

Gynaikokratia celebrated in Thrace

Women took 'control' of villages in Thrace this past weekend as part of the old tradition of Gynaikokratia. This tradition, which dates way back to the times of the Ottoman Days, is a day where the roles reverse in small communities and women take the role of a man and vice versa. Men are seen cleaning houses, washing dishes, and tending to other house chores; while women congregate in cafenia, socialize, play cards and enjoy the day. The tradition still has a strong following in the villages of Monoklisia, Petra, Kamila and Charopo or northern Greece.



Experimental cultivation of stevia rebaudiana as alternative crop is 'promising'

Called by many "the plant of the new millennium" and "the sugar of the future", Stevia was completely unknown in Greece up until 2006 when the University of Thessaly commenced a systematic scientific research aimed at introducing the plant to Greek farmers as an alternative crop, an effort that is ongoing.



According to Professor Petros Lolos, Thessaly University is the only foundation in Greece to systematically study stevia, which has been experimentally introduced in several parts of the country.

Lolos told ANA-MPA that stevia is of major agricultural, industrial and commercial interest for Greece, but also the EU, with respect to the growth of the agricultural and national economy.

Regarding the agricultural perspective, stevia could in the next 4-6 years, under certain conditions, become the new alternative crop for the former tobacco producers, Lolos said, adding that stevia cultivation could contribute to the diversification of

Greek agricultural but also to the exploitation of large farm expanses that have been abandoned. Given the current prices for stevia leaves internationally, the plant could ensure a satisfactory income and employment, without requiring subsidisation.

Since the plant is not threatened by many or serious 'enemies' or diseases, it is suitable for organic production and this is considered a "green" cultivation.

The species *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni, commonly known as sweetleaf, sweet leaf, sugarleaf, or simply stevia, is widely grown for its sweet leaves. As a sugar substitute, stevia's taste has a slower onset and longer dura-

tion than that of sugar, although some of its extracts may have a bitter or liquorice-like aftertaste at high concentrations.

In 2006 and 2007, University of Thessaly studies on the plant's adjustability, productivity and affordability conducted in ten agricultural regions in Greece (Serres, Xanthi, Grevena, Katerini, Toumpa Kilkis, Lamia, Drama, Zagliveri, Tithorea, Agrinio) produced very encouraging results. The plant's adjustability was proved to be satisfactory in conditions of limited fertilizer use and irrigation while is highly resistant to insects or diseases.

Professor Lolos, who heads the University of Thessaly research program, stressed that *Stevia rebaudiana* can be an innovative and alternative crop, replacing conventional and problematic ones, and can lead consumers in Greece and the EU away from the use of sugar and synthetic sweeteners. The specific plant can ensure a good income for farmers even better than tobacco.

Stevia rebaudiana is a species of herbs and shrubs in the sunflower family native to subtropical and tropical South America and Central America discovered in 1887 in Paraguay. For centuries, the Guaraní tribes of Paraguay and Brazil used *Stevia* species, primarily *S. rebaudiana* which they called *ka'a he'e* ("sweet herb"), as a sweetener in medicinal teas for treating heartburn and other ailments.



Carnival lovers bring color to the capital

Cyclists dressed in colorful Carnival outfits enjoy a ride through the sunny city center on Saturday. Leading the parade in Athens were hundreds of revelers from the western port city of Patra, the focus of the country's largest Carnival celebrations, which this year culminate on February 14.

ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

Re: Subsidy Program of the Ministry of education and Culture for Greek Departments at Universities abroad

Το Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού της Κύπρου χορήγησε 3.000 ΕΥΡΩ στο Πρόγραμμα Ελληνικών Σπουδών, του τμήματος Διεθνών Σπουδών στο Πανεπιστήμιο Macquarie, και εκχωρήθηκε στην κ. Ανδρούλα Στυλιανού, η οποία εκπονεί την διδακτορική της διατριβή στο προαναφερθέν τμήμα.

Dr Elizabeth Kefallinos

Greek Studies

Department of International Studies: European Languages and Cultures

Macquarie University, NSW, 2109

Australia

Phone: (02) 9850 7031

Fax: (02) 9850-7054

E-mail: Elizabeth.Kefallinos@mq.edu.au



AHEPA NSW EDUCATION COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO A PRESENTATION BY DR PANAYIOTIS DIAMADIS

"AUSTRALIAN TRAVELS IN MACEDONIA"

PRESENT

Macedonian Walkabout:

Australian travels in Macedonia

Through this fully illustrated presentation, Sydney-based historian Dr Panayiotis Diamadis will look at the history and culture of Macedonia through the eyes of Australians who have travelled there over the last century.

Some were soldiers, sent to the northern frontier of Hellas to defend democracy against Nazi tyranny. Some came over into Macedonia because of the overwhelming need created by the Hellenic Genocide of 1914-1924. Still others visited the land of Phillip and Alexander out of simple curiosity: to see what was there.

Many of these guests (some anonymous, some eponymous) have left written records of their memories and experiences. All those who returned to Australia came back with a deep admiration and love for Hellas and Hellenism. Through the words and images of Australian travellers, this presentation provides us with a look at Macedonia through Antipodean eyes.

SUNDAY 7th FEBRUARY 2010 at 6pm

Refreshments at conclusion - No admission fee

AHEPA HALL 394-396 Princes Highway Rockdale

