherine the Great to inhabit the northern shores of the Black Sea when they became part of the Russian Empire. Another wave of Greek immigrants headed for Russia after the Russian-Turkish wars that took place during the last half of the 18th Century and the first half of the 19th Century. A large number are descendants of Pontian refugees who were forced to abandon their homes in Asia Minor between the years 1917 and 1923.⁴

That Greece and Russia have belonged to separate political and ideological camps since 1917—a change whose consequences became dramatic some years before and after World War II—“froze” the positive relations between the Greeks living in Russia and their historic mother country. The period 1938-1948 was particularly traumatic for the Greeks of Russia and the USSR. Stalin’s regime uprooted thousands of Greeks from their homes in the Black Sea and other southern parts of the USSR and exiled them to Siberia and Central Asia. The Greeks were transported by trains under reprehensible conditions. A considerable number perished from these adverse circumstances, but most managed to restart their lives.⁵ The grim realities of the Cold War impeded any Greek initiative on behalf of the Greeks living in Russia.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the relations between Greece, the ex-USSR countries and the Diaspora have entered a new era. The Greeks are once again claiming the special position that they held within Russia during the past five centuries—a phenomenon of major historical, political, economic, and cultural importance. Greece has been re-discovering the Diaspora Greeks and has attempted to revitalize its relations with the other peoples of the former USSR.

The post-Soviet period, however, has been painful. Millions of ex-Soviet citizens have been forced to move within and between the 15 successor states of the USSR. They have been uprooted by armed conflict and social upheavals and they have been stricken by poverty, disruption of the social safety nets and unemployment. Many of these internally and involuntarily displaced persons became de facto refugees who sought repatriation to their ancestral homelands as economic immigrants and asylum seekers.⁶

These numbers included thousands of Greeks who were forced to abandon their homes and to seek a new life in Greece. In response Greece has tried to meet their needs and to support them by adopting procedures for prompt repatriation and by organizing extensive operations, such as the "Golden Fleece" in Abkhazia in 1993.⁷

Greek Communities in Russia and the USSR

The Greek population of the Russian Empire in 1917 was approximately 750,000. A great number of these Russian Greeks left for Greece after the October revolution, and another substantial number left during the first purges of 1937-39. Estimates of the number of people of Greek descent living in the USSR at the time of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 vary. According to the Russian census, conducted in 1989, this number was estimated at 370,000. Unofficial sources, however, consider this an undercount and believe the number exceeded 700,000. Greek community leaders think the number might be as high as 1 million. Other sources have estimated the Greeks of the USSR at about 550,000, inhabiting the various countries as follows: 120-200,000 in the Ukraine, 110,000 in Georgia, 120,000 in Russia, 60,000 in Kazakhstan, 15,000 in Uzbekistan, 8,000 in Armenia, 3,000 in Kyrgyzstan, and smaller numbers in the Central Asian states, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, and the Baltic states.⁸ Another important group of Greek exiles in the USSR were the 35,000 political refugees of the Greek Civil War who settled primarily in Uzbekistan and less so in Moscow. This group began returning to Greece in 1982 after a treaty was signed between Greece and the Soviet Union. By 1989, aided by the increasing assistance of Greece, most of the Greek political refugees had left the Soviet Union.

A characteristic of the Greek communities in the Black Sea region is that they have settled in large numbers in coastal cities, most of them former ancient Greek colonies or not too far from them. Coastal cities such as Anapa, Novorossisk, Gelendzik, Sochi, and others have Greek populations that number between 4 and 5,000. Until 1991, more than 17,000 Greeks lived in Sukhumi in Abkhazia, and between 4,000 and 5,000 in the cities of Batumi and Kobuleti in Georgia. In the Ukraine, the city of Mariupol was considered a "Greek" city with more than 25,000 Greeks.

The Diaspora Greeks have consistently shown an admirable ability to endure, to adapt, and to persevere, despite the various difficulties they have had to face. Whether or not they lived among people who held the same beliefs, whether they chose the place they were living in or whether they were exiled there, they never failed to display these positive traits and a remarkable vitality. Their presence has always been positive and productive. As a result, the Greeks generally have been welcomed by other nationalities. Their position in local societies was strengthened by the renown of certain Greek figures such as the ex-mayor of Moscow, Gabriel Popov, the archeologist Victor Sariyiannides, the philosopher Theocharis Kessides, the musician Odysseas Demetriades. The presence, importance and role of the Greek communities has continued to be manifested after 1991. Diaspora Greeks were elected to the Parliament on both a local and national level, were involved in academic communities, and excelled in business affairs on a national level.⁹

The Diaspora Greeks possessed certain characteristic tendencies before and after the collapse of the USSR. One of these was an adoration for anything Greek—a strong emotional attachment to Greece and to Greek history, despite their strong loyalty to their home countries. A great number of the Diaspora Greeks bear ancient Greek names (Miltiades, Socrates, Aristides, Achilles, Democritos, Hercules, Aristotle, etc.). This Greek identification provided them with an element of moral support, particularly for those who, after 1923, suffered more uprootings and exiles in the Stalinist era. For many years, marrying within the group was the norm. This contributed to the preservation of the “group”—the non-assimilation of the Diaspora Greeks with other nationalities. This is not to say that they were marginalized or ethically biased. In the present day, the tradition of marrying within the ethnic “group” is not so strictly adhered to.

The development of the *Greek associations* and other organizations after 1991 is significant. The Diaspora Greeks immediately founded associations, initially in cities, through which they could forward their concerns to the local authorities, to the Greek Consulate of Moscow (which at the time was the only Greek Consulate in the former Soviet Union), as well as directly to Greece. After the first difficult period of 1992-1993, they became organized into federations of Greek societies on a national level (Federations of

Greek Societies of Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan). In 1996, the establishment of a permanent Confederation of all existing Greek societies of the ex-USSR was made possible ("International Greek Union of the Commonwealth of the Independent States and of the Baltic Countries"—PONTUS). Apart from the aforementioned federations, the Greek Society of Lithuania as well as that of Tashkent, formerly known as the Society of Greek Political Refugees also joined the Union. This new confederation constituted the historical and legal continuation of the "International Greek Union—PONTUS," which was founded in 1991, before the collapse of the Soviet Union and headed by Gabriel Popov, ex-mayor of Moscow and ally to first-period democrat Yeltsin. The Federations of the Greek associations have become trustworthy interlocutors with both the local authorities as well as with the local consulates and embassies. Significant experience has already been obtained, and the rules of democratic procedures have been consolidated.

Population Movements After the Break-up of the USSR

After the break-up of the USSR, a large number of Greeks, about 150,000, opted to return to their historic mother country. Diaspora Greeks were characterized by a strong attachment to their history and tradition. Thus, even the terminology coined to express the "return" to Greece was *palinnoisti* (repatriation) although not correct and precise, since most families descended from immigrants to the Tsarist empire from Asia Minor and the historic Pontus in today's Turkey.

In conjunction with these population movements to Greece, internal migrations were taking place within the countries of the former Soviet Union. Many Greeks from Georgia, Armenia and Central Asia moved to the Russian Federation. The immigration primarily affected those members of the Greek community who lived in the areas that were hurt or involved in civil wars or affected by intense political and economic crises. While the migration from the Ukraine was marginal, Georgia lost a significant part of her Greek population between the years 1991 and 1994, due to the national and political turmoil of the early 1990s and the war of Abkhazia. Additionally, most of the Greeks left Kazakhstan, not

as a result of crises or threats against them, but due to their wish to return to their homes at the seashore cities of the Black Sea from where they had formerly been banished from 1937 until 1939 and also in 1948. Nonetheless, the Greek population in Russia, however, increased to 135-150,000 as a result of a partial "return" of Greeks from and Central Asia to their birthplaces from where they have been uprooted during the Stalinist purges. They were part of an estimated nine million people who migrated within the post Soviet space, This constitutes the biggest population movement since the end of World War II.¹⁰

Conflicts and Other Crises in the First post-Soviet Period

The first post-Soviet period was followed by wars between the former Soviet states, by separatist movements, civil wars, and by extended political and social crises. The Greeks who lived in such areas of conflict were direct or indirect victims of these crises. The areas which have been most troubled by armed conflict and refugee movements are to be found in two principal areas, the Caucasus and Central Asia.¹¹

In the Caucasus, Georgia has been confronted with ethnic and political crises, civil strife and two secessionist conflicts, both of which have led to large-scale population movements. As a result of the crises in Georgia and their catastrophic impact on the national economy (destruction of the network of productivity, unemployment, crime, lack of prospects), a great number of the Greek population was forced to move to Greece either on a temporary or a permanent basis after 1990.¹²

Following the collapse of the USSR a major conflict raged in Abkhazia a former Autonomous Republic of the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet voted to secede from Georgia. That declaration of sovereignty was annulled by the Georgian Government and some weeks later Georgian troops entered Abkhazia. On 14 August in the Ochamchire district south of Sukhumi, the Abkhazian capital, Georgian and Abkhazian troops exchanged fire. The same day, Georgian troops entered Sukhumi, and Abkhazian leader Vladislav Ardzinba declared full mobilization. As Georgian troops occupied Sukhumi, the Abkhazian government fled north to Gudauta, which would

be its base for the rest of the war. Soon the Abkhazian forces and their allies surrounded Sukhumi.¹³ A bloody war ensued that resulted in the occupation of Sukhumi in September 1993 by the Abkhazians. The conflict resulted in 30,000 victims. It also led to the internal displacement of 270,000 people, while a further 80,000 have fled to Russia and other former Soviet republics.¹⁴ The war also caused the shrinking of the once flourishing Greek Diaspora in Sukhumi, the ancient Greek colony of Dioscurias, even though the Greeks were never persecuted by either side.¹⁵ On the contrary, the Greeks were encouraged by both sides to remain in the area throughout the conflict, and they were even offered high ministerial positions. Nevertheless, during the war and after the occupation by the Abkhazians, there were casualties among the Diaspora Greeks. The years 1992 and 1993 marked the third great exodus of Greeks heading from Abkhazia towards Greece and Russia. More than 17,000 Greeks lived there before the war of 1992.¹⁶ Prior to World War II, Sukhumi was not only the capital of the 65,000 Greeks of Abkhazia, but also a cultural center of Hellenism of Russia and the USSR. One could find schools, theatres, newspapers, and libraries located there. Sukhumi was a place where the intellectuals of the Diaspora participated in scientific dialogue. Between 1937 and 1939, and again in 1948, this significant Diaspora was exiled almost in its entirety to Central Asia and to Siberia. Only a small number of Greeks returned during Khrushchev's liberalization period after 1955.¹⁷

The conflict for the independence of South Ossetia from Georgia, which began in 1989, has created some 40,000 internally displaced people and 120,000 refugees, the majority of whom have fled to Russia. Relatively few Greeks lived in the area and almost all left.¹⁸

A significant number of the relatively few Greeks living in Armenia were affected by the clashes between the Armenians and the Azeris, as well as by the crises that plagued Armenia at the time. The crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh started at the end of 1989, when the Armenians living in the area declared their union with Armenia and elected representatives to the Armenian Parliament (Soviet). The already tense relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan quickly led to a long and bloody war. Due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, this war could not be controlled. Mehmana, a Greek village in Nagorno-Karabakh was destroyed and the

approximately 600 Greeks of the region left. The protracted war resulted in tremendous damages to both sides and caused thousands of victims and more than 1,5 million refugees and internally displaced persons. Many Greeks left Armenia at the time.¹⁹ Russia mediated a cease-fire in May 1994. Later mediations by the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international initiatives have stalled and the cease-fire has not yet been translated into a binding political settlement.²⁰

The hostilities between *North* Ossetia and Ingushetia in Ossetia in 1992 was the first war on the territory of the Russian Federation. The basic source of this conflict was the prolonged dispute between North Ossetia and Ingushetia concerning the administrative status of the Prigorodny region which was attached to Ossetia after the WWII. The war produced between 40,000-60,000 Ingushetian refugees, almost all of whom fled to Ingushetia. To the more than 8.000 Greeks in the area, most of whom (4,5-5,000) inhabited Vladikavkaz, the Ossetian capital, these conflicts produced insecurity and tendency to flee.²¹

In 1991, after the independence of Moldova, the Gagauz declared a separate "Gagauz Republic" in the south and Russians and Ukrainians on the east bank of the Nistru River proclaimed the "Dnestr Moldavian Republic" in Transnistria. Moldovan nationalist volunteers marched to Transnistria, where widespread violence was temporarily averted by the intervention of the Russian 14th Army. Violence again flared up in Transnistria in 1992. A ceasefire agreement was negotiated by the presidents of Russia and Moldova in July. Although they found themselves in a difficult situation the 1,000 Greeks of the area were unable to leave as there was no Greek consulate close to them to turn. The problem of the political status of the "Transdnister Republic" despite international efforts remains unresolved.²²

In Chechnya two bloody wars have had disastrous dimensions. The first war (1994-1995) constituted the worst crisis in the Russian Federation which had negative effects for the Diaspora Greeks in the area. During its brief self-proclaimed independence under Jokhar Dudayev from 1991 to 1994, Chechnya became a heaven of lawlessness and extremism. Russia, in the fall of 1994, supported opponents to the Dudayev regime militarily and Dudayev turned to radical Islamic elements in the Middle East and Central

Asia for support. The military action began on December 12, 1994, when the Russian army marched on Grozny, the Chechen capital.²³ The war resulted in at least 20,000 civilian victims, though according to other estimations, the number of the victims was much greater, thousands of refugees (about 150,000) and about 250,000 internally displaced persons and enormous material destruction. Although the war ended on August 31, 1996, with a truce agreement, and the withdrawal of the Russian army, Chechnya's future status remained open. The peace agreement that was signed on December 5, 1997, by President Yeltsin and the newly elected Chechen President Aslan Maskhandov did not result in a definite arrangement. The final status of Chechnya was agreed to be decided upon at a later date.²⁴

Prior to the establishment of the Dudayev regime there were approximately 550 Greeks living in Chechnya, although earlier there had probably been 1,500. Many of them, however had already abandoned the area due to the "Islamification" of the region and the regime's fundamentalism. On the eve of the first war, 1994-1996, 250 Greeks still lived there.²⁵

Maskhandov's efforts to bring together the opposite tendencies of the Chechen society, were not fruitful and led to the loss of control of the situation and the takeover of power by war chiefs, who had been characterized by Moscow as terrorists. In August of 1999, Muslim rebels from Chechnya invaded the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan, with the objective to provoke a general revolution in the Caucasus, against the Russians. The great majority of the population of Dagestan, however, took position against the invaders. After the liberation of the territory, the Russian army invaded Chechnya. The second Chechen war (September 1999-Spring 2000) was also destructive. Thousands were killed, 70,000 according to one estimate and about 450,000 became refugees or were internally displaced. Those inhabitants who remain, lived in towns and villages that have suffered great destruction, while Grozny has been reduced to ruins. Sporadic confrontations in the southern part of the area continue and in many areas, feelings of insecurity are prevalent.²⁶

In Central Asia most of the Greeks lived in Kazakhstan approximately 60,000. Although no social or political crisis has threatened the Greeks in that country, more than half of them left the area after the collapse of the USSR. A substantial number

returned to their homes on the coast of the Black Sea, while others sought a better fortune by repatriating to Greece. A reason for their flight was the widespread sense of uncertainty and insecurity.²⁷ These feelings of uncertainty and insecurity were especially prevalent among those who found themselves living in a "foreign" environment, which, despite not openly expressing animosity towards "foreigners", sought and enforced changes in the areas of education, administration, management, etc. Living in such a setting, along with the decreased importance of the friendly Russian factor, the Diaspora Greeks estimated that in the future their prospects would become progressively worse.

