

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

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Consular Office can be reached by email at [grcon.bei@mfa.gr](mailto:grcon.bei@mfa.gr)

Dear Friends,

In view of the lockdown measures taken by the Lebanese Authorities to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, in force since 14 November 2020, we would like to inform you that the Consular Office of the Embassy of Greece in Lebanon will continue providing services to Greek citizens and address urgent cases.

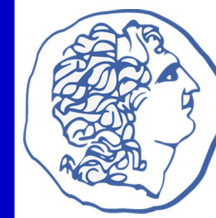
- ◆ All scheduled appointments will be upheld and every effort will be made to accommodate last minute changes due to circulation restrictions.
- ◆ To book an appointment, kindly send an email to [grcon.bei@mfa.gr](mailto:grcon.bei@mfa.gr)
- ◆ Do not forget to wear a mask when you are entering the consulate premises.
- ◆ For your safety, entry will be allowed only if necessary (e.g. for fingerprints collection) and body temperatures will be measured.

In these challenging times we ask for your understanding.

Stay home.

Stay safe.

The Greek Embassy in Lebanon



الجمعية الخيرية اليونانية في بيروت  
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ ΒΗΡΥΤΟΥ  
GREEK COMMUNITY OF BEIRUT



Ta Nea

Volume 3  
NOVEMBER 2020

*Time of remembrance...*

Dear Reader

Here we are again confined, in Lebanon as in Greece, and this for a good cause! It is true that it is already difficult to live our present, to adapt ourselves and to find new solutions. Not to mention the past that returns, more and more present! And this is one of the main reasons why we have focused our November issue on the importance of celebrating Lebanon's independence, on presenting the deep meaning of the Zeibekiko dance, facing the hope conveyed by the message from Greece with its wonderful video clip shot at the Olympic Stadium of Kalimarmaro, "Let the dances last", a bearer of perseverance and unity. This action is part of the various events undertaken within the framework of the activities and actions for the celebration of the bicentenary of 1821. Because the world economy is not in its prime, we thought we could trace the history of the first bank of Greece as part of the commemoration of the history of Greece from 1821 to the present day

Enjoy your reading and stay safe!

### *Lebanon 77<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary*

Lebanon Independence Day is the national day of Lebanon celebrated on 22 November in commemoration of the end of the French Mandate, in 1943, after 23 years of mandate rule. What makes this 77<sup>th</sup> anniversary particular is its link with the proclamation of the state of Greater Lebanon, a century ago. Under international pressure, the first "independence" was proclaimed indeed on the 26 November 1941 by Georges Catroux, the delegate general working under General De Gaulle orders. Although this independence was recognized by major countries at that time, the Lebanese did not consider it as a real independence as it did not stop the French from exercising their authority over Lebanon.

November 22<sup>nd</sup> commemorates the National Independence Government that fought on the eve of the President's release, Beshara El Khoury, Prime Minister Riad El Solh, and other cabinet members from detention, while

exiled at the old citadel located in Rashaya on the morning of November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1943. It celebrates the handover of France by granting Lebanon full independence. However, it was not completed until the withdrawal of French forces from Lebanon on January 31, 1946.

And on this day, we pay our tribute to the eternal spirit of the Lebanese people; the spirit of unity, compassion, and nationalism.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO GREEK CITIZENS

Kindly contact our Center by phone or email informing us about any change of address, phone number or social status helping us to keep our data list updated.

August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The aftermath

On October 31, in the presence of H.E Mrs. Catherine Fountoulaki, Ambassador of Greece to Lebanon, the screening of the short documentary "Zeibekiko in Beirut" by George Eid, took place at the cultural center of the Greek Community, in a small gathering due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



The terrible explosion of August 4, 2020 shocked the entire Lebanese population as well as many others around the world. George Eid, a journalist of Greek origin, wanted to describe his pain by taking the camera again and shoot a short documentary about the deadly explosion which includes testimonies from Greeks in Beirut. The documentary is named "The Zeibekiko in Beirut".

