



A publication of the Dean C. and Zoë S. Pappas Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies and the Friends of Hellenic Studies

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From the Director

Dear Friends,

As we enter finals week with students taking their exams virtually, we just received the good news that the Covid-19 vaccine is out! After this extremely difficult period for our students, faculty, and staff, we are hopeful for a return to normalcy to, once again, offer life-changing educational opportunities for our students.

This past week also marked the passing of Senator Paul S. Sarbanes, who is the brother of our own Zoë Pappas. Senator Sarbanes was an exceptional human being, a dedicated public servant, and an example of a remarkably authentic individual who through his hard work used his great talents to improve the lives of his fellow human beings. He was highly respected and loved by his colleagues, constituents, Greek-American and non-Greek friends, and family.

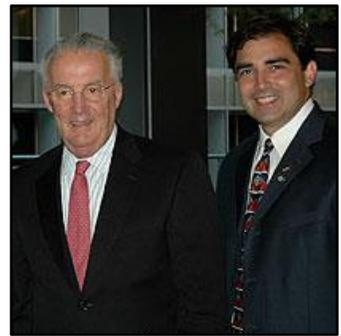
We were fortunate to have Senator Sarbanes speak at our 2007 Friends of Hellenic Studies event, "The Greek American Dream." During his talk, he highlighted four values that led Greek immigrants to success: family, faith, hard work and education. Clearly, these values impacted his own life. He added, however, that it is society's duty to educate its people in order to preserve the health of the society. Fittingly, in 2008, Stockton granted him the Honorary Doctor of Laws degree and he was the Commencement speaker. He is among our most accomplished and notable alumni.

On a personal note, I always appreciated speaking with the Senator who not only demonstrated a brilliant acumen but was fully engaged with whatever we discussed. His curiosity and personal concern were ever present. I appreciated how, after he asked about my family, he always asked, "How is the Hellenic program going at Stockton?" He believed it to be an exceptional program, and was always a great supporter along with Zoë and Dean. Our deepest condolences go out to Zoë Pappas and her entire family for their loss. It is a loss felt by Stockton and the Greek-American community. May His Memory Be Eternal. Αιώνια ή μνήμη αὐτοῦ.

Tom Papademetriou, Ph.D., Director



DEAN C. & ZOË S. PAPPAS
INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY



Left to right: The late Senator Paul S. Sarbanes and Dr. Tom Papademetriou, Director

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From the Co-Chairs of the Friends of Hellenic Studies

Greetings and Happy Holidays!

We are so excited to present our second on-line issue of *The Hellenic Voice* and hope you find our newsletters entertaining and informative. We believe that we could further enrich our issues with articles, poems, recipes, memories, or other snippets of wisdom about Greece and Hellenism you would like to share. If interested, simply email us at fhs@stockton.edu We will try to include them in future issues.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, we would like to begin by expressing our sincere gratitude to the members of the Stockton Family and the Hellenic Communities of South Jersey for supporting our initiatives as we strive to share our love of Hellenism. We couldn't do it without the help of all our volunteers and donors. Because you are all **essential**, we hope to see more of you join us at our webinars and regular meetings on Zoom every second Tuesday of the month. It's super-easy to join in.

Since our last issue we have been busy meeting regularly on Zoom, working on our newsletter and planning and executing several on-line presentations which, we feel, help to deepen our understanding of Greece and Cyprus' illustrious past, present and future.

On October 29th the Classical Humanities Society of South Jersey began this year's Lecture Series with the Zoom webinar "Her Brown Hands Bore Me Alabaster Smooth—Sculpting Cleopatra in Stone



**Friends of
Hellenic Studies**

ΛΑΜΠΑΔΙΑ ΕΧΟΝΤΕΣ ΔΙΑΔΩΣΟΥΣΙΝ ΑΛΛΗΛΟΙΣ

"Those Who Possess the Light Shall Pass it on to Others"
The Republic, Plato

and Word," presented by Margaret Malamud, Ph.D., Professor of History, New Mexico State University. It was a fascinating case study on race and representation of the Classical World.

Two weeks later we were treated to a webinar book talk by Peter S. Giakoumis, author of "The Forgotten Heroes of the Balkan Wars: Greek-American and Philhellenes of 1912-1913." The author gave an informative and entertaining account of a little-known period in Greek history.

