

environmental history. Recent monographs in this category have described the poisonous legacy of mining in the American West, the accumulation of garbage in American cities, and the horrible contamination left behind wherever America's Cold War weapons establishment poured its witch's brew of poisons into the ground.

The history of ideas about the environment comprised the third category in my talk. Here, along with a few other intellectual histories, I summarized some of my own work on Germany, specifically my exploration of the tangled relationship between Nazism and nature conservation. My recent book also provided some of the material I used to illustrate the final two categories: policy history, where I reviewed the remarkable burst of legislative activity in Germany in the 1960s and early 70s; and the history of the movement, where I showed that, over the past century, conservation has won support from persons as diverse as factory workers and the Kaiser.

“Scholarly Standpoint and Improbable Twins” by Sally L. Kitch, *Center for Women's Studies and Division of Comparative Studies*

What motivates scholars to pursue their particular research? In some fields, that question might be of only passing interest. Chemists rarely wonder why they explore a particular polymer or biologists a particular aspect of DNA. They may never consider how their scientific investigations relate to their personal histories or values. But women's studies scholars are acutely aware of what we call scholarly standpoint, that is, the connection of our scholarly pursuits with our identities, backgrounds, and biases. Some would argue that a particular scholar's identity might even disqualify her from the investigation of certain topics. Recognizing that all perspectives (even scientific ones) are partial, they assert that such characteristics as race and class, for example, create biases that limit an individual's ability to understand and analyze works or ideas generated by those of other races and/or class status.

I understand and respect the concerns

from which such views have evolved. Indeed, recent revelations of the linkages between a scholar's identity and the work she or he does have transformed the conduct of research and the practice of pedagogy. Today, most fields hold scholars accountable for their own role in collecting information and data, for their particular formulation of research questions, and for their interpretations of human experience. What we might call unlocatable knowledge claims have been exposed as irresponsible.

At the same time, there are and must be limits to standpoint as a barrier to scholarship. Some of those limits are exposed in postmodern theory, which questions the essential nature of identity. Postmodern theory asserts that identities are constituted through racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities which are determined by political and cultural forces rather than by nature. Having been constructed through the politics of a given culture, even the categories of race and sex cannot be presumed natural. A friend of mine, for example, is considered a woman of color in the United States and a white woman in her native Haiti. Which is she really? Neither and both; her racial classification depends on the cultural forces to which she is subject at a given moment.

In my own work, I have adopted an approach to scholarly standpoint that recognizes such limitations on the notion of fixed or absolute identity. To illustrate that approach, I am reminded of an ad for the movie *Twins* from a few years ago. The poster pictured two white men, Danny DiVito and Arnold Schwarzenegger, whose identical suits did little to qualify them for the film's title. In order to be twins, such mismatched men must overcome apparently insurmountable obstacles and explore unauthorized, even unthinkable, connections among persons and things. In the



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process, they must transcend what postmodernists call the discourse of sameness and difference, which cannot in any case be trusted, and establish creative and illuminating connections in defiance of ordinary categorizations and limitations of relationship.

That is the process I have sought in my own scholarship: a quest for my improbable rather than my predictable twin—the Danny DiVito to my Arnold Schwarzenegger. I have chosen to study people and situations quite unlike myself and my background—nineteenth-century celibate utopians and African American women writers are two examples. I have studied and written on these topics in order to understand cultural structures and to explore the alternative visions that people unlike myself have considered and constructed. In my pursuit of the not-me, I have learned much about myself, but had I been dedicated only to such a mission, I am saddened to think what I might have missed.

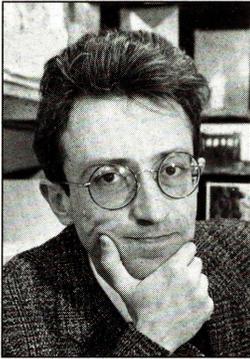
“What Is So ‘Modern’ About Modern Greek?” by Vassilis Lambropoulos, *Department of Near Eastern, Judaic, and Hellenic Languages and Literatures*

My area of specialization is defined by the tension generated between two words, Modern and Greek. For no other field in the entire University has the unenviable distinction of being distinguished, discriminated against, singled out by this qualifying adjective which better than any other word characterizes our world: Modern. Thus I have the dubious advantage of teaching in the most modern of fields. Nothing is more modern than Greek because nothing is more ancient. We first became Moderns, and we still understand our modernity, by measuring ourselves against the Greeks, the archetypal Ancients. To do Modern Greek is by definition to study and measure the Modern against its liberating and forbidding model, the Greek. And we speak Modern Greek every time we discuss modernity in terms of its classical background—in terms of culture, freedom, and independent reflection.