In the presence of H.E. the Ambassador of Greece Mrs. Fountoulaki and a small circle of colleagues, (who came to bid farewell to George Eid who is going to settle abroad) Mr. Eid explained his testimony and the link between the dance of Zeibekiko with the current situation of the country and the Greeks of Lebanon.

In order to emphasize the importance of Greek roots and history, H.E. Mrs. Fountoulaki in her speech recalled the importance of the commemoration of 1821 and the "Bicentenary of the Revolution 2021", while ensuring the permanent support and assistance of Greece to Lebanon.

A historical documentary retracing the important events of the recent history of Greece was projected on the screen, followed by a projection of the performance "sound and light" video clip which took place at the first Olympic Stadium of Athens, the Kalimarmaro, few days ago, titled *Let the dances last!*

Following the speech of Mr. Eid who explained clearly his approach and the link between the Zeibekiko dance and the general state of mind, the audience was able to watch the short film which left them moved and deeply touched.

In addition, the board members of the Greek community expressed to Georges Eid their congratulations, encouragement and best wishes in his new pursuits.



### What is the Zeibekiko dance?

The dance takes its name from the *Zeybeks*, a militia living in the Aegean region of the Ottoman Empire from late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was first seen in cities such as Constantinople and Smyrni. Originally, Zeibekiko was strictly a man's dance, who is not embarrassed to manifest his pain or weaknesses. The dancer will pick the song and the lyric that expresses his personal state of mind. It is difficult to dance the Zeibekiko, mainly because it has no set steps, no particular rhythm. It requires an inner intensity; it is an improvised dance that expresses the feelings of the individual who gets up to dance. They are mainly feelings of defeat, of sadness, life's despair, unfulfilled dreams, the bad luck you see coming, the dark at the end of the tunnel. After all its origin is in Asia Minor, the place of displaced Greeks, a homeland long lost, along with lives and fortunes. So, it is almost a religious experience not to be taken lightly. It is a personal moment, like the time of prayer and of course, it is an insult to interrupt a man who dances the Zeibekiko.

"When I was learning to dance Zeibekiko, and the whole family gathered on Saturdays, it was like a big celebration! My parents told me that we 'inherited' this dance from Asia Minor and that Zeibekika often refer to sadness and deluded people who have gone through a lot but have maintained their dignity. They dance with their 'ghosts', their memories and so I found that the Zeibekiko can be the connecting link with the Lebanese people at the moment" explains George Eid, adding "My goal is to keep alive the memory of the Greek

community in Lebanon and to send perhaps a message of hope. It is a way to keep my identity alive despite the fact that only my DNA is what connects me to Greece. I may not have Greek citizenship, but I inherited many of the Greek values and I intend to pass them on to the next generations".



The dancer Samir Najem in full performance between the rubble of what was the Greek club



August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The aftermath

**The listed historic building of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Beirut was devastated by the August 4 explosion**

During all the years of recent Lebanese history, the Orthodox Archdiocese has resisted despite everything; like many other historic buildings, it has often been hit hard and therefore often repaired.

The initial building in the heart of Rmeil, dates back to the year 1862, the year that witnessed the beginning of urban expansion and is considered the oldest building in the heritage street. Originally built by the retired Metropolitan Gerasimos Farah as his residence on a forested hill overlooking the Beirut port, he spent the rest of his life in

his house and recommended that he donate it to the Archdiocese after his death in 1872. It became the Archdiocese in 1909.

From 1862 until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the building facing the port was enlarged several times in accordance with the standards of typical Beirut and Lebanese architecture, namely the use of the sandy stone specific to the capital, whitewashed, "mandaloun" arcades, beams and wooden structures topped with red tiles. Even during the years of the Lebanese war the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Beirut, with its wonderfully gilded and painted walls and ceilings has suffered but continued to develop. Thus, last year was inaugurated on the same ground, a new Archdiocese with the aim of moving the offices to the new building and commencing the restoration of the old house preserving it as an architectural and cultural heritage but the October Revolution followed by the Covid-19 pandemic delayed the start of restoration work, until the catastrophe that overthrew Beirut's old neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, everything was destroyed on August 4<sup>th</sup>.



