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## CLIMATE CHANGE – CRISIS OR OPPORTUNITY



Whether you agree that climate change is affecting our lives directly or not, there is no disputing that weather patterns have changed in the last few years. According to the 2013 United Nations climate report, scientists worldwide can now state with 95% certainty that humans are causing most of today's climate issues. Many think that these changes are only causing polar ice caps to melt, but there are serious long term health consequences that can occur as a result. These consequences affect us and future generations.

As a result of these shifts and extremes in our environment, scientists report that the population will experience more air pollution and water borne diseases. In addition, the shifts will compromise our water resources and as a result our food supply. News reports indicate that last summer's heat waves in Europe resulted in 70,000 deaths in 11 days. Government statistics indicate that in one month of temperatures over 100 degrees in Russia, 55,000 died, one million acres burned and crop production dropped by 25%. The phenomenon of environmental refugees, only recently looked as a result of climate change, could rise as a result.

Recently, the White House released a memo on how the administration was preparing for the impact of climate change, building on plans started in October 2009. The memo states in part, "the impacts of climate change — including an increase in prolonged periods of excessively high temperatures, more heavy downpours, an increase in wildfires, more severe droughts, permafrost thawing, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise — are already affecting communities, natural resources, ecosystems, economies, and public health across the United States. These impacts are often most significant for communities that already face economic or health-related challenges, and for species and habitats that are already facing other pressures.

The memo went on to state that "managing these risks requires deliberate

preparation, close cooperation, and coordinated planning by the Federal Government. In addition, stakeholders need to be involved to facilitate Federal, State, local, tribal, private-sector, and nonprofit-sector efforts to improve climate preparedness and resilience; help safeguard our economy, infrastructure, environment, and natural resources; and provide for the continuity of executive department and agency (agency) operations, services, and programs."

Further the Journal of Nature indicates that since 1979, 40% of the polar ice caps have melted. The Journal cites that future summers will be warmer than the warmest on record. These weather changes will affect many health conditions, including lung diseases. Rising temperatures will be felt most by city dwellers, and although it might be a slow process, it does not mean that actions shouldn't be taken immediately.

As high intensity rain storms and heat events increase in frequency, the question must be asked what have we done to address these events. Further, an assessment of where residents are most vulnerable is necessary. This is why reassessing policy development of urban areas is one of the first steps we have to make; with climate change included in regional infrastructure plans. Our planning processes must change and become proactive, not reactive.

We cannot view global warming in the abstract and think it only affects distant ice caps. News reports indicated that Lake Michigan, for example, had a new record low water level in December 2013. The latest studies have shown that in the past 40 years ice covering of Lake Michigan has declined about 71%. These lower water levels and warmer temperatures may increase the amount of mercury in the food chain, not to mention their effect on the millions of people depending on Lake Michigan for drinking water.

What are some of the things we can do now to stop the effects of this phenomenon in our day to day lives. Government reports indicate that three million people die each year due to physical inactivity with an additional 3 million deaths annually due to urban air pollution. As a result, the World Health Organization recently suggested reducing car use by taking all round trips of 5 miles or less with alternative modes of transport, if possible. For example, if only half of short trips could be accomplished by bike that would reduce auto emissions by 20%. These changes could save up to 500 lives a year, with

## ORESTES FOUND NOT GUILTY IN NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM'S RE-TRIAL



On Wednesday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the UIC Forum, the National Hellenic Museum presented a mock trial of the ancient Greek mythological character, Orestes, son of Agamemnon, of the cursed House of Atreus. Orestes was put to trial for the charge of matricide, and the majority of the 600 guests who attended the re-trial event voted Orestes "not guilty." There was, however, a hung jury of 16 jurors, while the judges, whose vote was not taken into account, voted guilty 2 to 1.

The court participants included Judge Honorable Richard A. Posner, Presiding Judge, Honorable Charles P. Kocoras, and Honorable William J. Bauer. Orestes was defended by Dan K. Webb (Winston & Strawn) and Robert A. Clifford (Clifford Law Offices). Counsel for the prosecution was Patrick J. Fitzgerald (Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP) and Patrick M. Collins (Perkins Coie). Hariklia Karis, Kirkland & Ellis LLP, gave the introductory remarks and the background story of Aeschylus' *The Oresteia*.