If you missed either of these lectures you can read the summaries by our Stockton students, Ivan Beste and Justin Melchionne, in this issue of our newsletter.

In January we will be hosting another webinar book talk by Dan Georgakas, author of "My Detroit: Growing Up Greek and American in Motor City." The book has been called "a blend of traditional ethnic memoir and a historian's account of America's most populous industrial city." Information on how you can view this interesting presentation will be forthcoming. We hope you will join us.



From the Co-Chairs of the Friends of Hellenic Studies, continued

In addition to our Student and Faculty Voices, other articles in this Holiday Issue of *The Hellenic Voice* will spotlight some of the ways our community celebrates traditional Christmas and New Year's festivities. This year, the pandemic has altered many of these rituals, but we continue to be joyful and hopeful for the future, one which looks promising.

One of the things we look forward to for next year is the bicentennial of Greece's independence, the first successful European revolution of the 19th century! In conjunction with the Pappas Center and others, we are planning a variety of ways to celebrate, so be sure to stay tuned as more information is forthcoming. We hope you will join in the festivities.

The Friends of Hellenic Studies wish you and your families both here and abroad a holiday season filled with peace, love, and happiness which continues into the coming year.

Happy Holidays!

Χρόνια Πολλά

Cathy, Maria and Katherine
Co-chairs, Friends of Hellenic Studies





Student Voices: Reflections on Recent Lectures

Thoughts on “*Her Brown Hands Bore Me Alabaster Smooth:*” *Sculpting Cleopatra in Stone & Word*

By Ivan Beste

I was excited to attend a Zoom lecture on October 28, 2020, by Dr. Margaret Malamud of New Mexico State University, regarding the last pharaoh, Cleopatra. I was even more ecstatic when I learned how historical depictions of her race would be discussed in depth. But I wasn’t expecting to gain an understanding of 19th century biases and prejudices.

The first sculpture that Dr. Malamud discussed was “Cleopatra” (1860) by William Wetmore. The artist portrayed her in white marble as cunning, beautiful, and powerful. Wetmore intentionally sculpted her to be a black Queen of the Nile in order to broadcast his strong abolitionist beliefs. At first glance this is true, but Dr. Malamud explained the problematic nature of this artist’s intent. William Wetmore created a beautiful sculpture, but it did not necessarily empower Cleopatra (or black women) but rather was referencing racist beliefs that African women were hypersexual. Even poems written about this specific sculpture equate the Queen of the Nile with wild animals when talking about her romantic relationships with various Roman statesmen.

In contrast, Edmonia Lewis’ “Death of Cleopatra” (1873) depicts the last pharaoh as a white woman. This was done to strip the harmful stereotypes found in depictions like Wetmore’s from the ancient ruler. Here, in Cleopatra’s final moments, she is in control of her destiny just as Plutarch wrote. Lewis clearly made a feminist piece that one could argue whitewashes Cleopatra. However, she does this for the purpose of showing Cleopatra as more than a sexual object of the male gaze. Even critics at the time did not consider the sculpture beautiful but rather depicting a woman who was finally finished with politics and war.

This lecture has piqued my interest in how works of art broadcast historical conceptions of race and bias. It has also given me another reason to thank the Pappas Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies for sponsoring this unique, educational opportunity.



Above: William Wetmore, “Cleopatra” (1878)

Below: Edmonia Lewis, “The death of Cleopatra” (1876)

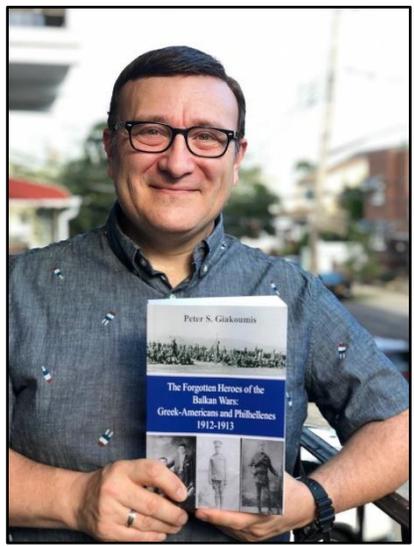




Student Voices: Reflections on Recent Lectures

The Forgotten Heroes of the Balkan Wars: Greek-Americans and Philhellenes 1912-1913