Ever since the crisis Lebanon went through, the Archdiocese has been facing many difficulties, both socially and financially. Ensuring the continuity of education in their five schools, retirement homes, the hospital as well as the assistance provided to parishioners are not easy tasks while they too suffer from problems related to the banking sector.

This tragedy of August 4, exacerbated the economic collapse that Lebanon was experiencing; the explosion destroyed the in-



rastructure of multiple hospitals, schools, and community-service centres in Beirut.

At the Archdiocese, the walls, the windows and their frames, the old cedar wood shutters, the red tiles and the wooden frame were blown away by the blast of the explosion.



longing to the Archdiocese in particular at Gemmayzé, Jeïtaoui, Rmeil, Down Town Beirut, Mdarwar and Mar Mitir, as well as the premises of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Balamand and the old historic building of the Saint-Georges hospital. The homes of more than 419 families of our parishioners have been affected, 130 of them are completely destroyed! The losses were estimated at hundreds of millions! We have prioritized the reconstruction by focusing in the short term on the most urgent needs which is the

renovation of the destroyed Saint George Hospital, the schools and the nursing home as well as supporting the most vulnerable members of the community. Our goal is to secure the necessary donations and deploy them in an emergency response to the disaster, to get the community back on its feet with a particular focus on the most vulnerable."

Large sections of the ceiling were shattered. The beautiful building has become a heap of ruins. There is not a single piece of furniture, painting or icons left! The building of the new Archdiocese was not spared either and the damages are also very heavy. "In an instant we lost everything! At the hospital we lost four people from the medical staff as well as relatives of patients. The hospital, more than twelve churches, the five schools, the centers and specialized homes located in the capital have either been devastated or have suffered immeasurable damage! Among the ravaged buildings, are those be-

The Archdiocese, which is a listed historic building, will have its building covered before the heavy rains of the season.

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\*For additional information or donations, you can visit the sites:

www.saintporphyrios.org , www.quartos.org.lb or call 961 1 200612/3  
961 1 217612 / 961 1 200611—Email: metbey@quartos.org.lb

## 2021, the bicentennial of the Greek revolution

As part of the commemoration of the bicentenary of the Greek revolution of 1821, we dedicate a new section. Each month we will present a story and a famous person who actively contributed to creating the actual Greece.



### The establishment of the first Bank in Greece

The National Bank of Greece NBG was founded in Athens in 1841, by the decree of King Otho giving it the privilege of issuing banknotes denominated in drachmas. ("On the creation of a "National Bank" Official Gazette, No. 6 of March 30, 1841, page 59), according to which the National Bank is a limited liability company based in Athens with a capital of five million drachmas, divided into five thousand shares of one thousand drachmas. The foundation of the longest-lived financial institution of the Greek State required tireless efforts, laborious processes, and, inevitably, several failures. It took 20 years since the beginning of the Greek Revolution for the persistent effort of certain brilliant minds to thrive and lead to the creation of the first fully functional Bank of the Greek State. The key players in them were the first governor of Greece Ioannis Kapodistrias, the Swiss philhellene knight Jean-Gabriel Eynard and the merchant from Epirus and member of the Friendly Society Georgios Stavros.

The main shareholder of the National Bank was the Greek State with one thousand shares. The other main shareholders were Nicholas Zosimas with 500 shares, Jean-Gabriel Eynard with 300 shares, King Louis of Bavaria with 200 shares, Konstantinos Vranis with 150 shares, Adolf Graf with 146 shares and Theodoros Rallis with 100 shares. Rothshild Frères Paris bought 50 shares and Jean-Gabriel Eynard bought another 50 shares on their behalf to strengthen the prestige of the new bank. In 1927, a new central bank, the Bank of Greece, was created in order to separate the issuance of money from the activity of commercial banking. The National Bank once had the exclusive right to issue banknotes, which it lost in 1928 when the newly established Bank of Greece took over as the country's central bank. In 1899, the National Bank acquired the Privileged Bank of Epirus and Thessaly. Andreas Syngros had founded the bank in Volos in 1882. Unfortunately, the bank could not recover from his death and the Greco-Turkish war (1897).

