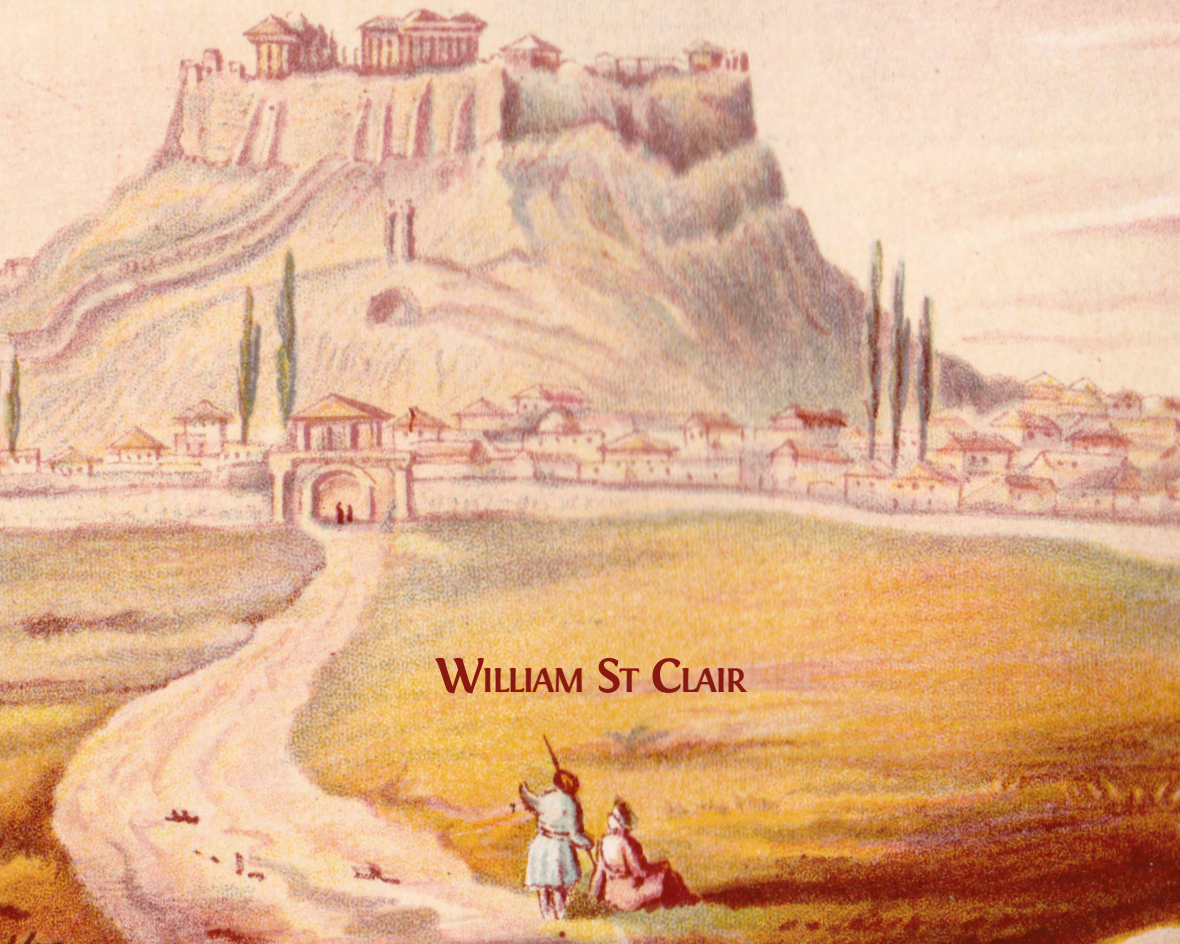


# Who Saved the Parthenon?

A New History of the Acropolis  
Before, During and After the  
Greek Revolution



WILLIAM ST CLAIR

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PARTHENON?

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*William St Clair*



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# Editors' Note

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This book is the culmination of decades of immersion in its material and years of painstakingly careful research and writing. Sadly the author, William St Clair, died in 2021 shortly before the manuscript was planned to go into production. He left behind electronic folders filled with his most recent drafts of the book's many chapters. It was our task, together with all the staff at Open Book Publishers, the academic press of which William St Clair was chairman, to make the book ready for publication.

Most of the chapters were in a polished state, but several bore the marks of unfinished drafting and one, which he had only just begun to write, had to be abandoned, its material folded into other chapters of the book. The task of editing the manuscript was therefore a complex one. We worked closely on the significant revisions required, balancing the final changes needed to craft a book worthy of William St Clair's distinguished academic record while remaining faithful to what we thought were his precise intentions. The guidance of Roderick Beaton was invaluable in steering us through the many pitfalls that might otherwise have arisen when editing a book whose author was no longer there to clarify points of confusion, smooth out wrinkles or correct previously unnoticed errors. Thanks are also due to Emily Lane, who worked with William St Clair and provided him with a keen editorial eye during earlier phases of the writing process, and to Sam Noble, who helped us in the final stage.

Every effort has been made to find any information that was missing from the references and captions, but inevitably in such a large book, without the author to lay his hand on the required volume or to interpret a cryptic note, the occasional gap may remain.

The most radical decision we took was to remove five chapters from the manuscript entirely and include them in a soon-to-be-published separate volume, *The Classical Parthenon: Recovering the Strangeness of the*

*Ancient World*. It had always been William St Clair's plan to release these chapters to be published on their own, in what he called a customised edition. The majority of readers of this latter volume he thought would be classical scholars who would not necessarily be interested in the modern Parthenon during the Romantic era, the Greek Revolution and up to the present day. However he did intend that all the chapters also remained in the larger single volume. It was our decision that, in an already lengthy book, we should pay heed to the instinct that had first led William St Clair to separate out these customised chapters. We hope that our efforts as editors have helped to make this first of two books a superb literary legacy from an outstanding scholar with a lifelong interest in the Parthenon and all its meanings.

David St Clair and Lucy Barnes March 2022.



# Preface

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William St Clair, who died on 30 June 2021 at the age of 83, while this book was in preparation for press, is justly well known to readers interested in the ancient monuments of Athens and particularly in the fortunes of their sculptures since the early nineteenth century. *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, first published in 1967, tells the story of the flawed Scottish aristocrat who determined to take advantage of his appointment as HM Ambassador to Constantinople, in 1799, in order to improve the standards of the decorative arts in Great Britain—and ended up transporting a large part of the sculpted monuments from the Acropolis of Athens to London, where they later ended up in the British Museum. Thirty years after that book's first publication, the author returned to the controversial story of these 'marbles' in a third edition, published in 1998, that added much new material about the monuments and raised searching issues about the custodianship of cultural heritage. No less of a classic is St Clair's second book, first published in 1972 and reissued in 2008 with much new visual material thanks to the possibilities of digital publishing offered by Open Book Publishers. *That Greece Might Still Be Free* tells in unprecedented detail the often tragic stories of those European and American volunteers who risked everything to go and fight in the Greek Revolution, or War of Independence, during the 1820s.

As might be expected, the author returns to the themes of both those books in *Who Saved the Parthenon?*—but with a considerable difference. During the intervening decades this most versatile of scholars had turned his attention to such diverse matters as what he called the 'political economy of reading', the early history of feminism, and the history of slavery, as well as becoming a champion of Open Access publishing. All of these separate strands come together in the remarkable richness of the present book. Drawing on his in-depth study of publishing practices and reading habits in Britain from the first printed books to

the mid-nineteenth century, published in 2004 as *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, St Clair had more recently applied himself to developing a concept of ‘viewing’ to match that of ‘reading’ that he had explored in that book. In the chapters which follow, the author of *The Reading Nation* maps out what he calls ‘a history of conjunctures of consumption’, as he discusses the many contrasting, overlapping, and self-contradictory ways in which different categories of viewer, and many different individuals of many different backgrounds and nationalities, have viewed the ancient monuments of the Acropolis from the seventeenth century to the present—with the lion’s share going to the period immediately before, during and after the Greek Revolution of the 1820s.

During the same period, St Clair had addressed the early history of feminism in Britain, in the twelve volumes of facsimiles of rare editions, with editorial introductions and commentary, *Conduct Literature for Women*, edited with Irmgard Maassen. Covering the period from 1500 to 1710, these appeared in two sets of six volumes in 2000 and 2002 respectively. The history of slavery became the subject of another large-scale monograph with the publication in 2006 of *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade*, published a year later in the USA as *The Door of No Return, The History of Cape Coast Castle and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*.

Together with its companion volume, *The Classical Parthenon: Recovering the Strangeness of the Ancient World* (on which see the Editors’ Note), *Who Saved the Parthenon?* draws together all these disparate themes and approaches. The result is a complex synthesis that is hard to categorise, or to compare with other books, including the author’s own, that traverse some of the same terrain. Two causes espoused vigorously by William St Clair in his later years—the history and ethics of the custodianship of cultural heritage (as exemplified in the emblematic case of the ‘Elgin Marbles’) and the value of Open Access publishing—animate the whole project, the first as a running theme (though never, this time, the dominating one), the second in the book’s expansive structure, its inclusion of a wealth of visual images, on a scale that would scarcely have been possible in a volume designed to be bound and marketed by traditional methods, and, of course, the collaboration with Open Book Publishers.

Greece, ancient and modern, and the intersection of both with the European Romantic movement, are very much to the fore once again. St Clair's scepticism about that creation of the early nineteenth century, nationalism, and his humane critique of the violent excesses it can engender, shine through; scrupulous and meticulous as a historian, the author also displays the strong moral compass that was evident in his life and his earlier writings. And there is even something reminiscent of the 'father of history', Herodotus of Halicarnassus, in the book's length, in its exhaustive treatment of details as well as the broader picture, in its many digressions, and in the way the narrative often loops back to pick up earlier threads and weave them into new and unexpected patterns. Just one example is the storks, whose wide nests atop ancient columns used to be described, and sometimes drawn or painted, by many visitors to the Acropolis before the Greek Revolution of 1821. Driven off by the violence, possibly even hunted for food during successive sieges, and finally exiled in the interests of archaeological purity for a reconstituted ancient site, the long forgotten storks return at different moments in the narrative to remind us of how drastically the monuments of ancient Athens have changed, along with the ways in which we (whoever we happen to be) see them.

Summing up a lifetime of erudition and scholarship, and thanks to the mode of Open Access publishing pioneered by Open Book, *Who Saved the Parthenon?* is a monumental work in several senses. The hundreds of high-quality images alone are to be treasured, and many of them are extremely rare; extensive notes provide additional information and a wealth of bibliographical and archival resources. But above all, as a biographer and a historian William St Clair knew how to tell a story vividly, with compassion and an eye for human detail. Alongside discussions that are more theoretical, this book contains passages of beautifully written, highly paced narrative that bring home the horrors experienced by ordinary people of all walks of life, on both sides of a brutal war, in Athens during the decade of the 1820s when Greece fought its way to recognition as the first modern nation-state in Europe.

Had the author lived to see this book through to publication, he would have had the opportunity to enrich its already huge bibliography with a number of items which either appeared too late or to which he would not have access during the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021.

The interested reader may wish to consult any or all of the following titles, which in different ways complement aspects of this book:

Elizabeth Key Fowden, 'Portraits of Ottoman Athens from Martin Crusius to Strategos Makriyannis', in Elizabeth Key Fowden, Suna Çağaptay, Edward Zychowicz-Coghill and Louise Blanke (eds), *Cities as Palimpsests? Responses to Antiquity in Eastern Mediterranean Urbanism* (Oxford and Philadelphia, PA: Oxbow, 2022), 155–97.

Maria Georgopoulou and Konstantinos Thanasakis (eds), *Ottoman Athens: Archaeology, Topography, History* (Athens: American School of Classical Studies, 2019).

H. Şükrü Ilicak, *'Those Infidel Greeks': The Greek War of Independence through Ottoman Archival Documents*, vol. 1 [introduction and translations] (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021).

Andreas Karkavitsas, *The Archaeologist and Selected Sea Stories*, trans. Johanna Hanink (London: Penguin, 2022) (see ch. 21).

Mark Mazower, *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe* (London: Allen Lane, 2021).

Roderick Beaton

King's College London & British School at Athens

March 2022

# 1. Why Another Book?

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Anyone who chooses to write about the Parthenon must expect to face the suspicion that, surely by now, there can be nothing much new to be said. As early as 1682, when the modern on-the-spot study of the building had scarcely begun, Sir George Wheler, in his *Journey into Greece*, admitted that he expected to be criticized for repeating what was already known, but since he was able to add to the pioneering account published in French in 1678: 'it would misbecome me to bury such Blessings in Oblivion.'<sup>1</sup>

In offering an anticipatory apologia Wheler was participating in a tradition that had been revived in western European countries in the 15<sup>th</sup> century CE from studies of the ancient Greek and Latin orators and of the ancient manuals on the art of persuasion. When, for example, in the year 155 CE, over a millennium and a half earlier, Publius Aelius Aristides composed a public speech in praise of Athens, he began by asking for the sympathy of his listeners as he faced difficult choices between what to include and what to leave out.<sup>2</sup> By the time of Aristides,

- 
- 1 Preface to Wheler, George, *A Journey into Greece, by George Wheler Esq; In Company of Dr Spon of Lyons* (London: W. Cademan, 1682). A longer and fuller justification was provided in the publisher's *Avertissement au lecteur* to the French translation of 1689 published in the Netherlands, *Voyage de Dalmatie, de Grèce et du Levant* (Antwerp: and sold in Paris: chez Daniel Horthemels, 1689). Spon's main work: Spon, Jacob, *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce, et du Levant Fait aux années 1675 et 1676, par Jacob Spon, Docteur Medecin Aggégé à Lyon, et George Wheler, Gentilhomme Anglois* (Lyon: chez Antoine Cellier Fils, 1678), including the circumstances in which it was first written and published in the form that it was, is discussed in Chapter 7. I use the term 'Parthenon' as has been the convention since the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, to mean the building known more formally as the temple dedicated to Athena or, in its Latin version, to Minerva. A discussion of the ancient authors who use the term is included in Davison, Claire Cullen, with the collaboration of Brite Lundgreen, edited by Geoffrey B. Waywell, *Pheidias The Sculptures and Ancient Sources* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, three volumes, 2009), 565–70.
  - 2 Aelius Aristides, *Orations 1–2*, ed. and transl. by Michael Trapp (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Loeb, 2017), Panathenaic, prologue 3. See also Oliver, James Henry,

the tradition that speakers and authors presented themselves as reluctant was already more than five hundred years old, documentable back to the age of Pericles in the fifth century BCE when the design of the classical Parthenon was under discussion, by which time the tradition was already long established.<sup>3</sup>

In this book I explore the history of the Parthenon throughout the modern era to the present day, with special emphasis on the period before, during, and after the Greek War of Independence of 1821–1833 in which the Greeks and their allies sought to break free from the Ottoman Empire. I situate this pivotal period in Greek history, including the two sieges of Athens and the roles played by British diplomat Stratford Canning and Ottoman statesman Reschid Mehmed Pasha (Reşid Mehmed Pasha), within the longer life of the Parthenon. I am interested particularly, not simply in the history of the building itself, but the history of looking at the Parthenon, and the ways in which it has been made meaningful by, and to, different groups of people. A related volume, also released by Open Book Publishers, explores the history of the Parthenon in classical times.<sup>4</sup>

I thought when I first started that this study might provide a worked example of an ‘archaeology’ or a ‘genealogy’ of knowledge, as had been called for by Michel Foucault, and the historiographical presentations I have adopted have been as much counter-chronological as chronological. Foucault’s assumption that the layers of interpretation, ‘discursive events’, are ‘tell layers’, and that ‘any attempt to organize history and time is contingent on the observer’, is certainly a huge intellectual advance on what the authors of a book on the classical tradition call ‘the robust naiveté of earlier ages’. However Foucault’s recommendation that we ought to accept without reluctance that ‘any attempt to organize history and time is contingent on the observer’ may still risk giving insufficient weight to the fact that the trajectories of

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*The Civilizing Power: A Study of the Panathenaic Discourse of Aelius Aristides Against the Background of Literature and Cultural Conflict, with Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society Transactions, 58 (1), 1968), especially 92.

3 Isocrates, in *Panathenaicus*, 74 and 75, composed around 380 BCE, in the tradition of which Aristides follows, also claims to foresee that he will be criticized for departing from the established conventions.

4 *The Classical Parthenon: Recovering the Strangeness of the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

consumption, of mediation, of interpretation, of the theories by which they were underpinned, and of the rhetoric within whose conventions the interpretations were justified do not form a sequence that coincides with chronological layering.<sup>5</sup> The history of looking at the Parthenon that has emerged from the present study is one where the past and the future as well as the present have themselves been fields of contestation, and where different ways of seeing can sometimes co-exist, morphing with only occasional resolution, for long periods of time. It is a history of conjunctures of consumption.

So, in the spirit of Wheler's apologia, what justifications do I offer for this new history? Leaving readers to discount for conventional politeness if they feel the need, I begin with a general disclaimer. The history of the Parthenon in the centuries before, during, and after the Greek War of Independence of 1821–1833, the central episode recounted in this book, is not a top-down revisiting of a body of historical evidence that is already known. It is derived bottom-up from the scrutiny of a vast amount of primary evidence in several languages, some printed, others in manuscript, whose testimony I bring to bear for the first time. In particular, I am able to make use of documentary evidence from the Ottoman side of the Revolution. Thanks to the work of Professor Edhem Eldem of the Boğaziçi University in Istanbul and of other Turkish-speaking scholars familiar with the Ottoman scripts and administrative processes, we now have a range of official documents from the archives of the Ottoman Government in Istanbul that are directly relevant to the role of the Parthenon in the Revolution, including a few written by the Ottoman Sultan Mahmoud II himself. Alongside these, I have been able to take account of many dozens of other primary Ottoman documents, governmental, military, and personal, that are known to me from contemporary copies and translations that were sent to London by ambassadors, almost none of which has previously been used, nor

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5 Quotations from Michael Silk, Ingo Gildenhard, and Rosemary Barrow, *The Classical Tradition: Art, Literature, Thought* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 15. Discussed also by Stewart, Andrew F., *Attalos, Athens, and the Akropolis, the Pergamene 'Little Barbarians' and their Roman and Renaissance Legacy with an Essay by Manolis Korres* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 237–41, an example of what can be done. The approach has also been successfully applied in other specific cases, for example in works by Neer and Barringer.

apparently even known about, from the time they were first written until now.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the book, I will use the term ‘archive’ to mean records systematically collected and kept at the time, some of which have been made available in printed form, but which mostly exist only as collections of papers—such as, for example, the archive of personal and public papers collected by Richard Church, the commander-in-chief of the Greek Revolutionary army. A recent tendency, again following the usage of Foucault, to speak of ‘the archive’ as a shorthand for contemporaneous documents of all kinds, including visual presentations, risks implying that the selection of materials that the modern author makes is amenable to theorization as a totality by the author applying traditional, that is mainly nineteenth-century, disciplinary and heuristic methods of literary and art criticism. This pays insufficient attention to the historic readers, viewers and consumers, and the possible effects on the minds of those actual men, women and children who encountered and consumed the texts. Such information is only obtainable, if at all, by quantified information on costs, prices, access, intellectual property and other components of the political economy of the production of texts, whether written or visual.

Besides written documents, I draw on the testimony of pictures, many not hitherto cited or reproduced, thus offering an opportunity for words and pictures, the two main modern ‘technologies of inscription’ to be given their appropriate weight, including especially the circumstances in which words are used to introduce, and often to commend, a picture (‘ecphrasis’), and pictures invented from readings of compositions in words that I will call ‘counter-ecphrasis,’ taking care, as with historical accounts in words, to separate those made at the time of the Revolution, of which there were only few composed locally, and almost none by participants, from the many that were produced subsequently for later viewerships. I also take account of events such as processions, ceremonies, and festivals, the parading of shackled prisoners, and public exhibitions of judicial killing and of body parts, ‘technologies of

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6 They are now held in the British National Archives at Kew. The circumstances within which the workaholic Stratford Canning wrote, and how he drove his staff to copy innumerable documents, are discussed in Chapter 19, along with a discussion of why, until now, they have been overlooked.



display and performance', that played a larger role in the attempts of the Ottoman leaderships to promote their objectives than technologies of inscription. Although such events consume themselves as they occur, much is recoverable from contemporary descriptions in words and pictures composed by onlookers and participants.<sup>7</sup> The present state of the Parthenon and of the pieces of the building taken elsewhere has sometimes allowed other evidence to be tested against the materiality of the stones as they have come down to us through the vicissitudes of two and a half millennia. Occasionally too, I draw on other direct evidence from the past, including the débris of war and human remains.<sup>8</sup>

Of course any sets of archives, however contemporaneous, however primary, however voluminous, and however widely defined, are inescapably products of the relationships embedded in their creation, selection, conservation, survival, and accessibility. However, the notion that evidence itself, being a function of the rhetorical and other aims of the producers, is inescapably unreliable, as some who study the ancient world suggest, is not a view I share. Nor, although our generation may accept that in writing about the past all lives should be accorded equal value, need we be drawn into the cultural relativism of what Werner Jaeger, champion of the unique value of ancient Hellenism, despairingly called 'a night in which all cats are grey.'<sup>9</sup>

Instead, I suggest, such considerations reinforce the need to treat words not as propositions stating facts, although they often do, but as speech acts by producers that aim to persuade consumers in a specific context; and to treat visual images as acts of invitation by their producers to their potential viewers, also in a specific context, to picture something in their imaginations, to adopt a meaning or range of meanings, and to act accordingly.

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7 The role of display and performance in understanding the decision to build the classical Parthenon and in how the building was put to use in ancient times is discussed in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

8 To help readers to judge the validity of the claims made in the book I have devoted Chapter 4 to discussing the nature of the evidence that is now available.

9 Jaeger, Werner, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Translated from the German by Gilbert Highet* (New York: OUP, second edition, third printing, 1960), xxv.

## A ‘phantom limb’: the Ottoman Empire and the Revolution

Looking back, as the two-hundredth anniversary of the 1821 outbreak of the Greek Revolution has arrived, the differences from the ways in which it was understood and presented at the anniversary of 1921 are striking. The more the Revolution has been studied during the past century, the more it has become clear that to frame it in local terms as a nation’s struggle against cruel oriental occupiers, as was a main theme at that first centenary, understates its importance as a pivotal event in the whole eastern Mediterranean region with geopolitical repercussions far beyond.<sup>10</sup> Just to reiterate the main themes of the 1921 commemoration would be to ignore the huge body of primary evidence that can now be brought to bear that was not available then, and also risks crossing the border between trying to understand the Revolution in the terms within which it occurred at the time, and exploiting old, often ahistorical, narratives and visual presentations as a means of promoting contemporary aims.<sup>11</sup> Instead, without implying that the two main combatant parties to the Greek Revolution should be regarded

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10 Discussed by Clogg, Richard, ed., *The Struggle for Greek Independence* (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 1–40 and other essays in the volume; Pizaniias, Petros, ed., *The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European Event* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2011); Damaskos, Dimitris and Dimitris Plantzos, *A Singular Antiquity: Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in Twentieth-Century Greece*, edited by Dimitris Damaskos and Dimitris Plantzos (Athens: Benaki Museum, 2008); Kitromilides, Paschalis M., *Enlightenment and Revolution: The Making of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013); Hamilakis, Yannis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), especially pp. 74–78, with lists of predecessors; and Beaton, Roderick, ‘Introduction to the New Edition’ in St Clair, William, *That Greece Might Still be Free* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2009), pp. xiii–xx. For the attempt of the European powers, beginning with the Concert of Europe in 1815, to manage inter-state relationships as a system, and the assumptions that lay behind it, see Mazower, Mark, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London: Allen Lane, 2012). What can be regarded as a late example of an earlier conceptualization that presents the history of Greece from a determinist Greek nationalist point of view as a series of wars of independence, events, treaties, and changes in frontiers, which is thoroughly researched as a chronicle but that offers little critique or discussion of the ideas and myths that drove the processes, and that shows insufficient concern for the peoples who were the receivers rather than the producers of policies, is Dakin, Douglas, *The Unification of Greece, 1770–1923* (London: Benn, 1972).

11 The notion of ‘presentism’ is discussed in the companion volume, *The Classical Parthenon: Recovering the Strangeness of the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

as morally equivalent, or underplaying the well-attested general historical phenomenon that what people believe about the past may be as determinative of the course of events as what actually happened, I hope to integrate the history of the justificatory and other discourses into the history of events. As it happens, as though a warning from the past, the centenary celebration in 1921 was followed by the disastrous Greek invasion of Asia Minor which ended in 1922 that aimed to expand the geographical boundaries of the Greek nation-state to include populations of a diaspora whose 'ancestors' had left mainland Greece several millennia before.

The causes of the Greek Revolution and the motivations of the Greek Revolutionaries have been much studied, with attempts to fit them into wider intellectual movements and shifts that were occurring in the run-up to the violence. Yet the perspectives of the Ottoman Government, and how Ottoman assumptions, traditions, and motivations shaped how the story was later told, have, until recently, scarcely been studied. We can see that, in their own terms, the Ottomans had grounds to fear that an independent Greece within their remaining dominions, with the institutions of a hostile European nation state, including an army and a navy, may have led to a general unravelling of their form of government, and of the unique combinations of laws, customs, ideas, and institutions that constituted their identity.<sup>12</sup> And indeed, after Greece became independent in the 1830s, came national autonomy as a step towards independence for Serbia in 1830, for Bulgaria and Romania in the 1870s, for Albania in the 1910s. And, from the beginning, others, such as those who claimed to speak for the Circassians of the Crimea, had also put in their own, unsuccessful, demands for independence.<sup>13</sup> In the words of H. Şükrü İlicak, even after Greece had gone, to the Ottoman leaderships it was a 'phantom limb' that still caused excruciating pain.<sup>14</sup>

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12 As was remarked by H. Şükrü İlicak in 2011: 'While historians of several ex-Ottoman nationalities, especially the Serbs, Greeks and Romanians, have dealt with this period from the perspective of their national narratives, there is not a single monograph, or even a comprehensive article, examining the concomitant empire-wide events and developments.' İlicak, H. Şükrü, *A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence 1821–1826*. PhD dissertation, Harvard University 14 September 2011, copy kindly provided by the author, along with much other advice for which I am most grateful.

13 As discussed in Chapter 18.

14 İlicak, *A Radical Rethinking of Empire*, 14.

By the 1920s nationalism and its rhetoric had crossed into the formerly Ottoman territories of the Middle East where members of religious communities had previously inhabited the same geographical spaces without national borders. And it was then too that a large part of the remaining Ottoman Empire, now proudly calling itself 'Turkey', became a 'nation'. As Edhem Eldem, a scholar who has studied the Ottoman Empire and its language and institutions, has remarked, many writers on modern Turkey have until recently tended to present the Ottoman era as a long prelude to the emergence of the Turkish nation.<sup>15</sup> To use the term coined by the late Benedict Anderson, the Greek Revolution can, I suggest, be most usefully understood as a violent encounter between two forms of 'imagined community'.<sup>16</sup> It was therefore also an encounter between the claims made by the opposing parties to legitimate and justify their attitudes and their actions, both to outsiders and to themselves, including the deployment of imagined pasts and aspired-to futures, and often to claim that what occurred can be fitted into notions of inevitability, destiny, or Divine Providence.<sup>17</sup>

Besides the two main warring parties, others were deeply involved, notably the governments of the four major European powers (Britain, Prussia, Russia and Austria). When the 'great powers' opposing the

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15 Discussed by Edhem Eldem at the Conference 'The Topography of Ottoman Athens' held in Athens on 23–24 April 2015. Videocast at: <http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/index.php/News/newsDetails/videocast-the-topography-of-ottoman-athens.-archaeology-travel-symposium>

16 Anderson, Benedict R.O'G., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 1991). Anderson pointed out that nationalism is a modern phenomenon, although most people think that 'nations' are ancient and eternal, with distinctive characteristics that artificially set them apart from others. The phenomenon, he suggested, had only thrived when governments were able to utilize modern media to promote mythic pasts, especially the printing press, and the institutions of capitalism that arrived at much the same time. As he wrote of his own personal, unusually diverse, ancestry and upbringing in three continents, his generation were seldom troubled by questions of identity, although he saw that the imagined community of the 'nation' although normally presented as 'freedom', forced individuals such as himself and members of his family into artificial, mainly geographical, boxes. He also wrote of his extensive higher education in the ancient Greek and Roman classics as a 'bathing in two grand non-Christian civilizations' whose very statues were a standing reproach to the local and temporal provincialism of 1950s Britain. Summarized from the extensive literature on Anderson's work and influence and from his autobiography, Anderson, Benedict, *A Life Beyond Boundaries* (London: Verso, 2016).

17 Prominent in, for example, Chapters 17 and 23.

French Empire in the Napoleonic Wars saw Napoleon's power collapse in 1814, they started planning for the post-war world. The initial aim of the 'Concert of Europe' was to stamp out any resurgence of the political and other ideas that had led to the French Revolution and in so doing maintain peace across the continent. Although unanimity among the great powers was rare, they too constituted an imagined community. This community was sometimes called 'Europe,' a term that outsiders including the Ottoman Government and Greek Revolutionaries accepted and applied without irony, and sometimes, although with less general acceptance, [western] 'Christendom' or 'the civilized world.'

Although, in general, the policies of the Concert were led by Chancellor Metternich from Vienna, in the case of the Greek Revolution, much of the effort was undertaken by Britain, France, and Russia, all of whom had interests and ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean region, and armed forces with ability to intervene. The countries of western Europe also had populations who took a particularly lively interest, both through media at home and via feedback from those among their number who participated directly as military volunteers and as observers on the spot. As a result, the vast majority of contemporary eye-witness accounts of the Greek Revolution that we have were written not by local participants but by men and women from the west, many of whom were deeply imbued with admiration for what is often called the classical heritage, including a view of the ancient world upon which many of their own modern institutions drew authority. Heritage is, of course, a capacious term. David Lowenthal and others have shown from innumerable case studies how common it has been for the past to be appropriated, selected from, eviscerated, revised, embellished, amplified, its strangeness and otherness domesticated and made familiar, as well as deliberately falsified, to serve the ideological agendas of a succession of presents. The past is claimed as validation of current ideas, or blamed for the ills of the present, especially by those who wish to promote the exceptionalisms claimed by imagined communities. As Lowenthal remarked, 'history is for all, heritage is for us alone.'<sup>18</sup>

Recent quantified studies show that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries successful revolutions were extremely rare; among those few, notably the Greek, that were successful, there is such a strong correlation

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18 Lowenthal 505, quoting predecessors who offered variations of the same thought.

between the extent of external help and eventual success that this link can be used as a predictor.<sup>19</sup> It is therefore, I suggest, also useful to think in terms of a fourth party to the conflict: the ancient Hellenes and in particular the classical Athenians, a civilization which, for westerners, was symbolized more than anything else by one building: the Parthenon.

## The Parthenon and its Meanings

As far as the role of the Parthenon in the Greek Revolution is concerned, taken together, the sheer quantity, richness and inclusiveness of the evidence has enabled us to recover a knowledge of events, of discourses, and of what went on behind the scenes, and how the factors interacted, that is as close to comprehensive as any researcher into an episode in the past, its antecedents and aftermaths, could ever wish to find.<sup>20</sup> However, to my surprise, I have unearthed new evidence that reveals an episode, to which the title ‘who saved the Parthenon’ refers, that has not hitherto been told—and that has implications both for how the history of the monument should be told and for illuminating larger questions about the uses of the built heritage.

The Parthenon was built in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, or rather rebuilt with the help of materials from the so-called Pre-Parthenon.<sup>21</sup> Although the, by then, famous men and women of that time had been dead for over two thousand years, ever since interest in classical antiquity had revived in western European countries in the fifteenth century, their presence in western minds through the institutions of education and historical and political writings had been steadily growing. From the eighteenth century, the influence of the ancient Hellenes began also to be felt increasingly among the peoples who lived in the historic heartlands, including in Athens.

The presence of the ancients in the memory of western European countries encouraged men and women to found organisations that

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19 Noted, by, for example Grauer, R., and Tierney, D., ‘The Arsenal of Insurrection: Explaining Rising Support for Rebels’ in *Journal of Global Security Studies* 2 (1), 2017, 18–38.

20 To be discussed in Chapters 15 and 16. The practice of promoting the Parthenon as symbolic of the ‘civilized world’ in the late nineteenth and twentieth century is discussed in Chapter 22.

21 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. To avoid unnecessary repetition I use ‘Parthenon’ to refer to the classical-era building.

supplied the Revolutionary forces with armaments, money, and military expertise, and motivated over a thousand foreign volunteers, 'philhellenes,' to join the conflict on the Greek side. It was mainly philhellenism that enabled two large loans to be raised on the London money market for the Greek Revolutionary cause and for part of the proceeds to be devoted to building two modern warships in the United States. In the case of the Greek Revolution, it is therefore scarcely an exaggeration to suggest that the ancient Greeks participated in the Greek Revolution almost as actively as if they were able to deploy armies and navies and had their own ambassadors and spokespersons.

Two general observations underpin everything that follows. First, without viewers, the Acropolis of Athens, the frame within which the Parthenon is set both geographically and cognitively, is an inert accumulation of animal, vegetable, and mineral — and even these are categories invented and imputed by human observers. It is the man, woman, or child who looks at the Parthenon who makes the meanings, not the building as such as rhetorics of western romanticism often imply.<sup>22</sup> And, secondly, the transformation in the mind of the viewer from the physiological act of seeing to the psychological act of making meaning cannot occur unless the experience has been mediated. Any act of looking at the Parthenon, as established by modern neuro-scientific understanding of the nature of cognition, has required decisions on the part of the viewer, not always consciously or explicitly taken, about the organizing categories within which the seeing experience is to be understood.<sup>23</sup> Even those viewers about whom we know least, such as women and girls forcibly brought from distant and alien cultures and immured as wives or slaves, brought their own ways of making sense of their new experiences and surroundings, even if it is now hard to recover what their interpretative categories were, including whether they thought their situation was abnormal or unfair. The situation today, when all on-the-spot seeing has been prefigured, is only the most recent example of a process that, we can be confident, has occurred at all times in the past, including during the centuries when there were no expectation-setting pictures and few words.

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22 Discussed in Chapter 9.

23 The general insight by Bloch and others is discussed with reference to the ancient Greek myths by Buxton, Richard, *Imaginary Greece, the Contexts of Mythology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994).

As for the advantages the Parthenon offers that make it especially suitable as a focal point for the present study, I note that, as an object of human interest, the Acropolis of Athens on which it stands constitutes its own visual frame. Some of the locations in and around Athens and beyond from which viewers have chosen to look, and from which artists have presented pictures—the ‘viewing stations,’ to revive the term employed by Adam Smith—were unchanged for centuries, and we can be confident that it was to influence the seeing experience of viewers standing on or moving in procession through these stations that the Parthenon was designed.<sup>24</sup> The Acropolis therefore matches the definitions of landscape pioneered by J.B. Jackson and W.G. Hoskins as ‘a portion of the earth’s surface that can be comprehended at a glance,’ but also as a text that is open to be read, and as a dynamic cultural process by which, by selective emphasis and exaggeration, human identities are constituted.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, during the millennia since the site was first settled by the humans who arrived in Neolithic times, the Acropolis has probably always been an official and, until the nineteenth century, a military site. The succession of those who have exercised effective control, recognized against the legal norms of each epoch, including right of conquest, of formal treaty of surrender, and of heritable jurisdiction, can be traced and documented back, through a transfer of sovereignties, to ancient times.<sup>26</sup> The transfer of power continued more or less continuously until 10th of April 1833, the day when the Acropolis was handed over to the government of the recently established Greek nation state, and its modern history began.<sup>27</sup>

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24 Smith, Adam, ‘Of the Nature of that Imitation which takes place in what are called the Imitative Arts’, first published in 1795, available online in the Liberty Fund edition of the Glasgow edition. Examples of the use of the word in Greece include a letter from Hawkins to Gell, 23 February [no year given] in the British Library, BL Add MSS 50,135 f 74, and Wordsworth, *Greece*, 1839 edition, 34. The extent to which the classical Athenians designed the Parthenon so that it could be seen in certain special, as well as in normal circumstances, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

25 Discussed in the Introduction to Robertson I. and Richards P., eds, *Studying Cultural Landscapes* (London: Arnold, 2003) and by Mitchell, W.J.T., *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).

26 The classical Athenians themselves knew that the site had had a long history, and this was part of their world-view when they decided to build the classical Parthenon.

27 What I will call the ‘emergence from brutishness’ narrative is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>



We can therefore say with confidence that—apart from catastrophes, such as earthquakes, lightning strikes, and outbreaks of fire—every substantial change, whether the flattening of the summit by the earliest settlers, the clearance of the caves and the vegetation on the slopes, the building of temporary barriers and walls, the digging of pits and water cisterns, the design and the placement of fortifications, buildings, statues, and publicly-displayed inscriptions, has required the approval of the authorities then in control, including those whose occupation was short-lived. Decisions to preserve, to destroy, to adapt or re-use, to ignore, and leave to moulder, or to permit others to remove objects from the site, of which the most substantial in recent times was the collection made by agents of Lord Elgin, have also required the approval or acquiescence of those then in control.<sup>28</sup>

All those who have been in control of the Acropolis of Athens since it was first occupied, have had the viewer in mind, whether by building, destroying, or modifying, or by conserving, repairing, or restoring, with the hope, intention, and expectation that meanings made by these viewers would be acted upon. Some were short-term and of immediate relevance, such how the prospects might appear to a military commander considering whether to order an assault or a siege. However, a wish to encourage users to adopt a longer time horizon was among the explicit aims of those who built the modern Acropolis in the nineteenth century and at earlier epochs, as well as of those who planned and built the classical Parthenon and brought it into use in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.<sup>29</sup>

Although the difficulties of recovering a history of looking at or ‘consuming’, the Parthenon are formidable, the building itself offers

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28 A note on the use of the phrase is included in Appendix A.

