



NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

Modern Greek Studies Foundation

CENTER FOR GREEK STUDIES

Professor Alexandra Pappas was appointed to three-year term as Director of the newly named Center for Greek Studies at SF State

The Board of Directors of the Modern Greek Studies Foundation overwhelmingly approved a proposal at a special meeting on December 1, 2018, to re-name the Center for Modern Greek Studies to the **Center for Greek Studies**. This name change reflects the broad scope of academic interest that has always defined the Center, and seeks to encourage greater outreach to students and faculty within the University. In addition, the Board endorsed the appointment of Associate Professor Alexandra Pappas as Director of the Center for a three-year term. After several years of uncertainty in the operation of the Center, we are excited that the doors are open, classes are being held, and a new vision for the Center has emerged.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

PROFESSOR ALEXANDRA PAPPAS
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR GREEK STUDIES



In this first semester of the Center's reopening after a period of dormancy there is much progress to report. With the invaluable help of Research Affiliate Dr. Anastasia Sakellariadi, Academic Office Coordinator

Seth Chabay, and Work Study student Stephanie Polos, we have been working to make the Center's physical space, including its unusually rich library and archival collections, organized and accessible for academic and non-academic researchers alike. We have made substantial progress in this ongoing project, and we invite you to drop by during our **Open House** on May 1, 4:30-6:30, Humanities 577 to see the fruits of efforts.

San Francisco State University

CENTER FOR GREEK STUDIES

For more information, visit <http://greekstudies.sfsu.edu/>

**RHODESSA JONES AND THE MEDEA PROJECT:
THEATER FOR INCARCERATED WOMEN/HIV CIRCLE**

OUR CLASSICS: ANCIENT MYTH IN THE COMMUNITY

Co-sponsored with the Department of Classics and the Classics Students Association at SFSU.

Wednesday, April 24, 7pm. San Francisco State University, Humanities Building, room 587.
Reception to follow.

OPEN HOUSE

Please join us for an Open House to celebrate the Center for Greek Studies!

Wednesday, May 1, 4:30-6:30pm

San Francisco State University, Humanities Building, room 577.

Refreshments will be provided.

DR. ANASTASIA SAKELLARIADI

**WHOSE CLASSICS? WHOSE HERITAGE?
CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE 'LOSS OF INNOCENCE'**

Co-sponsored with the Department of Classics and the Classics Students Association at SFSU.

Wednesday, May 1, 7pm. San Francisco State University, Humanities Building, room 587.
Reception to follow.

The Center's curricular mission continues to be ably served by Lecturers Dimetra Armenakis, who teaches the Modern Greek language sequence, and Dr. Thalia Anagnostopoulos, who offers courses on Byzantine and Modern Greek history. And we have begun exciting conversations about what new courses might be offered in the longer term, such as those on constructions of Hellenism in Greek national literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, and on women in Byzantium. And in an effort to boost enrollments in the language courses, we have applied for 2nd-semester Greek to satisfy the University's General Education requirement, as 1st-semester already does. We are hopeful this will be granted over the following year.

The Center has also signed on as co-sponsor for several exciting events this spring: the screening of the *Owl's Legacy* film series hosted by the Roxie Theater in San Francisco's Mission district (throughout March); a presentation by Rhodessa Jones and the Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women/HIV Circle offered in conjunction with the Classics Students Association's Spring Lecture Series (April 24); and a talk by Dr. Anastasia Sakellariadi on the role Classical archaeology has played in constructing contemporary Greek national narratives and in the nation-building process (May 1). See the Center website for event details: greekstudies.sfsu.edu

Next year's event programming will revolve around the broad theme of Greek literature from the ancient to the contemporary, with emphasis on women and Greek poetry. Please stay tuned for more information on these developments.

A guiding principle in this exciting new phase of the Center – with focus on building new bridges on campus and in the community at large – has been to honor the Center's legacy, core mission, and excellent leadership of the past while developing in new areas. And in this undertaking we are especially grateful for the ongoing and energetic support of the Modern Greek Studies Foundation.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Alexandra Pappas is a Greek-American with paternal roots in west Crete. She lived in Greece as a young child, and again in early adulthood when she was a Regular Member of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens.

Professor Pappas holds a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2003), and was an Assistant Professor at the Universities of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Arkansas before taking her current position as Raoul Bertrand Chair in Classics at San Francisco State University. She has also been a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania (2005-6) and a year-long residential Junior Fellow at Harvard University's Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, D.C. (2011-12).

Her teaching and research centers on ancient Greek words and images. She has published widely on archaic Greek vase inscriptions, the archaic Greek poet Archilochus, the ancient Greek symposium, the staging of letters and words on the classical Athenian stage, and Hellenistic pattern poems.

