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[εισαγωγικά]

Το περιοδικό *Έρεισμα για την Ιστορία*, είναι το διεπιστημονικό περιοδικό ανοιχτής πρόσβασης του Εργαστηρίου Νεότερης και Σύγχρονης Ιστορίας, και έχει σκοπό την προβολή και την ανάδειξη της ιστορικής έρευνας των υποψηφίων διδακτόρων, των μεταπτυχιακών και προπτυχιακών φοιτητών του Τμήματος Ιστορίας και Εθνολογίας, παλαιών και νέων, καθώς και άλλων ιστορικών και μεταδιδακτόρων, που ενδιαφέρονται να δημοσιεύσουν τις εργασίες τους σε αυτό. Τα άρθρα που δημοσιεύονται στο περιοδικό υπόκεινται σε κρίση από ανώνυμους κριτές. Τα θέματα αφορούν τη νεότερη και σύγχρονη ιστορία, από τον 15ο αιώνα έως σήμερα, και αφορούν κατά κύριο λόγο την πρόσφατη έρευνα που διεξάγεται σήμερα είτε στο εργαστήριο είτε σε άλλα τμήματα ιστορίας και ερευνητικά κέντρα. Το περιοδικό είναι ανοιχτό σε ιστορικούς, ανθρωπολόγους και πολιτικούς επιστήμονες που επιθυμούν να δημοσιεύσουν σε αυτό, καθώς στοχεύει στη διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση των θεμάτων που παρουσιάζονται στις σελίδες του. Στην ύλη του περιλαμβάνονται ακόμη ανταποκρίσεις από επιστημονικά συνέδρια και ημερίδες, ανταποκρίσεις από εκδηλώσεις στην πόλη της Κομοτηνής με ιστορικά θέματα, συνεντεύξεις και βιβλιοκρισίες. Φιλοδοξεί να γίνει ένα στήριγμα για την έρευνα των νέων στα πρώτα τους βήματα στην ακαδημαϊκή αρένα.

Η διευθύντρια του Εργαστηρίου Νεότερης και Σύγχρονης Ιστορίας

Αθηνά Συριάτου

[editorial]

The Journal *EREISMA* (which is Greek for ‘stepping stone’) is the open-access, peer reviewed, interdisciplinary journal of the Laboratory of Modern and Contemporary History of the Department of History and Ethnology of the Democritus University of Thrace and covers the period from 15th century to the present. Its chief aim is to bring to the general professional public historical research by PhD candidates and by current and previous post-graduate and undergraduate students of the Department of History and Ethnology, but it is very happy to consider publication of work by other historians. It will therefore showcase recent research, both from the Laboratory itself and from history departments in other Greek universities and other research institutions. As it targets on an interdisciplinary approach to history it invites articles not only from historians but also from anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists. It will also include reports on academic conferences and colloquia, cultural events regarding history taking place in Komotini, the seat of the Department as well as interviews and book reviews. The Journal hopes to become a stepping stone, publishing the work of young historians, as they take their first steps in their academic careers.

The Director of the Laboratory of Modern and Contemporary History

Athena Syriatou

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Antiquarianism, Orientalism, and an Eluding Modernity: Depictions of Greece in British Nineteenth-Century Travel Accounts[1]

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Introduction

The reflections on the Greek Revolution on the occasion of its bicentenary reminded us that the establishment of the Greek state in 1830 is said to have marked a decisive passage of the country from the Ottoman past into European modernity. Using nineteenth-century popular and influential travel accounts, this paper shall attempt to trace if there was any actual change in the depiction of modern Greeks and Greece in the perceptions of British travellers after the creation of the Greek state. To be more precise, it asks whether modern Greece and its inhabitants continued to be viewed primarily through the lens of Orientalism and antiquarianism during the rest of the nineteenth century, after the Greek War of Independence.