29 To be discussed, for the modern Acropolis, in Chapter 22, and, for the ancient, in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The aim in the latter is to suggest, and to demonstrate the potential value of, evidenced ways of limiting the risks by reviving two ways of writing about the past that were used and respected, in ancient Greece, namely the Thucydidean speech and the Rhetorical Discourse. Produced in modular form so that the components of the two experiments can be critiqued, revised, or rejected without undermining the whole argument, the first experiment has, in my view, not only illuminated what is recoverable about the mentalities of the leaderships in classical Athens in new and surprising ways, but has enabled a solution to an old puzzle about the building, namely what story is displayed on the central slab of the east frieze, to be offered for consideration.

huge advantages to any researcher and his or her readers. With several thousand years of recorded experience, we are constantly reminded that the assumptions that our own age, as well as past generations, have brought to the study are only the current and temporary outcomes of a long, jagged series of earlier assumptions, of changing and co-existing genres, and of theories of what occurs in acts of cognition and how they are presented, which all demand to be given weight in the explanations. And, if we are rightly cautioned to regard the past as a foreign country where things are done differently, we can be sure that the future will not share the mainstream views of our generation or approve of all the decisions taken in our time.<sup>30</sup>

## The Structure of This Book

In the chapters that follow I set out a history of events within broad and long-term political and cultural contexts. The first nine chapters develop the themes with which this book is concerned while also offering necessary background to the events that took place during the Revolution, including life in Athens before the conflict, aspects of Ottoman rule, different encounters with the physical and imagined Parthenon, and the growing influence of philhellenism. The following twelve chapters deal with the events of the Revolution and its immediate aftermath, while the final four reflect on the changing role of the Parthenon in later history up until the present day. Finally, as previously mentioned, a companion volume is currently under preparation that will focus on the Parthenon in classical times.

This project involves a changing understanding of the past ('the then pasts') and of aspired-to futures both short-and long-term ('the then futures'). I also attempt throughout the study to re-enfranchise from the neglect of historiography some of the peoples of the past, including

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30 The observation 'The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there', the opening sentence of the novel, *The Go-Between*, by L.P. Hartley, first published in 1953, and made popular by the film of the same name, was alluded to in the title of one of the late David Lowenthal's pioneering studies of the modern notion of heritage, first published in 1985. Lowenthal, David, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985). Republished as *The Past is a Foreign Country Revisited*, an updated edition 2015. I record here my thanks for many conversations with him over many years.

those, such as female slaves, whose voices are seldom recorded directly, and which, even when only recoverable from accounts of others, sometimes turn out to be different from what might have been expected.<sup>31</sup> Since, in an earlier book, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, I paid insufficient attention to women and children, I have done what I can to help redress that imbalance.<sup>32</sup>

I also provide six appendices of transcribed primary documents, most never printed before, that, although a selection, will, I hope, help readers to judge the extent to which my account is faithful to the evidence, both existing and known to be lost. They are transcribed with minimal editing to give a sense of how they may have appeared at the time, and, as throughout the book, where direct quotation from other languages is required, a translation into English is provided.<sup>33</sup> My hope is to contribute to the ongoing collective enterprise of advancing knowledge of the history of the Parthenon both as a material building and as a producer of immaterial ideas that, when consumed by real people, had real-world consequences.

Although seeing is individual and dynamic, the mediations that condition expectations and choices about salience are usually made or offered by agents, such as political and religious leaders, authors, image-makers, museum managers, the authors of museum labels, and tourist guides. I could, for example, give the names of many men and women, authors and artists, whose sincere accounts of looking at or picturing the Parthenon conform so closely to the conventions of their imagined cultural constituency that it is now impossible to tell from their words and pictures alone whether they ever went to Athens and experienced what they describe and depict.<sup>34</sup> I will occasionally refer to mediations,

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31 For example, the young women enslaved after the fall of Missolonghi in 1826 who chose not to be liberated, as noted in Chapter 14, although they too were making speech acts with consequences, in the harsh situation in which they found themselves.

32 William St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0001>). Cf. especially Chapter 14.

33 The texts are given in the languages in which they are at present only known to survive, as well as in English translation, as a possible aid to translating them back to their not-yet-found originals in Ottoman Turkish, as has been done with success by Professor Edhem Eldem in the case of the firman of 1821.

34 Many examples noted, in Chapters 9 and 23. The point was also central to the dispute between Spon and Guillet discussed in Chapter 7.

both verbal and visual, offered by authors and artists who present their work as taken from direct experience, but that were in fact created in the library or the studio at home.

Discussing the relationship of words with visual images, Socrates is reported by Plato to have remarked: 'Writings, Phaedrus, have a strange quality that resembles portraiture. Pictures stand like living things, but if you ask them any question about what they say, they preserve a solemn silence. And it is the same with written words. They seem to talk to you as if they had minds, but if you ask them anything about what they say, from a wish to understand them more fully, they go on telling you the same thing for ever.'<sup>35</sup> The Parthenon, our generation can readily agree, does not converse, but, with all respect to Socrates, we also know that it does not speak, let alone that it goes on telling the same story forever.

Contemporary neuroscience discusses the operation of visual cognitive processes in terms of 'saccades,' the eye movements that occur several times every second, and 'salience,' the value that the mind attaches to the visual stimuli received, and the reward it hopes to receive by targeting its gaze.<sup>36</sup> And the same cognitive processes have been discovered at work, to differing degrees, with the other human senses. It follows that, once we accept that cognition implies choice, and that the choices made are historically and culturally contingent, we need to historicize not only the spoken and visual discourses but the horizons of expectations brought to acts of seeing. In most cases these horizons included ideas that explicitly linked the then present with the past as it was then understood or presented, and with aspired-to futures, frequently by altering the visual landscape. At places, this study attempts to give weight to what is now sometimes called 'distributed cognition', that is defined in a recent book as a situation where 'the mind is spread out across brain, body, and the world.'<sup>37</sup> By reconstructing the irregular circles of contexts: some material, such as range of weapons;

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35 Author's translation from passage beginning at Plat. Phaedrus 275d.

36 Schütz, A.C., Trommershäuser, J., Gegenfurtner, K.R., 'Dynamic integration of information about salience and value for saccadic eye movements', in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 109 (19), 2012, 7547–52, doi: 10.1073/pnas.1115638109.

37 As discussed in Anderson, Cairns, and Sprevak (eds), *Distributed Cognition in Classical Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2019) from where the quotation comes in the Series Preface at vii. The approach is especially useful for trying to reconstruct the assumptions that underpinned the practices of classical Athens

some mental, such as genres of viewing; and some discursive, such as the rhetorical conventions within which the building has been culturally surrounded and presented, I hope to find ways of reconciling the messiness and contingency of the past as it was experienced, with more sustained trends and explanations that can only be discerned in longer retrospect.

What are likely to be regarded by some as the most surprising and disconcerting revelations about the Greek Revolution are set out in the central section of the book, in Chapters 17, 18, and 19, which derive from an astonishingly complete corpus of contemporaneous records relating to the active role of the Parthenon in the Greek Revolution and its aftermath that have been overlooked, despite being hidden in full view. These revelations require, in my view, previous answers to the question 'Who saved the Parthenon?' to be drastically revised, with implications for the ways that the history of the building and its detached pieces are presented. In the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*<sup>38</sup> I turn to the Parthenon in ancient times, and by stripping away the layers of imputations that have been applied to the building since classical Athens and findings ways of coping with the systemic and asystemic losses of all but a tiny proportion of the evidence that once existed, I offer suggestion for new ways, or rather revived ancient ways, of recovering the strangeness.

Although it cannot include the many continuities, disruptions, and parallels that emerge in *Who Saved the Parthenon*, it has been drafted so as to be a self-standing volume. *The Classical Parthenon* includes two experiments in ways of lessening the risks of using anachronistic categories ('the perils of presentism') and the severe problems to which, in stark contrast to modern times, the patchy and unrepresentative nature of the ancient evidence gives rise.<sup>39</sup> I will suggest that using the longevity of the natural environment and of the discursive conventions enables us to recover more effectively the mentalities of the people of classical Athens and the considerations that prompted the building of the Parthenon, than when confining ourselves within the conventions of

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to be further discussed, with two worked experiments, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

38 *Ibid.*

39 As discussed in *ibid.*

modern academic disciplinary boundaries.<sup>40</sup> In the brief final chapter, I offer a few conclusions that arise from the general aim of re-enfranchising the viewers and users of the built and landscape heritage and those who advise them, and suggest an initial way forward by proposing how we might develop consumer genres to complement the producer genres that have been dominant in modern centuries.

Thanks to new forms of publication pioneered by Open Book Publishers, of which I am proud to be among the founders, I am able to include reproductions of more images than could have been made available before, and link to others that would have been prohibitively expensive to obtain and reproduce under current intellectual property regimes. The images I offer are, of course, themselves mediations from one material form to another, unavoidably changed to fit the format of a modern book and online screen. Since the modern convention of tidying up tends to reinforce romantic notions of visual images as ‘works of art’ detachable from the contexts in which they were encountered in their time, I have mostly left them unedited.<sup>41</sup> But although all attempts to offset anachronizing and iconizing tendencies involve losses, there are also benefits. The lost clear air of Athens that was uniquely well captured by the technology of aquatint engraving is now made even clearer when republished online illuminated by a computer screen. Images, such as the contemporary map in Chapter 6<sup>42</sup> and other densely packed images can be enlarged. And readers can zoom in to improve their appreciation of how visual technologies achieved their effects on viewers, such as the tiny lines, invisible to the eye, used by the makers of engravings on steel.

Wherever legally possible, the images will be uploaded on Wikimedia Commons under Creative Commons licenses, as a resource for future studies. I have also occasionally been able to refer to recent open access publications.<sup>43</sup> Further information is given about the provenance of each

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40 *Ibid.*

41 A few exceptions where, for example, I have intensified the contrast to offset fading are noted as they occur.

42 See Figure 6.6, Contemporary map illustrating the places principally involved in the Greek Revolution, p. 168.

43 Notably Taplin, Oliver, *Pots and Plays: Interactions Between Tragedy and Greek Vase-Painting of the Fourth Century B.C.* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007), <http://www.getty.edu/publications/virtuallibrary/0892368071.html>, whose text and visual illustrations are especially relevant to a suggestion I make about the frieze in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

figure, with other comments, in the places where they occur in the book. Except in a few cases, explicitly noted, where the copyright in the image is retained by the present owner, all images are out of copyright and reproduced here under a CC BY licence. Occasionally, to help readers imagine the Parthenon as it was encountered when the Acropolis was a green space teeming with wild birds, such as storks, as it was before the Revolution, and almost certainly also in ancient times, I have included links to modern sound recordings.<sup>44</sup>

The present study depends upon the work of innumerable others and on discussions with friends and colleagues over many years. It would not have been possible without the facilities afforded by many record offices, libraries, museums, galleries, and other institutions. This book could not have been attempted until recently as it also uses the evidence of rare printed books in several non-English languages that, although not held in even the largest deposit libraries in Britain, have been put online by institutions. It also relies on numerous other rare books reprinted in India and sold at affordable prices in recent times. Nor, finally, could it have been published in open access until relatively recently, thus enabling readers worldwide, including many who would have been excluded by older methods of academic publication, to engage with the text. This too is a looking forward as well as back.

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44 In Chapter 4.





## 2. The Place

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### Ottoman Athens

Before the Revolution, the town of Athens was clustered round the north and north-eastern slopes of the Acropolis, as shown in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1. 'Athens from the foot of Mt Anchesmus' (ancient and modern Lycavettos). Coloured aquatint, from a view made on the spot, c.1810.<sup>1</sup>

- 1 From Hobhouse, J.C., *A Journey through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople* (London: Cawthorn, second edition, 1813), folded and tipped in after ii, 292. Composed by the soon-to-be-famous British architect in the neo-Hellenic style Charles Robert Cockerell. That Hobhouse sought a favour from Cockerell emerges from his letter in *Byron's Bulldog: The Letters of John Cam Hobhouse* edited by Peter W. Graham (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State UP, 1984), 47. A similar picturesque view, 'Athens from the foot of Mount Anchesmos,' made c.1805, is in Dodwell, Edward, *Views in Greece from Drawings by Edward Dodwell* (London: Rodwell and Martin, 1821), unnumbered.

During the hot summer months, the Acropolis appeared as a grey rock, standing among its olive groves and fruit orchards in a brown, dusty, landscape. According to a visitor in 1819, the oil that was destined for export was carried in goatskins, specially made, in which the head of the animal was cut off but the neck and front legs remained, so that they could be strapped to the sides of donkeys, a more effective and economical means of transport, especially by land, than the heavy amphorae found in ancient shipwrecks, and one that may have been used in ancient times but has left no trace in the archaeological or literary record.<sup>2</sup>

The town was not visible from ships at sea. It was because many mariners from western countries saw the Acropolis but not the town that a story had taken root in western countries that Athens, like Troy, had ceased to exist. Athens had, some apparently authoritative printed works reported, been destroyed by the Turks, an error prolonged by the business practices of the printed book industry that encouraged the copyright holders of the printers' guilds to reprint old texts long after they had been factually superseded.<sup>3</sup> William Lithgow, for example, who visited Athens in 1609, felt the need to assure the readers of his book that 'Athens is still inhabited.'<sup>4</sup>

The Acropolis physically dominated the cityscape and the surrounding landscape as far as the eye could see in all directions, as it had done since ancient times. Surrounded by steep cliffs and walls on three sides, the single entrance to the Acropolis was on the west side and although built for an era long before gunpowder, in the eighteenth

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- 2 *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Stephen Grellet*, edited by Benjamin Seebohm, volume 2 (London: Bennett, 1861), 19.
  - 3 For example: 'Overthrowne and vtterly destroyed by the Turks.' *Itinerarium Totius Sacrae Scripturae, or, The Trauels of the holy Patriarchs ... with a Description of the Townes and Places to which they travelled, and how many English miles they stood from Ierusalem* (London: Adam Islip, 1638), 543. That book had first been published in Latin by Heinrich Bünting in 1581 when opportunities to check such statements on the ground were few. Lithgow's book was reprinted for many decades after the time of his visit, entrenching other errors.
  - 4 Lithgow, William, *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures & Painful Peregrinations of long Nineteene Yeares Travayles, from Scotland to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Africa* (Glasgow: Maclehose reprint, 1906), 66. In 1624 Lewis Roberts also felt obliged to contradict the story that Athens no longer existed, although he only saw the Acropolis from the sea, and was evidently reporting what he had read or been told. Roberts, unpublished manuscript journal noted in the Bibliography.

century it was still formidable. Since almost all the military works and walls round which the fighting occurred during the Greek Revolution were removed in the nineteenth century, we are now mostly dependent on written historical accounts and on pictures made before the removals.<sup>5</sup> The picture shown as Figure 2.2, for example, made shortly before the Revolution, shows how a complex of walls and outworks offered a sense of impregnability.



Figure 2.2. The Acropolis of Athens from the west, by Heinrich Hübsch, 1819. Tinted aquatint published in Denmark with commentary in Danish.<sup>6</sup>

The castellations on the ancient walls gave it a western European appearance, like many of the Crusader Castles of the Levant and the Middle East, a fortress implanted into the landscape not for the defence of the local population but as a means of domination.<sup>7</sup> The castellations had mostly been added by the Frankish princes who took control of Athens from the local Byzantine archbishop as part of the spoils after the

5 Burnouf, Émile, *La Ville et l'Acropole d'Athènes aux diverses époques* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1877), 18. The clearances are discussed in Chapter 22.

6 Undated and signed only with the name of the engraver 'J. B. Peterson sculp.' A copy in Bonn says Hübsch del.1819/ Schilbach sc. 1823. The artist is known to have visited Athens and his composition appears to be independent of the more familiar one, made earlier by Stuart and Revett for *The Antiquities of Athens*.

7 As noted explicitly by, for example, Giffard, Edward, *A Short Visit to the Ionian Islands, Athens, and the Morea* (London: Murray, 1837), 138.

Fourth Crusade destroyed Constantinople/Byzantium in 1204, and by their successors.<sup>8</sup> They were to be used in the Revolution, both as firing and as lookout points, but were taken down soon afterwards as part of the Hellenizing of the view.<sup>9</sup> Visible on the left of the image is the tall structure, now known as the Frankish Tower, that had been built at some time, now thought to be during the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, to give the defenders of the Acropolis a longer view and therefore more notice of impending danger than was available from standing on the tops of the ancient buildings. It was to be removed after 1874 as part of the transformation of the Acropolis from military fortress to heritage site.<sup>10</sup> This image, taken with that shown as Figure 2.1, and many others, reminds us that in antiquity, as in the long eighteenth century, the Parthenon was not visible from the parts of the town where most daily life took place. It could be seen from far away, both locally in Attica and from other acropolises, notably that of Corinth, from the temple on the heights of Aegina, and from far out to sea. But it was only visible from close up to those who were able to visit the Acropolis. In ancient times, this occurred mainly when they were participating in festivals.<sup>11</sup>

It appears to have been as recently as 1805 that the Ottoman authorities completed the defensive works on the walls and the ground level outworks that had been made necessary by their experience of the temporary loss of the Acropolis to a western army led by General Francesco Morosini, in 1687–1688.<sup>12</sup> A marble inscription in Ottoman Turkish claiming the credit for Mustapha Effendi was identified in 1924 as having been carved on a slab that had once been part of the Erechtheion architrave.<sup>13</sup> Another Ottoman inscription that declared

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8 Summarized from the plentiful documentary record by Sicilianos, Demetrios, *Old and New Athens* (London: Putnam, 1960), 28–94.

9 They can be seen in many views of the Acropolis, including those from close up reproduced in Chapter 14.

10 Discussed in Chapter 22.

11 The implications for our understanding why the temple was built in the form that it was are discussed in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

12 The long-time gap between the destruction and temporary loss and the rebuilding is discussed, drawing on a contemporary account not previously published by St Clair, William, and Robert Picken, 'The Parthenon in 1687: New Sources', in Cosmopoulos, Michael, B., ed., *The Parthenon and its Sculptures* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), pp. 166–95.

13 Paton *Erechtheum*, 72. The identification was made by Dinsmoor. Earlier accounts had misread the date of the inscription.

that the *Giaours*, that is, the Christians, would never again possess the Acropolis was set above the outermost of the three gates on the road from the town. I only know of it because it is mentioned by an American linguist, Henry M. Baird, who spent a year in Athens in the 1850s, travelling with a Turkish interpreter.<sup>14</sup> In the eighteenth century the Muslim population of Athens and elsewhere in Greece spoke Greek as their first language, and few would have been able to read it.<sup>15</sup> Although these public inscriptions were designed, composed, and placed with the specific intention of influencing every visitor to the Acropolis, they had little power to prime the minds of viewers, either local or visiting. They were still there, being seen but not viewed, mute stones with no-one to voice them, long after the other more conspicuously visual markers of the former Muslim presence, such as the minarets of the mosques and the gravestones in the Muslim cemetery, had been destroyed or removed.<sup>16</sup>

Figure 2.3 shows the entrance to the Acropolis on the eve of the Revolution.

The picture shows the then *disdar* (military commander of the Acropolis), accompanied by a holy man ('dervish') and a servant. As can be seen within the image, a number of small artillery pieces were mounted on the walls. Another gun is recorded as placed on the wall overlooking the Serpenji where the main water cistern was located, making altogether 'four miserable guns' in the phrase of a visitor in May 1812.<sup>17</sup> However, on the eve of the Revolution, any hostile force

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14 Baird, 32.

15 'The Greek language was preponderant, Turkish being little understood even among the Turks and the Albanians.' Leake, William Martin, *Researches in Greece* (London: John Booth, 1814), v. 'The generality of Turks born and residing in the Morea [...] in most instances could neither speak, read, nor write their own language, having adopted the modern Greek.' Tennent, Sir James Emerson, K.C.S., L.L.D., etc, *A History of Modern Greece, from its Conquest by the Romans B.C. 146 to the Present Day* (London: Colburn, 1845), i, x, quoting a letter from the British consul Green who had lived there for three and a half years. According to the modern writer, Sicilianos: 'The Turks who lived in Athens spoke a mixed language, mostly composed of Greek, and had forgotten their own language to such an extent that they could not converse with members of their own race who came from abroad.' Sicilianos, 20. The Muslim inhabitants were assimilated in other ways. It is recorded, for example, that they drank wine and raki like the Christians, except during Ramadan. Chandler, 118.

16 A picture of the Muslim cemetery shortly before it was removed as part of national programme of monument cleansing is reproduced as Figure 16.2.

17 The phrase of Turner, William, *Journal of a Tour in the Levant* (London: Murray, 1820), i, 324, describing what he saw in May 1812.

approaching along the paved way to the main entrance gate could have been stopped by a single piece of ordnance and a few men with muskets or swords. The glimpse of the Frankish Tower shows one of its roles, as a prison with a grilled window. And the figure carrying a jar, perhaps a slave, reminds us of how dependent the Acropolis was on supplies brought from outside with the help of human and animal power. The drinking water was taken up daily in earthenware jars strapped to horses and donkeys.<sup>18</sup>

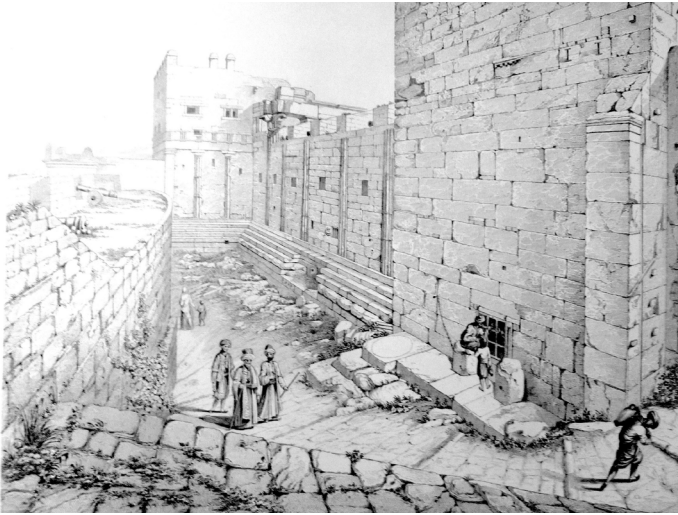


Figure 2.3. 'View of the West front of the Propylaea at Athens'. Copper engraving. Published in 1830 from a drawing made in 1818 by the architect William Kinnard.<sup>19</sup>

18 Chandler, *Travels in Asia Minor and Greece*, ii 44. Some of the images in Le Roy, Julien-David, *Les Ruines des Plus Beaux Monuments de la Grèce* first in 1758, and in its many derivatives also show men and women carrying jars, so that it became almost a standard feature of the pre-Revolution Acropolis, as depicted for reader/viewers in the west. If, as seems likely, the water was stored in its jars, as discussed in Chapter 22, the cost pressures to minimize the amount of water to stockpile, whether for human or for animal consumption, were increased. For the water-carriers pictured on the frieze of the Parthenon, and what message they carried to contemporary viewers of the temple see the discussion in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

19 From Stuart and Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, Volume 5, the 'Supplementary Volume' published much later (1830) opposite blank 6. An identical printing and illustration in Volume 4 of the second edition, opposite 3.

It may not always have been so. Evliya Çelebi, author of a long book of observations of the Ottoman Empire, known as *Seyahatname*, who visited in 1667, twenty years before the Parthenon was damaged, noted that: ‘when rain falls on these marble roof-tiles [of the Parthenon], it runs off by cunningly incised channels into a cistern [...] so there is plenty of fresh cold water for the thirsty congregation.’<sup>20</sup> Other eyewitnesses also record seeing the marble plates, although among those accounts that are at present known, only Evliya mentions the purpose of collecting rainwater.<sup>21</sup> Although, as has been remarked by a modern editor, Evliya had a ‘vivid and colourful imagination’, and is recorded as suggesting, for example, that the Bosphorus was a canal built by Alexander of Macedon to connect the Black Sea with the Mediterranean, he had on his extensive travels visited seven thousand Ottoman fortresses and taken part in many campaigns. He may therefore have been more aware of the military importance of access to water than the local authors and western topographers who recorded what they saw in Athens before 1687, and understood that marble plates would enable water to be collected.<sup>22</sup> If the commissioners, architects, and builders of the classical Parthenon had found ways, however expensive, of making the Acropolis more self-sufficient in

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20 Evliya Çelebi, *An Ottoman Traveller, Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi*, translation and commentary by Robert Dankoff and Sooyong Kim (London: Eland, 2010), 284.

21 Collected by Norre, A.D., also known as Norre-Dinsmoor, *Studies in the History of the Parthenon*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan (University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1966), 18, 26–27, with the testimonial transcribed. Discussed also by St Clair, William, and Robert Picken, ‘The Parthenon in 1687: New Sources’, in Michael Cosmopoulos, ed., *The Parthenon and its Sculptures* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), pp. 166–95. St Clair and Picken were also able to draw on a previously unknown account by an unknown French visitor who in 1699 saw the damaged marble plates on the ground and who noted: ‘Three ranks of parallel columns supporting two flat vaults of marble of which each marble traverse was 10 feet by 4 1/2.’ This account tallies with Wheler’s remark, also from before the explosion, that ‘The Temple was covered outwardly with great Planks of Stones.’

22 The comment is in Evliya Çelebi, *The Book of Travel (Selected fragments of volume 5)* edited by Helena Dolińska, from translation by Andrej Doliński (London: Caldra, 2001), 2. The comment about the canal is at page 15. The few known accounts by other visitors before the encounter with the classically-educated men from western Europe will be described with a discussion of what they can tell us about the ways of seeing during the long millennium, together with a written account and a visual image not previously published, in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

water than it had previously been, they had gone far to cure a weakness that had caused the fortress to be captured more than once in what to them were earlier years. In ancient times an acropolis without water was almost a contradiction, like an acropolis without walls, scarcely an acropolis at all. We may also have here a contribution towards an answer to a question that has seldom been asked in modern times. Why did the builders of the classical Parthenon choose to flaunt a story of the lack of potable water on the Acropolis on the most visible of all the stories in stone presented on the building, the west pediment?<sup>23</sup>

During the Ottoman centuries when the Acropolis was home to Ottoman soldiers and their families the non-potable water that was available at some times of year on the summit probably provided the place for the ritual washing that was required of Muslims before taking part in the rituals in the mosque. The non-potable water also seems to have supplied a cesspool on the north slope where archaeologists in the 1930s found over 1,500 Ottoman era coins, each a misfortune for somebody who had taken down his or her baggy trousers at the allotted place.<sup>24</sup>

## Haseki's Wall and Siege Warfare

In 1778 the local authorities of Athens decided that the town needed greater protection against the increasing raids by marauders arriving by land or sea. Haseki's wall, as it was called locally from the name of the Ottoman governor (voivode) then in power,<sup>25</sup> was thus hurriedly erected. This fortification was nearly four English miles in circumference, eight feet high, and included six gates that were normally left open even at night. About twenty towers, mainly made of wood, set at intervals

23 See *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

24 They also found knuckle bones, presumably used in the board games which the soldiers played to pass the time, as was noticed by visitors. Broneer, Oscar, 'Excavations on the Slopes of the Acropolis 1939', *American Journal of Archaeology* 44 (1940), 252, 256. A useful attempt at a modern map of the town on the Acropolis at the time of the Revolution, showing the streets and some buildings, as well as the immediate environs, the castellations, walls, and slopes, was made by Traulos, Ioannes, *Poleodomikē exelixis tōn Athēnon: apo tōn proïstorikōn chronōn mechri tōn archōn tou 19ou aiōnos* (Athens: Kapon, second edition 1993), 205, although it appears to show more guns than were there.

25 Usually called Hadji Ali Haseki, or in modern Turkish Hacı Ali Haseki, and in Greek Χατζή Αλής Χασεκίς.



within shouting distance of one another, were about twice the height of the wall.<sup>26</sup> In times of danger, they could be climbed with ladders and be used as viewing stations from which to look outwards in all directions. If an attempt at an incursion seemed imminent, the towers could be employed as command centres from which operations could be directed by, for example, rushing men to the threatened sections of the wall and mobilizing women and others to carry baskets of débris with which to fill in any breaches. For the few local inhabitants, almost all Muslims, who were legally permitted to have firearms, or to whom firearms could be issued in an emergency, enfilade fire could prevent marauders from approaching. And, even if some managed to enter the town by breaching the wall, if the townspeople held together, it was impossible for them to get out again, let alone to carry away any booty they may have seized, whether provisions, weapons, or persons. In some places the wall was set forward from the built-up area, leaving open spaces available for the cultivation of crops and the grazing of animals, and so providing a measure of food security in case the town was cut off.<sup>27</sup> According to a British army officer who visited Athens a few years after the wall was completed, it was intended to defend the town ‘from the irruptions of the Albanians, who are ever ready for a revolt, and have several times plundered the town.’<sup>28</sup>

Haseki’s wall, built by forced labour, was adequate in a situation where the only weapons available to marauders were swords, daggers, pikes, and a few muskets. Walls of this kind, which accorded with a standard Ottoman pattern, were a cheap way of improving internal security in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire where lawlessness was endemic. Against armies, Haseki’s wall was less effective. Unsubstantial though it was, however, a few defenders could still prevent any breaches from being exploited at least for a while. When the Ottoman army under

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26 ‘a garden wall, between three or four miles in circumference.’ Galt, John, *Letters from the Levant* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1813), 184; a ‘plaister wall.’ Cazenove, *A Narrative in Two Parts, Written in 1812* (London: privately printed, 1813), 217.

27 ‘The buildings occupy about four-fifths of this enclosure; the remainder consists of corn fields and gardens.’ Galt, John, *Voyages and Travels, in the Years 1809, 1810, and 1811* (London: Cadell, 1812), 184.

28 Sutherland, Captain D., *A Tour up the Straits from Gibraltar to Constantinople* (London: Printed for the author, second edition, 1790), 225. The letter, dated 3 February 1788, was probably edited later from notes made on the spot in accordance with the eighteenth-century literary convention, much used in novels, as a device to claim the authenticity of on-the-spot immediacy.

the command of Reschid Mehmed Pasha (Reşid Mehmed Pasha), the Seraskier (Ottoman military commander) often known in Greece as Kiutahi from the place of his birth in Asia, arrived outside Athens in 1826, it took thirty-four days during which the wall was bombarded with artillery by day, making breaches that the defenders filled in by night, before the town was eventually captured.<sup>29</sup>

This form of slow siege warfare was not much different from the practice of western European armies in western Europe during the early modern period, for example, in the sieges of towns in the Netherlands by Spanish armies. Success was normally as much a matter of the length of a time a blockade could be sustained as of military strength and fighting ability, a trial of the logistics as much as of weaponry and trained manpower. Success was dependent too on access to food and fodder for the haulage animals, as well as to drinking water, to firewood, and on taking measures to contain the risks of epidemic illnesses to which all sides in a conflict were often exposed.

In the spring of 1818, just three years before the outbreak of the Greek Revolution, there was earth heaped against Haseki's wall at various places to help people scramble across, as well as 'a large hole ... through which a short man might walk upright.' When, in that year, news arrived that a plague was raging in Thebes to the north and later in Megara to the west, the voivode refused repeated requests from the populace and the foreign consuls to shut the gates, close the gaps, and to post guards. When the death rate rose to eighty a month, and the situation presented itself as a choice between maintaining the economy or reducing the expected mortality level, the voivode declared that anyone who set up a guard at the town gates would be shot and that any shopkeeper who closed his shop would be bastinadoed. Only after the epidemic had been experienced for over a year, and following an intervention by the voivode of Negropont in whose jurisdiction Athens lay, guards were posted at the gates of Athens to turn away visitors from the infected areas, although western visitors were exempted.<sup>30</sup>

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29 *The Memoirs of General Makriyannis, 1797–1864*. Edited and translated by H. A. Lidderdale (Oxford: OUP, 1966), 100. The siege of Athens in 1826 and 1827, and its outcome, are described in Chapter 11. For the convenience of readers, I will call the Ottoman commander, who features frequently in later chapters and was known by a variety of names and titles during a long career, 'Reschid.'

30 Woods, Joseph, F.A.S. F.L.G. F.G.S., and Corresponding Fellow of the Society of Georgofili at Florence, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London:

In some places Haseki's wall followed the course of earlier walls, with the builders making use of any materials that lay to hand, including pieces of ancient carved marble.<sup>31</sup> In the early 1830s when *de facto* independence had been secured, the wall was soon being despoiled of the cut marble and dressed stones that were useful for the rebuilding of the town. By June 1834, just over a year after the last Ottoman soldiers left, the wall had ceased to exist.<sup>32</sup> Occasional survivals, found in later archaeological excavations, such as that shown in Figure 2.4, confirm how insubstantial it had been.



Figure 2.4. Remains of Haseki's wall, south slope of the Acropolis. Author's photograph, 2018. CC BY.

What may be other remains of the wall can be seen near the entrance to the Acropolis as shown in Figure 2.5, although they may have been built

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John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, pp. 292–94. Letter dated 'April 1818' in the printed version. In a document of advice to travellers prepared years before by Philip Hunt, Elgin's chaplain, based on his experiences, recommended: 'If you ask directly whether the plague exists and receive a positive denial of, the answer is by no means to be relied on; but if you ask whether there is any sickness in the village and receive for answer that there is a feverish complaint but which they assure you is not the plague, you have very strong reasons for suspecting it.' Quoted from a longer document among the Hunt papers, in St Clair, *Lord Elgin*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 73.

31 Discussed by Theocharaki, Anna Maria, *The Ancient Circuit Walls of Athens* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019).

32 Burgess, Rev. Richard, *Greece and the Levant: or, Diary of a summer's excursion in 1834: with epistolary supplements* (London: Longman, 1835), i, 275.

later to prevent stones from being taken for reuse locally or, in the case of choice pieces of marble, for sale to foreign collectors and local agents.



Figure 2.5. Possible remains of Haseki's wall. Author's photograph, 2014. CC BY.

## Athens and its Fortifications at the Time of the Revolution

During most periods in its history, Athens had been vulnerable both to sea pirates landing on the Attic coast and to bandits arriving by land. On the many occasions when the town had been threatened, some inhabitants had sought refuge in the Acropolis, but others had gone to the island of Salamis or to the caves in the mountains nearby in hope of sitting out the crisis. Lookouts on the Parthenon could see possible invaders before they reached the town from any direction, but could also see the places to which the people, when they had warning, had been able to flee.<sup>33</sup> Thucydides in the fifth century BCE had speculated that it was because the Acropolis lay a few miles inland that it had been chosen for human colonization at some remote age, a suggestion that archaeological findings from Neolithic times have tended to confirm.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Notably in 480 BCE and in the war of 1687–1690.

<sup>34</sup> Thuc. 1. 2. His account of the economic and social development of Athens, looking back from his time with the evidence that was then available to him, or

At the time of the Greek Revolution, the local geography and the local micro-climate still imposed many of the same limitations, and offered some of the same opportunities, of ancient times.<sup>35</sup>

Haseki's wall incorporated Hadrian's Gate, one of the ancient monuments of Athens that were architecturally largely unchanged since they were first built. A door was fitted and there was a platform for a lookout guard. A watercolour, initialled 'A.M. 1821', the year of the outbreak of the Revolution, made by an unidentified amateur British artist, is reproduced as Figure 2.6.



Figure 2.6. Hadrian's Gate, 1821. Amateur watercolour.<sup>36</sup>

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the 'emergence from brutishness' narrative, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, together with its role in the discourse that decided to build the classical temple.

<sup>35</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 24.

<sup>36</sup> Private collection. It is possible that the date, which is not easy to make out, is 1824 not 1821. Another image, an unfinished pen-and-wash drawing made on the spot on 8 September 1805 by Simone Pomardi with the aid of a camera obscura, is reproduced in *In Search of Classical Greece: Travel Drawings of Edward Dodwell and Simone Pomardi, 1805–1806*, the catalogue accompanying an exhibition curated by John Camp with Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan (London: British Museum, 2013), 187. The door appears to have been bricked up more securely with marble blocks in contrast with the pre-war image in Pomardi, Simone, *Viaggio nella Grecia fatto da Simone Pomardi negli anni 1804, 1805, e 1806* (Rome: Poggioli, 1820), i, 149, which appears to show only a wooden door. The Hadrianic era inscriptions on the Gate, often discussed, are included in the standard corpus, IG II<sup>2</sup> 5185.

During a war in 1808 between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, when Hadrian's Gate was closed at night, a resident of Athens who found the door shut simply kicked it down.<sup>37</sup> In 1824, when Athens was temporarily in the hands of the Greek Revolutionary forces, the wall was sketched from a distance by another amateur, Archibald Black, a British naval surgeon, as shown as Figure 2.7.

