

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### 35<sup>th</sup> International Byron Conference

**6-13 September 2009, Greece**

Conference theme: "**Lord Byron and History**"

The 35<sup>th</sup> International Byron Conference will be held September 6-13, 2009 at Athens University and Messolonghi, with an overnight excursion on Saturday September 12, to Nafplion with visits to Mycenae, and Epidaurus concluded by a return by bus to Athens and the airport on Sunday September 13, 2009.

The Academic Committee welcomes proposals of 150-250 words for 20-minute papers exploring some aspect of "Lord Byron and History." This broad theme can accommodate a range of approaches and topics. Some papers might consider Byron's own reading of historical texts, his representation of historical situations or figures. Others might look at Byron's place in various histories--literary, political, and cultural. Still others might examine Byron's own histories, whether actual or fictive, or the alternative histories in which he has figured. Proposals should be sent by email to Professor Peter Graham, [pegraham@vt.edu](mailto:pegraham@vt.edu) not later than 30 December 2008.

Further details of the conference and registration will soon be published on the IBS website. Information about Messolonghi itself and the Messolonghi Byron Center can be found at [www.messolonghibyronsociety.gr](http://www.messolonghibyronsociety.gr); University of Athens information is available at [www.uoa.gr](http://www.uoa.gr).

Preliminary and tentative details about the excursion to Nafplion:

**Nafplion** brings you face to face with the beginnings of modern Greece. For several years after the Greek war of Independence (1821-28), this was Greece's first capital. Although the palace of Greece's young King Otto--a mail-order monarch from Bavaria --burned down in the 19th century, you can see the former mosque off Plateia Sydagma (Constitution Sq.) where Greece's first parliament met. Another legacy of those years is the impressive number of commemorative statues of revolutionary heroes, most of them known to Lord Byron, in Nafplion's squares and parks. Nafplion is described as the most charming town in the Peloponnese, with stepped streets overhung with balconies dripping with bougainvillea and jasmine, handsome neoclassical buildings, and enticing shops, restaurants, cafes and two fine museums. Nafplion also has two hilltop Venetian fortresses, a miniature castle (Bourtzi) on an island in the harbor, shady parks, and the best ice cream in the entire Peloponnese. The last night of the conference, which will feature a dramatic reading from Byron's works, will be spent at Nafplion.

**Mycenae**, meaning "Rich in Gold", was home of the mythical King Agamemnon. Mycenae was the most important and richest palatial centre of the Late Bronze Age in Greece. Its name was given to one of the greatest civilizations of Greek prehistory, the Mycenaean civilization, while the myths related to its history have inspired poets and writers over many centuries, from the Homeric epics and the great tragedies of the Classical period to contemporary

literary and artistic creation. Today, ancient Mycenae features an impressive array of archaeological excavations and artifacts.

**Epidauros**, the most celebrated healing center of the ancient world, was the sanctuary of Asklepios. The status of Asklepios as the most important healer god of antiquity brought to the sanctuary great financial prosperity and in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC enabled the implementation of an ambitious building program for the construction of monumental buildings for worship and secular buildings such as its magnificent theater. The theatre designed by Polykleitos the younger in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC has the only circular orchestra – stage (20m or 66ft in diameter) to have survived from antiquity. The theatre is remarkable for its exceptional acoustics, which permit perfect intelligibility of *unamplified* spoken word from the orchestra - stage, to all 15.000 spectators, regardless of their seating. The theatre's original 34 rows of limestone were extended in Roman times by another 21 rows, and still used today for the summer festival of ancient drama and receive thousands of visitors all year around.