From the vantage point of Modern

Greek, there are three major lessons that the struggle of Hellenism with its past, its canon, its own hegemony has to offer to the intellectual debates currently preoccupying us. The first lesson, the ethics of inquiry, is a well known one. "The entirety of philosophy is conceived on the basis of its Greek source" (Derrida). This is so both because we use its vocabulary and because the language of doubt, disbelief, skepticism, the language of inquiry that examines discourses and institutions is Greek—because whenever we seek a rational, self-sustained, coherent account based on argument, we speak Greek.

It follows that a Greek is anyone interested in the logic of the argument and the power of discourse—anyone demanding an intrinsically valid account that does not appeal to an external, higher authority but only to the social agora and agon of human communication. Which brings me to the second lesson: Hellenism is primarily not an ethnic, racial, or religious category but a socio-cultural one. It is one (among many) historically specific way of going about things. No wonder that, for the most part of what is depicted as Greek history, the question of who was a "real" Greek was mainly a cultural issue that made no reference to blood, faith, color, or origin. The transnational Greek world included those who were members of the Hellenic cultural community of critical inquiry, argumentative debate, competitive rituals, and public politics. Hellenism as an inclusive category challenges positivistic and essentialist classifications by positing the primacy of a cultural, multi-layered, polyphonic identity. This has been dramatically reiterated by the recent history of Greek culture: at least since the Enlightenment, most of its major achievements have happened outside the mainland, in contact with foreign traditions,



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and were first resisted by the official national ideology.

From this strategic understanding of identity not as a given, hereditary, tribal quality but as a position, an attitude, a polyethnic discourse, stems that last lesson. We commonly associate Greece with its most extravagant, most scandalous and precarious institution, the direct democracy of 5th-century Athens. In my view, however, the noblest Greek quest that came before democracy, before equality, before freedom, is the demand for justice. During the long history of Hellenic culture, which includes (but is not limited to) various incarnations and transmutations of a Greek geopolitical entity, freedom and democracy have never reigned for long. Rather, unrest, strife, war, and occupation have been the norm. But from at least the early archaic times to the present, one unyielding quest has persisted unabated: the demand for socio-political justice, for an account of legitimacy based on human law, public deliberation, and proper procedure. Whenever a regime or institution is challenged to justify its actions, the age-old Greek appeal to the rule of no higher authority than man-made law expresses a fundamental principle of human solidarity: the principle of right.

Through the centuries, Hellas has been much more of a cultural community and world-view than a geo-racial reality. Nationalist and eurocentric ideas of continuity, homogeneity, territoriality, or superiority reduced it to the 19th-century Aryan model that has been justly debunked. But with the postmodern emphasis on local narratives and decentered hierarchies, we can begin to see again a multiple Hellas, a hyperethnic assemblage of notions and principles pertaining to autonomy and self-governance. This multicultural community of Hellenism is distinguished by three main ideals: the priority of philosophical argument, of public culture, and of political justice. It is only fair, therefore, to conclude that since, as moderns, we are all not Greeks but modern Hellenes, that is, moderns negotiating with Greece, what we can learn from the way contemporary Greeks negotiate with the ancient model is this

simple truth: even when we attack Hellenism, to the extent that we still do it by speaking the languages of argument, by operating in the domain of culture, and by appealing to justice, we remain indebted to Greek thought and we harbor higher, nobler, but still Hellenic, aspirations.

"Japanese, Japanese Literature, and Japanese Studies" by James R. Morita, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

The Japanese might call my lecture a *sandaibanashi*, literally, a "three topic story." This *sandaibanashi* will link three seemingly separate topics in the old *renga*, or linked-verse technique, thus showing that they are essentially one.

I have devoted my professional life to the study of Japanese poetry. As you may imagine, I am delighted to see that comparatists are treating Japanese literature in their studies and theorists are examining Japanese works more than ever before. I think it a healthy trend that Japanese literature is at last becoming accessible to and understandable for readers in the West.