By Justin Melchionne

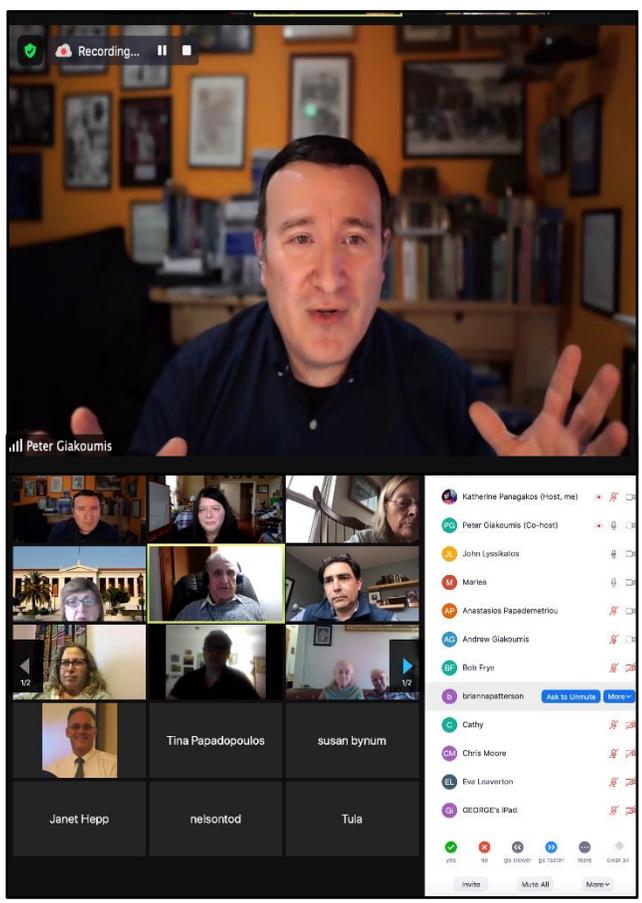


Above: The author, Peter Giakoumis, with his book.
Below: Screenshots from the November 15th lecture.

On November 15th, Mr. Peter Giakoumis presented a lecture on his riveting new book, *The Forgotten Heroes of the Balkan Wars: Greek-Americans and Philhellenes 1912-1913*. His work illuminates an often-neglected episode in history, the eponymous Balkan Wars just prior to the First World War. The conflicts saw a panoply of Balkan nations, the most prominent of which at that time was Greece, pitted against themselves and their historic nemesis: the Ottoman Empire. Featured in his work is the harrowing story of the tens of thousands of Greek-American immigrants who returned to their fatherland to answer the call to arms. The love of their homeland and fidelity to their King, as well as a certain wanderlust and adventurous spirit, compelled many of these brave young men to again cross the vast Atlantic Ocean, having made the same journey in the opposite direction not long before.

After making the long and expensive journey home (which cost around \$1,000 in 1913, around \$26,000 adjusted for inflation), many of these soldiers were sent to special units in the newly reformed Greek military, which almost exclusively consisted of Greek-American expatriates. Such examples were the “Garibaldi Legion” and the “Sacred Battalion,” which distinguished themselves in several bloody battles throughout the war. Giakoumis notes that often times these units sustained heavy casualties but inflicted them at a rate much higher than they received them.

Upon the war’s conclusion many of these men remained in Greece, but many returned adorned with fresh scars and sometimes accompanied with lovely brides. Greek communities in America bestowed their own honors on these returning heroes in ceremonies conducted by official representatives of King Constantine. Ninety-Nine years later, Giakoumis found the names of three of these men: John Agriostathos, Contantine Collias, and Andrew Alekopoulos. These names will forever serve as a burning reminder of another illustrious moment in Greece’s impressive history.