Back to 1827, the story started this way: The Swiss philhellene Eynard, internationally known for his successful economic endeavors and connections, was the first to realize and outline the critical situation to the Greek governor. "The fundamental idea is to establish a lasting organization and start to endow it with the savings capitals, increasing them with every new registration...", wrote Jean-Gabriel Eynard in a letter to Kapodistrias, as early as November of 1827. What Eynard had realized was that an organization needed to provide not only targeted support but loans, thus creating the conditions for an organized banking system, a vital pillar in the development of the Greek State. The proposal of Eynard convinced Kapodistrias, and in 1828, the National Financial Bank was founded, towards the capital of

which, the Swiss philhellene contributed 100,000 francs of his own money.

The first director was George Stavros, who remained in charge for 28 years, permanently linking his name with the Bank.

Four years later, the National Bank acquired its first privately owned building on Aeolou Street. The Bank bought it for 47,000 drachmas from the University of Athens, professor of natural history, Kyriakos Domnados. The building was located next to one of the two luxury hotels in the area, the "Hotel of England." At the same time, in front of the building, there was a ravine that was often used for military exercises.

The two buildings were joined at the end of the 19th century, and they formed the famous neoclassical building that features on the present-day logo of the National Bank of Greece. Since then, the course of the Bank became attached to the course of the country, while its administration has occasionally been handled by prominent personalities, including Alexandros Zaimis, Dimitrios Maximos, Alexandros Diomedes, Emanuel Tsouderos...



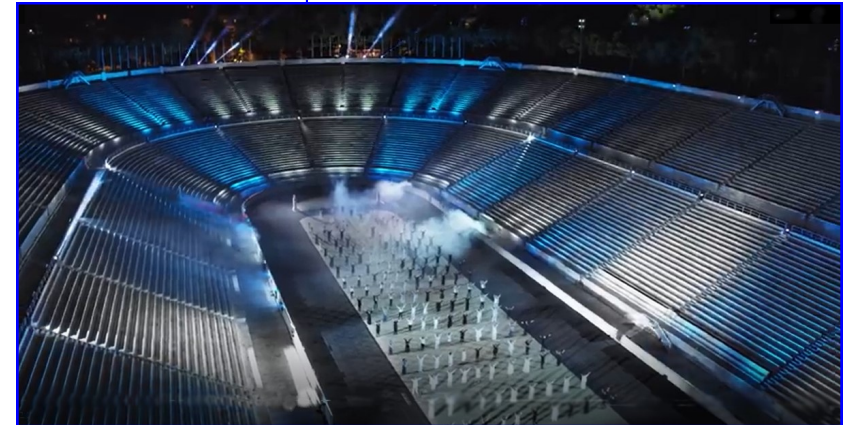
## Greek News

### Let the dances last!

The Greece 2021 Committee released a cheerful video clip ahead of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1821 Greek Revolution. For the needs of the celebration, the well-known song "Let the Dances Last" that was first released in 1983 with the album of Dionysis Savvopoulos "Tables outside", was videotaped with a new orchestration and interpretation by seven choirs: La Familia, Estia Nea Smyrni, Ministry of Interior, Pedro Ch., Musica, OTE and Athens Conservatory. The choirs participated on a non-profit basis. The cheerful and optimistic song has been loved by millions of Greeks and presents the historical course of Greece, through the allegory of the celebration of a group of modern Greeks. Through his lyrics, the timeless course of Hellenism from antiquity to the present day is presented with particular sensitivity. "We chose this song because it describes in a unique way our common journey," said Chairperson of the 'Greece 2021' Committee, Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki, adding "In these 200 years, our assembly has unfolded, grown. Our bond has thickened. Many times we fell but we got up again and our friends continued to write history". In 2021 we look forward. We combine our old and light orbits" with a bright and optimistic future."

