



Arcadia Center for Hellenic, Mediterranean and Balkan Studies

Arcadia University

GREC ANMO 360/SOMO 360 Contemporary Greek Society

Credits: 4

Course description

As an “honorary” anthropologist and ethnographer, in this class you will investigate different aspects of contemporary Greek society/ies. We will take a critical look at the unwritten rules - the “common sense” - that makes contemporary Greek society/ies work. It is particularly useful to students who wish to rigorously engage with the culture they have chosen to immerse themselves in this semester.

To develop a sense for some of the unwritten rules of contemporary Greek society/ies, we will read the work of anthropologists who have researched in Greece over the past 50 years. We will view and discuss films. And, you will carry out six participant-observation/fieldwork exercises in and around Athens that I have designed for you - and one that you design for yourself.

Our foray into the everyday life of contemporary Greece treats notions about and practices re: Greek coffee and sociability, body language, kinship, inter/national symbols of Greece as well as aspects of the Greek political history and culture. In exploring these topics, we will gain insight into broader issues of gender and class relations, sexual division of labor and sexuality, perceptions of time and “proper” behavior / manners, European-Greek relations and Balkan identities. Throughout, we will remain attentive to the coexistence of modern and traditional aspects of culture in Greece today. Over the course of the semester, we consider a wide variety of cultural forms, such as films and documentaries, museums and architectural heritage.

Rationale and Impact of Course

This anthropology-based course provides you the opportunity to rigorously engage with the culture you have chosen to immerse yourself in this semester.

Course Objectives

- To support the understanding of the social and cultural background of Contemporary Greece.
- To create the context in which the students will meet and interact with locals.
- To help the students realize the complex character of culture and to promote the cultural relativism.
- To assist the learners in understanding their own culture through the lens of another one.

Learning Outcomes and Expected Student Competences

Requirements	Learning outcomes
Course readings	The classical and contemporary anthropological studies provide insights into aspects of the day to day lives of persons living in Greece, and how they make sense of them – including into the intermingling of traditional and modern aspects of Greek culture.
Fieldwork exercises	The six fieldwork exercises I have designed for you, and the one you will design yourself, help you “get out there” and engage in an in-depth - guided – immersion into contemporary Greek culture.
Reflection papers / final research paper	The six small (3-paged) fieldwork reflection papers, and the larger (ten-page) final research paper, foster your analytical and writing skills – including your ability to integrate theoretical and empirical information.
Qualitative research methods	Your use of participant observation and semi-structured interviews qualitative methodologies will enhance your research skills.
Seminar style classes	You will become more adept at presenting your understandings and analyses of readings, and your testing of the claims made in them via your fieldwork.
Class presentations	You will hone your presentation skills, while learning from other students’ presentations about additional aspects of Greek culture not covered in the course readings/your research.

Course requirements

Participation

Fifty percent (50%) of your grade will be based on your participation in class and fieldwork exercises.

- The class is run seminar style. You will be expected to have read the readings, and come ready to discuss them. You will be asked to lead the class discussion twice — each time for one of the assigned readings.
- Fieldwork assignments are participant-observation and semi-structured interview exercises – two of the primary methodologies used by anthropologists. These entail getting out there and engaging with Greek society – taking part in activities, while observing and learning from them. Your contributions to class discussions need to demonstrate that you have partaken in, and reflected on, these exercises.

Written work

Fifty percent (50%) of your grade will be based on your written work. It will consist of:

- Six short reflection papers (four double-spaced pages each):

Each of these will be about one of the six shorter fieldwork exercises and related readings. With the exception of reflection paper 1, short/reflection papers must include a minimum of 3 references to the

related readings, and to three persons interviewed/observed. These will account for 60% of your written grade.

- Final paper (ten double-spaced pages):

This paper will be based on the independent research project you design and carry out. It must include minimum 10 citations from at least three academic articles on your topic, and ten references to persons interviewed/observed. This accounts for 40% of your written work grade.

No interviewing of Arcadia staff is allowed. You are expected to draw your evidence from persons you take the initiative to meet/observe outside the Arcadia setting.

All papers must be typed, spell- and grammar-checked. Papers must be turned in during class on their due dates. No late papers will be accepted unless there is a serious (medical) reason for it. All papers and oral and written assignments are to be the work of the student presenting the material.

Any use of wording, ideas, or findings of other persons, writers, or researchers requires explicit citation of the source; use of exact wording requires a 'quotation' format.