The long and bloody civil war in Tajikistan (1992-97) between two factions, ex-communists, and aspiring democrats in alliance with Islamic activists, but mostly a power struggle between regional clan groupings with little ideological connection resulted in 60,000 victims, 700,000 displaced persons and 270,000 refugees. All 590 Greeks left the country.²⁸ The massacre of the Meskhetian Turks in the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan during Perestroika, and other smaller disturbances between Tajiks and Kyrgyz, on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border over land and water use, and clashes between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in 1990 in southern Kyrgyzstan and later the revival of radical Muslim movements particularly in Uzbekistan all contributed to the climate of uncertainty.²⁹ The Greeks of Fergana valley left for Southern Russia. Out of 3000 Greeks in Kyrgyzstan there remain about 2,000. Out of 15,000 in Uzbekistan there remain 4,5-5,000. From the 450 Greeks of Turkmenistan almost none are left.

Aside from the previously mentioned crises that took place in specific areas, most of the Diaspora Greeks faced the broader economic and social problems of the first post-Soviet period. The dissolution of the USSR provoked a disastrous disruption to the centrally planned Soviet economy which was a highly integrated system based on specialization, division of labour and trade. The abrupt termination of budgetary transfers from the central government and the dislocation of production, trade and transport links caused economic decline and extreme poverty in almost all new states, and extinction or dramatic decrease of the principal sources of funding for the welfare services. The new states soon found themselves engaged in a difficult goal to undertake reforms, attempt to build new institutions, experiment in various degrees

with market economy, privatize the state enterprises and develop real national economies. These attempts of creating new economies have been marred by deep-seated systemic problems, both in the economic and political spheres, inadequate preparation, inexperience of the new competent officials and insufficient and contradictory legal safeguards and disastrous "shock therapies" and proliferation, particularly in Russia of the new class of the "Oligarchs."³⁰

The weakness of the new administrative infrastructure and the competition and conflict between the authorities of the new states made the smooth transition impossible to implement. In fact, these factors contributed to the development of widespread fraud, crime, embezzlement, speculation and the total disruption of the trade and production. The result was chronic inflation, shortages of basic household commodities, frequent delays in payment of wages and growing unemployment. Thus, the economic transition for the vast majorities of the citizens of the new states meant a sharp fall in living standards and a disastrous weakening of social welfare systems such as education and health care networks. For many, particularly the old, the loss of all the old certainties of the communist system and the steadily widening poverty gap made daily life a real fight for survival. Organized crime, commonly referred to as the "mafia" and rampant corruption produced an increase in robberies, muggings and other crimes. The disorganization of the police and other law enforcement agencies contributed heavily to the chaos. Feelings of uncertainty, fear of the future, economic deficiency, lack of promising prospects, alienation and anxiety became prevalent.³¹

With the economic and productive infrastructure destroyed or disrupted in areas struck by unemployment, economic inactivity and weakening of social welfare systems, a significant number of Greeks decided to seek their fortune in their mother country or to move to safer and more promising areas, such as Moscow and southern Russia where they had their own "Greek safety net". A prime example is the "Greek" area of Georgia, the mountainous Chalka region, which until 1989 had a Greek population that numbered over 40,000 (the majority in the area). The bulk of that population of Greeks has since left for Greece and Russia.

During this period, the Greek population also found itself living within new "nation-states", where the nationalistic tendencies

of the local populace had grown in order to fill the ideological void that followed the collapse of communism. These states were in upheaval, as were efforts to impose measures that benefited the members of the dominant nationality of the specific country at hand. For example in some new countries, entrance to universities could only be granted to candidate who knew the official language (the previous entrance language had been Russian). Although not directed towards the Greeks, such measures and tendencies had negative consequences on the Diaspora Greeks. By contrast, in safer and more stable areas (Russia, Belarus, Baltic states) the Greek population increased.

Greece's Initiatives in Favor of the Diaspora

Greece was not prepared to respond effectively to the particular problems that emerged with regard to the Diaspora after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the short term, only the embassy in Moscow was able to take upon itself the difficult task of assisting Diaspora Greeks through the former USSR. Nevertheless, despite the aforementioned problems, Greece responded swiftly, in some cases carrying out interventions that merited international recognition. Operation "Golden Fleece" for the evacuation of the trapped Greeks in Abkhazia during the war is one example.

The initial tasks of interventions were humanitarian in nature and aimed at determining the basic problems. The interventions proceeded to save the threatened Greeks either by offering humanitarian aid, by facilitating their repatriation, or by organizing evacuation of Greeks trapped in war torn regions. In the second phase, the Greek interventions were of an institutional character and followed mid-term and long-term policy objectives (e.g. establishing embassies and consulates, taking measures for the promotion of the Greek language and promoting trade relationships with the Greek assessment and Diaspora etc.).³²

Representatives of the Greek Embassy in Moscow conducted on-site visits after 1991 in order to fully assess the problems faced in areas with Greek population. These visits were essential, as there were no consular authorities at the time. The collection of information and evaluation of the data was otherwise impossible.

Among notable missions the one to Yerevan in the winter of 1991 prepared and organized the transportation of applications for repatriation to Greece. The mission to Georgia in April 1993 assessed the situation and established contacts with local authorities. That same year a mission to southern Russia, in 1993, aided the Greek refugees of Abkhazia, and organized their repatriation to Greece. In 1994-95 visits were made to several cities in Southern Russia, where 90% of the Greek *omogeneia* of the country lived (Anapa, Gelendjik, Novorossisk, Sochi, Essentuki, Krasnodar, Stavropol, Piatigorsk, Mineralnyie Vodi) and Georgia. In May 1995, members of the embassy in Moscow also visited Almaty and Tashkent in order to examine the special problems of the Greeks of Kazakhstan and of Uzbekistan embassy representatives also took part in congresses and meetings of the Diaspora Greeks, conducted studies of their problems and generally were able to transmit a reliable picture and estimation to the government.

These visits offered moral support to the Diaspora Greeks, many of whom saw official representatives of Greece for the first time. Moreover, each visit raised the prestige of the Diaspora in their local communities, since it showed the interest of their mother-country in their well-being.³³

These "reconnaissance" visits of 1991-1996 served the Diaspora Greeks until the establishment and operation of several embassies and consulates in the area. Many of the missions were conducted under very difficult conditions. The personal safety of the embassy personnel participating was often threatened. Despite these conditions, the visits, which filled the void created the lack of other official representations, were necessary, at once of great symbolic value yet able to yield results,

The Operation "Golden Fleece" in Abkhazia

To rescue the Greeks who were trapped between the warring parties in Sukhumi, Abkhazia and the surrounding villages, an operation called "Golden Fleece" was initiated by the Greek state in July 1993. The operation was completed successfully by August 18 of that year. It was the most important Greek initiative during this period, and one of the most noteworthy Greek enterprises undertaken beyond its borders.³⁴

Immediately after the outbreak of hostilities in 1992, the Greek government examined different scenarios to help the Greeks who were trapped in the area. The chaotic situation in Georgia and the extremely difficult and fluid situation in Russia impeded the organization of any operations prior to the ceasing of hostilities, because Greece feared that these operations could result in worse bloodshed and loss of lives. Thus, not much was achieved during the first months of 1993, as it proved impossible to secure even an informal guarantee that the warring parties, or some of their factions, would respect such a humanitarian mission.

As the situation evolved in 1993, the persistent political will of the Greek government to carry out an extensive rescue operation, the improvement of the network of contacts of the Greek embassy in Moscow (at the time responsible also for Georgia), and the possibility of an approaching ceasefire made the prospect of a rescue operation feasible. The responsibility for the on-the-spot organization of this special operation was given, according to a decision by then-Deputy Foreign Minister Virginia Tsouderou and then-President of the "National Foundation for the Reception of Pontian Greeks", to Giorgos Iakovou, to the Head of the Consular Office of the Greek Embassy in Moscow, Defense Attache Colonel Giorgos Kousoulis, staffer Prodromos Teknopoulos, and the representative of the "National Foundation" in Tbilisi, Adamis Mitsotakis. Close cooperation between the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Defense was established in order to assure the smooth and effective implementation of the operation. Initially, the above-mentioned officers of the Greek embassy in Moscow were sent to Georgia to prepare the extensive rescue operation. They had to locate and organize the trapped Greeks, issue travel documents and, most importantly, negotiate with the local Georgian authorities to secure the safe transport of the Diaspora Greeks to Greece.

From July 21 to July 30 the team made contacts with representatives of the Georgian government, the local Russian embassy, and with a representative of the Abkhazian secession administration. In order to protect the lives of the civilians, their main aim was to get all the interlocutors to guarantee that they would help the evacuation of the Greek population and the warring sides would maintain a truce until its completion. On July 31, as soon as this truce was agreed upon, the Greek team, facing great difficulties because all normal forms of transportation had been halted,

boarded a small plane carrying soldiers and went to Sukhumi to organize the evacuation of the Greeks. By that time Sukhumi had been left without water, electricity or food, with most of its infrastructure destroyed and with several uncontrolled criminal groups at large in the area. The Greek team stayed in an abandoned Russian sanatorium that was guarded by Russian soldiers and was considered to be safe. As they could not find food or water to buy, the local military police offered them "hospitality" in their canteen, where they dispensed only potatoes, tomatoes and tea, while the Greeks often shared their meager provisions and rationed dry bread and fruit with them. For 10 days the team, under conditions of extreme and imminent danger, accompanied by heavily armed members of the local militia, visited all the neighborhoods of the city and the surrounding villages that had significant Greek populations (Georkievka, Pavlovka, Odissi, Mitsurina, Alexandrovka, Temerchiki, Halachidon) in order to inform the Greeks about the operation and organize a network of help.

The team set up a temporary "consulate" in the house of Philippos Tyrikides, one of the Greeks in Sukhumi, and arranged the travel documents of 1,484 people. Subsequently, the organizers of the operation returned to Tbilisi, where on August 11 a team of 12 commandoes of the Greek Ministry of Defense arrived to help with the execution of the mission. On August 12, the now-enlarged group returned to Sukhumi on board a small plane with the necessary food supplies, water and communications facilities, and arranged the final details of the operation, which culminated at dawn on August 15. That day, early in the morning, according to the plan, a large Greek ship arrived in the port of Sukhumi. By nightfall, the 1,015 Greeks who had decided to abandon Georgia boarded the ship that left for Greece. On August 18 the ship arrived in Alexandroupolis.³⁵

Operation Golden Fleece succeeded in saving the Greeks. Its good timing and importance were further emphasized by the fact that in September 1993, Sukhumi was overrun by the Abkhazian forces and hundreds of people died.³⁶ This operation also contributed significantly to raising the stature of Greece, not only in the eyes of the Diaspora, but also on the international stage. As previously stated, it was the first postwar political-humanitarian operation beyond Greece's borders. This important and successful operation found its place in history, as well as in international

dialogue, academic discussions and bibliography.³⁷ A prominent writer, Catherine Dale, wrote "Caught in the middle of the madness were members of other official nationalities. In the earliest days of the war, Greece arranged an orderly and thorough evacuation for Abkhazia's Greek population . . ."³⁸ One of the most prominent observers of the Caucasian crises at the time, Edgar O'Ballance, notes, "Some international arrangements were in operation to evacuate refugees from the beleaguered seaport. For example, after secret preparations Greece activated 'Operation Golden Fleece', whereby 1,200 Greeks were evacuated by ships."³⁹

Assistance to Greek Refugees from Chechnya

Prior to the establishment of the Dudayev's regime, there were about 550 Greeks living in Chechnya (other estimations speak about 1,500). The Greek community had very good relations with the local population due to their common problems and recent history, such as the mass exiles to Central Asia after 1944. Nonetheless, many of the Greeks left the territory before the break up of the 1994 conflict because of the prevailing tense situation and extremist beliefs and practices. Despite the fact that the war only directly affected as few as 250 Greeks who finally found refuge in other areas of South Russia, the war was detrimental to the Diaspora, as it once again instilled a sense of uncertainty and insecurity. During this period, many Greeks reverted to seeking repatriation papers as a "preemptive" measure so that they could be ready to leave the country should "something occur" that would lead them to do so. During the period of 1991-1994, the remaining Greeks stayed away from Greek associations in order to avoid being the targets of the extremists. By so being, shortly before the Russian intervention, the number of Greeks in Chechnya remained unclear.⁴⁰

Before the climax of the crisis and the commencement of the hostilities, a committee was organized, comprised of representatives of the Greek embassy in Moscow and of Associations of Greek Diaspora to assist the Greeks in Chechnya. The Committee's functions were many. It collected information in regard to the situation in Chechnya and maintained continuous contact with the competent Russian authorities (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Nation-

alities, Red Cross, and Committee of Refugees). In order to assist in the event of an emergency it identified the Greeks in and around Chechnya and the organized a communications network. It prepared a reception area in North Ossetia for prospective refugees who wanted to relocate to the organization of the reception of the prospective refugees who might want to be relocated to other areas of southern Russia or who might wish to repatriate to Greece.

As soon as the war broke out, employee Prodromos Teknopoulos and policeman Apostolos Peponas, both serving at the Greek embassy in Moscow were sent to the cities of Mineralniye Vodhi, Piatyigorsk and Vladikavkaz in southern Russia. The team was soon reinforced by the head of the consular office and by Anastasios Galanis. The team met with the Greeks of Chechnya who had managed to depart before the outbreak of hostilities and furnished them aid, while at the same time obtaining valuable information regarding Greeks trapped in Grozny.

The team remained in the city of Mozdok in North Ossetia, which borders Chechnya, in order to be in constant contact with the Russian authorities and locate Greek refugees who needed aid. The team's petition to enter Chechnya had not been approved. In January of 1995, "National Foundation for the Greeks Abroad" President Giorgos Iakovou visited the area as well. At the same time, Associations of the Greek Diaspora in Russia organized a meeting at Piatyigorsk to strengthen the network for the reception and assistance of refugees. Due to the coordinated efforts of the representatives of the Greek embassy and the Greek associations, all 151 remaining Greeks, upon their arrival in Mozdok, were given economic aid and were taken to and sheltered in hotels in Mineralniye Vodhi. With the exception of two injuries, there were no casualties amongst the Greeks.

The majority of the Greek refugees from Chechnya, instead of being repatriated to Greece, expressed the desire to be relocated in neighboring areas of southern Russia. Accordingly, the Greek government financed the purchase of apartments for 20 refugee families. On April 15, 1995, the Greek government in cooperation with "the Doctors Without Borders", sent a load of medicines and medical supplies to the Mozdok Hospital, where the head of the Orthopedic Clinic was Greek, Hercules Hadziev, and to the Hospital of the City of Gauliaefsky, located at the border of Chechnya, where the Director was also Greek, G. Kosmov.