That ancient Greece and its culture cast a long shadow over the modern state is by no means a novel statement. Michael Herzfeld has suggested the term 'crypto-colonialism' to describe Greece; crypto-colonialism is an indirect form of colonisation, which Herzfeld defines as 'the curious alchemy' where countries, placed betwixt the colonizers and the colonized, essentially functioned as 'buffer zones' and managed to obtain political independence 'at the expense of massive economic dependence', resulting in the adoption of 'foreign models'. For Herzfeld, the countries that fit this profile constitute 'living paradoxes', since their dependence is merely nominal.[2]

What is more, he considers Greece as an example of crypto-colonialism, emphasizing that modern Greece always seems to be lacking when compared to the idealized ancient past, as a result of late eighteenth-century Aryanism. Thus, Herzfeld considers that European philologists and art historians who generated the neoclassical model of Greek culture were in fact performing cultural colonization.[3]

Similarly, Gonda Van Steen connects Hellenism to another colonial discourse, that of Orientalism, and states that the two are intertwined, since Hellenism, as the articulation of

[1] This article is based on a paper presented at the International Conference *Greece in Victorian Popular Culture*, Organized by the Department of English Language and Literature, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 8-9 April 2022.

[2] Michael Herzfeld, 'Absent Presence: Discourses of Crypto-Colonialism', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101 (2002): 900–901.

[3] Herzfeld, 'Absent Presence', 903.

the dichotomy 'the West versus the East', can hardly be separated from Orientalism. Additionally, she argues that Hellenism was for Western Europe 'a destination of literal travel, a sense of metaphorical homecoming or cultural belonging'. In this sense, Hellenism was an ideological vehicle for shaping an identity connected to ancient Greece.[4] This resulted in a differentiation between modern and ancient Greeks and in the subsequent categorization of the former as Oriental. Nonetheless, philhellenic discourse, under the form of a 'concern with classical antiquity', presented an opportunity for the 1821 War of Independence to be received as a Western cause and as a battle of civilizations.[5]

Stathis Gougouris continues in this train of thought, by considering Greece and the concepts of Hellenism and Philhellenism as a 'colonization of the ideal'. Moreover, he also observes a link between Philhellenism and (Western) civilization:

> As fantasy, Philhellenism always constitutes a desire – the desire for civilization, and particularly for civilization as the anthropocentric dissolution of myth, which the Enlightenment retroactively discovered to be its historical project. 'We are all Greeks' Shelley would declare in his famous Preface to *Hellas* (1822), encapsuling perhaps the displacement of Hellenes from a historical reality to an ontological condition.[6]

For Gougouris, Hellenism is connected to the 'most characteristic ideological industries of the period', that is, nineteenth-century philology, and more specifically, the 'Science of Antiquity', as he calls the discipline of Classics. He also observes that travel literature played an important part in 'recycling' these preconceived ideas throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[7]

Pandeleimon Hionidis also underlines the significance of British travel accounts of Greece and modern Greeks as a source of information in Victorian Britain. Additionally, he observes the distinction between modern and ancient Greeks and states that in spite of 'occasional allusions to the classical age', the interpretation of modern Greek culture was defined according to British conceptions of 'progress', 'civilization', 'character' and 'race' that were more relevant to early Victorian Britain rather than to the modern reality of Greece.[8]

i. A culture in ruins: Travel accounts on modern Greece and the Greeks in the early nineteenth century

To begin with early nineteenth-century travel accounts, politician and traveller John Hobhouse expresses his adoration for the 'ground once trod by heroes and sages of antiquity' upon reaching Athens. In addition, he stresses the significance of classical Athens to 'all the polished nations of every succeeding age', which he believes were and remain unparalleled. He also laments the fact that only ruins remain of the ancient city; nonetheless

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[4] Efterpi Mitsi and Amy Muse, 'Some Thoughts on the Trails and Travails of Hellenism and Orientalism: An Interview with Gonda Van Steen', *Synthesis: Hellenism Unbound,* no. 5 (2013): 159-160.

[5] Mitsi and Muse, 'Interview with Gonda Van Steen', 168-169.

[6] Stathis Gougouris, *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization and the Institution of Modern Greece*, Twenty-fifth Anniversary Edition (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2021), 6, 127.

[7] Gougouris, *Dream Nation*, 128, 134-135.