Grading scale:

A	90 - 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79

Other policies:

- Participation is not just about talking, giving opinions or exercising critical capacities. It should also involve giving evidence of reading either the material assigned or other sources relevant to the subject matter.
- One unexcused absence is permitted. After that, 2.5 grade points will be deducted for every unexcused absence. If you are ill, you must inform Jan or Joanna before class meeting time for your absence to count as excused.
- Each student is responsible for performing academic tasks in such a way that honesty is not in question. All tests, term papers, oral and written assignments, and other academic efforts are to be the work of the student presenting the material.

Please feel free to come and talk to me at the end of class about any questions / concerns you may have.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	Related activity	Date
Introduction: Anthropology / Ethnography of Modern Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Syllabus • Doing anthropology <u>Fieldwork Assignment 1:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subway ride 	Tu 29 Jan
Body language	<u>Anthropological Methodologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaplonski, Christopher, "Fieldwork," Cambridge anthro • "Anthropology Methods", from Minnesota State University Mankato site • Family Health International, Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collectors' Field Guide, Module 2: <i>Participant Observation</i> • Family Health International, Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collectors' Field Guide, Module 3: <i>In-depth interviews</i> • Reflection paper 1 due- Discussion of subway ride 	Th 31 Jan
Food and sociability: Coffee Kerasma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowan, Jane "Ch. 3: Everyday Sociability as Gendered Space", in <i>Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece</i> • Papataxiarchis, E. (1991) "Chapter 7 - Friends of the Heart: Male Commensal Solidarity, Gender, and Kinship in Aegean Greece". In: P. Loizos & E. Papataxiarchis (eds), <i>Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 	Tu 5 Feb
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just, Roger "Chapter 6 - The back to back community", A Greek Island Cosmos: Kinship and Community on Meganisi, London: James Currey. • Ethnographic Film: Parvas • Fieldwork assignment 2: kafeneio and café 	Th 7 Feb
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection paper 2 due • Discussion of visits to <i>kafeneio</i> and café 	Tu 12 Feb
Gender, Power, Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowan, Jane "Chapter 6 – Male Prestige and the Eruption of Conflict", in <i>Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece</i>, pp. 171-87, & "Chapter 7 – Ambivalent Pleasures: Dance as a Problem for Women", pp. 188-202. 	Th 14 Feb
Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rozakou, Katerina "The biopolitics of hospitality in Greece: Humanitarianism and the management of refugees" <i>AMERICAN ETHNOLOGIST</i>, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 563–578 	Th 21 Feb
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iosifidis, T. and R. King, "Socio-Spatial Dynamics and Exclusion of Three Immigrant Groups in Athens Conurbation", <i>South European Society and Politics</i> • Reading: Lazaridis, G. (2000) "Filipino Women Migrant 	

	Workers in Greece: Multiple Layers of Oppression, F. Anthias and G. Lazaridis (eds) <i>Gender and Migration in Southern Europe: Women on the Move</i> , New York: Berg, 49-79.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fieldwork assignment 3: dance 	F 22 Feb
Inter/national symbol Crossroads west/east Antiquity/today	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Yalouri, Eleana (2001) "Chapters 1 & 2 – Introduction, & <i>The Acropolis Past and Present, The Acropolis: Global Fame, Local Claim</i>, London: Berg, 1-48 Reading: Caftanzoglou, Roxane (2000) "The Sacred Rock and the Profane Settlement: Place, Memory and Identity under the Acropolis", <i>Oral History</i>, 28(1-2). Fieldwork assignment 4: Acropolis visit 	Tu 26 Feb
The Acropolis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fieldwork assignment 4: Acropolis visit 	
Memories of Cohabitation: The Greek-Turkish lived past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film: A touch of spicy Leyla Neyzi, "Remembering Smyrna/ Izmir: Shared History, Shared Trauma" in <i>History and Memory</i>, Vol. 20, No. 2, Special Issue: Remembering and Forgetting on Europe's Southern Periphery (Fall/Winter 2008), pp. 106-127, Indiana University Press 	Th 28 Feb
Cyprus- Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter Loizos, "The Heart Grown Bitter: A Chronicle of Cypriot War Refugees" Yael Navaro- Yashin, "Affective spaces, melancholic objects: ruination and the production of anthropological knowledge" <i>JRAI</i>, vol. 15, pp. 1-18, 2009 	Tu 5 Mar
Research Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual consultations re: final papers 	Th 28 Mar
Balkan Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Politiki Cusina Rebetiko Loring Danforth, <i>The Macedonian Conflict: Ethnic Nationalism in a transnational world</i> 	Tu 2 Apr
Crisis: Economic Political Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot Spots: Beyond the Crisis: http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/432 Lampousaki, Sophia (2008) <i>Employment Trends in Greece</i>, Labour Institute of Greek General Confederation of Labour/ Confederation of Public Servants. Woestman, Lois "The Economic Crisis and Gender in Greece". Fieldwork assignment 5: Work / economy fieldwork due /discussion 	Th 11 Apr
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zinovieff, Sofka (1991) <i>Hunters and Hunted: Kamaki and the Ambiguities of Sexual Predation in a Greek Town</i>, in P. Loizos and E. Papataxiarchis (eds) <i>Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece</i>, 203-220. 	Tu 29 Mar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual consultations re: final papers 	Tu 16 Apr
Exile- Civil War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voglis P. (2002), 'Political Prisoners in the Greek Civil War, 1945-50: Greece in Comparative Perspective', 	Th 18 Apr