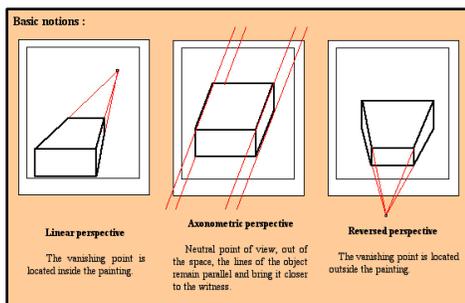


Faculty Voices

Kordis' *Hellenism through the Ages in Nature, Spirit, and the Arts* viewed through the eyes of Professor Mariana Smith

Professor Mariana Smith is an Assistant Professor of Art in Printmaking in Stockton's Visual Arts Program

To behold the magnificent mural by George Kordis, Byzantine iconographer and artist, was particularly exciting for me as a Russian immigrant who has studied the traditions of icon painting and its applications in the Russian folk arts. I immediately noticed the traditional Byzantine reverse perspective. This unique approach to a landscape with vanishing points placed outside the painting creates the illusion that these points are "in front of" the painting rather than in the painting. By using this technique, the artist created a particular relationship between the viewer, the space, and the images on the wall. Thus, just as in Byzantine icons and frescoes where the saints or Scriptural scene is brought forward into the space between the worshiper and the pictorial plane, likewise, Kordis' mural invites its viewers to connect to the symbolic landscape, to participate in the rich history presented through its inclusion of significant figures, and to inspire new generations of young scholars to find their spot on the banks of the ancient river.



This nuanced, tradition-bound approach to concepts of image and space is integral to George Kordis' scholarship. In 2016, he elaborated on the unique relationship between the image and the meaning:

"My painting does not aim to express the essence of reality, human sentiments or feelings, nor does



Located in The Constantelos Hellenic Collection and Reading Room, Bjork Library, Stockton University. Click the picture for more information on the mural.

it claim to present a subjective description of what my eyes see in the world. My painting cannot be categorized within a framework of modern Western art because it is grounded in a different cultural framework, that of Greek-Byzantine art, where painting and its function are conceived of in an entirely different way.

Painting concerns the surface (*epiphaneia*) of objects . . . <and> is the manifestation of *hypostasis* <the essence> of the depicted object, which is at once both revealed and hidden. Indeed, its existence is revealed while its essence remains hidden." (<https://kordis.gr/bio/>)

Artists emphasize a state of love, *synousia*, where the boundaries are lost, and life is an eternal communion. We can see it realized through the traditional principles and ideals of Byzantine painting, specifically, through rhythm. Kordis said that everything in his picture is energy: lines, colors, movements, etc. These energies must be reconciled and exist in a 'perfect' way, in a balanced dynamic state. Through rhythm, as understood by Greek-Byzantine tradition, the image becomes a manifestation of a state of love, and a peaceful time-place on earth. This depth of artistic consideration is particularly important since it conveys both a reverence to and care of broad, universal ideas. Additionally, it shows that even the smallest details are interconnected, symbolic, and meaningful.

When Stockton's future scholars stand before the Kordis' mural, *Hellenism through the Ages in Nature, Spirit, and the Arts*, they are included in its symbolic space, they receive its subtle but no less important message to consider the nuanced contexts in their own works, and to carry on the legacy of Rev. Dr. Demetrios J. Constantelos.



Community Notes

Ελληνικά Ηθη και Έθιμα Χριστουγέννων

By Mariea Kazantzis

Τα Χριστούγεννα ήρθαν και μαζί τους εφεραν παιδικές θύμισες με τούς κουραμπιέδες της μαμάς – μεγάλα ασπρα μισοφέγγαρα γεμάτα ζάχαρη αχνη τοποθετημένα σ'ενα μεγάλο στρογγυλό ταψί. Το ταψί όμως δεν ήταν προσβάσιμο καθώς ήταν τοποθετημένο ψηλά στην κορυφή της ντουλάπας – ε! ηθελε κανείς να καταστρώσει ολόκληρο σχέδιο να το φτάσει. Μετά ήταν τα κάλαντα που τα περιμέναμε πως και πως να ξεχουθούμε στην γειτονιά με το τρίγωνο στο χέρι να τραγουδήσουμε τον ερχομό του νεογέννητου Ιησού με την ελπίδα πως μετά το ακόλουθο ασμα θα ερχόταν και το πολυπόθητο δίφραγκο:

Καλήν εσπέραν αρχοντες,

Αν είναι ορισμός σας,

Χριστού τη Θεία γέννηση,

Να πω στ'αρχοντικό σας.

