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Cherish the Past, Embrace the Future

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Prime Minister's Kyriakos Mitsotakis official visit to the UK

Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos



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Agenda

Boris Johnson: It's great to welcome my friend Kyriakos Mitsotakis to London. We have been working on this for a long time; and the relationship between Greece and the UK is of the utmost importance to me, to us. This is of course the bicentenary of our support for Greek independence, for Greece's historic movement towards independence, in 1821

Kyriakos Mitsotakis: 1821, it all started, against the odds.

Boris Johnson: Against the odds, with the support of Lord Byron and others. Fantastic to see you.

Kyriakos Mitsotakis: It's great to be here. There's a lot to talk about, our very strong bilateral relationship. I recognize in you a true philhellene.

Boris Johnson: A true philhellene. But also I want to say a big thank you to Kyriakos for your leadership during COP26 in Glasgow.

Kyriakos Mitsotakis: Congratulations to you Boris. It was a very complicated project but I think that we are, overall, happy with...

Boris Johnson: We made a lot of progress. Thank you

Prime Minister's Kyriakos Mitsotakis official visit to London



Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis met on 16 November 2021 with his British counterpart Boris Johnson. The two leaders went over the bilateral relationship and discussed the prospect of further deepening cooperation between the two countries. Kyriakos Mitsotakis congratulated Mr Johnson on the COP26 Summit on climate change and his efforts to reach an outcome on this crucial and exceptionally complicated issue. Mr Mitsotakis reiterated to Mr Johnson Greece's long-standing demand for the return of the Parthenon Sculptures, stressing that the time has come to satisfy the fair Greek request and restore the monument in its fullness in the Acropolis Museum.

On EU – UK relations, the Prime Minister expressed his satisfaction for the continuation of the dialogue between the two sides on the Northern Ireland Protocol. He underscored that the implementation of the Protocol is necessary in the context of the UK commitments stemming from the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Prime Minister underlined Turkey's destabilizing role in the Eastern Mediterranean, which leaves no room for optimism regarding the prospects of engaging in dialogue, for which Greece always stands ready as long as international law -including the Law of the Sea- respect for sovereignty and sovereign rights are observed.

On Cyprus, the Prime Minister pointed out the intractability and aggressiveness still demonstrated by Ankara, with new illegal, provocative actions and threats, in Varosha and the maritime zones of the Republic of Cyprus. He stressed that the rescission of the illegal Turkish schemes in Varosha is an essential precondition for the efforts to resume negotiations, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary General, to come to fruition.

PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis inaugurates Greek exhibition at the Science Museum



Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis attended the inauguration of the "Ancient Greeks: Science and Wisdom" exhibition, at the Science Museum in London, on Tuesday 16 November. During his speech, Kyriakos Mitsotakis talked about the museum and its wonderful collection which provides us with an enduring and unparalleled record of scientific, technological, and medical achievement – a record that not only spans millennia but touches every corner of our fragile and ever evolving world. He also urged the audience to see the exhibition 'Ancient Greeks: Science and Wisdom', quoting Aristotle phrasing «Αρχή της σοφίας είναι η αμφιβολία...», which means simply "Wisdom begins with doubt".

«In the months ahead I hope and trust that visitors to this remarkable exhibition will gain a new appreciation for the science and innovation of our past and learn how wisdom – through doubt and indeed through curiosity and investigation – continues to shape the science and innovation of today» the Greek PM underlined and added «Ancient Greeks: Science and Wisdom highlights how modern scientific innovation is helping to reveal more about ancient Greece, more than we even knew before – allowing us in the process to travel back through time to an ancient civilisation where some of the technologies developed in Classical Greece appear much more advanced than we ever previously thought».

Moreover, Kyriakos Mitsotakis pointed out «the remarkable and truly international collaboration that made this exhibition possible», which «not only does it form part of the UK-Greece cultural programme marking this, the bicentenary year of the beginning of Greece's War of Independence – but it also features the loan of numerous exhibits from

across Europe». Greek PM also said that «it is with that shared history, and that spirit of co-operation and collaboration in mind, that I have approached discussions this week on the future of what you, in the UK, know as the Elgin Marbles, and what we, in Greece, know as the Parthenon Sculptures.