The fact that there was only *one* Greek embassy and consulate in the vast area of the former USSR, coupled with the high number of people who visited it daily, led to many problems in the functioning of the consulate and the serving of the members of the Greek Diaspora. After 1991, the Diaspora Greeks seeking to submit applications for repatriation took advantage of the easing of restrictions and the collapse of the old regime to flock from various areas of the Soviet Union to the Greek consulate in Moscow, which was then the only Greek consulate in the entire Soviet Union. The scenes that unfolded in front of the consulate were truly dismal; hundreds of people, especially during the difficult years 1990-1993, formed enormous queues and even tried to jump over the fence in an effort to receive the magic visa for Greece.

Many Diaspora Greeks underwent severe hardships in their efforts to reach Moscow. Some impoverished Greeks who had to travel extremely long distances from places such as Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Georgia, etc. were forced to sell their last belongings in order to purchase a plane ticket to Moscow. Their fate often meant having to wait in the snow for days outside the embassy while the temperature was at polar levels. They were repeatedly forced to spend their nights in stations. Many were easy prey to criminals, forgers, swindlers, and counterfeiters who sold falsified papers and visa outside the western consulates.

New Greek consulates were established in Kiev, Erevan, and Baku in 1992. They were followed by other Greek authorities in the period 1995-96. (embassies in Tbilisi, Minsk, Almaty and consulates in Mariupol, Odessa, Novorossisk, St Petersburg).⁴¹ With the strengthening of the existing consular offices and the establishment of new ones, the extensive network of authorities that emerged, apart from its political and diplomatic consequences, adequately served the needs of the Greek Diaspora in the area. Diaspora Greeks would no longer have to spend the enormous amounts of money or undergo the hardships that were formerly necessary, since they could address every problem or issue that concerns them to a Greek authority in their vicinity. Having an official Greek authority in their vicinity, helped reinforce their sense of security and gradually reduced the wave of repatriations especially from unstable areas.

Adoption of Rapid Repatriation Procedure

Since 1989, a special procedure for repatriation has been instituted for the Diaspora Greeks from the countries of the former USSR. Based on the repatriation visa that could be issued at Moscow, the Diaspora Greeks would be able to easily address the relevant authorities (police, municipality, prefecture) from which they would obtain a permit of residence, and after a short period, a passport and identification papers. By the end of 2003 about 100,000 Diaspora Greeks had been repatriated. At the same time, some 50,000 more have travelled to Greece on a tourist visa. This meant that they were essentially living in Greece permanently, without having been officially repatriated.⁴²

The organizations of Diaspora asked for the simplification of the repatriation procedures through the establishment of new consulates or at least through the strengthening of the already existing ones. They also pressured the government to address the problems of those who were living in Greece without having the official repatriation documentation. The situation was not normalized until 1997, when two more consulates, those of Tbilisi and Novorossisk, began issuing repatriation papers.

The Greek embassy in Moscow turned to undertaking initiatives of economic nature primarily because economic diplomacy is a branch of foreign policy that Greece could effectively practice in the former Soviet Union, and because a large majority of the repatriating Greeks were, among other things, economic refugees. One of the primary goals of these initiatives was the economic development and the strengthening of the Diaspora. In December of 1994, the embassy, in collaboration with the private, entrepreneurial sector of Greece and Russia, organized the "Conference of Economic and Commercial Relations", aimed at furthering the Greco-Russian economic and commercial relations as well as strengthening of the Diaspora. More than five hundred businessmen attended the meeting. An important element of the conference was the Diaspora, which constituted the "natural go-between" of such initiatives, as well as a "comparative advantage," not only for Greece but for Russia as well. In the spring of 1995 smaller conferences on economic issues were held in southern Russia, Kazakhstan, Tashkent, and Uzbekistan, with the participation of many businessmen of the Diaspora. Due to the known problems

that the countries of the former USSR faced (institutional problems, inadequate taxation system, inefficient judiciary systems, etc.), the results of these initiatives have not been particularly impressive. They did, however, lay the basis for successful collaborations later on. Many times, the Diaspora Greeks played a significant role.⁴³

One of the main demands of the Diaspora during the first post-soviet period was the assignment of Greek teachers to local institutions and schools to teach the Greek language. Even though this issue has from the beginning been a high priority of Greece, it has been plagued by the lack of the appropriate bilateral framework as there have been no educational agreements with the new states and their institutions. Some agreements, however, were made and teachers were assigned to departments of Greek studies of some universities in areas with a large Greek population (Moscow, Krasnodar, Stavropol, Mariupol, Tbilisi, Piatyigorsk, etc.). These agreements involve the introduction of Greek courses into the school curriculum in areas where Greeks live and the funding of the teachers who would be involved.

Despite sky-rocketing of prices and the lack of economic means after the fall of the USSR, many Diaspora publications and newspapers survived due to the community sponsorship and support. This aid included donations of equipment and technical infrastructure by Greece, by private institutions and Pontian Associations. Financial Support by the government and private institutions helped the work of Diaspora federations, societies, and individuals.

Furthermore, Greeks of Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia participated in educational programs organized in Greece in order to further educate journalists of the Diaspora. Other measures were the training and education of prominent members of the Diaspora and hospitality to senior citizens and children. Children between the ages of 9 -14 were accommodated at various places in Greece for a period of at least 20 days during the summer. The programs usually included lessons in the Greek language and visits to museums. Some prefectures and municipalities, especially those who already had a significant number of repatriates, instituted many "fraternizations" with cities in Russia, the Ukraine and Georgia. The "fraternizations" of cities are particularly useful and generally support the interests of the Diaspora Greeks, either through various

exchanges, contacts and relationships or through the sheer prestige that the “fraternizations” entailed.

Satisfying the demand of the Diaspora Greeks for cultural initiatives by Greece in areas with large Greek populations, the ‘General Secretariat of Greeks Living Abroad’ of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Greek embassy in Moscow and the Federation of the Greek Societies in Russia, organized the “Greek Cultural Month in Southern Russia” from April 8-19 in 1997.⁴⁴ The “cultural protagonists” of this “month” were groups of artists from Greece (musicians, singers, dancers, choirs), who toured all of southern Russia, including the cities of Anapa, Novorossisk, Gelendzik, Krasnodar, Sochi, Stavropol, Essentuki, and Vladikavkaz. They gave more than forty performances, not only for the Diaspora Greeks, but also for the local audience. Dance troupes of the Diaspora Greeks as well as local Russian troupes also participated in these performances. In 1998 and 1999 similar successful events of “Greek cultural months” were organized in Ukraine, Georgia and Moscow.

These initiatives succeeded in the cultural projection of Greece not only within the Diaspora of these countries, but throughout the entire region. It proved also that a “cultural diplomacy” exercised within a particular environment can be, relatively speaking, equally important in promoting the interests of a country and its Diaspora than more traditional “political” and “economic” diplomacy. The current conditions are very favourable, being that Greece maintains excellent relations with all the countries of the former Soviet Union and cultural initiatives must continue.

The majority of Greek political refugees of the Greek civil war in 1946-49 left the Soviet Union after 1982, when an agreement between Greece and the Soviet Union to allow repatriates to receive their pensions in Greece was signed. A substantial number of political refugees, however, remained, particularly those of mixed marriages and those whose entrance into Greece was prohibited. In the latter category were political refugees whose national identity was in doubt and those who were accused of or already condemned for crimes against the security of the state. Repeated appeals for re-examination of such cases were fruitless since no new evidence was available to prove their arguments.

In 1996, the Minister of Foreign Affairs decided it was time to find new evidence. A team from the embassy of Greece in

Moscow was sent to Tashkent, where the majority of political refugees resided, in order to re-examine all pending cases and to report its findings.⁴⁵ By October of that year the group had completed its mission, and by Ministerial decision, all those whose cases were pending could visit Greece and some were even allowed to repatriate. The reevaluation of the claims of the political refugees was of limited scale, since it dealt with only 180 families. This reevaluation, however, was of a great symbolic importance since it was the epilogue of the long drama of political refugees.

Prospects of the Diaspora

Some two decades after the dissolution of the USSR, the situation in the various former Soviet republics is steadily improving, even though the ensuing problems have not been dealt with equally successfully by all countries. The economies of the Baltic states and Russia were able to recover faster than others, while the prospects for future development remains more promising in countries like Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, due to their energy resources. Other countries, like Georgia, Armenia and Moldova will need more time to heal the wounds they suffered from recent conflicts. The autocratic tradition of Central Asia makes the establishment and consolidation of democratic institutions in the region more difficult. There remain the so called "frozen conflicts" (Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Transdnistria) and other wounds such as the Chechen problem or the signs of revival of extremism in Central Asia which must be addressed with in the most efficient manner for a comprehensive consolidation of peace, stability and development.⁴⁶

Despite these uneven paths of development and prospects for future growth, peace tends to prevail in the area and a spirit of cooperation is being developed, as the nationalistic sentiment following the break-up of the Soviet Union which was responsible for many conflicts before and after 1991, subsides and strong common interests unite the countries of the region.⁴⁷ There has been a strengthening of cooperation between the countries of the former USSR both in multilateral frameworks and institutions. These include the CIS, the Tashkent Treaty for collective security, the "Sanghai-5", the Customs Union between Russia, Belarus,

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, GUUAM, and bilateral agreements.⁴⁸ There is also an expanding relationship with the European Union and other Western organizations and countries.⁴⁹ Greece has and should continue to maintain close ties with the entirety of those countries and advocate their interests.⁵⁰

In international relations, the existence of ethnic communities, minorities or Diasporas in other countries constitutes an important leverage point and source of influence. In stable and democratic environments, a minority or Diaspora provides not only a basis for cooperation between countries but also a peaceful and acceptable means for mutual understanding of the three parties concerned: the country of residence, the Diaspora and the mother-country. The Diaspora, as a lobby, "pushes" the country of residence to closer cooperation with the mother country.⁵¹ Greece has used this element of international power to influence policies in countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, where the presence of a substantial and vibrant Diaspora has offered this possibility.⁵² The presence of Diaspora in the countries of the former USSR and its positive and productive role constitutes a "comparative advantage" in the region for Greece.

Many members of the Diaspora have access to the political power in their countries both at a national and local level. In fact, in some areas, members of the Greek Diaspora are elected as members of parliament (Russia, Ukraine, Georgia) or occupy high-ranking positions within the governments. Such a constructive presence of Diaspora Greeks constitutes the best basis for the further successful economic co-operation of Greek and local interests in the region. Greek "comparative advantage" as opposed to other Western countries is in this case evident, since apart from the common and usual problems other Western nations have difficulties trying to "comprehend" the post-soviet realities. On the contrary, the cooperation of Greek businessmen with local Diaspora Greeks gives them an advantage.

Greece is the only EU member and one of the few countries of the West that has a substantial number of Diasporans in almost all countries of the former USSR. This gives its voice added value in regard to many issues (the European Union, NATO, emigration policies, refugee issues, etc.).Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and the countries of the Caucasus region have, due to historical, religious and cultural reasons, always looked positively upon Greece. The

presence of Diaspora Greeks in their territory constitutes a considerable reason to maintain this tendency. Even in areas without a historical Greek presence, where many Greeks were moved during Stalin's purges (Siberia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan) a pro-Greek sentiment was developed not only because of the positive presence of the Greek Diaspora, but also because of the legendary role of ancient Greek civilization.

As we have recently seen in world events, many political and economic crises between countries result from a lack of cultural understanding and respect, which perhaps could have avoided or ameliorated problems. The presence of the Greek Diaspora in countries of the former Soviet Union, has afforded Greece with the benefit of cultural sensitivity and therefore facilitates political and economic cooperation. Given that many Diaspora Greeks have a high position in the social hierarchy, they often can lead in the resolution of problems or the advancement of different issues when other means prove to be ineffective and unsuccessful.⁵³

Greece's still strong Diaspora in the countries of the former USSR with all the comparative advantages mentioned, must be incorporated into a broader policy whose goals include: support for the Diaspora Greeks who wish to remain to their homes; the strengthening of ties between Greece and the countries of the former USSR; and the strengthening and maintenance of ties between the various Diaspora Greeks living in the various countries of the former USSR. Powerful federations and confederations of all the Greeks in the region would add an important voice in negotiations and discussions. They would be a pressure group that could not be ignored. At the same time such organizations could further the harmonious integration into Greek society of all repatriates and the strengthening of ties between the Diaspora and the motherland. A top priority should be the economic and political development of the Diaspora as a powerful center in its host nation, making it able to influence policies and defend its interests. Greek assistance to the Diaspora, a bridge of friendship and cooperation, would be to the mutual benefit of all concerned, the Diaspora Greeks, Greece and the countries of the former USSR.

Notes

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³Theophilus C. Prousis, *Russian Society and the Greek Revolution*, Northern Illinois University Press, 1994, p. 22.

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⁴⁰Kalamvrezos, "Examining the first Chechen war and its repercussions for the Greek diaspora . . ." *op cit*.

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⁴⁴The initiative was taken by the then Secretary-General of the "General Secretariat of Greeks Living Abroad" of the MFA, Stavros Labrinides.

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The Twined Muses: Ethel and Jenne Magafan¹

by STEVE FRANGOS

Enough evidence now exists to seriously question the manner in which the history and experiences of Greek women in North America are depicted in print. Inevitably portrayed as the weaker vessel Greek-American women, in academic as well as journalistic accounts, rarely hear of themselves as anything more than the shadowy helpmates of Greek men. This image neither agrees with everyday community experience nor the public record.

In the 1930s, many young Greek women, daughters of the stereotypically portrayed conservative peasant immigrants of the 1880 to 1920 era, sought a professional life outside of the traditional roles of wife and mother. A long series of Greek women doctors, lawyers, politicians, artists, journalists, musicians, actors, and college professors are easily found in the historic record. Elaine Kontominas Alquist, Patty, LaVerne, and Maxene Andrews, Helen Boosalis, Maria Callas, Georgia Drake (Tsarpalis), Olympia Dukakis, Angeline Geo-Karis, Yorka Linakis, Helen Zeese Papanikolas, Irene Peslikis, Thalia Cheronis Selz, Eva Catafygiotu Topping and Mary Vardoulakis can be effortlessly noted and more are as easily available for citation. These women were not the demographic norm. That is not the point. What matters is that the existence of these women as a distinct presence within the Greek community in North America is rarely, if ever, noted. It is with this complex of notions that we turn to the lives and careers

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*Top: Jenne Magafan
Below/sitting: Ethel Magafan*

of Ethel and Jenne Magafan, two of the most important muralists that emerged from the era of the New Deal.

The Magafan Sisters

On October 10, 1916, Ethel and Jenne Magafan were born identical twins in Chicago, Illinois, of a Greek immigrant father and a Polish mother. In 1912, the father, Petros J. Magafas had immigrated to the United States from the small village of Melfias near Messinia. By events no longer recalled, Magafas (who eventually changed his first and last names to accommodate the thick-tongued Americans) met and married Julia Bronick in Chicago. Family stories do retain the fact that once the Bronick family learned Julia wanted to marry a Greek they summarily disowned her. Due to this sharp break Julia's social world soon came to focus almost exclusively on Petros's family and friends. It is recalled that Julia learned to speak Greek after a fashion.