The video clip was shot at the Panathinaiko Stadium at Kallimarmaro and at the Agora of Calatrava at the Olympic Stadium. The new orchestration of the song was directed by Giannis Christodouloupoulos, responsible for the artistic events of the Commission "Greece 2021". The choreography was edited by Artemis Ignatiou. More than 300 people were involved in this project which took three months of uninterrupted and collective work to complete.

\*<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2KUxkA9JFw&list=RDW2KUxkA9JFw&start>



## Ας κρατήσουν οι χοροί

Ας κρατήσουν οι χοροί και θα βρούμε αλλιώςτικα  
στέκια επαρχιώτικα, βρε.

Ώσπου η σύναξις αυτή σαν χωριό αυτόνομο να ξεδιπλωθεί.  
Μέχρι τα ουράνια σώματα, με πομπούς και με κεραίες,  
φτιάχνουν οι Έλληνες κυκλώματα και ιστορία οι παρέες.

Κάνει ο Γιώργος την αρχή:

"Είμαστε δεν είμαστε, τίποτα δεν είμαστε, βρε."

Και ο Γιαννάκης τραγουδεί:

"Άμα είναι όλα άγραφα, κάτι θα βγει."

Και στις νύχτας το λαμπάδιασμα,  
να κι ο Άλκης ο μικρός μας,  
για να σμίξει παλιές κι αναμμένες τροχιές  
με το ροκ του μέλλοντός μας.

Ο ουρανός είναι φωτιές, ανεμομαζώματα,  
σπίθες και κυκλώματα, βρε.

Και παρέες λαμπερές το καθρεφτισμά του στις ακρογιαλιές.

Κι, είτε με τις αρχαιότητες είτε με ορθοδοξία,  
των Ελλήνων οι κοινότητες φτιάχνουν άλλο γαλαξία.

Να κι ο Μπάμπης έχει πει.

Κι η Λυδία ντρέπεται  
που όλο εκείνη βλέπετε, βρε.  
Κι ο Αχιλλέας με τη Ζωή,  
μπρος στην πολαρόντ  
κοιτούν γελαστοί.

Τότε, η Έλενα η χορεύτρια  
σκύβει στη μεριά του Τάσου  
και, με μάτια κλειστά, τραγουδούν αγκαλιά:  
"Εθνική Ελλάδος, γεια σου !"

Τι να φταίει η Βουλή ;  
Τι να φτάνουν οι εκπρόσωποι,  
έρημοι κι απρόσωποι, βρε ;  
Αν πονάει η κεφαλή,  
φταίει η απρόσωπη αγάπη  
που'χει βρει.

Μα η δικιά μου έχει όνομα,  
έχει σώμα και θρησκεία  
και παππού σε μέρη αυτόνομα  
μέσα στη τουρκοκρατία.

Να μας έχει ο Θεός γερούς  
πάντα ν'ανταμώνουμε  
και να ξεφαντώνουμε, βρε,  
με χορούς κυκλωτικούς  
κι άλλο τόσο ελεύθερους  
σαν ποταμούς.

Και στις νύχτας το λαμπάδιασμα,  
να πυκνώνει ο δεσμός μας,  
και να σμίγει παλιές κι αναμμένες τροχιές  
με το ροκ του μέλλοντός μας.

## Let the dances keep ongoing

Let the dances keep going and we will hang out in different  
places in the countryside, oh boy.

Until this gathering will unfold like an autonomous village.

Up in stellar space, with receivers and antennas,  
the Greeks make networks  
and history is made by the circles of close friends.

George starts:

"We are and we are not, we are nothing oh boy."

and little John sings:

"If nothing is written, then something will come out."

And in the night's glowing light,  
here comes Alkis our little boy,  
to join old and new paths  
with our future rock.

The sky is on fire, easy come easy go,  
sparkles and circuits, oh boy.

And the shining circle of close friends the sky mirrors  
on beaches. And either with antiquity or the Orthodoxy,  
the Greek communities are constructing another galaxy.

Here comes Babis who is drunken.

And Lydia who is ashamed  
because everybody looks at her, oh boy..

