There was a time Greeks sought refuge in Syria

As thousands of refugees from Near East are arriving in Greece in order to progress to the rest of Europe and while the immigration problem is exacerbating, it is time to travel back to the period when Greek refugees were seeking shelter in Syria in their effort to reach their homeland.

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Hephaestion’s monogram found at Amphipolis tomb

Katerina Peristeri, the archaeologist in charge of the excavation of the Amphipolis tomb, presented a new finding that may reveal the identity of the individual initially buried in the tomb.

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Asterousia

Routes to the rough coast on the Libyan Sea lead the visitor through some phenomenal landscape.

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5th EPISCOPAL ASSEMBLY OF OCEANIA

The members of the 5th Episcopal Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of Oceania welcomed the opportunity to meet in Sydney on Tuesday 13th October, 2015, under the chairmanship ex officio of His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos of Australia.

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The First Fruits of Spring at St Andrew’s Theological College: Professor David Bradshaw’s Lectures in Ancient Greek Philosophy

PAGES 8/26 - 9/27
Katerina Peristeri, the archaeologist in charge of the excavation of the Amphipolis tomb, presented a new finding that may reveal the identity of the individual initially buried in the tomb.

During a conference in Thessaloniki, Peristeri said that her team discovered the monogram of Hephastion, a general, and closest friend of Alexander the Great.

The archaeologist revealed that the monogram of Hephastion is found in three inscriptions, project contracts, for the construction of the monument.

Peristeri also said that the new findings show that the monument was commissioned by a powerful individual of that era, which could be Alexander himself.

According to ancient historian Plutarch, when Hephastion died suddenly in Ecbatana, Iran, “Alexander asked architect Deinokrates to erect shrines all over the country,” she said.

Peristeri believes the complex was built in the final quarter of the fourth century BC (325-300 BC) and was used until Roman times.

The old ruins of Amphipolis are located 100km from Thessaloniki, on the road to Kavala, near Strymon river. It was an ancient city built in eastern Macedonia and was founded by the Athenians in 437 BC to control the resource-rich region. The town was finally abandoned during the 8th century AD.

Greek archaeologist, excavator and professor of classical archaeology Panagiotis Faklaris told Greek radio that there is no indication that the Amphipolis tomb has any connection to Hephastion or that Alexander the Great had ordered its construction.

There is no historic or scientific basis that Hephastion had a connection with Amphipolis,” Faklaris said dispelling Katerina Peristeri’s claims.

“This is a monument which has tombs inside, and Hephastion was not buried in Macedonia,” Faklaris mentioned during the interview while he continued commenting on the monogram that is said to have been found inside the tomb saying that “there is no evidence that Alexander the Great ordered this monument’s construction.”

Faklaris, also, questioned the claims of architect Michael Lefantzis on the Lion of Amphipolis, stressing out that the monument should not in any way be related with the Kasta Hill, taking into account that “it was found around 2 kilometers away.”

The Delphi Bank 22nd Greek Film Festival announces its full 2015 program showcasing cutting-edge cinema steeped in Greece’s time honoured culture of storytelling. Jam packed with 14 feature films, 4 documentaries and a 60’s classics retrospective on the work of Aliki Vougiouklaki, the festival runs from the 14th of October to the 1st of November at Leichhardt’s Palace Norton Street Cinema.

“Following such a successful Festival last year, we are excited to be back with a program rich in history and culture,” says Festival Chair, Nia Karteris. “We are proud to showcase the latest and greatest of Greek cinema, that is bound to capture the hearts of Greeks and Australians alike.”

After seven years of sold out shows across Australia, the hit Australian stage play Alex and Eve (2014) makes its big screen debut on the Festival's opening night.

A question of humanity

By PANTELIS BOUKALAS – Kathimerini, Athens

Millennia-old monuments of global cultural heritage such as the Arch of Triumph at the site of Ancient Palmyra in Syria, signify both the great power of humanity as well as its greatest weakness.

The power to bestow creations born of the minds and hands of mankind, which are able to withstand the tides of time and somehow continue to express great things. And humankind’s weakness, as ephemeral beings, in terms of time, as defied by the ancients, or history, to use a more modern term.

Everything people believe to be immortal and everything they worship as almighty – beginning with their gods – is hostage to time.

This was succinctly expressed by a defiled Hercules, cast down by the Christ. In an epigram by Palladas of Alexandria: “Even I, a god, have learned to live with the times.”

It has been centuries since the temples of Palmyra ceased to express the divine under whatever name it may have been known, just as is the case with the Parthenon in Athens. The only thing worshipped there today is man, who raises monuments of great splendor in order to defy his predetermined temporality.

In the added minds and darkened souls of the fascists of Islamic State, the columns, arches, and ruins of ancient civilizations and religions are mere evidence of idolatry, blasphemy and anything else conjured up by their fixations. That’s what they claim at least. In reality, what we see is evidence of their incredible smallness, their barbarity, their place outside all that is civilized. And they blow them up to feel great. Even though they may never have heard of him, Herostratus the arsonist and destroyer is their only god.

The jihadists hate others, not the gods of others. Anything that doesn’t succumb to their slavery, that resists their bestial actions or that is simply different, is cut, uprooted, murdered in “summary executions” orchestrated for the voracious Internet, torn down and put to the torch. They commit crimes against humanity constantly, consciously and hedonistically.

What should humanity do in response? To start with, tend to the victims of the jihadists: the refugees. But honestly, not with a pinch of hypocrisy. Then it needs to take concerted and planned action against ISIS. Again, honestly, and not just for show. The air strikes so far basically serve the interests of the attackers more than they do to wear down the jihadists. The Turks are after the Kurds; the Russians are after the Syrian rebels and the Americans are after the pro-Assadists.

And Europe? Already regretting it refugee-friendly rhetoric, it is back to building walls, tripping itself and its lauded principles up.
University of Cyprus ranked in world’s top 400 by “The Times”

The Greek Australian VEMA

Letter from Maroubra

Mobile etiquette

Almost wherever you go today there is likely to be a mobile phone in use or someone focused on the screen of their mobile phone. God forbid that they should read a book or talk to another person! It is estimated that in the near future some 80 per cent of the world’s inhabitants will be connected by smartphone. There are some good points. It has brought about a revolution in inter-connectedness. For instance it has liberated people in Africa enabling them to have an online bank account, to conduct business and communicate. The political danger of the smartphone, however, is immense. For instance I understand that there is now an app with which it is possible for someone to track the location, speed, altitude and destination of every commercial aircraft in the sky. There is an app enabling anyone to obtain images from space that previously would have been highly secret. No one has thought through all these potentialities. They arise uncontrolled. But it is to the social rather than the technological sphere that I want to draw your attention.

The mobile has become a permanent part of the lives of most Australians. It occupies their thoughts, their idle moments. It is a constant companion in their everyday life.

Don’t ever say that you do not own one! People will look at you as though you are from another planet. Yet it is possible to survive quite nicely without one.

There was even a time in Australia when having a home phone was a luxury. The number of phones was considered an index of the standard of living of a nation. Public phone boxes dotted the landscape. Often there were queues waiting to use the phone.