[8] Pandeleimon Hionidis, 'Travelling and the Shaping of Images: Victorian Travellers on Nineteenth-Century Greece', *International Journal of Cultural and Digital Tourism* 1, no. 2 (2014): 30-31.

these ruins have 'more value than all the rude and costly monuments of barbaric labour'.[9]

Furthermore, Hobhouse also comments on the ignorance of modern Greeks of the classical past; for instance, he mentions that the Greeks of Thebes incorrectly informed him about the location of the ruins of Pindar's house and notes their lack of actual 'knowledge' regarding classical antiquity.[10] More interesting is the matter of the Elgin marbles, which he analyses in detail in the notes of his account. Hobhouse defends Elgin's actions and presents the issue as a battle between British and French; he theorizes that the French want to add Greece to the 'dominions of Napoleon' and 'in that case, not even our nationality would prefer a possession of some of their broken parts to their integrity in the hands of an enlightened enemy'. Other arguments in favour of the removal of the Parthenon marbles include the fact that they were not stolen but bought, that the Ottomans would have destroyed them and that they would be treated much better in England, where their presence would benefit artists and antiquarian scholars. Additionally, he states that 'anyone who has seen Athens and modern Athenians' could not possibly believe that they would rebel and achieve independence any time soon; therefore, since he does not consider that possible, the removal of the marbles should not be offensive to them; on the contrary, he expresses the view that Athenians agreed with the removal of the marbles away from 'the country of the tyrant Turk'. He does mention, nonetheless, that a Greek from Ioannina warned him that these artifacts belonged to Greeks and that one day 'we Greeks will come and redemand them'.[11]

Regarding Hobhouse's observations on the modern Greeks, he traces many similarities with their ancestors as far as their customs, 'their bodily appearance, their dress, their diet […] their tempers' are concerned. He also finds that there is a 'national likeness' in spite of a few differences between islanders and mainlanders and in the case of the young men in particular he identifies the same features as those of the 'models for the ancient sculptors'. However, he finds a difference in the modern Greeks' affinity for acquiring and displaying wealth, which was a far cry from the 'virtuous customs of the past'; a habit that Hobhouse finds imprudent.[12] Moreover, he is rather judgmental of the numerous superstitions of modern Greeks, which he attributes to the Orthodox church, and of their 'Oriental' habits, such as the 'use of the hot bath', which he thought was injurious to health as it caused too much relaxation. He also supports the view that the ancients did not 'indulge' often in this habit because they considered it as excessive as 'love and wine'[13] and adds:

> After all, this species of gymnastic has in it something rather revolting to our notions of delicacy, and is perhaps, not free from rational objection […]. The manners of the barbarous people of the West and North, seem less exceptionable in most points than those of the Orientals; amongst which the Greeks and in some measure even the Romans, may be classed, and the modern Franks may reckon themselves to be better, if not wiser men, than the boasted nations of antiquity.[14]

Other Oriental cultural attributes of the Greeks – both ancient and modern – include the

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[9] John C. Hobhouse, *A Journey Through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople, During the Years 1809 and 1810*, Volume 1 (Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1817), 184-185, 222.

[10] Hobhouse, *A Journey*, 1:235, 238.

[11] Hobhouse, *A Journey*, 1:286-287.

[12] Hobhouse, *A Journey*, 1:26-27, 417-418.

[13] Hobhouse, *A Journey*, 1:437-448.

[14] Hobhouse, *A Journey*, 1:438.

beard, the lose robe, the recumbent posture and the subordinate position of women in society.[15]

The account of English naturalist and clergyman E.D. Clarke is mostly preoccupied with antiquarian research. More specifically, in every place he visits he seeks out valuable antiquities in order to buy them. In Patmos he buys several manuscripts from the library of the monastery of St John, and since he felt that the monks were 'ignorant', he tries to downplay his desire to acquire the manuscripts because he was afraid that otherwise the monks would refuse to sell them; while in Naxos, Epiada (near Epidavros), Nauplia (Nafplio), Corinth, among other places, he searches for and buys ancient coins from the local population.[16]