The approach to that literature, whether you believe in the existence of a universal critical approach and one literary truth, or whether you have doubt about such things, must begin with a careful reading of the original Japanese text. Historical analysis and theoretical reflection complement each other and deepen our understanding of literature. But that deeper understanding cannot be achieved without primary attention to the use of language—problematized for English speakers, since Japanese, which is written vertically, has no linguistic connection with English, written left to right. A primary task of Japanese studies, therefore, has been instilling mastery of the language



James Morita

FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENT NEWS

Three College of Humanities Faculty Receive Prestigious University Awards

Professor **Vassilis Lambropoulos**, Department of Near Eastern, Judaic, and Hellenic Languages

and Literatures, Professor **Allan R. Millett**, Department of History, and Assistant Professor **Joseph T. Zeidan**, Department of Near Eastern, Judaic, and Hellenic Languages and Literatures, have recently been honored by President Gee for their contributions to the academic life of this university. In surprise visits to their classrooms, Gee informed Lambropoulos and Millett that they were

recipients of **Distinguished Scholar Awards**. Zeidan learned that he had received an **Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching**. The next issue of the *Humanities Exchange* will contain complete details of these honors.

Mary Beckman, Professor of Linguistics, has been named a Fellow of the Acoustical Society of America.

Professor of History Emeritus **Robert H. Bremner** has received the first Arnova Award for Distinguished Contribution to Nonprofit and Voluntary Action Research from the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action.

Professor **David Citino**, Department of English, received the Ohio Poet of the

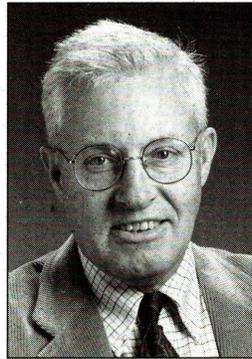
Year Award from the Ohio Poetry Day Association for his collection *The Discipline, New and Selected Poems, 1980-92* (Ohio State University Press, 1992).

Juanita Comfort, Graduate Student in the Department of English, has been awarded a CIC Dissertation Year Fellowship of \$15,000 provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Her dissertation is

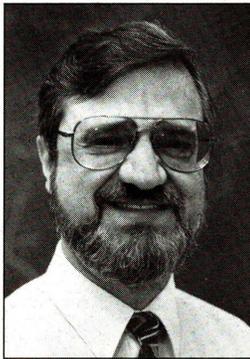
"Self-Representation in the Academic Writing of African-American Women Doctoral Students," directed by **Jacqueline Jones Royster**.



Vassilis Lambropoulos



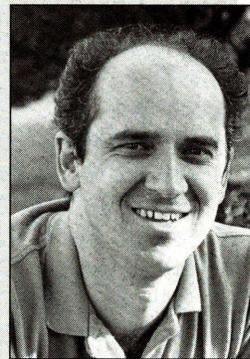
Allan R. Millett



Joseph T. Zeidan

Associate Professor of Greek **Gregory Jurdanis** has been appointed a **Woodrow Wilson Fellow** from September, 1994, until May, 1995, to broaden his on-going examination of the active role culture can play in the creation of nations. While focusing on Greece, Jurdanis's research will also take into account developments in Germany, Scandinavia, France, Canada, and the United States.

During his fellowship year, Jurdanis will be at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which is housed in the Smithsonian Institution. This research center is open not only to scholars but also to figures from government and the media throughout the world. Its fellowships are among the nation's most prestigious: of 819 applications received this year, the Center awarded only thirty positions.



Gregory Jurdanis

Scott Lloyd DeWitt, Assistant Professor of English-Marion, was selected as Ameritech Faculty Fellow of Ohio State for "Computer Networking in the Writing Classroom: Investigating Sites of Collaborative Inquiry."

Associate Professor **Helen Fehervary**, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, has won a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend to continue research for the biography she is preparing of Anna Seghers, the foremost German woman writer of the twentieth century. Fehervary has also won an award from the DAAD, the German Academic Exchange Service, for research on another aspect of the same project.

Noel C. Fisher, recent Ph.D. in the Department of History, has won the American Blue & Gray Association's 1994 doctoral dissertation competition. The ABGA is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating students and the public about the Civil War. Fisher's Evelyn and Lee Combs prize of \$5,000 recognizes his dissertation "War at Everyman's Door: The Struggle for East Tennessee, 1860-1869," directed by Professor **Allan R. Millett**.

Associate Professor **Bernd Fischer**, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, was awarded an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowship for 1994 at the University of Paderborn to complete a book on the philosophy and aesthetics of nationhood.

Kirk Freudenburg, Assistant Professor of Classics, has been awarded one of three Solmsen Fellowships for 1994-95. During that academic year, Freudenburg will be in residence at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he will be preparing a new edition with commentary of the second book of Horace's *Satires*. The book will appear in the Greek and Latin Classics Series published by Cambridge University Press.

Professors **Timothy E. Gregory**, Department of History, and **Thomas P. Kasulis**, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and Center for