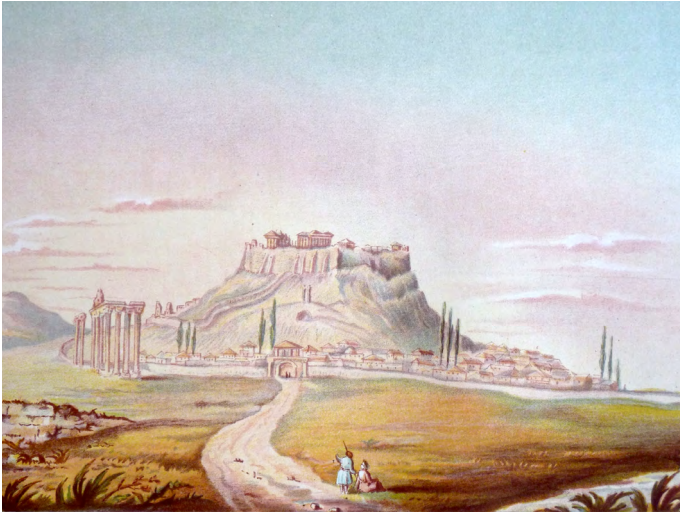


Figure 2.7. 'View of the Acropolis from the banks of the Illysus, Sep<sup>r</sup> 1824'. Chromolithograph from a contemporary amateur picture.<sup>38</sup>

This image brings out the military importance of another wall that ran up the Acropolis on the south slope, enclosing the area occupied by the ruins of the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, a site that had long been identified from remarks in ancient authors but had not yet been excavated. The 'Serpenji', as this enclosed area at the left of the picture was called, included wells from which poor-quality water could be extracted during some seasons of the year, plus a few cisterns, built centuries before, where the water could be stored. Enough vegetation

37 Black, William, L.R.C.S.E., Surgeon, H.M.S. *Chanticleer*, *Narrative of Cruises in the Mediterranean in H.M.S. "Euryalus" and "Chanticleer" during the Greek War of Independence (1822–1826)* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1900).

38 *Ibid.*, frontispiece. The chromolithograph was made by McLagan and Cumming of Edinburgh, c.1900.

grew in the Serpenji to enable animals to survive at least for a while.<sup>39</sup> Also visible in this image are the two ancient columns that stand above the Monument of Thrassylos, and the caves below, all accessible on foot.<sup>40</sup> During the Revolution, much of the fighting, including sorties, sapping and mining, and attempts to climb over the walls with ladders, as well as artillery bombardment, musketry, and hand-to-hand fighting with swords and daggers, was a struggle for control of this area of the Acropolis slopes.

Pictures made on the spot by amateurs sometimes record features that professional stay-at-home artists, trained in the conventions of the western topographical and picturesque traditions, tended to omit. Much the actuality was also lost in the transfer from an on-the-spot sketch to a monochrome line engraving prepared by the skilled men and women who produced the final version that circulated most widely, and who had their own professional ideas of how ruins should be visually presented. Black's picture, for example, presents the sky over Athens in a pale shade of violet. Whether knowingly or inadvertently, Black's picture celebrated Athens as the 'violet crowned', a phrase that Pindar had popularized in his celebration of Athens in the fifth century BCE.<sup>41</sup>

Haseki's wall enabled the authorities in Athens to monitor and to tax commercial traffic in and out.<sup>42</sup> His many acts of arbitrary, unfair, and cruel government made him rich enough to buy the well-watered estate at Patissia, but his rule led to an exodus of the population, complaints to Constantinople, and demands to have Haseki removed from office. He was later put to death by the Ottoman authorities and his head displayed on the imperial gate at Constantinople.<sup>43</sup> Under the Ottoman system, it

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39 The wells and cisterns in the Serpenji, that were brought back into service when the revolutionaries took the Acropolis in 1822, along with the rediscovered ancient well of fresh water on the north side, to be discussed in Chapter 8, are noted in a report from Salamis dated 13 September 1823 in Kew FO 78/117.

40 Discussed further in Chapter 15.

41 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

42 For example Chandler, Richard, *Travels in Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1776), 34.

43 Discussed by Strauss, Johann, 'Ottoman Rule Experienced and Remembered: Remarks on Some Local Greek Chronicles of the Tourkokratia,' in *The Ottomans and the Balkans: A Discussion of Historiography*, ed. by Fikret Adanur (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 208–21, using the account by Panayis Skouzes, who moved to Euboea, which was written in 1841 after the Revolution, printed for the first time in 1902 by Philadelphus, ii, pp. 328–62. An account of the times that Haseki served as

was possible for Orthodox communities to appeal against local officials, both directly and through the intervention of the Patriarch, with some prospect of success, but the process was time-consuming, presumably expensive, and complaining about maladministration was risky.

## Views and Maps of the Acropolis Before and During the Revolution

Before the Revolution those allowed to visit the summit found a small town, with gardens, home to the families of the soldiers. According to Hugh William Williams, an artist whose account of his visit in 1817 four years before the Revolution reports no pre-rumblings of the imminent shock, the buildings and houses on the Acropolis summit were constructed with clay and marble, 'the marble looking doleful through the mud.'<sup>44</sup>

The commandant's house can also be seen in a view of the summit by Edward Dodwell c.1805 reproduced as Figure 2.7. This picture, made before the Greek Revolution when many of the houses were damaged by bombardment or stripped of their wood for making fires for cooking, and when the trees were also cut down, is among the fullest images known of the Acropolis when it was still a living town.

Another view, made before Elgin's removals that began in 1801 is reproduced as Figure 2.9.

The chimney-like structures to be seen on top of some of the houses, a common feature across the Middle East, were designed to catch any breezes, draw the air down, and to help to cool the interiors.

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Voivode of Athens, with descriptions of his extortions, seizures of property, and other illegalities, and of his ultimate execution by order of the Ottoman court, is given by Sicilianos, Demetrios, *Old and New Athens* (London: Putnam, 1960), 141–56, based mainly on local chronicles, with a discussion of some whose authenticity is dubious. The accounts by Gerondas and Skouzes are summarized by Dimaras, c.th., [sic] *Histoire de la littérature néo-hellénique des origines à nos jours* (Athens: Institut français d'Athènes, 1965), 276–77.

44 Williams, Hugh William, *Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands In a series of letters, description of manners, scenery, and the fine arts. With engravings from original drawings* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1820), i, 298. Williams was among the few who insisted that in his day the marble surfaces were brown not white. For his statement of the romantic theory of seeing and cognition, see Chapter 9; for his attempts to counteract the 'saving' narrative advanced by Lord Elgin and his supporters, see Chapter 20.





Figure 2.8. 'The West Front of the Parthenon and the Erechtheion'. Coloured aquatint from a drawing by Edward Dodwell. Wikimedia Commons, public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_west\\_front\\_of\\_the\\_Parthenon\\_and\\_the\\_Erechtheion,\\_from\\_the\\_Propylaea\\_-\\_Dodwell\\_Edward\\_-\\_1819.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_west_front_of_the_Parthenon_and_the_Erechtheion,_from_the_Propylaea_-_Dodwell_Edward_-_1819.jpg)

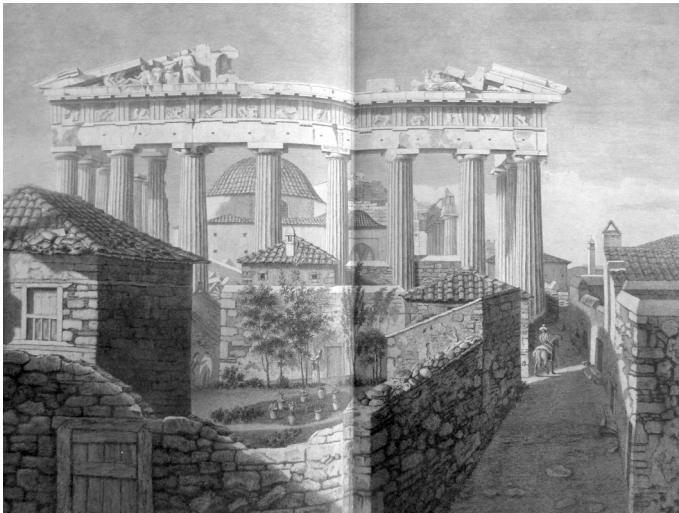


Figure 2.9. 'View of the Eastern Portico of the Temple of Minerva, at Athens, called the Parthenon'. Copper engraving.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Elgin Marbles from the Temple of Minerva at Athens on sixty-one plates selected from "Stuart's and Revett's Antiquities of Athens" to which are added, The Report from the Select Committee to The House of Commons, respecting the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles, and an Historical Account of the Temple* (London: J. Taylor, at the Architectural Library, 1816), after 88. The plates from which impressions were first published had evidently been used to produce more copies in response to the interest caused by the British Parliament's 1816 decision to buy Elgin's collection.

Figure 2.10 shows another view of the town on the Acropolis, taken in 1765 that gives a reasonably realistic view of the east end of the Parthenon before the removals by the agents of Lord Elgin. According to Sir Richard Worsley, who published the engraving in his book, when he visited in 1785, 'no further dilapidations had taken place.'<sup>46</sup> From this picture it emerges that at the east end of the summit, the furthest from the entrance gate, were some substantial buildings that, from their design, predated the Ottoman takeover in the fifteenth century, including what are probably stables.<sup>47</sup> There were however more houses than were needed by the garrison, some of whose members lived in the lower town when not on duty, and many houses on the Acropolis were untenanted.<sup>48</sup>



Figure 2.10. 'View of the Parthenon, shewing the situation of the sculptures of the metopes and the frieze'. Copper engraving.<sup>49</sup>

In 1825 or 1826, when Athens and the Acropolis were under the control of the Greek insurgents, and an attack by the Ottoman army was expected,

46 *Museum Worsleyanum or a Collection of Antique Basso-Relievos, Bustos, Statues, and Gems; with views of Places in the Levant taken on the spot in the years MDCCLXXV. VI. and VII.* (London: Prowett, 1824) ii, 21. His remark could be read as casting doubt on one of Elgin's justification for his removals: the dangers that the sculptures were exposed to while on the building. Discussed further in Chapter 18.

47 As suggested by Diana Gilliland Wright in her blog of 9 January 2010, in cooperation with the late Pierre A. MacKay, the double-fold windows imply that some of the modern buildings dated from the fifteenth-century Florentine period. <http://surprisedbytime.blogspot.co.uk/search?q=evliya>

48 Noted by, for example, Gell, William, Sir, *Narrative of a Journey In the Morea* (London: Longman, 1823), 20.

49 Noted as G. Pars del. D° Pronti sculp. Since Pars was normally known as William this may be a mistake by the engraver. *Museum Worsleyanum*, ii, 21.

the local commander, Yannis Gouras, commissioned an experienced French officer to prepare a military map of Athens that is also helpful in understanding what happened in Athens and its monuments during the Revolutionary War. A copy is reproduced as Figure 2.11.

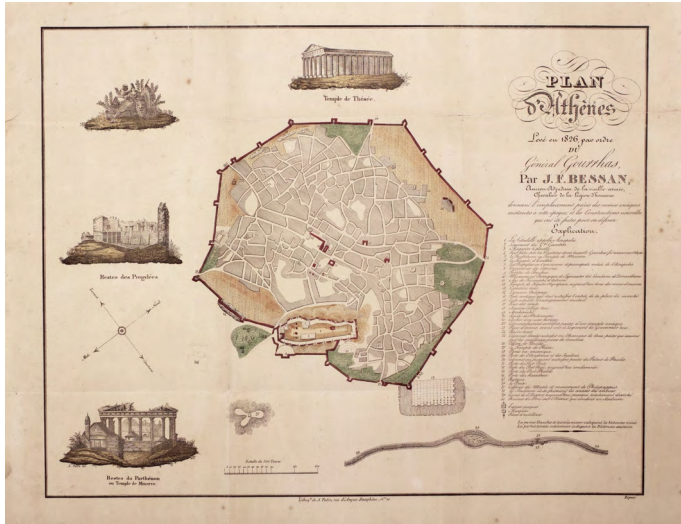


Figure 2.11. 'Plan d'Athènes levé en 1826 par ordre du général Gourrhas. Par J.F. Bessan ... donnant l'emplacement précis des ruines antiques existantes à cette époque et les constructions nouvelles qui ont été faites pour sa défense'. Lithograph, hand-tinted at the time it was made.<sup>50</sup>

A detail showing the Acropolis is at Figure 2.12.

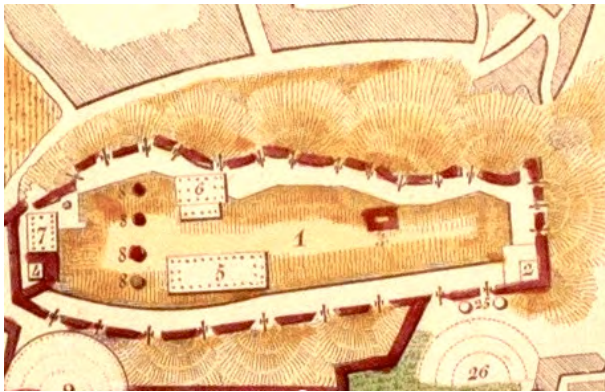


Figure 2.12. Detail from Bessan's map (Figure 2.11 above), showing the Acropolis.

<sup>50</sup> Private collection.

From the numerous accounts by eyewitnesses, we can say with confidence that much of the detail is not accurate. Anyone with military knowledge understood that in any siege it was vital to ensure that the gunpowder magazines were protected from hot shot aimed at igniting them. The Propylaia had been badly damaged in 1640 in time of peace when the gunpowder stored in the building was ignited apparently accidentally by lightning.<sup>51</sup> The Parthenon, which had previously been structurally complete since ancient times, had been reduced to a ruin in 1687 when a mortar bomb fired by a besieging force penetrated the roof, set off an explosion, killed many people, and caused a fire that the besieged army, with little water, had no means of extinguishing. When the invading western army of General Morosini heard that the Parthenon was being used to store explosives, it had needed only 'a small number of shots' to hit the Parthenon with a mortar.<sup>52</sup>

With two ancient buildings destroyed by gunpowder explosions, the third and last, the Erechtheion, had been adapted into a gunpowder magazine by the Ottoman forces at some time before the Revolution. Since the whole Acropolis was within range of artillery shelling from the hills that lay just outside the town wall, and the Ottoman army, famed for its modern artillery, was able to send shots into defended structures, it was vital to protect the magazine.<sup>53</sup> The careful precautions against the risk of the gunpowder being set alight by accident or by bombardment, that involved enclosing a chamber in the Erechtheion with marble blocks, so that it offered only one small entrance, and how the magazine was further protected by a brick vault of uncertain age within, were described by the British architect Joseph Woods in a letter

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51 Korres, 70 in Stiros and Jones, drawing on the work of Tasos Tanoulas.

52 'après un petit nombre de coups' Laborde, Comte de, *Athènes aux XVe, XVIe et XVIIe siècles, d'après des documents inédits, etc par le Comte de Laborde, membre de l'Institut Langues français* (Paris: J. Renouard, 1854), ii, 151, quoting the account of Sobiewolsky, a lieutenant in a regiment from Hesse. That the targeting was deliberate and the story subsequently altered to make it appear like an unfortunate accident was shown by Mommsen, Theodor E., 'The Venetians in Athens and the Destruction of the Parthenon in 1687', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 45, 1941, 544–56.

53 The fires needed for making red-hot shells are shown in the Zographos picture of the 1826/27 siege of Athens. The high quality of the Ottoman artillery, developed with the help of engineers from France, was noted by Griffiths, J[ulian], *Travels in Europe, Asia Minor and Arabia*, by J. Griffiths. M.D., *Member of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, and of several foreign literary societies* (London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies; and Edinburgh: Peter Hill, 1805), 167.

written during his visit in 1818.<sup>54</sup> The gunpowder magazine was still in use when Edward Blaquiere visited the Acropolis on 24 July 1824, with the Greek Revolutionaries who were then in possession, having not yet found a safer place.<sup>55</sup> There is a report that the magazine was moved, although where it was located during the months of bombardment of 1826/27 is not known.<sup>56</sup>

The map also shows many more cannon mounted on the battlements than were ever deployed there during the Revolution.<sup>57</sup> The water cisterns on the summit, that Yannis Gouras had had cleaned and filled in the years between 1822 and 1826, are marked as larger and more numerous than they were, and the map gives no indication of the more important water cisterns on the slopes within the Serpenji that were also brought back into use at that time. The location of the commandant's house on the Acropolis, that Gouras took over from the Ottoman *disdar*, in modern terms the command-and-control centre, appears also to have been misplaced.<sup>58</sup>

The map, therefore, cannot be trusted. It is as if it were intended to mislead both friends and the enemies about the military strength of the Acropolis. Whatever its exact status and intended viewerships, with its picturesque vignettes of the ruins of Athens, mostly copied from eighteenth century engravings, the map is, if not a *ruse de guerre*, certainly a document of persuasion, aimed both at local participants in the war and at philhellenic viewers in France and elsewhere who supplied armaments, money, and military expertise.

Unusually, however, we also now have a map prepared by the Ottoman authorities during the Greek Revolution.<sup>59</sup> The main inscription

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54 'In order to avoid the danger of explosions, the Turks have walled up the opening, and are obliged to make a hole in the wall when they want any powder.' Woods, ii, 257.

55 Blaquiere, *Second Visit*, 95.

56 'The beautiful porch, where the Turks kept their powder-magazine, was opened again, and the magazine removed to a more convenient place.' Staehelin, 207. His unusual texts are discussed in Chapter 10.

57 A useful modern map of the Acropolis at the time of the Revolution, drawn by Travlos in 1958, perhaps influenced by Bessan, also, in my view, exaggerates the number of cannon mounted on the walls. Traulos, Ioannes, *Poleodomikē exelixis tōn Athēnon: apo tōn proistorikōn chronōn mechri tōn archōn tou 19ou aiōnos* (Athens, Ekdose, second edition 1993) plate 138.

58 The commandant's house is shown in Figures 7.4 and 7.5.

59 The map is reproduced in coloured printed form by Stathi 169 with details enlarged on 172 and 173. It could be viewed online at the time of writing at <http://www>.

reads: “This is a Map of the Castle of Athens including the city and the protective wall, conquered with the help of Almighty God”. This is followed by the date 11 Zilkade 1242 Hegira year, corresponding in the western European calendar to 6 June 1827, the date on which the Acropolis was surrendered to Reschid’s forces. There is however also another date, the Ottoman equivalent of 13 October 1826, that implies that the map was prepared earlier, during the period when the Acropolis was in the hands of the Greek Revolutionaries. What relationship the Ottoman map bears to that prepared by Bessan is not yet certain.<sup>60</sup> It too appears to show more cisterns and mounted artillery than was ever there. But by contrast it shows no interest at all in the ancient monuments. On the eve of the Greek Revolution, to the western visitors, and increasingly to the leaders of local Orthodox population, the Parthenon was a ruin inside which the Muslims had built a mosque. To the Ottomans it was a mosque surrounded by the ruins of a building constructed long ago by an idolatrous people whose civilization the Christians had superseded.

## Places of Worship and Greek Cultural Heritage

In 1809, thirteen years before the outbreak of the Revolution, Athens was said to contain one Greek Orthodox cathedral (the ‘little metropolitan’), plus thirty-nine churches and over eighty Christian chapels, including several in the caves on the Acropolis slopes, that were only occasionally in use.<sup>61</sup> According to an English churchman who made inquiries on the spot in 1818, there were thirty churches with their own priest, and around three hundred chapels and shrines.<sup>62</sup> There were eleven mosques

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[athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/ottoman-map-1827/](http://athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/ottoman-map-1827/) or by using a search engine for its reference number <HAT 946.40731> in the Ottoman archives.

- 60 A full publication of the Ottoman map edited by Tolia and Eldem was reported to be underway at the time of writing.
- 61 Galt, John. *Letters from the Levant* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1813), 119, 184. Information about the mosques is summarised by, for example, Travlos, [sometimes Travlos] Ioannes, *Poleodomikē exelixis tōn Athēnon: apo tōn proistorikōn chronōn mechri tōn archōn tou 19ou aiōnos* (Athens: second edition, 1993). The first was c.1960. A French edition is also available: Travlos, Ioannes, *Athènes au fil du temps, Atlas historique d’urbanisme et d’architecture. Par Jean Travlos. Traduction de Michel Saunier* (Paris: Cuénot, 1972).
- 62 Jowett, Rev. William, M.A., one of the Representatives of the Society, and late Fellow of St. John’s College, Cambridge, *Christian researches in the Mediterranean, from MDCCCXV to MDCCCXX, in furtherance of the objects of the Church Missionary*

including some with minarets, a small mosque that had been built in the early eighteenth century inside the recently ruined Parthenon, and numerous Muslim shrines. In 1678, Evliya had counted four 'Friday mosques', that is, mosques in regular use for weekly services, including the small one built inside the ruined Parthenon, seven neighbourhood mosques, one religious school, three primary schools, three dervish convents, and three Turkish baths.<sup>63</sup> The tallest working building in Athens, which dominated the skyline of the lower town, was the mosque known as Fethiye, that had been adapted from a Christian basilica at the time when Sultan Mehmet the Second came to Athens in 1456, after his armies had taken Constantinople in 1458 and who had guaranteed the position of the Orthodox Church. It survives today, although desacralized and without its minaret. A new mosque was built in central Athens in 1759.<sup>64</sup> From viewing stations inland, many of the dozen or so monuments surviving from antiquity were visible among the domes of the churches and the minarets of the mosques.<sup>65</sup>

The visual influence of places of worship extended beyond the buildings themselves. An industry producing visual images for display in Orthodox Christian churches and in private homes had existed in and around Athens for centuries before the Revolution, part of a network

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*Society, with an Appendix, containing the journal of the Rev. James Connor, chiefly in Syria and Palestine* (London: Printed by R. Watts, published for the Society, by L.B. Seeley, and J. Hatchard, 1822), 77. His informant was Pietro Ravelaki whose career as a classical topographer, his opinions on Elgin, and his choices in 1821 are discussed in Chapter 10. Ravelaki's estimate that the total population of Athens was then 12,000 or 14,000, is larger than that of most others.

- 63 *An Ottoman Traveller, Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi, translation and commentary by Robert Dankoff & Sooyong Kim* (London: Eland, 2010), 287
- 64 Philadelphus, Th. N., *Ιστορία των Αθηνών επί Τουρκοκρατίας από του 1400 μέχρι του 1800 υπό Θ.Ν. Φιλαδελφews* (Athens, 1902), ii, 278. The name of the Voivode who arranged for it to be built, and whose removal of a column of the Olympian Zeus temple caused protests, is transcribed as Tsistakes of Athens, which indicates that he may have been among those Orthodox who, by becoming Muslim, obtained high positions in the Ottoman service.
- 65 Among the ancient monuments existing at this time were the Parthenon, the Propylaea, and the Erechtheion on the Acropolis, and the remains of the Thrassylos monument, with the two Corinthian columns standing above it, on the south slope. The Nike temple had not yet been re-erected, as will be discussed in Chapter 22. The main monuments in the town were the Theseion (now thought to be the Hephaisteion), the Tower of the Winds, the Monument of Lysicrates, the Doric Arch, Hadrian's Gate, Hadrian's Library, the columns of the temple to Olympian Zeus, and the monument to Philopappos.

of picture-makers that served Orthodox communities in the eastern Mediterranean region.<sup>66</sup> With few exceptions, the only forms of image that the Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities permitted were in two dimensions and the only allowable content were stories of the early history of the religion and of its saints, martyrs, and heroes, which their viewers easily recognized by standard markers whose conventions, learned as part of childhood education, were shared by consumers and producers.

Within some churches, or in the entrance chambers, it also became a custom to display images of sinners suffering in hell alongside the anti-heroes of the religion, such as Judas Iscariot who had betrayed Jesus, and the Byzantine Emperor Julian who had tried to reverse the policy of Christianization of the Emperor Constantine, who had led a successful rebellion by marching an army into Rome and defeating the sitting emperor at the battle of the Milvian bridge in 312 CE.<sup>67</sup> Some entrance chambers pictured persons whom they regarded as contemporary adversaries of their community such as the 'schismatic' Roman Catholics who had broken away from the Orthodox church, and occasionally Muslims.<sup>68</sup> On the Princes Islands in the sea of Marmara, within sight of the minarets of Constantinople, the French countess Isabelle de Ferté-Meun, who wrote a book about her life there in 1816 and 1817 during which, as the wife of an affluent Frank, with diplomatic privileges, she explored the churches and former churches, reported seeing dragomans in the picture of hell.<sup>69</sup>

During the long eighteenth century, the painters of Athens appear to have been organized, as elsewhere, into guilds that regulated entry to the industry, supervised the training, settled internal disputes, and

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66 It was described by, for example, Clarke, *Travels*, part the second, ii, 520. A picture of c.1834 of the making of a large-scale religious painting in the Monastery on Mount Pentelicon is reproduced in Rottmann, C., and Lange, L., *Greek Landscapes after the War of Independence, text by Marinós Kalligas* (Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece, 1978), 18.

67 The invoking during the siege of the Athenian Acropolis in 1821 of the story of words appearing in the sky at the battle is described in Chapter 10. An image from a French schoolbook of 1819 is given as Figure 22.16. The blue and white flag of modern Greece alludes to the story.

68 I am grateful to Dr Angliki Lymberopoulou for her advice on this point and for describing a project that aims to record the images of hell and its inhabitants in churches in Greece, of which there are many examples in Crete.

69 Ferté-Meun, Comtesse de la, *Lettres sur le Bosphore, ou Relation d'un voyage en différentes parties de l'Orient, pendant les années 1816 à 1819* (Paris: Domere, 1821), 215.



generally managed standards, prices, and production. As is a feature of guilds, perhaps the commonest form of industrial organization in most societies before modern times, the membership appears to have included a large hereditary element as boys learned their trade from assisting their fathers and uncles in their workshops, while those who showed unusual promise were apprenticed to experienced masters beyond the family. The guilds maintained the prototypes or patterns ('anthibola'), a system of pictorial control inherited from the time of the Byzantine Empire, explicitly recorded as early as 1436 in one of the few non-ecclesiastical primary contemporary texts surviving from that time, the will of the painter Angelo Acontato.<sup>70</sup> Since the painters were exclusively drawn from the Orthodox community, and their main customers were those who had responsibility for church buildings, they were, in practice, forbidden to produce non-religious images except in territories outside the Ottoman millet system—a system in which the Muslim, Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic, Maronite, Jewish, and other religious communities were accorded a large degree of autonomy under the supervision of their religious leaders.<sup>71</sup> The guilds can thus be regarded as a branch of the Orthodox jurisdiction in pre-Revolutionary Ottoman Greece. El Greco, for example, often regarded as a painter in the western sense of the Spanish school, produced images in both traditions.<sup>72</sup>

Many of the pictures to be seen in Athens before the Revolution were produced in workshops on church-owned premises, such as monasteries in the hills or in small offshore islands, where valuable materials, such as gold leaf, could be kept secure from theft by outsiders, and to a lesser extent, embezzlement by insiders. The industry, whose customers were also its regulators, enjoyed a monopoly guaranteed by the Ottoman state and controlled both the stock of fixed capital and the human resources employed, so enabling the authorities of the guild to regulate the output,

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70 Mango, Cyril, ed. and transl., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 238.

71 For the changing meaning of *millet* in Ottoman Turkish see Eldem, Edhem, 'From Blissful Indifference to Anguished Concern: Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities, 1799–1869', in Bahrani, Zinab, Zeynep Çelik, Zeynep, and Eldem, Edhem, *Scramble for the Past: A story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: SALT/Garanti Kültür, 2011), 327 fn55.

72 Discussed by, for example in Panagiotakes, Nikolaos, M., *El Greco, the Cretan Years, translated by John C. Davis with a preface by Nicos Hadjinicolaou; edited by Roderick Beaton* (Farnham: Ashgate, c.2009).

the pricing, and the visual content. For many centuries before the Greek Revolution, the only non-ecclesiastical visual images that the local Orthodox population encountered were those made by foreigners. In a few locations, notably Athens, foreign artists were frequently to be seen making the sketches that, when worked up in studios and workshops abroad, would become paintings and engravings<sup>73</sup>

The changing religions of the city's population were also reflected in the use, reuse and disuse of some of its buildings. Figure 2.6 shows how the alterations made to Hadrian's Gate and the nearby section of the town wall had included blocks of finely cut marble. They had been recycled from the small classical-era building now known as the 'Ionic temple on the Ilissus', that had been situated in what was then open country nearby, close to the river of that name. That temple had been converted into a church in the early Christian centuries, but had fallen into disuse as the population of Athens had shrunk. It can be seen in the picture shown as Figure 2.13.



Figure 2.13. 'The Ionic Temple on the Ilissus'. Copper engraving.<sup>74</sup>

73 The absence in Greece of any indigenous representational art other than ecclesiastical for many centuries before the Revolution, and the sudden surge when restrictions were lifted, emerges vividly from the collections of the Benaki Museum illustrated in Delivorrias and Fotopoulos, *Greece at the Benaki Museum* edited by Angelos Delivorrias and Dionisis Fotopoulos (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1997).

74 By E. Rooker, copied from the gouache painting, and/or from an on-the-spot sketch, by James Stuart, early 1750s, in *Antiquities of Athens*, Volume i, 1762, Chapter ii, plate i. The comment by Stuart and Revett on the astonishing degree of precision in the carving that had survived in the warm, dry, microclimate of Athens at that time

The men pictured are the voivode and his party on a hunting trip, an event that might have happened in ancient times, an example of a long continuity that convinced eighteenth-century visitors to Athens that the 'Nature' they found in Greece was largely unchanged since antiquity. Although the strangely shaped building had long ago been identified by western visitors as among those described by the ancient author Pausanias in the second century CE as a fine classical-era building that had been in active use for over two thousand years, the engraving is the only picture ever made.<sup>75</sup>

Figure 2.13 also brings out how, at some time after the end of antiquity, more than a thousand years earlier, the Orthodox Christians who had been accorded a formal monopoly over religious practices in the Byzantine Empire visually asserted the drastic change from ancient Hellenic practice. By adapting the architectural design from walls, columns, and lintels made of marble, to the shape of a domed basilica made in part from bricks and tiles, they had transformed a sacred building in whose vicinity in ancient times ceremonies involving the killing, roasting, and eating of animals were performed by participants in the open air, into an indoor darkened space within whose walls Christian rites were performed by professional priests in the presence of a congregation of the local community. As with the Parthenon on the Acropolis, so with the Theseion in the town, and other ancient temples turned into churches elsewhere, the leaderships of the Christian theocracy had brought religion indoors.<sup>76</sup>

With the slow decline in the population of Athens, the church of 'St Mary on the Rock', as the adapted Ionic temple was called, had ceased to be in regular use by June 1669.<sup>77</sup> It was dismantled in the late 1760s by order of the Archbishop and Orthodox authorities of Athens, the money raised from the sale of the building materials being used

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is noted in Chapter 6. The implications of the phenomenon for an understanding of Athens and its institutions in the classical era when the temple was built are considered in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

75 It is noted as the 'Temple of Diana' in the useful map in Wheler, 338. Materials on the history of the building were collected and analysed by Picón. Some features copied from the measurements made by Stuart and Revett were adopted by the British architect George Dance the younger, in association with James Lewis, for the Royal College of Surgeons building in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, opened in 1813.

76 The persistence of the error that ancient temples were entered by congregations like Christian churches is discussed in Chapter 22.

77 Dreux, Robert de, *Voyage en Turquie et en Grèce du R.P. Robert De Dreux* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, published and annotated by Hubert Pernot, 1925), 145.

to finance the construction of churches within the town.<sup>78</sup> Richard Chandler, whose main purpose in visiting Greece was to report on how far any monuments from antiquity still survived, predicted in 1765 that it would soon be gone altogether as 'the materials will be removed, as wanted.'<sup>79</sup> When Baron Riedesel visited Athens in 1768, all that remained was a single column with its Ionic capital.<sup>80</sup> What little then remained was demolished by Haseki to provide materials for the town wall.<sup>81</sup> The church was replaced by a small chapel where, on the saint's day, a detachable icon was set up and removed after the ceremonies were over.<sup>82</sup>

At the time of the abandonment and demolition of the Ionic temple, there was evidently little sense among the Greek Orthodox population of Athens that the ancient building had any claim to be preserved, let alone that their contemporary identity was related to the ruins of ancient Hellas.<sup>83</sup> Scattered evidence has been found of a memory of the pre-Christian past persisting among the country people who had little contact with the foreign visitors and whose opinions may therefore have claims to have been indigenous in the sense of being uninfluenced by intellectual developments in western Europe, and may possibly be indications of continuity. The tombs disturbed by the ploughs of the

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78 Riedesel, Johann Hermann von, *Remarques d'un Voyageur Moderne au Levant* (Amsterdam: [no publisher named, 1773), 134. A translation, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise nach der Levant*, which named the author, was published by C. Fritsch in Leipzig in 1774.

79 Chandler, 82.

80 Riedesel, 134.

81 Stuart and Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens, measured and delineated by James Stuart FRS and FSA and Nichols Revett, painters and architects. A New Edition* (London: Priestley and Weale, 4 volumes, 1825), i, 29. '... it was razed by order of the Voivode of Athens about the year 1780, for the supply of materials for a wretched boundary wall to the modern city, which was erected under compulsion by the Greeks in seventy five days, as a barrier against the incursions of the piratical Albanians, who had made descents on Attica in unusual force, subsequent to a Russian invasion of the Morea.' When the architect Joseph Woods saw it in 1818, all that was left was 'the foundations of the semicircular apsis, added to make it a church.' Woods, Joseph, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, 231.

82 Chandler, 84, says the church was regarded by the Orthodox as having been desecrated when the visiting French nobleman, Nointel, arranged for a Roman Catholic service to be conducted there in 1672. The chapel is to be seen, for example in a drawing by Rey and Chevenard made in 1843, reproduced by Matton, xci.

83 *Select Committee Report*, 41. The inhabitants of Athens 'contemplant sans émotion les ruines de ses temples & de son aréopage.' Ferrières-Sauveboeuf, Cte de, *Mémoires historiques, politiques et géographiques des voyages du comte de Ferrières-Sauveboeuf* (Paris: Buisson, 1790), ii, 258.

country people were said to be those of legendary, semi-supernatural giants, as tall as poplar trees, of 'Hellenes' who could leap across rivers in one stride, and pick up marble blocks with one hand and throw them from island to island. The epic poem *Erotokritos*, written in the early seventeenth century and evidently reflecting the official ecclesiastical teaching and implicit censorship of that time, noted that the 'Hellenes' had not been Christians, and their religion had neither roots nor foundations.<sup>84</sup> In 1809, John Galt, who drew his information from Padre Paolo, the superintendent of the building belonging to the Roman Catholic Capuchins, who had lived in Athens for decades, recorded that the Albanians who did most of the agricultural work frequently came across pieces of sculpture that, in accordance with their religion, they always destroyed, 'believing them to be works of the devil, framed in order to tempt mankind to return again to idolatry'. Galt, as a member of the Scottish Presbyterian Church whose members had destroyed many images at the time of the Protestant Reformation, fully approved.<sup>85</sup>

The loss of the Ionic temple was referred to by Lord Elgin as evidence of the alleged indifference of the people of Athens to the ancient monuments at the time his agents were active, and as an assessment of local Orthodox attitudes in the middle of the eighteenth century, it may have been fair.<sup>86</sup> Nor is there any reason to doubt Elgin's claim that the Archbishop of Athens cooperated in allowing Elgin's agents to search church properties for ancient sculptures and inscriptions built into the walls ('spolia'), and that he had had the Archbishop's authority to remove them.<sup>87</sup> Many others were allowed to take away antiquities, statues, inscriptions, painted pottery, coins, and other antiquities, including jewellery and other grave goods without restriction, although gifts were normally given as part of the transactions.

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84 Quoted by Kakrides, John Th., 'The Ancient Greeks and the Greeks of the War of Independence', *Balkan Studies*, 4 (2), 1963, 251–64, 258.

85 Galt, *Letters*, 152.

86 For example in *Memorandum on the Earl of Elgin's Pursuits in Greece*, 1810 edition, 4. There are differences between the quarto edition printed in 1810 and the more common octavo editions, although mainly of style. As I noted in the 1967 first edition of *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, 183, the document drew heavily on a letter from Elgin's secretary, Philip Hunt. Some of the amendments that were made in the later editions at the suggestion of William Richard Hamilton were intended to remove examples of the pretentiousness of Hunt's style, but to ascribe the authorship to Hamilton, as many catalogues still do, is incorrect.

87 *Memorandum*, 1810 edition, 20.

## A Changing View of the Classical Past

The first mention of the ancient monuments being invoked as symbols of a newly emerging nationalism that I have found in my research is in a petition made to the Russian Empress Catherine by a number of overseas Greeks in April 1790 asking for Russian help in throwing off Muslim rule: 'our superb ruins speak to our eyes and tell us of our ancient grandeur.'<sup>88</sup> However, a few decades would pass before these views took root, as both the Orthodox Church and the Ottoman rulers held very different views of the Classical past.

From its earliest stirrings, Enlightenment-inspired talk of 'liberty' arriving in Ottoman territories from the time of the French Revolution had been condemned by the Orthodox patriarchs as 'an ambush of the Devil' designed to lead the people to destruction by enticing them from their lawful, that is, their Ottoman, rulers.<sup>89</sup> The Ottoman Empire, Patriarch Anthimos declared, had been created by the Christian god to protect the true, that is, the Orthodox, Christians from the schismatic Roman Catholics who had broken away from the Church in 1054 CE.<sup>90</sup> In 1793 and again in 1798, the Patriarchate of Constantinople condemned the importation of western Enlightenment ideas and the printed books that carried them. In deciding to take up arms, the insurgents of 1821 were therefore in revolt not only against the Ottoman Empire, but they were defying the leadership of the institution on which their identity had been re-founded and preserved for around fifteen hundred years. Even in 1828, when Greek national independence had been secured in all but name, the Patriarchate of Constantinople was demanding that the Orthodox return to their allegiance.<sup>91</sup>

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88 Eton, William, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire* (London: Cadell, second edition, 1799), 373.