Οι ευχές για «χρόνια πολλά» εδιναν και επαιρναν καθώς και η ενημέρωση με το που θα εκανε η κάθε οικογένεια Χριστούγεννα. Επίσης, οι νοικοκυρές ξεσκόνιζαν τις συνταγές τους για μελομακάρονα και γαλοπούλα γεμιστή με κάστανα για την ημέρα των Χριστουγέννων. Αυτά είναι τα Χριστουγεννιάτικα βιώματά μου απο την Αθήνα. Αλλα γνωστά ελληνικά χριστουγεννιάτικα ήθη και έθιμα (σύμφωνα με την ιστοσελίδα www.aftodioikisi.gr/ota/dimoi/xristougenna) μας ερχονται απο αλλες περιοχές της Ελλάδος οπως:

Το στόλισμα του караβιού: Το καράβι είναι το σύμβολο μιας καινούργιας κατευθύνσεως, μετά τη γέννηση του Χριστού. Στην Χίο, κατα το εθιμο, την παραμονή της Πρωτοχρονιάς, οι ενορίες συναγωνίζονται στο ποιά κατασκεύασε το καλύτερο Αγιοβασιλιάτικο караβάκι ως προς την ποιότητα και ομοιότητα σε πραγματικό πλοίο, ενω οι ομάδες (πλήρωμα) τραγουδούν κάλαντα.

Το τάισμα της βρύσης: Στην Θεσσαλία, τα χαράματα των Χριστουγέννων, οι κοπέλες αμίλητες πηγαίνουν στην βρύση “για να κλέψουν το άκραντο νερό” και αλείφοντας την βρύση του χωριού με βούτυρο και μέλι προσμένουν ευδαιμονία και προκοπή να ρέει στο σπίτι τους όπως και το τρεχούμενο νερό.

Το σπάσιμο του ροδιού: Στην Πελοπόννησο το πρωί της Πρωτοχρονιάς, ο νοικοκύρης του σπιτιού πάει στην εκκλησία ενα ρόδι να το “λειτουργήσει”. Μετά το σπάει στην είσοδο του σπιτιού σκορπίζοντας τις ρώγες του σε ολο το σπίτι ταυτοχρόνως κάνοντας ευχή για υγεία, ευτυχία και τόσες λίρες στην τσέπη για ολη την χρονιά οσες οι ρώγες του ροδιού.

Χριστόκλουρα: Στη Θράκη, οι Σαρακατσάνες φτιάχνουν την “Χριστόκλουρα”, στρογγυλή κουλούρα με σχέδια όπως στάνη, στρούγκα και άλλα και με μέλι την τρώνε τα Χριστούγεννα.

Αλλα εθιμα στα Ελληνικά χωριά: Τό στόλισμα της εξώπορτας με πλεξούδες από σκόρδα που πάνω τους κάρφωσαν γαριφαλάκια για να κρατούν την κακογλωσσιά μακριά απο την εσωτερική ευτυχία του σπιτιού.

Επίσης, το στεφάνι απο ελατο με τα χριστουγεννιάτικα στολίδια στην εξώπορτα του σπιτιού προκαλούσε την καλή τύχη των ενοίκων.



Community Notes

Greek Christmas Traditions

By Maria Kazantzis

Christmas came and with them memories of Mom's *kourambiedes* – big white crescent moons covered with powder sugar placed in a large round baking pan. But the problem was that the baking pan was not accessible as it was placed high at the top of the pantry closet – e! one had to figure out a whole strategic plan to reach them. Then, there were the carols that we long expected all year to pour out into the neighborhood with the triangle in hand to sing the coming of the newborn Jesus in the hope that after the singing of the following carol the home owners would treat us to a coin of two drachmas:

Καλήν εσπέραν αρχοντες,
Αν είναι ορισμός σας,
Χριστού τη Θεία γέννηση,
Να πω στ'αρχοντικό σας.

Good evening, Lords,
Would you allow me
to announce within your manor
The Holy Birth of Christ.

Folks were passing “Merry Christmas” wishes from one to another as well as information as to where each family would spend the holidays. Also, the housewives were dusting off recipes for *melomacaronas*, *diples* and stuffed turkey with chestnuts for the Christmas dinner. These are my Christmas experiences from Athens. Other well-known Greek Christmas traditions come to us from other regions of Greece (www.aftodioikisi.gr/ota/dimoi/xristougenna) such as:

The decoration of the boat: The ship is the symbol of a new direction after the birth of Christ. In the island of Chios on New Year's Eve, the parishes compete with one another on which has built an *Agiovassiliatiko* boat that looks the best and has the closest similarity to a real boat while the groups (crew) sing carols.

