

The Story of Silent Night

Continues from page 25

DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Whilst the 1818 manuscript of Gruber's guitar arrangement is still missing, five other arrangements by Gruber exist.

The most widely accepted versions of the reason for the carols first performance were that either mice or rats had chewed holes in the leather air bellows of the organ in the church at Oberndorf, or because of repeated floodings of the church when the Salzach River frequently broke its banks, moisture and water, or mildew had either rusted or rendered the organ

unplayable.

The story went that, when on Christmas Eve 1818 the assistant priest at Oberndorf, 26 year old Father Joseph Mohr, found that the organ could not be played and realising the disappointment for his congregation at the Christmas Midnight Mass if there was no music, took a poem he had written in 1816 to his friend Franz Gruber, the schoolmaster at the nearby town of Arnsdorf, about four kilometres from Oberndorf, who was also the organist and choirmaster in Oberndorf, and asked Gruber if he could hurriedly set the words to music for two voices,

a choir and guitar accompaniment.

Father Mohr owned a guitar which he frequently played. Gruber agreed and proceeded to compose the music in time for the Midnight Mass at which both Father Mohr and Franz Gruber sang it, standing in front of the main altar, whilst the children's choir joined them.

The organ was in fact broken at the time but the real reason as to why Father Mohr had Granz Gruber set his poem to music for the guitar is not really known.

Some historians believe that Father Mohr simply wanted a

new Christmas carol which he could play on his guitar.

It might well have been that, remembering the poem he had written two years before, and after seeing itinerant players stage a Nativity play, he wanted to have his poem set to music for his own guitar so that he could present it, no matter whether the church organ was playable or not - we shall never know.

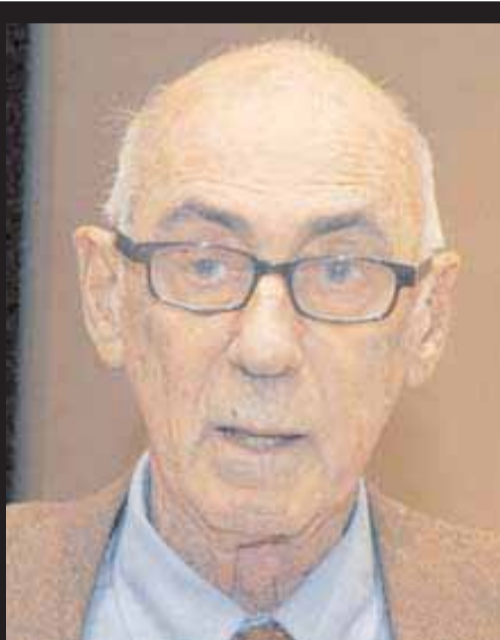
A tradesman named Carl Mauracher went to Oberndorf in 1825, and rebuilt the church organ. When all was restored Franz Gruber played Silent Night on it to test the repairs.

Mauracher came from an

area in the Tyrol Mountains where there were many travelling folk choirs who performed throughout Europe. He recognised the carol's potential, took a copy of the manuscript and returned home with the carol.

There he taught it to the child singers of the Strasser Family Singers, who sang it some time in 1832 in Leipzig Guildhouse and later that year at a command performance in the Court Chapel in Pleissenburg Castle, near Bayreuth in Bavaria.

Article from the Independent - December 8



Greek media magnate dies of heart failure, aged 75

ATHENS, - Media magnate Christos Lambrakis, publisher of two leading Greek political newspapers and dozens of magazines, died of heart failure at the age of 75 at an Athens hospital on Monday, his media group said.

Lambrakis Press (DOL) (DOLr.AT: Quote, Profile, Research) publishes four newspapers, including To Vima and Ta Nea, 24 magazines and runs the website www.in.gr. It also owns 22 percent of Teletypos (TELr.AT: Quote, Profile, Research) which runs the Mega TV channel.

"The Lambrakis media group in untold grief announces the death of Christos Labrakis, president of its board of directors," To Vima said on its website.

Lambrakis started his career as a journalist at one of his father's newspapers, To Vima. In his early 20s he inherited the family business.