Furthermore, while Clarke is in Athens, he comments on the fact that many excavations were conducted by travellers; he and his companion, Mr Cripps, also excavate some wells and a tumulus, and he even gives out information about were to search for antiquities. Additionally, he points out that "Turks" and Greeks called Athens 'ΑΘΗΝΗ', and that it was the duty of antiquarians to adopt all the ancient names of the places they travelled in order to reinstate their ancient names. He also comments quite negatively about Elgin's spoliation of the Parthenon marbles. Nonetheless, the main reason for his condemnation of Elgin is the fact that he damaged the antiquities and that he destroyed the effect that Phidias wanted to create. However, Clarke himself got permission from the Ottoman authorities to detach the statue of Demetra in Elefsis, even though such an act was prohibited by the British ambassador and against the wishes of the locals, who even cursed the ship that carried it away.[17]

Regarding modern Greeks, Clarke thoroughly describes the wretchedness of the Greek peasants in Delphi, Livadia and generally in the dominion of Ali Pasha, whom he considers responsible for the impoverished population.[18] Another characteristic that he believes was directly derived from the Ottomans was the Greeks' ostentatiousness. More specifically, he points out the display of wealth in their clothing and stresses that the wealthy Greeks imitate their inflated masters, the 'Turks'.[19] However, when it comes to the matter of superstitions, he traces many similarities between those of the ancient and the modern Greeks, while he rejoices to find the dances essentially the same as in antiquity.[20]

ii. Back to the future: the images of the Greek state and modern Greeks in the second half of the nineteenth century

Turning now to the travel accounts after the establishment of the Greek state, Scottish politician William Mure starts his narrative by acknowledging that, in the previous years, a

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[15] John C. Hobhouse, *A Journey Through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople, During the Years 1809 and 1810*, Volume 2 (Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1817), 245-248.

[16] Edward Daniel Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, pt. 2, *Greece, Egypt and the Holy Land*, vol. 6 (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1817), 41-44, 45, 105, 391, 434, 544-545, 252.

[17] Clarke, *Travels*, 2/6:199, 207-208, 224, 336-337, 616-617, 623.

[18] Edward Daniel Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa*, pt. 2, vol. 7 (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1817), 225-226, 277-278.

[19] Clarke, *Travels*, 2/7:154.

[20] Clarke, *Travels*, 2/6:175, 345.

journey in Greece was essentially a journey in Turkey, having more of an 'Oriental' rather than a 'classical' or a 'European' character; nonetheless, he observes that there are no more Oriental aspects in Greece, even though some of the changes that had occurred were not 'for the better'. Additionally, the shift from slavery to freedom has resulted to a change in the character of the population. Therefore, he considers his account as a re-introduction to (modern) Greece.[21]

Still, like the previous travellers, Mure attempts to trace the ancient world in the modern reality; he compares the 'predatory warfare' on the Ionian sea (Ithaca and Epirus) to the situation described by Homer in the *Odyssey* and the custom to defend one's self by throwing rocks, as well as the ferocity of the local dogs. Moreover, he finds similarities between the 'pastoral life' of ancient Greeks as described by Homer, to what he witnesses in modern Greece.[22] Regarding the character of modern Greeks, while he considers them a 'degenerate' version of the 'nobler talents' of their ancestors – 'the sweetest wine makes the sourest vinegar' – he still believes that they 'share, at least in the blood as well as in the spirit of the ancient Hellenes' and he traces this similarity in their 'tenacity'. More specifically, he notes that, unlike the Turks and the Romans, whom he deems barbarous, the Greeks assert their superiority with art; and argues that the fact that the Greeks remained Christian in a Muslim empire is proof of their tenacity. What is more, Mure adamantly states that the Greek War of Independence is of equal importance to the Greco-Persian Wars and calls it 'an event unexampled in the history of mankind', as it provides proof that after centuries of oppression, when slavery 'had become to them a second nature', they still managed to rise against the 'overwhelming power of their oppressors'.[23]

Nonetheless, Mure's antiquarianism is also evident as he highlights the difficulty of finding a capable local tour guide with actual antiquarian knowledge and specifically when he talks about his travelling servant, Nicola, who was no help in his antiquarian endeavours. He is equally displeased to realize that Otto's government is indifferent to restoring any antiquities other than those of Athens, a fact that he finds inexcusable after a decade of 'comparative tranquillity'. He also comments on the fact that as a result of the natives' interaction with travellers the former have begun to be more acquainted with the classical names of ancient cities, to the point that he claims that the classical names are being 'restored' and he offers the case of Leake[24] in Oeniade, which was called Trikardo by modern Greeks.[25] His disapproval of the modern culture was not restricted to the names of the towns, but to the towns themselves, as he lamented that 'nothing can certainly be more dismal than the aspect of those masses of hovels or rubbish, which under the barbarous appellations of Skripu, Koklas, Karvata etc. have succeeded to the classical sites of Orchomenus, Plataea, or Mycene'.[26]

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[21] William Mure, *Journal of a Tour in Greece and the Ionian Islands*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1842), vi-viii.