I believe it is time we took a bold step towards and opened a new dialogue between Athens and London on this topic. After all, the sculptures represent a hugely significant piece of the world's cultural heritage and are an important symbolic link between modern Greeks and their ancestors. Most of the Parthenon Sculptures are housed in the modern Acropolis museum in Athens. And as I am sure you are aware, the so-called Elgin part of the collection currently resides in another of your great cultural institutions, the British museum. Undoubtedly, they are best viewed in situ, and in context. That they are connected visually to the very monument which lends the sculptures their global significance, really matters».

Afterwards, Greek PM stressed out that «in the case of this exhibition, rare and remarkable objects have been brought together for the first time to highlight five areas of ancient Greek science: the cosmos, animal worlds, music and mathematics, the human body, and boundless seas. If an exhibition like this proves anything, it is this: that cooperation and collaboration can bring incredible collections together.

My hope is that by pooling and sharing those collections, and by utilising new technology – as you have admirably done – we can begin to widen public access and understanding of the scientific, historical, and cultural treasures we hold so dear. Only last week, in ancient Olympia, I saw how another unique collaboration, this time between the Greek Ministry of Culture and Microsoft, is harnessing the power of AI and augmented reality technologies. Ancient Olympia: Common Grounds is utilising cutting-edge technology to open up a completely new way of experiencing what our cultural heritage is all about. This exhibition is doing exactly the same – highlighting innovation in order to deliver a new frontier in the preservation of our ancient heritage».

At the conclusion of his speech, Kyriakos Mitsotakis said: «We touched on the importance of the Parthenon Sculptures to the Greek people. But what of the building itself? Would the Athenians of the 5th century BC have been able to stare in awe at the sculptures without the deep scientific

knowledge that made the architectural perfection of the Parthenon itself possible? I think not. Science and Wisdom matter. And everything that we admire in this exhibition confirms what Einstein meant when he said: "In our days, old machines are being reinvented, and ancient experiments are conducted once again." Then, Greek PM after thanking all for listening, officially declared «Ancient Greeks: Science and Wisdom», open for the public.



Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos

"The sculptures represent a hugely significant piece of the world's cultural heritage and are an important symbolic link between modern Greeks and their ancestors. Undoubtedly, they are best viewed in situ, and in context. That they are connected visually to the very monument which lends the sculptures their global significance, really matters».

Kyriakos Mitsotakis



Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos

“Seeing the marbles in situ is integral to understanding the artworks in the context of the Acropolis”

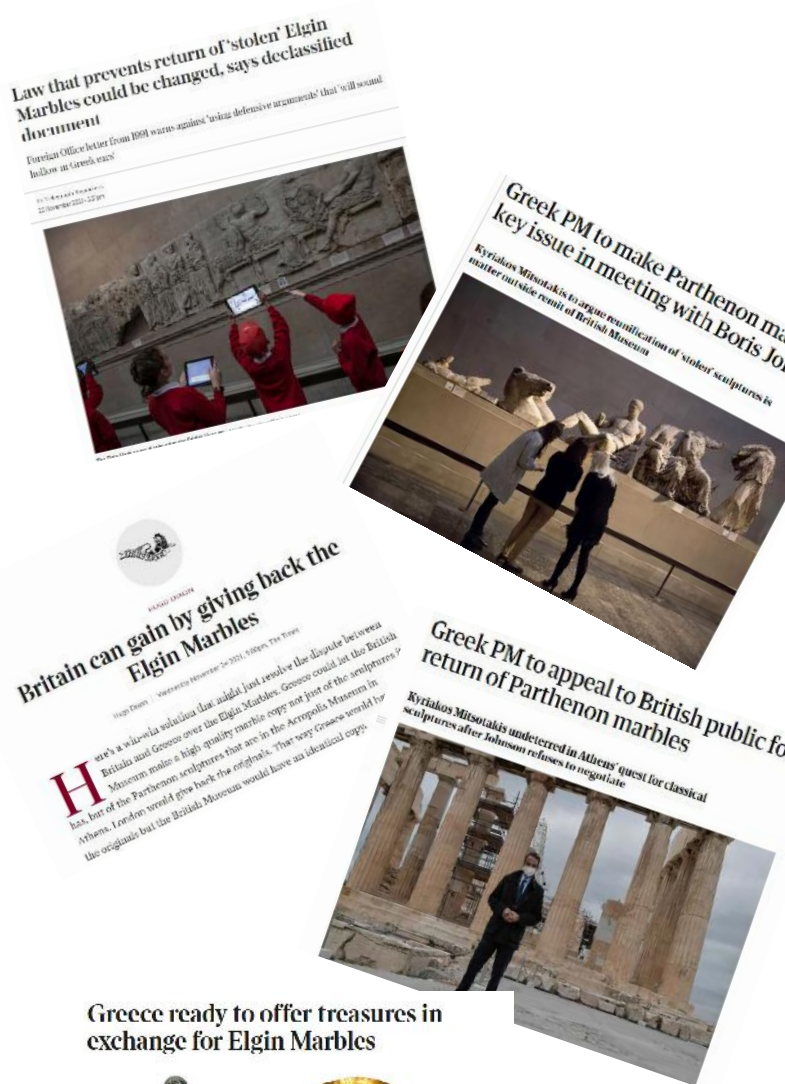
In an interview ahead of meeting with Boris Johnson in [Telegraph](#), Greek prime minister proposed a deal to solve the age-old deadlock. “Our position is very clear,” he said. “The marbles were stolen in the 19th century, they belong in the Acropolis Museum and we need to discuss this issue in earnest.” “I am sure that if there was a willingness on the part of the Government to move, we could find an arrangement with the British Museum in terms of us sending abroad cultural treasures on loan which have never left the country,” he added.