In those days telephone use was private but everything has changed.

Now conversations take place in public, within buses or trains, in shops, restaurants and at social gatherings. Young couples at a restaurant are often both seen immersed in their mobile phones instead of staring into each other’s eyes. Maybe they are texting each other, who knows!

Various ring calls of dubious sanity summon their owners. They respond like a well-trained puppy.

It is no longer unusual for a conversation to be overheard by everyone in earshot whereas once there were rules about the inappropriateness of private conversations in public.

People have varying views about when it is okay to use their mobile phones. Recently 3271 adults in America were asked about their use of mobile phones and the etiquette of their use. Around three-quarters agreed that it was okay to use a phone when walking down the street or on public transport or while waiting in a queue.

About 40 percent said it was okay to use a mobile in a restaurant but only 12 per cent agreed that it was okay at the family dinner table.

Believe it or not 4 per cent said that it was okay to use their phone in church. In my local parish, people take calls, text or even share photos. The phenomenon of the loud ring tone is common – it seems to occur mostly during the sermon.

The mobile drama continues. Even though people find mobile use in public annoying, distracting or harmful to a conversation, almost 90 percent used their phones during social activities with others or in social gatherings.

They might read a message such as a text or email (61%), take a photo or video (58%), send a message (52%), receive an incoming call (52%). Around one-third check to see if they received a call or place a call and around a quarter use an app or browse the web.

In one fifth of cases, however, it was used to avoid interaction.

The thought of being without a mobile phone now seems anathema in modern society. It is rare, however, that this is always an essential item to be carried around with us wherever we go.

It is sad that we are no longer able to live without the need for constant stimulation. Probably it is sadder that we are so insecure that we always feel the need to be connected wherever we go but definitely saddest of all is that even etiquette has become extremely mobile.

The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the VEMA or St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College.

letterfrommaroubra@gmail.com

The Greek Australian VEMA

The Greek Australian VEMA

The University of Cyprus ranked among the 400 top universities worldwide, according to the “Higher Education World University Rankings,” published by The Times of London on September 30.

According to a University of Cyprus announcement, its ranking at the 351st place is “an enormous achievement for our country, but also for the University of Cyprus itself, which has managed within its first 52 years of operation to be among the organizations of scientific excellence.”

According to The Times, University of Cyprus ranking reaches even higher among universities in Europe, taking its place between the 172-197 best. No university from Greece has a higher ranking, it is added.

The University of Crete ranks in the same group with the University of Cyprus, having more citations for its scientific work, however, University of Cyprus predominates in two out of five basic criteria, used to determine the rank.

University of Cyprus Rector Constantinos Christofides welcomed the announcement, saying it constitutes a very important distinction for the academic institutions, while noting that the goal is to aim at the top 200 universities in the world.
The Greek Australian VEMA
Our Primate’s View

THE ELDER PAISIOS

The text that follows was written long before the Ecumenical Patriarchate officially proclaimed the Eld-
er Paisios a Saint (in the Year of our Lord 2015, on 12th January). It should be noted that this text con-
stituted the response of the writer to the Monastery of ‘St John the Theologian’ at Vasilika, Thessaloniki-
ki, when formally requested to write about the experiences which he had during his long-time contact
with the Elder. When the bulky volume was published by the Monastery and entitled ” St Paisios the
Athoneite”, the text was not included for some unexplained reason!

Precisely for this reason we established, from then, the annual invitation to Athone and Confessors and
Confessors in order to relieve the Cross borne by the Clergy here and by the people of God with
the rare and rich blessings which they possess, com-
ing from “the Garden of the Panayia”.

I recall when we first sighted the two Athoneite monks walking on the tarmac of the airport
with their humble “shoulder bags”, it was impos-
ible to hold back the tears. At least those of us who
who knew who each of them was, from that sacred
“peninsula”!

We appreciated the occasion of that visit even more, contemplating how many were the pil-
grims to Mt Athos – from Australia and elsewhere –
who, in order to visit the Elder Paisios, had to make
arrangements long before reaching there. Indeed, they
would often ensure “to close an appointment”, in approximation (!) many months before departing
Western Europe for Greece.

In any case, I remember as a daily surprise
and experience which “stunned” (!) all of us, that
neither the Elder nor the Abbots (the Underling) had
the slightest desire: Where they would stay. Where
we would take them. How much we would “incon-
vence” them, showing them the “wounds” of the
Greeks abroad.

They saw and heard, and only the Abbots would speak (modestly), after my introduction. He
spoke in the presence of the Elder, not just modest-
ly, but like a “Novice”. Like a “Student” under exam-
ation.

As a rule, the Elder remained silent. But his fiery eyes spoke all the “languages”, not of the
world, but of God.

Only in private confession with him did he usually have much to say and much to teach. Especially with his stance like “a wounded
bird”. Not in our manner, which is more or less
“rhetoric”. Most of the time he had his head bowed
to the earth. And with each utterance being inter-
rupted by a deep sigh, without anyone being able to
discern with certainty whether the sigh came from
physical or mental or spiritual pain. Rather it was
the three of them united, as one indivisible “min-
istry”. An unceasing “plea” for divine Mercy. Not
for only for the present, but for the entire “suffering”
humanity, everywhere in the world.

For this reason, after a stay of about a week
“like a fish out of water” (this is essentially the un-
declared psychology of the authentic Athoneite
monk), when the “multicultural radio station” (SBS)
requested an interview with the Elder Paisios for the
Greek language programme, he did not want to say
anything. At least nothing of the usual interviews
given by even the most spiritual of our Visitors from
the West. Neither impressions, nor judgements, nor
suggestions and advice.

He only whispered, very briefly, certain
striking images.

“\textit{‘We did not come to teach anyone. Nor did we come to
preach. We came only to take some of the pain of our brothers and sisters. And to raise it as a holy
“phosphorion” to God who became man in order to save us.’}”

\textit{Cont. page 6/24}
Our Primate's View

Cont. from page 5/23

And rather than describe circumstances or his own characteristic "impressions", he dared to speak again with an "image", since his most enduring language was that of five icons:

"Here we relived, once again, our Motherland Greece. Walking through the ages, She gives birth to her parents and then she gives birth to her icon. She throws them here and there, and proceeds."

Another striking "image" that gripped me as it exited entirely "naturally" from his usually sealed mouth, and at an unsuspecting time and place, was the following:

As we were eating in the remarkable dining room of the Central Offices with the two Athonite monks, the Vicar General of the day Archimandrite Stephanos of Pantanassa Monastery and my humble self, I remembered to ask if, at last, there was any progress in solving the frightening crime that had occurred a few weeks previously in Thessaloniki. The victim was the former Abbess of Iviron Monastery Archimandrite Pangratios, a Doctor and Theologian, well-known throughout Greece for his considerable servility to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, for which precisely he was bestowed with the title of Great Archimandrite.

This legendary and "controversial" Aivalioti who came to Greece as a refugee child following the catastrophe of Asia Minor, I had succeeded as the "Titular" Abbott of Vlatadon Monastery.