[22] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:94-97, 99, 298.

[23] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:145, 148-151.

[24] William Martin Leake (14 January 1777–6 January 1860) was an English military man, topographer and antiquarian with important contribution to the study of ancient Greece. 'William Martin Leake', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Martin-Leake (accessed on 01/03/2022).

[25] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:66-67, 105-106, 110, 184, 219.

[26] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:117-118.

Additionally, he observes the 'oriental manners' of the modern Greeks in their domestic life and he considers the lack of furniture such as chairs and tables in their houses, as a 'trait of Turko-Greek barbarism'. Further on in the narrative, upon spending a rather uncomfortable night at an inn, where people shared the same space as animals, he initially expressed the belief that this 'lack of domestic comfort' was probably a result of the 'adoption of the filthy habits of the successive race of barbarians' who were their conquerors. Nonetheless, he then acknowledges that the peasants in Homer's time probably lived in the same conditions. However, he could not help but find them offensive to the 'higher standard of modern European civilization'.[27]

What is more, Mure refers to modern Greeks as a 'semi-barbarous nation' and expresses some quite negative comments about the 'pompous displays of European civilization' on king Otto's behalf, as his palace heavily contrasts to the 'hovels', 'rubbish', 'misery and barbarism' of the modern town of Athens.[28] Another account of the 'semi-barbarism' of the modern Greeks was their habit of separating the women – a habit that existed both in the Ottoman Empire and ancient Greece – but was, nonetheless, contrary to notions of European civilization; he admits, though, that this phenomenon has begun to eclipse. All in all, Mure's verdict of modern Greeks was that they were 'Asiatics' when it came to both social and political views and that a 'civilized European power' should 'correct or eradicate' their faults in order for them to become 'civilized'.[29]

In the first two editions (1840, 1845) of Murray's *Handbook for Travellers*, Greece was included in the same volume as the Ottoman Empire. Published under the title *A Handbook for Travellers in the Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Constantinople*, they include information from various travel accounts, by Tournefort, Clarke, Hobhouse, Holland, Morrit and Leake, and others. The guidebook mostly contains practical information about routes and does not comment much about the state of modern Greeks, except stating their superstitious character, their avariciousness, the 'ridiculousness' of the rites of the Greek Church and the difficulties encountered by travellers because of the lack of roads and the inferiority of the hotels and inns.[30] In 1854, Murray published a *Handbook* that treated Greece separately from the Ottoman Empire and was largely based on new material; this edition included the Ionian Islands, the Kingdom of Greece, the Aegean Islands, Albania, Thessaly and Macedonia. The author of the *Handbook* justifies this decision by claiming that these regions were chosen on the basis that even though they did not belong to the Greek Kingdom, they are 'still *Greek* in those great elements of nationality – blood, religion and language'.[31] It could be argued that the areas included in the edition were chosen for their classical associations; that is their 'Greekness' derived its legitimacy from their classical connotations rather than the more chronologically recent Byzantine Empire.

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[27] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:29, 120. William Mure, *Journal of a Tour in Greece and the Ionian Islands*, Volume 2 (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1842), 14, 16-17.

[28] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 1:29, 2: 34.

[29] Mure, *Journal of a Tour*, 2:216, 288-289.

[30] John Murray, *A Hand-book for Travellers in the Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Constantinople* (London: John Murray, 1840), i-ii, iv, 17-19, 22-23.

[31] John Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece: Describing the Ionian Islands, the Kingdom of Greece, the islands of the Aegean Sea, with Albania, Thessaly, and Macedonia* (London: John Murray, 1854), v (italics in the original).