Writing an article for the [Daily Mail](#) he stressed: “Boris Johnson knows he has a unique opportunity to end an injustice that weighs on all Greek hearts and finally return the Parthenon Sculptures”. “It [The Acropolis Museum] is the right place, the best place, and the only place in which it is possible to appreciate the cultural and historical importance of these sculptures in situ. And it is the beauty of precisely this alignment that makes the physical separation between the sculptures in London and the main collection in Athens such a gaping void. A void that is impossible to ignore” wrote the Greek PM.

British Press on Mr. Mitsotakis visit

The visit of the Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and his interventions on the future of the Parthenon Sculptures led to many newspaper articles. They express opinions generally in favour of finding a fair solution, which could involve the making of copies to be exhibited in the British Museum. Some articles refer to “a win-win situation” and supporters of the Greek arguments, such as Paul Cartledge, the vice-chair of the British Committee for the Return of the Parthenon Marbles, were hosted in prominent British media.

Moreover, UNESCO’s recent decision that the Greek demand for the marbles’ return was an “intergovernmental matter” and not, as successive British governments have claimed, a matter for the British Museum to decide, evoked campaigners’ complains that London was hiding behind the museum trustees. Many articles mentioned the PM’s offer to lend to Britain other invaluable art objects that have never left Greece, in return of the Parthenon Sculptures.



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis received praise from British TV presenters after he appeared on the popular TV show Good Morning Britain on Tuesday 16 November.



Photo Credit: PM Office Dimitris Papamitsos

Event at the Greek residence: Ken Loach, acclaimed film maker, has been conferred the title of Doctor honoris causa of the University of West Attica

On Friday 26 November, Ken Loach, acclaimed film maker, twice winner of the Palm D'Or at the Cannes film festival, has been conferred the title of Doctor honoris causa of the University of West Attica for his work known to raise awareness on social issues.

The Ambassador of Greece Ioannis Raptakis welcomed everyone at the Greek residence stressing that it is the most appropriate venue for events which promote relations between Greece and the United Kingdom and advance art, culture and academia, since it is the house where the celebrated Greek poet and Nobel laureate George Seferis lived, during his appointment as Ambassador to the UK from 1957 to 1962.

Ambassador Raptakis congratulated Ken Loach for his works and the many awards he has received, including the Palme D'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and the European Film Award twice. He also emphasized the social impact of Ken Loach's work, as his films promote the concepts of empowerment, advocacy, social equality and social change.

Lastly, the Greek Ambassador mentioned Ken Loach's advocacy in favor of the reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures. Ken Loach in his short speech after receiving the title said: "I feel overwhelmed, people are extremely generous". Regarding the Parthenon Sculptures he said: "The Marbles from the Parthenon were stolen by the British; the arrogance of not thinking of the crime they were committing is outrageous... Of course the Marbles should go back to Athens and to the Greek people; they have no right to be here".