89 Notably by Patriarch Anthimos of Jerusalem, *Submission to the Powers that Be: The Paternal Exhortation*, 4:1 (Constantinople, 1798) cited by Clogg, Richard, *The Movement for Greek Independence*, 62. Leake quotes and translates a substantial portion of this work as an example of the deep ideological division between the philhellenism of the overseas Greeks who looked back to 'their ancestors' and the conservative Ottomanism of the Patriarchy who hated European modernity. Leake, William Martin, *Researches in Greece* (London: John Booth, 1814), 193–95.

90 Summarised by Mackridge, Peter, *Language and National Identity in Greece, 1766–1976* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 76. The Roman Catholic Church, which claimed to have been founded earlier than the churches in the eastern empire where the religion had begun, regarded the Orthodox as having broken away. Each regarded the other as 'schismatic' and illegitimate.

91 The text, along with another of 1822, is given in English translation in Appendix E.

As for the Ottoman attitudes to the ancient ruins, the official Muslim discourse was that all representational images were forbidden and 'idoltrous.' In this regard the Muslims followed the texts of the ancient Jewish and Judaeo-Christian bibles, among the most influential of which were the reported opinions of Paul of Tarsus, whose speech in Athens was repeated and built on by many early Christian writers.<sup>92</sup> In the Koran ('Qur'an'), the Prophet drives out the idolaters from Mecca and destroys their idols, just as in early Christian writings Paul and Philip are said to have destroyed the idols of Athens, and other saints, notably James, are said to have done the same in other Hellenic cities such as Ephesus. In the Koran there are other similarities with the early Christian discourses, including the association of statues with 'demons' and the 'filth' that refers to the ritual slaughter of animals and the spreading of the blood and some of the inedible parts for the gods.<sup>93</sup>

It was possible, perhaps even common for Muslims, to claim to admire the works of some of the ancient Hellenic writers, notably Plato, while simultaneously condemning Hellenic visual images. So the firman<sup>94</sup> arranged by Elgin in 1801, a formal document that we can take as an example of official Ottoman and Muslim mainstream discourse at that time, of which I offer a new transcription and translation in Appendix A, refers to the Parthenon both as a place of the 'philosophers' [good] and as a temple of 'idols' [bad]. Evliya, in telling a story of how the Ottoman naval port of Negropont (Chalcis or Egriboz) was founded in the fifteenth century, describes the naval commander as acting 'with the genius of Aristotle', in cutting a way through the strait, capturing ten Venetian ships, and returning to Constantinople, 'having overturned the idols of the infidels, with their crosses.'<sup>95</sup> In these respects formal Islamic discourses had much in common with Christian discourses at the time of the Revolution. In practice, however, since many ancient buildings had been transformed into churches or mosques, as was the

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92 The period from post-classical antiquity to the modern revival of interest is discussed more fully in Chapter 22.

93 Hawting, 58. For demons in statues see Hawting, 108–09.

94 A firman is a formal document, often written, or rather painted with a brush on vellum, issued in the name of the sultan. The different types of firman are discussed in Chapter 6.

95 Quoted from the translation of the late Pierre MacKay, by Diana Gilliland Wright in her blog *Surprised by Time*: 'Negroponte in 1395', 31 July 2013, <http://surprisedbytime.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Negroponte>

case with the Parthenon, they were religious buildings under Ottoman state protection as part of the millet settlement.

## The Philhellenes and Their Influence

Philhellenism, the nexus of ideas that asserted the identity of the present day with the ancient Greeks, had made much progress, both in western European countries and among the Greek diaspora, during the eighteenth century. By 1763, perhaps as part of the modern European Enlightenment, we hear the beginnings of a local discourse of ‘our ancestors’, although at that time neo-Hellenism was still more of a literary movement led by foreigners and by westernised Orthodox Greeks living outside the Ottoman territories, mainly in Paris, Vienna, and Venice, than a local political or revolutionary project.<sup>96</sup>

There are occasional indications of changes of attitude on the way. We hear, for example, of a deputy Pasha of the Morea who in 1809 ordered that a translation of the ancient Greek travel writer Pausanias into Romaic (modern Greek) should be made and who personally visited Athens, ‘in order to see, as he declared, himself, those remains and monuments which attracted so many Europeans so far from home.’<sup>97</sup>

In 1813, however, as an example of the rapid progress of the idea, a number of prominent Athenians established the Philomuse Society that aimed to improve local education in the ancient Greek classics and

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96 The term favoured by some modern historians, notably by Kitromilides, Paschalis M., *Enlightenment and Revolution: The Making of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2013). For examples of ‘our ancestors’, see the case of Anson at Tenedos quoted by Spencer, Terence, *Fair Greece, Sad Relic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), 217; Firmin-Didot, Ambroise, *Notes d’un Voyage fait dans le Levant en 1816 et 1817* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, [n.d.], c.1826), 339. Parodied in Hope, Thomas, *Anastasius, or, Memoirs of a Greek written at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Murray, 1820) where, at i, 9, the eponymous hero refers to Achilles as ‘my countryman.’

97 Galt, John, *Voyages and Travels, in the Years 1809, 1810, and 1811 containing Statistical, Commercial, and Miscellaneous Observations on Gibraltar, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, Serigo, and Turkey* (London: Cadell, 1812), 168. Although much of this book relates to the territory of modern and ancient Greece, the title’s use of ‘Turkey’ meaning Ottoman, is an example of how, before the publication of Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, A Romaunt*, in 1812, philhellene talk of Greek nationalism was not yet the norm. For the role of the works of Pausanias in reviving a knowledge of antiquity, see Chapter 7.



to study and preserve antiquities.<sup>98</sup> It quickly established a library of about forty volumes, mostly about Greece, that visitors could use by paying a subscription. Four years earlier John Galt, who had brought no books with him, had lamented that he had had to rely on his memory, for 'books are not to be purchased here.'<sup>99</sup>

After the successful effort made in the century after independence to make the Athenian Acropolis the symbol of the new nation of Greece, and the constructing of a national history that used the ancient monuments as a heritage that connected the modern with the ancient Hellenes, it still comes as a surprise to discover how recent the change in attitudes to the monuments had been.<sup>100</sup> Immediately after the end of the Revolutionary War, for example, Ioannes Makriyannis, one of the most famous of its heroes, in memoirs begun in 1829 but not printed till 1907, is said to have told some soldiers who were about to sell ancient statues to Europeans: 'You should not let these leave our country [...] For it is for these we fought.'<sup>101</sup> The Greek soldier, Peter Mengous, who took part in many campaigns, and whose autobiography is less influenced by hindsight than the oral histories written down by famous commanders, records his searching for antiquities to sell to foreigners, including a marble bust of Socrates and a marble relief of three female figures. He writes of his business in matter-of-fact terms without any suggestion that he was caught in a dilemma, let alone that he was being disloyal to the aims of the Revolution.<sup>102</sup>

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98 An account of circumstances of the founding of the Society in 1813, with translations of the primary documents, stated aims as regards education, books, and antiquities, subscription fees, and the names of many of the first members from Athens and abroad is given by Sicilianos, Demetrios, *Old and New Athens* (London: Putnam, 1960), 147–49. Further details are provided by Hanson, John Oliver, 'Private Journal of a Voyage from Smyrna to Venice', edited by Anghelou, Alkis, *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 1 January 1971, 66 (18); and by Williams, Hugh William (later known as 'Grecian' Williams), *Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands in a series of letters, description of manners, scenery, and the fine arts. With engravings from original drawings* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1820), ii, 365. A facsimile of the membership document issued to Peter Edmund Laurent, who became a member in 1820, is inserted in Laurent, Peter Edmund, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey, and Italy, made in the years 1818 and 1819* (London: Whitaker, second edition, 1822), i, opposite 202.

99 Galt, John, *Letters from the Levant* (London: Cadell, 1813), 119, 123.

100 The transition from military fortress to heritage site is discussed in Chapter 22.

101 Quoted in English translation by Hamilakis, Yannis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 74.

102 Mengous, Peter, *Narrative of a Greek Soldier; containing Anecdotes and Occurrences Illustrating the Character and Manners of the Greeks and Turks in Asia Minor, and*

One sign that Greek perceptions of identity before and during the Revolution were shifting was the growing practice of naming children after the famous men and women of ancient Athens rather than the traditional Orthodox Christian saints, a trend the Church authorities tried to halt. In 1818, for example, Demetrios Zographos, who gave lodgings to visitors from the West, had named his sons Miltiades, Themistocles, Alcibiades, and Pericles, and his daughter Aspasia.<sup>103</sup> Koraes himself, however, one of the intellectual fathers of neo-Hellenism, never called himself a Hellene, nor did he use ‘Hellenes’ except when referring to the ancients.<sup>104</sup> In the Revolution many insurgents called themselves ‘Hellenes’ from the start, so distinguishing themselves from their Orthodox co-religionists, using language to splinter off a component of the previous identity.<sup>105</sup>

### The Acropolis as a Symbol of a New Greek Identity

Before the Revolution the Acropolis, as an imperial military fortress, was administered direct from the court in Constantinople, formally the sultan himself through firmans sent by the grand vizier, the highest official of the Empire. The commander of the Acropolis, the *disdar*, a low-ranking officer of much the same military status as a sergeant in a western army, was not answerable to the local governors of the towns and provinces, the *voivodes* and *pashas*, but only to the military authorities. As part of his responsibilities, he ensured that nothing could be removed from the Acropolis or altered without specific authority from Constantinople. And if the fortress were attacked or besieged, without specific permission, it was not open to local commanders to make terms of surrender.<sup>106</sup> Apart from a few months in 1688/89, when the Acropolis had been occupied and then abandoned by a western army under the command of the Venetian general Morosini, its international legal status

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*Detailing Events of the Late War in Greece* (New York: Elliott and Palmer, 1830), 239. The American editor claims that he had not altered the opinions expressed which seems likely to be true for this passage.

103 Eastlake, *Pictures by Sir C. Eastlake, With a biographical and critical sketch of the artist, by W.C.M* [William Cosmo Monkhouse] (London: Virtue, Spalding, [n.d.], [1875]), 26).

104 Noted by Kakrides, 253.

105 *Ibid.*, 252.

106 Noted by Ilicak, ‘Revolutionary Athens’.

had not changed since it had been surrendered by the ruling Italian ducal family to the forces of Sultan Mehmet the Second in 1458, shortly after his army had taken Constantinople in 1453.<sup>107</sup> Already by the early modern period, with the arrival of gunpowder, firearms, and artillery in the form of cannon and later of mortars and howitzers, its military limitations had been exposed. But, while what is now called its 'hard power' had steadily declined, in the eyes of the arriving westerners its symbolic and cultural 'soft power' was on the rise.

From the reports of travellers we can detect a shift from maintaining the Acropolis as a fortress from which foreigners were excluded to exploiting it as an income-generating tourist attraction. Removals of antiquities, however, continued to be forbidden. In 1786, for example, Lady Craven, seeing the many fragments of sculpture from the Parthenon lying on the summit, was refused permission to take 'even a finger or a toe.' The *disdar*, even after a long negotiation, said that if he agreed he would have his head struck off.<sup>108</sup>

The Ottoman documents that are now available relating to the firman that allowed a large part of Elgin's collection to be exported from Ottoman jurisdiction in 1809 make no reference to the fact that the terms of the firman of 1801 were exceeded. Nor do they reveal any concern about the nature of the contents of the collection as pieces taken from ancient buildings. They treated the matter not as one of idolatry or incipient local nationalism, let alone as national heritage, but as foreign properties sequestered during the recent war now being returned to owners as part of the peace settlement.<sup>109</sup>

What is striking, at first sight, is to find in an intercepted letter to the sultan from Reschid Pasha, the Ottoman commander who besieged the Acropolis in 1826/7, that it was western philhellenes who had come to Greece to fight who are castigated as idolatrous, and the monuments of Athens the object of their idolatry. It was the Acropolis that brought them: 'to fight with their Greek co-religionists and offer their impure

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107 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The town and acropolis had been in the hands of western princes and chartered companies since it was given to them as their share of the spoils of the Fourth Crusade in 1205.

108 Craven, Lady, *A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople. In a series of letters ... to His Serene Highness the Margrave of Brandebourg, Anspach, and Bareith. Written in the year MDCCCLXXXVI* (London: G.G.J. & J. Robinson, 1789), 256.

109 The relevant documents are transcribed in Appendix A.

blood in sacrifice to vile and dumb idols that they appreciate and worship in their deplorable ignorance.<sup>110</sup> Reschid writes like Paul of Tarsus, Augustine of Hippo, Tertullian, and the image-haters of the western European churches who had split from the Roman Catholics as part of the European Protestant Reformation who drew their ideas from the early Christian writings and re-performed them both in their words and in their deeds.<sup>111</sup> Reschid was, however, picking up on a more general point: the Muslims had their mosques, the Orthodox had their churches, and the Jews their synagogues. To the Franks from Europe, the Parthenon and other ancient buildings were being increasingly perceived and presented not quite as modern temples to modern gods but as 'works of art' to be 'rapturously' admired and adored in much the same language.<sup>112</sup>

The extent to which the Greek Orthodox population visited the Acropolis, except occasionally as workmen or as guides or servants of visitors, is hard to judge, but they had little reason to go there even if regular access had been permitted, as seems unlikely.<sup>113</sup> Although all the inhabitants of Athens knew the ancient monuments of the town among which they lived, few would have regularly seen those inside the Acropolis. And it was only from outside the town wall that they saw the Parthenon, the distant and middle-distance view having apparently been those to which the ancient designers had given the highest priority. From the lands to the west, then mainly used for grazing, the west pediment was visible, as shown in Figure 2.13. However, it would have been difficult to make out much of the pedimental sculpture, from which the paint had long gone, even before it was damaged in the siege of 1687 and after almost all the remaining pieces were removed by Elgin's agents after 1801. Although evidence is scanty, it seems likely too that, until the generation immediately before the Revolution, the ancient monuments were regarded by the Orthodox leaderships as of

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110 Kew FO 78/145 50. Full text in Appendix C.

111 Discussed in Chapter 20. See also the report of the Ottoman soldier on the Acropolis who 'inquired if we had no such stones in America' discussed in Chapter 8.

112 Examples of the western rhetoric of rapture, associated with romanticism, are given in Chapter 6.

113 'The Greeks never go there, so that we drew there in perfect tranquillity,' Eastlake, *Pictures by Sir C. Eastlake*, 26. Eastlake, who was in Athens in May 1818, spoke on behalf of around a dozen visitors at the time.

more importance to the Franks than to themselves. In, for example, the chronicle of the history of Athens until 1800 that was composed by the scholar Ioannes Benizelos at some time before 1821, he notes that the magnificent sculptures of the Parthenon 'caused astonishment and admiration among all visitors' without saying that he or other local people shared these feelings.<sup>114</sup> And that appears to have also been the view of the Ottoman leaderships.

Elgin's removals of pieces of the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Acropolis, made with the help of a team of about twenty locally recruited workmen, seem to have accelerated the change in local attitudes. According to Edward Dodwell, who had been present and who was generally well informed: 'The Constantinopolitan patriarch has been induced by the Greeks, who are fondly anticipating the regeneration of their country, to issue circular orders to all the Greeks not to disturb any ancient remains; and neither to assist nor connive at their destruction nor removal, under pain of excommunication. The plunder of the Athenian temples was the cause of this necessary measure.'<sup>115</sup> Since no text has been found and we only have a range for the date, we can only guess at the explanation that the Patriarch offered his subordinates, but we can be confident that he would not have publicly associated himself with talk of revolution.

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114 Benizelos chronicle printed in *Philadelphus*, ii, 313. Extracts in English are quoted by Sicilianos. Elgin was reported by Benizelos as having employed both 'Romans' (Orthodox) and those from the upper town ('αναπολιτάνοι') by which I take it he meant the soldiers of the garrison. Benizelos Chronicle printed in *Philadelphus*, ii, 313. The same lack of identification with the ancient monuments also emerges from a personal letter he sent to an English friend lamenting the damage done by Lord Elgin. Part quoted in St Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, 210. Extracts in French translation were given by Buchon, J.-A., *La Grèce Continentale et La Morée* (Paris: Gosselin, 1843) when the manuscript was in the possession of Kyriakos Pittakis, and I have found no mention of the manuscript being read by other visitors. Other extracts are quoted by Sicilianos. The Benizelos history is described by *Philadelphus*, ii, 255.

115 Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, 338.

## The Ecosystem of the Acropolis Before the Revolution

Each year the hill of the Acropolis performed the regular cycle of the seasons. In the spring, its slopes blazed with wild violets, crocuses, and anemones, as it had done in ancient times.<sup>116</sup> During the hot summer months, it appeared as a grey rock standing in a brown, treeless, dusty, landscape. This was still the same Athens, as the occasional tempests seemed to confirm, as had suffered a catastrophic flood in mythic times, one of the reasons why, as was reported by ancient authors, the first inhabitants had taken refuge in the caves of the Acropolis slopes.<sup>117</sup>

Athena's owls, the main symbol on the coinage of the ancient city, still fluttered round the Acropolis.<sup>118</sup> Snakes, another common symbol of ancient Athens, still lurked in the caves and crevices of the slopes, and the frogs still croaked 'brek ek, co-ax, co-ax, co-ax' as they had done in 405 BCE when Aristophanes had won first prize for his comedy, *The Frogs*. Thanks to the blog of Diana Gilliland Wright, you can now hear them too.<sup>119</sup> During the summer months, Athens teemed with storks another continuity from ancient times. Their strange clicking noise, that you can also now hear, made a counterpoint to the Muslim calls to prayer from the minarets.<sup>120</sup>

Before the Revolution, many families of storks arrived every year near the end of March.<sup>121</sup> The domes of the mosques of Athens, crowned by the nests of the storks, were noticed by Chateaubriand when he caught his first distant sight of Athens in 1806. Having seen storks in his travels

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116 Gardner, Ernest Arthur, *Ancient Athens* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 14, notes 'anemones of all colours, daisies, asphodels, and certain beautiful pink and yellow flowers unfamiliar to foreign eyes.'

117 Plato's account of the flood myth in *Kritias* 111e to 112a, quoted in translation by Hurwit 1. See also Chandler, 27.

118 Noted, for example, by Chandler, 129. That they were direct descendants was assumed, explicitly, for example by Dorr, Benjamin, 359.

119 Diana Gilliland Wright, 'The Frogs', *Surprised by Time*, 5 September 2009, <https://surprisedbytime.blogspot.com/2009/09/frogs.html>

120 The clicking noise can be heard on YouTube, for example, 'Storks making sounds', 10 October 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YPM3rNfZNI>

121 In fact the storks he had seen in North America, although sharing many characteristics, had evolved into a different species from the European. In 1809 they arrived on 20 March. Galt, *Letters*, 227.

in Canada, they were, he concluded, a species, like the human, that was equally at home in all the continents and climates of the world.<sup>122</sup> As he wrote: 'In meeting with them again in another species of desert, on the ruins of the Parthenon, I could not forbear devoting a few words to my old friends.'<sup>123</sup> Chateaubriand's mention of storks on the Parthenon makes him the only author since ancient times explicitly to notice them there, an example of the selecting eye eliding what the brain interprets as a an irrelevant or unwelcome intrusion. The storks of the Acropolis were, however, shown as incidental features in three engravings from sketches made on the spot by the young architect Charles Robert Cockerell in 1810. Two are reproduced, as they appeared in the book, slightly tinted, in Figures 2.14 and 2.15.

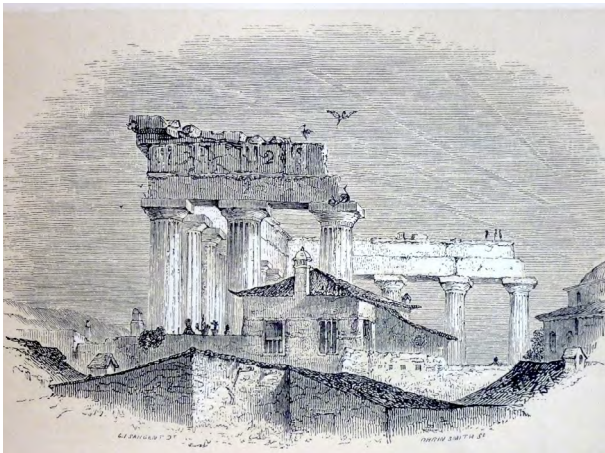


Figure 2.14. 'North East Corner of the Parthenon'. Woodcut c.1831, Sargent del. Darin Smith sc. From a sketch by Cockerell, 1810.<sup>124</sup>

122 Chateaubriand, ii, 160.

123 Malakis edition of Chateaubriand, i, 176.

124 Wordsworth's *Greece*, in the edition first published in 1853, 199. Noted on the Contents page xxii as 'from a sketch by C.R. Cockerell, R.A.'. J-B-G D'Ansse de Villosion says of his visit in 1786, that 'almost all the buildings of Athens and Thebes were covered' [with storks]. *De l'Hellade à la Grèce, Voyage en Grèce et au Levant (1784–1786)* edited by Étienne Famerie (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2006), 112.

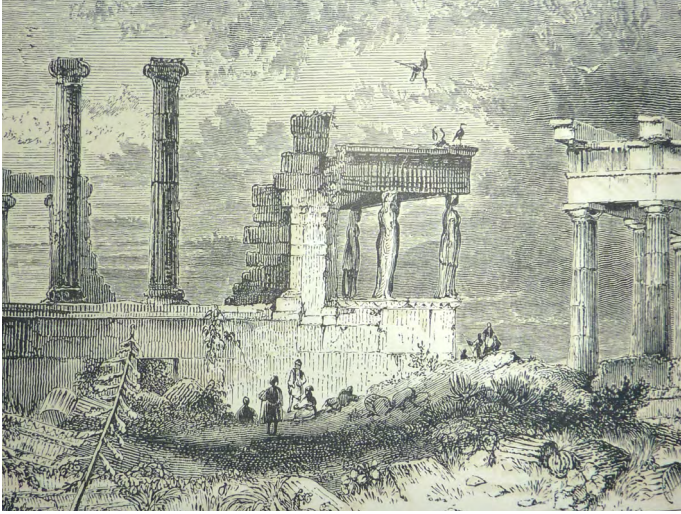


Figure 2.15. 'The Parthenon and Erectheum'. Woodcut c.1831 by J. Whimper, from a sketch by Cockerell, 1810.<sup>125</sup>

The naturalist Sibthorp noted: 'The domestic stork, a privileged bird, arrives regularly at Athens, sometimes in the month of March; and leaves it when the young are able to support the fatigues of a long flight, about the middle of August.'<sup>126</sup> According to the naturalist Frédéric Hasselquist, writing more than seventy years before, it was a capital offence for a Christian to kill a stork.<sup>127</sup> The storks of Athens, that were to be among the casualties of the Greek Revolution that was intended to restore the built heritage of classical Athens, had incidentally destroyed one of the features that some of the most highly regarded writers of that age, including Plato and Aristotle, had included in their world view and their understanding of the place of humans in that world.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Wordsworth's *Greece*, 200.

<sup>126</sup> Sibthorp's *Journal in Walpole*, *Memoirs*, 76. Noted also in Galt, *Letters*, 229; by Kelsale, 15; and by D'Ansse de Villoison, 112.

<sup>127</sup> Hasselquist, Frédéric, *Voyages dans le Levant dans les années 1749, 50, 51 & 52: contenant des observations sur l'histoire naturelle, la médecine, l'agriculture & le commerce, & particulièrement sur l'histoire naturelle de la Terre Sainte / par Frédéric Hasselquist; publiés par Charles Linnæus; traduits de l'Allemand par M.\*\*\** (Paris: Chez Delain, 1768–1769), 50.

<sup>128</sup> The driving out of the storks is discussed in Chapter 13. Their role in classical Athens is described in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>



Besides including the storks that other artists omitted, Cockerell gives us in Figure 2.16 a glimpse of how the little owls, that were even more central to the self-fashioning of classical Athens, were encountered as darting flashing pairs of eyes.<sup>129</sup>

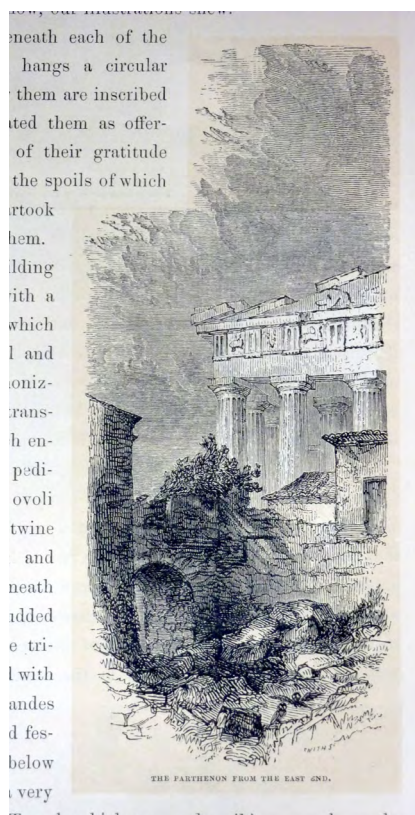


Figure 2.16. 'The Parthenon from the East End'. Woodcut.<sup>130</sup>

During the recent centuries for which we have records, domestic animals, including dogs, goats, donkeys, mules, and horses were kept on the summit, as were domestic fowls, as well as human activities including burials, all of which helped to fertilize and deepen the soil and to encourage the insects on which wild birds fed.<sup>131</sup> During the nineteenth

<sup>129</sup> Discussed in *ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Wordsworth's *Greece*, Orr edition, 197, composed by Cockerell, engraved by Andrew Smith. As with the storks, the owls were not mentioned.

<sup>131</sup> For the burials see Chapter 15.

century, as was estimated at the time, 120,000 cubic metres of earth was removed from the summit and dispersed, as the site was excavated down to the bedrock.<sup>132</sup> How much of that earth had remained from what was there before the summit was first settled in Neolithic times and how much was later accumulations, cannot now be determined. In ancient times too, however, the Acropolis summit was evidently a green space, almost a garden town, where wild birds shared the natural environment for their food and the human built environment for their nesting sites, a fact that deserves to be included in any attempt to recover ancient ways of seeing.<sup>133</sup> The ecological destruction of the Acropolis is discussed more fully in Chapter 21. It could not have been foreseen by the inhabitants of Athens on the eve of the Revolution whose lives we discuss in the following chapter.

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132 Burnouf, 15.

133 My discussion of the ancient viewing experience and its genres is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>





Figure 3.1. Members of the Ottoman garrison on the Acropolis. Copper engraving. Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, 4 vols (London: printed by J. Haberkorn, 1762–1816).

# 3. The People

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## Population

In 1820, when the outbreak of the Revolution was only a few months away, Athens was estimated to contain 1,200 to 1,300 houses, of which about two thirds were occupied by Orthodox Christian families and the rest by Muslims.<sup>1</sup> The total population living within the town wall was estimated at around 10,000, but many women, men, and children went out to the fields to work and people living in the villages in the countryside visited Athens in a typical rural economy of inter-dependent town and country.<sup>2</sup>

There were a handful of larger dwellings, mostly belonging to the foreign consuls and their families, many of whom were members of the Roman Catholic Church. In some cases, the consular families had held their offices in an unbroken, quasi-hereditary arrangement that went back to the seventeenth century. By the time of the Revolution, however, few consuls had direct personal experience of the European countries

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- 1 'The present state of Attica' summarised from surveys said to have been made in 1820 printed in Müller, Karl O., *Athens and Attica; an inquiry into the civil, moral and religious institutions of the inhabitants, the rise and decline of the Athenian power and the topography and chorography of ancient Attica and Athens, translated from the German of K.O. Müller, Grotefend, and others by John Ingram Lockhart* (London, Oxford, and Cambridge: Groombridge, 1842), 191–94. Both the Orthodox and the Muslims included some who were Albanian by ethnicity and by language.
  - 2 '10,000 Greeks and 2000 Turks at the utmost.' Douglas, Hon'ble. Fred. Sylv. North, *An Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance between the Ancient and Modern Greeks* (London: Murray, 1813), 45. 'ten or twelve thousand, about a fifth part of whom were Turks.' Fuller, John, *Narrative of a Tour through some parts of the Turkish Empire Not Published* (London: Printed by Richard Taylor, 1829), 542. See also Walsh, *Residence*, i, 123. Different estimates are given of the size of the Muslim population of Athens before 1821, including '10,000 Greeks and 2,000 Turks' by Douglas, 45, but 'an eighth', the figure of Raybaud, ii, 70, who arrived after the first hostilities, is too low.

whose commissions they held. They were financed by governments, by chartered trading companies, and by fees they charged for consular services, including the procurement and sale of antiquities.<sup>3</sup> Altogether the resident Europeans ('Franks') of Athens amounted to about a dozen families in all.

## Government and Leadership

In Ottoman imperial and economic terms, Athens was a place of little importance.<sup>4</sup> Of the two million or so Greek Orthodox who lived in the Ottoman territories, Athens and its province of Attica counted for only about 20,000.

At the time the Revolution broke out, all inhabitants of the Ottoman territories owed formal allegiance, through hierarchies of office holders that converged at the imperial court.<sup>5</sup> And most senior officials, religious as well as political, obtained their offices by purchase, their personal incomes dependent upon what was left after meeting official expenditures and paying off the purchase price, from the amount of rents, taxes, tythes, and other contributions that they were able to raise from the local people in their jurisdiction.<sup>6</sup> Since everyone belonged to a religious community, the millet system enabled the Ottoman Government to exercise some indirect control over, and also to tax, the inhabitants of the Empire down to the poorest peasant, although with a high proportion going to the intermediaries.

Themistocles Philadelphus, who wrote a history of Athens in the centuries before the Revolution with the help of the chronicle of Benizelos and other local records, notes the names of many eighteenth-century voivodes, with dates.<sup>7</sup> The fact that most are described as

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3 Their role as dealers in antiquities is discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

4 Leake, *Researches*, iii.

5 The figure of three hundred Muslims given by Chandler in the first edition of his book in 1776 was an error that was put right in the subsequent revised edition of 1825 in which Nicholas Revett corrected the figure to 'near one third of the inhabitants, which may be reckoned at five or six thousand.' Chandler (1825) ii, 149.

6 See, for example Speros Vryonis, Jr, 'The Greeks under Turkish Rule' in Diamandouros, 55.

7 Philadelphus, *Ιστορία των Αθηνων επί Τουρκοκρατίας από του 1400 μέχρι του 1800* υπό Θ.Ν. Φιλαδελφews. (Athens: 1902), especially at ii, 79–84.

'rapacious' may be more than a general anti-Ottoman comment. The voivodes, like the Orthodox archbishop, bought their office from the Ottoman leadership in Constantinople, including the Patriarch, either with wealth accumulated earlier in their careers or by borrowing, and they knew that they were likely to have only a limited time to recoup their expenditure with a profit. Such arrangements enabled the central government to draw revenues from their territories, much of which was devoted to display, and, in effect, discouraging investment and enterprise, except possibly in shipping that is hard to tax.<sup>8</sup> A voivode whom Robert Master met in 1819, two years before the outbreak of the Revolution, was: 'an old man of 77 who has been four years married to a young wife and has two or three children. His salary is very small and he could not live upon it but for the gratuities he receives from English travellers.'<sup>9</sup> At least one voivode was an Athenian who, although necessarily a Muslim retained his Greek name.<sup>10</sup> An Italian-speaking settler called Lombardi, who intermediated between the Franks and the local Ottoman authorities, was accepted as a Muslim and given the honorific title of Dervish.<sup>11</sup>

Local disputes between Christians and Muslims went before another Ottoman official, the *cadi*, the religious judge who administered Muslim sharia law, in the name of the sultan among whose many titles was Calif. In the century before the Greek Revolution apart from those holding the key offices, the Muslim population of Athens were not, however, dominant. According to Ioannes Benizelos, a member of one of the leading Orthodox families, whose history of Athens written before the Revolution is the fullest locally-written eighteenth century record whose text has come down to us, his own and the other families

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8 The technologies of display and performance, preferred to those of inscription, are described in Chapter 6.

9 Master, MS journal, British Library, 35. It is likely that it was this voivode, whose name I have been unable to discover, who is mentioned in Chapter 2 as having resisted measures to isolate the town of Athens from new of the plague of 1818. He is said by Woods to have commanded the respect of the population.

10 Philadepheus, ii, 84.

11 Chandler (1776 edition), 26. The history of the Gaspary family in Athens is summarised by Sicilianos, 226–27. Pierre Gaspary, a consular official at the time of the Revolution and later, makes frequent appearances in the notebook of Burgon, and in the papers of Fauvel, including those printed by Clairmont.

governed the town as a hereditary aristocracy.<sup>12</sup> They met regularly as a council to conduct the business of the town, and every Monday at the 'little metropolitan' Cathedral, along with the Archbishop, they settled disputes. On Fridays, the Muslim Sabbath, the archons made a formal call on the voivode and on the *cadi*. According to Benizelos, the minority Muslim community, who owned almost no land, were generally poor and deferred to the archons.<sup>13</sup> Nor was this a recent change. That the Muslims of Athens were an underclass had been remarked upon in the 1660s by the Ottoman traveller Evliya who described them as 'a despised group, with no standing or dignity, because the Christians are great merchants who have business partners in Frankistan' (western Europe).<sup>14</sup> Statistics of the head tax collected by the government from all adult non-Muslims show that the non-Muslims of Athens paid only around three per cent of the amount paid by the non-Muslims of Constantinople alone.<sup>15</sup>

Incomes in Athens, if converted into western currencies, were small, but since provisions were cheap, and many families grew much of their own food, real living standards were higher than those in many places in the west, for example, in Ireland.<sup>16</sup> During the eighteenth century, whatever benefits the Orthodox church may have brought to the souls of people of Athens, a high proportion of the local economic output went towards maintaining the clergy and the religious buildings.

## Life for Christians and Muslims in Athens

To an extent not unusual in the Ottoman territories, the two main religious communities were largely self-governing. The Orthodox Christians had their own political leaders, courts, and prisons, and were able to appeal to the Patriarch of Constantinople, who had imperial

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- 12 They are often referred to by visitors as 'archons', an ancient Greek word that suggests an emerging philhellenism, but that was probably anachronistic.
- 13 Summarised from Benizelos's history by Sicilianos, Demetrios, *Old and New Athens* (London: Putnam, 1960), 360.
- 14 Evliya Çelebi, *An Ottoman Traveller, Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi, translation and commentary by Robert Dankoff & Sooyong Kim* (London: Eland, 2010), 287.
- 15 Eton, 45–49.
- 16 Noted by, for example, Douglas, 67. 'They have abundance of all things, requisite for the sustenance of humane life.' Lithgow, 67.



responsibility under the millet system for the affairs of the whole Orthodox community. In modern political terms, the empire of the Byzantine theocracy had come to an end in 1453, when Constantinople/Istanbul was captured, but, for many regulatory functions, the Ottoman sultan simply replaced the Byzantine Emperor, and the Patriarch continued to exercise a jurisdiction over many aspects of the lives of his community much as before. The law applied among the Orthodox in Athens on the eve of the Revolution was Byzantine Roman, ancient customs, some codified in writing but mostly traditional, apparently in many respects much the same as it had existed long before 1456, the year when Athens and its Acropolis had been surrendered to the forces of the Ottoman Empire, and the privileged position of the Orthodox Church in relationship to its Roman Catholic rival, was formally guaranteed by the new rulers.<sup>17</sup>

In Athens, as elsewhere, among the features of the Byzantine theocracy that continued was ecclesiastical control over all visual images and of the locations where they could be displayed, a monopoly in one of the main instruments of government that was not formally brought to an end until the establishment of the nation state of Greece as a result of the Revolution. The patriarchal ban only applied to members of the Orthodox community, not to Europeans ('Franks') or members of the Roman Catholic community, with the result that, with no known exceptions, all pictures of Greece and its monuments including of the Parthenon, made before the Revolution, were composed by foreigners.

At birth, or soon after, the two main religious communities of Athens marked the hereditary religious affiliation of their children by the ceremonies of baptism and circumcision. But, for the most part, in Athens, the communities were not much separated in their daily lives. According to Evliya's description of Athens in 1667, the Muslims then mainly lived in three areas of the town, but there were no physical barriers. Although there were different schools for Christians and Muslims, everyone drew water from the same public fountains and bought and sold in the same bazaar. The women of both communities bathed together in the same Turkish baths, one of the few places where they had any social

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17 Discussed in the context of women and property by Dexiades, Evdoxios, 'Legal Trickery, Men, Women, and Justice in late Ottoman Greece', *Past and Present*, 210, February 2011, 129–55.

life outside the family home.<sup>18</sup> There were a few festivals, notably at the Muslim/Ottoman New Year, celebrated in March, that were confined to women of both of the main denominations, with all males excluded, even as spectators, but others, of which an image is given as Figure 3.2, involved the whole town.<sup>19</sup> People congregated separately or together on plentiful open spaces within the town walls, some near the ruins of ancient buildings, for festivals, weddings, parties, dancing, and play. Although I have not been able to discover who formally owned these lands, they appear to have been in practice if not in law, open to the public and normally no new building or demolition was permitted.<sup>20</sup>

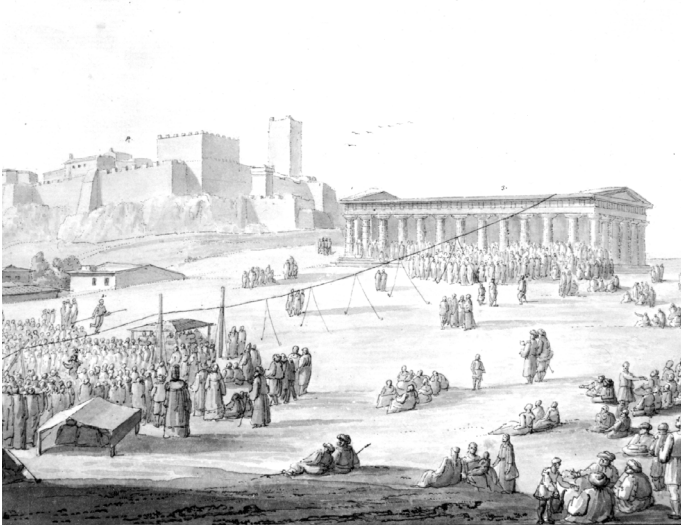


Figure 3.2. A display of tight-rope walkers, 1800, by the 'Temple of Theseus' [Hephaesteion], then the principal Orthodox church, with the Acropolis in the background. Drawing by Lord Elgin's artist, Sebastian Ittar.<sup>21</sup>

18 Clarke, *Travels*, part the second, section the second, 1814, 590.

19 Cockerell, 47.

20 The public open spaces included the area round the ancient Temple of Olympian Zeus, the area near the Theseion which belonged to the Orthodox Church, and the Pnyx, whose status I have not been able to discover.