(Continue p. 2)

100,000 hospital admissions avoided. Swapping pedals for tail pipes is a small change that could pay huge dividends by reducing heart attacks, cancer and road traffic crashes. Many cities across the United States are developing plans to shift the focus from cars to alternative transportation.

President Obama spoke about climate change at his inauguration in 2009 and created a Climate Action plan in June 2013. Part of that plan is to build resilience against climate effects which includes a climate profile, vulnerability assessment, disease burden and making projections for 50 years from now.

There is no single fix to this problem. In addition, the recent pattern of extreme cold temperatures is another component and its implications cannot be solved with a narrow focus and lack of conversation. We must look at climate change as a reality and be the best stewards of our planet as possible, if not for our sake, then for the sake of future generations.

Mariyana Spyropoulos is an attorney based in Chicago, Illinois as well as an elected Commissioner at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.  
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## NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS

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- 5 To assist all the Greek-American fraternal, cultural patriotic and religious organizations
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- 7.To advance the just causes of Hellenism.
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## ORESTES FOUND NOT GUILTY IN NATIONAL HEL- LENIC MUSEUM'S RE-TRIAL

( From p. 1)



National Hellenic Museum President Connie Moutroupalas

Sixteen distinguished citizens of Chicago decided the validity of the charges. J.P. Anderson, Editor-In-Chief, Michigan Avenue Magazine; Louis G. Apostol, Executive Director & General Counsel, Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board; Alderman Walter Burnett, Jr., 27<sup>th</sup> Ward, City of Chicago; John Corkery, Dean, The John Marshall Law School; Anna Davlantes, Chicago Journalist; Dean R. Glassberg, Regional President – First Midwest Bank; Angelo Kokkino, President Ghafari Associates; Eleni Kouimelis, Partner, Winston & Strawn & President-Elect, Hellenic Bar Association of Illinois; Annie Kuhlman, American Bar Association; Hon. Anthony C. Kyriakopoulos, Circuit Judge, Circuit Court of Cook, County State of Illinois; Dan Mihalopoulos, Chicago Sun-Times; Dr. Sara Monoson, Professor of Political Science and Classics, Northwestern University; Dr. Robin Rhodes, Archaeologist and Historian of Classical Art & Architecture, University of Notre Dame; A. Thomas Skallas, Partner Thompson Coburn LLP, President, Hellenic Bar Association of Illinois & Vice-Chairman, National Hellenic Museum; Neil Steinberg, Chicago Sun-Times; Larry Yellen, Anchor, Fox News.

The Oresteia, by Greek playwright Aeschylus (525-456 BC), is a foundational literary work that examines the crucial place of law in society. Consisting of Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Eumenides, the trilogy constitutes a deeply affecting study of crime and punishment, probing such irresolvable and vexatious issues as the nature of justice, the frequent conflicts between love and duty, the torments of moral decision making, our obligations to the gods, society, and ourselves, and the spiritual consequences of irremediable actions. Above all, the Oresteia shows us the burdens of a culture based on the lex talionis—an eye for an eye—and the blessings of a jury trial in a court of law.

### About the Museum

The National Hellenic Museum is America's only national institution to document and present the legacy of Greek Americans and their contributions to the American mosaic, while celebrating their rich Greek history and culture and the profound impact of their Hellenic heritage upon the world.

The Museum is located in a 40,000-square-foot, three-story, eco-friendly building which is home to interactive exhibits, children's education center, research library, oral history center, museum store, special events hall, and rooftop terrace.

For more information, visit <http://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org> or call 312-655-1234.



The international community must act on evidence that crimes against humanity are being committed in North Korea, says a long-awaited UN report.

A panel of experts mandated by the UN's Human Rights Council said North Koreans had suffered "unspeakable atrocities", and that those responsible, including leader Kim Jong-un, must face justice.



Pictures of the world



Highway in Japan with snow around more than 10 meters high. Unbelievable.



Spectacular rice fields in China.



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World's Largest Swimming Pool in San Alfonso, Chile. More than 1,000 yards long.

Pappas: Read Your New Property Tax Bill to Track Your Local Government Debt

Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas said today that the property tax bill mailed to nearly 1.8 million Cook County owners contains debt figures for every local government that taxes a home, business or other real estate property.



