

It is a pleasure to be here on behalf of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and its Board of Directors. We have very much enjoyed following the work of the Center over the years, and it is a privilege to be here to witness that work in action.

In my remarks at the inauguration of Center for Modern Greece at the Free University four years ago, I expressed hope that, through the leadership of Professor Pechlivanos, the Center would excel in two respects. First in the traditional role for such an institution, facilitating teaching and research here at the Free University, but additionally in going beyond that traditional focus to coordinate with other scholars and similar centers across Europe. It's clear that the Center is succeeding in this second, additional mission, looking no further than the workshop co-organized with the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities earlier this week on "Hegel in Italy, Spain, and Greece," . Its Publication program, "Edition Romiosini", has gone beyond than fulfilling its mission of the promotion of contemporary Greek literature for a German-speaking audience, counting 70 translated titles. I also remarked at the inauguration on the connection between the excellent work taking place here around Hellenic studies and the "free" world of knowledge indicated by the University's name. It's worth lingering on this idea of a free world of knowledge for a moment to consider what it looks like in actual application. While in other contexts, freedom indicates independence and an ability to act without being tied down, in the case of free knowledge exchange, interdependence and extensive ties are its essential element. And those ties are not a feature of an institution's resting state; they are formed and strengthened through intentional, focused effort, such as that we see enacted here at the Center for Modern Greece.

Professor Pechlivanos contributed to SNF's October DIALOGUES event, whose theme was the deep cultural, historical, and intellectual ties between Greece and Germany. Given these ties, it is fitting that the partnership with Center for Modern Greece at the Free University marked the first time the Foundation supported the establishment of a Center for Modern Greek Studies on the continent of Europe. Promoting Hellenism around the world is a key component of SNF's mission, and forming enduring collaborations around the subject with academic institutions has been a core focus of this effort. Partners include, among others, Yale University, Simon Fraser University, University of Oxford, Koç University in Istanbul, King's College London, and the Center of Byzantine, Modern Greek and Cypriot Studies in Granada.

Just as collaboration is not to be taken for granted as a default mode, each of these collaborations is not a static entity, but has its impact determined by the extent to which it inspires further collaboration and greater connectivity. This we can see taking place here at the Center for Modern Greece.

Linked to these institutional collaborations is SNF's support for efforts to bring early-career academics and professionals from Greece into contact with the resources of world-class institutions like this one. Such initiatives include a program for Journalists at Columbia University, a program for surgeons at New York's Hospital for Special Surgery, and the Greek Diaspora Fellowship program for academics in a variety of fields. Increasing access to specialized knowledge and resources has informed the more than 4,300 grants totaling more than \$2.6 billion SNF has so far committed to organizations in 124 countries.

As we have enjoyed following the work of the Center over these past years, we look forward to seeing how it will continue in the future to foster academic collaboration, encourage the sharing of knowledge, and push toward greater intellectual freedom through greater intellectual connectivity. Congratulations

to Professor Pechlivanos and his team on their dedication and achievements so far, and the very warmest of wishes to you from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation as you continue in your excellent work.

Thank you very much.