

# THE OWL

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER OF COLLEGE YEAR IN ATHENS

Fall 2022



Reflection from Jeff Koons' Gazing Ball Tripod: Prof. Hadji's Curating class visiting the Jeff Koons exhibition Apollo at the DESTE Foundation's Project Space at Hydra (photo by Alexis Phylactopoulos)

5 PLATEIA STADIΟΥ, ATHENS, GREECE

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

YEAR 2022 was the 60th anniversary of CYA, a landmark year offering the opportunity to assess past accomplishments, to reflect on how we have pursued our mission so far, and offer creative thoughts about how we go forward. 2022 is also the centennial of the catastrophe of Smyrna, the painful conclusion of an ill-conceived military campaign of Greece to liberate the Greek populations of Asia Minor following the conclusion of WWI at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and the mandate given to Greece to police the area of Smyrna.

Why are the two events, the birth of CYA and the Smyrna affair, related? Because Ismene Phylactopoulou, Mrs. Phyl, was one of the 1.5 million refugees from Smyrna who survived, made her way to Greece and from there, thanks to a scholarship, studied at Wellesley College. The creation of CYA in 1962 was partly an effort on her part to give back to US education.

CYA's humble beginning accelerated in the years that followed. The struggle for survival in the 60's gave its place to a quest for high quality education and the first enlargement of the curriculum in the 70's and 80's, the acquisition of permanent academic facilities at a landmark privileged location in Athens early in the first decade of the new century. Over all these decades the school survived political crises, regional wars, the economic crisis of Greece, and the pandemic. It has rebound in a magnificent way, regaining

the lost ground due to the pandemic, adopting best practices for more diversity and inclusivity, and opening its doors to smaller short duration programs in summer or faculty-led groups satisfying the current trend for shorter overseas study in a world that is going faster and faster.

What will the future bring for CYA? The 60th anniversary heralds another turning point. I will soon be giving the helm to another leader of the school for whom the Trustees are searching at this time. CYA will benefit from the fresh eye of a younger leader, to take advantage of new opportunities, and confront new challenges that are coming our way. One such challenge is the internationalization of the Greek higher education system by opening its doors to American universities in the form of joint programs and degrees, exchange of students and faculty, and ultimately to study abroad at Greek public universities. CYA should not fear the new competition since as Greece becomes an international educational destination, CYA will flourish even more.

There are current projects that need attention: the creation of an endowment is a must, so that CYA can provide scholarships and the best possible conditions to its students. The school also needs adequate housing for an enlarged student body; the remodeling of a town house recently acquired to turn it into a study center for CYA students and the community; the acquisition of an adjacent plot next to our classroom building to allow



for expansion of academic space when financially possible; and the enrichment of the curriculum by the addition of new courses in the humanities and the social sciences, and why not, also STEM courses so that students can study the future apart from the past at CYA.

We are soon coming to the turning of a chapter in CYA history. CYA needs to keep steady on its strategic goal and mission to provide an exemplary academic course of study and an immensely valuable transformational experience to US college students in Greece, a historical country with proven endurance and everlasting appeal.

Alexis Phylactopoulos, *President*

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**Deadline for submissions for the next OWL : March 1, 2023**



## CYA IS CELEBRATING ITS 60TH YEAR!

For six decades, CYA has been dedicated to fostering an engagement with Greece that encourages personal discovery, growth, and cross-cultural sensitivity.

We kicked off the celebrations with a very successful, week-long alumni reunion trip with alumni from the U.S. who came with their families; and with a reception at the home of CYA President, **Alexis Phylactopoulos**, in conjunction with the CYA Board of Trustees at which luminaries of the Greek and American community were present.



Minister Niki Kerameus (right) with Alexis Phylactopoulos

## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES RECEPTION

Among the many dignitaries and leading political and academic figures attending the reception were U.S. Ambassador to Greece, Mr. George Tsunis, and Greek Education Minister, Ms. Niki Kerameus.

Ambassador Tsounis, in his address during the Reception spoke about the spirit and perseverance of CYA founder, **Ismene Phylactopoulou**, and praised CYA for developing thousands of friends of Greece in the U.S. and across the world. Minister Niki Krameus in her brief address thanked president Phylactopoulos for his tireless efforts to set up a successful model of cooperation with American universities, which has been tremendously valuable in the ministry's current efforts to create collaborations between Greece's public universities and leading American educational institutions.