Despite his more or less legendary "eccentricities", I had admired his courage, his industrious handwork and his incomparable honesty which was more manly than the public attitude of many ungrateful recipients of his benefaction, who had often slandered him. On the contrary, the truly great Men of the East recipients of his benefaction, who had often slandered him. On the contrary, the truly great Men of the East, and of Thessalonikis (E. Venezi, Str. Myrivilis, Phot. Kontoglu, G. Vafopoulos and J. Ladas) had no difficulties in acknowledging that Pangratios was an unforgettable personality in the history of the "Co-reigning" city of Thessaloniki!

The newspapers, irresponsible as usual, had written in reference to that unfortunate and frightful crime, the most unbelievable assumptions presented as so-called "news". That is why I was seeing the most ascetic Elder Paisios with an understandable degree of reservation.

Instead, however, of showing some indifference or disdain towards the rather "worldly-inclined" monk of the world who had consumed his life in the "Capital of the Refugees", the Elder hastened undis turbed to declare, within hearing range of all of us:

"I, who am not in a position to know how the life of an Athonite monk "rolled out", have every reason to respect him. I will not judge him from the tragic end of his public disgrace. In difficult times of my human weakness, when I cannot be comforted either by the Saints or the Angels of God who are very high, that is, unreachable by me who is struggling down here, Pangratios, with his frightful death, has become for me a protective "barrier": that I might never suffer such an end."

Yet, this "Giant of Faith and repentance and vast philosophers", Elder Paisios at times "became stubborn" like the more austere Prophets of the Old Testament. And he could "crush you" like a bolt of lightning.

This is precisely why I shall detail just two incidents. And this, not only to hold the entire historical truth, as I lived it through this "unreal" Ascetic. But also to repeat a confession I made as a young Metropolitan Arsenios of Cappadocia.

As soon as my two actor friends were installed with various audiences shared the most unbelievable assumptions present in the presence of a throng of pilgrims, when serving at a famous Monastery of the Holy Mountain.

I had said at the time:

"For you, the Athonite Fathers, all of us who did not have the privilege of living in "the Garden of the Saints" or the "Mount of Seizing"), feel not just respect and admiration. We feel something more. A vast gratitude, because, as strange as it might come across, you support us even with your weaknesses or your sins. Because it is natural for us to think, since You, who offer so much asceticism and learn and adversities and prayers, have not attained the "state, equal to the angels"(1), we, also, affected as we are in the world, can hope upon the mercy of God."

Here, then, are two of the "weaknesses" of the Elder Paisios which I experienced here, and which I confess, did not influence in the least my love and admiration for his "revered" person.

- It coincided, that in the days whilst he was in Sydney with Father Vasiliou, that there came to Australia for the first time, to participate in theatrical performances, the well-known and popular actors Kostas Kazkos and his wife Jenny Karezi. They had become my friends from the day they visited me at Vlatadon Monastery and later they had brought their newly-born son Constantinos for his "forty day blessing". In fact, it was known in wider circles of intellectuals and artists that Kostas Kazkos each year visited at the "Karoula" of the Holy Mountain a great Hermit, Father Vasiliou, about whom Kazkos had many times and with various audiences shared the most unbelievable stories regarding this admirable Elder.

As soon as my two actor friends were informed that we had the honour of extending hospitality to the famous Elder Paisios, they hastened to plead if he would "permit" them just one minute to kiss his hand. I immediately conveyed their devout request which was made even more sacred by the "thirst" of the Thessalonian Jenny Karezi who had never had the opportunity to venerate a "living Saint", as she would say.

Well then, despite my fervent plea and mediation that he not deprive such an innocent joy from two well-meaning people of the Arts, the Elder remained unmoved, saying that he "does not converse with actors!"

I did not wish at all to pressure his ascetic "sensitivity", even though I could have told him, with all due respect, that Christ Himself would never have denied such a sacred request.

- The other case was his "non-negotiable" insistence on those well-known welter of words used by the American Protestants regarding the Antichrist and the consequences of the number 666 on the private and public lives of the faithful.

With sensitivity to care I reminded the Elder that the entire authentic Tradition of the Orthodox, as to the dangers and the threats of the "Antichrist", is summarized beautifully in the most reverent saying of our struggling people: "Jesus Christ overcomes, and all the evil things He scatters!"

Nevertheless, to say that the most stunning "proof" that the visit to and presence of the Elder Paisios in Australia has blessed our Archdiocese, is illustrated in all that has transpired with the direct "stamp" of his person, under the guidance of my first Vicar General and later Abbott of the Holy Monastery of "Panayia Pantanassa", Archimandrite Stephanos of Pantanassa (Papakonstantinou):

- Both his holy name ("Paisios"), as well as that of the Saint "revered" especially by his self, his own Elder and Godparent, ("our Righteous Father Arsenios of Cappadocia" 1924+) born in Farasa of Cappadocia, have been given to much-promising and already much-offering exemplary Monks here in Australia. Additionally, the photograph of the Elder Paisios with his meditative face and his cap, appropriately "handcrafted" by our Monks (and glued to the surface of crosset cut tree branches) is offered as a "blessing" at ecclesiastical functions generally, to the children of our Catechetical Schools, etc.

- Finally, the Chapel in Sydney where Father Stephanos of Pantanassa Monastery bears confessions, is honoured in the name of "our Righteous Father Arsenios of Cappadocia".

May all of us have the intercessions and the blessings of them both!

Amen.

Translation by FSS

Technology casts light on Methoni sunken town and Sapienza Island shipwrecks

Technological advances used in the bay of Methoni, southwest Greece, and the northern coast of nearby island Sapienza have revealed more details about the geological features of the seabed and supplied further details about two of the known shipwrecks there.

Research was conducted by the ministry of Culture’s Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities in cooperation with the University of Patras’ Geology department, and its Laboratory of Marine Geology and Oceanography, in particular.

According to a statement by the ministry of Culture, research in the area had two purposes, “to locate ancient and historical shipwrecks lying on the bottom of the sea or buried in its sediments, and the palaeogeographic reconstruction of the bay of Methoni in the last 10,000 years.”

The ministry said the following equipment was used: a sub-bottom high-resolution profiler, which can locate seabed targets buried several meters below the surface of the seabed; a side-scan sonar to locate objects lying on the seabed surface; a magnetometer to locate metal objects and magnetic targets (including amphorae, the vessels with handles that were used to transport liquids) on the seabed or below it; and a multi-beam echoounder to map the depth and underwater terrain in detail, allowing the modelling of the seabed in three-dimensional format.

The equipment allowed the detailed recording of two known shipwrecks off the northern coast of the Sapienza island, possibly of the Roman era, and of the sunken settlement in the Methoni bay which dates to the Middle Bronze Age.