The Magafas couple's first child was a girl named Sophia. By 1919, the Magafan family moved to Colorado Springs due to health concerns related to Peter Magafan. Family recollection has it Petros finally chose Colorado Springs because the mountain setting reminded him of his village in Greece. The Magafan twins grew up with their father's love of mountainous terrain. Peter Magafan worked as a waiter at the Antlers Hotel in Colorado Springs. When the Magafan family moved to Denver in 1930, Peter Magafan, became headwaiter at the Albany Hotel. Sophia, married a local Colorado Springs' resident, Stanley Mullins, and participated for many years in the Greek community's activities.²

The artistic qualities of the twins became evident at an extremely early age and they were encouraged by their grade school teachers to continue their endeavors in art. Between 1930 and 1932, Ethel and Jenne, while students in Morey Junior High School in Denver won various student poster awards sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the *Denver Post*. By 1933, Ethel had "won first prize in the Music Week Poster Contest. In the National Poster Contest, Ethel won second prize, while her sister, Jennie, walked away with the third prize. Jennie was also awarded the Carter Memorial All-City Prize for the good work that she did during her high school art course (Angelus 1933: 144)."

In various interviews in later life, Ethel Magafan, was quite frank in stating that while her father was a dedicated worker, utterly devoted to his family, the Magafans were never far from dire poverty. Unquestionably the darkest moment for the Magafan family was in 1932 when Peter Magafan suddenly died. Alone and estranged from her family in Chicago Julia Bronick Magafan supported her three daughters by working as a linen checker in a Denver hotel. But the memory of their father, and his unfailing belief in their artistic gifts, never faded from the twin's memories.

Artistic Beginnings

Katharine Smith-Warren who has written extensively about the career of the twins notes that with the onset of the Great Depression and Peter Magafan's unexpected death, Julia Bronick Magafan "took Ethel and Jenne's interest in art less seriously than their father had. For a single mother . . . in the years before Social Security provided a safety net to widows and orphans, art was at best a hobby. The person who recognized and warmly supported his daughters' talents was now dead." Years later Ethel Magafan, recalled that her father always said, " 'My girls are gonna be artists' . . . It remained a mantra throughout her life, virtually the only thing she told her own daughter about Peter Magafan (Smith-Warren and Perisho 2002: 29)."

Other issues were also brewing for the twins. Between 1931 and 1934 the Magafan twins attended East High School in Denver. Smith-Warren notes this school was renowned for educating "some of the wealthiest and most prominent families in the city." The shy twins "with their long black hair and Greek names . . . felt isolated and ethnic in comparison to the sea of tall, blond seemingly sophisticated girls and boys. Ethel Magafan described feeling like a "country bumkin," out of place and insecure in a new environment (Ibid)."

Nonetheless, in their art class the Magafan twins excelled. Their artwork of the time revealed a love for the western landscape. They also soon gained a strong ally and mentor in Helen Perry, their art teacher. Helen Perry was unquestionably a revelation for the twins. She was the first person they had ever met who had studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and had led the artist's life in New York and Paris.

Aside from class work and Miss Perry's instruction local artists and architects were often asked to speak in class. In the *Angelus*, the East Denver High School yearbook of 1933, on the page devoted to the "Sphinx and Two Arts Clubs" we hear something of these visiting lecturers: "Outside exhibits were displayed by Mr. W.H. Calvin, who showed a group of oil paintings by western artists, and Mr. Frank Mechau, who discussed some of his cubist paintings and talked on modern art (104)." On this same page Jennie Magafan is credited as the Two Arts Club vice-president and Ethel Magafan as the secretary. Two photographs are featured on this page. The photograph on top is a group portrait of the club members. The smaller photograph in the bottom left corner shows Miss Perry, Frank Mechau and a group of students standing in front of them, presumably at Mr. Mechau's lecture. In the very front of the group of students are the two Magafan sisters.

For all that Helen Perry offered her students it was not lost upon the Magafan twins that she had abandoned her dreams of an artist's life and was instead teaching. According to Jennie Magafan Currie (b. 1956), Ethel's daughter, "Miss Perry's career choice clearly played an important role in forming her mother's "hell bent, driven attitude towards being an artist."

The Magafan twins made the transition from high school art classes to art school in a series of steps. There are some discrepancies in the published accounts on exactly how and when various events and individuals influenced the twin's lives but the overall actions and direction the Magafan sister's chose in their efforts to become professional working artists all tend to agree.

A Working Artist's Life

During his classroom visit to East Denver High School, Frank Mechau (1904-1946), an established painter and muralist in Colorado, was so impressed with the Magafan twins that he invited them to his studio. "With the assistance of Miss Perry, who paid the modest tuition, Ethel and Jeanne studied with Mechau. "When Mechau moved to Redstone, Colorado, in the Rocky Mountains he invited them to apprentice with him and they spent the summer of 1934 and again a period in 1936 at his studio in Redstone. (Smith-Warren, 2000: 29).

Aside from what Frank Mechau taught the two young women in the studio his overall way of life fascinated them in the extreme. Smith-Warren notes that Frank Mechau and his wife Paula "lived in a big, old house in the mining town of Redstone, outside of Aspen. They lived the bohemian artist's life, with four children under the age of five that seemed exciting amid the grim reality of the Depression. The scramble for money that was a constant in Mechau's life was forgotten during dinner parties with other artists and writers where conversation focused on ideas, books, and artists. Eduardo Chavez, who was an apprentice, described the scene, "I can never forget the days working on one or another of Frank's Treasury Department murals . . . later in the evening, before a roaring fireplace, after a shared meal . . . discovering Mozart by way of his Concerto in A major, or reading aloud the discussions about Piero Franscesca and Pieter Breughel (Smith-Warren and Perisho 2002: 30)."

After the summer of 1934, the twins returned to their mother and sister and the family home at 1823 Clarkson Street in Denver. Faced with the needs of the Depression and their mother's persistently voiced concern that they have real jobs the Magafan sisters worked for a time in a Denver department store as fashion artists.

The Magafan sisters, as fashion artists, might have been hard for their friends and teachers to, at first, accept. At a time when people regularly wore suits and dresses to go see an afternoon moving picture, the Magafan sisters were known to dress in blue jeans, Mexican shirts and huaraches. But the twins were attractive with long dark hair and dark eyes. Both were slim. Ethel was said to be taller than Jenne, but neither woman was ever more than 5'1" or 5'2" in height. Jenne is remembered as mild mannered and the quieter of the two.. With Ethel other forces were at work. As Jenne Magafan Currie recalls concerning her mother, "She was an extraordinary disciplined artist, yet in most other parts of her life emotion ruled. There was no middle ground for her; things were either fantastic or horrible. She either loved you or detested you."

In 1936, when Jenne won the Carter Memorial Art Scholarship of ninety dollars, she shared it with her sister and they both attended the Broadmoor Art Academy (now the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center). The tuition covered only the first two months. Ethel Magafan in an August 10, 1988 interview with Roderick Dew of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center reported that Frank

Mechau brought the two young artists with him when he accepted the new teaching position at the Fine Arts Center. "He encouraged us to come down here, he was very sweet (Accession No. N552.5 A9 1988G)." Once the Magafan sister's money ran out Mechau hired them as assistants. Ethel went on to say of Mechau, "He was a lovely man but he was a hard worker. He drove us. There was no fooling around (Ibid)."³ Ethel and Jenne worked with Mechau in 1937-1938, along with Edward (later Eduardo) Chavez (1917-1995) and Dorothy Duncan, assisting Mechau at his Redstone, Colorado studio on mural commissions.

In the course of this interview Ethel credits Frank Mechau with teaching her (and all the other students) the process by which they were able to conceive, win and successfully complete a mural. Ethel spoke of the steps involved, from library research through small scale drawing, to overall composition, to the manner in which to hand make paints and other supplies. Frank Mechau was, as far as Ethel Magafan recalled that summer in 1988, a "master."

One mural from this time period illustrates the collaborative nature of these early commissions. In 1937, Frank Mechau received the award to paint a mural for the Glenwood Springs, Colorado Post Office. The mural is a panoramic scene of the White River near which this small community is located. A visitor to the current Glenwood Springs Post Office (113 9th Street 81601) will not see this mural. This is the location of the town's new post office which was built in the 1960s. The old post office building is now the location of the White River National Forest Service (900 Grand Avenue 81602). Glenwood Springs is on Route 70 and is surrounded by the White River National Forest. The mural is still in place and according to a staff person I spoke to at the Forest Service Building a plaque indicates that the mural was painted by Jenne Magafan and Edward Chavez under the supervision of Frank Mechau.

The two young Magafan sisters were constantly encouraged by all their instructors at the Broadmoor Academy especially Boardman Robinson (1876-1952) and Pepino Mangravite (1896-1978). In 1939, Mangravite, hired Ethel and Jenne to assist him at his New York City studio on murals he was commissioned to complete in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The twins continued attending the Broadmoor Art Academy (financially supplemented by their periodic work as assistants) until roughly 1938-1939 when both Ethel and Jenne each received their first public art commissions.

The deprivations of the Great American Depression had been preceded by the excesses of the Roaring Twenties. The excesses of the rich and politically powerful had led to a situation where the country was for all intents and purposes split between rich and poor. Most workers did not passively accept their working conditions or their economic status. Extensive labor unrest in the cities as well as farmer cooperatives directly challenged the unfair practices of those in political power. This turmoil within the working class coincided with the arrival in 1880 to 1920 of millions of new immigrants to North America. This immigration was not happenstance, but the result of the need for new workers in an ever expanding and growing industrialization of the American economy. What did these workers demand? Among the most radical ideas of the day we find the call for an eight-hour workday, safety regulations for workers in hazardous jobs, professional health care for injured workers, elimination of child labor (so age limits), and cost of living pay raises.

Along with these new immigrant laborers came those who were well aware of the reasons and political conditions for their exploitation. Greeks were deeply involved in the American labor movement. Writers such as Helen Papanikolas, Dan Georgakas and Zeese Papanikolas have all detailed the roles and actions of Greeks in this period of American history. Inadvertently omitted from this consideration of the Greeks in the labor movement are the actions and creations of Greek American artists.

Art and politics were much closer, at this time, than in later decades. The well-known statement that "Art is not a mirror. Art is a hammer," by German playwright and poet Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), encapsulates the view of left-leaning artists who wished their work to directly serve as a tool for reshaping these economic and political inequities. Unquestionably the movements in European modern art were associated in the minds of American bureaucrats in Washington with these new radical ideas and the European immigrants who promoted them. Many perceived abstract art as a radical European invention tied to socialism and communism. Indeed, much of what we is now described as modern art (especially much of the work done from the turn of then century until World War II) was once directly associated with left politics.

This prevailing mood was not lost on those who wished the new federally funded art programs to succeed. This led to a decision to support a realistic art style that would focus on local history and events. Officials in charge of these programs wanted a figurative style with strong elements of story telling that celebrated a belief in rural over urban, on things homegrown and verifiably American.

This choice influenced American art for the next twenty to twenty-five years. Inadvertently it also gave an advantage to two western schools of art. Smith-Warren observes that, "The artists who taught at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center when the Magafan's attended . . . like the Taos School artist working in New Mexico . . . tied their work to the landscape and native people of the American West (Smith-Warren 2000: 31)."

During the darkest moments of the Depression post offices were being built, electricity was being installed (often for the first time), dams were being completed to bring water and other modern amenities to villages, towns and cities that had long been used to receiving next to nothing from their state and federal officials. Part of the new federal work program's task was to provide services and facilities to places in America that had long been ignored, places such as Auburn, Nebraska; Anson, Texas; and Helper, Utah. Providing fine art to local government buildings symbolically indicated the worth of these buildings. Involving local officials in the process of awarding a commission for a mural theme—which was inevitably centered on local life and history—was an additional marker of the value the federal government placed on these home communities.

The WPA Murals

The United States was in the midst of the Great Depression when Ethel and Jenne Magafan came of age as artists. One of the many public programs that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt put into effect upon assuming office was the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which was established to create general employment. On May 9, 1933, George Biddle (1885-1873), a talented painter and personal friend of President Roosevelt sent him a letter suggesting that the WPA include jobs for fine artists. His argument was straightforward, "Hell, they've got to eat just like

other people (www.ralphmag.org)." Biddle proved especially knowledgeable of Roosevelt's personality, when he stressed the fact that "young American artists be encouraged to produce murals on public buildings as monuments to the ideals of Roosevelt's social revolution (Ibid)."

The idea of public art was never separated from politics and soon individual government agencies were responsible for a host of different programs. Various public works programs, under the general auspices of the Public Works of Art Project employed artists and supported the arts. The WPA/Federal Art Project soon took form. Artists on relief or unemployed took part in this program. By 1934, the Treasury Department became responsible for all the new artwork that would be commissioned for federal buildings. This new Treasury Department Section of Painting, and Sculpture was later renamed the Section of Fine Arts. Any artist, not one simply on relief, could apply for these commissions. Winning the commission to paint a mural for a specific government building (such as a post office) was a long complicated process. Harsh restrictions soon went into effect stipulating who could and who could not receive a government art commission.

These federally commissioned artists quickly became known for portraying uplifting images that built morale in the country at large. Some critics of these federally subsidized artists thought that these images were not so much uplifting as decidedly political in nature. To cite just one example of the impact of this new public art funding, one percent of the budget for all new post offices was set aside for murals.

The Magafan twins' teachers, who were themselves already recipients of various federally sponsored mural projects, encouraged the two young women to enter the open juried competitions. The application process required that an anonymous scaled study be submitted. These small-scale works of art were called by various names: mural studies, cartoons, or marquettes. The artist's name was not attached to the study during the review process. This was to deter awards being given simply to known or famous artists. Having said all that it was still the case that of the government's 850 commissions for murals, only approximately one-sixth were awarded to women and minority artists.

While the Magafan sisters were the *wunderkinder* of the local Colorado art scene they had much to learn. In 1937, in what many

writers believe is Ethel's first mural study she won the hearts and praise of the critics but failed to be awarded the commission. "I was rather naïve," Ethel remarked about her first try for a post office in Fort Scott, Kansas. "I chose to depict the Lawrence Massacre. [It was] a very bloody, tragic event in this town." (Trenton 1995: 230). On August 21, 1863, William Quantrell's gang of some four hundred Missouri Bushrangers burned Lawrence to the ground in retaliation for the town's abolitionist activities. Ethel Magafan's sketch shows the town in flames and centers on the heroic acts of Lawrence women during the early dawn raid. Her sketchbook notes for this post office project reveal how much she was attracted to this theme: "Women were struggling with their bare hands while homes were burnt down and men were killed. Women clinging to the bridle of a guerrilla horse while husband tries to escape, she was dragged around. Women's bravery!" Not surprisingly, while Magafan's mural proposal greatly excited the Treasury Department, it was rejected at the local level (Ibid.).