And Achilles and Zoi,  
in front of the Polaroid camera  
they are smiling.

Then, Ellen, the dancer

Leans toward Tassos

and, with their eyes closed, they sing embracing each other:  
Cheers to the Greek National Team!

Is there something to blame to the Parliament?

Is there something to blame for the  
Nation's Representatives? wasted and faceless people, oh  
boy? If the head is aching,  
it is because of the faceless love  
that is has been found.

But my love has a name,  
has a body and a religion  
and grandfathers in autonomous countries  
under the Turkish Occupation.

Let our God save us  
Until we always could meet again  
in wild parties, oh boy,  
with circled dances  
and be free  
like rivers.

And in the night's glowing light,  
our bond is tightening more,  
and it is mixed with old paths on fire  
with our future rock.



## Protect yourself and those you care for

As we all know, Covid -19 is spreading everywhere !

In the absence of an effective prevention strategy such as a vaccine, it is therefore recommended to actively remember barrier gestures in order to protect yourself and loved ones. Therefore, it is a must to wear a face mask, use gel or cleaning hands, respect social distancing and avoid public spaces.

Many scientists have said it over and over again, as appeared in the journal **European Scientist**: *"By drastically cutting back on sugar and ultra-processed foods, and preparing meals with fresh produce, the health impact can be seen within weeks. People must be informed that they must reduce sugar, processed carbohydrates and start consuming raw products, rich in vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, together with a lot of protein from legumes, fish, meat, eggs, to improve their health in a few weeks and help them protect themselves against this disease. The message is not to "diet": the priority is to reduce added sugar, processed foods and processed carbohydrates for better metabolic results. Good physical activity is also crucial for improving blood sugar: Even confined, a recent study proves that it is enough to walk up several floors, just after a meal, to lower blood sugar! By restricting processed carbohydrates, the three risk factors of hyperinsulinemia, hyperglycemia and hypertension, which increase inflammation, clotting and the risk of thrombosis, should be quickly brought under control. Magnesium, vitamin D and zinc supplements could be administered to those who lack them."*



### THE REVISED GUIDELINES FOR MASK USE BY THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS

The Medical Faculty Therapeutic Clinic of the National University of Athens with the following doctors, Theodora Psaltopoulou Panagiotis Malandrakis, John DANAS and Thanos Dimopoulos (Rector of EKPA), presented all the advantages and disadvantages of all kind of masks available on the market.

The use of a mask is a simple barrier to infectious respiratory droplets and is necessary even for the non-sick, as studies have shown that asymptomatic patients who never show symptoms transmit the virus. The primary value of the mask is to protect others in case someone gets sick, especially if they cannot keep a distance of at least 2 meters. The use of the mask also protects the one who wears it from the others, depending on its material.

#### The types of masks

A proper fabric mask should be made of at least two levels of tight fabric, such as cotton, and facilitate breathing through it (leather and plastic masks should be avoided). Disposable non-surgical masks can be used in situations where the fabric mask may become soiled. Masks with an inhalation valve are not recommended because they do not protect against the spread of the virus in case the user becomes ill. Surgical masks should be used by health professionals. Transparent plastic covers for the oral cavity are an alternative for special occasions, such as deaf people, children learning to read or students learning foreign languages, people with disabilities or in cases where the mouth movements should be visible. If this alternative is used, then it must be confirmed that the user is breathing normally, and that no moisture is accumulating inside the mask.

Other types of face protection, such as face shield, are not recommended as a replacement for the mask, as they leave large gaps around the face allowing micro droplets to pass through. In cases where the use of a shield is the only solution, then it should cover the entire face down to the chin. Good hand washing is also recommended when removing the shield and if reused it should be disinfected. In cases where the use of a mask is not possible, the distance of two meters between people is recommended. Finally, it is important to emphasize that the use of a mask does not increase the levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) that the user inhales. The CO2 molecule is small enough to pass through the sides of the mask during respiration and speech, and through the mask, while the virus is large enough to pass through a properly placed mask.