Property owners can use their 2013 first installment tax bill to track how much of that total debt is from their own seven to 20 local governments. The bills, due March 4, 2014, show these categories:

- \* Money Owed by Your Taxing Districts.
- \* Pension and Healthcare Amounts Promised by Your Taxing Districts.
- \* Amount of Pension and Healthcare Shortage.
- \* Percentage of Pension and Healthcare Costs Taxing Districts Can Pay.

“Read your bill to see how much debt your local government is carrying,” Pappas said. “We want you to see what’s behind the bill.”

Pappas said taxpayers “should be aware of how local government debt affects their finances. Just as they need to know how much credit card debt they have, taxpayers should know their local government debt. This information should be a wake-up call: Your local government debt is like having seven to 20 credit cards you may not know you had.”

Lawrence Msall, president of the Civic Federation, said the bill not only gives taxpayers information about total debt, but breaks out pension and healthcare costs that threaten to overwhelm local governments.

“By putting these numbers on individual property tax bills, Treasurer Pappas has taken an important step toward educating taxpayers about the crippling level of debt and pension obligations carried by many of our local governments,” Msall said. “These obligations are a growing threat to the fiscal and economic stability of our communities.”

Pappas said that people have a right to know where their tax money is going, and showing them the debt of the governments closest to them, local governments, “is transparency in its highest form.”

Pappas explained that the information comes from the Debt Disclosure Ordinance (DDO), which requires all primary local governments across Cook County to report their financial data yearly to the Treasurer’s Office. Pappas also put the DDO data on [cookcountytreasurer.com](http://cookcountytreasurer.com), where taxpayers can look deeper into the finances of the individual taxing districts that claim shares of their tax bill.

“The debt you see on your bill will raise the property taxes that you pay today and your children will pay tomorrow,” Pappas said. “We are leaving a debt-filled future to our children.”

The ten commandments to follow in life all the time.

1. Prayer is not a “spare wheel” that you pull out when in trouble, but it is a “steering wheel” that directs the right path throughout.
2. Why is a car’s windshield so large and the rear view mirror so small? Because our past is not as important as our future. So, look ahead and move on.
3. Friendship is like a book. It takes a short time to burn, but it takes years to write.
4. All things in life are temporary. If it’s going well, enjoy it, that won’t last long. If it’s going badly, don’t worry, that won’t last long either.
5. Old friends are gold! New friends are diamonds! If you get a diamond, don’t forget the gold! Because to hold a diamond, you always need a base of gold!
6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, God smiles from above and says, “Relax, sweetheart, it’s just a bend, not the end!”
7. When God solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities; when God doesn’t solve your problems, He has faith in your abilities.
8. A blind person asked St. Anthony, “Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?” He replied, “Yes, losing your vision!”
9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them; sometime when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you.
10. Worrying does not take away tomorrow’s troubles, It takes away today’s peace.