Nonetheless, from such beginnings the Magafan sisters were to prevail. In due course Ethel and Jenne Magafan would each be awarded seven commissioned murals. The sheer quality of their art—at such a young age—is significant. Moreover, artists did not give their names when competing for federal competition. This meant that Jenne and Ethel were competing at an equal status with men and were being awarded numerous commissions on the basis of their talent.

As with the work of many other artists it sometimes took decades before what the Magafan sister's created became accepted. A case in point is the rejected Lawrence Massacre mural study. In 1939, this original oil study which measures 16" x 40¹/₈" was "displayed in the New York World's Fair exhibition of American Art Today (*Rocky Mountain News*, Jan. 13, 1940)." Officials from the Denver Art Museum purchased this painting along with 30 others. Some 32 years later, this mural study would, once again, enter Ethel Magafan's life.

The Magafan Murals

The published dates for the Magafan sister's work often vary between the year when the commission was awarded and the year



"Indian Dance" 1937. Senate Chamber, Washington, DC. Ethel Magafan

when the finished mural was installed. In all cases I have decided to cite the year when the mural was physically installed. Another academic anomaly is that in virtually every biographical reference on the Magafan sisters there is mention of Ethel Magafan painting a mural in the United States Senate Chambers in Washington DC. Dates for this commission also vary but most cite 1937. The May 31, 1938 *Colorado Springs Gazette* reports that, "Miss Magafan also painted a five-foot picture, entitled *Indian Dance*, which recently was hung in the senate chamber at Washington." Yet no other documentation on this specific mural, which is so commonplace with Ethel Magafan's other artwork, is available. According to Ethel Magafan's family, *Indian Dance*, which measures 3' x 9', was her first commissioned mural that was awarded in 1937. The mural study depicts eleven Indians dancing in an oblong circle. In keeping with Ethel's keen attention to historical detail these Indians are seen in traditional native garb inclusive of buffalo head masks, rattles, spears, leggings and other elaborate headdresses.

In trying to unravel this mystery I called the United States Senate Curator's Office. After checking their computer files in vein I was directed to contact the Architect of the Capital's office. I spoke with Pamela McConnell, a curator with over thirty years of experience, and nothing on *Indian Dance* could be found. I indicated that the family still held Treasury Department Art Project documents on this mural. Nevertheless, no record of this mural is now available from contemporary Washington sources. As we shall see given the amount of publicly available documentation on the



"Wheat Threshing" 1938. Auburn, Nebraska Post Office. Ethel Magafan

other murals in Ethel Magafan's long career this mysterious omission is all the more perplexing.

In sharp contrast there is no doubt that on June 5, 1938, Ethel installed her second commissioned mural, *Wheat Threshing at the Auburn*, at the Nebraska Post Office (1320 Courthouse Avenue 68305). At 26, Ethel Magafan was the youngest artist in America to receive such a commission. Worth noting is that fewer than 1,000 of the 57,000 artists listed in the 1930 federal census were employed by the Section of Fine Art. The local Nemaha County Herald newspaper article, "Picture Placed in Post Office" describes something of this mural's installation:

A finishing touch was given the new federal post office building in Auburn Monday when a mural painting, the work of Miss Ethel Magafan . . . was placed on the north wall of the lobby, above the door leading to Postmaster Harmon's private office.

The picture 4 x 13 feet in dimensions depicts a typical Nemaha county threshing scene, executed with great fidelity to detail as depicted in the attitude of the workers—the composition being admirable.

When Miss Magafan was commissioned by the mural arts section of the United States treasury department to make this picture, she visited Nemaha county last August and made a series of sketches, embodying not only the operation of the thresher, but the surrounding typography, therefore the mural is not an imaginary picture, but was developed from sketches made by the artist. The picture is one of a scene that is still *common, although it is disappearing with the increased use of the carbine.*

The idea that the production of mural paintings for public buildings is a WPA project is wrong, Miss Magafan pointed out. The work is done as a part of treasury department art projects and the artists are commissioned after sketches are submitted and the ability of the artist to execute the commission is established.

Miss Magafan was accompanied to Auburn by her twin sister, Jennie Magafan, and Edward Chavez . . . who came to assist in placing the mural in the lobby of the post office here (June 9, 1938). We hear furthermore that: "Ethel's mural *Threshing* was readily received by the appreciative Auburn community, unlike many murals by other artists which were openly criticized. Its theme of depicting local agriculture was very popular. It was said, "A better subject could not have been chosen, for the old threshing machine is rapidly going out of use, and inside of a generation it will be a thing of the past and will stand as a memory of the by-gone days.

(www.communitydisc.westside66.org/html/colette/muralsSIG/AuburnPage.html).

In 1939, Jenne was awarded her first commission which was for *Winter in Nebraska* for the Albion, Nebraska Post Office (310 W. Church Street 68620). The mural shows a farmer tending his cows in a winter pasture. At the time the mural was installed "a local 'art critic' observed that the mural was "a right nice bit of art" but was upset that the farmer was not dressed properly for the Nebraska winter (<http://communitydisc.westside66.org>)." This mural is still very much in place and has been honored by being entered onto the National Register of Historic Buildings. After sixty-five years changes in this post office were probably inevitable. One local website notes that the installation of modern post office machines and posters in the lobby detract from the overall effect of the mural (Ibid.)."

On the weekend before Christmas 1939, Ethel's *The Cotton Pickers* mural study was installed at the Wynne, Arkansas Post Office (402 E. Merriman Avenue 72396). Ethel had visited the Cross County area, where Wynne is located, in 1938. Ethel recalled this trip to a reporter later as a time when she "made many sketches of the negroes at work and found that your landscape here



"Cotton Pickers" 1939. Wynne, Arkansas Post Office. Ethel Magafan

offered much interesting material for an artist to use . . . I was especially interested in negroes at work and thought they would make good subject material for a mural (*Wynne Daily-Star Progress* December 27, 1939). The mural presents a group of Negroes in a cotton field.

The original cost of this 4' x 12' mural was a tidy \$560! This at a time when a day laborer was making, on average, a dollar a day and supporting a family on that weekly income. On August 14, 1998, this mural was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In part the nomination reads: "Ethel Magafan's mural *Cotton Pickers* remains the centerpiece of the Wynne Post Office nearly 60 years after its installation."

Although the Magafan sisters were amazingly successful in the balancing act between local sensibilities and Washington bureaucrat directives, more was at work. Only within recent times have the subtle layering of meanings the twins were able to invest into these murals become recognized. Susan Valdes-Depena has noted that Ethel Magafan always "emphasized that her *Cotton Pickers* was drawn from life (Valdés-Depena 2002: 278)." Much has been made of the fact that the mural depicts only blacks and that rather than being seen as picking cotton they are shown weighing it and loading it on a wagon. Unlike other federally funded murals which presented African Americans working in the rural South the "unmistakable message that can be taken from the painting is that competent African-American men are entitled to evaluate the worth of their own labor (Ibid)." Recalling the *Lawrence Massacre* study, with its emphasis on presenting strong women taking part in the world around them we see at the very center of *Cotton Pickers* the portrait of a monumental woman, singing.

Ethel Magafan consciously chose Marian Anderson (1897-1993) as the model for this woman. While Anderson was the third most popular opera singer of this era it did not exempt her from racial discrimination. She was often refused accommodations at restaurants, hotels, and concert halls. Events that took place just as Magafan was composing and painting *Cotton Pickers* influenced its creation. A website for the University of Pennsylvania describes the situation as follows, "Before Easter Sunday 1939, Marian Anderson had performed in the nation's capital only in churches and schools. Aware of her increasing recognition and popularity, manager Sol Hurok believed that it was time to select concert venues in the places where all the best performers appeared. In Washington, D.C., that place was Constitution Hall. Ironically, just the year before, Ms. Anderson had given seventy recitals in the United States—at that time, the longest, most intensive tour in concert history for any singer. She had also made her initial tour of the southern states and received an Honorary Doctorate of Music from Howard University.

When the management for the owners of Constitution Hall—the Daughters of the American Revolution—realized that a booking was being sought for a "singer of color," it refused to allow the performance to go forward. Public shock and outrage were so great that First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt resigned from the D.A.R. and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes formally invited Marian Anderson to appear in the open, singing from the Lincoln Memorial before as many people as would care to come, without charge. The event on the ninth of April drew a crowd of 75,000 (the largest to date ever assembled at the Memorial) and was broadcast to a listening audience of millions. Although a difficult and painful incident for Ms. Anderson, it remains a touchstone for all those who have struggled to gain racial equality in the United States. In July 1939 she received the Spingarn Medal of the NAACP. It was presented by Eleanor Roosevelt (www.library.upenn.edu)."

The entire episode caused the news media to focus greater attention on subsequent cases of discrimination involving Anderson and other African Americans. Ethel Magafan's 'logical choice' of Marian Anderson had racial and progressive themes that are only now coming to the attention of academics.⁴

In 1940, Jenne and Ethel Magafan made their New York City debut: "... showing jointly at Contemporary Arts. The former

keeps to oil, the latter to tempera, and their work is quite individual despite a certain common point of view (*New York Times*, October 13, 1940:10)." Coincidentally, again on October 13, 1940, the *Ethnikos Kyrix* (National Herald) also ran a short five-paragraph review article (in Greek) with photograph of the Magafan sister's opening at the Contemporary Arts Gallery. The article correctly identifies the twin's Greek background, but the area from which Peter Magafas emigrated is incorrectly cited. Something of the Magafan's work is also mentioned. Over time the two sisters would exhibit their easel size paintings together another six times.

The Magafan sisters would also have individual one-man shows as well as having their paintings, lithographs and other work exhibited in grouping shows with other artists. Between 1950 and 1961, Ethel Magafan had thirteen solo exhibitions in some of the most prestigious art galleries of the nation with seven shows in New York City. Principally Ethel Magafan's solo shows were held at the Ganso Gallery throughout the 1950s, the Seligman Galleries in the 1960s, and the Midtown Gallery thereafter.

Neither Jenne nor Ethel stopped using Western themes in their easel paintings. Art historian Virginia Scharff notes that, "Ethel Magafan . . . painted Rocky Mountain landscapes tinged with awe and paradoxically inviting menace (1995: 17)." Erika Doss, yet another art historian who has studied the Magafan's notes a decided difference from their mural themes and those of their other work: "In their smaller, private paintings the Magafan twins were hardly so optimistic. Ethel's *Garden of the Gods*, 1938, and Jenne's *Deserted Street*, 1943, are more eerie than upbeat. One is a surreal landscape of small figures pose against sharp stone outcroppings, the other a disturbing portrait of her twin in an abandoned mining town; both hint at the psychological and physical tensions of the Great Depression and World War II."

1941

In 1941, so much was going on in the lives of the two Magafan sisters it is difficult to sort out which murals they were researching, painting, applying for and/or completing. As far as can be determined the first mural completed in 1941, was Ethel's *Prairie Fire* that can still be seen at the Madill, Oklahoma Post Office (223



"Prairie Fire" 1940. Medill, Oklahoma Post Office. Ethel Magafan

West Lillie Blvd 73446). This mural shows five cowboys battling to keep their horses and oxen-team under control. The canvas of the wagon seen on the mural's right has caught on fire. The dynamic scene is one of pioneers pitted against the elements.

In 1941, Jenne finished the mural *Western Town* for the Helper Utah Post Office (45 South Main Street 84526). This mural study was clearly created to honor the cowboy. Don Amerman describes this mural as depicting "a typical town in the West during frontier days. Inhabited largely by tough-looking cowboy types . . . It shows a blacksmith contemplating his handiwork, a woman entering the town's general store-cum-post office, two hard-bitten horsemen entering town on their mounts, and a saloon in the distance. The artist's signature appears on a scrap of discarded paper that lies on the street of the town. The influence of such early Renaissance masters as Massacio and Giotto is evident in the murals of both sisters (2001: 80)."⁵

As a *Helper Journal* feature story dated Thursday April 24, 1941 states, "The only painting to be installed in a Utah post office under the National Treasury Department's special grant . . . was fastened to a wall of the Helper Post Office Monday morning . . . Entitled "A Typical Western Town" (sic) the painting in everyway lives up to its name. The artist is Miss Jenne Magafan, who along with her sister Ethel . . . hung the picture . . . This was the second trip here of the Misses Magafan, they having been here once before during the time a special exhibition of their work was shown in the community art gallery, last year . . . This painting Miss Magafan's most recent, was to have been here last November, but work on a mural for a Texas post office delayed here (sic) . . . During the

past month this painting has been representing Utah in a group of post office paintings at the Utah State Art Center."

Jenne's original mural study for *Western Town* is in oil, and measures some 25" x 43 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Today this study is held by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Just to give some insight into the complicated history of bureaucracy and neglect prior to the 1960s this work of art was transferred from the Internal Revenue Service through the General Services Administration to the Smithsonian.

The Texas mural mentioned above was Jenne's *Cowboy Dance* (or) *Fiesta de Vaqueros* for the Anson, Texas Post Office (1002 11th Street 79501) that was also completed in 1941. Anson Texas is the Jones County seat and is situated in the West Texas Panhandle, twenty-four miles north of Abilene. According to the 2000 census the current population of Anson was 2,556 individuals.

In 1939, when Jenne was asked to submit a study for the Anson mural she quickly visited this small Texas town. Jenne Magafan quickly learned that Anson is home to the Cowboy's Christmas Ball and has been since 1885. The *Texas Two-step*, the *Do-si-do* dance, and waltzes all figure prominently in this annual affair. Aptly enough Jenne chose this yearly gala as the subject for her mural. She submitted a pencil sketch for *Cowboy Dance*, which received approval, and set to work on the color sketch that would more fully indicate her plans for the mural. Jenne received many suggestions for improving the composition. Jenne made the corrections, proceeded with full-size cartoons, and, then painted a 23 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ " oil on fiberboard mural study. After receiving further approval, the young artist painted the mural. At the last minute, Jenne added an earthen jug in the lower right corner (absent from both her cartoons or painted study) to signal the festive mood. Anticipating an enthusiastic public reception, Magafan was aghast at the local newspaper's reaction: "throughout the history of Anson there has never been an open saloon nor did [Magafan] know that the people of Anson continue to vote against liquor stores (Mecklenburg 1990: 3)." Jenne Magafan never confirmed or denied this claim. In fact, the story of the Anson mural does not end here. In 1942, Jenne Magafan was awarded the Ernst Peixetto Memorial Prize, given in New York, for murals painted by an artist under thirty specifically for *Cowboy Dance/Fiesta de Vaqueros*. Today, the Smithsonian American Art Museum holds the original study for *Cowboy Dance*.



*"Mountains in Snow" 1941. Social Security Building, Washington, DC.
Ethel Magafan and Jenne Magafan*

These federally funded works of art were powerful public symbols to the communities they celebrated. In the uncertain times of the 1930s the commissioning of public art grounded in local history, culture and themes gave small town America reassurances that the federal government valued them individually by embracing them in a nationwide project. As art historian Karal Ann Marling writes, "Post office murals like those Ethel and Jenne Magafan painted came to symbolize a "collective act of faith . . . The murals were bridges, anchored at one end in the past and vaulting over the present into the world of tomorrow (Marling 210)."