Commenting on the geological findings, the ministry’s announcement said the area “may serve as an excellent natural laboratory for the testing and development of new methodologies and technologies in underwater geoarchaeology and in the management of underwater archaeological sites.”
Dr Anna Dimitriou pointed out that this push for the acceptance of diversity will lead to an un-defining of the family. Social scientists supporting same sex ‘marriage’ draw on research that promotes the idea depression, anxiety, and suicide amongst LGBT communities would be lessened, and they endorse this view through research that has been shown to be methodologically flawed. Not all heterosexual marriages are ideal, but it has been shown that children do better in families with their biological father and mother. Researchers such as S. Saratokas, D.P. Sullins, M. Regnerus and L. Marks have contested the validity of the ‘no harm to children’ thesis. The oral accounts by children from same sex families have clearly highlighted the emotional and psychological impact of living in a same sex family, as well as the strong possibility of other sociological and ethical dilemmas arising, based on overseas experience.

Mr Nicholas Augustinos, Senior Lecturer of Law at The University of Notre Dame, in Sydney, focused on the impact of the proposed same sex ‘marriage’ legislation on the ability of Orthodox Christians, both lay and clergy, to freely express and act on their religious belief of what marriage truly is. He identified a number of examples from the United States where, following the enactment of state legislation of same sex ‘marriage’, individuals with strongly held religious convictions were prosecuted for acting on their convictions and refusing to provide their commercial services to same sex weddings. He pointed out that, as currently conceived, same sex ‘marriage’ legislation ‘would probably produce similar results under Australian law because no conscience or religious freedom protections had been extended to members of the general public (including Orthodox lay persons), leaving them potentially open to prosecution under Australian anti-discrimination law. He pointed out that, as currently conceived, same sex ‘marriage’ legislation ‘would probably produce similar results’ under Australian law because no conscience or religious freedom protections had been extended to members of the general public (including Orthodox lay persons), leaving them potentially open to prosecution under Australian anti-discrimination law. He pointed out that, as currently conceived, same sex ‘marriage’ legislation ‘would probably produce similar results under Australian law because no conscience or religious freedom protections had been extended to members of the general public (including Orthodox lay persons), leaving them potentially open to prosecution under Australian anti-discrimination law.

The key note speaker was the Very Reverent Geronta Eusebios, Abbot of Pantanassa Monastery, in N.S.W., who gave an overview on the Orthodox Church’s teachings on marriage, same sex ‘marriage’ and the need for us to contribute to the national discussion. He mentioned that, ‘The Church’s ultimate concern is to speak the truth with love, compassion and without judging the person who identifies as homosexual, but simultaneously to have the freedom … to teach her faithful in the parish and in Orthodox schools the Orthodox Christian teaching on marriage without being accused of breaching anti-discrimination laws, as is happening to the Catholic Archbishop of Hobart.’

Geronta Eusebios also mentioned that, ‘according to the Apostle Paul, the union between a man and a woman in the Sacrament of Marriage, symbolises the union between Christ and His Church.’ Whereas to redefine marriage so that it may include two persons of the same gender, ‘sends a message, enshrined in law, that there is nothing unique about male and female, husband and wife, father or mother, but rather that all are interchangeable and replaceable.’

The Scriptures and the saints of our Church universally testify that … divine love cannot be expressed in sexual acts between persons of the same gender. This is because it can never be complementary, unitive, life-creating and life enhancing in the way that God intended sexual relationships to be between a man and a woman.’

We need to personally live out our Christian faith and the truth about marriage in our lives. Intellectual arguments are important but people are moved more by the beauty of holiness. Yes, marriage is an invaluable social construct but it is firstly a path to holiness.
The First Fruits of Spring at St Andrew’s Theological College: Professor David Bradshaw’s Lectures on Ancient Greek Philosophy

The new ecclesiastical year has commenced at St Andrew’s with joy and enlightenment thanks to the second visit of its good friend, Professor David Bradshaw (Department of Philosophy, University of Kentucky, USA) and his wife, Mrs Mary Bradshaw (both of whom are Orthodox Christians). To be sure, the internationally renowned scholar has added to the prestige of the College over the past few years as a member of the editorial board of and contributor to the biannual journal, Phronema, as a guest lecturer for certain units in patristic theology, and as a main speaker at various public events.

I first met Prof. Bradshaw in 2013, when he delivered a keynote paper at the College’s Patristic Symposium on St Cyril of Alexandria. During the lunch break he graciously made time for us to discuss the philosophy of Gennadius Scholarius, in which I was interested at the time. I also had the pleasure of attending many of the professor’s lectures. The scope of his knowledge is staggering and expanding. His mastery of the ancient languages of classical and late antiquity is evident in his dynamic and varied method of teaching. For instance, in one session he would participate in the College’s Patristic Symposium on St Cyril of Alexandria. During the lunch break he graciously made time for us to discuss the philosophy of Gennadius Scholarius, in which I was interested at the time. I also had the pleasure of attending many of the professor’s lectures. The scope of his knowledge is staggering and expanding. His mastery of the ancient languages of classical and late antiquity is evident in his dynamic and varied method of teaching. For instance, in one session he would

Whilst my duties as the College’s I.T. and Registry Officer often required my attention elsewhere, I had the privilege and pleasure of attending many of the professor’s lectures. The scope of his marvellous expose extended from the basic arithmetic and geometry. Demonstrating his altruism and skill by clarifying the more difficult concepts we encountered whilst drawing analogies to Socratic philosophy, Pythagorism, Platonism, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, Scepticism, Stoicism, and Neo-Platonism. For instance, in one session he would

The Bradshaws accompanied by the course coordinator, the Very Revd Fr Dr Doru Costache, and the students.
ther Mario (Associate Lecturer in Church History at St Andrew’s) obtained his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Sydney.

Upon his return from the graduation ceremony, Father Doru warmly congratulated Mario in the presence of the professor and the students, joyfully encouraging him to undertake new scholarly and ecclesial initiatives in a spirit of Christian compassion.

Let me now highlight a few aspects of Prof. Bradshaw’s public lecture, which was met with much acclaim (as demonstrated by the numerous requests that I’ve received to post footage of the event on YouTube!).

Having been introduced by Father Doru, he began by reciting a moving question that had been presented to him by one of the students, namely: how might a Christian intellectually engage with loved ones who dismiss the very notion of faith?

To answer this difficult question, the professor examined Plato’s *Phaedo*, underscoring Socrates’ assertion that reason is given to humans by the gods so that they might live virtuously. Both Socrates and Plato maintained that since the gods are good they honour those who earnestly seek the truth while attempting to live by reason. Prof. Bradshaw noted that Socrates also speaks of an afterlife and divine judgment within the *Phaedo* despite the sceptic challenges posed to him in relation to the soul’s immortality. In a manner worthy of imitation, the professor gently refuted modern sceptics by describing how Socrates had put his faith in reason whilst acknowledging that all investigations of the truth ultimately depend upon the former.

I could easily see that the audience was greatly impressed by Prof. Bradshaw’s sensitivity and discernment, best reflected by his concluding remarks. In short, he stated that in the Scriptures and the other writings of the saints, Christ – the supreme truth – invites all of humanity to know him as a person. He then expressed his admirable conviction that Plato would have rejoiced if he had known that the quest for truth would no longer be limited by faith, but could culminate in personal experience.

Prof. Bradshaw’s knowledge of the major classical and late antique thinkers is extraordinary. His admiration for Socrates in particular is inspiring. It is needless to state that we hope that he will continue to cross the Pacific in order to share his philosophical insights with the Orthodox faithful in Australia.