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**\$219** /MO\*



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**\$289** /MO\*



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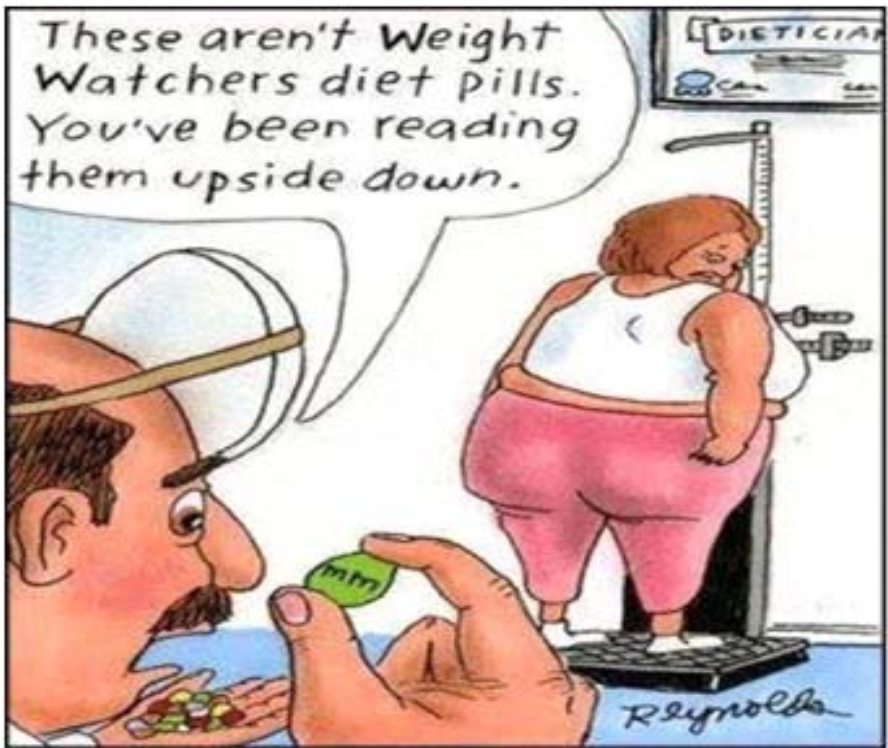
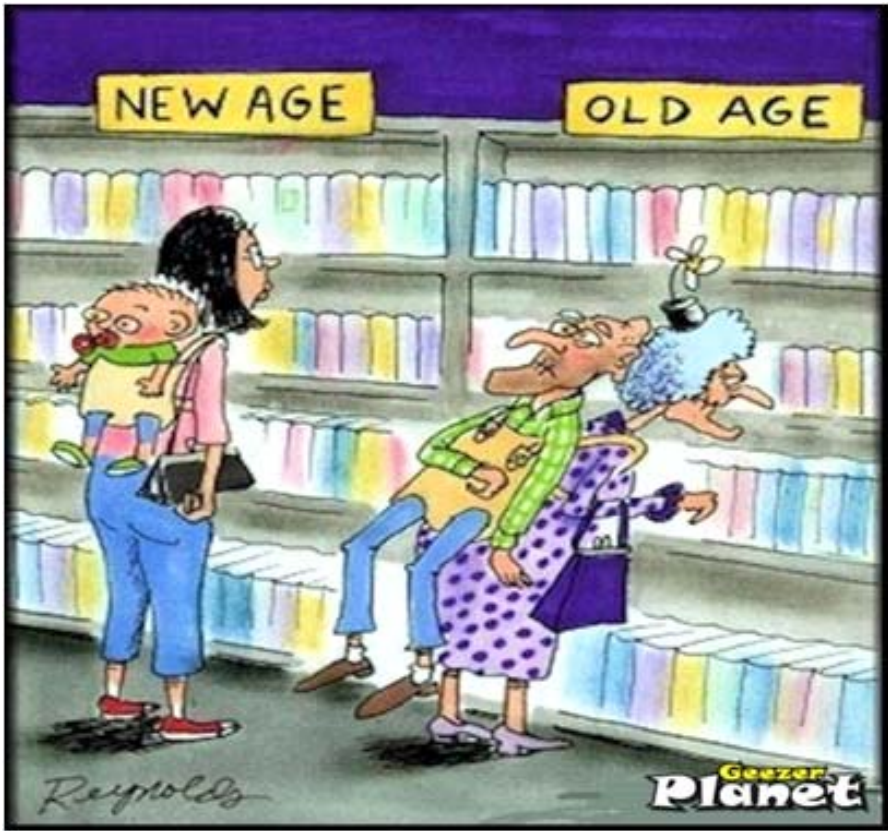
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# GREEK CITIZENSHIP INFORMATION FOR PERSONS OF GREEK DESCENT

## Benefits of Greek Citizenship

Greek citizens are entitled to reside, work and study in Greece as well as in any other member state of the European Union (EU), indefinitely. For the duration of their residence in any member state of the EU, Greek citizens benefit from the privileges and legal status enjoyed by locals in that Member State. As a result, increasing numbers of people of Greek ancestry are acquiring Greek citizenship and procuring Greek passports.

## Citizenship Pursuant to Recognition

The Greek Nationality Code provides ethnic Greeks (i.e. persons with a Greek ancestor) with two means of acquiring Greek citizenship. Persons whose ancestor were born in Greece and/or registered on either a Municipal Register or Male Register of Greece are entitled to have their birth right to Greek citizenship recognized. In order to do so, these persons must obtain the relevant certificates from the Municipal or Male Registers of Greece and must thereafter proceed with registering all subsequent ancestors by submitting certificates of birth, marriage and death, which took place abroad, with the Special Register of Greece. Foreign certificates must either be certified by Apostille in accordance with the Hague Convention or authenticated by the authorized Greek Consular office, if the country issuing the certificate is not a party to the Hagu

Once the necessary certificates are issued by the Special Registry, they must be submitted to the Municipality with which the applicant wishes to register. The decision recognizing the Greek nationality of an applicant is issued by the Prefecture (Perifereia). Once the applicant is included on the relevant Municipal Register and Male Register, if applicable, he/she is a Greek citizen and can apply for the issuance of a Greek Identification Card and Greek Passport.

