

*Project summary: With the generous support of the Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation, this summer I attended Modern Greek classes at the Athens Centre on the island of Spetses and in Athens. I improved my vocabulary and fluency a great deal, and was better prepared for the second part of my project: study of economic integration into the European Union on Cyprus. I met with numerous experts from academia and government, and hope to turn my research into a publishable paper.*

This summer, with the generous support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, I was able to attend the Athens Centre ([www.athenscentre.gr](http://www.athenscentre.gr)) Modern Greek language program on the island of Spetses for two weeks, and courses at the Centre in Athens for one week.

Overall, I found Athens Centre to be very professional, with high-quality teachers with many years of teaching expertise. However, there was one issue: although I had clearly indicated my level of Greek and the books I had already finished in email correspondence with the Centre for weeks prior to my departure for Greece, upon my arrival in Spetses, I found that there was no class that was at a suitable level for me. The Athens Centre handled it well, though, and immediately arranged for private lessons for me with two of the teachers, so that my private tutoring hours (1.5 hours daily) corresponded to the price I had paid for the regular group lessons (3.5 hours daily). I found that the private lessons were extremely beneficial to me at the level of Greek at which I am, as they allowed me to focus on what I need the most practice: vocabulary building. We read articles from daily Greek papers such as *Kathimerini* and *Eleutherotipia*, and modern Greek poetry from Kavathi, Elitis and Seferis.

Classes thus went very well, and beyond that, the Athens Centre organized nightly activities. These included poetry readings three times a week, to which Greek poets or poets having to do with Greece were invited. I had the chance to meet Nikos Papandreou and Stefanos Papadopoulos and have dinner with them following the reading (I never knew Papandreou was also a Yale graduate!). There were also dance classes twice a week on the rooftop of the hotel where the school's classes were at, with a gorgeous view of Spetses and the Peloponesus across the water. In addition, on occasion the school would have a film screening in the late evening – one such screening featured the famous film “Never on a Sunday.”

I thus had an overall very positive experience with the Athens Centre program, although I still believe that the Kentro Ellinikou Politismou (Hellenic Cultural Center) in Ikaria has the best Modern Greek program of the ones I have attended.

The second part of my project in Greece this summer consisted of independent research on Cyprus' economic integration into the EU. As an economics major with an interest in Europe and EU affairs, this was the perfect way to combine my love of Greek language with my academic interests. With the help of the contacts established thanks to Denis Chaibi (European Commission Visting Fellow at Yale), I met with various representatives of the European Commission (EC), Central Bank, and Planning Bureau while in Cyprus. These included: Andreas Troccos (Senior Planning Officer, Directorate for Macroeconomic Policy, Research and Studies, Planning Bureau), Andrea Battista (Attache, EC), George Kyriacou (Senior Officer, Economic Research Department, Central Bank), Sophocles Michaelides (Head of Economic Research Department, Central Bank), and Chrystalla Haili (European Affairs Unit, Central Bank). While at the EC, I also met two young additions to the unit, Panayiota Arnou and Sertac Sonan, and I am also in email contact with Aysun Onet and Ahmet Aker (they were not in Cyprus at the time I was and a meeting was impossible). The different viewpoints of these experts on current topics such as the EU's legalization of trade with northern Cyprus and aid package, the budget deficit, taxation, and other reforms related to Cyprus' economic integration into the EU have provided me with vast amounts of information to continue my research and create a publishable paper.

My Greek language study and research in Cyprus this summer have thus been a success, and I would like to thank the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for this opportunity.