For more information on Prof. Bradshaw’s important research, visit the following website: https://philosophy.as.uky.edu/users/dbradshaw

For snippet videos from his various presentations at St Andrew’s, see the following link: www.youtube.com/user/SAGOTC/videos

Chris Baghos
St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College

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Left: Prof. Bradshaw. Right: On Monday 21 September, His Eminence Archbishop Stylianos (College Dean) welcomed Professor David Bradshaw and his wife Mrs Mary Bradshaw to St Andrew’s. Here they are pictured together with His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Militoupolis (College graduate).
Adult Faith Education Seminar

On Saturday 19 September 2015, St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College delivered a series of catechetical lectures on the topic “Baptism: Being Clothed with Christ” at the Greek Orthodox Parish of St Paraskevi, Taigum (QLD), as part of its ongoing Adult Faith Education Open Learning (offered to the public for the third year in a row).

Three lectures were delivered to an appreciative audience of around eighty people by the Rev. Fr Gerasimos Koutsouras (“The Meaning of Baptism and its Significance for our Everyday Life”), Basilios Psilacos (“The Structural Overview and Meaning of the Ritual of Baptism”) and Anastasios Kalogerakis (“Believing and Belonging: Baptismal Themes Conveyed Through Early Christian Art”).

Special thanks is owed to the Rev. Fr Laurentiu Pescar and to the parishioners of St Paraskevi for hosting the event with such generosity of spirit, as well as to the Rev. Fr Anastasios Bozikis for assisting as MC, and to all those who attended.

There was a time Greeks sought refuge in Syria

As thousands of refugees from Near East are arriving in Greece in order to progress to the rest of Europe and while the immigration problem is exacerbating, it is time to travel back to the period when Greek refugees were seeking shelter in Syria in their effort to reach their homeland.

The issue was revived last year by journalist Damian Mac Con Uladh in response to the hunger strike of Syrian refugees on Syntagma Square in Athens. His article was published in the Irish Times and generated a mixed response on social media. A photograph from the Library of Congress photo archive posted by one commentator, reminded people of the time which Greeks sought refuge in Syria in 1923, after the Asia Minor Catastrophe, and during the forced exchange of population between Greece and Turkey, as agreed upon under the 1923 Lausanne treaty.

After the end of World War II, thousands of Greek refugees travelled to Syria and Lebanon, areas that were under French occupation. At least 17,000 Greeks from Asia Minor sought refuge in Syrian cities alone, Onur Yildirim explains in his work, which is entitled “Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922-1934.”

The controversial photograph from the Library of Congress, although not dated, is entitled “Greek refugees at Aleppo” and depicts a group of poorly dressed people waiting in line to be fed. Under the digitized photograph, one can find a caption which reads: “12,000 Greeks were fed by the Americans.” The American Red Cross estimates that around 2-3 million dollars had been offered for the needs of the refugees in Syria until the summer of 1923.

Yildirim even cites a telegram that was sent from the President of the Refugee Commission in Aleppo to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, asking him to prohibit further Greek immigrants from fleeing Asia Minor for Aleppo, where “it has become impossible to accept more refugees.”

Of course, the life of a refugee both in Syria and in other areas was far from easy. By the mid-summer of 1923, the food that had been obtained from various charities had already run out and the situation for refugees was described as “tragic and precarious.”

As journalist Damian Mac Con Uladh mentioned in his 2014 article, “No doubt, just as the Syrian refugees protesting in Syntagma don’t want to be in Greece, the Greek refugees in 1923 did not want to be in Syria. They wanted to reach Greece, a country most of them had never seen but hoped would at least put them out of danger.”
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Entries close on Monday 8th February 2016.
Exams will be held at the College on Saturday 27th February 2016.

Applications and information are available via our website under the "Scholarships and Awards" icon.
For further information please call Angela Kringas on (02) 9311 3340
or online at www.stspyridon.nsw.edu.au

For enrolment information please contact the Enrolment Officer:
Angela Kringas by email at enrolments@stspyridon.nsw.edu.au
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An activity of the Greek Archdiocese of Australia
Greece opens Olympic venue to migrants

Ban Ki-moon appeals to the world to approach Europe’s refugee crisis with “creativity, compassion and courage”

Greece has opened a disused Olympic venue to house more than 400 migrants who have been camping out in Athens’ Victoria Square.

Police escorted buses carrying the migrants, many from Syria and Afghanistan, to Galatsi Olympic Hall.

The venue was home to table tennis and gymnastics competitions during the 2004 Olympics.

City officials have been trying to ease citizens’ concerns about the number of migrants camping out in the open in central Athens.

Greece is on the front lines of the European migrant crisis and has been overwhelmed with people who travel across the Mediterranean Sea from the Middle East and Africa to seek better lives in the European Union.

Ban Ki-moon’s appeal

At the U.N. General Assembly in New York earlier this month, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appealed to the world to approach Europe’s refugee crisis with “creativity, compassion, and courage.”

Ban told meeting of 70 ministers at the General Assembly that “the future does not belong to those who seek to build walls or exploit fears.”

He stressed cooperation among all those who are struggling to cope with the crisis with all efforts focused on saving lives. Otherwise, Ban said “the winners will be smugglers, traffickers and unscrupulous employers. Those who lose will be the dispossessed, the hungry, the vulnerable, the defenseless, and the children.”

Opening the General Assembly, Ban urged Europe to do more. He called on international community to tackle the source of the migrant problem – including the civil war in Syria and terrorism and instability in Afghanistan.

The world’s seven leading industrialized countries, along with Gulf states, have pledged $1.8 billion to U.N. aid agencies helping with the migrant crisis. Separately, Japan announced it will give $810 million.

Number of asylum seekers grows

The U.N. reports nearly 515,000 asylum seekers have left war and poverty in the Middle East and Africa since January, reaching Europe through Greece and Italy. But nearly 3,000 have drowned or disappeared, crossing the hazardous Mediterranean Sea on rickety or overcrowded boats and rafts. Most were left to the mercy of the sea by human traffickers.

Some European countries who at first opened their borders to migrants have now sealed them or have reimposed visa rules and checks on asylum seekers. Hungary has built a razor-wire fence along its border with Serbia.

Gone are the days when a rainbow of multi-colored, multi-national citizens can be seen in the streets of European capitals.

Delegates at the European Trade Union Confederation meeting in Paris Wednesday overwhelmingly adopted a resolution to ensure more rights for asylum seekers and demand the migrants and refugees are “evenhandedly” accepted among EU member states.

The confederation, a group of 90 unions, condemned governments who refuse to fully cooperate in the resettlement of asylum seekers and said “obstacles and closures” must be banned.
The music of Ioannis Pane

By Chris Vlahonasios
TRANSFIGURE Media

Digital Mosaic
Where the Ancient Faith + 21st century media merge

Based in Thessaloniki, Ioannis Pane is one of the most promising young composers in Greece. Currently he is number one in local & national ranks on ReverbNation, a major achievement in the highly competitive and overcrowded online music world. Ioannis’ music weighs heavily on emotion to generate an intense, almost cinematic experience. Following the release of several earlier singles including, ‘We Have To Go Back’ and ‘A Long Time Ago’, his most recent single ‘Alone’ is perhaps his most personal work.