Ambassador Tsunis (left) with Alexis Phylactopoulos



Mariella Phylactopoulou with CYA Trustee Emeritus and University of Athens Professor of Political History Emeritus Thanos Veremis, and CYA Executive Vice President Theoni Scourta

## HONORS FOR CYA

CYA was featured in the July 15th issue of the Greek-American newspaper *National Herald* with a piece titled "College Year in Athens Marks 60 Years of Bridge Building, Academic Excellence", and quoted President Phylactopoulos who described the beginnings of our organization: "This is how CYA was born, a startup with no funds, product of the restless mind of an emancipated woman who did not fear failure, as long as she could explore the limits of her vision, and this she did."

On October 18th, the Greek newspaper *Kathimerini* also featured CYA with an article by Margarita Pournara: "The primary reason the CYA program is proud is that it molds its participants into world citizens, with an understanding and appreciation of other cultures."

## ALUMNI TRIP

The Alumni Reunion Trip (July 2022) was a big success, with 30 participants. Of them, 17 were alumni representing all six decades of CYA's existence. Attendees stayed in CYA apartments and followed a detailed itinerary that included a rooftop reception at CYA, a tour of CYA's facilities, and neighborhood walks, including of course a Kolonaki "stroll down memory lane". The week-long trip included a visit to the Acropolis and the New Acropolis Museum, a series of thematic walks and visits around central Athens, and a two-day trip to Nauplion with visits to Mycenae and Epidaurus. The schedule still left plenty of time for alumni to explore sites and some venturing on their own; many took the opportunity to visit places from "back in the day."



Spring '13 alumna Ariana Gunderson, Christina Palis and Caitlin Deal



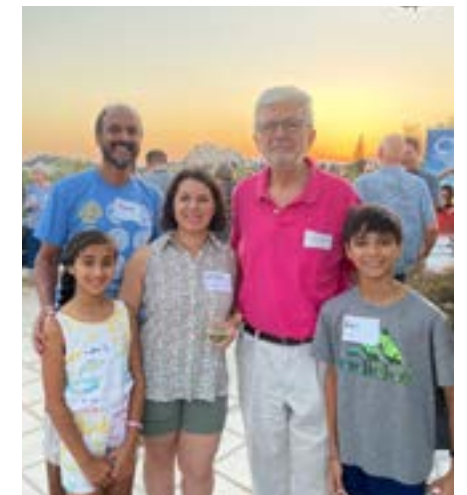
Brian Martens, Spring '08 and Brendan Burke, Spring '89



Erica Huffman '93, Director of Alumni Relations, and Vasilis Simopoulos, Development Officer, prepare for the arrival of trip participants.



Mr. Phylactopoulos welcomes everyone to the Rooftop reception kicking off the alumni trip



Deanna Petrochilos '95 and her family (husband Rama Katragadda, Ben and Sophia), with Mr. Phylactopoulos



CYA staffer, Anthi Papageorgiou, prepares to lead the group on a neighborhood walk of Pangrati.



A stroll down memory lane in Kolonaki, led by Popi Baloglu, Housing and Catering Director.



ALUMNI TRIP, CONTINUED

As part of the Alumni Trip, Mr. & Mrs. Phylactopoulos hosted a garden reception dinner at their home in Kifissia.



Mr. Phylactopoulos greets dinner guests



Sam Levine & Mae Hardman Spring '19



Kip Hughes '67 with CYA Faculty member Nina Papathanasopoulou



CYA Faculty members Maria Vidali and Michael Nevradakis



Christine Paterakis Fall '88 and Aimee Cox enjoying the reception



Steve Diamant with Harvard Professor and CYA Advisor Michael Herzfeld.



Alumni Trip participants reminisce with CYA Faculty member Steve Diamant

UPCOMING EVENTS

Other events commemorating CYA's 60th anniversary will include a January 6, 2023 reception in New Orleans; a February 2023 Founder's Day event in Athens; and a May 2023 reception at Washington, D.C.

For more information about the celebratory events and ways to get involved, please visit our 60 Years section of our [website](#).



The group was very fortunate to get a private tour of the Agora excavations from Professor John Camp.



