



# HELLENIC SOCIETY NEWS

Newsletter of the Hellenic Society of Maine

the Hellenic Society of Maine is a tax exempt non-profit public charitable organization

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Fall 2022

**Website:** [www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org](http://www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org) **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/hellenicsocietyofmaine](https://www.facebook.com/hellenicsocietyofmaine)

## “The Great Catastrophe of Turkey’s Cultural Heritage Policy: A Century’s War Against Greek Orthodox Cultural Heritage”

by Elizabeth Prodromou

October 20, 2022 at 7 p.m. — via Zoom

This presentation considers Greek cultural heritage within the context of the massive loss of tangible and intangible cultural tradition that occurred as a consequence of the Great Catastrophe, using that as the point of departure to understand a century of Turkey’s cultural heritage policy that has meant the ongoing catastrophe after the Catastrophe.



Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou is a faculty member at The Fletcher School at Tufts University where she directs the Initiative on Religion, Law, and Diplomacy. She is non-resident Senior Fellow and

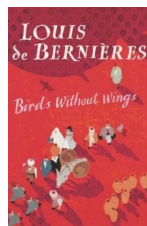
Co-Chair of the Working Group on Christians and Religious Pluralism in the Middle East at the Center for Religious Freedom at the Hudson Institute. She is also Co-President of Religions for Peace. She served as Vice Chair and Commissioner on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (2004-2012) and was a member of the U.S. Secretary of State’s Religion & Foreign Policy Working Group (2011-2015).

Her research interests focus on geopolitics and religion, with particular focus on the Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Southeastern Europe. Her current projects concentrate on cultural heritage and institutional religious freedom in Turkey and comparative context, as well as Eastern Orthodox Christianity and global public engagement. She is the faculty director for Fletcher’s executive education program for faith-based leadership. The author of multiple edited volumes and publications in scholarly and policy journals, Prodromou is a frequent commentator and contributor in US and international media.

She holds a Ph.D. and an S.M. in political science from MIT, an M.A.L.D. in international relations from Fletcher, and a B.A. in history and international relations from Tufts.

## Biblia Mazi – Books Together

Current members of the Hellenic Society are invited to sign up for the next two book selections. This fall’s first Biblia Mazi book club selection is *Birds Without Wings*, a novel by Louis de Bernières, written in 2004. The book will be discussed at 7 p.m., Tuesday, September 20 via Zoom.



Narrated by various characters, it tells the tragic love story of Philothei and Ibrahim. It also chronicles the rise of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the 'Father of the Turkish Nation'. The overarching theme of the book reveals the impact of religious intolerance, over-zealous nationalism, and the war that often results. The characters are unwittingly caught up in historical tides outside of their control.

The title is taken from a saying by one of the characters,

## “The Terror and Rescue at Smyrna, September 1922”

by Lou Ureneck

November 18, 2022 at 7 p.m. — in person  
133 Wishcamper Hall, Univ. of Southern Maine

Lou Ureneck is the author of *Smyrna: September 1922*, the most complete account in any language of the destruction of the city of Smyrna and the American rescue of tens of thousands of Greek and Armenian refugees. The book is based on five years of research in five countries including extensive visits to Greece and Turkey.



Ureneck is the author of two other books, one of which won the National Outdoor Book Award for literary merit. He is a former professor and chair of the Department of Journalism at Boston University, the former editor of the Portland Press Herald and a former senior editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

His work has appeared in The New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, International Herald Tribune, Boston Globe, Nieman Reports, Field & Stream and other publications. He was a regular blogger for the New York Times and a visiting columnist for the Boston Globe.

In addition, Ureneck was a Nieman Fellow and editor in residence at Harvard University; a Fulbright Senior Specialist, teaching at the National University in Kiev; and the Eleftherios Venizelos Chair in Modern Greek Studies at the American College of Greece in Athens.

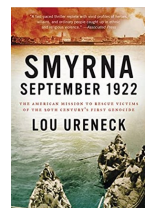
He has been inducted into the Maine Journalism Hall of Fame and received the Hellenic Heritage Award. The New England Academy of Journalists named Ureneck a recipient of the Yankee Quill Award, New England’s highest individual award for Journalism.

A book sale and signing will follow.

Iskander the Potter, "Man is a bird without wings, and a bird is a man without sorrows." The book includes a vivid and detailed description of the horrors of life in the trenches during World War I and after. Some of the characters also appeared in the author's earlier novel, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*.

The next book discussion will be on **Tues., Jan. 10, 7 p.m.** of the book, *Smyrna: September 1922* by Lou Ureneck. Publisher: Ecco; April 2016; ISBN. The book is an account of the destruction of the city of Smyrna, now Izmir. (See above.) This tragedy contributed to the Greek diaspora.

Sign up for either of these sessions by sending Angela Bournakel an email: [about@me.com](mailto:about@me.com). You will be sent a link to the Zoom session a week before. Contact her if you have any questions. The Biblia Mazi committee also includes Lucky Hollander, Evie Papacosma, & Mary Snell.



