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NEWS

## Newsmaker of the Month: Filippos Tsimpoglou, Ph.D General Director, National Library of Greece

**You have been serving as the head of Greece's most important Library since 2014. Is it factual to declare that your main goal is to lead this invaluable Institution towards 21st century?**

The National Library of Greece (NLG) is indeed undergoing a transformational process and I had the honour to be appointed Director General at a turning point for the institution. My previous experience at the University of Cyprus Library and the National Documentation Centre of Greece enables me to develop the roadmap for the transition of the NLG to a new era, bridging the old and the new, the analog and the digital, the expert and the popular, the past and the future, the national and the ecumenical. Our vision is to create an international centre of excellence for the study of Hellenism and for the preservation and evolution of Greek culture. In the long term we see the NLG function as a living organism where research and innovation enable communities to grow self-awareness, collective spirit, humanism and democratic values.



**What impact is the new National Library building at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center in Athens going to have for the enhancement of the Library's activities?**

The new building will enable the NLG to open to the world, to attract diverse audiences and offer extended services and programmes to society. Students and researchers will have access to the collections as well as major electronic databases from five contemporary Reading Rooms. Thanks to the generous donation of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and a special grant by the Greek State, the NLG will have state-of-the-art vaults for manuscripts and rare books, spacious workshops and advanced technological equipment for conservation and digitisation of books and a new Public Library Section for children, teenagers and diverse audiences. In this framework, the NLG relocation project is not just a matter of moving books from one building to another, but about redefining the role of the National Library of Greece at a local, national and international level.



**You have recently concluded a successful business trip to the US. Could you share with us any potential new collaborations that you might have discussed with your american partners?**

Following the invitation of Professor Gregory Nagy, the Director of Harvard University's Centre for Hellenic Studies, my colleagues and I had the great opportunity to travel to the US and visit some of US's most prestigious institutions. We are currently exploring partnerships with the Widener Library at the Harvard University, the University of Virginia, the Library of Congress and the National Archives of the USA: Exchange of

Duplicate Materials Exchange Programme of the Library of Congress), and NLG's participation in "The Free First Thousand Years of Greek" project in cooperation with the CHS and other institutions, are some of our first thoughts and priorities. The possibilities are endless though and we believe that our connections and bonds with our American partners will continuously grow through our shared knowledge and professional experience. NLG's new premises & services will offer a wide range of opportunities for new collaborations with international institutions.



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**Are you optimistic regarding modern Greek literary outreach abroad? Are there ways that the Greek-American community could get involved towards this end?**

I will become optimistic when we achieve to launch concrete collaborative initiatives for the promotion of Hellenic Studies abroad. At the moment Hellenic Studies are mainly connected to Ancient Greece and there is little research and limited bibliography related to Modern Greek Studies. We ought to promote the wealth of Modern Greek language and culture, and promote Modern Greek Literature as a continuation of Ancient Greek and Byzantine Studies. The Greek-American Community can play a major role to this end by supporting existing Centres of Modern Greek Studies and advocating for the creation of new ones. The promotion of Modern Greek Studies can strengthen the sense of identity of the Greek Diaspora and create solid bridges between the Antiquity, the Byzantium and contemporary Greece.

*Filippos Tsimpoglou holds a PhD in Library & Information Science from the Ionian University (2005) and a BSc in Economics from the Athens University of Economics and Business (1983). He was the Director of the Cyprus University Library and an ex officio member of the Cyprus University Senate from 1999 to 2014. He served as Head of three Departments at the National Documentation Centre of Greece / Hellenic Research Foundation (1983-1999) where he managed major EU framework and development programmes. In 2008 he published his book "Collaborations between Libraries: a systemic approach". He has also published numerous articles for international scientific journals, books and conferences.*

*Since 2014 he has been the General Director of the National Library of Greece and head of the historic relocation project to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre. He is leading the design of digital services which will enable the organisation to enter the digital era, as*