21 Collection of the late Rodney Searight, present whereabouts unknown. First reproduced with his permission by St Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, second edition, 1983.

According to John Galt, a businessman who later became a prolific author, who visited Athens in the spring of 1809, a year of drought and food shortages, the town authorities arranged nine consecutive days of public prayers for rain, the first three conducted by the Muslims, the next three by the black population both free and slave, and the last three by the Christians. But the voivode also took practical measures, calling in the community leaders and arranging a subscription of money, to which he made a large starting donation, to be used to buy food from elsewhere to be sold at subsidised prices.<sup>22</sup> F.C.H.L. Pouqueville, a French medical doctor who visited in 1815, another year of drought, described the Muslim ritual performed in the open ground around the columns of Olympian Zeus that differs in some respects. The leaders, according to Pouqueville, began by ordering their slaves to pray for rain, and if that produced no result, the children were ordered to join them, carrying on their heads vessels containing burning charcoal, and finally they brought lambs born that year. This 'assembly of living things considered as the most innocent and guiltless' pray towards the rising sun. 'The old men commence a sacred hymn; the children raise their innocent voice, the slaves groan in silence, the lambs unite their tender bleatings.'<sup>23</sup> As another western observer remarked, the Muslims, 'unable to find the voice of innocence among men have recourse to the young of the harmless sheep to avert the wrath of heaven.'<sup>24</sup> The collective prayers for rain were also described by Evliya.<sup>25</sup> In ancient Athens too, there had been rituals of animal sacrifice and prayers of supplication to Zeus, the maker of the weather, and since there were harsh droughts every few years, it is possible that there had been a continuous tradition and not just a coincidence.<sup>26</sup>

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22 Galt, Letters 226.

23 Pouqueville, F.C.H.L., M.D., late Consul-General of France at the Court of Aly Pasha, of Janina; Corresponding Member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Letters in the Institute of France; of the Ionian Academy of Corfu, &c. &c., &c., *Travels in Southern Epirus, Acarnania, Aetolia, Attica, and Peloponesus, or the Morea &c. &c., in the years 1814–1816* (London: Sir Richard Phillips, 1822), 89.

24 *Voyages and Travels of her Majesty, Caroline Queen of Great Britain ... by One of her Majesty's Suite* (London: Jones, 1822), 445, perhaps derived from Pouqueville's account.

25 Evliya, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 289.

26 Parker, Robert, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 417. In ancient Athens all public prayer was accompanied by ritual sacrifice.

After death, the inhabitants of Athens, including the expatriates, were physically segregated into cemeteries in accordance with their religious affiliation. The largest and most prominent was that of the Muslims that lay in front of the main gate of the Acropolis in the area where, in normal times, the tourist buses now drop off visitors.<sup>27</sup>

## Cooperation between Christians and Muslims

In the years before the Revolution, except when it was caught up in wars or invasions, droughts, or extortionate local leaders, Athens was by common consent a pleasant place to live. On the eve of the Revolution, visitors remarked on how closely the communities co-operated even in their religious practices. For example, in 1820, at an Orthodox wedding reported by a visitor, it was the Muslim barber, with his looking-glass, who accepted the presents brought by the guests.<sup>28</sup> To act as a bridge between communities and individuals as well as exchanging information was as much a part of the socio-economic role of barbers as the shaving of chins. At the Ottoman court, the Reis Effendi (Reis ül-Küttab) Halet (Meḥmet Sa'îd Hâlet Efendi) one of the highest officials, communicated with the sultan through the chief barbers, who were, in the words of Şükrü H. İlicak, 'customarily the Sultan's confidants and major source of information from the outside world.'<sup>29</sup>

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27 A view of the Muslim cemetery shortly before it was removed after the Revolution is at Figure 16.2.

28 Laurent, i, 187. A picture of a wedding in Athens, showing a Muslim barber in Dupré, Louis, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople, ou Collection de portraits, de vues et de costumes grecs et ottomans, peints sur les lieux* (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1825 but almost certainly worked up some years later). The image is also accessible in the heavily adapted edition in Greek with much additional information, and pictures of Greece by other artists, edited by Manoles Vlachos (Athens: Folio, 1994), opposite 140.

29 İlicak, H. Şükrü, *A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence 1821–1826*. PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2011, 52. Ambassador Strangford's plan to bribe Halet, and his role in one of the firmans that saved the Parthenon, is noted in Chapter 6. Classicists may have recalled the much-repeated saying attributed to Archelaos, the ancient king of Sparta, who, when asked by his barber how he wanted his hair cut, replied, 'in silence.' Plut. Regum 25.2. The story has usually been understood as a joke against barbers but, to ancient ears, it may have carried a more serious message about the official civic values of Sparta, namely, that it was unnecessary, as well as unbecoming, and possibly a sign

Attempts by the communities to recruit members from the others were forbidden, their leaders cooperating in enforcing a policy that helped to preserve inter-community peace. Unlike many empires, the Ottoman authorities did not attempt to assimilate the peoples whom they ruled either into their language or into their religion, although after their conquest of Constantinople in 1453, a high proportion of the previously Orthodox Christians of Asia Minor had chosen to become Muslim.<sup>30</sup> An attempt in 1645 by western-financed Jesuit missionaries to establish themselves in Athens in hopes of recruiting members from the Orthodox to their religion had been quickly stopped.<sup>31</sup> It was however allowable for someone born into the Orthodox community to become Muslim if he wanted to pursue a career in the Ottoman service.

### Clothing

As elsewhere in the Ottoman territories, the peoples of Athens were differentiated by their costumes, an elaborate system of identity markers, as much social as religious, that were understood locally but not, with few exceptions, by visitors. Men of both main communities, for example, wore what many visitors called 'turbans', some coloured, some white, with different numbers of twists of the cloth, that were different from the turbans that only Muslims were permitted to wear, and there were other rules about the extent of embroidery, colour of slippers, and the hairstyles of women. At Carnival, for four days, the Greeks were permitted to dress as Turks or as Franks, although in 1818, it is reported that some were punished for wearing masks, so that they could not be easily identified. The Greek language teacher of the architect Joseph Woods, whom he described when he met him in 1818 as normally the 'quietest, dullest, and meekest animal that ever existed,' when complimented one morning on how confident he appeared when

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of distrust in his fellow Spartans, for a Spartan to listen to anyone from outside the military caste.

30 Speros Vryonis, Jr, 'The Greeks under Turkish Rule', in Diamandouros, 53.

31 Sicilianos, 168. See also Fleuriau, a Roman Catholic priest of the Jesuit Order, *Estat des Missions de Grèce, Présenté a nos Seigneurs les Archèvesques, et Deputez du Clergé de France, en l'année 1695* (Paris: Lambin and another, 1695).

dressed as a Turk, answered that they should not 'admire his assumed character which was little deserving of esteem, but that which he really possessed.' In the afternoon he dressed as a Frank.

## Farming, Diet and Health

In 1820, the year before the outbreak of the Revolution, the surrounding countryside, which consisted of around sixty townships, was thought to contain 100,000 goats and 60,000 sheep, and 3,000 oxen mainly employed in ploughing the heavy stony soil, not for milk or beef.<sup>32</sup> In the production of food, the nature of the land imposed many of the same limitations as had existed in ancient times and had featured not only in the literary descriptions of classical Athens, but in the political economy of income redistribution and diet.<sup>33</sup>

Athenians were so healthy, it was commonly said, that doctors could not make a living and many people lived to the age of a hundred. And indeed, the sea breezes of the microclimate do seem to have protected Athens and its plain from some of the plagues that frequently struck other places in the Aegean Archipelago, including the provinces immediately to the north and south. Diseases of the eye were however common, caused by the particles of sand that occasionally blow in from the Sahara Desert across the Mediterranean, changing the light and leaving a fine dust.<sup>34</sup> And some people were malnourished, their bodies further weakened by the long fasts enforced by both the Muslim and Christian religions.<sup>35</sup>

## Ethnic Minorities and Slavery in Athens

Besides the Christians and the Muslims, there were a few hundred people of African descent, slaves, freed slaves, and their descendants,

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32 Müller, *Athens and Attica*, 189–91, drawing on several accounts

33 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The cows shown on the Parthenon frieze that are due to be sacrificed and eaten, reminded viewers that beef, a rare treat, had mostly been specially bred to be used in festivals.

34 Mentioned by, for example, Pouqueville, *Voyage*, iv, 87.

35 The many severe and prolonged fasts, and their weakening effects, are described by Rodd, 51.

whose main occupations were as guards or personal attendants to the leading Muslims. Some women were members of harems but only a few of the higher-ranking Ottoman officials could afford to maintain more than one wife. Occasionally a foreign artist included a member of the black community in his work, as in Figure 3.3, a detail from a larger composition.



Figure 3.3. A black groom, perhaps a slave. Copper engraving, 1760s.<sup>36</sup>

John Galt, visiting the Piraeus in 1810 saw only two ships in the harbour, one exporting antiquities for Lord Elgin, the other importing slaves from Africa.<sup>37</sup>

Travellers sometimes encountered itinerant slave merchants leading a few shackled women scarcely clothed even in winter, in the 'khans', the staging posts that were mostly open-air enclosures that provided basic accommodation and services, such as water and food, to be found all over the Ottoman territories.<sup>38</sup> A scene of female slaves of African origin on sale in Pharsalia in Thessaly was caught in the picture at Figure 3.4 made in 1803 by Georg Gropius, the Austrian consul in Athens, who was to play a prominent role in the Revolution.

36 Detail from Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, ii, chapter ii, plate 1, published May 1789.

37 Galt, *Letters*, 127, *Travels*, 185.

38 For example, Pomardi, ii, 106, in December at Corinth.

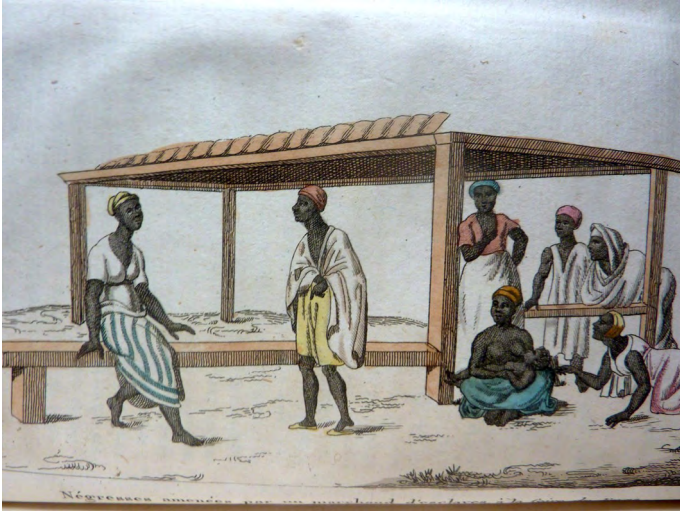


Figure 3.4. 'Negresses brought by a slave merchant to the fair at Farsa' (ancient and modern Pharsalia). Engraving.<sup>39</sup>

From conversations with a trader whom a British resident met in the hinterland to Smyrna in 1826, an area not much affected by the Greek Revolution, the slaves were bought at the market in Alexandria in Egypt, escorted by land to be sold at the market in Constantinople, at a gross margin of one hundred per cent. Most came from east Africa but some, from west central Africa, a huge inland area that also supplied the European transatlantic trade, had been led across the Sahel to Timbuktu and on to Alexandria.<sup>40</sup>

An instance of a female being sold at Patras in 1817 is recorded by an eyewitness<sup>41</sup> and we have a rare record of the voice of one such slave

39 From a picture by Gropius in Bartholdy, J.L.S., *Voyage en Grèce fait dans les Années 1803 et 1804 Contenant des détails sur la manière de voyager dans la Grèce et l'Archipel; la description de la vallée de Tempe'; un tableau pittoresque des sites les plus remarquables de la Grèce et du Levant; un coup-d'œil sur l'état actuel de la Turquie et de toutes les branches de la civilisation chez les Grecs modernes; un voyage de Négrepont, dans quelques contrées de la Thessalie, en 1805, et l'histoire de la guerre des Souliotes contre Ali-Visir, avec la chute de Souly en 180, traduit de l'allemand, par A. du C\*\*\*\** (Paris: Dentue, 1807), i, opp. 9. That Gropius was the artist is noted in the Preface, i, xi.

40 Arundell, Rev. Fr. V. J., British Chaplain at Smyrna, *A visit to the seven churches of Asia; with an excursion into Pisidia; containing remarks on the geography and antiquities of those countries, a map of the author's routes, and numerous inscriptions* (London: Rodwell, 1828), 148.

41 . . .the melancholy spectacle of a young woman female exposed for sale. She was sold for 80 crowns; and a gleam of light passed over her dejected countenance at the



overheard in Athens: 'About a week ago, a black girl brought a duck to our convent for sale, and the friar [Padre Paolo] asked her how she came to be made a slave. She gave a shrill ludicrous laugh, and said that she was taken by the catchers while she was at the well for water. She was born in Egypt and caught in the neighbourhood of Alexandria.'<sup>42</sup>

Besides the slaves, who were estimated at that time to number about two hundred, thirty families of African origin were employed in Athens as blacksmiths.<sup>43</sup> Although the 'Moors' as they were called locally, had no religious buildings of their own, and were largely assimilated into the identity of their Muslim masters, they had their district near the Areopagus hill, known as Karasouniyou, 'the Place of the Blacks', a term sometimes applied to the hill itself.<sup>44</sup> They seem to have maintained some of the customs of the societies in Africa from which they or their forebears had come or been taken as slaves, who were released by their masters, for example in their wills.<sup>45</sup> A visitor in 1819 who had lived in exile in the United States, who met some black-skinned people in the street, gave an account, now little known, that deserves to be quoted in full.<sup>46</sup> Their presence reminded some

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idea of going to another master in a different part of the country. A fair, beautiful, young, and plump Circassian, has been known to bring 3000 crowns, and even more.' Williams, *Travels*, ii, 226.

- 42 Galt, *Letters*, 128. Dated from Athens 8 March 1810. It is not known in which language the conversation occurred
- 43 Noted by Tunali, Gülçin, 'Another Kind of Hellenism? Appropriation of Ancient Athens via Greek Channels for the Sake of Good Advice as Reflected in TARİH-İ MEDİNETÜ'L-HUKEMA', Inaugural Dissertation zur Erlangung des Grades einer Doktorin der Philosophie in der Fakultät Für Geschichtswissenschaft Der Ruhr Universität Bochum, 225, <https://docplayer.biz.tr/643693-Another-kind-of-hellenism.html>
- 44 Travlos, John, and Alison Frantz, 'The Church of St. Dionysios the Areopagite and the Palace of the Archbishop of Athens in the 16th century', *Hesperia*, xxxiv(3), 1965, 192.
- 45 'about two hundred black slaves' Jolliffe, 155. People of African appearance are commonly shown in western representations of Athens and of elsewhere in Greece at this time and earlier, but I have been unable to discover much about their origins.
- 46 'Meeting in the streets [of Athens] some black people who appeared to enjoy themselves, and were dressed very clean, I asked them if they were slaves. They said they had been such, but they were now free. I queried how they had obtained their freedom. They answered that it was very common among the Turks, when slaves had served them a sufficient number of years, to compensate them for the price paid for them, and, if they have behaved well, to give them their liberty. Among these were several men and women under thirty years of age. They appeared well behaved persons. What an example is here given to Christian professors, by

classically-educated westerners that in ancient times 'the Athenians were always great slave mongers.'<sup>47</sup>

As elsewhere under the millet system in the Ottoman territories, in Athens the status of most individuals, women as well as men, was made clear by their dress.<sup>48</sup> J.L.S. Bartholdy, who, unusually, was more interested in the people than in the monuments, noted that in Athens, as in comparable towns, the music that the voivode arranged to be played every afternoon at the hour of prayer, was provided by the people now called Romany, who in the west were known as gypsies or Bohemians.<sup>49</sup> The reed instruments, with which they made music, were heard all over Athens.<sup>50</sup> In one of the few locally composed accounts we also hear of twenty-five Romany families who made straw hats.<sup>51</sup>

Members of the Jewish community, who were also, like the Muslims and Orthodox, officially acknowledged by the millet system, were not allowed to live in Athens. Although Jews are recorded as living there in Roman times, for example in the first century CE by the author or compiler of the Acts of the Apostles, they appear to have been legally excluded from Athens since some time unrecorded long before. Why that ban was allowed to continue after the Ottoman takeover in 1456 has not yet been explained: in the whole of the Ottoman territories, there was only one other town from which members of the Jewish millet were officially excluded.<sup>52</sup> As an organised community, they were prominent at Negropont (modern Chalcis) to the north, a town that, in the

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Turks! Such actions are very rare in our southern states. I had an opportunity of seeing, at Smyrna, a considerable number of slaves, lately come from the interior of Africa. They were left at liberty to go about in the streets or in the marketplace. Some of them were even asking persons if they would not purchase them. They are not treated as on the American shores, when landing from slave-ships, or when marched from one state to another, chained together, or shut up in jails at night.' Grellet, 21–22. By 'Christian professors', I need hardly say, Grellet meant all those who professed to be Christians.

47 Galt, *Letters*, 128.

48 Many eighteenth century costumes seen in Athens were sketched by Thomas Hope (1769–1831) Pictures from *18th Century Greece*, Texts Fani-Maria Tsigakou (Athens: Benaki Museum, British Council, Publishing House "Melissa", 1985).

49 Bartholdy, J.L.S., *Voyage en Grèce*, ii, 232.

50 For their music and 'Nubian' dancing, Queen's *Travels*, 423, that drew on other accounts.

51 Noted by Tunali, 'Another Kind Of Hellenism?', 225.

52 Trapezos. Noted by Sicilianos, 18.

eighteenth century and for centuries before, was a base for the Ottoman fleet and for sea communication to Constantinople and elsewhere. Salonika (modern Thessaloniki), not then regarded as part of Greece, had one of the largest Jewish populations of any city in the world.

### The Residents of the Acropolis

As for the people who lived on the Acropolis, the garrison was said by an eyewitness in 1810 to have consisted of 120 soldiers and its armament of twenty-seven cannon, of which only about seven were serviceable. Count Forbin, who visited in 1817, put the number of soldiers at sixty.<sup>53</sup> Others record smaller numbers, perhaps because the size of the garrison may have changed, but more probably because some gave the size of the total force and others the number on duty.<sup>54</sup> As for their families, the women and children, with any slaves they might have included in their households, may have amounted to a similar number, as would be consistent with figures we have for 1822 when many lost their lives.<sup>55</sup> The soldiers in the Acropolis, who were mostly Muslim Albanians, and who were more a gendarmerie than a military force, seem to have had a separate hereditary community. The ‘castrioti’, the ‘castriani’, the ‘castle people’, were occasionally mentioned on Ottoman public inscriptions, such as one carved on the columns of the Theseion, that many saw but, as with the other Ottoman inscriptions in Athens, only a few could read or understand: ‘The evil death came in 1555 and thousands of the people and of the Castrioti died.’<sup>56</sup> Their pay was low, less for a year than

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53 Forbin, M. le Comte de, *Voyage dans le Levant en 1817 et 1818* (Turin: Alliana, 1830), i, 46. The figures offered by visitors vary, perhaps because the actual numbers changed, but more probably because some gave the size of the total force and others the number on duty. The numbers do not appear to have varied much during the century. In 1738, for example, Lord Sandwich noted that the Acropolis was ‘defended by a few cannon, and a garrison of about three hundred men.’ Sandwich, *A Voyage Performed by the late Earl of Sandwich round the Mediterranean in the Years 1738 and 1739, Written by himself* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1799), 66.

54 In 1818 there was one guard on duty and ‘a few soldiers’ who spent most of their time in the town. Laurent, i, 190. Hanson in 1814 put the garrison at ‘ten to twelve men’, presumably those on duty in the Acropolis. Hanson, John Oliver, ‘Private Journal of a Voyage from Smyrna to Venice’, edited by Anghelou, Alkis, *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 1 January 1971, vol. 66, 13–48, 22.

55 See Chapter 10.

56 Sicilianos, 100.

a western visitor might typically pay for a day's visit to the Acropolis.<sup>57</sup> By the time of the Revolution, the tourist expenditure that the ancient monuments brought to Athens was already a large proportion of the local economy from which a high number of the inhabitants benefited—and the influence of classically-educated visitors to Athens is the subject of the next chapter.

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57 Hobhouse, MS journal, 8 January 1810. Recorded payments made for access to the Acropolis in the years before the Revolution include: 1805, Dodwell. Visiting and drawing for several days with an artist, 80 to 100 piastres (£6 to £7). Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, 293, conversion rates from Angelomatis-Tsougarakis, Helen, *The Eve of the Greek Revival, British Travellers' Perceptions of Early Nineteenth Century Greece* (London: Routledge, 1990), 164. 1809, Cazenove. Visit to the Acropolis 'cost us a guinea' [£1.2]. 'Some had to pay 6 guineas [£6.6] for two hours'. Cazenove, *A Narrative in Two Parts, Written in 1812* (London: privately printed, 1813), 217. In 1812, William Turner. 'The customary present of five [Spanish] dollars' [about £0.25] when accompanied by Elgin's agent Lusieri. Turner, William, *Journal of a Tour in the Levant* (London: Murray, 1820), i, 326. In 1817, Hugh William Williams, a bargain that included the right to draw. 'At parting, the amount of about forty shillings [£2] was put into his [the disdar's] hand, for which sum we obtained permission to visit the Acropolis, whenever we might chuse .... The poor man's salary does not exceed £10 a year.' Williams, Hugh William ['Grecian'], *Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands In a series of letters, description of manners, scenery, and the fine arts. With engravings from original drawings* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1820), i, 296. In 1820, Laurent. 20 piastres, 20 paras [about £0.33] for three university students, in total to the disdar, the guard, and the coffee maker. Laurent, Peter Edmund, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey, and Italy, made in the years 1818 and 1819* (London: Whitaker, second edition, 1822), i, 206. In March 1821, Napier. 'Parthenon £5/1/6', note in the expense book of Charles James Napier, presumably a payment to the Ottoman authorities. Napier notebook, BL.

# 4. The Encounter

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## Classically-Educated Visitors

There was another community in pre-Revolutionary Athens whose influence, both locally and among constituencies in western Europe, was disproportionate to its numbers: the ancient Athenians. Since the 1670s, an almost continuous succession of classically-educated men, and a few women, had visited Athens and its acropolis, not as traders or soldiers like most of their predecessors, but as aristocrats and scholars, usually privileged persons of wealth and leisure, among whose principal aims in going on the expensive and hazardous journey was to improve their knowledge of ancient Greece.<sup>1</sup>

In Figure 4.1, an image of the pioneers inserted at the front of the Dutch edition of a book, equivalent to an expectation-setting frontispiece, invites stay-at-home readers to accompany the real-life explorers in their imagination.

The image at 4.2, from the same book, shows the pioneers at work. More an allegorical presentation of new ways of seeing as explorations among landscapes than an attempt to turn the words of the book into realistic images, it too conveys something of the sense of excitement they felt at seeing the actual physical remains of a civilization that they had hitherto only known from its literatures.

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1 Among the few women were Lady Craven, who visited in 1786, as described in Craven, *A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople. In a Series of Letters from the Right Honourable Elizabeth Lady Craven to His Serene Highness the Margrave of Brandebourg, Anspach, and Bareith. Written in the Year MDCCLXXXVI* (London: G.G.J. & J. Robinson, 1789) and Queen Caroline in 1816, see Adolphus, John, *Voyages and Travels of her Majesty, Caroline Queen of Great Britain ... by One of her Majesty's Suite* (London: Jones, 1822), and Demont, Louise, *Journal of the Visit of Her Majesty the Queen to Tunis, Greece, and Palestine ... translated by Edgar Garston* (London: T. and J. Allan, 1821).



Figure 4.1. Untitled picture inserted at the front of the abridged Dutch edition of the book by Jacob Spon.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 4.2. 'Athenen'. Copper engraving from 1689 by Jan Luyken, inserted in the same book.<sup>3</sup>

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- 2 Spon, Jacob, *Voyagie door Italien, Dalmatien, Griekenland, en de Levant. Gedaan in de Jaren 1675 en 1676* (Amsterdam: Jan ten Hoorn, 1689). Spon's visit is discussed in Chapter 7.
  - 3 Engraving in *Voyagie door Italien, Dalmatien, Griekenland*, 1689, a translation into Dutch from the work of Jacob Spon written in French whose full title is noted in the Bibliography, with subsequent editions.

## Recovering the Ancient World through Meursius and Pausanius

Neither Jacob Spon nor any of the other early students of the monuments would have been able to advance far in their work if they had had to rely on their own observations or on the few books that were then available locally. They were the beneficiaries of what was the single most decisive event in the recovery of a reliable knowledge of the topography and customs of ancient Athens, without which none of the on-the-spot research results could have occurred so soon, so successfully, or so comprehensively.

In *Cecropia* [‘Things relating to Kekrops’], a short book first printed in 1622, the Leiden scholar, Johannes van Meurs, known throughout Europe by the Latinised version of his name, Meursius, collected all the references to the Acropolis of Athens he could find in the ancient texts that he knew, an astonishingly full corpus that included extracts from ancient annotations which commentators had added to manuscripts (‘scholia’) and other texts only available in editions that were not then easily accessible. For the quotations from Greek-language authors, Meursius provided Latin translations, so opening his work to educated men, and to some women, across Europe. Named after Kekrops, the first king of Athens, from whom the Acropolis of Athens received its ancient poetic name, *Cecropia* at once became indispensable to anyone who wished to cross the border between the world of ancient Greek texts and the world of material survivals. Meursius later published a succession of other books, in which he brought together references to other aspects of ancient Athens, including some, such as his collection of ancient texts that discuss the festivals, whose importance in the life of the ancient city he was among the first to appreciate.<sup>4</sup> Meursius, who presented himself to his patron as never having been south of the Alps, is the unsung founding scholar of the recovery of knowledge of ancient Hellas, and of Athens in particular. His works, referred to with respect

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4 The titles are noted in full in the Bibliography. It is not always clear which of his many works is being referred to. Even among stay-at-home scholars and travellers who wrote up their experiences on their return with the help of a library, only a few would have had access to the full corpus. *Cecropia*, a slim volume that could be carried in a knapsack, although not designed for the purpose, seems to have made its way physically to Athens more often than Meursius’s other works.

until at least the late nineteenth century, are an unseen presence in the whole modern scientific, Enlightenment, and scholarly traditions to the present day.<sup>5</sup>

As far as the ancient authors that Meursius filleted for his compilations, by far the fullest account of the monuments of ancient Greece to have survived from the ancient world was that of Pausanias, whose long description of the Greece of his day was probably composed in the second century CE, more than half a millennium after the classical Parthenon.<sup>6</sup> First printed in 1516 in Italy from the single known manuscript, of which many manuscript copies were made soon after it was first re-discovered, Pausanias is a reminder of how tenuous were the threads of contingency that permitted an ancient Greek body of work to have survived across the divide between the end of antiquity and modern times, the 'long millennium'.<sup>7</sup> Frequently reprinted and much read in Latin translations in the eighteenth century, Pausanias's text later made its way into European vernacular languages, especially French and English, thus becoming available to even wider readerships, including women. The process of diffusion was presented visually, as shown in Figure 4.3.

The reader/viewer is invited to accompany Pausanias on a time-travelling, imagined journey into ancient Greece. Pausanias, led by Athena, will help him or her, with the help of Fancy, to overcome the discomforts, the dangers, and the expense of real travel, to reach the goal, a temple of fame on a distant hill. That convention, already hinted at in Figure 4.2, had been

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- 5 He is quoted by, for example, Giraud, Jean and Collignon, Maxime, 'Le Consul Giraud et sa Relation de L'Attique au XVIIe. Siècle', an article in *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, vol. xxxix (Paris: 1913), 56; Watkins, Thomas, *Travels through Swisserland, Italy, Sicily, the Greek Islands, to Constantinople ... in the Years 1787, 1788, 1789* (London: Cadell, 1792), ii, 319; Chateaubriand, *Travels to Jerusalem and the Holy Land through Egypt, translated by Frederic Shoberl* (London: Colburn, third edition, 1835), i, 213; and Francis, Sir Philip, K.B., *A letter missive to Lord Holland, dated 10th June. Published 1st July 1816* (London: Ridgway, 1816), 65.
  - 6 The history and influence of its publication are discussed by Georgiopoulou, Maria; Guilmet, Céline; Pikoulas, Yannis A.; Staikos, Konstantinos Sp.; and Tolia, George, eds, *Following Pausanias, The Quest for Greek Antiquity* (Kotinos: Oak Knoll, 2007).
  - 7 The 'long millennium' is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.





Figure 4.3. Minerva (Athena) urges Pausanias to describe the monuments of Greece. Copper engraving. Frontispiece to the first translation into French, 1731.<sup>8</sup>

in the story of the valiant pilgrim undeterred by hardships and setbacks. As was not generally known at the time, one of the earliest and finest surviving examples was in an epigram by Simonides of Ceos, a classical author, who had applied the ‘long-and-hard journey’ metaphor to the effort needed to understand and internalise the lessons offered by looking at the Acropolis of Athens, and he was inserting his work into a tradition that was already ancient in his day.<sup>9</sup>

In Figure 4.3, the ancient buildings being pointed out are shown with untidy foliage as if they were ruins in the landscape in a northern country, and the ground is strewn with broken antiquities. The map that the *putti* display is of Europe, not of Greece. The words on the obelisk tomb are not readable, but confirm that the aim of the translation was part of the Renaissance (‘rebirth’) quest to revive what had been dead and recover

8 Humblot designed, Scotin engraved, Pausanias translated, by Louis Gedoyn and Francois Didot, *Pausanias, ou, Voyage historique de la Grèce traduit en françois avec des remarques par M. l'Abbé Gedoyn, Chanoine de la Sainte Chapelle, & Abbé de Baugenci, de l'Académie Française, & de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions & belles-Lettres* (Paris: Quillot, 1731).

9 Discussed, with other examples of the classical Acropolis as an instrument of civic education, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The tradition drawn on by Simonides included the poems of Tyrtaeus.

what had been lost. As the Preface declares, the book presents not the Greece of the day, as it was being described by modern topographers such as Spon, but the Greece that ‘flourished as the dwelling place of the Muses, the home of the Sciences, the centre of good taste, the theatre of an infinitude of marvels, the most renowned land in the Universe.’

The image, as is the convention of many frontispieces of the period, ignores the constraints of time and space, and mixes presentations of actual seeing with the flow of ideas and mental images that seeing them can encourage in the viewer/reader.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, the picture is an example of the rhetorical device known to the ancients and their early modern successors as ‘enargeia’, as it was applied to visual presentations as well as to speeches and writings.<sup>11</sup> However, although Gedoyn’s translation is a celebration of antiquity, the editor knows that he must take care not to overdo his praise of pre-Christian ‘pagans.’ Although the editor was a churchman, itself a reassurance to some readers and a claim frequently adopted in later printed books, he was using another device common at the time in several western European countries to ensure that books about the ancients did not run into difficulties with state or ecclesiastical censors.<sup>12</sup>

It became the custom for real visitors from the west to explore Athens by following the route that Pausanias had taken with a version of his book in their hands, a practice that continued far into the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> If, even allowing for all the many discoveries that modern archaeology has made, we only had what has survived in physical form, our modern understanding of the ancient city of Athens would still be

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10 For my suggestion that ancient viewers read the stories of stone presented on the Parthenon and on other civic buildings as dynamic, see *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

11 Examples of my experiment in reviving the convention are given in *ibid.*

12 Pausanias, Gedoyn, ‘Avec Approbation’ [that is, passed by the political and ecclesiastical censorship] ‘et Privilège du Roy’ [that is, given copyright protection against local piracy]. See also Gedoyn’s *Preface*, ix.

13 Thomas Henry Dyer, for example, as late as 1873, still arranges his description of ancient Athens according to the routes taken by Pausanias. Dyer, Thomas Henry, *Ancient Athens: Its History, Topography and Remains* (London: Bell and Daldry, 1873). It is likely that most of the travellers who note that they carried Pausanias used abridged versions.

badly incomplete. From the internal evidence of his work, Pausanias evidently wrote from personal experience, although he also drew on writings by ancient authors now lost, and on oral traditions that he picked up from conversations with local people, including tour guides. But as Pausanias had written nearly half a millennium after the classical Parthenon had been built, to him it was already a piece of built heritage.<sup>14</sup>

Until not long ago, it was customary to scold Pausanias for not answering the questions that modern readers (especially art historians) were interested in, regarded as normal, and projected back to the very different world of antiquity.<sup>15</sup> As Jaś Elsner has remarked, understanding the paradox that Pausanias is both indispensable and strange: he ‘has the temerity to be our single greatest surviving source.’<sup>16</sup> Pausanias is a rare, but not unique, example of an ancient viewer of the Parthenon who reported his experience in a surviving text—a text that, when read

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14 To be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

15 For example: ‘like the tourist of today, he devotes his attention to superficial details rather than to truly artistic qualities’: When describing a statue, he ‘rarely gives a critical appreciation of it.’ Pausanias and Jones, William Henry Samuel, *Description of Greece. English & Greek, with an English Translation by W.H.S. Jones, Loeb edition* (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1918–1935), i, xiv; ‘in his description of the temple at Delphi, which is even worse arranged than is usual with him.’ Euripides, and Verrall, Arthur Woollgar, *Ion with a Translation into English Verse and an Introduction and Notes by A.W. Verrall* (Cambridge: CUP, 1890), xlvii; ‘Pausanias ... was infected with all the superstition and credulity of an ardent votary of polytheism ... He often disappoints us by some absurd discussion, in the place of those circumstances which it would be interesting to know ... To say that it is “worth looking at” is the strongest expression of admiration which he bestows upon the inimitable performances of the great masters of Grecian sculpture ...’. Leake, William Martin, Lieut-Col. R.A., L.L.D., F.R.S., Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Berlin, *The Topography of Athens with Some Remarks on its Antiquities* (London: Murray, 1821), xxxii.

16 Jaś Elsner, ‘Introduction’, *Classical Receptions Journal*, 2 (2), 2010, special issue: ‘Receptions of Pausanias from Winckelmann to Frazer.’ For what was presented on the west pediment of the Parthenon, the story in stone most frequently encountered by viewers, we do however have the explanation given by Marcus Terentius Varro, a more authoritative source than Pausanias, whose work has unaccountably slipped from the scholarly tradition in recent times, as discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

alongside others, may enable the ancient ways of seeing practised in antiquity to be recovered with greater confidence.<sup>17</sup>

## Visitors to Athens in the Long Eighteenth Century

Before the Revolution, visitors were supported in their travels by the foreign consuls, who were mostly born locally, and their staff, and latterly by a few long-term resident expatriates including Giovanni Batista Lusieri, Lord Elgin's resident artist and agent who lived in Athens with brief interruptions, for over twenty years, from 1799 until his death on the eve of the Revolution. Georg Gropius, the consul of Austria, lived in Athens before and throughout the Revolution, during which he not only wrote many eye-witness accounts, mostly unprinted, but also played an active role in saving lives, and who was still in his post after the Revolution came to an end.<sup>18</sup> Louis-François-Sébastien Fauvel, an artist and draftsman, who also acted as the agent for buying antiquities and who stayed on in Athens as consul of France, came and went in various capacities from pre-Revolutionary days.<sup>19</sup> Another familiar long-term resident was Padre Paulo, the head of a small community of Roman Catholic Capuchins, who had been settled in Athens since the seventeenth century, when the French Government had, by agreement, bought the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, still commonly known as the 'lantern of Demosthenes' or 'the lantern of Diogenes.'<sup>20</sup>

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17 This topic is examined further in the discussion of how to find ways of recovering the strangeness of classical Athens in my companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

18 His life summarized by Callmer, Christian, *Georg Christian Gropius als Agent, Konsul und Archäologe in Griechenland 1803–1850* (Lund: Gleerup, 1982).

19 Summarized by Zambon, Alessia, *Aux origines de l'archéologie en Grèce — Fauvel et sa méthode, préface d'Alain Schnapp* (Paris: INHA, 2014) drawing on a huge archive of papers, many previously published, noted in the Bibliography.

20 What was then known of him was collected by Eliot, C.W.J., 'Gennadeion Notes, IV: Lord Byron, Father Paul, and the Artist William Page', *Hesperia*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1975, 409–25. To which other contemporary mentions can be added, such as Grellet, Stephen, *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Stephen Grellet, edited by Benjamin Seebohm* (London: Bennett, 1861), ii, 26.