What is it about your style of music that appeals to you?

I chose to create mostly instrumental music because in that way I could express my messages and feelings to everyone, regardless of nationality. When I was younger I used to write lyrics, but I had so much inspiration there wasn’t enough freedom to express everything I wanted in the vocals, especially the elements or melodies I had in mind. After I started creating instrumental music I felt that there was no limitations to my inspiration. There are so many elements and colours you can put in music, especially when you compose for an orchestra. I was impressed by how the music can create images inside my mind. I wanted to do something that can be understood by anyone.

I chose piano because it is the instrument that expresses me the best. I like its sound and the possibilities that gives me when I am on keys. I think it suits my character better and to my specialty as a composer. Apart from the fact that my music comes naturally out of me, I have chosen this genre and style because I believe that it is closer to my personality and it is more suitable to express what I want and fits more with my values.

Who have been your greatest influences?

I was greatly influenced from the music of my childhood from artists who are very different from the genre I now follow. I am not quite sure, but I’ve probably been influenced from some movie soundtracks. I have listened to many genres and artists since I was a child and I guess I have taken something from all them. I also have in mind some pieces of music from video games that influenced me.

Can you tell us a little about the creative process?

Usually everything starts on piano, it comes spontaneously when I am improvising. When I play something that has a clear melody, a clear theme that I like, I record it and I save it. Then the imagination starts working. I imagine how this theme can evolve, how it can be used and in what orchestration it will sound nice. Sometimes some of this process happens immediately when I compose the theme on piano.

After that, the whole idea comes to life on my computer thanks to sophisticated music software where I start building the sound. I choose the instruments I want to use, arrange the melodies and chords, experiment and then I come to the final arrangement. If there’s a piano part I play it on my digital piano and record it. Sometimes I make a lot of changes during this process.

I also do the mixing of my pieces and usually this procedure starts happening while I am still working on the instrumentation and the arrangement.

Alone is a powerful and engaging piece, what’s it trying to communicate to the listener?

‘Alone’ was originally a song I wrote in 2009 in which I was trying to express my loneliness. And when I say loneliness I don’t mean the lack of company, but to emphasise how very differently I was seeing the world from other people. How differently I was thinking, how some things were so important to me and people don’t seem to care about them. ‘Alone’ was an expression of disappointment.

Through the years the piece has evolved and I have changed as a person, but the meaning hasn’t. You can say that it is somehow the loneliness of the artist, or the loneliness of a person that wishes to live differently to the rest of society.

How do you incorporate spiritual themes into your work?

As long as I don’t use lyrics I start with the title, the title expresses what the music is talking about. But what’s more important is the music itself. I try to find how a melody would fit with a spiritual theme. The orchestration, arrangement, sounds I use, how the themes and the instruments appear in the composition, all these are a way to express a spiritual theme through my work.

What have you learnt about the music industry?

I don’t have a good opinion of the industry. It doesn’t care about art. They don’t care about talent, they don’t care about quality. I think that in most cases an artist must change to fit certain standards, otherwise he/she doesn’t get any support and he/she is not promoted.

As for my faith, yes I have felt that. I mostly experienced this issue in the world of art, with other musicians and artists. This is a problem that I will have in the future again, because the music industry and the world of art do not fit with my faith and moral values.

What advice can you give to others wanting to enter the music industry?

To be very careful and try to be as independent as possible. To rely on themselves and on their audience and not on labels and industry. To build true relationships with other artists and with their audience and to make slow but steady steps, because something that is built quickly can easily collapse. And of course to be humble.

What are your future plans?

I have a lot of musical ideas. I will be publishing some new music in the future and I am planning to make an album when I finish enough pieces. I am also thinking of uploading some piano covers on my YouTube channel and do some live streaming shows.

Ioannis’ music can be downloaded/streamed from www.transfiguremedia.com

Follow Ioannis Pane on Facebook & YouTube

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Heart & Soul on paper: Orthodox poet Hadel Ma’ayeh

By Chris Vlahonasios
TRANSFIGURE Media

Poetry strives to express the very essence of human existence in beautiful yet concise and efficient language. It is unfortunate many people today do not truly value this ancient art form and the richness it offers. Hadel Ma’ayeh is a US-based Orthodox poet and Huffington Post passionist with Jordanian heritage. She has recently published a book of poems and haikus, From the Heart – A Journey of Love.

What inspired you to become a writer?

Since the age of nine I have enjoyed writing and reading poetry. Great poets that use emotional effects have inspired me to create my own style and poetic symbolism. For instance, Khalil Gibran, Edgar Allen Poe, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost and Walter Butler Yeats. By the time I reached high school I had a wonderful English teacher, Mr Richard McNally (God rest his soul) who pushed me hard to write well above all in poetry. With his perseverance, Mr McNally entered two of my poems, “Life” and “Souls” in the local paper, The Mirror, my first published pieces.

Your book is a collection of poems, haikus and your own sayings, why was it so important to publish this work?

“FROM THE HEART – A Journey of Life” was truly written from my heart and soul. Some of my works were written as far back as twenty years or more, poetry for me is a journal of life. When revising some of my older works, the mind set at that moment in time was reawaken. The words stirred up old sentiments.

You were born in Jordan and baptised in Madaba, how has your cultural heritage influenced you and your writing?

My Jordanian heritage and Greek Orthodox faith has a great deal of influence on me especially our family crest, the Holy Cross and Saint George. This resonates through my poems such as “Spirit Departs” It’s about the values and traditions I uphold as a Jordanian and to carry on the family crest.

Your style of poetry is very sensory. You give vivid yet concise descriptions of places, environments and people – are these from direct experiences or from observing others?

I am a visual person who takes in the surroundings to heart and I literally use all my senses as well as my feelings at that particular moment in time. My passion in writing poetry comes from two directions, my personal experiences and interaction with my family and friends. I write it down in a journal that I use later when writing poems. When I write my poems I am like an oil painter who uses a paint brush, I paint my words with heart and soul.

You cover a wide range of topics, including death, divorce and even Hollywood – does the world trouble you?

I am an advocate for human rights, animal rights and a sustainable global environment. I hold all these concerns dear to my heart and daily prayers. The poems “On the Eve of Condemnation”, “Prayers for Humanity”, “The Seven Hills”, “Am Just Tired”, “Closed Heart”, “Don’t Forget” and “Hope, Faith and Love” are expressions of these concerns. Although, I have the faith that humanity will discover solutions for our current issues and crises by using our hearts and not just our minds.

You explore worldly issues with a spiritual lens, what is it about the transcendent power of poetry that makes this possible?

Poetry is an expression of oneself and through this expression, I explore God and faith my personal voyage in life. Writing poems about God or faith in general comes natural to me, because it is embedded deep in my soul. The poems stream out like a river when I particularly write about God.

Out of all the works in the book which speaks to you the most?