Eighteenth Annual - Fall 2022 - Via Zoom  
**GREEK FILM SERIES**  
 Contemporary & Classic Films about Greece  
 presented by  
**Hellenic Society of Maine**

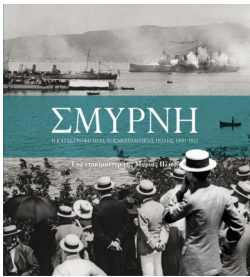
**WATCH AND DISCUSS FILMS via the Internet and on ZOOM**  
 Once again we will offer films via an Internet link one week before a planned  
 ZOOM discussion of the film (the ZOOM link will be sent separately.)

If you are interested in viewing the films below, send an email to  
 novak@maine.edu prior to the date shown, and the links will be sent to you.

**“Smyrna - The Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City”** Dir. Mary Iliou, Greece, 2012

**ZOOM Discussion: Thursday, October 6 at 7 p.m.**

**During the week of September 29-October 6: watch on the link to be distributed by September 29 .**



This documentary film, by Maria Iliou, depicts the Ottoman port of Smyrna (now Izmir, Turkey) as a cosmopolitan paradise where people of various faiths and nationalities, including significant populations of Greeks (perhaps 400,000), Jews, and Armenians, lived harmoniously - but not necessarily as social equals. Rising nationalism and World War I disrupted the balance and led, in September 1922, to a catastrophic purging in which Turkish troops marched in and the city burned. The film recounts this with vintage footage and photographs, and interviews with a few survivors and descendants of survivors. Giles Milton, author of a book on the subject, says half a million people were stranded on the quay during and after the fire; some died, and many others became refugees. Alexandros Kitroeff, the well-known authority on nationalism and ethnicity in modern Greece and its diaspora, served as the historian for the film. *In English. 87 minutes.*

**(Dedemin insanlari) “My Grandfather’s People”** Dir: Çagan Irmak, Turkey, 2011

**ZOOM Discussion: Thursday, November 3 at 7 p.m.**

**During the week of October 27-November 3: watch on the link to be distributed by October 27 .**

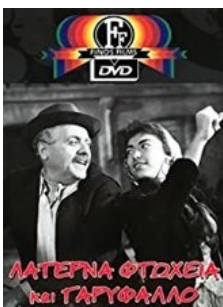
This Turkish film is a popular drama about the ethnic Turks, who had lived for generations in Greece, who were forced to migrate to Turkey during the population exchange at the end of the WW I. It is somewhat the reverse story that is told in the Greek movie, *Politiki Kousina (A Touch of Spice)*. When Grandfather was just seven years old his family was displaced from Crete to mainland Turkey. Here the family is not fully accepted because they are considered to be Greeks. Yet in Greece they were considered Turks. The Grandpa’s greatest desire is to see the land of his birth before he dies. It is this longing that makes him frequently drop bottles containing letters into the Aegean. The lack of acceptance in the village is particularly hard on the young grandson who acts out. In the light of the recent refugee situation in Greece, it is helpful to once again hear this story of when both Greek people and Turkish people were forced to leave the lands of their origins - millions of them. Through these population exchanges, people experienced what it means to be “the other.” *In Turkish, Greek, and some English with English subtitles. 126 minutes.*

**“Λατέρνα, Φτώχεια, και Γαρυφαλλο” (Barrel Organ, Poverty and Carnation)**

Dir.: Alekos Sakellarios, Greece, 1957

**ZOOM Discussion: Thursday, December 1 at 7 p.m.**

**During the week of November 24-December 1: watch on the link to be distributed by November 24.**



In Jenny Karezi’s 1955 film debut *Barrel Organ, Poverty, and Honor* (which we showed in 2020) she played Keti, an affluent, but desperate runaway girl intent on escaping a much-despised arranged marriage in order to marry Dimitris (Alekos Alexandrakis). Keti's father offered street musicians Pavlaras and Petrakis (played by Mimis Fotopoulos and Vasilis Avlonitis) to bring her back, but they helped her instead. In this sequel, filmed two years later, sadly, all good things have come to an end. The ample reward the men received in the first film, has now run out. Once again, we see the impecunious duo of portable barrel organ musicians hit the road to eke out an existence, as Pavlaras’ already frail health is gradually deteriorating and they face eviction. Their equally impoverished friends try to help, but can’t raise enough money. Under those dire circumstances, more than ever, the two grizzled instrumentalists need their young friends, Keti and Dimitris, whose photo adorns their beloved laterna. However, it’s been nearly three long years since they last saw them. Does the married couple know that the kind-hearted performers are on the verge of collapse? *Greek with English subtitles. 106 minutes.*

# Hellenic Society of Maine

P. O. Box 8007  
 Portland Maine 04104-8007  
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 charitable organization

[www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org](http://www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org)

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## Do We Have Your Latest Mail / E-mail Contact Information?

We want to keep our lists up-to-date. If you've changed your address or e-mail please send a note to: Irwin Novak at [novak@maine.edu](mailto:novak@maine.edu).