Feeding the tap: In Thessaly in the early hours of Christmas, silent girls go to their village's tap to steal the *akranto-silent* water and after they smear the tap with butter and honey expecting happiness and prosperity to flow into their homes as the running water.

Breaking the pomegranate: In the Peloponnese on New Year's morning, the owner of the house brings to the church a pomegranate to "bless" it. Upon returning home, at the front entrance, he breaks the pomegranate and while the berries run through the house, he makes a wish for health, happiness, prosperity and for pockets full with golden coins throughout the year.

Christocloura: In Thrace, the *Sarakatsanes* make the *Christocloura*, a round loaf of bread decorated with designs such as a sheep farm, a sheep pen-struga and other designs and eat the bread with honey at Christmas.

Other customs in the Greek villages: The decoration of the front door with braids of garlic and with nailed carnations on them keep the negative spirits away from the inner happiness of the house.

Also, the wreath of fir with Christmas ornaments on the front door of the house invites in the good fortune for the residents.

Prose and Poetry

Holidays in Greece

By Cathy Karathanasis

January 1st isn't just New Year's Day in Greece but also St. Basil's Day. Agios Vasilis, or St. Basil, is the Greek Santa Claus. After the celebrations of Christmas, Greek children impatiently await the New Year because that's when St. Basil delivers their gifts. In Greece it is the custom to exchange gifts at the New Year instead of on Christmas Day.

These are some of the most popular New Year's traditions in Greece:

At the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, fireworks shows light up the night skies across the country in many cities and villages throughout Greece. As one can imagine, nothing beats watching the fireworks which light up the Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens. It must be the ultimate experience to celebrate the beginning of another year in the place where modern civilization really began.

On New Year's Day people across Greece cut the *vasilopita*, a traditional orange-flavored pound cake containing a hidden coin. Greeks bake a coin inside the cake which is then sliced up and served to celebrate the feast day of St. Basil. The first slice goes to Jesus and the rest is cut and served to the entire family. The person who gets the slice with the coin is said to be the lucky one for the rest of the year.

Vasilopita from Constantinople

Ingredients:

½ cup butter ● 4 large eggs ● 1-1/4 cups sugar
 4 cups self-rising flour ● 2-3 Tbsp. brandy
 The juice from 3 large oranges ● The zest of one orange
 ½ tsp. baking soda ● 1 tsp. baking powder
 Confectioners sugar ● Cinnamon

Directions:

All the ingredients must be at room temperature.

1. Divide the egg whites and egg yolks. Beat the butter until white and in a separate bowl the egg yolks with the sugar until the grains are melted. Add the brandy to the egg mixture.
2. Add the mixture to the butter and continue mixing.
3. Dissolve the baking soda in the orange juice and after it foams add it to the butter mixture.
4. Beat the egg whites until firm and slowly add them to the butter mixture using a spatula.
5. Add the orange zest and then the flour and baking powder after they have been sifted. Continue mixing with the spatula.
6. Grease a round pan and pour in the dough and a coin wrapped in foil.
7. Bake at 180 degrees C. in a preheated oven for 40-50 minutes.
8. After the cake has cooled down, cover it with the confectioners sugar and decorate with the powdered cinnamon.

[Click here for a video about the origins of the *Vasilopita*!](#)

If you are fortunate enough to be the first guest at someone's home on New Year's Day, you are considered to be very lucky. Since New Year's Day is considered to be a day of good fortune, many Greeks try their luck at card games. From Greece's biggest cities to tiny, snowy hillside villages, you will see people both young and old playing cards as they ring in the new year. The betting sums are usually kept low, so as to offer a friendly diversion without upsetting the losers.

Caroling is part of the holiday tradition. A carol is called *Kalanda* in Greek. The word *kalanda* derives from the Latin *calendae*, which means the first day of the month. In Ancient Greece, there were various comparable texts which contained praises for the landlord and good wishes for the prosperity of the household. At that time, children sang carols while carrying boat models in honor of the god Dionyssos. Sometimes they carried branches of olive or laurel upon which they hung their tips and gratuities. Today, kids go out caroling on Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve and Epiphany Eve (January 5th) They go door to door singing carols, and often bring along triangles to play while singing. Kids are often given small amounts of money or sweets for caroling.