Contemporary Art Museum; the group got an in-depth look at the museum from CYA Faculty member Athena Hadji



Epidaurus



Acropolis Museum; tour led by CYA Faculty member Robert Pitt



Lunch at "Ta Karamanlidika tou Fani" restaurant



A culinary tour with Carolina Doriti and a walk around the Varvakeios and Psiri area.



Jean Dresley and Kathy (Dresley) '79 Khirallah pictured here at the Stavros Niarchos Cultural Center, where CYA Faculty member Evgenia Tousi led a tour.



Group photo at Mycenae's Lion's Gate



## FACULTY NEWS

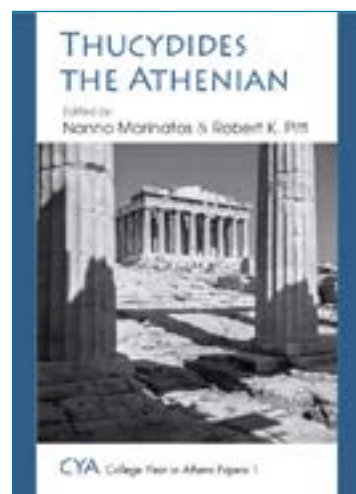
**Robert Pitt** published a volume of the inscribed Athenian funerary monuments of the British Museum, part of the Attic Inscriptions in the UK project (AIUK), funded by the AHRC, to (re)publish all the Athenian inscriptions held in UK collections. Link [here](#).

The accompanying website, **Attic Inscriptions Online**, provides translations and brief notes on the inscriptions, aimed at the general reader. Website [here](#).

## CYA PUBLICATION

CYA is excited to share news of our first academic publication, *Thucydides the Athenian*, edited by **Nanno Marinatos** and **Robert Pitt**.

This volume of proceedings stems from the conference “Thucydides the Athenian” hosted by College Year in Athens in Summer 2018 and organized by the editors. The series of papers discusses Pericles and Thucydides in their Athenian contexts, and explores the theme of personalities and individuals both in the History itself and in scholarship on Thucydides. In addition to the papers submitted by participants at the conference, we are delighted that Paul Cartledge and Seth Jaffe accepted invitations to contribute to these proceedings.



## LIBRARY NEWS



CYA librarian, **Georgia Katsarou**, made a virtual presentation along with Anne Wittrick, librarian at Loyola University Chicago; John Felice, Rome Center; and Cristina Bellini, librarian at New York University Florence with the title “Host Institution Academic Libraries and Librarians in Long Term Education Abroad” at the 18th Annual Conference of the Forum on Education Abroad. They discussed the importance of having organized libraries managed by professional librarians in study abroad programs, and presented viable solutions on collection development and technology applications for small-scale libraries. They also presented projects that can help with student engagement. This presentation was an effort to spread the word that libraries are an essential part of education even when students are away from their home institutions.

## AN HONOR FOR ENDY ZEMENIDES (CYA '95)

We are proud that CYA Trustee and alumnus **Endy Zemenides**, Executive Director of the Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC), was recognized for his contribution to Hellenism by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis during his official visit to Washington.

Endy was awarded the insignia of the Commander of the Order of the Phoenix. This honor is awarded to people who have contributed to enhancing Greece’s stature by distinguishing themselves in the fields of public administration, science, commerce, industry and shipping, and the arts and letters.

Congratulations Endy on such an important distinction!



## NEW GREEK CITIZENS



We are proud to announce that **Christine Kondoleon**, a CYA Trustee and George and Margo Behrakis Chair of Greek and Roman Art, in the Department of Art of Ancient Greece and Rome at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston was sworn in as a Greek citizen at the Consulate General of Greece in Boston!



**Mary Lefkowitz**, Andrew W. Mellon Professor Emerita in the Humanities at Wellesley College and Trustee Emerita of College Year in Athens, took the oath of Greek citizenship at the Consulate General of Greece in Boston in June. Lefkowitz received honorary Greek citizenship from the Greek Consul General, Mr. Stratos Efthymiou, in recognition of her outstanding services to Greece and to Greek-American cultural relations. “I am very honored to be a Greek citizen. I have been studying Greek writers, philosophers, and poets since the age of sixteen. Greece has always been in my heart!”, said Lefkowitz, who has been a dear friend of CYA since its inception. For more than six decades, this exceptional professor has been studying and promoting classical studies, and ancient Greek literature.