In 1941, Ethel and Jenne Magafan conceived and completed together the mural *Mountains in the Snow* for the Board Room of the Social Security Building (now the Health, Education and Welfare Building) in Washington, D.C. This tempera panel mural depicts "a mountainous landscape typical of the Colorado scenes among which these girls grew up and learned to paint (*Los Angeles Times* April 23, 1944)." The sisters worked on this 9'9" x 18'8" mural while living in Cheyenne, Wyoming where Edward Chavez was stationed at the time. As with the other mural commissions the Magafan's applied for during this era it was awarded as the result of an open competition. According to family recollections

this is the one and only public project that the Magafan sisters ever worked on together.

Ethel and Jenne Magafan continued to live and work out of Colorado Springs until 1941. Jenne Magafan and Edward Chavez had become lovers by sometime in the late 1930s. Ethel Magafan, continued residing with Jenne and Edward serving as something of a cover for the two young lovers. When Chavez was inducted into the military the movements of the twins was determined by his postings. Ethel and Jennie first moved briefly to Los Angeles (1941-1942) then to Wyoming (1942-1943) and then back to Los Angeles in 1943-1945.⁶

The Murals of 1942 and 1943

In 1942, Ethel received the much sought after commission to paint a mural at the South Denver Post Office (225 South Broadway). *The Horse Coral*, which is still in place, is a full-color composition of six horses and one working cowboy set against the mountains of the high prairie. This 6' x 15' mural is found over the old postmaster's office doorway. Unfortunately, since 1942, new lighting fixtures have been suspended from the ceiling that interfere with a clear view of the mural. Ethel Magafan's name is clearly printed in the bottom right hand corner of the mural. A one-page handout on the mural is available for the asking.

In 1943, Ethel Magafan was awarded the commission to paint a mural at the Recorder of Deeds Building 515 D Street NW (corner of D and sixth Streets NW) in Washington, D.C. This 5'8" x 14'4" tempera on board mural (which was installed in 1944) is still to be seen in the main foyer. The process of applying and receiving the commission had been as complicated and political as ever. Given that the Recorder of Deeds in Washington, D.C. employed a large number of African-Americans, the theme for the murals to decorate its new building was "Contributions of the Negro to the American nation." As with all Section competitions, submissions had been anonymous. Seven artists were chosen out of one hundred twenty-four, among them one African-American and three women. Magafan submitted two designs: *The Colored Regiment at Fort Wagner* and *Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans*. *The Colored Regiment* was not chosen, although Magafan preferred its com-



"Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans" 1943. Ethel Magafan

position. It depicted the 54th Massachusetts, the first all-black unit that fought with the Union Army during the Civil War. The regiment suffered heavy casualties in a heroic, though unsuccessful attempt to capture Fort Wagner at Charleston, South Carolina harbor in July 1863. The winning entry, *Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans*, featured the African-American regiments that fought in the War of 1812. Basing her work on extensive research, Magafan depicted Jackson's defense of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, including the building of bulwarks by piling up cotton bales. Section judges suggested a number of changes to this panel—the addition of Creoles, Spanish moss, a flotilla in the harbor, corrections to the shape of the cotton bale, and the number of persons needed to carry it—all of which can be seen in the finished painting⁷

It is sometimes difficult to imagine the Magafan Sisters crisscrossing the country in their station wagon to research, apply, or complete an assignment. As Jenne Magafan Currie reports, "During the war years my mother told me they saved up gas coupons as fuel was rationed and drove cross country on "retreads," refurbished old tires." In 1944 while the two were in Los Angeles, pursuing an assignment, the sisters met artists Doris Lee (1905-1983) and Arnold Blanch (1896-1968) who were the first to speak to them of the artist's colony in Woodstock, New York. In the spring of 1945, the Magafan sisters headed east to see what this new art colony was all about. 1945 was a pivotal year for the Magafan sisters in that they had their work exhibited at both the Los Angeles Museum of Art and the National Academy of Design.

On June 30, 1946, Ethel married the painter Bruce Currie (b. 1911) whom she had met at a Woodstock artist's party nearly a year before and continued her career as a very successful easel artist. Jenne's movements are a tad more difficult to document. We do know she married her long-time sweetheart, the painter and fellow muralist Edward Chavez who upon his return from World War II, in the summer of 1945, joined Jenne in Woodstock.

Once the Magafan sisters moved to upstate New York it was the first time the twins did not share a studio. In an interview in the *Catskill Mountain Star* (Saugerties, NY) on October 27, 1950 the Magafan's asserted that, "Prior to their marriages when the twins were living and working in the same studio it was difficult to tell 'who painted what,' but within the last three years their work has grown highly individual."

One way to judge the Magafan sister's success as easel artists, in this period of transition, is the fact that neither one of the sisters ever had to work at any other profession to earn a living. Ethel recalled later in life that while "the money . . . the mural projects provided [was important]" "We all needed the money—but the encouragement to be able to go on painting was even more important (Ibid.)"

Woodstock Art Scene

The Catskill and Hudson Valley regions of New York State are home to some of the finest artists in the world. For nearly one hundred years painters, sculptors, photographers and fine-craft artists have flocked to this region to work. Artists report finding inspiration not only in the breathtaking landscape but also in the large community of their fellow artists.

From 1946, onwards Ethel Magafan and her husband Bruce Currie made this area their home. Local guides to the region wrote of them as follows, "The couple spent many decades as fixtures in the art world, creating art in their wildly different styles in their own studios on opposite sides of their house. They had an unspoken law with each other that neither would comment on the other's work unless asked. Advice, when sought after, was extraordinarily helpful to both artists, and the support that the two gave each other throughout their careers is touching. At one point, Ms.

Magafan was having a great deal of trouble completing a painting. The more she struggled with it, the unhappier she was with it. She finally asked her husband's advice. "It looks like you have two paintings here," he said. "You have one thing going on over here and another going on over here." [Given that she was painting on a masonite panel] Her response? "Get the saw—we'll cut this painting in two." The result was two successful paintings, rather than one unsuccessful one. In turn, Mr. Currie often turned to his wife for inspiration for his paintings. He loved the domestic scenes of late nineteenth/early twentieth century artist Pierre Bonnard, and found himself, too, fascinated with the quietness of domestic life. He often sat sketching his wife as she would go about some domestic task, or even if she was just sitting and reading. His daughter, Jenne, too, often served as the model for his paintings (www.catskillregionguide.com March 2004)."

During this period, Jenne Magafan is credited with working on two other mural projects. In 1947, Jenne Magafan was awarded the contract to paint four murals in the lobby of the Grafton Street Junior High School in Worcester, Massachusetts. A local paper noted, "Miss Magafan submitted four sketches in soft color combinations depicting scenes in the days of Jonas Rice, first Worcester schoolmaster. They center on the teaching activities of Mr. Rice and the pupils in instructed . . . Money for the painting and erection of the murals is from a St. Wulstan Society grant and class gifts. It is expected that the artist will begin work on the project next month (*Worcester Daily Telegram* May 29, 1947)."⁸ In speaking with Rose Dawkins, principle of this school, I learned that the four murals are still in place at the entrance of the building. The school itself, however, is now called Worcester East Middle School (420 Grafton Street 01604) and, today, serves a highly mixed student body.

For the second mural project all that is said in the available literature is that Jenne was one of three artists to work on murals at the West Denver High School (951 Elati Street 80204). During a visit to the West Denver High School, Lynne Milliken of the art department and Marthanne Simons of the school's library, provided me what information they could. Curiously while documentation is readily available on some of the WPA artists and so their murals at this school no such information is held on Jenne Magafan's murals.

I was shown the two murals by Jenne Magafan that are still to be seen on the south wall of the school's main entrance. These murals are in full color and are approximately 4' x 6'. Consequently, the figures are in near to life size stature. The one mural furthest to the east (which is hung lower than the next mural) shows two mountain men firing at some unseen enemy from behind the cover of trees. The other mural shows the full-length profile of a pioneer woman drawing a bucket of water from a well. A child is near her and a roughshod house can be seen in the background. Jenne Magafan printed her name, in paint, on both murals.

On the north wall immediately opposite to Jenne Magafan's two murals are two other murals which were painted by Edward Chavez. These two murals show cowboys at work. What is striking about Chavez's two murals and Jenne Magafan's mural of the two mountain men is that from the viewer's perspective we see, as one walks up the main entrance stairs, all these individuals only from their backs. The viewer is, in effect, looking over their shoulders back into history. Only the life size pioneer woman can be seen even partially facing the viewer and as one walks up the stairs the eastern light of the massive windows falls on these figures one is drawn to look up into her face.

Fulbrights to the Mediterranean

During 1951 and 1952 both Magafan sisters worked and traveled in the Mediterranean.. Edward Chavez, Jenne Magafan's husband had won a Fulbright scholarship to Italy and Ethel Magafan one for Greece. This was the longest time the twins had ever been separated and it is said that they corresponded to each other daily.

Bruce Currie, who is still very much alive at this writing , recalls that while in Athens Ethel frequently visited one of her aunts who was then living in Piraeus with her son. Ethel and her relatives would sit and talk in Greek. But as the article "Magafan and Mountains' in *American Artist* reported not much time was spent sitting around and visiting. For Ethel Magafan and her husband Bruce: "There was little in Greece and its islands they did not see. That meant roughing it much of the time. They would start out in a jeep with lunch and a bottle of wine, prepared to jog

over roads that were scarcely more than trails (Watson 1957: 62).” And like so many individuals of Greek descent before and since the Magafan twins “first visited the ancestral home in the little village of Messinia, near Sparta (Ibid).” Ernest Watson, the author, of this article was regrettably mistaken. The Magafas family village, as Bruce Currie remembers it, was Melfias which is located near Messinia.

Jenne Magafan Currie recalled for me that, “The way they finally got in touch with my mother’s family was . . . my parents . . . had been in Greece a couple of weeks or so . . . and they were in the American embassy in Athens . . . one of the men [working in the embassy] he came over to my Mother, and he said, ‘Excuse me Miss Magafan,’ he was saying in it a very disparaging tone, ‘there’s some guy outside who says he’s a relative of yours.’ And he was just being really snootie about it. My mother said, ‘Oh really.’ And she walked outside and there’s this young man. He was very poorly dressed . . . it was right after the Second World War when Greece was so poor . . . The young man was saying, to my parents, ‘I’m your cousin. I’m your cousin.’ And as a way of proof this person—my mother’s never laid eyes on—as a way of proof he pulls out of his shabby jacket this little folded up dog-eared piece of newspaper clipping. He opens it up and shows my Mother . . . it’s a clipping of the *Denver Post*. It’s a little thing, ‘Twins Nail Poster Award,’ one of those little hokey [newspaper stories] . . . ‘Your father mailed this to my mother, I’m your cousin’ It was so touching. My mother was so moved. And so he [immediately] took them home to meet my mother’s aunt Diamando . . . My mom’s dad was mailing every single one of those silly little clippings to his family in Greece saying [in effect] see this is what my kids are doing!”

This was the very early 1950s in Greece and visiting Greek-Americans were not as commonplace as they would be later. In one of Ethel’s notebooks we hear more of this time: “We came down on primitive villages perched on the sides of sheer cliffs, places so seldom visited by foreigners that the natives all stared at us, and in the village of Alagonia we had to be rescued by the police from a curious mob. This is not a pretty country; rather it is rugged and fierce.” Interesting to note is that the opening photograph of Ethel in the “Magafan and Mountains” article—that she provided—shows her posed next to the capital of a massive Greek column.



Ethel Magafan, Greece, 1951



Characteristic drawing of a Greek hill town from Ethel Magafan's sketchbook, slightly reduced

Tragedy in the Catskills

In 1952, the Magafan sisters and their husbands returned to the United States. Unexpectedly, on October 20, 1952, less than a week after their return, Jenne Magafan died in the Albany Hospital of a cerebral hemorrhage. Ethel was deeply affected by her sister's death. Two memorial exhibitions were held in Jenne Magafan's honor one at the Albany Museum and the other at the Ganso Gallery in New York City. Homage was paid to Jenne Magafan by her fellow artists, including Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Peppino Mangravite, Fletcher Martin and Eugene Speicher.

From that point on Ethel Magafan made considerable efforts to be certain that her sister's artwork was included in exhibitions. Given that Jenne Magafan died at thirty-six and Ethel survived her by forty-one years it is not surprising to find that various writers assert that Ethel Magafan is the "better" artist. Still, after reading and reviewing a considerable amount of the available writings on the Magafan Sisters this kind of either/or appraisal seems not simply inappropriate but unappreciative of the real accomplishments each sister made in art.

Jenne Magafan dealt with a wide variety of subjects in her oils, and later graphics as well, western themes remained an important part of her work for most of her career. A short list of public institutions that hold Jenne Magafan's art work includes (but is not limited to): Newark Museum, Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institute, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Grand Rapids Art Gallery, and the White House. Her work also have appeared in numerous exhibitions that do not include Ethel's work. In 1988, the National Museum of American Art presented the exhibition *Special Delivery: Murals for the New Deal*. The mural study for *Cowboy Dance* was prominently displayed in this exhibition when it first opened in Washington DC and as it toured the country. Jenne Magafan's painting *Mountains and Plains* (circa 1930) was included in the exhibition *Colorado Landscapes and the New Age of Discovery* (November 3, 2001-January 6, 2002).

Jenne's death may have influenced Ethel's life and work far more than is now understood. Complicating this entire story is the fact that most of what we know about Jenne comes filtered through Ethel, whose concern for her sister is expressed through a more volatile personality. Jenne's sometimes tumultuous marriage to Edward Chavez did not escape a protective sister's brooding attention. "The message she passed on to her daughter was unequivocal. "Make sure you end up with a man who respects your work. Don't end up like Jenne—the worst thing for an artist is to be in competition with her husband." And most succinctly, her daughter remembers, "Don't let any goddam man tell you what to do."

In later life Ethel described her sister's death as "a tragedy from which I have never fully recovered." Jenne Magafan Currie experienced it as "this thing that was hanging over the household my whole life. This person I never met but was named after."

The Solo Career

After, Jenne's death, Ethel continued to have a highly successful art career. Even while living and raising a family in upstate New York Ethel still drew much of her artistic inspiration from the Western landscape. Realizing this Ethel began to make annual trips to sketch and paint in the western mountains of the United



Ethel Magafan in her studio, Woodstock, NY, 1963

States. This annual trip sees fine description in a letter from Mary J. Gruskin, Director of Midtown Galleries to Fred Bartlett Director of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, "Every summer Miss Magafan returns to Colorado. She, her painter husband and daughter drive up into the mountains, sketch all day and sleep in their attached trailer. Back in Woodstock, New York, she works from these sketches producing the exciting paintings which have won her countless national awards and representation in many of America's museums (February 5, 1976)."

During this time nothing stopped Ethel Magafan from her one-man shows. From 1962 to 1993 Ethel Magafan had a phenomenal 19 solo gallery shows. Magafan's drive and dedication impressed everyone. As Jennie Magafan Currie, a professional artist in her own right notes on this level of highly accomplished "fiercely focused" work, "she was an extremely attentive mother. Yet her track record of one person shows does not skip a beat, during her pregnancy or when she had a new born, a one year old or a three year old . . . that's totally amazing."