## Citizenship Pursuant to Naturalization

A foreign born ethnic Greek who fails to qualify for recognition of their right to Greek citizenship pursuant to the above, may acquire Greek citizenship pursuant to naturalization. This procedure requires the applicant to submit a related declaration to the Greek Consular Authority of their domicile or the Mayor of the area in which they live (for residents of Greece) together with the Greek ancestors' baptismal certificates, Greek Orthodox marriage certificates and the applicants' own baptismal certificate. The Minister of the Interior issues the decision regarding whether or not Greek citizenship is granted, based on a review of the file. Children of a naturalized Greek citizen obtain Greek citizenship, if they are under 18 years of age when the parent obtains Greek citizenship. Information for children born out of wedlock, ad hoc considerations, military service and consequences of Greek citizenship.

# GREEK TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (AFM)

## Age Requirements

All residents of Greece who are 18 years of age or older must request and obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number known in Greek as «Ανέεiu Ömreiaééy lçõñpiõ» or «Α.Ö.Ι.». Physical and legal persons who reside abroad are required to possess a Taxpayer Identification Number if they own property located in Greece, engage in any real estate or commercial transaction in Greece or earn income from a Greek source.

Residents of Greece should apply for a Taxpayer Identification Number at the Greek Tax Office located nearest to their place of residence or business. Non-residents of Greece should obtain their Taxpayer Identification Numbers from the Special Tax Office for Foreign Residents and should ensure that they remain registered with this Tax Office in order to avoid being subject to imputed taxation and/or taxation of their worldwide income.

## Required Documents

All applicants for a Taxpayer Identification Number must submit a completed and signed M1 form.

In addition, Greek citizens who are residents of Greece are required to present their original Greek Identification Card and to submit a photocopy thereof. European Union nationals who reside in Greece are required to present their original passports or Identification Cards and to submit a photocopy of the document presented. Third country nationals who reside in Greece are required to produce their passports and valid residence permits and to submit photocopies thereof. Non-residents of Greece are required to present and submit photocopies of their passports or other official forms of identification.

The applicant may authorize a third party to request and obtain the number on his/her behalf; however, a Power of Attorney document must be presented. This document may either be signed before a Greek Consular Authority abroad or before a foreign Notary. In the latter case, the document must be certified by Apostille in the country where it was signed.

## Discontinuation of a Greek Taxpayer Identification Number

A Greek Taxpayer Identification Number which is no longer in use, as a consequence of death, must be formally removed from the Greek Taxpayer Register. The following documents must be presented in order to formally remove a number from the Register:

- A certified copy of the Taxpayer's Death Certificate
- A suitable Power of Attorney document from the heirs of the deceased
- A Certificate of Next of Kin
- A certified copy of the Last Will and Testament or a Court of the First Instance certificate indicating that there is no such document

*Our firm handles Greek citizenship procedures, including name changes, pursuant to specifically drafted limited Powers of Attorney. It is therefore not necessary for our clients to travel to Greece in order to accomplish the above indicated.*

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NEWS FROM GREECE

Stalled negotiations to resume, eurozone officials agree

Dutch Finance Minister and eurozone President Jeroen Dijsselbloem (left) talks with Greek Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras (center) and Luxembourg's Finance Minister Pierre Gramegna (right) before an Eurogroup Council meeting at EU Headquarters in Brussels on Monday.

European officials meeting in Brussels agreed on Monday that troika officials would return to Athens this week to resume stalled negotiations but indicated that a discussion on debt relief would likely not start until after the summer when Greece is confident it can tap international bond markets.

"The troika intends to return to Athens later this week," Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem said after a meeting of eurozone finance ministers. He said authorities "must now work with the troika so that the review mission can be successfully concluded." Greek Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras said the envoys would be in Athens "by Sunday."

Earlier Dijsselbloem played down the need to come up with a plan to reduce Greece's public debt before the European Parliament elections in May. "If the current program and all the conditions are fulfilled, then further disbursements can take place before May that will finance Greece right into August," he said.