(Reporting by Renee Maltezou)

Dr. Katerina Harvati honoured with the title "Fellow"

Her researches reverse solidified perceptions and they give answers in questions related with the development of modern person.

The reason, for the professor Dr Katerina Harvati, which is honoured with the title "Fellow" from the American Union for the Progress of Science (American Association of the Advancement of Science-AAAS). This honorary title of AAAS, that publishes also the approved scientific magazine "Science".

Priv. Doz. Dr. Harvati is a paleoanthropologist specializing in Neanderthal evolution, modern human origins and the application of 3-D geometric morphometric methods to anthropology. Her broader research interests include primate and human evolution; evolutionary theory and the species question in the human fossil record; evolution of primate and human life-history; evolution of H. erectus and Middle Pleistocene humans; the relationship of morphological variability to genetics and environment; and Paleolithic archaeology. She has conducted fieldwork in Europe and Africa, and recently directed paleoanthropological fieldwork in Greece (Aliakmon Paleolithic/ Paleoanthropological Survey project) and Tanzania (Lake Manyara Paleoanthropological Fieldwork). Dr. Harvati has organized international symposia on Neanderthal evolution ("Neanderthals Revisited: New Approaches and Perspectives", with T. Harrison) and modern human origins ("Transition from archaic to modern: Quantitative approaches", with J.-J. Hublin) (more about the conferences). Her edited volume of the articles presented at the "Neanderthals Revisited" conference

was published by Springer in 2006.

Priv. Doz. Dr. Harvati studied at Columbia University (BA, summa cum laude) and the City University of New York (MA, PhD), and held a doctoral fellowship at the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Before joining the Max Planck Institute for Human Evolution in 2004, she was Assistant Professor at the Dept. of Anthropology, New York University. In addition to her current post as senior researcher at the MPI, Harvati is adjunct Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center and Priv. Doz. at the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen.

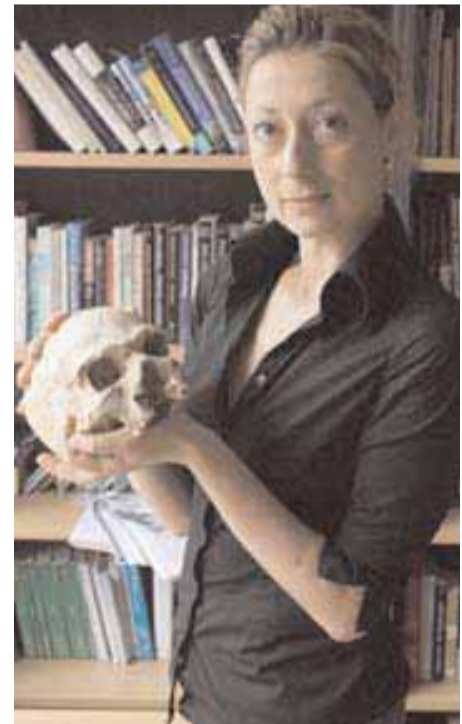
Her research is published in Nature, Science, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Journal of Human Evolution, American Journal of Physical Anthropology and International Journal of Primatology.

The handing-over of title will take place at the annual meeting of AAAS, on 20 February 2010, in San Diego of USA.

A few words about Dr Katerina Harvati

She was born in Athens in 1970 to parents originally from Epirus. In 1988 she was admitted to the Athens Law School but soon she realized that she wanted different things. She decided to leave for the United States where she received a degree in biology.

Dr. Harvati studied at Columbia University (BA, summa cum laude) and the City University of New York (MA, PhD), and held a doctoral fellowship at the American Museum of



Natural History, New York. Before joining the Max Planck Institute for Human Evolution in 2004, she was Assistant Professor at the Dept. of Anthropology, New York University. In addition to her current post as senior researcher at the MPI, Harvati is adjunct Associate Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center.

Her research is published in Nature, Science, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Journal of Human Evolution, American Journal of Physical Anthropology and International Journal of Primatology.

She was a member of the international group of geologists, archaeologists, biologists and anthropologists who proved that human beings have their roots in Africa, placed by TIME Magazine among the TOP 10 scientific discoveries in 2007.