Congratulations to Professor Mary Lefkowitz upon her honorary Greek citizenship!

## HONORARY DEGREE

CYA Trustee, Director of Computing at the MIT Media Lab, and research scientist **Michail Bletsas** was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of the Aegean/ Πανεπιστήμιο Αιγαίου’s Department of Cultural Technology and Communication!

The honor was awarded to him by the University’s Rector and CYA alum **Chryssi Vitsilaki** (1977).

Michael Bletsas with wife Argyro at the award ceremony.



## CYA WELCOMES NEW TRUSTEE

CYA is delighted to welcome **Deborah L. Wince-Smith** (CYA '70) as a member of the Board of Trustees of College Year in Athens. Deborah’s long experience and expertise will prove extremely valuable to College Year in Athens.

Deborah is the President & CEO of the Council on Competitiveness, a non-partisan leadership coalition of CEOs, University Presidents, Labor Union Leaders, and National Laboratory Directors, all committed to developing policy solutions and national initiatives to drive future productivity growth, prosperity for all Americans, and the global success of American business.

She has more than 20 years of experience as a senior U.S. government official, as the first Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy in the U.S. Department of Commerce in the Administration of President George H.W. Bush, and as the Assistant Director for



International Affairs in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Reagan Administration. She served as a Senate-confirmed member of the Oversight Board of the Internal Revenue Service in the Administrations of President George W. Bush and President Barack H. Obama.



## MY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AT KORA BAKERY

By Lucy Anderson, Spring '22, Mt. Holyoke College

Before traveling to Athens for my semester abroad with College Year in Athens (CYA) this past spring, I reached out to inquire about potential volunteer opportunities that I could take part in when I arrived. I really wanted to get the most out of my time abroad and felt that volunteering would be a great way to meet local Athenians and be immersed in day-to-day life in Greece. As an avid home baker with a massive sweet tooth, I was particularly intrigued by the idea of volunteering in a Greek bakery. With help from CYA's amazing Student Affairs Advisor, **Angela Kouvara**, I ended up getting connected with Kora Bakery. Kora is a new and very well-loved bakery in the Kolonaki neighborhood of Athens that specializes in sourdough breads and viennoiserie. Utilizing long fermentation methods that make their baked goods more nutritious and digestible than traditional store-bought breads, Kora Bakery is dedicated to making high-quality (and delicious) breads and pastries. Besides their



emphasis on high-quality goods, I was also very drawn to Kora due to their prioritization of environmentally responsible and charitable practices to support the local community.

After applying to the bakery and interviewing with one of the co-founders, Ianthi Michalaki, I began work at Kora in early February. I volunteered there twice a week throughout the semester, primarily helping with the preparation of bakery goods (e.g., cutting brownies, baking cookies, assisting with pastry preparation, making granola, etc.) and packaging products, especially around Valentine's Day and Easter. Overall, I really loved my experience volunteering at Kora Bakery! Volunteering at Kora was truly a highlight of my week every week. Throughout the semester, the staff there went out of their way to be welcoming and kind to me, and were very patient as I learned. They even prepared an Easter basket with lots of delicious goodies for me and my family to enjoy when they visited over spring break! I felt proud to contribute to the amazing products they produced and support a business I really admired. Now that I am back in the United States, I already really miss many of their baked goods, especially Kora's brownies, chocolate croissants, and mini croissant granola! To students who are planning to study abroad with CYA in the future, I would definitely recommend volunteering while you are abroad.

Whether it be at Kora Bakery or another organization that aligns with your interests, I believe that volunteering is a great way to further immerse yourself in Greek culture while abroad. My volunteer position taught me a lot about both how professional bakeries run as well as what everyday life is like for Greeks. I am grateful to the staff at Kora for their continued kindness to me and to CYA for setting this opportunity up for me. It was truly one of my favorite parts of my study abroad experience. I look forward to visiting Kora again when I eventually return to Greece!

## MY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AT BLUE CYCLE

Kate Philips, Spring 2022 Semester, Skidmore College

As a country surrounded by the stunning blue sea, Greece provides gorgeous beaches for tourists and numerous ports for fishers. While the human connection with water is beautiful, it does not exist without a consequence: excessive marine waste. Although much of this waste remains in the water, some waste is recycled. Recycling plants often transport the recycled materials to companies in industries using unsustainable production practices. For example, the fast fashion industry is notorious for wasting water in clothing production and emitting greenhouse gases while transporting goods.