Germany's finance minister, Wolfgang Schaeuble, said the priority for Athens remained tying up loose ends from the reform program. "Greece and the troika have to concur that Greece is taking the steps that have been agreed in the program," he

told. "That condition must be met and then the next tranche can be paid." German press reports over the weekend suggested that Chancellor Angela Merkel has blocked Schaeuble's attempt to provide further aid to Greece before the European elections.

European Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner Olli Rehn also pressed Athens to focus on reforms. "It is in everyone's interest, especially Greece's, to do what it must do," he said, adding that the troika's review could be finished by March and aid subsequently disbursed. Rehn said the fact the troika was returning to Athens was a positive development but added that it would not be easy for an agreement to be reached.

Back in Athens, in an apparent bid to offset the negative news about the delay to debt relief talks, sources close to Prime Minister Antonis Samaras said Greece was confident it could return to bond markets in the second half of this year. Meanwhile Samaras repeated his pledge to return the bulk of a primary surplus Greece is expected to post this year to low-income pensioners and military and security services staff.

In a related development, former Premier George Papandreou claimed that the governments he had led in 2010 and 2011 had laid the groundwork for Greece's primary surplus.

Steel companies to shut down plants at Aspropyrgos

The steel industry in Greece is losing its battle for survival as the countdown has begun for the shutdown of the factories of the Manesis group's Hellenic Halyvourgia and Halyvourgiki, owned by the Constantinos Angelopoulos group, at Aspropyrgos, Western Attica.

On Monday Hellenic Halyvourgia informed the plant's 120 employees that it is preparing to lay off all the staff at the Aspropyrgos unit in the next few days. The steel company's management explained to the workers that right now it is able to give them their severance pay, while in the next few days and weeks it may not be in the position to do so. The workers are expected to propose their own alternative solutions by Thursday.

Also on Monday, during a meeting at the Labor Ministry, the management of rival Halyvourgiki appeared determined to halt production at its own plant at Aspropyrgos after March 31. The ministry and the workers' unions asked for a four-day extension before employees enter suspension status so that a ministerial committee can convene, possibly in the presence of the prime minister.

The company insists on the suspension of 192 employees out of the 255 staff at Aspropyrgos, and asked for the recording of its decision that if no solution is found within those six weeks, then the factory will shut down.

Asked about the huge problem of energy costs that major industries such as the two steel com-

panies are facing, Prime Minister Antonis Samaras said on Monday that "we will present specific measures to tackle the problem."

The two steel factories have practically suspended operations over the last couple of years. Halyvourgia had been rotating its staff and had reduced employee numbers at the Volos plant where it currently employs 370.

With domestic demand having dropped below 300,000 tons per annum, the bulk of production is directed abroad. Since the start of 2013 the steel companies have been forcing themselves to export output – even if that entails losses – in order to maintain sales and avoid leaving their production potential unused.

BoG confirms primary surplus at 812 mln euros

Bank of Greece data confirmed on Monday that the primary surplus for the 2013 budget amounted to 812 million euros on a cash basis at the end of January 2014.

Last month's budget revenues came to 4.46 billion euros, compared with 4.29 billion a year earlier, while expenditure reached 3.6 billion euros against 3.8 billion in the first month of 2013. The amount for January includes some 5 million euros spent on the repayment of expired debts.

The net result of the Public Investment Program produced a deficit of 276 million euros, against just 10 million euros in January 2013. This means that spending on public investments last month exceeded the program's revenues by 276 million euros.

Interest payments in January amounted to 216 million euros, some 15 percent less than the 248 million paid for interest in the same month last year.

A few days ago the State General Accounting Office issued the latest data on the execution of the 2013 state budget after the end of January 2014, which showed a primary surplus of 811 million euros. Certain January and February figures are regularly included in the previous year's budget results.

Clooney hits back in dispute with London mayor over Parthenon Marbles

American actor George Clooney has defended his comments from just over a week ago advocating the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece despite criticism from London Mayor Boris Johnson.



Johnson accused the actor of pursuing a "Hitlerian agenda" for what he termed "London's cultural treasures" as the Nazis had also intended to remove the marbles from the British Museum if they occupied Britain.

"I'm a great fan of the Mayor, and I'm sure my right honorable friend had no real intention of comparing me to Hitler," Clooney said in a statement.