The University of West Attica also handed an honour plaque to the Greek Ambassador Ioannis Raptakis in recognition for "everything he has done -and is still doing- for the University and for the Greek Diaspora in the UK".

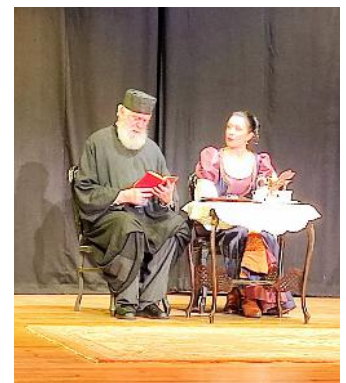


Athanates (the Immortals) performed for the first time in Britain for the 200 years celebration

The theatrical play Immortals (Οι Αθάνατες) was performed in London in order to celebrate the 200 years from the Greek Revolution. Both shows were full house on Friday 12 November at the Rudolf Steiner Theatre and Monday 15 November at Millfield Theatre in Enfield. The play, which is about the Greek revolution of 1821, focuses on the life and struggle of Laskarina Bouboulina and Manto Mavrogenous. The initiative was under the auspices of the Greek Embassy in London, the Cyprus High Commission, the Holy Archdiocese of Thyateira and the National Cypriot Federation.

Actress Mary Vidali played the role of Bouboulina, and Chrysanthi Georgantidou starred as Manto Mavrogenous. Other actors were Konstantinos Zamparas and Vassilis Batsakoutsas. The play won the first prize in the artistic competition of the Attica Region on the theme of the 200 years of the Greek Revolution. It forms part of the proposed actions of the Committee "Greece 2021" and is under the auspices of EOT, General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Attica Region. It has been presented throughout Greece before coming, in collaboration with the Greek Diaspora, abroad starting with Britain.

The Greek Consul Mr. Christos Goulas was present at Rudolf Steiner Theatre for the first performance of the play in the UK where he stated: "Today's play gives us the opportunity to travel back in place and time to the beginning of the Greek Revolution, which led to the birth of the Modern Greek state, 200 years ago. This year, 200 years after the Greek Revolution, we honour the heroes of 1821, but also the timeless values represented by their struggle; the struggle for freedom, equality and democracy". "The dynamic presence of Hellenism in the United Kingdom and the valuable contribution of the Philhellenes in spreading the Greek spirit, then and now, is the best proof of the broad prospects and possibilities", he added. "Laskarina Bouboulina and Manto Mavrogenous are two immortal personalities in the collective and individual memory. We are grateful to them, but also to all heroes, prominent or invisible, who led us to where we are today", he concluded.



The Sts Panteleimon & Parasceve Community celebrates the 200 years anniversary from the Greek Revolution

The Sts Panteleimon & Parasceve Community celebrated the 200 years anniversary from the Greek Revolution, on Sunday 14th of November 2021. Roderic Beaton, Professor of the Greek History in the King's College University, presented the Lecture "Lord Byron and his participation in the Greek Revolution". The programme for the celebrations also included Memorial Service for the Victims of the Greek Revolution, Hymns and traditional songs by the School of Byzantine Music of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and G.B guided by rev. Protopresbyter Joseph Paliouras, Poems by the students of the Greek Schools and Traditional dancing from the Lykeion Hellinidon in London. After the memorial service there was the opening of an exhibition of pictures of the Heroes of the Greek Revolution.

The Greek Consul Mr Christos Goulas attended the event and stated: "The Greek Revolution continues to be a source of inspiration and pride for Hellenism everywhere. The sacrifices and offerings of our ancestors in the struggle for freedom remind us of our duty to work together to build a future of prosperity and cooperation between peoples and states. In the end, it is the people who reflect our values and ideals and who are worth remembering and supporting.

We all had the opportunity to listen and being moved by the poems of the students and the speech of Professor Beaton about the valuable contribution of Lord Byron to the Greek Revolution. There are innumerable Greeks and Philhellenes, the prominent and invisible heroes, who led us here where we are today: free. To all of them, we are eternally grateful".



News in a flash!