Okay, the sad part is over. Luckily, Blue Cycle is taking action. The 2019 start-up collects marine waste, such as fishing nets, and recycles the material. Then, Blue Cycle uses a 3D printer to create new products. Through this process, Blue Cycle's employees can recycle waste and develop new products—sustainably! Blue Cycle creates and sells many items, including furniture and home goods. Additionally, Blue Cycle partners with other organizations. For example, a nearby school gives Blue Cycle hard plastic toys to be recycled and reused as Jenga blocks.



As a Spring 2022 CYA student, I was lucky enough to intern at Blue Cycle. Every Tuesday, I took the green line to Piraeus and walked to Blue Cycle's warehouse, about ten minutes from the port. Eirini Avgoustaki, Blue Cycle's wonderful secretary, gave me a variety of tasks. I spent time doing inventory, researching grants for start-ups, and smoothing out Jenga blocks (a shockingly fun task!)

I loved seeing the entire recycling process in action and having the opportunity to support such a fantastic organization. I hope other CYA students are lucky enough to intern at Blue Cycle!

## CYA VIRTUAL LECTURE SERIES

CYA has presented 20 virtual lectures since we began offering them in June 2020.

On 15 March 2022, the Consulate General of Greece in Boston and College Year in Athens co-hosted a lecture, ***Smyrna, 1922: The End of a Cosmopolitan City***, a tribute to the city of Smyrna and the 100 years since its destruction on the coast of Asia Minor—now modern-day Izmir on the Turkish coast. Guest speaker was Professor **Alexander Kitroeff**; discussant: Professor **Fotini Christia**.

Link to lecture [here](#)

On 13 April 2022, CYA and the Princeton Club of Greece co-hosted a virtual lecture ***Between Pascal and Spinoza? Faith, Reason, and the Cambridge Platonists*** on philosophical interpretations and views on arguably the most fundamental inquiry asked by humankind: the existence of the divine being. Guest speaker was Professor **Douglas Hedley**; discussant: Professor **Stelios Virvidakis**.

Link to lecture [here](#)

## CYA'S FIFTH ANNUAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

CYA's fifth annual student conference (May 2022), "Challenging Athens: Urban Development and Human Interaction at a Mediterranean Crossroads," was a success! Students presented their papers and then attended our rooftop reception to celebrate their hard work.

**Acacia Oyler** of Trinity University and **Claire Hylton** of Bryn Mawr College presented on "Immigration, Identity, and Insularity: Negotiating Phoenician Identity in Athens Through Names."

**Luis Rodriguez-Perez** of The University of Southern California presented his paper "Roman Athens: Identity and Transformation of Urban Space."

**Alexander Krauzlis** of Siena College presented his work "Ar-dittos Hill: Its Beauty and Significance Throughout the Ages."

**Riley Thompson** of Brown University presented on "Forced Migration and Conceptions of Belonging: A Case Study of Greece and Turkey."

**Kaitlin Birnbaum** of Vassar College presented her paper "Behind the Spray Can: Graffiti as Dissent in Exarchia and the Larger Athens Area."

## CYA HELLENIC EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

CYA recently completed its third executive education seminar titled ***Greece & the Challenges of Europeanization: 1936-2021***, taught by Professor **Alexander Kitroeff**, thus concluding the trilogy of seminars on Greece's modern history, in celebration of the country's bicentennial. Thanks to CYA Trustee **Endy Zemenides** and Professor Kitroeff, this pilot program was a success with 38 students enrolling for at least one session out of the three. The participants are now a part of the CYA community and ambassadors of our school.

College Year in Athens is currently preparing a specialty course that will focus on Greece's relationship with Turkey and the latter's claim over Greek territory and islands. This course will be titled: ***The Greek Frontier: The Aegean as a Fault Line*** (working title). It will be taught, again, by Professor Alexander Kitroeff, this fall.

Notable participants include **Chris Todd**, **Endy Zemenides**, and **Jack Hermansen**; with a guest appearance by the Ambassador to the United States in Greece, George J. Tsunis.







