



INVITATION

The War Archive has the pleasure to invite you to a presentation by **Nikos Mitrogiannopoulos** entitled:

Greek and German Amateur films of the Occupation and of the December 1944 events ("Dekemvriana") in Athens

On Wednesday 26 June 2013 at 7.30 pm at the above address

There will be a screening of three amateur black and white and colour films shot by Greek civilians and German soldiers from the extensive collection of amateur war films of the Archeion:

- (a) The invaluable films of life and terror in occupied Athens shot, risking his life, by Angelos Papanastasiou (These are the version of the films authorized by the Papanastasiou family)
- (b) A truly superb and unknown film shot by a German soldier, H.He nnings, showing the daily life of the German occupation troops in Athens and in Salonica
- (c) A harrowing film shot right after the December 1944 events in Athens and featuring the destruction of large parts of Athens, the discoveries of graves and of cadavers of people killed.

Please note that the presentation will be in Greek, but all the films are silent

There will also be a small exhibition from the collection of military models of the Archive of some of the troops, planes, tanks and military vehicles used by the Germans in their Greek campaign and in particular of the parachute assault on Crete. There will also be on display a small sample of books from the collection of the Archeion on the experience of the Occupation and of the December events.

Light refreshments will be served after the presentation

Please let us know if you will attend by calling Ms Maka Dokhnadze either at the Archive number above, or on her mobile 69-98088220, but not later than Friday 21 June as space is limited.

Looking forward to seeing you at the War Archive !

The presenter

Nikos Mitrogiannopoulos

Was born in 1966 in Athens and studied Classical Philology at the Athens University and Film Direction at the School of Lykourous Stavrakos. He has been active in both areas of his studies. In 2002 he founded the “Anonymos” Archive of Audiovisual Material in order to rescue and utilize amateur films.

He has worked in projects for ELIA and has been closely collaborating with, and working for the Archeion Polemou since its foundation.

He has published articles and studies in various magazines such as Antikinimatografos, Kathreptis, Laiko Tragoudi and Metronomos

The topic and the films

Amateur films and film-making offer an invaluable insight in the way that common people face and appraise through their camera lenses either daily and familiar topics, important events in their social and family lives and, in extremis, the threat of war and of death. The Archeion is proud to have in its collections of videos a large number of amateur films, that is personal and unofficial, non-propaganda films shot during the war by both German and Allied soldiers and by Greeks.

Nikos Mitrogiannopoulos has chosen three of these to introduce, comment on and discuss.

His choices focus, first, on the way that an Athenian, Angelos Papanastasiou saw the horrors of the Occupation and then compares and contrast with the bland, literally touristic approach taken by the German soldier and his luxurious daily life in a military garage near the old Fix Factory in Syngrou Avenue. What is nearly surreal of this film is that H.Hennings the person who shot the film, returned to Athens in the early 1960s, revisited all his old haunts and filmed them again ! The guilty returning to the scene of the crime. The Archeion has this film too, but we will show it on a different occasion so as not to detract from the main issues and events examined here.

Last, and possibly controversially, is the film shot right after the December events (“Dekemvriana).The origins of the film are not known but it is not an “official” film as the style and form of filming clearly attests.Equally clearly it was shot in order to show the “atrocities” purportedly committed by ELAS. It is, therefore, likely that it was filmed during the visit to Athens of Walter Citrine, chairman of the Trade Union Conference in the UK , during 22-29 January 1945, less than three weeks after the Battle of Athens had ended. There are .however, scenes which both predate and postdate that visit, and hence the film clearly consists of short takes shot over a period of weeks. However we stress that we have no evidence as to who shot the film or the date of its filming.

The Archeion Polemou wishes to make it absolutely clear that in showing this film the Archeion does not take sides, nor shows it as evidence of killings committed by either side. There is enormous and bitter controversy over the number and cause of deaths of civilians during the Battle of Athens and of the origins of perpetrators. This is simply a rare filmatic evidence of the extreme violence visited on Greece just after the nightmare of the German occupation had ended.

Andrew Freris
Chairman of the Archeion