- The Greek Basketball team played against the UK on 25 November for the Men's World Cup 2023 qualifier. Greek Ambassador Mr. Ioannis Raptakis travelled to Newcastle to support them and the members of the team gave him a Greek team T-shirt! For the history of the game GB beat Greece 78-69.
- A new song by Evanthia Reboutsika & Lina Nikolakopoulou, with the support of the General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy, is dedicated to all Greeks Abroad. This song was presented on Monday 15 November at the end of a Scientific Conference dedicated to the Greek Diaspora, co-organized by the Academy of Athens and the General Secretariat of Greeks Abroad, entitled "Greeks Abroad –History, Works and Offering to Greece" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51ZKWB-peFo>
- Ancient Olympia: Common Grounds, a new collaboration between the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports and Microsoft, is harnessing AI to digitally preserve and restore this rich site for future generations by bringing its structures and cultural impact to life like never before. Watch more: <https://youtu.be/xWdl4rKi4zk>

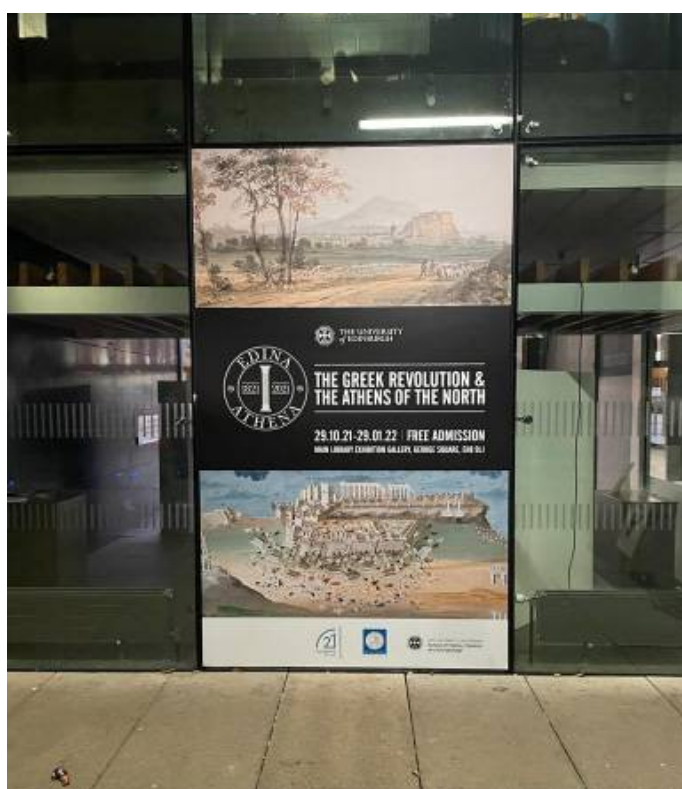
The 12th A. G. Leventis Conference at the University of Edinburgh

The 12th A. G. Leventis Conference took place in the Playfair Library at the University of Edinburgh entitled "The Greek Revolution of 1821, Contexts, Scottish Connections, the Classical Tradition" in connection with the exhibition "The Greek Revolution & the Athens of the North (29.10.2021 – 29.01.2022).

The Greek Consul Mr. Christos Goulas praised the exhibition by saying that it is "a unique exhibition, shedding light from a different scope into our history and cities". Mr. Goulas also said that "today's conference proves that Philhellenism is still here and that the ideals of the Revolution and the Classical Spirit are still alive".

"There are so many in common between UK, Scotland and Greece, between Athina and Edina, the Athens of the North. The culture, the people and the connections between them", he added.

"So many were the Scottish Philhellenes! It is delightful that in the conference are included lectures on many subjects related to the Greek Revolution of 1821, its influence and the valuable contributions of the Philhellenes, like Lord Byron, George Finlay, and Thomas Gordon. All of them will be well remembered in history and our thoughts", the Consul concluded.



British and other Philhellenes in the Greek Revolution during the 1820s» at Cambridge University

On Tuesday, November 30, Professor Roderick Beaton FBA, FKC, Commander of the Order of Honour of the Hellenic Republic, in partnership with the Fitzwilliam Museum, presented, in a lecture titled «British and other Philhellenes in the Greek Revolution during the 1820s» at Cambridge University, the role of Philhellenes during the struggle for Greek independence in 1821. In his talk, Professor Beaton argues that the Philhellenes were prepared to risk their lives during the Greek War for Independence because they believed that they, too, had a stake in the conflict. The Ottomans stood in the way of an emerging new Europe that the philhellenes saw as their own and that was the goal to which the volunteers were responding.