	<p><i>Journal of Contemporary History</i>, Vol. 37, No. 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilakis Y., (2002), The Other "Parthenon": Antiquity and National Memory at Makronisos, <i>Journal of Modern Greek Studies</i>, Vol. 20, N. 2. • Documentary: Makronissos 	
European Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yiakoumaki, Vassiliki (2006) "Local," "Ethnic," and "Rural" Food: On the Emergence of "Cultural Diversity" in Greece since its Integration in the European Union <i>Journal of Modern Greek Studies</i>, 24(2)pp. 415-445. • Michael Herzfeld, A Place in History: Social and Monumental Time in a Cretan Town: " Ch 1 "The Town of the Tale" 	F 19 Apr
Field-trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lavrio 	Sa 20 Apr
Field-trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makronissos- Sounio 	Su 21 Apr
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fieldwork Assignment due 6: On the field-trip 	Tu 7 May
Research papers Course Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations: Final research projects 	Tu 7 May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations: Final research projects 	Th 9 May
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final research papers due 	Th 16
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course evaluations 	May

Prerequisites: None.

Cost to Student: None.

Select Bibliography – all course materials are available for download from the course webpage

Assignments

Fieldwork assignment 1: Body language 1 - Subway Rides

Take your notebook/journal and pen with you. Go to a subway station, buy a ticket and enter the subway system. Spend two hours riding the various subway lines. If you can manage, transfer lines at least four times. That is, get out of the train you are on, and shift over to another one, at least four times. (The subway runs until midnight during the week, until 2:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights.)

Based on your experiences, write a four-page (double-spaced, spell and grammar checked) paper addressing the following questions. Bring it to class on Thursday, and come to class prepared to talk about your experiences/reflections on them:

- What time of day did you ride the trains? Which day? Which train lines did you take?
- What kind of people were riding along with you: age, gender? Did one group predominate? In a particular train line / time period?
- Were people traveling alone, in groups?
- What were the people doing as they waited for their stop?
- What kind of eye contact did they make – with each other, with you - if any?
- What kind of personal distance did people keep from each other – from you?
- What kind of behavior did they display upon entering and exiting the train?
- What was the noise volume like?
- Did anyone eat, drink or smoke in the subway?
- Did you speak to anyone, and/or they to you? What did you/they say? How did the exchange make you feel?
- Did your experiences differ from your previous subway experiences you have had in other country settings – if you have them?
- What else struck you as typical / unusual about the ways in which Athenians got about on the subway?

Fieldwork assignment 2: Café- Kafeneio

Outing 1: Go to a Kafeneio in Pagrati either in the morning between around 10:00 and 12:00, or in the afternoon between around 18:00 and 22:00. Ask people in the office to suggest one.

Order a double Greek coffee (Ena diplo elliniko) – a “double Greek [coffee]” – me oligi if you want a bit of sugar in it.

Outing 2: Choose a café on Kolonaki square. Go during business hours, i.e. between around 10:00 to 17:00. Order a frappe (or two).

In both cases, take a notebook and pen with you, stay for at least two hours, and write what you observe about the following questions.

- Who is in the kafeneio / café: what sex, what age? (as customers, as workers)
- Are they sitting alone or with company?
- What are they drinking / eating?
- What are they wearing?
- How long do they stay?
- Can you observe “kerasma” – people treating each other to the coffee?
- What appears to be the main purpose of their “visit”?
- What else strikes you about the situation – e.g. similarities / differences with U.S. experiences?