This was also an especially dynamic period for Ethel in that, as numerous critics note, her painting style was evolving gradually from the literal realistic “to the semi-abstract and in subject matter form figurative studies to landscapes (Kovinick and Yoshiki-Kovinick, 1998: 200).” In 1968, Ethel Magafan was elected an Academician of the National Academy of Design.

Ethel Magafan’s considerable stature in American Western art can be judged, in part, by the circumstance that in 1971 the Department of the Interior “invited her to make on-location sketches of the scenes in arid western America. The paintings were first exhibited at the National Gallery, Washington, D.C. then sent on a tour of the country by the Smithsonian Institution (Kovinick and Yoshiki-Kovinick 1998: 200).”

Ethel Magafan’s attention to her career did not end with simply her steady production of one-man shows. In 1973, Ethel was guest artist in residence at the University of Georgia (Athens) and in 1976 at Syracuse University. As Ethel Magafan’s numerous *Who’s Who* entries reports she garnered a staggering 62 awards from right after her return from Greece in 1951 right through into the very early 1990s. Again, from the late 1940s-early 1950s onwards as many writers have noted Ethel Magafan, along with her husband Bruce Currie, were renowned fixtures of the Woodstock Art Colony.

The Last Murals

In 1976, as the Midtown Galleries brochure for the new Magafan show explains, “in contest with painters across the country, Ethel Magafan won the Abbey Mural Fund Competition administered by the National Academy of Design . . . the artist was commissioned to paint a mural for the Chancellorsville Visitor Center.” After 2½ years of work, on May 6, 1979, Ethel Magafan’s last public mural *Grant at the Battle of the Wilderness* was unveiled at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park (120 Chatham Lane Fredericksburg, VA 22405). Four major battlefields of the Civil War are within the Park’s boundaries. Two Visitor Centers are to be found in the Park: one commemorating the Battle at Fredericksburg and the other the Battle of Chancellorsville. Magafan’s mural is at the Chancellorsville Visitor Center.⁹

The principal figures in this 12' x 20' mural are General Grant, Major General George Mead and Ely S. Parker. Parker, a Seneca Indian, was Grant's military secretary. In 1865, it was Parker, who transcribed the terms of surrender Grant offered General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Courthouse. At *The Battle of the Wilderness*, which took place between May 5 and 7, 1864, a total of 25,416 men died: 17,666 Union soldiers and 7,750 Confederate. This particular battle was the sixth costliest, in terms of casualties, of the entire Civil War.

Ethel Magafan remained deeply committed to this mural. A *New York Times* review states that Ethel had a show at the Midtown Gallery which featured "sketches and drawings for Ethel Magafan's mural which was made for the National Military Park, Fredericksburg, Virginia (June 1, 1979)." The reviewer went on to remark: "It is a very odd thing to be doing an almost lifesize Civil War mural in the year 1979. When the figures look like a tinted engraving by Winslow Homer and the burning forest shows, by contrast, a close acquaintance with 20th century practice, the end-result might be expected to be even odder. But in point of fact the sketches and drawings for Ethel Magafan's mural . . . are not at all ridiculous. They are well planned and well drawn, the figures and the background are nicely mingled, and there is about the whole enterprise a quality of care and concern that is really very touching. The subject is a stirring event, by any standards, and Miss Magafan has not betrayed it."

In 1987, at the Inaugural Exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., Ethel Magafan's forty-inch study panel of the rejected *Lawrence Massacre* mural was exhibited. A private collector was so taken with this study that a seven-foot mural was commissioned and Ethel completed the project just as she turned 72. Ethel Magafan's first mural study proved to be her last completed mural. On April 26, 1993, Ethel Magafan died in her home of a series of strokes.

Ethel Magafan's art continues to be present in many public and private collections including those of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institute, Denver Art Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Autry Museum of the American West (Los Angeles), Newark Museum, Portland Museum (Maine), Wichita Art Museum (Kansas), Butler Institute of American Art, Canton Art Institute (Ohio), Whitney Museum of

American Art, Columbia Museum (SC) and Delaware Society of Fine Arts (Wilmington).

The artwork of Ethel and Jenne Magafan also can still be seen in public buildings throughout the American West, Washington, D.C., and Chancellorsville, Virginia. Their art has also been included in a series of major exhibitions such as: Pikes Peak Vision, The Broadmoor Art Academy, 1919-1945 (in 1989); Independent Spirits: Women Painters in the American West, 1900-1945 (in 1995); Time and Place: One Hundred Years of Women Artists in Colorado, 1900-2000 (2000); and Colorado Landscapes: and the new age of discovery (November 3, 2000 to January 6, 2002).

Other exhibitions have presented Ethel Magafan's work with each one taking yet another new perspective on her art. On November 14, 2004 the Windham Fine Arts opened its "Independent Spirits: Jenne Currie and Ethel Magafan," which featured a selection of paintings by daughter and mother. On June 18, 2005 at the 20th Century Gallery (605 Warren St. Hudson, NY 12534) a reception opened the new exhibition "20th Century Contemporaries." Windham Fine Arts working in conjunction with 20th Century Gallery hosted a joint venture in the same year. Windham Fine arts curator, Victoria Alten, selected an array of work by notable artists, Bruce Currie (b. 1911), Ethel Magafan (1916-1993) and Alexander Rutsch (1916-1997) to appear at 20th Century Gallery in June and July.

In addition to the strong presence of the Magafan sisters in public collections, they also enjoy ongoing popularity in the art market. The Internet is awash with references to those who wish to buy, sell or trade art by the Magafan sisters.

For Greek-American Studies the Magafan twins are significant for additional reasons. Constantino Brumidi (1805-1880) is the first person of Greek descent to paint public buildings in North America. Often called the Michelangelo of Washington Brumidi painted scores of frescos and other paintings at the Capital Building. Although less well-known to the general public, the Magafans are two other painters of Greek descent to decorate to great acclaim public buildings in Washington, D.C.

In his review, "Odysseus's Progeny," Richard Kalina raises a serious question that he never bothers to answer, concerning the exhibition *Modern Odysseys: Greek American Artists of the Twentieth Century* (c.f. *Art in America* September 2000). How did/does Greek ethnicity or identity see expression in art? Kalina wasn't sure this exhibition accomplished that task.

Kalina writes, "What the 34 artists selected all share is a Greek heritage, and for many, that is the sum of it. But this exhibition's premise, arbitrary as it might seem to some (especially considering the 60-year time span of the works shown), throws into relief linkages and commonalities of interest that are illuminating, although scarcely definitive (Ibid)." Compare Kalina's thinking to what Katherine Smith-Warren has to say at virtually the very same moment in the introduction to *Time and Place: One Hundred Years of Women Artists in Colorado*, "until recently, studies about male artists have paid little attention to their personal lives. Recent biographies of Pablo Picasso, Balthus and Jackson Pollock are notable exceptions. When we look at the lives and careers of women artists in the 20th century, we need to understand their personal circumstances to provide a context for their art. What support systems did they have, and what obstacles limited their art practice? Were there other obligations that took them away from their art? What kind of mentor situations or rewards encouraged their work? The same questions could apply to artist of either sex (2000: 9)." Obviously, the same could be said for self-identifying 'ethnic' artists.

Asking the question, then, of how one's personal identity and individual past influence one's art seems not only tenable but totally in keeping with how critics are now considering and evaluating the production and meaning of modern art. Ethel and Jenne Magafan are forgotten figures in the history of Greek-American art. That is not the same as saying they ever forgot their Greek heritage.

Thirteen murals by the Magafan sisters are still to be seen in public buildings across the country. Many have received ongoing praise for decades as exceptional works of art. Learning more about these accomplished artists as well as the other professional women from this first generation of Greek women born in America can serve as a corrective for the passive roles usually associated with

females in the academic and journalistic press. Perhaps considering the identity of the Magafan sisters as self-identified Greeks may help future critics better understand the internal energies on which they drew.

Notes

¹A number of people helped with the research involved with this article. My deepest thanks to Bruce Currie and Jenne Magafan Currie for answering all my various and seemingly unending questions and reading over an early draft of this article. All statements attribute to them are from my notes.

This article based on a six-part series of articles that appeared in the *National Herald* from October 1, 2004 to November 5, 2004. I owe Antonios Diamataris publisher of the *National Herald* as well as editors Sophia Apossos and Evan C. Lambrou my thanks for helping make that series possible. I also acknowledge Rose Beetem of the Denver Art Museum for allowing me to reprint Ethel Magafan artwork for that series.

Dan Georgakas not only read and commented on the draft from which the newspaper series was drawn but also godfathered this present article. As always, I owe Dan Georgakas my thanks.

²My thanks to Penny Zavichus, lifetime resident of Pueblo Colorado and current president of the St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church for first telling me about "the Sisters." Alex Ellis, a long-time resident of Colorado Spring, also was kind enough to share his memories of visiting with Julia Bronic Magafan in her Color Springs garden.

³My thanks to Roderick Dew who was especially helpful when I visited the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center.

⁴See Susan Valdés-Dapena's article for a further discussion of Ethel Magafan's conscious choice of employing Marian Anderson into her mural.

⁵Not only is this mural still in place, when I called and asked about this artwork, Jody, the postmaster, sent me seven pages of information on this mural and the Magafans!

⁶While in California the twins are said in a number of sources to have worked on a mural "*at a hotel in Beverly Hills*" little other information is available. My thanks to both Katherine Hyman and June Loewin at the Beverly Hills Public Library for attempting to solve this mystery.

⁷A full discussion of this work is found at wolfsonian.fu.edu/collections/c8/newdeal10.html.

⁸My thanks to Robyn Christensen at the Worchester Historical Museum for providing me with newspaper clippings and other historic information on the Grafton Street Junior High School.

⁹Janice M. Frye, Park Historian, at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park not only provided me with numerous clippings and other documents related to the Magafan mural but took the time to speak to me, at length, about visitor responses to the mural and related topics.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Book Reviews

Panayotis Tranoulis, *My Life in the Furnace*. Translated by Marjorie Chambers. New York: Pella Publishing Company, 2005. 192pp.

Absent fathers, usurped fathers, and misidentified fathers have set in motion much of world literature's most engrossing literature. Typically, the son is launched prematurely on a questing journey for which he is ill prepared. At the age of seven, the protagonist of Panayotis Tranoulis's fictionalized memoir is sent to fill his deceased father's shoes at the local brick furnace. Certainly, his older brothers are not up to providing for the family. They flee the home and make no provision for their mother or their younger siblings. In fact, when the eldest brother does return, it is to beat their mother.

The protagonist joins the ranks of apprentices under the tutelage of a series of moulders in the brick furnace. The furnace authorities turn a blind eye to the young snotty boy's age, which makes him ineligible to work, and so agree to his induction into a life of drudgery, "to carry on the family slavery," as one of the moulders blithely puts it. As an apprentice, he submits to a regime of thrashings and beatings meted out by a cadre of older men keen to satisfy the furnace boss's unrelenting quota of ten thousand bricks a day. "To make a brick the moulder threw a lump of the tempered clay into the mould. Then he sliced off the surplus clay with a heavy stick— 'the strike,' as we called it. With the water and the clay the 'strike' became as heavy as iron. The bottom of the mould was made of sheet iron, and when the moulder wanted to hurt us he would throw the tempered clay in before we could set it properly down and take the filled one away, and our hands would be caught between the mould and the bench. This could hurt like a closing door squeezing your fingers. It would have been better if he had given us a hundred blows with a stick than have our hands caught like this" (48).

Our protagonist's misfortune is so great that he even suffers the very torment for which he rhetorically states a preference when a moulder hits him with the heavy strike on the left shoulder. This renders the young man incapable of carrying the moulds and relegates him to working outside the furnace, handing water to the workers, trudging around with a wheelbarrow, and gathering up broken bricks. This demotion amounts to an emasculation of sorts as the book's hero is now not only too young and too small—i.e. already worthy of our sympathy— but now also too incapacitated to become a moulder or a fully functioning apprentice. Consequently, he finds himself in a more humiliating predicament than many of his peers. Yet work he must. In fact, he even needs to engage in special pleading to keep this abominable job. In this, he exemplifies a predicament that requires victims to beg for the continuation of their misery. In a later scene, he comments on his mother's ignominy as she begs his boss for an advance on his salary.

It is in such expositions of humiliation that Tranoulis's work is at its most perceptive as it comments on class hierarchies. Yet this humiliation is also a constitutive element of apprenticeship itself, where humiliation must be borne and surpassed. As Michael Herzfeld explains in his anthropological study of apprenticeship titled *The Body Impolitic: Artisans and Artifice in the Global Hierarchy of Value*, "Men's belittling of younger and weaker males who work for them emerges as a form of symbolic feminization. It is clearly and explicitly understood as such. A rabbit hutch-maker described the apprentice's humiliation as 'castration' [*evnoukhismos*] designed to induce 'servility' [*dbouloprepeia*] in the sense that those who fail to learn from it will never attain the respect that men consider the fragile but essential prerogative of their gender identity (. . .) the bitter hurt that feminization represents for men accustomed to expectations of aggressive maleness would not bite very deep if there were not a general recognition of the underlying conventions" (92). Given this over-determined gendered environment, and his lowliest of positions, Panayotis seizes on the smallest crumb of compassion with a frenzied and uncontrollable hunger. All the while, he is prone to looking for father figures. Thus, the benevolent figure of one moulder, Nikolas Goldfinch, wins Panayotis's heart as, "I would go to him as if her were my father or my big brother" (60). Nikolas's compassion confuses the young child as, "Once, when Nikolas was sitting with a group, I went and sat beside him. Without realizing, I put my hand in his pocket. I stayed like that with my mind elsewhere. When we rose to go back to work Nikolas felt my hand in his pocket and smiling, said to me, 'Hey you, you put your hand in my pocket.' Others saw it and didn't think anything of it. I felt ashamed and I still torment myself about it." The reaction of the fellow apprentices is, perhaps, a function of the underlying homosexual relations to be found just under the surface of the institution of apprenticeship. Latent or otherwise, the novel does not elaborate or describe such feelings any further. As for Panayotis's shame for his quasi-incestuous act, perpetrated as it is in the company of a surrogate father, we hear little about it beyond this textual irruption.