The antiquarianism of the *Handbook* is also evident in its assertion that 'Greece holds the most interest for Antiquarians' and in its preoccupation with the restoration of the ancient (classical) names of Greek towns. The *Handbook*'s writer rejoices that 'we are gradually coming back to the names dear to us from a thousand memories […] instead of the new-fangled Genoese or Venetian appellations.' Additionally, the Greek War of Independence is compared to the Persian Wars.[32] Nonetheless, once again the modern culture is found wanting compared to the ancient one; the writer quotes a passage from Leake about the relationship between ancient Greek and the modern language which is rather revealing: 'The modern dialect of the Greeks bears the same comparison with its parent language, as the poverty and debasement of the present generation to the refinement and opulence of their ancestors.' However, Leake adds that modern Greek can be useful in better understanding the ancient language and culture.[33]

Regarding the commentary about the state of the country, the observations of the previous editions about the lack of carriage roads and proper inns and hotels are repeated for most areas, with the exception of Athens. The lack of infrastructure is attributed to the 'profligate expenditure of the public revenue' and to the preference of Greek labourers to work in their fields rather than in public works. In any case, the writer underlines that the state is newly founded and that its progress, for instance in commerce, should be applauded.[34]

The fifth edition of the *Handbook* (1884) boasts an important addition regarding the medieval history of Greece, which, as stated, was 'hitherto totally neglected in all guides to Greece.' However, the value of Byzantine culture is identified in its 'high antiquity' and in its function as a link between the ancient and modern cultures. Nevertheless, the fact that Greece is mostly deemed interesting due to its classical past is reasserted by using excerpts and comments from previous editions. What is more, the effort to connect ancient survivals in the customs of the modern Greeks is still a usual occurrence. Of note is the distinction between superior antiquities and 'barbaric' ones: for instance, Mycenaean artifacts are being classed as 'Oriental', 'Asiatic' and of 'barbaric character'.[35]

Regarding the issue of the Greek state, the *Handbook* mentions that it is in debt, considers the justice system 'venal' and its prisons wretched. When the British minister in Greece, Sir Thomas Wyse, tried to ameliorate the prison system, the results were only temporary. Additionally, it underlined the need for Greeks to obtain 'moral training'.[36]

Richard Farrer, who travelled to Greece in 1880 and published his travelogue two years later, begins his account by expressing the wish to indicate two points to possible travellers; firstly the erroneous impression of the 'progress and Enlightenment' of the Greeks, and secondly, the 'fair scenery, and still fairer ruins, of a once glorious land'.[37] He devotes numerous pages to the description of the 'capital of ancient art and learning'; yet it is rather interesting that he comments on the Elgin marbles to defend Lord Elgin by stating that

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[32] Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece (1854)*, vii, 2, 32.

[33] Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece (1854)*, 36-37.

[34] Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece (1854)*, 14-15, 20, 44.

[35] John Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece*, Vol. 1 (5th ed.) (London: John Murray, 1884): iii, 7-9, 21, 63-64, 76, 144, 163, 207.

[36] Murray, *Handbook for Travellers in Greece (1884)*, 62, 79.

[37] Richard Ridley Farrer, *A Tour in Greece, 1880* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1882), vi-vii.

even though he spoiled them, his actions were justified as the antiquities would be better treated in London, where they would be widely available to 'lovers of art'. He also states that the British government tried to make amends for this 'alleged injustice' by giving out casts of the marbles to the Acropolis Museum but, as Farrer claims, 'it is not the way of the natives to acknowledge these little courtesies'. What is more, he points out that even though modern-day Athenians boast about 'their glorious ancestors', essentially they are ignorant of classics; for example, he claims that they could not read classical poetry properly, something that caused him 'harmless amusement'.[38]

Regarding the progress of the Greek state, Farrer complains about the lack of 'civilization' in all aspects of culture; he finds the steamers 'unbearable', mocks the port at Loutraki ('if indeed a landing-stage and a raki shop can be dignified with that title'), the slow speed of carriages, the 'inelastic' hotels and the lack of cleanliness. He proclaims that the Hellenic Kingdom is not civilized, and compares it to Arabia and Central Africa and its inhabitants to similarly 'idle races' who are prone to crime, such as the Irish.[39]