Yes, the poem “Divorce” comes to mind and heart. In the spring of 2014, through a mutual friend, I reconnected with an old friend from my university years. I came to find out that my friend had separated and was in the process of a divorce. My heart instantly felt with the pain and the misfortune of the children. I took this poignant matter to heart and it stirred up in me the desire to write the poem “Divorce”. I am certain that this poem resonates with many readers who have experienced the struggles and pains of a divorce.

Are there any topics you’d like to explore?

I will continue to write poetry and Haikus along with exploring ballads and prose.

UNCHANGING WIND (page 31)
The wind hurks among the Olive trees
Unchanging its path through the brittle leaves
Murky waters unsettled by the sands
And red lobsters do their usual dance
The lonely wind makes a wave
As it passes the hallowed cave
Untouched by time and
No sound or chime
The reddish sun hides in the distance
Like the unchanging wind with resistance.

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On Tuesday September 29 throughout Australia at 11am, service was conducted for the National Police Remembrance day to commemorate the lives of Australian Police Officers who died in the line of duty.

This year the Greek Orthodox Community of Mildura (Victoria) took the responsibility to host the official Remembrance day, and conducted the service in the local Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation of our Lady. Mildura is in the Northwest corner of Victoria and co-operates with neighbouring states, officers from N.S.W Police were also present at the service, from Melbourne our very own police chaplains Fr Chris from South Melbourne and Fr Emmanuel from Moonee Ponds accompanying by Senior Sergeant John Dimos made the trip to support the local Greek community as well as to officiate the service.

A successful turnout was made by officers and the local community who impressively commented on the uplifting of the service and congratulated the local Greek Community for their support in providing the Church and the hall to commemorate this special day. At the conclusion of the service the local Greek ladies auxiliary group provided catering in the churches hall.

Remembrance Day at the Greek Orthodox Community of Mildura

China Greece Times, a community newspaper in the Chinese language published in Greece since 2005, has launched a Greek-language section.

“Our readers used to be Chinese who live and work in Greece but also Chinese visitors to the country,” the paper’s editor-in-chief, Lydia Liang stated. “However, as our two peoples have come so much closer over the past two years and the two governments are working closer together, we decided to expand to a Greek audience.”

The new edition forms a bridge of communication for many Greeks, mainly businessmen who are interested in expanding their activities to the Asian powerhouse.

“Many Greeks want to know more about the real China by reading Chinese news firsthand,” says Liang.

“There are already businessmen who have found partners in China and expanded their activities, such as Coco-Mat with its mattresses, Vianex with pharmaceuticals and Boutaris wines,” notes journalist Giorgos Tzogopoulos, an expert on Greek-Chinese relations who is also one of the newspaper’s columnists and founder of the website chinaandgreece.com. “Language has always been an obstacle and with this initiative we are removing it. Tzogopoulos admits that the political uncertainty in Greece is making potential Chinese investors hesitate, but in the meantime, “they are waiting and are interested in making acquaintances in the Greek business community.”

One part of the 32-page newspaper is written exclusively in Chinese and includes subjects that are of interest only to the 10,000-strong Chinese community in Greece. The Greek part will contain news from China, from the Chinese Embassy in Greece, Chinese companies in Greece and the Chinese community.

The paper works with China Radio International and other media in the Asian country in order to bring in richer content. It is available at select kiosks in downtown Athens, particularly near major tourist attractions.
The Sydney College of Divinity (SCD) is a consortium of theological colleges of various Christian denominations, through which St Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Theological College is accredited as a tertiary education provider. As an active member of the consortium, St Andrew’s participates in a number of SCD bodies, including the Research Committee which, under the expert leadership of Professor James Harrison (Director of Research), had the initiative of the event of interest. More specifically, Professor Harrison convened a full-day conference on Monday, 28 September 2015, on various Christian understandings of wellbeing. The theme of the event was ‘Wellbeing, Personal Wholeness, and the Social Fabric: An Interdisciplinary Approach.’

As a member of the Research Committee, I can share the thought behind the theme of this conference. It happens that a year or so ago a certain federal politician made a public speech on what Australians need these days to maintain their prosperity and wellbeing, a speech which challenged the members of the Research Committee in that it defined wellbeing in quite selfish and upfront materialistic terms. After lengthy deliberations, we decided that the time has come to act and offer a unified Christian response to any narrow, materialistic understanding of wellbeing. This is how the theme of the conference emerged.

The event consisted in the presentation of fourteen papers offered by lecturers and researchers from within the consortium, accompanied by a magnificent contribution by Dr Wendy Mayer from the Centre for Early Christian Studies at Flinders University (Brussels QLD), ‘Australia’s Moral Compass and Societal Well-Being.’ Dr Mayer is an honorary research associate of the SCD who, I am happy to announce, will be appointed an honorary research associate of the Centre for Early Christian Studies. She addressed the city of Constantinople as exemplary for the religious mindset where architecture and art more generally are meant to evoke the sacred and lift up people’s minds to a rich understanding of life and values. The proponents contrasted this understanding to the structure and symbology associated with modern cities, which suggest a preference for the mundane and a surrendering to the passions. In my own paper, ‘Being, Wellbeing, Being for Ever: Three Patristic Witnesses of the Existential Trajectory of the Rational Creation,’ I discussed a series of passages from Clement the Alexandrian, the author known as Dionysius the Areopagite, and St Maximus the Confessor. These passages present human wellbeing as an interactive experience where divine grace and people’s free will lead to healing and fulfillment insofar as the human being chooses to live in virtue and compassionately-in likeness to the Logos incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ.

By all accounts, the fourteen papers reached the conference’s target, namely to offer a broader definition of wellbeing as referring to more than the selfish contentment of a culture driven by materialistic purposes. The convener and contributors deserve praise and gratitude for their blessed and enriching efforts.

Wellbeing, Personal Wholeness, and the Social Fabric
A Sydney College of Divinity Conference

The Greek Australian VEMA

Flinders University announces Aristotelian Celebration

The Annual Aristotelian Celebration will take place on October 28 at Flinders University Tonsley Campus.

To celebrate the inspiring achievements of Flinders University’s LOGOS Australian Centre for Hellenic Language and Culture, the university will be hosting a special presentation and performance.

The event is organized by the Modern Greek students, LOGOS Australian Centre for Hellenic Language and Culture, and the Halkidikeon Society of South Australia ‘ARISTOTELE’ Inc., in conjunction with the Pan Macedonian Association of SA, and it will be held in Lecture Theatre 1, G42.

For more information, visit www.flinders.edu.au/LOGOS

When: Wednesday 28 October from 7.00 pm-9.00 pm
Where: Flinders University Tonsley Campus, 1284 South Road, Clovelly Park, SA 5042

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Mudgee in the NSW Central West some 3.5 hours drive from Sydney is home to some of the States’ premier small food producers and some of the best produce the country has to offer. The Mediterranean influence and inspiration is strongly present, from olives, olive oil and superb feta, alongside contemporary additions such as charcuterie (preserved meats) thanks to Pipeclay, and also of course Mudgee’s older reputation for wine and in particular ‘stickies’ like the port and muscat of Pieter van Gent still very much present.