Below are the lyrics to the most popular carol sung throughout Greece on New Year's Eve. They are written in Greek, English, and Phonetics so you can join in with the carolers on the video which follows.

[Click Here for a video of the *Kalanda!*](#)

**Αρχιμηνιά κι Αρχιχρονιά
New Year's Song
(Greek)**

**Arhiminia ki arhihronia
New Year's Song
(Phonetics)**

**A New Month & A New Year
New Year's Song
(English)**

1. Αρχιμηνιά κι Αρχιχρονιά
ψηλή μου δεντρολιβανιά
κι αρχή καλός μας χρόνος
εκκλησιά με τ' άγιο θρόνος.

1. Archiminiá ki archichroniá
psilí mou dhendrolivaniá
ki archí kalós mas **chrónos**
ekklesiá me t' áyio thrónos.

1. A new month and a new year,
My tall rosemary*,
May we all begin a good year
Like the church of the holy throne.

2. Αρχή που βγήκε ο Χριστός
άγιος και Πνευματικός,
στη γη να περπατήσει
και να μας καλοκαρδίσει.

2. Archí pou vyíke o **christós**
áyios ke pneumatikós,
sti yi na perpatísei
ke na mas kalokardhísi.

2. At the beginning came Christ
Holy and Spiritual,
To walk the earth and
Fill our hearts with joy.

3. Άγιος Βασίλης έρχεται,
και δεν μας καταδέχεται,
από την Καισαρεία,
συ' σαι αρχόντισσα κυρία.

3. Ayios vasílis érchete,
ke dhen mas katadhéchetes,
apó tin kesaría,
si' se archóntisa kiría.

3. Saint Basil is coming,
And he does not dignify us,
He comes from Caesarea**,
Thou are the Lady of this House.

4. Βαστά εικόνα και χαρτί
ζαχαροκάρνο, ζυμωτή
χαρτί και καλαμάρι
δες και με το παλικάρι.

4. Vastá ikóna ke **chartí**
zacharokárno, zymotí
chartí ke kalamári
dhes ke me-dhes ke me to palikári.

4. He's holding an icon and paper,
Sweet bread,
Paper and inkwell
See the lad here.

5. Το καλαμάρι έγγραφε,
τη μοίρα του την έλεγε
και το χαρτί ομίλει
άγιε μου καλέ Βασίλη.

5. To kalamári éghrafe,
ti míra tou tin éleye
ke to **chartí**-ke to **chartí** omíli
áyie mou-áyie mou kalé vasíli.

5. The ink was writing,
Telling about his fortune
And the paper spoke,
My dear, holy St. Basil***.

6. Κάτσε να φας κάτσε να πεις
κάτσε τον πόνο σου να πεις
κάτσε να τραγουδήσεις
και να μας καλοκαρδίσεις.

6. kátse na fas kátse na pis
kátse ton póno sou na pis
kátse na traghoudhísisi
ke na mas kalokardhísisi

6. Sit down to eat, sit down to drink,
Sit down to tell us your pain,
Sit down to sing
And fill our hearts with joy.

It wouldn't be Christmas without traditional Greek Christmas sweets, which are so very delicious! The traditional sweets one simply must have at this time of year include snowy *kourambiedes* which are Greek Christmas cookies filled with almonds and drenched in powdered sugar; and *melomakarona*, which are sticky-sweet cookies soaked in honey, with a spicy hint of cloves. Below are the recipes for both, along with a video link:

Kourambiedes (Greek Butter Cookies)

These melt-in-your-mouth packages of delight are light, flaky and slightly sweetened:

Ingredients:

4 sticks unsalted butter, softened (1 lb.) ● 1 egg
 3-1/4 tsps. pure almond extract
 1/2 cup powdered sugar/icing sugar plus 1 cup for coating
 1/8 tsp. baking soda ● 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 pinch of salt ● 1/4 cup chopped almonds (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Prepare baking pans with parchment paper
2. Using a stand mixer, beat butter on medium-high for 10 minutes. Butter will become fluffy and a very pale yellow color.
3. While butter is beating, sift powdered sugar in a small bowl. In a separate large bowl, sift together flour, salt and baking soda. Set aside.
4. After butter is finished, add egg and almond extract and mix well.
5. Turn mixer to low and slowly add powdered sugar to the egg mixture. After incorporated, turn to medium-high and blend for an additional 5 minutes.
6. Turn the mixer back to a low speed, then in batches, slowly add in the flour mixture until well combined. If the dough is too sticky, add flour a few tablespoons at a time until desired consistency is reached.
7. If additional almond flavor and texture is wanted, add in the chopped almonds and mix well.
8. To form the cookies, take approximately 1 tablespoon of dough and form into a ball or crescent shape.
9. Place on cookie sheet 2 inches apart and bake 15-20 minutes until cookies are very lightly browned on edges.
10. Cool the cookies slightly, and while still warm, coat them in powdered sugar and serve immediately.