Reflection report

Write – type up – a three-page, double-spaced, report on what you observed. Compare and contrast the kafeneio and café experiences according to the questions I asked you to take notes on. Relate your observations to those made by Cowan and Papataxiarxis in their chapters – are your impressions about kafeneio and café life similar or different from theirs? Why? Come to class ready to discuss your experiences / answers.

Fieldwork Assignment 3: Cemetery visit

Go to the cemetery – the proto nekrotafeio is close to Arcadia – if possible, on either a Saturday or a Sunday morning, from around 10:00 to 12:00. Wear conservative clothing, i.e. no short/short skirts, no open tops.

Bring your notebook and pen with you. Observe quietly during the first 1.5 hours, then go somewhere nearby and sit and write your observations for the last half hour.

- What day/time did you go to the cemetery?
- What was the overall physical layout of the cemetery like: what was located where?
- What were individual graves like? What constituted differences between them?
- How/did your observations relate to Loring Danforth’s description of a village cemetery?

- What (other) things struck you about the cemetery as physical space/place?
- Were there others in the cemetery?
- If so, what were they doing?
- Did you observe a cleaning of a grave, a funeral, other activities?
- How/did these actions relate to Loring Danforth's article on rural death rituals?
- How did these experiences of the cemetery compare and contrast with your previous ones in the United States (and/or elsewhere)?

Write a four-paged (double-spaced, spell and grammar checked) paper answering these questions – and, if you like, addressing other issues that arose for you as well.

Fieldwork assignment 4: Body language 2 – Dance night out

Select one of the dance locales preparing to go to one of them on Friday or Saturday night. Dress in what you would consider to be elegant casual – we can talk more about this. Prepare for a late night; dance spots usually open around 11:00 pm, and not much starts happening before midnight. And they usually start to wrap up around 4:00 a.m. It is good to go in a small group of up to four persons, but no more – especially if they are all foreigners.

Write a three-page reflection paper on your dance experience, keeping in mind and referring to the readings on kamaki and dance.

- Was there anything else that seemed new/odd/curious to you that you observed? What club did you go to? What time did you arrive, and leave?
- What kind – “class” – of people appeared to attend?
- What did they do? What did you do?
- Did you see any examples of krasma?
- Did you see what you would consider “kamaki” happening – to others, to you?
- Did you see any gender distinctions in dance styles? That is: Were there dances that only women or only men danced? Did you get the impression, as the readings suggest, that women might have to be more circumspect in showing their sensuality/sexuality while dancing than men?
- What struck you as similar to times you have gone out dancing in the United States, what different?

Fieldwork assignment 5: Acropolis

Conduct your own investigation into the various meanings the Acropolis holds for those who behold it. Take a walk around and through the acropolis. As you go, interview at least three persons about the meaning the acropolis has for them (preferably of different ages, occupations, types of relations to the acropolis). Note down also your own impressions/feelings/meanings. Write up your work in a three-page double-spaced (grammar and spell-checked) paper in the following format:

- Introduction: Set out what you think is a major issue at stake re: the Acropolis, and your thesis about it.
- Literature review: summarize Yalouri and Caftanzoglou arguments that are relevant to your thesis, mentioning if/how you dis/agree with them
- Methodology: describe the route you took around/through the acropolis, and which three persons you interviewed and why
- Your arguments: set out what you learned in reference to your main thesis, supporting with evidence from your interviews – and your own views on the Acropolis – weaving in discussion of how these relate to Yalouri/Caftanzoglou pieces
- Conclude: by repeating your thesis, then mentioning again broader issues it touches upon
- Reference page: cite any/all references you used

ECONOMIC CRISIS- ASSIGNMENT 6

Interview at least three Athens residents - please at least two Greek nationals, another could be a foreigner. Among others, make sure you ask them the following questions. Relate their answers to the insights you have gleaned from the readings and the movie.

Include at least two quotes from each person you interview in your paper.

Causes / blame

What caused the Greek economic and fiscal (government budget) crises? Who is to blame? (Did all Greeks "eat it together"?)

Effects

What are the effects of the structural adjustment programs on women and men, older and younger people, immigrants and Greeks, better and less-well off residents, politicians and non?

Options

Are the rescue packages working? If not, what should Greece be doing instead?