**January 24:** Welcome to CYA! Director of Housing and Catering, **Popi Baloglu**, with **Olympia Kappatou**, the Housing and Catering Manager



**January 25:** Snow on the first day of classes!



**February 23:** Mycenae (Peloponnese Field Trip)



**February 23:** Museum of the Olive and Greek Olive Oil in Sparta (Peloponnese field trip)



**March 11:** Being inside the Parthenon is a once in a lifetime experience!



**March 22:** Four students ran the Athens 5K!



**March 30:** A stop at Thermopylae, on the field trip to Thessaloniki



**April 19:** The **Topography** and **Monuments of Athens** class with professor **Robert Pitt** at the Karamaikos cemetery



**April 8:** Students of **The Orthodox Church** pose with 'tamata' (votives) given to them by course professor **Despina Iosif** to remember their class visit to Agios Spyridon Church.



**May 13:** Saying goodbye never gets any easier! Farewell dinner



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College Year in Athens was created sixty years ago to introduce young Americans to the Greek culture and establish Greece as an educational destination. Since 1962, over 11,000 students have studied at CYA and have experienced first-hand what it means to be global citizens. By offering an academically rigorous program of studies combined with the vibrant experience of day-to-day contact with the people, monuments, and landscape of Greece—a rapidly evolving country with a uniquely varied past—our students have gotten to know Greece and, most importantly, got to know themselves.

Thanks to the dedication and determination of our staff, the resourcefulness of our faculty, the trust of our governance, the support of our alumni, and the willingness of our students, CYA has managed to further its mission of offering American univer-sity students a transformative study abroad experience.

CYA hopes that you will continue to aid and support our insti-tution. Your generosity will help us fulfill our mission of offering our American university students a life-changing, trans-cultural competence that aims to make them world citizens.



Thank you to our alumni and friends who use AMAZON SMILE for CYA donations. For those of you who want to know more, please visit <https://smile.amazon.com/>.

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By transferring appreciated stock to College Year in Athens, you may be eligible for a tax deduction equal to the stock’s full fair market value, avoiding the capital gains tax on its increased val-ue. For your gift to be acknowledged, it is essential to notify CYA of the type and amount of stock you will be giving. You may do this either personally or through your agent or broker.

Matching Gifts

Your employer may match your charitable donations, multiplying the impact of your gift. To learn if your organization participates, please contact your Human Resources Office.

Named Scholarships

What better way to support a deserving CYA student than through a named scholarship! You can honor a particular person and give the incredible experience of College Year in Athens to an academically qualified student who would not otherwise attend.

Recurring, Monthly Giving

Monthly giving is an easy way to make your support for CYA go further, with less impact on your budget. Automatic monthly contributions help CYA administration with its budgetary plan-ning, while at the same time allowing your automatic contribu-tions to be spaced out over 12 months. Implementing this kind of support is simple to set up online—and simple to terminate should the need arise.

Planned Giving

Many people choose to support organizations that mean the most to them with a gift through their will or trust or planned arrangement. These types of gifts are known as planned gifts and are usually fulfilled after one’s passing. Planned gifts pro-vide a unique opportunity for one to create a lasting legacy for CYA. It is also a way to make a gift that costs nothing today—or that helps you make a tax-wise investment in your future and CYA’s. For more information about leaving a CYA Legacy gift and opportunities for permanence, please contact CYA’s Devel-opment Office at [development@cyathens.org](mailto:development@cyathens.org).



“IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO STAY UNINTERESTED” – STUDYING MYTH AND RELIGION AT CYA

By Sarah Reidy, CYA Spring 2022

What happens when the kids who were way too into the Percy Jackson books grow up and decide to study abroad? They come to Athens, take CYA’s *Greek Myth & Religion* course with professor **Nina Papathanasopoulou**, and become 100 times more obnoxious—at least I did. Since I was little, I loved learning about the unique and iconic Olympian gods, their favorite humans who became heroes, and their adventurous tales that included every beast or magical creature I could dream of. I took this course expecting to relearn the stories I knew as a kid, and that I would maintain the same interest and enthusiasm I had when I first read them. Now, at the end of the semester, I am blown away by how much Nina’s course reignited and added to my fascination with Greek mythology.