What really motivated the volunteers to risk their lives, and supporters of the cause to mobilise in so many different countries, is a big question: Some have suggested that the philhellenic movement in the 1820s marked the beginning of what we now call 'humanitarian intervention'. Others have seen the volunteers as deluded idealists, (many of them were also supporters of the French revolution), adventurers, or even spies. Beyond and above all, most of the Philhellenes felt they owed this Battle to the origin of their civilization, which was the Hellenic civilization.

Further to that, Professor Beaton stressed out the significant role of the Art in the internalisation of the Battle: Many European poets where strong Philhellenes, like the British Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, the French Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas, several musical events took place in support of Greek revolution, while the visual arts also played a philhellenic role as well, the all famous painting of Eugène Delacroix, «Scenes of massacre at Chios».

Last but not least, Roderick Beaton underlined the role of the economical support of the battle which came from all over Europe and America. To conclude, Professor Beaton emphasized on the wider movement of philhellenism all around Europe, in which also UK played a leading and distinguished role. The Philhellenes, whether they set out to recreate the Athens of Pericles, start a new crusade, or make money out of a war, all felt that Greece, Hellas, had unique claim on the sympathy of the world. As Lord Byron wrote, "I dreamed that Greece might still be Free"; and he died at Messologhi trying to translate that dream into reality.

From a Pre-Modern Society to the Modern Greek Nation- State, organised by The Greek Archaeological Committee (UK)

When: 03-12-2021, 6pm
Where: Online

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZmtUEDzmTJanP8HXoSiTBA

Christmas with Asterakia

When: 05-12-2021, 12pm-2pm
Where: The Hellenic Centre

<https://helleniccentre.org/event/christmas-with-asterakia/>

Historic Walking Tour of Cavafy's London

When: 06-12-2021
Where: Queensborough Terrace, Bayswater

<https://2in21couk.files.wordpress.com/2021/10/cavafy-walking-tour.pdf>

Minimum Wages: Lessons from international experiences

When: 07-12-2021, 4.00pm to 5.30pm
Where: Online

https://lse.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5YcUkN1DQXeIXy1QFwXI-w

In the Footsteps of Lord Byron: John Frederick Lewis in Greece and Albania

When: 08-12-2021, 7pm
Where: The Hellenic Centre

<https://helleniccentre.org/event/on-the-footsteps-of-lord-byron-john-frederick-lewis-in-greece-and-albania/>

Conference: Byron, Philhellenism in Literature, the Arts, and Scholarship

When: 10-12-2021 to 11-12-2021, 3.00pm until 4.00pm
Where: River Room (Friday) and Council Room (Saturday), Strand Campus, KCL

<https://2in21.co.uk/events/byron-conference/>

A Christmas Wonderland Enlightened Evenings by Greek Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of GB

When: 12-12-2021, 4.30pm – 8.30pm
Where: The Hellenic Centre

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-christmas-wonderland-enlightened-evenings-tickets-204969458167>

Greek Dialogues Online - "We are all Greeks": Philhellenism, Shelley's Hellas and the Faces of Modern Greece

When: 14-12-2021, 6.30pm
Where: Online

<https://www.cgs.csah.cam.ac.uk/events/greek-dialogues-online-we-are-all-greeks-philhellenism-shelleys-hellas-and-faces-modern>

Levantine Alternatives: Greeks in Constantinople, Smyrna and Alexandria after 1821

When: 14-12-2021, 7pm
Where: The Hellenic Centre

<https://helleniccentre.org/event/levantine-alternatives-greeks-in-constantinople-smyrna-and-alexandria-after-1821/>

Faces of History. History has a face. Organised by The Hellenic Centre and Sylvia Ioannou Foundation

When: 16-12-2021, 7pm
Where: The Hellenic Centre

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/faces-of-history-history-has-a-face-tickets-211639327927>

A guided private tour of the Science Museum's exhibition Ancient Greek Science

When: 17-12-2021, 9am
Where: Science Museum, Exhibition Road, Kensington

<https://www.anglohellenicleague.org/cultural-events/>

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