For more information on HSoM go to the Hellenic Society of Maine website (see above) or "like" the HSoM Facebook page  
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## In Honor or In Remembrance

This column lists donations made IN MEMORY OF (IMO) and IN HONOR OF (IHO) special persons. Listings include the name of the honoree followed by the name of the donor, and run in two consecutive issues. To donate you can use the membership form found in this newsletter and send it, together with a check to the HSoM address (*top left of this page*) OR use the donate button on our website (indicating IMO or IHO) at [hellenicsocietyofmaine.org](http://hellenicsocietyofmaine.org)

Crown of Olive Level - \$500 or more

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*Leslie English*

Copper Level – under \$25

## From the Archives – Screenshot of attendees at a Zoom lecture this winter



## YOU CAN NOW JOIN THROUGH OUR WEBSITE

Our dues cover the period of July 1 to June 30 each year, NOT a calendar year. If you want to become a member, or renew, through our website, go to: [www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org](http://www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org) and use the "Donate" button to pay through PayPal or Credit Card, and indicate "For Membership" - OR fill out the form below and mail it in.

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**For July 1, 2022—June 30, 2023:** Renewal / New member (<— circle one)

\_\_\_\_ \$25 Annual Full Member (grants the right to vote on policy issues)

\_\_\_\_ \$15 Annual Associate Member

Number of Memberships \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a contribution of: \_\_\_\_\_ in support of HSoM.

**OR** enclosed is my donation of \_\_\_\_\_ In Honor or in Memory (circle one) of: \_\_\_\_\_.

Make check or money order payable to:

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Send to: Chris Ziagos, Treasurer

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## Quick Calendar Summary

Live, online via Internet, and ZOOM

**Tues., Sept. 20, 7 p.m. - Biblia Mazi Discussion** of the book *Birds without Wings*.

**Thurs. Oct. 6, 7 p.m. - Discussion** of the film *Smyrna: the Burning of a Cosmopolitan City*

View the film online from Sept. 29-Oct. 6.

**Thurs., Oct. 20, 7 p.m. - Talk by Elizabeth Prodromou:** “The Great Catastrophe of Turkey’s Cultural Heritage Policy: A Century’s War Against Greek Orthodox Cultural Heritage” via Zoom.

**Thurs., Nov. 2, 7 p.m. - Discussion** of the film *My Grandfather’s People*.

View the film online from Oct. 27-Nov. 3.

**Fri., Nov. 18, 7 p.m. - Talk by Lou Ureneck:** “The Terror & Rescue at Smyrna, September 1922,” in person in 133 Wishcamper, USM. Reception & book sale to follow.

**Thurs., Dec. 1, 7 p.m. - Discussion** of the film *Barrel Organ, Poverty and Carnation*.

View the film online from Nov. 24-Dec. 1.

**Tues., Jan. 10, 7 p.m. - Biblia Mazi Discussion** of the book *Smyrna, September 1922*.

**Thurs., Jan. 19, 5 p.m. - Annual Cutting of the Vasilopita & Social** at Tiqa, Commercial St., Portland.

E-mail: [novak@maine.edu](mailto:novak@maine.edu) for film & discussion links

✂ *Clip and Save!* ✂

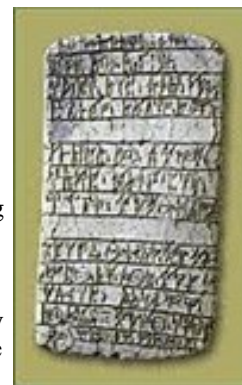
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## A Spring Highlight

On March 31 professor and archeologist Cynthia Shelmerdine once again treated us to a lecture – this time on “How the Greeks Learned to Write—Twice!”

She spoke about how the earliest known texts in the Greek alphabet date to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. We looked at what kinds of texts these were, and how the uses of writing expanded over the next couple of centuries.

But the Greeks also learned to write several hundred years earlier, in a different script and for very different purposes. Long undeciphered Linear B was written on clay tablets used to record goods and property. The tablets were usually recycled. But “lucky” fires hardened a few so that they survived in ruins to the present.

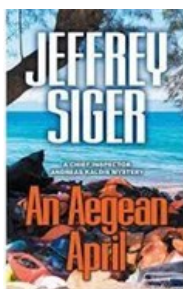


Linear B

## Ellenika Biblia

*A column with suggestions for other Greek-related books to read.*

Take a break from the serious stuff and try reading some entertaining crime fiction by American Jeffrey Siger who lives in Mykonos. The author has written a series of 12 novels set in various locations in Greece and featuring his main character, Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis. Some titles are: *An Aegean April*: set on Lesbos among the chaos of boatloads of refugees flooding the island. *A Deadly Twist*: set on Naxos where Kaldis tries to find a missing reporter, who was reporting on a conflict between tourist promoters and the traditional locals. *Santorini Caesars*: the investigation of a murder leads Kaldis to Santorini where Greece’s top military chiefs have gathered. Some other titles include: *Murder in Mykonos*, *Assassins of Athens*, *Prey on Patmos*, *Target: Tinos*, *Mykonos After Midnight*, *Sons of Sparta*, *Devil of Delphi*, and his latest, *One Last Chance* (Source Books / Poison Pen Press).



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