"I'd chalk it up to a little too much hyperbole washed down with a few whiskeys. I've found myself in the same spot a time or two so I hold no ill will," the actor, who has been promoting his new film "The Monuments' Men," said of Johnson's op-ed in the Daily Telegraph.

"When it comes to real facts, not imagined history, you need only to look at the UNESCO rulings that have been agreed to by all parties.

"An occupying nation can't sell off the national heritage of the country it occupies," added Clooney.

"More relevant is the fact that the Parthenon Marbles were chipped away from the Parthenon by the occupying Turks and sold. It was a single monument broken into bits. It would be as if the statue of David's head were sold to England. His arm to the Vatican. And his torso to the Met.

"There are many pieces in nearly every country that this conversation should take place. The best place to start would be at the most obvious object. When polled the British people are overwhelmingly in favor of their return.

"The rest of the world follows suit. If you want to deal in facts. Those are the facts. But maybe it's just easier to compare me to Hitler."



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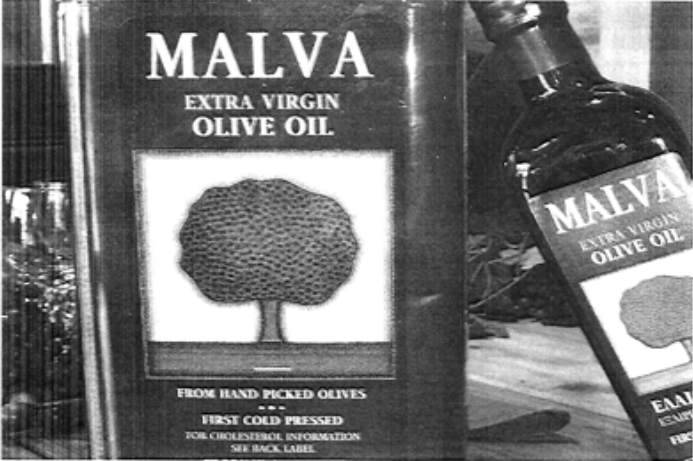
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# WHAT GREEK WISDOM CAN TEACH *the* REST of the WORLD ABOUT LIVING WELL

“I came to the Greeks early, and I found answers in them,” writer and classicist Edith Hamilton once said. The Greeks have one of the oldest cultures in the world (not to mention the first known democracy), and to this day, we turn to the wellspring of Greek wisdom for guidance on living well. With both an ancient tradition of introspection and ethical inquiry, and also to one of the most heart-healthy diets in the world, the Greeks know a thing or two about how to live a good life. But it’s not just ancient Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle who unlocked the secrets to a meaningful life. The health habits and leisure rituals of modern Greece also have a lot to teach the rest of the world about health and happiness. Here are 11 Greek secrets to living well.

## 1. They eat a healthy Mediterranean diet.

The Mediterranean diet is heavy on vegetables, olives, healthy fats and oils, fish, whole grains and red wine (in moderation), and is thought to have extensive



health benefits, contributing to lower rates of heart disease, obesity, cancer, and Alzheimer’s disease. Research analyzing **1.5 million healthy adults** found that those who followed the Mediterranean diet had a lower risk of dying from heart disease and cancer and a reduced risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease.

## 2. They take naps.

Greeks believe firmly in many things, and afternoon naps are one of them. In some of the smaller towns and villages, businesses commonly shut down in the mid-afternoon for the Greek *siesta* time and open again around 5 p.m.



“Napping is a response, an adaptation to the hot climate,” Dimitrios Trichopoulos, a Greek researcher at the Harvard School of Public Health, told NPR. “Siesta is a very pleasant habit. In a way, it doubles your day. Because you start all over again at 5 o’clock and you can go on until 11 or 12 o’clock which is not uncommon at all in our part of the world.”

## 3. They appreciate the value of a good walk.

During the warmer months, small villages and towns in Greece turn to the daily tradition of *volta* (translated as stroll or outing). When the sun goes down, Greek families will take leisurely walks up and down the main streets of small towns, and on the islands, they’ll enjoy a leisurely stroll along the shore.

## 4. They ask the big questions.

The Greek philosophical tradition is one of the oldest and arguably the richest in the world. Philosophical inquiry thrived in the culture of ancient Greek, and philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Epicurus and Epictetus asked the big questions: How do we live a good life? How should the city be governed? What is morality and how should we treat others? In many ways, we owe the tradition of living the “examined life” to the ancient Greeks. As Aristotle once wrote, “Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.”