She has also reached outside academia in recent years to emphasize the modern relevance of the Classics, including speaking at area galleries on Classics and modern art, and publishing commissioned pieces on

Classics and contemporary issues with SFMOMA's *Open Space* and contemporary artist Paul Chan. Professor Pappas also has found deep meaning and value in her ongoing work since 2016 with Rhodessa Jones and The Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women/HIV Circle, and in teaching Classical Mythology in the San Francisco County Jail to students in the gender-nonconforming pod.

THE 15TH ANNUAL SAN FRANCISCO GREEK FILM FESTIVAL A STUNNING SUCCESS

The 15th Annual San Francisco Greek Film Festival, held in October of 2018, was the most successful festival in our history. Opening Night was held at LucasFilm's Premier Theater in the Presidio and was host to more than 300 guests who viewed Pantelis Voulgaris' compelling film *The Last Note* with producer Yiannis Iakovidis and actress Melia Kreiling in attendance. Closing night was held at Dolby Cinema on Market Street in San Francisco where a large audience viewed Greece's nominated film for Oscar consideration, *Polyxeni*. Director Dora Masklavanou was present to discuss the film. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all our sponsors whose generosity and support made this extraordinary film festival such a success.



Join us October 20-26, 2019, as we celebrate our 16th Anniversary with more special screenings and events. Learn more at: grfilm.com

Funding Campaign to Fully Endow the Nikos Kazantzakis Chair in Greek Studies

In addition to approving the change in the name of the Center, the Board also approved a proposal to seek private funding to endow the Nikos Kazantzakis Chair in Greek Studies at SF State. This chair was established in 1983, but was never fully endowed. The Board recognized that private funding was the best long-term solution to ensure the presence of a full-time professorship dedicated to Greek Studies with a specialty in Modern Greek literature. A serious capital campaign to secure funding for this position will commence this Fall with the collaboration of the University. San Francisco State University is the only institution in the world that holds a Chair dedicated to the great Cretan author Nikos Kazantzakis.

PETRIS LECTURE SERIES

The Foundation hosted Tasoula Hadjitofi, author of *The Icon Hunter*, as special guest for our annual Petris Lecture Series on May 3, 2018. In this book, Ms. Hadjitofi recounts her efforts as a relentless fighter for the recovery of priceless religious artifacts stolen from ancient Cypriot churches following the Turkish invasion and sold on the black market. She was instrumental in uncovering thousands of looted antiquities as part of "The Munich Case," one of the largest European art trafficking stings since World War II. Ms. Hadjitofi spoke to a riveted audience of her lifelong quest to have these sacred religious and cultural artifacts repatriated to their rightful home.



The Modern Greek Studies Foundation expresses its genuine appreciation for the ongoing invaluable support provided by the Elios Charitable Foundation.

And a very special thanks goes to Mr. George Marcus and Dr. Kenneth Frangadakis for their ongoing kindness and generosity in hosting the festive Opening Reception for the San Francisco Greek Film Festival at Kokkari Estiatorio.

IN MEMORIUM THANASIS MASKALERIS (1930-2017)



MGSF held a special memorial program for our beloved Professor Thanasis Maskaleris. More than 200 friends, admirers, family members and colleagues gathered on January 20, 2018, to pay respects to our founder and guiding light. Former Mayor

Art Agnos delivered a thoughtful farewell, along with several others, including poet Jack Hirschmann.

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION

Support the work of the Modern Greek Studies Foundation by becoming a "Friend of the Foundation." Your contribution of \$25 or more will help enable the Foundation to continue its work in supporting academic and cultural events in the Bay Area to share the importance, beauty and meaning of Hellenic culture. Sign up now at mgsf.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 24 · 7pm
Rhodessa Jones & the Medea
Project: Theater for Incarcerated
Women/HIV Circle
SFSU Humanities Bldg, Room 587
greekstudies.sfsu.edu

MAY 1
Center for Greek Studies Open
House & Lecture by Dr. Anastasia
Sakellariadi
Reception 4:30-6:30pm
Lecture 7pm
SFSU Humanities Bldg, Room 577
greekstudies.sfsu.edu

MAY 16 · 7pm · Café Nostos
Executive Committee Meeting

MAY 19 · 12pm · Holy Trinity
General Board Meeting

OCTOBER 20-26
San Francisco Greek Film Festival
grfilm.com

MODERN GREEK STUDIES FOUNDATION

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HONORARY MEMBERS

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The mission of the Modern Greek Studies Foundation is to support the Center for Greek Studies at San Francisco State University and to present public programs reflecting Hellenic culture to the broader community. Established in 1983 by the late Professor Emeritus Thanasis Maskaleris, the Center continues to offer a variety of course offerings in Modern Greek language, literature, history and culture. The Foundation also sponsors the San Francisco Greek Film Festival, the longest-running festival of its kind in the United States.

“I asked the almond tree, ‘Sister, speak to me of God’. And the almond tree blossomed.”

NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS, REPORT TO GRECO