The tales I thought I already knew were brought to life in this course, under a new lens of societal and feminist analysis, through dissecting the words that make up myth to gain etymological understanding, and in adventures throughout Greece during field trips to the settings of the stories and sanctuaries of the gods. Nina prompted us to evaluate ancient Greek deities beyond their religious roles, and helped us in uncovering continuous themes under the surface of the stories. She gave us the floor for open discussion of why certain messages were ingrained so deeply in these myths, and she reminded us how important it is to use our personal experiences and contribute our individual takes—they all add new depth to the original work. This class made evident the deeper mean-

ings in Myth that I never would have otherwise noticed: the evolution of the patriarchal power structure, the relationship between mankind and the various environments it inhabits, and the feelings of this ancient society towards the unanswerable philosophical questions that permeate our lives (the meanings of life, death, love, and free will were brought up, to name a few).

The name of Aphrodite took on new meaning as a story all itself and a tribute to the fear-inspiring and all-encompassing power of love. The paradoxical characterizations of motherly love and vengeful wrath in the goddess Demeter made new sense under the context of the unpredictable agricultural seasons experienced by ancient Greek farmers: bounty one year and famine the next. Nina led organized trips to sanctuaries like Eleusis and Delphi, an early morning class held in the incredibly rare setting of an empty Acropolis, and my personal trip to Sounion all connected the fantastical celestial gods to the relatable experiences in the monotonous daily lives of earth-bound humans.

It was impossible to stay uninterested in class, and that interest was persistent outside of the classroom; I left each day armed with at least one new hot take, deep question, or fun fact that my roommates could not avoid unpacking with me. Class discussions felt like teamwork—in listening to my peers and voicing my own contributions, I was playing a part in the centuries-long attempt to understand the true meaning of the lasting works from the ancient Greek society that still affects us today. At the overdue push of assigned reading, I finally read the “classics” that I had previously considered the exclusive property of English majors, and I was shocked to find how much I enjoyed them. From ancient works like *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *The Oresteia*, and *The Bacchae* came an innate desire to understand these original Greek myths and expand that understanding to their modern retellings. I sped through Madeline Miller’s *The Song of Achilles* and *Circe* on weekend trips to the same Greek islands the characters visited. Disney’s *Hercules* became a subject for accuracy analysis (it is not accurate, but so many small details come from ancient Greek

truths and the songs are fun!). A pre-tentious, critical re-reading of the Percy Jackson series jumped onto my summer to-do list.

**The Myth and Religion Class at the Sanctuary of Demeter at Eleusis**

Every American who comes back from studying abroad thinks they have had the unique experience of discovering the secrets of the world; the key difference between myself and the millions who came before me is that when I say, “you won’t understand unless you study abroad”, I am correct. It is significantly due to my enrollment in this course that I feel enabled to confidently claim that I am built differently. Obviously, I gained a lot academically from my *Greek Myth & Religion* class, but, in total honesty, the most powerful takeaway is a justified superiority complex towards courses on Greek myth taught in the United States. Conceptually, the content of this course may be covered, but there is nowhere better to learn about Greek myth and religion than its birthplace.

To put it plainly, learning about mythology just hits different here. Linguistic analysis coming from the mouth of your professor the native speaker is just more authentic and makes more sense. Socratic seminars in the states? Mid. Discussing ancient philosophical concepts in the city where Socrates himself lived? Elite. Oh, you looked at pictures of the sanctuaries of the gods? Delphi was (respectfully) my playground, I touched the poppies that symbolize Persephone at her mother’s sanctuary, and I can tell you firsthand how magical sunset over the Aegean sea from the temple of Poseidon is. Regardless of previous knowledge (as mine was limited to children’s books) or field of study (I am a neuroscience major who does not, and probably will never understand, the minds of my Classics-major peers), professor Papathanasopoulou’s class has value and brings an incredible, unique perspective to a truly interesting subject. I came to Greece as a self-proclaimed annoying mythology nerd. Still, thanks to Nina and the eternal relevance of some really old books, I am leaving with the self-awareness that my current attachment to Greek mythology makes my pre-study abroad interest in the subject look like child’s play.

CAMPUS RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVES

This fall, CYA has three campus relations representatives traveling the US to recruit students and spread the word about CYA.