## 5. They take hospitality and generosity very seriously.

Greek hospitality goes as far back as Odysseus, and it’s been embedded in Greek culture and families to this day. (Ever seen “My Big Fat Greek Wedding?”). This generosity and welcoming spirit derives from the word *filoxenia*, which translates to “love of foreigners.” Historically, it has referred to the hospitality of

villagers and residents of small towns who would take in travelers passing through, offering a meal and a bed, whereas now it generally refers to the hospitality offered to friends, family or acquaintances, according to Greek Care, a website that teaches Australians about traditional Greek culture.

## 6. They’ve unlocked the secrets to longevity.

The little Mediterranean island of Ikaria has one of the healthiest, longest-living populations in the world. Ikarian men are nearly four times as likely as American men to reach the age of 90, and often in better health, according to a 2012 New York Times article, “The Island Where People Forget To Die.” They also have lower rates of depression and dementia. Their secrets to long life? A fresh, healthy Mediterranean diet, lots of outdoor and leisure time, strong families and communities and plenty of sleep. “We wake up late and always take naps,” Dr. Ilias Leriadis, an Ikarian physician, told the New York Times. “I don’t even open my office until 11 a.m. because no one comes before then.”

## 7. They take time for leisure.

Another longevity secret of the Ikarians? They live by “island time.” “Have you noticed that no one wears a watch here? No clock is working correctly,” Leriadis said. “When you invite someone to lunch, they might come at 10 a.m. or 6 p.m. We simply don’t care about the clock here.”

But taking time to savor life’s little pleasure isn’t limited to Ikaria; Greeks are known for having a slower pace of life, which allows them to linger over and savor family activities, long meals and small pleasures. As a Manchester Evening News travel writer advises visitors to the Greek isles: Take a stroll along the waterfront where the fishermen are mending their nets and unloading their catches. Pause for a coffee. Buy fresh-from-the-oven bread. Enjoy breakfast. Then let the day unfold. Slow your pace of life to that of the locals, philosophise, read a good book, bathe, snooze.

## 8. They tell stories.

The rich tradition of Greek mythology is alive and strong in the culture today. Through these classic tales of gods and mortals, children learn classic wisdom and moral values. Traditionally, it is through stories — which our brains use to give our lives structure and meaning — that the Greeks have made sense of their world. As Arianna Huffington wrote in *The Gods of Greece*: “In our longing to understand ourselves and our world, the gods of the past, very much alive today, can show us our way into the future. Because they are so natural, so human in their divinity, they can help heal our culture’s split between the earthly and the sacred, the secular and the religious. In the Greek gods, the eternal and the divine are fully at home with the ephemeral and earthly. The natural is the divine, and therefore nothing is accidental or meaningless.”

## 9. They spend time outdoors.

With Greece’s temperate climate, warm sunshine, beautiful beaches and islands, why wouldn’t you soak up the health benefits of spending time outdoors?

## 10. They come together over good food.

Greeks love food, and they love gathering with family, friends and community members. So naturally, it’s a Greek tradition to bring people together for healthy meals. “[My mother] loved how food brought people



together,” *Unbinding the Heart* author Agapi Stassinopolous wrote on Oprah.com. “Eating dissolves the separation between strangers. That’s the Greek way, and that was our family way also — to feed people, to show love and attention through dishes like spanakopita. At the table, my mother mended old wounds and made new friends. She reminded us that excluding anyone is simply denying yourself an opportunity to grow — and live.”

## 11. They know where to find happiness.

Stoicism was one of the ancient Greek schools of philosophy founded in Athens that remains relevant to this day. The Stoics believed that stress and unhappiness are not the result of external events, but rather the product of our own internal judgments, and therefore that happiness, too, can only be found within. The Stoic philosopher Epictetus said that the one way to happiness was to look within; to “cease worrying about things which are beyond the power or our will. “ “Stoicism took off because it offered security and peace in a time of warfare and crisis,” HuffPost Managing Editor Jimmy Soni wrote in his book *Rome’s Last Citizen*, a biography of noted Stoic, Cato the Younger. “The Stoic creed didn’t promise material security or a peace in the afterlife; but it did promise an unshakable happiness in this life.”