During the long eighteenth century,<sup>21</sup> most western travellers to what is now Greece made the first part of their journey by sea. As in earlier times, Athens visually projected its presence far out among the gulfs, islands, peninsulas, and capes of what was then known in most languages as 'The Archipelago.'<sup>22</sup> By a linguistic backformation, the strait between the island of Cerigo (modern and ancient Cythera) and Crete, through which all ships going to or from the western Mediterranean had to pass, was known as 'The Arches.'<sup>23</sup> In the age of sail, and before that, in the age of oarsmen, this was probably the most dangerous of the Archipelago straits, hiding rocks, shoals, and strange

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- 21 The notion of a 'long eighteenth century', a category that has proved helpful in understanding and explaining the history of western Europe, can be applied in some respects, although not in others, to what was occurring in south-eastern Europe (including Athens) and in the Ottoman lands generally. For example, throughout the period, the technologies of travel and warfare by land and by sea were not only much the same across the whole extended region but remained remarkably stable, with occasional improvements, some of which were made by the Ottoman forces. By contrast, however, during the long eighteenth century, whereas in the countries of western Europe the reproduction of words and images by printing and engraving, the two main technologies of inscription for the transfer of complex ideas across time and distance, had been well established and had remained stable for centuries, they were scarcely used until far into the calendar nineteenth century in all the territories to the east of the Adriatic, including Athens, as a result of religious restrictions.
- 22 The name at that time in both the languages of the region and those of the western European maritime countries, including the Venetians, the Dutch, the French, the British, and others. Discussed in Sphyroeras, Vasilis, Anna Arramea and Spyros Asdrahas; translated from the Greek by G. Cox and J. Solman, *Maps and Map-Makers of the Aegean* (Athens: Oikos, 1985).
- 23 The phrase 'the Arches' is used by Rapelje, George, *A Narrative of excursions, voyages, and travels ... in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa* (New York: Printed for the author, 1834), 231. He provides much first-hand information about life at sea in small sailing ships. The word is used in the title page of Randolph, Bernard, *The present state of the islands in the archipelago, or Arches, seas of Constantinople and gulph of Smyrna with the islands of Candia and Rhodes Faithfully Describ'd by Ber. Randolph* (Oxford: Printed at the Theater, 1687), that describes some of the services, including repairs available when he visited. Lord Baltimore in his book, Baltimore, Lord, *A tour to the East, in the years 1763 and 1764, with remarks on the city of Constantinople and the Turks; also select pieces of Oriental wit, poetry and wisdom* (London: printed by Richardson and Clark, 1767), describes his tour as 'from Naples through the Arches to Constantinople in the Year 1763'.

and treacherous currents.<sup>24</sup> Sudden storms, whose force intensified as they rushed through the channels between the islands, made even the most experienced mariners pay great respect to the elements.

The harbour at Melos, where in 1822 George Rapelje spent eighteen days as part of a voyage from Malta to Greece, was described by a predecessor in 1796 as 'one of the finest and most capacious in the world,' with an entrance 'large enough to admit a vessel of any burden,' and 'from whatever quarter the wind may blow, the shipping is secure.'<sup>25</sup> When the wind was from the north, however, sailing ships, and, presumably, also the oared ships that preceded them, could not leave, and delays were normal. To Robert Richardson, voyaging with a noble party in their own chartered ship, it was, with the shelter and facilities it offered, 'pre-eminent' among all the harbours of the Archipelago.<sup>26</sup> As was noted by Edgar Garson, a former philhellene who visited in 1840, at the end of the age of sail: 'There is great depth of water, and space enough for the united navies of Europe to ride in safety, so that the possession of the island would be of infinite vale for a maritime power desirous of controlling the navigation of the Archipelago.'<sup>27</sup> In the long eighteenth century, vessels sailing from west or east faced another risk. In the western Mediterranean, ships were at risk from 'Barbary pirates' who operated from Algiers and other ports in North Africa. Despite the efforts of the Ottoman and other navies, the sea pirates of the Mani continued to make a living by capturing unarmed or lightly

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24 The perils of the Cerigo/Cythera passage in the age of sail were frequently described, notably by the experienced yachtsman Knight, William, *Oriental Outlines or a Rambler's Recollections of a Tour in Turkey, Greece, & Tuscany in 1838* (London: Sampson Low, 1839), 3–10.

25 Hunter, William, *Travels in the year 1792 through France, Turkey and Hungary ...* (London: second edition, Bensley, 1798), i, 166.

26 Richardson, Robert, M.D., Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of London, *Travels along the Mediterranean and parts adjacent. with the Earl of Belmore, during 1816–17–18, extending as far as the second cataract of the Nile, Jerusalem, Damascus, Balbec, &c &c. illustrated by plans and other engravings* (London: Cadell; Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1822), ii, 534.

27 Garson, *Greece Revisited*, i, 161. He reports that the Knights of Malta, a Christian military organization, that dated from the Crusades, offered to help the Greek Revolutionaries with forces and money in return for their ceding the island, which would have become a new Malta.

armed ships as they passed through the Arches, and 'the wretched crew [was] irrevocably condemned to perpetual bondage or instant death.'<sup>28</sup> The buyers in the slave markets of Algiers, Cairo, Alexandria, Smyrna (modern Izmir), and in Constantinople, probably the biggest in terms of turnover, were not usually concerned about the sources of their supplies, and fair-skinned people commanded higher prices than dark.<sup>29</sup>

A map prepared towards the end of the Greek Revolution, before the advent of steamships, is reproduced, unedited as it was encountered by its users, as Figure 4.4.



Figure 4.4. Contemporary map illustrating the places principally involved in the Greek Revolution. Folded engraving.<sup>30</sup>

The map, chosen from many candidates, gives a sense of how the land and the sea were rightly experienced and envisaged as complementary

28 'the terror of unprotected merchant ships' Walsh, *Residence*, i, 106. Hunter, *Travels in the year 1792*, i, 148, describes a near encounter with the famous Lambro, romanticized by Byron as *The Corsair*.

29 The slave markets and their role in the Greek Revolution are discussed in Chapter 14.

30 Inserted in Volume 1 of Emerson, James, *Letters from the Aegean* (London: Colburn 1829).

during the Revolution. It brings out the limiting, almost determining, power of geography, including the sea routes and the mountain passes, for the movement of ships, men, and supplies, and in the physical transportation of information, including the opportunities to intercept couriers. It also preserves some of the names that were used at the time.

Travelling by land where, with few exceptions, there were no roads capable of taking wheeled vehicles, meant riding on saddled horses or donkeys. Travellers were normally accompanied by interpreters and servants, who walked alongside leading spare horses and pack animals, and by armed guards provided by the Ottoman Government or by local Ottoman officials.<sup>31</sup> Without a change of horses, a traveller and his party could travel about twenty to twenty-five English miles a day, but if he could afford to pay for frequent changes at the main towns ('post-horses'), they could exceed sixty.<sup>32</sup> Sometimes in Greece there was no alternative to riding bare-back.<sup>33</sup> Even the least ambitious expedition was an elaborate and expensive affair that required careful planning and management. William Gell, travelling unaccompanied except by his servants, bought three horses that he had carefully selected for their sure-footedness, and on occasion he hired two more.<sup>34</sup> Figure 4.5 shows what was required for a modest tour.

In 1836, William J. Hamilton, with fellow researcher Hugh E. Strickland, travelled over two thousand two hundred English miles in twenty-two weeks through the wilder parts of Asia Minor, employing seven or eight horses, occasionally nine, full time. He calculated the cost at 230 British pounds, including the pay of servants and messengers,

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31 According to Hunter, *Travels in the year 1792*, i, 246, who also gives a list, the pack horses were 'worn out steeds'.

32 Estimates were given by Urquhart, David, *The Spirit of the East* (London: Colburn, 1839), i, 7, from direct experience, and his book may be the source of later compilations.

33 As, when, for example, George Wheler noted: 'But, as my Companion [Spon] observeth, I learned afterwards in Greece to be less nice: For there we were sometimes mounted like Marcus Aurelius in the Capitol, without Bridle or Saddle.' Wheler, *Journey*, 224. The small mountain horses are described in Chapter 15.

34 Gell, Sir William, MA, FRS, FSA, *Narrative of a Journey in the Morea* (London: Longman, 1823), 135. Although published during the Revolution, the book discusses his expeditions of almost twenty years before.





Figure 4.5. Travelling in Ottoman territories, c.1815 Coloured aquatint.<sup>35</sup>

that is, about 0.25 pounds a mile for two.<sup>36</sup> Land travel was slow, uncomfortable, and sometimes dangerous, but for foreigners with foreign currency it was cheap.

Another picture (reproduced as Figure 4.6) that illustrates a journey made later but still before the building of modern roads, bridges, and railways, picks up the difficulties of travelling through a mountainous terrain. It also shows the skeletons of executed criminals, including political rebels and suspected dissidents, that were a feature of the passes in Ottoman Europe and Asia, part of a theatre of deterrence and punishment presented by the Ottoman Government, and by its local provincial governors, whose ability to provide security on land or sea was always limited.<sup>37</sup>

36 Hamilton, William J., Secretary to the Geological Society, *Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus, and Armenia, with some account of their Antiquities and Geology* (London: Murray, 1842), i, 544.

37 Some eyewitness examples from 1795 in Morrilt, *The Letters of John B.S. Morrilt of Rokeby* (London: Murray, 1914), 78. The frequency of judicial executions of men of all ranks from pashas to soldiers, as well as of others, is noted by, for example Wittman, William, M.D., of the Royal Artillery, *Travels in Turkey, Asia Minor, Syria, and across the desert into Egypt during the years 1799, 1800, and 1801, in company with the Turkish army and the British military mission. To which are annexed, observations on the plague, and on the diseases prevalent in Turkey, and a meteorological journal* (London: Phillips, 1803).

35 From Turner, William, *Journal of a Tour in the Levant* (London: Murray, 1820), frontispiece to volume 1. The image is reproduced in Dupré, Louis, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople, ou Collection de portraits, de vues et de costumes grecs et ottomans, peints sur les lieux* (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1825), adapted edition in Greek with much additional information, and pictures of Greece by other artists, edited by Manoles Vlachos (Athens: Folio, 1994), 204.



Figure 4.6. 'Eastern Travel'. Folded lithograph of an image coloured by hand, inserted as a folding-out illustration in a printed book, 1845.<sup>38</sup>

In order to travel in the Ottoman territories, it was necessary for the visitor to have a firman issued in the name of the sultan, with his calligraphic insignia [*tougra*].<sup>39</sup> This normally had to be obtained from one of the dragomans, who acted as interpreters, and who had much influence over policy making. An illustration of a dragoman handling a painted document is given as Figure 4.7.

38 Frontispiece to Kinglake, Alexander, *Eothen*, 3rd edition (London: John Ollivier, 1845). The image made by J.R. Jobbins who was not part of the expedition. Some copies are uncoloured.

39 The actual travelling firman, with the *tougra* of Mahmoud II, issued to Robert Master in 1818, is inserted in BL Add MS 51313. A facsimile of his imperial firman with a translation into French is included in Sonnini, *Travels in Greece and Turkey, undertaken by order of Louis XVI, and with the authority of the Ottoman court by C.S. Sonnini; illustrated by engravings and a map of those countries; translated from the French* (London: Longman, 1801) from which it was translated into English. A full-size folded facsimile of another imperial travelling firman is included in Wittman, opposite 463.



Figure 4.7. 'The First Dragoman of the Porte', c.1800, engraving.<sup>40</sup>

A firman was, in essentials, an internal passport issued by the central Government in Constantinople, requesting, in the name of the sultan, that all subordinate governors afford protection and hospitality to the named guest. Those firmans needed for long journeys were personal documents that could only be obtained by a western ambassador at Constantinople, and any visitor who travelled without one had to obtain permission from each of the local Ottoman governors, through whose territory they passed, with a local firman known as a 'teskeré'.<sup>41</sup>

40 Dalvimart, Octavian, *Picturesque Representations of the Dress and Manners of the Turks Illustrated in Sixty Coloured Engravings. With Descriptions* (London: Thomas M<sup>c</sup>Lean, [n.d.], c.1824), Plate 11. The book was a reissue, dated from the watermark, of one first published in France before the Revolution.

41 For half a century after American independence, when the United States had no diplomatic representation, Americans relied on the courtesy of the British Ambassador to obtain their travelling firmans. Rapelje, George, *A Narrative of excursions, voyages, and travels ... in America, Europe, Asia, and Africa* (New York: Printed for the author, 1834), 261. 'Almost invariably under English protection.' Brewer, Josiah, *Missionary to the Mediterranean, A Residence at Constantinople, in the year 1827. With notes to the present time, Second edition* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1830), 376.

A facsimile of the imperial travelling firman given to C.S. Sonnini, who had been sent by the French government on a long fact-finding mission to the Ottoman territories and had been accorded a status almost equal to that of an ambassador, is reproduced as Figure 4.8, with the caption:

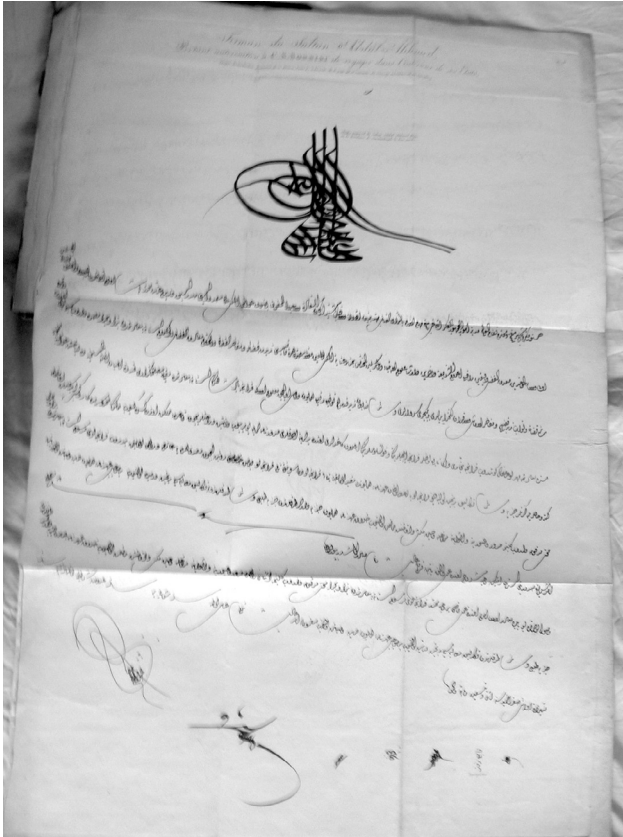


Figure 4.8. Facsimile of Sonnini's travelling firman. Engraving in the book of plates that accompanied Sonnini's book in its French version, 1801.<sup>42</sup>

42 A facsimile of his imperial firman with a translation into French is included in Sonnini, *Travels in Greece and Turkey*, from which it was translated into English. A full-size folded facsimile of another imperial travelling firman is included in Wittman, opposite 463.

TRANSLATION OF THE FIRMAN.<sup>43</sup>

(Here is the Sultan's cypher)

Most just, most noble, most great, most glorious, most respectable governor, who knows how to manage the most important affairs of this world, with intelligence and discernment, and whose superior solicitude extends with wisdom and benignity over the poor of the state; pillar of the glorious empire, illustrious governor of Egypt, empire, our fortunate vizir Mohammed pacha: may God increase his glory! Most just of the cadis of Ismaelism, treasure of virtues and truths, deeply read in the laws and in religion, heir of the science of the prophets and apostles, specially loaded with/the favours of the most high, learned cadi of Cairo in Egypt, may God increase his virtues!

Happy successors of the cadis and princes, abundant mines of nobleness and virtues, who, in our fortunate name, govern the empire of the lands and seas of Egypt, may God increase their merits!

Lieutenants, leaders of troops, janizaries, and other commandants, may God increase their power, and raise them in dignity.

When this noble firman shall have reached you, know that: The ambassador and the consuls of the King of France, our powerful friend, the support of the great of this world, the model of Christian princes (may his end be happy!) having caused to be represented to us that it would be expedient to grant to the merchants who wish to travel in the state? (well-guarded) of our glorious empire, supreme orders for them to be treated with safety and protection, conformably to the treaties:

And a Frenchman, named *Sonnini*, who has the intention of repairing to Cairo in Egypt, having made known to us that he begs us to cause to be delivered an order issued by our sublime Porte to all those who exercise our authority over the lands or over the seas of *Egypt*, to the end that he may reside there, or travel there freely, without fear or hindrance whatever:

And being desirous that, agreeably to our intentions and our express commendations, he should be protected by our sovereign orders, stamped with our noble seal,

We direct that:

When this order, issued by our sublime *Porte*, shall have reached you, the aforesaid Frenchman may travel freely over the lands and seas above-mentioned, dependent on our glorious empire; that he may at pleasure enter them, leave them, or reside in them, conforming himself

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43 I use the English translation from the French, printed in the English edition published in London soon afterwards.

in all things to our sovereign orders, and that there shall be everywhere granted to him aid, succour, and protection.

And to the end that the contents of these orders may leave you no doubt, we have graced them with our noble and eminent signature, to which you will give credit; we recommend it to you. Understand it thus.

Given in the beginning of Sefier, in the year of the hegira 1192 (February 1778, O[ld]. S[tyle].)

At CONSTANTINOPLE the well-guarded.

*(Translated by Citizen JAUBERT, Turkish professor in the special school of Oriental languages, near the national library, fifth interpreter to the government.)*

In this document, the Ottoman court affirms its sovereignty over Egypt, which was at the time largely nominal. The country was restored to its Ottoman jurisdiction as a result of the British naval and military intervention including battle of the Nile, a state of affairs that once again became nominal shortly afterwards. The obtaining of this (ultimately temporary) jurisdiction resulted in the extraordinarily high respect accorded to the British Ambassador of the time, Lord Elgin, enabling him to arrange for a more important type of firman to be sent to the Governor and Judge of Athens. Consequently, Elgin's agents were able to remove many pieces of the Parthenon and of the other ancient buildings of Athens.<sup>44</sup>

The price to the visitor of obtaining a travelling firman shortly before the Revolution was equivalent to two or three British pounds, not negligible even to gentlemen, for whom the annual expense of a visit to Ottoman territories was estimated at 500 pounds in the money of the day.<sup>45</sup>

The translator of Sonnini's travelling firman, referred to here as Jaubert, may be the same man as Chabert or Chaubert mentioned earlier in this chapter, who during the Greek Revolution was to translate into French many of the Ottoman published documents and notices, including the formal firmans by which the Empire was governed, for the benefit of the ambassadors in Constantinople—giving them a view of the situation that may have been more comprehensive than that of either the Greek Revolutionaries or the Ottoman Government itself.

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44 The vizieral letter is discussed and transcribed in Appendix A.

45 Carne, John, *Letters 1813–1837* (London: privately printed in 100 copies, 1885), 25.

Nonetheless, in much of the Ottoman Empire, including in the territories that make up present-day Greece, a document from the central government was little more than an invitation to negotiate, assisted by gifts, with the leaders who held local power. In the Peloponnese, according to Lord Byron who was there in 1810, the local Ottoman governor acted so independently of his nominal masters in Constantinople that a personal passport was more useful than an imperial firman.<sup>46</sup> Sometimes, such letters between Ottoman governors in what is now Greece were written in Greek, often their first language, with some key words inserted in Turkish.<sup>47</sup>

Many travellers mistakenly believed that an imperial firman allowed access to military fortresses such as the Acropolis of Athens, unaware that they were not under the jurisdiction of the local pashas and voivodes but were directly controlled by the imperial authorities in Constantinople, in practice the grand vizier, acting in the name of the sultan. In 1800, one of Elgin's private secretaries, Philip Hunt, was advised that 'Your imperial Firman will not open to you the gates of one Turkish fortress; it will be necessary therefore, to procure admission to the Acropolis [of Athens] by a present of ten piastres or its equivalent in Coffee and Sugar.'<sup>48</sup>

Warnings not to expect too much from their imperial travelling firmans made the rounds among the European community settled at Constantinople. It was said that a traveller who presented his firman at the imperial castle at Bodrum (ancient Halicarnassus) was told that the firman would allow him to come in but it said nothing about allowing

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46 In Byron and Hodgson. 'When, also, he [Gell] remarks that "the first article of necessity 'in Greece' is a firman, or order from the sultan, permitting the traveller to pass unmolested," we are much misinformed if he be right. On the contrary, we believe this to be almost the only part of the Turkish dominions in which a firman is not necessary; since the passport of the Pacha is absolute within his territory (according to Mr. G.'s own admission), and much more effectual than a firman.' A facsimile of the local passport written in Greek given by Ali Pasha to Byron and Hobhouse in 1809 is given in Hobhouse, 1858 edition, ii, 413.

47 An example with translation in Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, 276. A transcription of a travelling firman, issued by Ali Pasha, written in Greek with some Turkish words, is given by Jolliffe, T. R., *Letters from Palestine*, 189.

48 Hunt papers. That a 'direct firman from the Sultan for that purpose' was needed in order to enter the imperial fortress of the Acrocorinth was noted by Laurent, Peter Edmund, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey, and Italy, made in the years 1818 and 1819* (London: Whitaker, second edition, 1822), i, 290.

him to leave.<sup>49</sup> The same drollery was offered to John Cam Hobhouse when in 1810 he presented his at the gate of the fortress of Negropont (modern and ancient Chalcis) and the Ottoman commander reminded him that in the fortress of Canea in Crete, an Englishman who went in with the authority of a firman had then been put to death.<sup>50</sup>

Most of the western visitors who travelled with an imperial firman were delighted and charmed by the courteous welcome they received from the senior Ottoman officials whom they encountered. Although some had a sentimental philhellenic attitude towards the Greeks, as they called the Greek-speaking Orthodox, few realized the extent to which their privileged detachment from the lives of the population affected the opinions that they confidently offered to the readers of their books. One exception was Julius Griffiths, a medical doctor from Edinburgh, who, in the 1780s, hoped to observe without preconceptions and who travelled without the usual panoply of protections. As he wrote, anticipating that his book would be criticized for upsetting the common view: 'If the animadversions upon the Turks should be thought to savour of petulance, unfavorable prejudices, or exaggeration; or if they should appear contradictory to those authors of eminence who praise their urbanity, their wit, their talents, and their hospitality — let me be allowed to state, that I travelled through great part of the Ottoman dominions in the humble disguise of a poor Greek; not under the protection of Janissaries, the influence of ambassadors, or the authority of a Firman.'<sup>51</sup>

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49 Newton, C.T., M.A., Keeper of the Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, *Travels & Discoveries in the Levant* (London: Day, 1865), i, 334. He may have been repeating what he had read as having occurred in 1817 as noted in Didot, Ambroise Firmin, *Notes d'un Voyage fait dans le Levant en 1816 et 1817* (Paris: Didot, [n.d.], 1826), 358.

50 Hobhouse manuscript journal for 9 February 1810.

51 Griffiths, J[ulian], *Travels in Europe, Asia Minor and Arabia*, by J. Griffiths. M.D., Member of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, and of several foreign literary societies (London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies; and Peter Hill, Edinburgh, 1805), ix. Although books on the travellers to Greece during the long eighteenth century are plentiful, including Augustinos, Olga, *French Odysseys, Greece in French Travel Literature from the Renaissance to the Romantic Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994); Constantine, David, *Early Greek Travellers and the Hellenic Ideal* (Cambridge: OUP, 1984); Stoneman, Richard, ed., *A Luminous Land, Artists Discover Greece* (Los Angeles: Getty, 1998) and others, Griffiths is seldom discussed. He is mentioned by the pioneering work, Spencer, Terence, *Fair Greece, Sad Relic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), 240, but only from his having been referred to disparagingly by Thornton, Thomas, Esq., *The present state of Turkey; or, A description of the political, civil, and religious constitution, government, and laws, of the Ottoman empire: the finances,*



Having seen for himself the arbitrariness of Ottoman Government as it impinged on the lives of the unprivileged, Griffiths was sure that, in the Morea at least, a violent revolution was on the way and that it would be successful.<sup>52</sup> His only regret was that it was likely to be France that would deliver the Greeks 'from the galling chains of Turkish tyranny.'<sup>53</sup> And there were others who, speaking from their experience, protested at the accounts of visitors who only saw the country with a 'distant view', that is, from their immersion in the texts of a selection of the ancient classics, or with a 'transient glance', that is, without much knowledge of the main languages then spoken in the country, demotic Greek, Turkish, and the two main mutually-incomprehensible dialects of Albanian.<sup>54</sup>

For the classically educated visitors from the west, every feature of the landscape had a familiar name, and each offered a story, often a succession of stories from mythic to historic ancient times. As Edward Dodwell wrote, repeating a point that occurred to many: 'Almost every rock, every promontory, every view, is haunted by the shadows of the mighty dead. Every portion of the soil appears to teem with historical recollections; or it borrows some potent but invisible charm from the inspiration of poetry, the effects of genius, or the energies of liberty or patriotism.'<sup>55</sup> As the visitors cast their eyes towards Mount Cithaeron in the far distance, they knew it was there that Actaeon had been changed into a stag, that Pentheus was torn into pieces by the women Bacchae, and that the infant Oedipus had been exposed and left to die.<sup>56</sup> It was easy to imagine the bonfire that, according to Clytemnestra's speech in

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*military and naval establishments; the state of learning, and of the liberal and mechanical arts; the manners and domestic economy of the Turks and other subjects of the grand signor, &c. &c. together with the geographical, political, and civil, state of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. From observations made, during a residence of fifteen years in Constantinople and the Turkish provinces* (London: Mawman, 1807).

52 Griffiths, 122.

53 'The philanthropist will rejoice to see the descendants of Socrates and Solon, of Apelles and Phidias, again under the auspices of a christian government. But the politician of England will feel infinite regret ...' Griffiths, 124.

54 Thornton, iv.

55 Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, iv.

56 According to the version given by the character of Jocasta and by the Chorus in Euripides's *Phoenician Women*, his father Laius had given the baby, marked with a golden brooch, to shepherds to be exposed on Cithaeron, after piercing his ankle with iron spikes, but had been found alive by passing horsemen. Eur. *Phoen.* 1; Eur. *Phoen.* 801. The practice of exposing children in classical Athens is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, was among those lit in succession across the acropolises of the Archipelago, that brought the news of the fall of Troy. As they looked up at the Acropolis of Athens, immediately visible was the cave where, in the *Ion*, Euripides had dramatized the story of the rape of Creusa, daughter of the mythical Athenian king Erechtheus, a version of which, *Creusa, Queen of Athens*, composed by William Whitehead, was played on stage and read from printed versions in England from 1750.

The visitors saw, too, the hill of the Pnyx where political debates had taken place in classical times, with the Acropolis and the west pediment of the Parthenon in direct view. Also in front of the Acropolis entrance was the hill of the Areopagus, the 'hill of Ares', the ancient god of war, near which a great battle was said to have taken place in mythic times between Theseus and the Amazon warrior women, and where in historic times Paul of Tarsus had, it was plausibly thought, debated his ideas with the intellectuals of two of the philosophical schools of Athens around the year 60 CE.<sup>57</sup>

The visitors from Europe were familiar with 'storied landscapes' in their own countries, where myth also coalesced with recorded history, orally-transmitted tales with written literature, and the official supernatural of organised Christianity co-existed with fluid stories ('magic' and 'folklore') that were inconsistent with the official tales. But seldom, if ever, had visitors encountered such an intense concentration. Greece, and Athens in particular, was 'a country, of which almost every mountain, and river, and valley is celebrated in History or Song.'<sup>58</sup> To visitors from North America, by contrast, and to those such as Chateaubriand and Galt, who had visited the 'New World', including the wildernesses of what was then beginning to be called Canada, the difference was startling. As John Galt wrote of the boyhood of the artist Benjamin West, who was brought up in colonial Philadelphia:

the forests though interminable, were but composed of trees; the mountains and rivers, though on a larger scale, were not associated in the mind with the exertions of patriotic valour, and the achievements [sic] of individual enterprize, like the Alps or the Danube, the Grampians or

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57 To be discussed in Chapter 22.

58 Haygarth, William, Esq., A. M., *Greece, A Poem in Three Parts; with Notes, Classical Illustrations, and Sketches of the Scenery* (London: Printed by W. Bulwer ... sold by Nicol, 1814), vi.

the Tweed. It is impossible to tread the depopulated and exhausted soil of Greece without meeting with innumerable relics and objects, which like magic talismans, call up the genius of departed ages with the long-enriched roll of those great transactions, that, in their moral effect, have raised the nature of man, occasioning trains of reflection which want only the rhythm of language to be poetry. But in the unstoried solitudes of America, the traveller meets with nothing to awaken the sympathy of his recollective feelings.<sup>59</sup>

The stories that the western visitors recognised and received from the landscape and cityscape of Athens were all from ancient times. And it was 'Nature', meaning the landscape, as much as the ruined buildings that prompted images to emerge from their memories in their own acts of viewing. By contrast, as the visitors soon discovered, the stories that the landscape told to the local Greek-speaking people of Athens derived, with only a few exceptions, not from ancient Hellas but from Christian Byzantium and its continuing aftermath.<sup>60</sup>

Many were inclined to see the landscape, including the ancient ruins, as accompanying notes to the texts of the ancient authors. And indeed, a visit to Athens could illuminate passages, including political speeches and those delivered in the law courts, and especially the plays, both comic and tragic, whose actions were set in and around Athens, and which had in some cases used the local sightlines to increase the audiences' sense of 'being actually present' (what the ancient writers on rhetoric called 'enargeia').<sup>61</sup> Some travel books, notably those by William Gell, while purporting to be guides to actual travellers, were in practice aimed at armchair travellers in Europe.<sup>62</sup>

It was only when, in 1810, a book appeared written by a French artist who had lived in the region and who, exceptionally, chose to present the landscape as he encountered it in his own time, with scarcely a mention

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59 Galt, John, *The life, studies, and works of Benjamin West, Esq. President of the Royal Academy of London* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1820), 79.

60 The Christianization of the landscape throughout the Byzantine territories will be considered in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The arrival after the Greek Revolution of a constituency of western Christians who shared many of the anti-Hellenic and anti-Parthenon attitudes of their Byzantine and early Christian predecessors, is discussed in Chapter 22.

61 Discussed more fully in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

62 As was pointed out by Byron and Hodgson in their review, 'Article IV. Gell's Geography of Ithaca and Itinerary of Greece', *Monthly Review*, August 1811, 371.

of the ancient monuments, that the weight of the conventions of the 'classic tourists' could be pointed out, even if seldom acted upon. As one reviewer noted, they had: 'in some instances too much neglected to furnish us with a picture of things in their present state [and] described these districts not as if they carried their eyes but their libraries in their heads.'<sup>63</sup>

Many travellers had planned from the beginning to publish printed accounts of their experiences and discoveries. Some of the resulting books were compiled from the 'journal letters' that were sent back occasionally from places *en route*, composed and intended from the beginning as notes and drafts for later publication.<sup>64</sup> A few aimed to produce what would be, in effect, a comprehensive book of geographical descriptions, maps, and visualisations of places, peoples, and customs, that would be indispensable to European governments, to military and naval planners, and to merchants and exporters, as well as to those interested in the lands and antiquities of the ancient world. At the end of the eighteenth century, Edward Daniel Clarke is said to have netted over £6,000, a colossal sum, for his extensively illustrated, multi-volume account of his travels, in addition to the money he made from the sale of antiquities and manuscripts bought along the way. In 1809–1811, when Lord Byron spent time in Athens along with dozens of other men from western Europe, it would have been hard to find even one who was not writing a description or drawing in a sketch book. As early as 1740, two British travellers conducting research for their books were in Athens during the same week.<sup>65</sup>

The largest expeditions of the eighteenth century, which usually visited Athens as part of an extensive tour of the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, carried western clothes, tents, bedding, cooking and

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63 Review of Castellan's *Lettres sur la Grèce* in *Monthly Review*, 66, 1811, 460. The reviewer was repeating a point made by Byron and Hodgson in their review of Gell's books.

64 The phrase is used on the title page of *Photograms of an Eastern Tour. ... By Σ. With original illustrations* (London: [Bungay printed], 1859).

65 Pococke, Edward, *A Description of the East and Some other Countries* (London: Bowyer, 1743 and 1745) and Perry, Charles, *A View of the Levant Particularly of Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and Greece* (London: Woodward and Davis, printers to the Royal Society and Shuckburgh, 1752). Pococke was accused in print of having plagiarised from his book by Perry, a charge also made by Shaw, author of a large book on the North African Ottoman territories.

eating utensils, magnetic compasses, telescopes, and watches.<sup>66</sup> Some noblemen brought private secretaries, tutors, and artists, as well as personal servants. To enable the members of their staff to do their work, they brought surveying instruments, art paper, portfolios, pencils, brushes, and paints. None of these things was available locally in Athens, and only some could be sent for and bought in Constantinople or Smyrna (modern Izmir). The Comte de Choiseul Gouffier, a French Ambassador in Constantinople, whose ambitious project was copied on a lesser scale by Lord Elgin soon afterwards, made two visits to Greek lands, including Athens. For his second, he took, in effect, his own travelling academy: a chaplain, the Abbé Martin, who also acted as private secretary; Jacques Delille, a poet already famous for his translations of Virgil, whose task was to celebrate his employer's achievements; Louis-François Cassas, an academy-trained painter; Tondué, an astronomer; Fauvel, artist, draftsman, antiquities agent and French consul; plus J.B.G. d'Ansse de Villoison, a 'Hellenist', whose task was to help with the understanding of the Greek language in its many forms, modern and ancient, as well as the reading and transcribing of ancient inscriptions and of any manuscripts that they were able to access and to buy. Other members of Choiseul Gouffier's professional team, Barbié de Bocage and Foucherot, the surveyors who had been on the first expedition, remained in France working up the drawings and maps they had already made into engravings to be published in the first volume.<sup>67</sup>

The larger expeditions also brought goods not available locally for use as gifts, or rather as gift-exchanges, as local custom required. The

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66 A full list of what was required in 1819 is included Wilson, William Rae, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land, the second edition, with a Journey through Turkey, Greece, the Ionian Islands, Sicily, Spain &c* (London: Longman, 1824), 450–51. As another piece of advice: 'The most necessary article for a traveller is a bed, which should of course be as portable as possible. A piece of oil-cloth to cover it, when rolled up in the day, and to place under it at night, would be useful. A carpet about eight feet square is of service to sit upon. A knife, fork, spoon, plate, drinking cup and some kind of vessel for boiling water seem the only necessary additions. A light umbrella as a shade from the sun would always be found very agreeable, and would be more serviceable if it were fitted to an iron spike, by which it might be stuck into the ground, Curtains suspended to the sides of the room by cords, are very useful to exclude insects while the traveller sleeps. If these be made of silk, and tucked under the bed as soon as it is made, the night's rest will not be disturbed; many will prefer mosquito curtains, but they are not to be depended upon.' Gell, *Argolis*, ix.

67 Augustinos, 161.

most aristocratic brought telescopes, pieces of jewellery, and rolls of fine western cloth. By the end of the period, by which time the social background of the travellers had widened, travellers from a little lower down the income scale were recommended to bring 'pistols, knives, needles, pocket-telescopes, penknives, scissors, pencils, India rubber, well bound blank books, ink-stands, toys for children and ornaments for ladies.'<sup>68</sup> Presents in cash were made to local persons of low social status. However, in order to maintain the fiction that the Franks were guests, and did not therefore have to pay for the favours they received from their hosts, the visitors often made their gifts in the form of bags of coffee or sugar, or of bottles of 'brandy' (probably ouzo or raki) that could be bought locally and constituted a kind of near-cash for payment for small services.<sup>69</sup> By the latter part of the eighteenth century, the expenditure of foreigners was a vital part of the local economy of Athens.

### The 'Franks' of Athens and Elgin's Acquisitions

The 'Franks' of Athens were a real community who had read the same books, shared in the same traditions, ambitions, and aspirations, and who spent time together despite national and language differences. They behaved as a community even during the years between 1793 and 1815, when the western European countries from which they came were engaged in the longest, most destructive, and most global conflict that had ever occurred until that time. But they were also an imagined community who linked themselves through their writings and the pictures that they commissioned to a broader, western-Europe-wide, republic of letters. Indeed, so important to 'Europe' was the research into ancient Greece planned by John Spencer Stanhope that when he was arrested in France under the Napoleonic policy of detaining enemy

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68 Murray's *Handbook*, 1840 edition, ix.

69 A full itemised account of the costs of the Fourmont expedition of 1729–1730, that totalled 11,000 piastres, with the payments for travel, living expenses, wages of workers for digging, and gifts to local political and religious officials, including the expenses he incurred at Athens, is transcribed in Omont, *Missions*, ii, 1126–1143. The far greater expenses incurred by Choiseul-Gouffier for his two journeys and for the publication of the *Voyage Pittoresque* are discussed from scattered references by Barbier.

nationals, a policy that also caught Lord Elgin, he was released by intervention of the French Academy.<sup>70</sup>

To western eyes, the Ottoman lands were extraordinarily exotic and foreign. However, in every large town and a few smaller towns, including Athens, there were local Frank merchants who were permanently linked into the western banking, credit, and payments system, who would discount letters of credit into local currencies.<sup>71</sup> There was therefore usually no need for travellers to carry much actual cash, as the local brigands knew. Ambassadors such as Choiseul-Gouffier and Elgin were able to borrow almost unlimited amounts on a well-founded understanding that the loans, and the high interest rates that they were offered at, were guaranteed by their governments. Along with the official firmans secured by political influence in Constantinople, Elgin was thus able to take into his private ownership pieces of the Parthenon and other antiquities that were only acquired and shipped because he and his agents were able to engage the prestige and credit of the British Government and to deploy the resources of the British Royal Navy, as well as the network of official consulates. The majority of antiquities that were taken into the collections of western Europe from Greece during the long eighteenth century were acquired under such arrangements, either directly or indirectly through intermediaries.<sup>72</sup> In modern terms, one effect of these arrangements was therefore to permit the privatization of assets that, if the full costs of obtaining them had been charged, would in modern circumstances be regarded as already belonging in large measure to the state that had arranged for them to be acquired and that had financed their transportation.<sup>73</sup>

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70 The circumstances are set out, with transcribed documents, in Stanhope, John Spencer, *Topography Illustrative of the Battle of Plataea with engravings* (London: Murray, 1817).