**Ana Sundvall** graduated from Lewis & Clark College in May of 2021 where she double majored in International Affairs and Clas-

sics. Her enthusiasm for traveling and appreciation for cross-cultural engagement led her to study abroad at CYA in the fall of 2019. Studying in Greece also aligned well with her areas of studies and every day brought her joy, adventure, and new understandings. She left CYA with landmark memories and lifelong friends. When she longs to be back in Greece, she breaks out her Greek cookbook and video chats with the close friends she created there. Ana is excited to work as a Campus Relations Representative and share her appreciation for CYA with other students.



**Samantha Jewell** attended CYA in Spring 2021 and Summer Session I 2021, where she studied ancient Greek, art history, and political

science, and took part in an archaeological excavation on the island of Despotiko. Though she studied abroad during the Covid-19 pandemic when travel in Greece and Europe was severely limited, CYA still provided her with an incredible experience and lifelong friends. After graduating from UC Irvine in 2022 with a B.A. in Classics and double minors in Archaeology and Political Science, she is thrilled to be a Campus Relations Representative for CYA and share her excitement for study abroad!



**Jacki Healy** studied psychology and classics at Lawrence University from Fall 2019 through Fall 2021, and she is now completing work

on her B.S. in Psychology online at Liberty University. She fulfilled her dreams of studying abroad in Fall 2020 with CYA, learning about Greek art, mythology, language, sports, and culture. Jacki describes her time in Greece as one of the best and most transformative times of her life, and she is so excited to continue sharing her love of CYA as a Campus Relations Representative.

COOKING CORNER

**Biftekia (large meatballs) and potatoes baked in the oven**

**Ingredients:**

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 2 eggs
- 2 onions (grated)
- 2 garlic cloves (grated)
- 1 cup fresh parsley (well chopped)
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound (approx) bread without crusts that has been moistened and then had the water squeezed out.
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

With your hands, mix the ground beef and other ingredients well, and then shape the mixture into (approximately) six large biftekia.

**Potato Ingredients:**

- 6 – 7 potatoes
  - salt
  - pepper
  - oregano
  - 1/2 cup lemon juice
  - 1 cup olive oil
  - 1 cup water
- Peel the potatoes and cut them in small pieces (small potato will be in approximately four pieces). Rinse them well. Place the potatoes in an oven pan. Add salt, pepper, oregano and then cover with the prepared meatballs.
- Pour in 1 cup of olive oil, 1/2 cup lemon juice, and 1 cup of water. Cover the pan with foil and bake in a 390 degree F oven for approximately one hour. After one hour remove the foil and bake for another 10-15 minutes.





FALL '05

**Andrew** '06 and **Ciara** (Fernandez '06) **Faber** welcomed their second child, Maya, in May 2022.

SPRING '98

**Ed Brzytwa** '98 joined the Consumer Technology Association as Vice President of International Trade in 2021.

SPRING '88

**Ron Miller** '88 married Emily Comstock on June 11, 2022. Groomsman **Eric Marshall** (Spring '88) was also in attendance. Ron and Emily then celebrated




Wedding party photo: Groom Ron Miller '88 with fellow CYA alum, Eric Marshall '88 in the middle of the groomsmen.

their honeymoon on the Alumni Trip in Athens. Ron remains employed at Barnes & Thornburg LLP, working in both Washington DC and Indianapolis. Emily works in Quality at Eli Lilly & Co. in Indianapolis.

1979-80





**Linda Kordas** '80 writes, "I worked teaching Latin in public schools for 38 years. I retired twice (two different schools) and am happily living in New Hampshire with my husband (another Latin teacher) and my cat, Romulus and 14 cute finches. We did a month in Europe this summer: one week in Spain where we met my Greek teacher and his family, one week in France and two weeks in Rome. What a great time!"









### CYA Social Media Contributors

This year, we began working with some of our on-site CYAers as Social Media Contributors. These students documented the CYA experience while in Greece, sharing some of their favorite moments for our team to highlight on social streams. Upon returning to the U.S., many of these contributors have become CYA Ambassadors and now represent CYA on their home campuses!



Follow us:   College Year in Athens  @CYAthens  @CollegeYearInAthens

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\*Our system is to list Fall semester and Spring semester students as belonging to the class of the full academic year (e.g., people who attended in Fall 1990 and Spring 1991 both belong to the class of '91). Summer students are listed by the year they attended.

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