A few years later, classicist John Edwin Sandys published the account of his journey in Greece. In his prologue he expresses his happiness in visiting a land that brought memories from his 'school days'. His love of classics is also made obvious by numerous mentions and quotations of ancient authors, such as Pausanias, Aristophanes and Herodotus. What is more, he traces modern Greek words like fish to the ancient Greek ones and theorizes that the simple, everyday words of modern Greek 'have the greatest departure from ancient usage'.[40] However, Sandys is dismissive of the treatment of antiquities on behalf of the state; for instance, he expresses his disapproval at finding a broken inscription lying on the ground. Additionally, he describes the museum of sculpture in Olympia as a' badly lighted shed', and states that it is much more preferable to study antiquities in English galleries and museums.[41]

Regarding the state of modern Greece, he observes that although the country remains backward regarding roads, there have been some improvements, since railways and steamers operate. Nonetheless, he states that not much information is available to travellers and the purpose of his account is to assist by making this information available. In addition, he mentions that the Greek trade has developed considerably. He also comments favourably on the steamers of the Hellenic Company, which he finds clean and comfortable. Nevertheless, he mentions that the trains were very slow to the degree that a dog could 'accompany' them.[42]

iii. From Orientalism to Balkanism: the Greek Revolution as a rite of passage?

As all the above-mentioned accounts show, throughout the nineteenth century the image of modern Greece and its inhabitants was viewed, if not constructed, though the lens of antiquarianism. As Yannis Hamilakis has recently argued, the idealized image of ancient

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[38] Farrer, *A Tour in Greece*, 30-48, 86-87.

[39] Farrer, *A Tour in Greece*, 21-22, 26-28, 57, 67, 138.

[40] John Edwin Sandys, *An Easter Vacation in Greece* (London: Macmillan, 1887), xi-xii, 9-10, 17, 22-23, 43, 48, 58, 59, 67, 90.

[41] Sandys, *An Easter Vacation in Greece*, 20, 98-99.

[42] Sandys, *An Easter Vacation in Greece*, vii-viii, ix, 22.

Greece was a form of colonization of the modern one, which aimed at the absorption of the country into the 'Western sphere of influence':

> Western Hellenism as we know it, is going to be defined as a construction of a certain version of ancient Hellas, which had only a tenuous connection to the social realities of ancient Greece as an Eastern Mediterranean phenomenon and its designation as the original moment of Western civilization.[43]

Hamilakis points out the dismay that Western travellers felt at having to imagine the ancient civilization even on Greek land due to the dilapidated state of the ancient monuments and the existence of monuments from later time periods. Additionally, modern Greeks were dismissed as barbarians due to their lack of knowledge and acknowledgement of the importance of their own ancient past. Moreover, Hamilakis stresses that '1821 was a monumentalized and archaeologized war in a monumentalized and archaeologized country' and considers this 'archaeologization' of Greece as an Orientalist discourse.[44]

Furthermore, in his 2007 book *The Nation and its Ruins*, Hamilakis asserts that the 1821 Revolution was presented both by Europeans and by the Greek middle class as the continuation of the Greek nation's perpetual struggle with its Oriental Others. This resulted in the interpretation of the Greek Revolution by its contemporaries as a unique case, effectively separating it from the other similar efforts of the Age of Revolution, and while this granted the Greek Struggle legitimacy, at the same time it obliterated its radical and social character through its monumentalization in space and time. What is more, he uses Mary Douglas' notion of purity and danger to explain the removal of any post-classical monuments in the area of the Acropolis, with few exceptions, as well as any contemporary ones. Nonetheless, in this effort to "cleanse" the site of "barbaric elements", the archaeological site of the Acropolis was cut off of the rest of the urban fabric, thus creating a past that never existed, what Hamilakis calls "sterile sites". Additionally, he stresses that Greece's ancient past is the basis on which Greeks were and are evaluated, while at the same time the Greeks themselves assert their European present and future based on the symbolic capital of their past. This results in a double pressure; on one hand, the pressure of having to fulfill European expectations of curating their classical heritage; and on the other, to prove that they are worthy descendants of their ancestors. In any case, the European discourse around Hellenism and archaeology played a crucial part in the formation of the Greek national identity.[45]