71 Many of the transactions arranged through the local Frank families settled in Athens are described in the notebook of Thomas Burgon who conducted large scale excavations in and around Athens in 1813 are reported in his notebook held in King's College, London, Archives.

72 Discussed for the nineteenth century, with many official documents quoted, by, for example, Gunning, Lucia Patrizio, *The British Consular Service in the Aegean and the Collection of Antiquities for the British Museum* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

73 The wider links between the collecting of antiquities and European, mainly British, imperialism in its high noon from the mid eighteenth to mid nineteenth centuries are discussed by Hoock, Holger, *Empires of the Imagination* (London: Profile, 2010).

It was formerly customary for authors to present the activities of the foreign colony in Athens as steps in a progressive narrative of increasing professionalization, from dilettantism to science, from antiquarianism to archaeology.<sup>74</sup> And the many members of the colony and the visitors who were genuinely interested in discovering as much as they could about ancient Hellas, and about Athens in particular, found a ready reception among the local people whom they met.

In the years immediately before the Greek Revolution, the house of the French consul Fauvel was the main resource in Athens where scholars and visitors could, with his permission, access some of the standard printed works, see the antiquities and plaster casts that he and his workmen had collected or made, hear about the results of his own research, and obtain specialist advice about their own purchases.<sup>75</sup> Although sometimes called a 'museum', Fauvel's house was also an emporium where collectors of antiquities, their agents, and visiting dealers could inspect what was on offer and place their orders. For those with good credit, it was possible to send a letter from abroad with a list of objects the buyer wanted.<sup>76</sup> Lusieri, Elgin's agent, seems also to have been an occasional dealer, in defiance of his contract with Elgin, it being noted among the items that were stolen or lost 'a specially fine Etruscan vase which Lusieri had bought on his own account.'<sup>77</sup>

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74 For example, Clairmont, Christoph W. ed., *Fauvel; The First Archaeologist in Athens and His Philhellenic Correspondents* (Zürich: Akanthus, 2007). Legrand, who published a selection of Fauvel's papers in the late nineteenth century, called him 'antiquaire'.

75 An account of the role of Fauvel as a guide to the town, as well as a description of his antiquities and his numerous books in 1820 is given by Marcellus, Vicomte de, ancien Ministre Plenipotentiaire, *Souvenirs de l'Orient* (Paris: Debecourt, 1839), ii, 352, with another description by Pouqueville, F.C.H.L., *Voyage dans la Grèce* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1820), iv, 73. 'Vast unarranged masses of collections in antiquity; he has an immense quantity of vases, casts of the sculptures of most monuments in Greece, several drawings of the buildings in Athens of his own and others, Mr. Cockerell's pencil drawing of the beautifully ornamented door of the temple of Erechtheus and several sketches of Constantinople curiously done in burnt cork, together with lots of fragments of mouldings, tombs, &c.' Taylor, G. Ledwell, *The auto-biography of an octogenarian architect: being a record of his studies at home and abroad, during 65 years, comprising among the subjects the cathedrals of England, France, and Italy, the temples of Rome Greece, and Sicily ... also incidents of travel* (London: Longman, 1870–1872), 121. Taylor was there in June 1818.

A description of the antiquities, made at the start of the Revolution, is given by Raybaud, ii, 85–87.

76 For example, in the letter from Dodwell to Fauvel from Rome in 1811, Clairmont, document numbers 46 and 47.

77 Noted by Smith, *Lord Elgin*, 278.



## The Treatment of Ancient Objects Before the Revolution

For many decades before the Revolution, ancient objects were routinely removed, literally ungrounded, from the geographical, cultural, and commemorative contexts of their creation and use. For at least a millennium and a half, despite knowing that objects of value could be found there, the Orthodox or the Ottoman authorities had mostly left ancient burial sites undisturbed, but they nonetheless did not seem to have cared much about the opening of ancient tombs, the removal and export of their contents, or the casual junking of the remains of the ancient dead who were not yet generally regarded by the Orthodox Greeks as their ancestors. Thomas Burgon, who spent some weeks in 1813 opening tombs in and around Athens, found fragments of gold leaf, mirrors, pieces of ivory, and other objects of monetary value. The results of these diggings were separated out into modern western object-centred descriptive categories, such as sculptures, vases, and jewellery. Bundled together in accordance with the imported western category of 'works of art', anachronistically applied to ancient times, the objects were categorised, and often later displayed, in accordance with their characteristics as manufactured objects.

Richard Burdon, remembering the mythic story of Charon, who ferried the dead across the Styx to the underworld, hoped to find an obol coin in the mouths of skeletons, but with only doubtful results. As was reported when he came to sell his collection: '[Burdon] employed not less than twenty men at Athens in constantly digging for curiosities, and the coins he has collected are considered rare and of great value. The impressions of some are as fresh as if just come from the mint.'<sup>78</sup> What those who commissioned the digging up of graves called 'coins' had not, however, been primarily used in ancient times as pieces of 'money' intended to circulate in the economy or as 'works of art' that gave 'aesthetic' and other satisfactions to live viewers, but as grave goods that performed their main function at the funeral and commemorative ceremony for the dead person.

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<sup>78</sup> Goulburn, Edward Meyrick, *John William Burgon late dean of Chichester: a biography, with extracts from his letters and early journals* (London: Murray, 1892), i, 14.

It was a commonplace of the visitors to say that the local people thought, in their ignorance, that they were digging for gold, and much gold was indeed found, usually in the form of grave goods such as wreaths and jewellery, but antiquities could also be turned into money by those who able to sell them up the market chain operated by the foreigners. In modern terms, we can say that the foreign colony, by digging, removing, and reclassifying objects, was destroying those objects' provenance, as well as evidence of how they had been used, and was therefore also limiting, and in many cases, denying the possibility of gaining knowledge of the actual lives and customs of the ancient men and women who had created and used them.

The foreign colony was not to know that a papyrus of the fourth century BCE found in 1962 near Thessaloniki, known as the Derveni papyrus, owed its survival to having been partly burned on a funeral pyre.<sup>79</sup> Nor could they know that in 1981, in a tomb excavated near Athens, the remains of a papyrus scroll would be discovered, along with other artifacts, including wax tablets, a stylus, and an ink stand, that indicated that the deceased had been a professional scribe or author.<sup>80</sup> Since the end of the nineteenth century, vast quantities of papyrus fragments have been discovered, mainly in Egypt, and are gradually been published. Although almost all are from later epochs of the ancient world, they show how widespread writing on papyrus was, for how many different purposes it was used, and how broad was the spectrum of society who treated writing and reading as a normal part of daily life. To attempt to recover a knowledge of the ancient Parthenon without taking account of the use of now lost documents on perishable materials is therefore liable to produce a misleading account.<sup>81</sup>

Even at the time, however, it was well understood that the casual digging and removal was irreversibly damaging the prospects of

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79 'Derveni Papyrus Inducted Into UNESCO's "Memory of the World" Programme', *Archaeology News Network*, 14 October 2015, [http://archaeologynewsnetwork.blogspot.dk/2015/10/derveni-papyrus-inducted-into-unescos.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed:+TheArchaeologyNewsNetwork+\(The+Archaeology+News+Network\)#.VmPqVSi4Ldk](http://archaeologynewsnetwork.blogspot.dk/2015/10/derveni-papyrus-inducted-into-unescos.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+TheArchaeologyNewsNetwork+(The+Archaeology+News+Network)#.VmPqVSi4Ldk)

80 Described by Pöhlmann, Egert and West, Martin L., 'The Oldest Greek Papyrus and Writing Tablets Fifth-Century Documents from the "Tomb of the Musician" in Attica', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, Bd. 180, 2012, 1–16.

81 The practice of joining the evidential dots with my suggestions of how its limitations might be offset is discussed in Chapter 24.

learning more about ancient societies and their customs and beliefs, their minds, and motivations. For example, in a book published in 1800, the Swedish diplomat Johan David Åkerblad, an accomplished linguist and scholar, noted that: 'No one has destroyed more grave mounds than the French painter Fauvel. He has excavated almost all in the vicinity of Athens, Marathon and other areas ... The worst thing about it is that Fauvel has not given us the slightest notice about the remarkable items found in these venerable monuments, and that one does not even know what has become of the objects.'<sup>82</sup> As more visitors employed men to dig for a few days here and there, and picked out anything that caught their fancy, throwing the rest away, and keeping minimal records of what they had found and where, and of the customers to whom they were sold, we see a growing reliance on justifications based on an invented distinction between 'artistic' or 'aesthetic' value, on the one hand, and the value of objects as documentary evidence for the societies that had brought them into existence and used them for their own cultural purposes, on the other. However, as became increasingly clear at the time, and even more so today, when a largely illegal antiquities trade is sustained at the top of a shady international market by employing the rhetoric of 'works of art', huge, often irreversible damage is done to these items' value as documents and therefore to knowledge. Writing in 2002, Sian Lewis estimated that of the tens of thousands of pieces of painted pottery known to have survived in the museums and private collections of the world, about eighty percent are 'unprovenanced' and of those about half were funerary objects manufactured in order to be used in performance contexts of which little is knowable.<sup>83</sup> Then as now, those who presented themselves as lovers of 'art' were destroyers of potential knowledge about the societies that had brought the objects into being. In the past, as now, they also encouraged a trade in fakes.<sup>84</sup>

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82 Discussed with plentiful citations, including some from writers in Swedish seldom quoted, by Thomasson, Fredrik, 'Justifying and Criticizing the Removals of Antiquities in Ottoman Lands: Tracking the Sigeion Inscription', *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 17 (3), August 2010, 493–517.

83 Lewis, Sian, *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook* (London: Routledge, 2002), 4 and 5.

84 A terracotta plaque, one of several bought by various museums, that appeared to provide information about the central slab of the east frieze of the Parthenon, discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, fouled the wells of truth for some decades in

In 1812, Lord Byron, who had a keen nose for hypocrisy ('humbug'), writing in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, A Romaunt*, his own account of what he had seen in Athens in 1809 and 1810, mocked the practices of those who claimed to be admirers of ancient Hellas, who broke off pieces of ancient buildings, dug up ancient tombs in search of grave goods, and exported whatever they could to western Europe. He also noted that the 'artists' of the expatriate community were deeply involved in the trade in antiquities. When news reached Athens that Byron referred to the Austrian Consul Gropius as 'Lord ---'s collector', Gropius wrote to Lord Aberdeen, who was evidently the lord referred to, demanding that the slur on their reputations be withdrawn. A member of Lord Aberdeen's staff visited Byron in London, and read him the complaint. But if Lord Aberdeen thought that his distant cousin in the Gordon family could be pressurized out of some sense of national or lordly solidarity ('affinity bias') he mistook his man. The excuse that was offered, that Gropius had exceeded his formal authority as a painter, Byron saw was a device for shifting blame, at best a mere legalism. And the correction that Byron made to the third edition, published later in 1812, although in form an apology, is, in substance, the exposure of another layer of hypocrisy.<sup>85</sup>

The recent publication of many financial documents that refer to the removal of the sculptures of both the Aegina and the Bassae (Phigaleia) temples in the years 1810–1813, shows how lucrative the

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the nineteenth century until it, with the others, was patiently exposed as forgeries. Discussed in Waldstein, Charles, *Essays on the Art of Pheidias*, 191–266.

85 'This Sr. Gropius was employed by a noble Lord for the sole purpose of sketching, in which he excels: but I am sorry to say, that he has, through the abused sanction of that most respectable name, been treading at humble distance in the steps of Sr. Lusieri.—A shipful of his trophies was detained, and I believe confiscated, at Constantinople in 1810. I am most happy to be now enabled to state, that "this was not in his bond;" that he was employed solely as a painter, and that his noble patron disavows all connection with him, except as an artist. If the error in the first and second edition of this poem has given the noble Lord a moment's pain, I am very sorry for it: Sr. Gropius has assumed for years the name of his agent; and though I cannot much condemn myself for sharing in the mistake of so many, I am happy in being one of the first to be undeceived. Indeed, I have as much pleasure in contradicting this as I felt regret in stating it.' Since the notes to the second edition were set up with generous spacing, it was easy to insert the addition, and it was carried through to all the later editions in Byron's lifetime. For Gropius's subsequent attempt to rewrite the past, see Chapter 12. His role in the crisis of 1821 is discussed in Chapter 9.

business was. Leaders of the local communities at Aegina, known to the westerners as ‘the primates’, represented the interests of the local people on whose land they stood and when they demanded that removals be stopped, their protests were dismissed as superstitious excuses to ask for money. A payment equivalent to forty British pounds was made but the final price obtained by those who ‘discovered’ and removed them was 6,000 pounds. At Bassae, the local authorities tried to stop the removals until the joint owners obtained a firman and the pieces were hurriedly removed, fetching a final price of 19,000 pounds. Gropius contracted for two per cent of the final price for both sets of antiquities, in effect taking a share of the equity in the investment, plus reimbursement of all his heavy expenses on which he declined to give an account. Charles Robert Cockerell, who played a leading role in the removal of the sculptures from both temples, and who obtained a piece from the Parthenon, reports that he was called ‘a tomb breaker and sacrilegious wretch’ by locals, and his group ‘marble stealers and dealers.’<sup>86</sup>

### Travelling to Athens and Viewing the Acropolis: Representations of the Experience

At the provincial border on the road to Athens from the Peloponnese, an officer with a party of around six soldiers stopped all travellers, and any foreigners without proper passports were not permitted to proceed to Athens.<sup>87</sup> John Spencer Stanhope and his party were turned back at the border in 1814, but evaded the controls by going to Athens by sea.<sup>88</sup> The architect Joseph Woods reports in 1818 that no-one was allowed to pass the Isthmus of Corinth without an order from the Pasha of Tripolizza which would have taken eight days of negotiation to obtain, so he too went by sea.<sup>89</sup> As was noted by several travellers, the ‘*derveni*’, where

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86 Charles Robert Cockerell in *the Mediterranean, Letters and Travels 1810–1817*, edited by Susan Pearce and Theresa Ormrod (London: Boydell, 2017), 39 and 44, retaining the spelling of the manuscript.

87 Bramsen, John, *Travels in Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, The Morea, Greece, Italy &c* (London: Colburn, second edition, 1820), ii, 58.

88 Spencer Stanhope, 36.

89 Woods, Joseph, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, 228

the frontier guards were stationed, and the 'khans', where all travellers and merchants were usually obliged to stay overnight, had probably existed in the same locations since ancient times.<sup>90</sup> Many ancient sites had been largely determined by the local geography, combining military features such as the narrowness of the mountain passes with the presence of fast-running rivers that could provide drinking water for humans and animals in all seasons and also deliver enough power to turn a mill wheel, a piece of equipment indispensable for grinding or crushing edible crops. This was especially true of the ancient mountain pass between Argos and Corinth, where the recently rediscovered city of Tenea was situated.<sup>91</sup>

For the men and women from the west whose main aim was to see Athens, their first distant sight of the Acropolis was an experience to be mentally anticipated and physically prepared for. As Chateaubriand neared the place where he knew he would experience his first sight of the Acropolis, he reports that he ordered that his horses be washed down and that his guard should put on a clean turban. He himself changed into his 'gala clothes', and walked in silence towards the viewing station, aware that he was repeating a practice of the ancient Athenians.<sup>92</sup> Thomas Watkins kissed the ground. 'I stopped and gazed,' he wrote, 'but was too full to speak, yet thankful to the Supreme Being that he had permitted me to visit the place, which of all others I most desired, but least expected, to behold.'<sup>93</sup>

That first view of the Acropolis, which was seen by Chateaubriand and by many others since ancient times, was caught in 1828 by an amateur artist, William Mure, as reproduced in Figure 4.9.

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90 An example noted in *Charles Robert Cockerell in the Mediterranean, Letters and Travels 1810–1817*, edited by Susan Pearce and Theresa Ormrod (London: Boydell, 2017), 165.

91 To be discussed in my contribution to a forthcoming publication by the archaeological team.

92 Chateaubriand, *Travels to Jerusalem and the Holy Land through Egypt*, translated by Frederic Shoberl (London: Colburn, third edition, 1835), ii, 158: 'Never did the most devout of the initiated experience transports equal to mine'.

93 Watkins, Thomas, *Travels through Swisserland, Italy, Sicily, the Greek Islands, to Constantinople ... in the Years 1787, 1788, 1789* (London: Cadell, 1792), ii, 281.

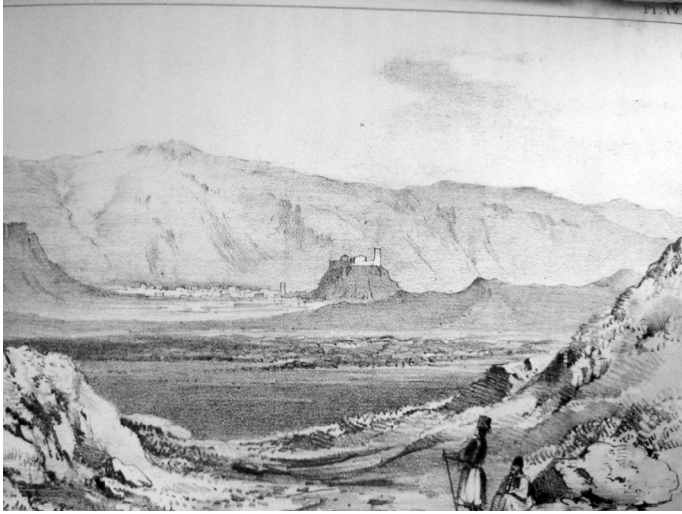


Figure 4.9. 'Athens from the Pass of Daphne'. Lithograph of a drawing made in 1838 by William Mure of Caldwell, travelling as Colonel Caldwell.<sup>94</sup>

As Mure wrote perceptively: 'It possessed, to myself, the additional advantage of novelty, as I do not recollect having seen any view of Athens from this spot in the published collection.'<sup>95</sup> The view that he captured, we can be confident from what is known about the ancient routes, was amongst those that were most frequently encountered in ancient times both by Athenians and by visitors. Charles Ernest Beulé, who after Greek independence used explosives to destroy some of the mediaeval buildings on the Acropolis, also appreciated that the sudden view from the pass of Daphne was not only intensely dramatic but had probably also been similarly experienced in ancient times. As he wrote of his years in Athens, he grew to appreciate the ancient Athenians better every day, not because, as an archaeologist, he put his hands on their marble, but because he lived in the open air in constant contact with the

94 Mure, William, of Caldwell, *Journal of a Tour in Greece and the Ionian Islands, with remarks on the recent history — present state — and classical antiquities of those countries* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1842), opposite ii, 44, 'J[oseph]. Netherclift lithog.' The partly illegible inscription I have completed from those on other lithographs in the book. Netherclift, one of the pioneers of lithography in Britain, evidently made lithographs from drawings made by Mure or by a member of his party on the spot: he is not known to have visited Greece.

95 Mure, ii, 43.

natural world in the incomparable light that clothed the nakedness of Attica in delightful colours.<sup>96</sup>

Mure also appreciated that the landscape that he pictured matched the conventions of the northern picturesque, mountains in the background, the Acropolis in the middle drawing the eye, and the foreground 'forming, as it were, a frame to the picture.'<sup>97</sup> The human figures gave scale, and they directed the eyes of the viewer. Since the view would have been the same in ancient times, we may guess that the commissioning authorities and the makers of the classical-era Acropolis may have consciously taken account of the implied viewing station caught by this picture.<sup>98</sup>

The visitors struggled to turn into words their intense personal happiness at seeing Athens that was matched by a general sadness, 'a mixed sensation of affection and sorrow.'<sup>99</sup> As a French officer proclaimed in 1830: 'Oh! Que de bonheur et de tristesse.'<sup>100</sup> For many, that bittersweet moment of experience demanded to be lingered over, written up in a journal, described in a letter home, celebrated in a piece of verse, sketched in a notebook, or otherwise held fixed.<sup>101</sup> An event of inner mental experience was arranged and tidied, turned into words, written down or pictured in a fixed material form, made portable, and carried home, with the expectation that the reader of the words or the viewer of the picture would go through that process in reverse.

Some likened their first sight of the Acropolis to the drawing back of the curtains at the commencement of a play when the audiences catch their first sight of the set.<sup>102</sup> Following the conventions of the English and

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96 Beulé, *Mes Fouilles*, 13. There is no evidence that he remembered that Chateaubriand had put on his 'gala clothes' at the same spot. Beulé's operations on the Acropolis are summarized in Chapter 22.

97 Mure ii, 44.

98 Discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

99 Watkins, ii, 313.

100 Lacour, M. J-L., *Excursions en Grèce* (Paris: Bertrand, 1834), 170.

101 Among the women are Lady Craven, who visited in 1786 and Queen Caroline in 1816, see Demont and Queen's *Travels*. Soon after the Revolution we have Plumley, Miss, *Days and Nights in the East; from the original notes of a recent traveller through Egypt, Arabia-Petra, Syria, Turkey and Greece* (London: Newby 1845) and Damer, the Hon. Mrs. G.L. Dawson, *Diary of a Tour in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and the Holy Land* (London: Colburn, 1841).

102 'The Acropolis of Athens is soon afterwards discovered on which the eye of the traveller rests with avidity.' Galt, *Travels*, 183. Galt, *Letters*, 104. 'Mount Hymettus spread his curtain.' Bramsen, ii, 88.



French novel of sensibility, they claimed the uncontrollable human body as evidence of a direct, immediate, sincere, authentic, and unmediated expression of their inner self. Cries were uttered.<sup>103</sup> Eyes filled with tears.<sup>104</sup> Pulses raced.<sup>105</sup> Hearts throbbed wildly, palpitated violently, and stopped beating.<sup>106</sup> Count Forbin was 'rivetted to the spot' and 'unable to utter a coherent sentence.'<sup>107</sup> John Gadsby was so overcome that he had to turn away. As he wrote: 'it was almost too much for my nervous system. I ceased to gaze upon it, for I felt my knees giving way under the sensation.'<sup>108</sup> Enoch Wines had an out-of-body experience.<sup>109</sup> And just as writers of words sometimes declared themselves 'speechless', the makers of visual images offered failure as evidence of authenticity. Francis Hervé 'took out his pencil when he saw the Acropolis for the first time, but 'soon renounced the thought, perceiving the presumption of the attempt.'<sup>110</sup>

We see too the champions of the conventional attempting to shame the doubters into conformity. Walter Colton, an American naval chaplain, later a newspaperman, wrote that the sight of the Parthenon made his whole previous life seem like 'an anxious pilgrimage', and now that he had reached the object of his deferred hopes: 'I could now willingly yield up my breath.'<sup>111</sup> But admitting that his highfalutin style might be read as 'the language of affected reverence, or the confession of a morbid enthusiasm', dismisses anyone who declines to be co-opted. When someone with the right qualities, he writes, 'comes into the overpowering presence of the Parthenon! And though it may be a weakness, yet he will kneel and weep.'<sup>112</sup> 'He who could behold such a

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103 For the custom of emitting a cry of recognition, Holland, 406.

104 Williams, *Travels*, i, 288.

105 'The pulse goes quicker, and the tears fill the eye, but not with those of delight.' Williams, *Travels*, i, 299.

106 For example: 'My heart beats as I date my letter from the venerable presence of the mistress of the world,' Biddle, 217; Cox and Cox, 193; Romain, 233; Forbin, 3.

107 Forbin, 3.

108 Gadsby, *My Wanderings*, 66.

109 The visitor's sentiments ... 'as he continues to gaze, increase in purity and depth, till, lost in one delicious glow of enthusiasm, he scarcely knows "whether he is in the body or out of it." This is not exaggeration.' Wines, 297.

110 Hervé, i, 126.

111 Colton, 271.

112 Colton, Rev. Walter, late of the United States Navy, *Land and Lee in the Bosphorus and Ægean; or Views of Constantinople and Athens, edited from the notes and manuscripts of the author, by Rev. Henry T. Cheever* (New York: Barnes, 1851), 271.

scene unmoved, must indeed deserve pity,' wrote John Bramsen of his non-conforming fellow-travellers.<sup>113</sup> Or as Nicholas Michell, a poet of the mainstream, wrote, repeating the romantic cliché that mute stones can speak to a man of taste and sensibility:

There are, whose earth-born thoughts can ne'er  
aspire,  
Who feel not taste's fine glow, or fancy's fire;  
Who view with unmov'd heart, and frigid gaze,  
The pleading wrecks of bright departed days;  
Who grasp at petty pelf, or present power,  
And ask no joy beyond the passing hour -  
Oh! let not such approach this land of fame;  
For them no magic breathes in Graecia's name;  
For them her ruins seem but silent stone.<sup>114</sup>

Some writers, perhaps sensing that the rhetoric of rapture was overused and already losing its power to persuade, resorted instead to the 'came to scoff, stayed to worship' conversion narrative, emphasising their initial indifference or hostility in order to sharpen the contrast of the sudden reversal.<sup>115</sup> Bayard Taylor, for example, a professional writer, assured his readers that 'I am hardened against conventional sentiment ... I can resist the magic of ancient memories, no matter how classic,' but, as he wrote of his first sight of the west front of the Parthenon, 'all my fine resolves were forgotten. I was seized with an overpowering mixture of that purest and loftiest admiration, which is almost the same as love ... and had I been alone, I should have cast myself prone upon the marble pavement and exhausted in some hysterical way, the violence of this

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113 Bramsen, John, *Travels in Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, The Morea, Greece, Italy &c* (London: Colburn, second edition, 1820), ii, 61.

114 Michell, Nicolas, *Ruins of Many Lands, A Descriptive Poem, with Illustrations* (London: Tegg, 1849), 107. The verse echoes the then famous lines of Walter Scott in praise of nationalism that begin: 'Breathes there the man with soul so dead Who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land!' Another example on first setting foot in Greece set out at length in Swan, *Journal*, i, 105–06.

115 'Let it suffice for me to say that, notwithstanding all I had heard and read of the immaculate purity of conception, and the almost celestial harmony of proportions exhibited in Minerva's shrine, I came here a skeptic; but, the moment I found myself within the sphere of its influence, I became a convert. Haight, Sarah, *Letters from the old world by a Lady of New York* (New York: Harper, 1840), ii, 292.

unexpected passion.<sup>116</sup> Edward Hutton kissed the marble: ‘all golden, all white ... as warm to the lips as a woman’s body.’<sup>117</sup>

Even those who only pretended to have been to Athens knew what was expected. Alexander Thomson, a medical man who reported in 1798 on ‘the variety of emotions that agitated my mind’ was probably a publisher’s hack, recycling the clichés of printed books.<sup>118</sup> Charles Thompson, his near namesake, who was probably also a stay-at-home compiler, felt the same in 1810.<sup>119</sup> As the publisher of the English translation of the genuine book by the French academician Pierre-Augustin Guys, who had lived in Constantinople and who did go to Athens, felt obliged to affirm in 1782: ‘The number of travels through Italy and Greece, daily manufactured in the closet, and obtruded for originals upon the world, renders it necessary to authenticate a work of this nature, in the most public manner.’<sup>120</sup> And there were the real travellers ‘who write their journals in their studies, and can tell more about what they have read than what they see.’<sup>121</sup>

From the earliest days of the encounter, it was therefore possible to write convincingly about the emotions aroused by looking at the Acropolis without having left home. As the French stay-at-home compiler Guillet wrote in 1674 of the experience of his pretended

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116 Taylor, Bayard, *Travels in Greece and Russia with an excursion to Crete* (New York; Putnam, 1859), 37; 40.

117 Hutton, Edward, *A Glimpse of Greece* (London: Medici Society, 1928), 17.

118 Thomson, Alexander, M.D., ed., *Letters of a Traveller, on the Various Countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa; containing Sketches of their present state, Government, Religion, Manners, and Customs; with some original pieces of poetry* (London: Wallis, Wynn, and Scholly, 1798), 326.

119 Thompson, Charles, Esq., *Travels through Turkey in Asia, the Holy Land, Arabia, Egypt, and Other Parts of the World; giving a particular and faithful account of what is most remarkable in the Manners, Religion, Polity, Antiquities, and Natural History of those Countries; with a curious description of Jerusalem as it now appears, and other places mentioned in the Holy Scriptures ... Interspersed with the REMARKS of several other modern Travellers, illustrated with NOTES Historical, Geographical, and Miscellaneous* (Glasgow: printed by Napier, for Fullarton, Somerville, and Blackie, 1810). Probably a compilation. A printed prospectus calling for subscriptions in which the author was described as ‘the late’ was circulated by Robinson in London in 1743.

120 Guys, *A Sentimental Journey Through Greece in a Series of Letters 1772 written from Constantinople by M. de Guys of the Academy of Marselles, to M. Bourlat de Montredon, at Paris. Translated from the French. ‘Natura Graecos docuit, ui ipsi caeteros’ In Three Volumes* (London: Cadell, 3 volumes, 1772) Preface, i, ix. By calling the translation a ‘sentimental’ journey, and publishing it as a three-volume work as if it were a novel, the publisher was presenting the book as suitable not only for learned scholars but for female readers who borrowed from circulating libraries.

121 Galt, *Voyages and Travels*, 62.

brother: 'at the first sight of this Famous Town (struck as it were with a sentiment of Veneration for those Miracles of Antiquity which were Recorded of it) I started immediately, and was taken with an universal shivering all over my Body.'<sup>122</sup> Guillet did not disguise the fact that he was repeating sentiments that had been expressed by Cicero, who had studied at Athens eighteen hundred years before, and that had been rhetorical clichés even then.<sup>123</sup>

Readers, however, especially those who might themselves have liked to have had the opportunity to see the Parthenon but had no realistic prospect of doing so, can have too much of this kind of writing, at once boastful, excluding, and condescending. And we find occasional instances of the resisting viewer. As Lord Byron wrote to his friend Francis Hodgson, a Cambridge classical scholar, with whom he had collaborated in reviewing two travel books on Greece, reporting the plain man's opinion at his first sight of the Parthenon: 'Sir, there's a situation, there's your picturesque! nothing like that, Sir, in Lunnun, not even the Mansion House.'<sup>124</sup>

The writers who competed to out-gush, to out-weep and to out-shiver their rivals were addressing a reading audience in their home countries, without any expectation that their words would ever be read by the people of Athens. Just occasionally, however, we hear a local voice and a local reaction. In 1816 Gian-Dionisio Avramiotti, who as a native of Zante (modern and ancient Zakynthos, one of the Ionian Islands, at the time of his birth an overseas territory of Venice) was able to look both eastwards into the Ottoman territories and westwards to Italy, published a critique of Chateaubriand's book, drawing attention to topographical errors, and casting doubt on the autobiographical passages.<sup>125</sup> How was Chateaubriand able to change into his 'gala clothes'

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122 Guillet and his dispute with Spon are discussed in Chapter 7.

123 'I could not contain my self, but cryed out, Adsunt Athenae, unde Humanitas, Doctrina, Religio, Fruges, Jura, Leges ortae, atque in omnes Terras distributae putantur, de quarum possessione propter pulchritudinem, etiam inter Deos certamen proditum est. Urbi (inquam) quae vetustate eâ est, ut ipsa ex sese suos Cives genuisse dicatur: Autoritate autem tantâ, ut jam fractum prope & dehilitatum Graeciae Nomen, hujus Urbis laude nitatur: You may remember it in Tully.' Guillet English version 124.

124 Byron to Hodgson, 20 January 1811, *Letters and Journals*, ii, 37.

125 Avramiotti, Giovanni Dionisio, *Alcuni cenni critici ... sul viaggio in Grecia che compone la prima parte dell'itinerario da Parigi a Gerusalemme del Signor F. R. de Chateaubriand*.

like an Eleusinian votary, he asked, when elsewhere in his book he was playing the part of the hardship-enduring pilgrim, travelling with only one coat? Avramiotti, with his personal knowledge, questioned whether Chateaubriand had spent even as much as a tenth of the vast sum that he claimed, alleging that Chateaubriand was insincere, but also undermining his pretensions to be an aristocratic successor to the grand travelling-academy-type expeditions of Choiseul-Gouffier and Elgin. To Avramiotti, Chateaubriand was just another travel writer among many, who had a foreign servant and a local guard, who followed and reinforced the conventions of the Franks, and who took home a piece of the Parthenon as a souvenir. A good travel book does not consist of elegies, Avramiotti proclaimed in his last sentence, but the truth, 'and the truth inhabits an unknown land not yet visited by our traveller.'<sup>126</sup>

It is, of course, hard to separate the culturally-conditioned from the spontaneous, the sincere from the pretended, the public professions of belief from actually-experienced inner states, especially when the fleeting experience of a seeing moment is always written up and fixed in words or pictorial images after an interval. Indeed, modern neuroscience suggests that even to try is inconsistent with what occurs in perception and cognition. The romantic quest for a pure and unmediated response was as impossible in the long eighteenth century as it was to be in the so-called romantic period. Rather than attempting to disentangle degrees of sincerity, I suggest it is preferable to understand the gushing and the shivering as the social construction of a ritual in which participants simultaneously help to invent, build, and fix its conventions, who vie in ostentatious displays of their commitment, who try to shame, to evince a hostility to, and to expel insiders who decline to conform, and who internalize the whole process as the only one that is legitimate or 'natural'.

When the eighteenth-century western travellers reached the town gate of Athens, they were invited by the guard to share coffee and tobacco, and as was customary, to offer him a gift.<sup>127</sup> Then came

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*Con varie osservazioni delle antichità greche* (Padua: Tipografia Bettoni, 1816).

126 Avramiotti, final sentence, my translation. Discussed by Malakis, Emile, 'Chateaubriand se méprend-il sur Avramiotti?', *Modern Language Notes*, 50 (4), April 1935, 249–51, drawing on the work of a Mille Poirier, not identified.

127 Trant, 259.

the ceremonial presentation of the visitor's imperial passport to the voivode.<sup>128</sup> Lord Charlemont, who visited Athens in 1749, described the ceremony: 'We presented our firman, which the Voivode received upon the back of his hands, and bowing down his head, touched it with his forehead. It was then opened and read with the greatest solemnity, and with every mark of the most profound respect.'<sup>129</sup> Coffee and tobacco again followed, and the visitor often made a gift, sometimes a watch, a telescope, a snuffbox, or a roll of fine cloth, which, although a gift-exchange, also proclaimed the wealth of the visitor, and, by implication, the military, technological, and cultural superiority of his country. With the help of the western consuls, accommodation was secured and introductions made to the other leading men of Athens, including the Orthodox archbishop, the Muslim mufti, the local expatriate Franks, the other travellers, antiquarians, and artists who might be visiting Athens or residing there.<sup>130</sup>

## Recording the Visit

So narrow was the social circle to which most western visitors to Athens belonged that by the turn of the eighteenth/nineteenth centuries, it was possible to run into an old friend in Greece just as one might occasionally do in parts of Paris or London, as, for example, when Lord Byron met Lord Sligo when they were touring the Peloponnese. As a reviewer wrote in 1814, commenting on the recent surge of travel books on Greece: 'it is an introduction to the best company ... to have scratched one's name upon a fragment of the Parthenon.'<sup>131</sup> By the end of the period, the ancient monuments of Athens were covered with the names of western travellers, colonising the site.<sup>132</sup> The temple at Sounion, often

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128 I know of no consolidated list of the voivodes of Athens, but many are mentioned by name with dates of their time in office, and some lists, by Philadelphus.

129 Charlemont, *The Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey 1749*, edited by W.B. Stanford and E.J. Finopoulos (London: Tregraph for Leventis Foundation, 1984), 129.

130 The ceremonies of sending a present, calling on the voivode, presenting his imperial and other firmans and letters, and then calling on the archbishop, are also described by Poccoke in a letter to his mother from Athens, 29 September/10 October 1740, Poccoke, *Letters*, 3, 281.

131 Quoted by Spencer, Terence, *Fair Greece, Sad Relic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), 229, from *Quarterly Review*, July 1814, xi, 458.

132 Pouqueville, *Voyage*, iv, 73.

visited by sea as well as land, long remained a palimpsest of graffiti as shown in Figure 4.10.