My Life in the Furnace is, in general, disinclined to engage in inner psychological analysis. Some might say that repression such as in this scene may be a function of our narrator's tender age, his absorption in the presentness of the narration. In this aspect, however, Tranoulis's prose is also typical of a strain of Greek prose that shies away from inner psychologization so typical of western realism and, instead, plots the effects of actions across characters and their deployment in certain scenes. Typical, too, of the way such prose controls emotionalism are the short and matter-of-fact sentences that have in recent years marked the prose of Thanassis Valtinos, Chronis Missios, and Sotiris Dimitriou. Although Tranoulis's prose and the atmosphere of his world are reminiscent of such prose in places; his short chapters do not fare as well as the works by these authors, in part, because the chapters do not have the poignancy or double-edgedness of the ironic eye characteristic of these writers. For all of the wretchedness described in this book, there is a conventional sentimentality lurking beneath the surface that is as much familiar and moving to a general readership as it is alienating to the critic. The chapters stand alone in the larger scheme of the work as short stories, yet they rarely engross the reader in their plot development or its denouement. Read as a whole, the work follows the

young boy as he lives through a season of drudgery, from spring to fall, only then to endure a winter of discontent, unemployment and hunger when the furnace closes, and, finally, as he returns for a second season at the novel's end. In the final scenes, our protagonist fills his father's shoes, at least by earning the respect of his co-workers. For all their harshness, they see in him "a young boy struggling above his strength, with a crippled shoulder, to earn his bread, like us" (136). Rough men empathize with him and express their love with a back-slapping homo-social camaraderie: "Drakoulis lifted me up in the air. The others reached out and I found myself being carried round above their heads in their strong hands, like a little toy" (136). We seem to end with the boy surrounded by more surrogate fathers and he achieves a modicum of manhood. He identifies with his role models, but also clings to his symbolization as an accoutrement of childhood, "a little toy." On a quite different note, it is worth stating that our protagonist does not really learn his craft. This would not surprise Herzfeld in his anthropology of apprenticeship as he finds that this is often the case. However, our protagonist does acquire a good deal of practical social knowledge for a relentlessly agonistic social milieu. If nothing else, "[apprentices] become effective and knowledgeable members of their respective local communities" (Herzfeld 51).

Of course, the reader is tempted to look for the broader political repercussions of this belonging and, to this end, one discerns a proletarian brotherhood and (at least) a driving homo-sociality. But the novel's presentation of syndicalism is ambiguous and unsustainable. The most manly of male characters, Karamitos, is explicitly the union's leading spirit, and alongside his partner, the "belligerent" Kokkinoyenis, they strike fear in bosses and gendarmes alike. But in the scenes of fighting that take place during a strike, the union mob is shown as a powerful force, "a beast," that is as self-destructive as it is menacing. The position of the narrator, held hostage in the factory by the bosses, and so on the receiving end of the workers' fury in this scene, further complicates the perspective here and stymies any ringing endorsement of union activity.

Events in the novel are not plotted in relation to a larger historical background. Of course, it could again be argued that this may better capture the consciousness of so young a man living in his present (or, at least, that which passes, fictionally, for a plausible and believable consciousness of so young a narrator). However, it is disappointing how Tranoulis's descriptions do not dwell sufficiently on place and detail. The reader gets little sense of the physical environment in which these interpersonal relations play out. While the original novel in Greek, published in 1973, bore in its title the locale for this brick furnace and the mud-brick hovels built close to it, *Keratobori*, the reader derives only a moderate sense of place. It is regrettable that so little is rendered of the neighborhood, the community, and the brick furnace itself and all that would routinely come to pass there daily. A descriptive paragraph from Panayotis Tranoulis's life in the book's biographical note is enticing in this regard, "In winter, when the furnaces closed down, [Tranoulis] worked in tanneries. He cleaned cisterns in freezing water above his knees, cisterns that stank horribly—at that time skins were lubricated with dogs' excrement—in small tannery works, with burning soda and potash, he scraped cisterns three or four metres deep and when he was slow in coming up for a breath of air, so he could do as much work as

possible, his nose ran with blood" (187). Such detail as well as a regard for practice or place is largely missing elsewhere in the novel. Detailing and a greater sense of practice and place would have added a further dimension to the overall effect; instead, they always take a backseat to the interpersonal exchanges between the men.

Of interest is Tranoulis's biography given in a five-page note at book's end. The biography establishes the fictional work as largely based on Tranoulis's life. An autodidact, Tranoulis published his first poem at the age of seventeen or eighteen and soon frequented the writer Elli Alexiou's literary evenings. There, he met many writers, Menelaos Loudemis and Galateia Kazantzakis amongst them. By 1950, he managed to set up a brick furnace of his own in Rafina. All the while his circle of literary interlocutors widened to include many figures from the Left, (he had dealings with Skarimbas, Ritsos, and Vrettakos), and he went on to publish three novels: *Keratobori* (1973); *For a Grape* (1980); and *From Furnace to Prison*; and, in 1989, a fourth book of short stories under the title *In Hiding*.

As Vasilis Rotas and Voula Damianakou assert in the foreword, Tranoulis's language is unadorned, with no figures of speech, and without histrionics. Such rhetorical choices recall the leftist poetry of post-war generations. There are, too, aspects of a post-war leftist discourse of poverty that runs through Theodorakis and Bithikotsis's proletarian neighborhoods. But, reading this language today, it has become so codified that the modern reader struggles to be moved by it and constantly butts up against its overwhelming rhetoric and a set of well-trying figures of speech (not least about poverty). The translator, too, must have faced some difficulty with the simplicity of the sentences and the challenge of conveying very loaded though simple Greek words of this discourse of poverty into an analogous English idiom. The translator has done a good job on the whole, even if the prose in this form is not overly inviting for an English-language reader. Whether a bolder recasting of sentences for effect in English would have fared any better is hard to say.

By contrast, the English translation of Vasilis Rotas and Voula Damianakou's foreword retains Greek syntax and word order in a way that burdens our reading of it and only highlights the foreignness of a certain kind of Greek sociological and socially conscious discourse and syntax when rendered mechanically into English. It also neither sheds much light on the text nor places it in its social and cultural milieu. If anything, its overblown writing, which in fact accompanied the original first Greek edition in 1973, only exhibits some of the very same discursive tendencies of Tranoulis's text itself, a chip off the same block.

The text is well-edited and carefully produced, but it is lamentable that almost fifty pages (139-185) are devoted to sundry critical commentaries on the work of Panayotis Tranoulis. These range from extracts from correspondence exchanged with the author, some of it only a sentence long, to brief critical notes and the occasional review. This kind of paratext is not unknown in Greek publications. I have always found it embarrassing. Rarely is it evaluative except in the most uncritical sense and it adds little to our understanding. Much of it here is repetitive; a set of citations might have been useful on the back cover and a couple of the reviews are interesting, but this is overkill.

All these comments imply discomfiture with a certain excess in conveying sentiment, self-esteem, and self-justification. But this may be a shortsighted criticism. Tranoulis writes of a Greece far harsher, more punishing and unforgiving than the country we know today. To survive in a society such as this, such excess may have been a necessary defense mechanism as well as the inevitable byproduct of having fought the good fight.

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Stewards of Land: The American Farm School and Greece in the Twentieth Century, by Brenda L. Marder. Mercer University Press. 2005. 502 pages

In *Stewards of the Land: The American Farm School and Greece in the Twentieth Century*, author Brenda L. Marder presents an intriguing drama of individuals—American and Greek—and their interaction with each other and with Greece, how they would bend and shape each other, the give and take, one might almost be tempted to say the love that drove and motivated most of the people involved in a unique experiment. From humble origins, the American Farm School would grow to become one of the world's leading agricultural institutions. Marder, the school's official historian, has been meticulous in her research on facts, in bringing to life the personalities, and in telling the story of how the school progressed from its Protestant origins through the process of Hellenization.

Missionary Dr. John Henry House, a highly educated, Phi Beta Kappa, Union Theological Seminary graduate, with his wife, established the American Farm School near Thessaloniki in 1904. His dream was to help bring a new vitality, health and stability to Greece, and the Balkans, by introducing practical farming methods and training leaders who would return to their communities and help raise the standard of living. The school was founded with a handful of orphan boys as its first students. Today, a century later, it is thoroughly international, co-ed and in sync with the goals of Greece and the European Union.

From the beginning, the school had the benefit of that very special breed of American known as the WASP—White Anglo Saxon Protestant—sons and daughters of privilege, mostly educated at Ivy League Schools, with the genuine desire to “do good,” a sense of adventure, and a remarkable, almost Utopian belief that great oaks from little acorns grow. They hoped to help change the world, and Greece, for the better.

In today's political climate, the missionaries who founded this institution would probably not be allowed to begin the experiment. What was once looked upon as benevolent would now be viewed as chauvinistic and encroaching. We live in a completely different political climate, where religious fervor frequently can connote terror and even the possibility of destruction.

But Dr. John Henry House, forthrightly a religious zealot, was an energetic visionary. Describing Dr. House, Marden writes, "A man never idle, he was always at work with his hands, roaming the farm school, properly albeit incongruously dressed in a suit jacket, suit pants, vest hung with a Phi Beta Kappa key, white collar and soft hat, as he grafted trees, sawed wood, or demonstrated the uses of a modern plough." The motto of the school was: "To work is to pray." Despite missionary fervor, Dr. House was equally committed to honest labor. When a visitor noted that the school crops were splendid and said, "You must pray a lot," Dr. House responded, "Yes, we pray a lot, but we also spray."

With his wife Susan, "Mother" House, a New Yorker whose great-great-grandfather planned the founding of Yale College, they laid the groundwork for the school. The first ten boys brought to the school were Protestant, Slavic-speaking and with Slavic surnames. By the end of 1907, sixteen orphans had been gathered. Gradually changes were made. A scholarship program was initiated.

The Second Balkan War, begun on June 30, 1913, would mark the beginning of a new period in farm school history—that of a relief organization for refugees and reconstruction work. After the wars, with Macedonia once again part of a Greek state, the school would enroll primarily Greek students. Throughout the school's history, Greek vitality would combine with American "can-do" spirit in a positive way. Author Marder observes, "The Greek farmer is, if nothing else, resilient and independent in spirit. His long struggles with poor land and years of war and devastation have made him one of the most buoyant and philosophical creatures on earth."

The Houses chose to stay with the school through World War I. Despite the Germans bombing nearby Thessaloniki, the school remained in operation, offering aid, whenever possible, beyond the campus. The school also became a center for British expeditionary forces, who shared their music, their expertise and world view with the students. British and French soldiers often came for seeds and to ask advice on cultivation of land around their camps. After the war, "Mother" House played host to a variety of visiting dignitaries to Thessaloniki, including King Alexander in 1917.

House, who never failed to pass out a Bible if the opportunity arose, would be succeeded as school director by his son, Charles House, a Princeton graduate who answered a "call" to help his father, and arrived at the school in 1917. A conscientious objector who was denounced and cursed by most of his friends and members of his family for not fighting in World War I, in 1957, he would later receive the highest honor bestowed on a Princeton alumni, the Woodrow Wilson Award as "an exemplar of the Christian gospel" for his work at the American Farm School.

According to friends and colleagues, Greece influenced and shaped Charlie House, a maverick, an anarchist and pacifist, an undistinguished boy, into a capable, strong man. Trained as an engineer, Charlie set about to build the school as a modern institution. He spoke Greek, as well as Bulgarian and Turkish, and was able to communicate well with workers. If his father had been the idealist, Charlie put his shoulder to the wheel in all practical areas, including bringing a good supply of water to the school and altering primitive facilities. Using an American machine for drilling oil wells, the American sank a 280 foot

well that was capable of yielding some 800 gallons of water an hour. The exuberant Charlie House also attracted leaders prominent in Greek civic affairs including Alexandros Zannas, an intimate of Prime Minister Venizelos, who became deeply interested in the school, and Kostas Zannas.

Throughout the history of the school, it managed to move with the times. After the 1922 Smyrna disaster, the Farm School accommodated as many refugee boys as possible, and hired refugee men to work on construction projects.

Ann House, a graduate of Mount Holyoke college, came to Greece to marry Charlie House and would have her own impact on the school, proving herself a dynamic leader who would make friends in the Greek and foreign community. During the 1930s worldwide depression, Charlie and Ann House subsisted on a salary of \$75.00 a month, setting an example for sparse living.

John Henry House, the school's founder died on April, 19, 1936, and was buried in the school's cemetery with a plain marble slab and words composed by his son: "John Henry House/An adoring servant of God/A faithful apostle of Christ/A practical friend of man." Because he had been decorated with the Silver Cross of the Order of the Savior and the Silver Cross of the Order of the Phoenix, a Greek military detachment was sent to render honor at the funeral.

In 1940, four months before the Italians invaded Greece, widow "Mother" House returned to America, but Charlie and Ann House stayed. When the German army marched into Macedonia, the Houses were given the option by the Board of Trustees in the United States of leaving the school and returning to the USA, an idea they rejected. Charlie House wrote, "The appreciation shown by all our Greek friends is very touching. We have cast our lot with these people and these difficult times might prove our greatest opportunity to serve."

The Germans would occupy the school, eventually arresting Charlie and Ann House, then releasing them under condition that they live as "aliens in an occupied country." Before the Germans left the school, they would smash doors, break lightbulbs, shoot wildly in the air, and explode a 500 pound bomb, blowing up a large part of one of the key buildings.

Bruce M. Lansdale, the school's third director, who led from 1955 to 1990, came to Greece as an infant and knew and loved the country. He demonstrated both bardic and spiritual streaks, and a talent for cultivating Greek leaders and involving them with the school. With his wife Tad, a mountain climber, he put his own stamp on the school. He understood the dichotomous view of the Greek farmer. In *Master Farmers: Teaching Small Farmers Management*, he wrote, "The attitudes of the more sympathetic city people and foreigners toward the Greek peasant after World War II expressed the paradox of development. They urged him to progress and at the same time expected him to be changeless. They cherished their leisure with him but encouraged him to be more active and organized. They enjoyed the primitiveness of his village but were forever telling him to build a better house and dairy barn and keep his cows cleaner. They wanted to sing and dance with him, yet insisted that he should make better use of his time."

Lansdale was succeeded by George Draper, an educator, and his wife Charlotte, a librarian, who expanded the school's parameters by embarking on university-level education, and applying European Union funds to broaden the

school's national and international reach. As the school moved into its centennial year, David Buck and his wife Patti were beginning to etch their own pattern on the history of a bi-cultural, philanthropic and now primarily Greek institution.

Through tumultuous years, the American Farm School would continue to prosper and grow. Some of the important developments from 1950 to 2002 included the advent of co-education, with the incorporation of the Quaker Girls School. The Dimitris Perrotis College of Agricultural Studies was founded. Importantly, an enhanced program of rural development would involve lifelong learning for adults, with special seminars and programs. The application of research to agricultural production created Greece's most advanced dairy herd and poultry unit, and, in sum, a model farm that was widely copied by others. International students were introduced to the school on a secondary level, first with Africans and Middle Easterners enrolled in short courses starting in the 1950s, then with Balkan neighbors attending Perrotis College after 1996.

Today the school is alive with student exchange programs, excellent English language instruction and the placement of young American interns in the school and college dormitories. Although an expanding Thessaloniki continues to encroach on the school, with the original acres now ringed by housing developments and supermarkets, the school thrives.

Author Brenda L. Marder is to be commended. *Stewards of the Land* is an inspiring story of people and how they reached out to give their best to each other. Many native Greeks march across its pages, leaders and teachers who were attracted to the school's goals of training leaders and helping farmers. Among the delights of the book are the many photographs including pictures of students, charming early photos of Greeks in native dress, and all of the myriad individuals who influenced and were influenced by the American Farm School.

—Penelope Karageorge