Melomakarona (Christmas Honey Cookies)

This recipe comes from Akis Petretzikis and has been converted to US measuring amounts. Please visit his website via the link below for more information.

Ingredients:

For the Syrup

about 2 cups water ● about 4 cups gran. sugar ● 1/2 cup honey
 3 stick (s) cinnamon ● 3 cloves ● 1 orange, cut in half

1st Mixture

1 3/4 cups orange juice ● 1 3/4 cups seed oil ● 6.3 oz. olive oil
 1.75 oz. icing sugar ● 1/2 tsp cloves ● 2-3 tsp cinnamon
 1/4 tsp nutmeg ● 1 tsp baking soda ● Orange zest, of 2 oranges

2nd Mixture

8 cups all-purpose flour ● 1 3/4 cups semolina, fine

To Serve

honey ● walnuts

Directions for the Syrup:

1. Boil all of the ingredients for the syrup, apart from the honey, until the sugar melts. Remove from heat. Add the honey and mix till combined.
2. Let the syrup cool for 3-4 hours. It must be cold by the time the cookies come out from the oven.
3. You can prepare the syrup from the day before.

Directions for the Cookies:

1. Preheat the oven to (370°F) set to fan.
2. To make the cookies, you need to prepare 2 separate mixtures.
3. For the first mixture, add all of the ingredients in a large bowl. Mix, using a hand whisk.
4. In a separate bowl, add all of the ingredients for the second mixture. Combine the first and second mixture.
5. Mix by hand, very gently and for a very short time (10 seconds at the most). If you mix longer the mixture will split or curdle.
6. Mold cookie dough into oval shapes, 3-4 cm in length, 30 g each. Try to keep them as similar as possible.
7. Bake for about 20-25 minutes, until they are crunchy and golden brown. As soon as you remove them from the oven, soak the hot cookies in the syrup for 10 seconds.
8. Allow them to drain on a wire rack. Drizzle with honey and chopped walnuts.

[Click here to visit the recipe on Akis' website!](#)



The Dean C. and Zoë S. Pappas Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies

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The Dean C. and Zoë S. Pappas Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies, originally established by the American Foundation for Greek Language and Culture (AFGLC) as the Interdisciplinary Center for Hellenic Studies, is housed in the School of Arts and Humanities, under the direction of the Dean, Dr. Lisa Honaker. With six endowed professorships, the Center's focus includes the disciplines of Greek language and literature, history and culture, classical archaeology, art history, philosophy, politics, anthropology, and Byzantine civilization and religion. Scholarly and artistic activities emphasize the diachronic range of Hellenism and promote student enrichment through travel and university exchanges in Greece and Cyprus (<http://www.stockton.edu/ichs>). The faculty in Hellenic Studies are:

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About the Friends of Hellenic Studies

The Friends of Hellenic Studies (FHS) is a community organization established by the late Rev. Dr. Demetrios J. Constantelos and members of the community to promote and strengthen the Stockton Hellenic Studies program. The Friends of Hellenic Studies organization raises money for student scholarships for activities related to Hellenic Studies at Stockton University and for study abroad travel to Greece, Cyprus, and other relevant places to the Hellenic world. Working closely with the Stockton University Foundation to advance its fundraising goals, the Friends of Hellenic Studies organization hosts many cultural and social events as well. In addition to providing for student scholarships, the Friends of Hellenic Studies were major donors to the Rev. Dr. Demetrios J. Constantelos Hellenic Collection and Reading Room in the Björk Library. To become a member, please join the Friends of Hellenic Studies at any of their announced meetings, or email fhs@stockton.edu for more information.

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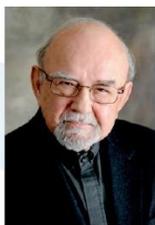
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