This September saw the annual Flavours of Mudgee festival with local wineries and food producers showcasing their products throughout a week long celebration of the food and wine of the region. Attracting a large number of visitors over the week, the celebrations culminated in the 26 September Street Fair which featured hundreds of stalls from local producers and attracted around 5,000 visitors. From locally grown and super fresh Murrungundy pistachios to the award winning Spencer Chocolate (bean-to-bar manufactured in Mudgee), Wagyu beef, salt bush lamb and natural-ly the almost ubiquitous olives, olive oil and of course wine it was an extravaganza of fabulous food, wine and a buzzing atmosphere.

Topping off the weekend’s excitement was the Sydney-based chamber orchestra Camerata Academica of the Antipodes (whose inaugural performance in 2014 was featured in the Vema) concert at St John’s Anglican Church in Mudgee. Touring with chamber musicians and a vocal ensemble, the concert brought together sacred and secular music from the past 600 years with the programme including Mozart’s Ave Verum motet performed by chamber vocal ensemble, the perennially popular Air by Bach and Spring from the Four Seasons by Vivaldi, alongside music by Purcell, Handel and more.

The Mudgee region boasts extensive live music events, both popular and classical, so there is never a shortage of musical entertainment. This was the Camerata’s first appearance in Mudgee and the concert was met with a standing ovation and demand for encores by the large and enthusiastic audience. For students of early Greek-Australian history there is also a fascinating connection between the visiting performers and the town of Mudgee. The Camerata’s Director (and Vema contributor), Dr Imogen Coward and her musician brothers Taliesin and Leon were especially excited to bring the ensemble to the town as in the 1920s their great-grandfather, Nick Matis, built what was then the Mudgee Café in Church St. Other cafés in Church Street were once owned by the Bokos and Primeas families. There is also an interesting connection to the township of Denman (Hunter Valley, NSW) where Nick Matis had his first café, in partnership with Nick Flaskas. Sadly, eight stores and the School of Arts, which together made up one side of Denman’s main shopping area, were burned down in 1928. Today, on what appears to be the same site of the Matis/Flaskas original café, stands a new restaurant, called Gerard’s Place. For anyone contemplating a trip to the Hunter, the food here is exceptional. Boasting a well-deserved 5 stars on Trip Advisor, the menu at Gerard’s, like the food at Mudgee’s street fair, reflects the acceptance of Mediterranean produce and meals. There is, of course, something ironic in this if one recalls that, to be successful, the early Greek café owners sold Australian/British/American style food and drinks.

The Camerata’s next performance will be a Christmas gala featuring vocal and instrumental music by Vivaldi, Mozart and more and will be held in Sydney 5 December at 7pm at St Alban’s Anglican Church Hall, Pembridge St, Epping. For more information visit CamerataAntipodes.com.au.

The dates for the 2016 Flavours of Mudgee festival will be released soon. For more information the Flavours of Mudgee visit www.flavoursofmudgee.com.au or the facebook page https://www.facebook.com/flavoursofmudgee/
If only we could ask Euripides about refugees
How did the ancient Greeks treat their refugees?

The costs and benefits of taking in refugees feature in other plays, where fallen heroes from across Greece make their way to Athens for protection. These people are not innocent children, but have done terrible things. Taking them in is therefore risky, though may offer long term rewards. In Sophocles’s Oedipus at Colonus, the Athenians offer sanctuary to the blind Oedipus, who has murdered his father and married his mother, despite their fear that holding him will bring divine anger. At the end of the play we learn that his spirit will protect Athens in the future.

On the other hand, in Euripides’s Medea, Medea persuades the Athenian king to take her in, presenting herself as a refugee in need. While helping provokes conflict, it is the risk involved that gives Athens a claim to moral uniqueness. British audiences are enjoying an unprecedented flush of Greek tragedy, with the Almeida theatre devoting an entire season to its “big hits”. However, plays that focus on Athenian identity are rarely performed today, and are often felt to be jingoistic or parochial, their themes of little interest in the modern world. But as real life tragedy plays out on the shores of the Mediterranean, these lesser known texts have relevance to our understanding of what we owe to our fellow citizens and to other human beings.

By: Laura Swift | Oct 7 2015

Laura Swift is Lecturer in Classical Studies, The Open University. This article was originally published on The Conversation.

Source: http://www.merzomat.net/articles/view/If-only-we-could-ask-euripides-about-refugees/16967#sthash.jkGonSGz.dpuf
The Asterousia mountain range and its highest peak, Kofinas (1,280 meters), is considered as part of the Iraklio district, on Crete. It gets crowded in the fall and the bells of the animals grazing in the area accompany the sea breeze. The time to do so is before midsummer, when it gets crowded.

Near Aghiofarago lies Vathi, one of the most beautiful beaches in the district, reached via a 9-kilometer dirt road that starts next to the Odigitria Monastery. You can also get there by boat from Aghia Galini, Kokkinos Pyrgos and Matala. Krommos is another alluring long beach with sand dunes lined by juniper trees, and one of the places where loggerhead sea turtles (Caretta caretta) lay their eggs. It was also an early Minoan settlement, to which the archaeological site near the parking lot bears testimony. More public buildings from that period lie next to the beach. There are tavernas above the southern side - with German World War II bunkers below them - from which you can watch the sunset. Again, it gets crowded in the summer months.

Matala, a well-known spot popular among the hippy scene of the 1960s and 70s, continues to draw visitors in the summer. It was also an ancient and medieval port. The caves above, which before the hippy set arrived had been used as houses or for burials during antiquity, are fenced off for archaeological site. To be sure, the coastal area also features spots whose aesthetics leave something to be desired, such as the beach at the end of the Triptiti Gorge, which some consider an appropriate place to park their camper vans throughout the year. However, the route from the village of Kapetaniana to the gorge must be one of the most beautiful in Greece. Kapetaniana has several guesthouses and an excellent climbing face.

Some kilometers west of Triptiti lie the settlement and gorge of Lentas and the archaeological site of Levin, which has the remains of a temple to Aegaeas, the ancient god of healing, and of a therapeutic spa. Across from the Odigitria Monastery is a dirt road that leads toward the Marble Gorge. A steep, five-minute descent from the parking area will bring you to the small chapel in side a cave dedicated to the Virgin Mary Panaghial, which celebrates with a feast day on August 15.

The shaded courtyard of the church offers an excellent view of the gorge below.

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Where to stay


Where to eat

Near Aghiofarago lies Vathi, one of the most beautiful beaches in the district, reached via a 9-kilometer dirt road that starts next to the Odigitria Monastery. You can also get there by boat from Aghia Galini, Kokkinos Pyrgos and Matala. Krommos is another alluring long beach with sand dunes lined by juniper trees, and one of the places where loggerhead sea turtles (Caretta caretta) lay their eggs. It was also an early Minoan settlement, to which the archaeological site near the parking lot bears testimony. More public buildings from that period lie next to the beach. There are tavernas above the southern side - with German World War II bunkers below them - from which you can watch the sunset. Again, it gets crowded in the summer months.

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