Indeed, all the above-mentioned motifs are evident in British travellers' accounts both before and after the establishment of the Greek state. Sandys complains that the effect of the Acropolis and of Lycabettus is destroyed by the existence of modern houses and Farrer is astonished at the bewilderment of modern Greeks that foreigners were only interested in visiting ancient ruins and were completely indifferent to modern Greek culture.[46] Addition-

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[43] Yannis Hamilakis, *Modernity's Sacred ruins: Colonialism, Archaeology and the National Imagination in Greece and Israel* (Athens: British School at Athens open lecture, 11/03/2021), 11:20-11:55. https://youtu.be/C0qskcTK2Uw?t=715 (accessed on 05/03/2022).

[44] Hamilakis, *Modernity's Sacred ruins*, 13:00-18:30.

[45] Yannis Hamilakis, *Το Έθνος και τα Ερείπιά του. Αρχαιότητα, αρχαιολογία και εθνικό φαντασιακό στην Ελλάδα* (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις του Εικοστού Πρώτου, 2012), 105, 109, 115-116, 125, 130-132, 150. Original publication in English: *The Nation and its Ruins. Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[46] Sandys, *An Eastern Vacation in Greece*, 24; Farrer, A Tour in Greece, 58.

ally, more or less all travellers criticised modern Greeks' lack of knowledge of the classical past. The reinstatement of the ancient names of towns, for instance, also became a sort of crusade for them. In this sense, their knowledge of classics entitled them to intervene in the modern reality of Greece under the grounds that they were restoring the superior ancient civilization. As mentioned previously, for Gougouris the Hellenic civilization was a construction of 'the science of Antiquity', Classics, which took on egocentric characteristics by functioning as a source of verification of the supremacy of the West.[47] This can be corroborated as well by the rather predatory collection practices of ancient antiquities by travellers, who went as far as detaching artifacts and moving them to England under the pretence that they were merely saving them from the barbaric treatment of the Ottomans. Furthermore, Hobhouse's comments both on Elgin and on the matter of the baths are quite revealing in this regard; in the first case, the acquisition of classical antiquities is acknowledged as a form of imperial competition, and in the second the habit of bathing is used to confirm the superior morality of the 'Franks'.

At the outset, we raised the question whether Greece continued to be viewed through the lens of Orientalism and antiquarianism after independence. However, I argue here that this is not exactly the case. As shown by the travellers' accounts, and as mentioned by Hamilakis and Van Steen, the 1821 War of Independence was given symbolically charged ideological connotations by being compared to the Persian Wars. Additionally, it was shown that even though the modern Greek state was considered backward compared to the 'civilized' world, even its most ardent critic, Farrer – who had underlined the false impressions of Europeans about the 'progress' of the Greeks – admits that some towns like Athens, Patra and Syra exhibit signs of 'life and progress'.[48] Also, Mure refers to modern Greeks as 'semi-barbaric'. This suggests that the Orientalist-barbaric image of the Greeks under the Ottoman rule switched to a Balkanist, 'semi-barbaric' image of the Greek state, as described by Maria Todorova; no longer a complete 'other', but an 'inferior self'.[49] This contention is compatible with both Hamilakis' and Gougouris' assertion that antiquarianism and Philhellenism provided the means for the ideological colonization of the modern Greeks and a moral basis for their absorption in the Western sphere of influence. Therefore, the Greek War of Independence becomes a 'rite of passage' for modern Greeks who moved from the barbaric Orient to the civilized West, were they belonged as the descendants of the founders of Western civilization. However, modern Greeks are found lacking in comparison to both their ancestors and Western travellers, and can only be classified as 'semi-civilized'. In this sense, it could be argued that antiquarianism, Orientalism and Balkanism are essentially the same colonial discourse with the same aim: to reaffirm the superiority of the 'self' that merely adjusts its rhetoric according to its own preconstructed hierarchy.

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[47] Gougouris, *Dream Nation*, 134-135.

[48] Farrer, *A Tour in Greece*, 58.

[49] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 16.

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