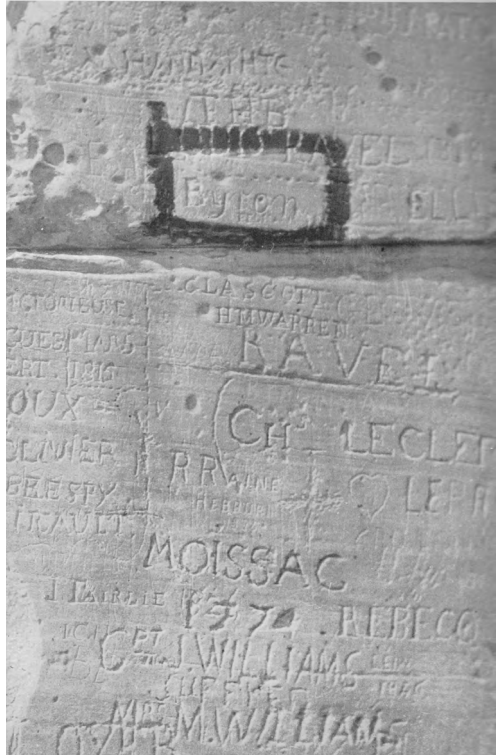


Figure 4.10. Byron's name carved at Sounion Photograph, 1931.<sup>133</sup>

The English artist J.M.W. Turner had produced so many expectation-setting paintings and engravings of Greece and its ruins that visitors expected to find his name carved there too, although he had never been to Greece nor anywhere nearer than Italy.<sup>134</sup> Charles Swan, the chaplain of the British frigate the *Cambrian*, who saw the graffiti in 1824 during the Revolutionary War, could scarcely believe that Byron and Tweddell

133 Holme, C. Geoffrey, and William Gaunt, *Touring the Ancient World with a Camera* (London and New York: The Studio, 1932), 34.

134 For example, Hichens, Robert, *The Near East, Dalmatia, Greece, and Constantinople*, illustrated By Jules Guérin and with photographs (London and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1913), 131: 'I looked in vain for the name of Turner.' Most pictures of Greece were worked up in the studio even if the artist had visited the places and made sketches on the spot.

had indulged in such 'childish vanity'.<sup>135</sup> But he was unusual. Francis Vernon, who had been in Athens in 1678 as one of the pioneers, had inscribed his name on the wall of the Theseion.<sup>136</sup> The names of both Spon and Wheler, who had been his companions, had also once been there.<sup>137</sup> On the monument of Philopappos, on the Hill of the Muses, one of the favourite viewing stations from which to look at the Acropolis for visitors from the present day back to Xerxes in 480 and no doubt even earlier, was carved the name of Foucherot, who had drafted the standard map of Athens which many were at that very moment holding in their hands as they looked.<sup>138</sup> William Rae Wilson, lodging at the Capuchin convent in 1819, judged it from the 'crowd of names of Englishmen written and cut out on the walls, to be a kind of head-quarters for British travellers.'<sup>139</sup> The walls of the Makri family lodging house were 'covered with memorials of their visits.'<sup>140</sup>

It became the custom to seek out the names of famous predecessors. The names of authors could be read at the Castalian spring near Delphi, where they had sought inspiration from the Muses who in ancient times were said to live on Parnassus.<sup>141</sup> Pouqueville found that of Delille,

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135 Swan, Rev. Charles, late of Catharine Hall, Cambridge; Chaplain to H.M.S. Cambrian; author of *Sermons on Several Subjects*, and Translator of *Gesta Romanorum*, *Journal of a voyage up the Mediterranean: principally among the islands of the Archipelago, and in Asia Minor: including many interesting particulars relative to the Greek revolution, especially a journey through Maina to the camp of Ibrahim Pacha, together with observations on the antiquities, opinions, and usages of Greece, as they now exist: to which is added, an essay on the Fanariotes*, translated from the French of Mark Philip Zallony, a Greek (London: Rivington, 1826), i, 117. It was noticed in print by Colton, Rev. Walter, *Ship and shore: or, Leaves from the journal of a cruise to the Levant. By an officer of the United States' navy* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835), 269. His visit, the date of which is not recorded, took place c.1833.

136 Vernon's name is noted on the Theseum, Chandler D.D., *A new edition with corrections and remarks by Nicholas Revett to which is prefixed an introductory account of the author by Ralph Churton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1825), ii, 90.

137 Clarke, *Travels*, part the second, section the second, 1814, 587.

138 For the inscription see St Clair, *Lord Elgin*, 63, 354. It was still possible to make out much of the writing that I noted in the 1960s.

139 Wilson, William Rae, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land, the second edition, with a Journey through Turkey, Greece, the Ionian Islands, Sicily, Spain &c* (London: Longman, 1824), 276. The building was destroyed in the Revolution.

140 Bramsen, ii. 64.

141 Marchebeus, *Voyage de Paris à Constantinople par bateau à vapeur: nouvel itinéraire orné de vues et vignettes sur acier, avec tableaux indiquant les lieux desservis par les paquebots à vapeur, sur la Méditerranée, l'Adriatique et le Danube, le prix des places et des marchandises, les distances et la valeur des monnaies: par Marchebeus, architecte du gouvernement* (Paris: Artus, 1839), 47. He also saw the name of Fauvel.



Choiseul-Gouffier's poet, dated 1784, on which a later visitor had sculpted a garland of roses, but he looked in vain for that of Chateaubriand.<sup>142</sup> In 1833, when the Erechtheion was in a collapsed state, and one of the Caryatids still lay headless on the ground, Kyriakos Pittakis, one of the first locally born students of the monuments, pointed out to visitors how; 'on the inside of the capital of one of the columns, the place where the poet had written his name. It was simply "Byron" in small letters, and would not be noticed by an ordinary observer.'<sup>143</sup> Since there is no reason to doubt the story, it must have been written during Byron's single recorded visit to the Acropolis summit on 29 January 1810.<sup>144</sup>

The French consul Fauvel told a visitor that he had been present when Byron, with his own hand, carved his curse on Elgin on a column of the Parthenon. 'What indignation burned in his eyes that at other times were always melancholic,' the visitor liked to recall, but since Byron had not yet published, or even composed, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* in which he assumed that literary persona, we may suspect that Fauvel's memory had been colonised by what he knew later. Fauvel recalled too how Delille had written some of his own not-yet-print-published melancholic verses on the Parthenon in a neat and regular hand, although they soon ceased to be readable.<sup>145</sup>

One traveller, unidentified except by his initials, wrote a comment on the practice:

Fair Albion smiling sees her sons depart  
To trace the birth and nursery of art,  
Noble his object, glorious is his aim,  
He comes to Athens and he writes his name.

R.A.

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142 Pouqueville, *Voyage*, iv, 78. Delille's name, dated 1784, carved on one of the columns of the Theseum was also noted by Marcellus, ii, 358, and in 1822 by the French philhellene Maxime Raybaud, who recognised the name of 'the French Virgil.' Raybaud, ii, 83. Delille's name carved on the Theseion, 'almost an antiquity,' was also noticed by D'Estournel, i, 146.

143 Willis, ii, 138. Byron's name in his own hand 'on one of the Ionic capitals in the north portico of the Pandrosium' was also noticed by Sir Grenville Temple who was there in March 1834. Temple i, 81. A large number of graffiti on the Erechtheion are noted by Lesk, Appendix E.

144 Beaton, *Byron's War*, 13.

145 Marcellus ii, 354. Delille's verses were from *L'Imagination* chant vii, beginning 'Partout ...'

To which Byron composed a 'counterpoise':

This modest bard, like many a bard unknown,  
Rhymes on our names, but wisely hides his own;  
But yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse,  
His name would bring more credit than his verse.<sup>146</sup>

By the nineteenth century, visitors not only felt the presence of the shades of Pericles, Pheidias, and the other great men of ancient times, but that of their own famous forebears, especially of Chateaubriand and Byron, increasingly seen as prophets as much as writers.<sup>147</sup> They followed the routes taken by these luminaries just as their predecessors, the topographers, had followed the routes taken by Pausanias.<sup>148</sup> They read their works on the spot. And they re-enacted the customs. We hear, for example, of parties of French visitors arriving at Athens by sea, changing into their best clothes in preparation for catching their first glimpse of the Acropolis as the mist cleared, as Chateaubriand claimed to have done. By such repetitions and rituals, the visitors not only reaffirmed their membership of an exclusive club, but inducted themselves into an imagined community.<sup>149</sup>

In some ways, the arrival of the first book-educated western Europeans in Athens was typical of encounters that were occurring at many places near the sea elsewhere in the world. As in Asia, Africa, or the Americas, many were expeditions commissioned and financed by governments or societies with agendas that went beyond intellectual curiosity, on the lookout, for example, for raw materials, timber, minerals, local produce, and useful medicinal plants that could be traded for western manufactures. Some were disappointed to find that there had been commercial and other contacts for centuries, and that it was only in their ways of seeing that they were pioneers. In 1675, Francis Vernon noticed that the voivode wore fine stockings made by the London firm of Shakespeare and that the Venetian consul too had 'satin Shakespeare's waistcoats.'<sup>150</sup>

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146 Williams, *Travels*, i, 290.

147 For example, 'The dreams of Chateaubriand have been realised'. Marcellus, ii, 338.

148 For example, Reynaud 33. Giraudeau 264 noted Byron and Chateaubriand among the many names he saw at Sounion in 1833.

149 For example, Chateaubriand, Byron, Renan, Leconte, De Lisle 'faisaient une rumeur de foule dans les parties subconscientes de mon être'. Barrès, 44.

150 Vernon journal, unpublished. The firm of Shakespeare is recorded as supplying the luxury fabrics that were traded for slaves from forts along west Africa at this time.

But whereas such encounters elsewhere in the world were with places and peoples that were all strange and in different ways, Athens was different. The vast Ottoman Empire was one of the most exotic, puzzling, and mysterious societies, or rather sets of societies, western Europeans had ever encountered, with customs, attitudes, and systems of thought and government deeply at variance with the traditions within which they themselves had been brought up. But, paradoxically, to many of the visitors, Athens was already familiar. The air of Athens was as clear as it had been in ancient times when it had been described and celebrated by ancient authors. Mariners were amazed at how clearly they could see 'the smallest cordage' of other ships even by moonlight.<sup>151</sup> As Alessandro Bisani noted in 1788, he was enveloped in, and enchanted by, the same air as had been breathed by Demosthenes, Pericles, and Socrates.<sup>152</sup> At some times of year, the scents from the wild flowers and herbs that grew in profusion on the surrounding mountains, especially thyme, were carried across the Attic plain, and out to mariners on the nearby seas.<sup>153</sup> To the classically educated visitors from the west, the aura of association with the ancient world was an immediate, palpable bodily experience.<sup>154</sup>

Even those travellers whose education was confined to the classics of their own languages felt that they had already been here. As Milton, who never saw Athens, described it in *Paradise Lost*:

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See William St Clair, *The Grand Slave Emporium: Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade* (London: Profile Books, 2006).

151 Schroeder, Francis, Secretary to the Commodore Commanding the United States Squadron in that Sea, 1843–1845, *Shores of the Mediterranean, with sketches of Travel* (New York: Harper, 1846), i, 95.

152 Bisani, 59.

153 Among many examples 'perfumed air from Hymettus', Jolliffe, T.R., *Narrative of an Excursion from Corfu to Smyrna* (London: Black, Young, and Black, 1827), 142. 'fragrant with odours' Cuthbertson, Rev. James, *Sacred and Historic lands: Being a record of travels in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Greece, Constantinople, &c.* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1885), 200. For the thyme Napier, Lt. Colonel E., *Excursions along the Shores of the Mediterranean* (London: Colburn, 1842), ii, 372.

154 A point made explicitly, for example, by, for example, Linton, William, *Corresponding Member of the Archaeological Society of Athens, Author of "Ancient and Modern Colours" &c., Scenery of Greece and its Islands, Illustrated by Fifty Views, Sketched from Nature, Executed on steel, and described en route, with map of the Country* (London: published privately by the artist, 1856), vi, referring to other authors, including St. John, J. Augustus, *The History of the Manners and Customs of Ancient Greece* (London: Bentley, 1842).

Where on the Aegean shore a city stands,  
 Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil--  
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts  
 And Eloquence, native to famous wits  
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,  
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.  
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,  
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird  
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;  
 There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound  
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites  
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rowls  
 His whispering stream.<sup>155</sup>

At Colonos, where Sophocles, in one of his most famous plays, had set the arrival in Athens of the blind Oedipus accompanied by Antigone, the nightingales still sang.<sup>156</sup> In the surrounding and enclosing mountains, wild boars, lynxes, and chamois were still hunted for their meat and their pelts. On the road to Marathon, the descendants of the wolves that Pausanias had heard still howled.<sup>157</sup> One was seen from the beach by Byron and Hobhouse on their visit in 1810.<sup>158</sup> Meeting a venomous snake on a mountain path could still cause a whole cavalcade to halt.<sup>159</sup>

The bee-eater, celebrated in ancient literature, still arrived at the end of summer to feed on the famous bees of Hymettos that still produced the famous honey from the famous thyme.<sup>160</sup> As Christopher Wordsworth, the poet's nephew, wrote of the Athenian bees in one of

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155 Quoted by, for example Williams, *Travels*, ii, 288; Anderson, James, 30; Linton, *Preface*, and Marjoribanks, Thomas S., *Travel Sketches, Letters from Egypt, Greece, and Southern Italy* (Haddington: Printed by D. and J. Croal, 1902), 26.

156 Suksi, Aara, 'Nightingales in Sophocles', in *Mnemosyne*, vol. 54, no. 6, 2001, 646–58, 13. The role of the Hill of Colonos in the ancient cityscape and storyscape is discussed in Chapter 22. The role of the story told in the play in the discursive environment and public debate in classical Athens is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

157 Wilson, 189; Sibthorp 73: Joy, i, 106.

158 Hobhouse MS diary 24 January 1810. They knew the story from Pausanias.

159 For example, Scollard, Clinton, *On sunny shores, with illustrations by Margaret Landers Randolph* (New York: Webster 1893), 184. On Pentelikon: 'a snake contested the right of way with us, and caused a temporary stoppage of our cavalcade. Paulos seized the muleteer's staff and speedily put his serpentship to rout'.

160 Almost everyone who visited or wrote about Greece from antiquity to the present day mentioned the honey of Hymettus. Chateaubriand is one of the few to have disliked it.

the most influential books on Greece of the nineteenth century: 'Their race remains immortal, ever stands, Their house unmoved, and sires of sires are born.'<sup>161</sup> Whatever the opinions of visitors about the genetic ancestry of the people they encountered, few doubted that they were the lineal descendants of the ancient.<sup>162</sup>

Byron, who lived in Athens in spells during 1809, 1810 and 1811, picked up the sense of instant recognition of the ancient environment surviving unchanged, refraining on the two English words, 'yet' and 'still':

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild;  
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,  
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,  
And still his honied wealth Hymettus yields;  
There the blythe bee his fragrant fortress builds,  
The free-born tenant of thy mountain-air;  
Apollo still thy long, long, summer gilds,  
Still in his beam Mendéli's marbles glare;  
Art, glory, freedom fail, but nature still is fair.<sup>163</sup>

Even the food was the same. As Byron recalled of his happy months in Athens:

The simple olives, best allies of wine,  
Must I pass over in my bill of fare?  
I must, although a favourite *plat* of mine  
In Spain, and Lucca, Athens, every where:  
On them and bread 't was oft my luck to dine,  
The grass my table-cloth, in open-air,  
On Sunium or Hymettus, like Diogenes,  
Of whom half my philosophy the progeny is.

161 Quoted by Wordsworth, *Greece*, 172. No source given, nor have I been able to trace it. The book was a favourite for prizes given to boys at British 'public' schools.

162 A point also considered explicitly by, for example, Dorr, Benjamin, 359.

163 *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto ii, 89. Some writers, e.g. Tweddell, 277, amended 'Mendeli' to the more familiar 'Pendeli', an example of the pull of the ancient language on the modern. For a more prosaic example, Biddle, 1, declares that the sod, the air, and the hills are still the same. Although, when comparing their own time with what the visitors knew or surmised about ancient times, 'Nature' appeared to have been constant, an observation built into the explanations offered by visitors, as discussed in Chapter 8; the landscape had been changed drastically in the classical period and before as discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

The local micro-climate in Athens had apparently remained much the same for hundreds of years, indeed it appeared to have been unchanged since ancient times, when its unusual characteristics had been celebrated by the authors of the classical era.<sup>164</sup> The rainfall measurements taken by Consul Fauvel in 1812 and 1813 appeared to confirm that the local seasons followed a precise, regular, and predictable pattern.<sup>165</sup> In 1913, when Athens was still largely free of air pollution and scientists had access to daily records kept for half a century, the apparent constancy could still be experienced. It was then reckoned that on only about forty days in the year was there no sun, on only about a dozen days was the sky completely overcast. Rainfall was light, at only about sixteen inches a year, but much of that fell in terrifying thunderstorms, marked by dramatic bolts of lightning, for which there was no adequate explanation, but many theories, including some that saw them as interventions by, or messages from, supernatural powers.<sup>166</sup> For most of the year, except in the early morning when there was some cloud that soon dispersed, the clarity of the air made the horizons of the mountains appear like sharp, almost architectural, lines.<sup>167</sup> To visitors from the west with knowledge of the visual arts of their own times, this was a landscape of sculpture rather than of painting, of stark lines that reproduced well in engravings as well of rapidly changing colours.<sup>168</sup> Questions about the extent to which the people were different were open to be disentangled and debated, but the climate, the weather, the air, the changing colours, the flora and fauna, the natural landscape, the seascape, the skyscape, the soundscape, even the smellscape and the tastescape, were evidently little changed.

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164 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

165 Holland, Henry, *Travels in the Ionian Islands, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia, &c. During the Years 1812 and 1813* (London: Longman, 1815), 411.

166 The statistics were noted by Weller, Charles Heald, *Athens and its Monuments* (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 20.

167 A point made explicitly by, for example, D'Ideville, 200.

168 Line engraving in black ink on white paper monochrome, the main distance medium until the late nineteenth century will be discussed in Chapter 8. The 'colour window' that enabled distant viewers to experience something of the ancient classical experience before the arrival in the region of air pollution, and how it helps us to understand the strangeness of the classical era, and to keep at bay the omnipresent perils of presentism, is discussed and illustrated in my companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

The clean dry air had preserved the marble surfaces of the ancient buildings to an astonishing extent, with the carved edges as sharp and crisp as they had evidently been in ancient times, as was noticed by Stuart and Revett in the 1750s when they examined the soon-to-be demolished classical era Ionic temple on the Illysos.<sup>169</sup> As they wrote: 'It should be observed, that most of the ancient Structures in Athens, of which there are any Remains, were entirely built of an excellent white Marble, on which the Weather has very little Effect; whatever Part therefore of these Antiquities, has not been impaired by Violence, is by no means in that mouldering State of Decay, to which the dissolvent Quality of the Air, reduces the ordinary Buildings of common Stone: from which Cause it is, that, notwithstanding great Part of this Temple has long since been thrown down, and destroyed, whatever remains of it is still in good Preservation.'<sup>170</sup> The exactitude and resultant durability was noted by Charles Robert Cockerell, one of the few on-the-spot observers who understood that the effect on the viewer was among the primary considerations of those who had commissioned and built the classical Parthenon. Modern architects, he wrote in 1855, as one who had by then successfully practised as an architect responsible for designing and building monumental buildings in the neo-Hellenic style before the advent of electric power and heavy machinery, only very rarely employed a stone weighing more than two or three tons. By contrast, the ancient builders had frequently used marble blocks weighing five to one hundred tons, and at Athens they had placed them so precisely 'that a pin could hardly be introduced into the joints.'<sup>171</sup> In May 1814, when a party of the western

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169 As shown in Figure 2.13.

170 Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, ii, 2. 'perfection of masonry ... horizontal joints so close that after a lapse of 2000 years you cannot introduce the finest edge, or even follow them everywhere by the eye'. Woods, Joseph, F.A.S. F.L.G. F.G.S., and Corresponding Fellow of the Society of Georgofili at Florence, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, 241.

171 Letter from Cockerell to Hobhouse dated 17 May 1855, printed in Hobhouse, *Journey*, 1855 edition, ii, pp. 449–556, recalling their on-the spot explorations in 1809 before the Revolution. As with the Cyclopean architecture, parts of which the classical builders had apparently been careful to preserve, they conveyed to him ideas of the sublime 'by the association of superhuman power and by the promise of perennial duration.' Many others made the same observation over the following two centuries and later. For example, 'blocks ... so beautifully fitted together that at the distance of two thousand years you very often cannot find the joints, except where the marble is chipped'. Hughes, Thomas, Q.C., ('Vacuus Viator') Author of 'Tom Brown's

community in Athens, including Cockerell, examined pieces on the ground, including those thrown from the building by Elgin's agents and were 'lost in admiration' at the 'incredible precision' with which the columns of the Parthenon had been constructed, they concluded from their specialist knowledge, that 'the marble was first reduced to its proper shape with the chisel after which the two pieces were rubbed one upon the other, and sand and water thrown into the centre of friction' so that, even at ground level, the joins presented 'a mark no thicker than a thread.'<sup>172</sup> Even those who loathed what they called the 'idolatry' of the marble images displayed on the Parthenon admitted that 'many of the carvings appear as if they were but a few years old.'<sup>173</sup> William J. Hamilton, a geologist much interested in the properties of different types of stone, who saw the joins in October 1835, just two and a half years after the last units of the Ottoman army left, eight since the Acropolis had been subjected to months of bombardment by mortars and artillery, was also amazed to see the precision of the joins ('as highly finished as the most elaborately worked ornament or figure') even in places where they were out of sight. This degree of care, he suggested, was needed 'to ensure an equal pressure on all points of the stone, that the enormous weight above might not cause the edges to exfoliate; an accident to which ancient buildings were particularly exposed, in consequence of the stones not being bedded in cement.'<sup>174</sup>

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Schooldays', *Vacation Rambles* (London: Macmillan, 1895), 58. The implications of these observations for helping to understand why the ancient Athenian authorities decided to build the Parthenon and other monuments in the form that they did are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

172 Hanson, John Oliver, 'Private Journal of a Voyage from Smyrna to Venice', edited by Anghelou, Alkis, *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 1 January 1971, vol. 66, 22. As another example, of the Parthenon, 'struck at the immense size of the blocks, and at the fine preservation of the marble, which appears to be nearly in the same state as when first hewn'. Of the Ionic columns of the Athena Polias, 'of so astonishing a delicacy, that it seems incredible marble could be so finely sculptured'. Laurent, Peter Edmund, *Recollections of a Classical Tour through Various Parts of Greece, Turkey, and Italy, made in the years 1818 and 1819* (London: Whitaker, second edition, 1822), i, 203 and 204.

173 Grellet, *Memoirs of the life and gospel labours of Stephen Grellet*, edited by Benjamin Seebohm, volume 2 (London: Bennett, 1861), 19. He was there in 1819. The renewal of this discourse among western Christians after the Revolution is discussed in Chapter 22.

174 Hamilton, William J., Secretary to the Geological Society, *Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus, and Armenia, with some account of their Antiquities and Geology* (London:



Hamilton had foreseen the danger of the whole remaining structure collapsing, as came within a week or two of happening following a series of earthquakes in the later nineteenth century.<sup>175</sup> His observation helps us to understand the question of why the building had been over-engineered by the designers and builders of the classical era.<sup>176</sup> Especially when put alongside the explanation offered by William Martin Leake, a British artillery officer whose expertise was in knocking buildings down: '[T]he total annihilation of massy buildings constructed of stone, is a work of great difficulty.'<sup>177</sup>

Although only a few traces of ancient paint were still visible, the surface of the marble itself was unchanged except in colour. As John Oliver Hanson, who visited Athens in March 1814, wrote in his journal: 'In our [British] climate, in an atmosphere overcharged with smoke and rain, stone of the purest white soon turns black or of a greenish tone. The serene sky and the brilliant sun of Greece merely communicate to the marble of Paros and Pentelicus a golden tint resembling that of ripe corn or the autumnal foliage.'<sup>178</sup>

One of the most conspicuous examples of a heavy stone that still remained in place was the lintel over the Propylaea, which was pictured by Edward Dodwell around 1805, as shown in Figure 4.11.

Cockerell and other visiting modern architects were astonished at the feats of the ancient quarrymen, architects, and engineers who had evidently devoted great efforts to finding the seams from which such large flawless blocks could be extracted, cut, transported, carved, and lifted into place. By the time of Pausanias's visit, when the classical-era buildings were still in much the same architectural state as when they had first been erected, the decoration and size still caused astonishment, but the reasons why the Propylaea had been so constructed had been forgotten even by the temple staff available to answer his questions.<sup>179</sup>

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Murray, 1842), i, 39.

175 As discussed in Chapter 22.

176 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

177 Leake, *Topography of Athens*, second edition, 12. Leake was among the topographers who were most learned in the ancient authors as well as in the contemporary situation in Greek lands.

178 *Ibid.*, 17. Hanson's remarks are likely have included the results of conversations with the foreign community in Athens that when he was there, that included Cockerell and about a dozen others.

179 Paus. 1.22.4 τὰ δὲ προπύλαια λίθου λευκοῦ τὴν ὀροφὴν ἔχει καὶ κόσμῳ καὶ μεγέθει τῶν λίθων μέχρι γὰρ καὶ ἐμοῦ προεῖχε. The role of the staff, who were

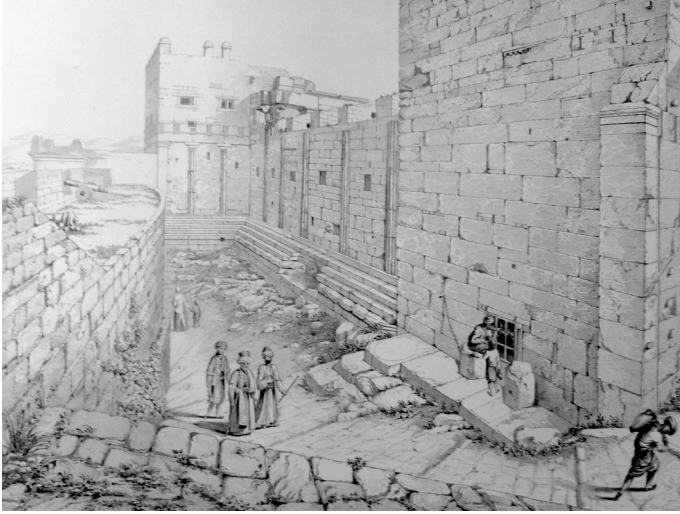


Figure 4.11. 'West front of the Great Gate of the Propylaea at Athens'. Lithograph from a drawing by Edward Dodwell made c.1805.<sup>180</sup>

The same clear and dry air that had preserved the marble also permitted extraordinarily long sightlines, to the extent that the columns of the Parthenon could be seen from long distances in several directions, although not from close up except from the west. At night, too, the sky over the Acropolis was normally unusually clear, and the ever-changing moon, the planets, and the rotating constellations of stars offered

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knowledgeable even about memorials that were no longer there, is mentioned in the immediately preceding passage. My suggestion for the possible reasons, based on the discursive environment of the classical era, is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

180 Dodwell, Edward, *Views and Descriptions of Cyclopean, or Pelasgic Remains, in Greece and Italy, with Constructions of a Later Period, Intended as a Supplement to his Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece during the Years 1801, 1805 and 1806* (London: Rodwell and Martin, 1834), Plate 70. 'The lintel over the middle gate is one of the largest masses of marble I have seen, being twenty-two feet and a half in length, four feet in thickness, and three feet three inches in breadth. It must accordingly weigh at least twenty-two tons.' Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, 319. Measurements of length are given in Dinsmoor, William B. and Dinsmoor, William B. Jr, *The Propylaea to the Athenian Akropolis* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1980 and 2004), *passim*. In Dodwell's time the lintel may already have cracked, as it was when it was first formally surveyed, but despite its having apparently received no maintenance or repairs for hundreds of years, it was still in place and performing adequately.

a mobile tapestry of ancient mythology.<sup>181</sup> On some nights, as a later visitor witnessed, it was possible, using a mirror, to see the moons of Jupiter with the naked eye, an experience thought until recently to be impossible anywhere in the world.<sup>182</sup> What they saw, the visitors from the west could be confident, was the same nightscape that ancient Hellenic astronomers and mathematicians had come to understand, to the extent that they were able to predict its changes, including eclipses, in proto-scientific terms.<sup>183</sup> The relevance of these eighteenth-century observations to answering the question of why the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Acropolis were designed and built in the form that they took is discussed later.<sup>184</sup>

To an extent that was at least as great as even visitors of the present day, the westerners felt, from the time of their first encounters, that they had been here before. To be physically present in Athens was to make actual an experience that they had been taught about, had read about, had internalized, and had taken into their imaginations and their memories from childhood. When Virginia Woolf wrote in 1932 ‘my own ghost met me, the girl of twenty-three with all her life to come’, she was following a tradition that went back to the earliest days of the Encounter.<sup>185</sup> That sense of childhood re-emerging unbidden from the unconscious mind to the conscious body was caught by young Compton Mackenzie, in tears at glimpsing Sounion from a ship at the sea in 1915 during the First World War, who felt that ‘all my youth was in my eyes.’<sup>186</sup> Or as Sir George Wheler remarked when he arrived in 1675: ‘I may without Vanity say, I went to school in Athens.’<sup>187</sup>

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181 Noted, for example, by Rawlinson, George, *Selections from my Journal during a Residence in the Mediterranean* (London: privately printed, 1836), 80.

182 *Photograms of an Eastern Tour. ... By Σ. With original illustrations* (London: [Bungay printed], 1859), 143. The unidentified author, a socially well-connected visitor from Ireland, who had already been in Greece twenty years before, made his observation in Athens in January 1858. For other well-attested reports of naked-eye observations of the moons of Jupiter, including in Siberia, where the atmosphere was also clear, see Dutton, Denis, ‘Naked-Eye Observations of Jupiter’s Moons’, in *Sky and Telescope*, December, 1976, 482–84. [http://www.denisdutton.com/jupiter\\_moons.htm](http://www.denisdutton.com/jupiter_moons.htm)

183 Discussed in Chapter 24.

184 In *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

185 Diary of Virginia Woolf, 21 April 1932 quoted by Connolly, *Parthenon Enigma*, 329.

186 Mackenzie, *Gallipoli Memories*, 400.

187 Wheler, *Journey*, 353.

For the visitors, every feature of the landscape had a familiar name. And each held a story, often a succession of stories, from mythic to historic ancient times, as Dodwell had observed. The stories that the visitors heard told by the mute landscape and ancient stones of Athens were all from ancient times. Only a few looked for the grove where Shakespeare had set *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, whose story he had adapted from the ancient author, Lucian of Samosata.<sup>188</sup>

### Providentialism and the Ancient Monuments of Athens

Until the later eighteenth century, the people who lived in Athens played almost no part in these research projects except to welcome and assist the visitors. Identifying themselves primarily as Orthodox Christians, they were largely indifferent to the ruins of ancient buildings that survived in Athens, and knew almost nothing about what they had been used for in ancient times.<sup>189</sup> There was, however, one puzzle that confronted those who took a long view. In most of the lands that bordered the eastern Mediterranean, the physical remains of Greco-Roman antiquity were plentiful. Ancient temples, some in ruins, some adapted to later purposes, were standing reminders of the civilizations of the former Roman Empire and also of the sharp disjuncture with those of its theocratic successors, Christian, Muslim and others. In mainland Greece, by contrast, in Corinth, Argos, Olympia, and Delphi, the heartlands of the ancient Hellenism that even the conquering Romans had regarded as part of their own artistic and literary culture, there was little to be seen. Although almost every village had something ancient above ground and workers in the fields sometimes uncovered and destroyed broken statues, the huge pan-Hellenic sites of Olympia, Delphi, and Epidaurus that now enable modern visitors to imagine ancient life had to wait until the later nineteenth century for their buildings, statues, theatres, and stadia to be uncovered and, in many cases, partially rebuilt.

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188 For example, de Moüy, Cte Charles de, Ambassadeur de France à Rome, *Lettres Athéniennes* (Paris: Plon, 1887), 285. 'Timons's Tower' appears in at least one of the maps prepared at the time of the Venetian-led invasion of 1687.

189 To be discussed in Chapter 7.

In the landscape of Ottoman Greece, Athens was a conspicuous exception. Joseph Woods, the main purpose of whose visit in 1818 was to study the remains of ancient Greek architecture, was disappointed at how little was to be seen. As he wrote when he reached Athens after having found nothing in the Ionian Islands or in western Greece: 'At Patras they shew a single Corinthian capital of indifferent workmanship; and in the road thence to Corinth, there is nothing to be met with but one or two insignificant scraps of wall.'<sup>190</sup> Why had so many monuments survived in Athens when so little could be seen in the other cities which, the works of ancient authors showed, had once been equally rich in monuments? To some from the west contemplating the puzzle at a time when the Enlightenment project of developing a philosophical theory of history still looked feasible, the only explanation they could offer involved notions of Divine Providence. To J.B.S. Bartholdy, for example, a well-informed German proto-anthropologist whose aim was to follow up current theories by observation on the ground, Athens may have been watched over by a 'mysterious providence.' And anticipating thoughts and explanations that were to occur to the puzzled visitors in the post-Revolution years, the artist Hugh William 'Grecian' Williams, suggested his own artistic version of providentialism: 'The Temple of Minerva [an alternative name for the Parthenon] was spared as a beacon to the world, to direct it to the knowledge of purity of taste.'<sup>191</sup>

Did the unexplained survival of the monuments of Athens imply that the Christian God was changing his all-seeing mind? Was He morphing into a neo-Hellene as many of his Orthodox adherents did during the eighteenth century? In retrospect, the Revolution's own wish to return to the glories of the ancient past was often presented as predestined, implying that God had become a nationalist. To providentialists, such questions were to arise even more starkly just twenty years later when, to almost universal astonishment, the monuments of Athens turned out to have again escaped destruction.

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190 Woods, Joseph, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, 229. 'After we left Venice, the first place in Greece, where we found any remains of ancient buildings worth our notice, was at Corinth'. Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, iii, 41.

191 Williams, *Travels*, ii, 323. Examples of a resort to the same providentialism to explain the unexpected survival of the monuments after the Revolution are given in Chapter 16.

In Europe, in both the eastern and western Christian traditions, the notion that the hand of their god intervened in the human world to push it along in a particular direction had mostly been employed in narratives of the triumph of Christianity over the ways of thinking that the Christians lumped together as 'superstition' or 'paganism.' Any events that contradicted the overarching providentialist narrative, as developed by Augustine of Hippo, by his pupil and collaborator Orosius, and by many others, had had to be squeezed in, and their implications faced, while avoiding, although with incomplete success, the circularity implicit in the whole notion. Among almost all living parties who participated in the Greek Revolution, providentialism was not just a figure of speech or a matter only of theological interest: on the contrary, it was the proposition that, since events showed that the Christian god had willed the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium, Orthodox Christians had a duty to obey the sultan. This duty was among the foundations of the millet settlement, whose overthrow was amongst the aims of the Greek Revolutionaries, and why their cause was condemned by the Patriarchate even when the war was almost won.<sup>192</sup>

Already, by the late seventeenth century, Christian providentialism, with its need for explanations for the misery inflicted on men, women, and children as collective punishment, gave rise to discomfort, even among churchmen. To Sir George Wheeler, for example, the survival of the monuments of Athens was less important than the fact that they had been ruined. Acknowledging that his providentialism was no longer universally accepted, Wheeler attributed what he saw as the reduced state of the Athens in his day to 'Divine Providence, for our Sins'.<sup>193</sup>

In modern times, since the development and progress of evidence-led archaeology and a filling out of more reliable knowledge based on contemporary sources of what had occurred in the centuries since the end of antiquity, Athens no longer seems so unique, and explanations that do not depend on providentialism are available. The history of each site was different, as were the patterns of invasion, natural disaster, environmental change, poor governance, and other factors.

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<sup>192</sup> See examples in Appendix 4.

<sup>193</sup> Wheeler, George, *A Journey into Greece, by George Wheeler Esq; In Company of Dr Spon of Lyons* (London: W. Cademan, 1682), 345.

But it is established too that the survival of many of the monuments of Athens had resulted, more than those in most other localities, from specific political decisions, including, in the case of the Parthenon, its construction to a far greater degree of durability than was required to meet its then contemporary purpose.<sup>194</sup> Since the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium and the takeover of the Acropolis in the fifteenth century, those ancient buildings that had been adapted as churches or mosques, including the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, the Theseion, the Tower of the Winds, and the temple on the Illysos, had all benefited from the millet system that gave Ottoman protection to the buildings of the officially recognised religious communities.

The ancient buildings of Athens had survived official Byzantine imperial policies that had destroyed many other such buildings before being changed. In the early centuries of the Christian theocracy which can be said to have begun with the victory of co-emperor Constantine over an imperial rival at the battle of the Milvian Bridge in Rome in 312 CE, the Hellenic cities had been subjected to a slow, step-by-step, top-down, centrally imposed, 'imperial Christianization', as has been recovered from the archaeological record, notably in Corinth.<sup>195</sup>

In this long and, we may guess, contested process, the authorities of the city of Athens, which retained, in name at least, many of the institutions of the classical period, and whose prosperity depended upon the continuation of the famous philosophical schools founded by Plato, Aristotle, and others many hundreds of years before, appear to have stood out against the central government longer than most. The Parthenon and the other buildings were still standing in the fourth century CE. As has recently been noted by Jaqueline P. Sturm, many of the monuments of Athens, including especially the 'Theseion', for which the evidence is particularly full, but also the Parthenon, and the others still standing at that time, had benefitted from a change in imperial policy that permitted the buildings of their defeated opponents to be adapted for Christian use provided certain conditions were adhered to.

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<sup>194</sup> To be discussed in Chapter 24.

<sup>195</sup> Summarised by Maloney, Ashley E., 'Imperial Christianization in Corinth: 300–600 AD', A Senior Honors Thesis, Ohio State University, June 2010, <https://kb.osu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/1811/45737/honors-thesis-final.pdf?sequence=1>

It was enough that ancient 'pagan' rites should no longer be celebrated.<sup>196</sup> This 'minimally invasive' policy of 'gentle transformation', to use Sturm's phrases, also required that only the most visible of the stories in stone presented on the buildings need be mutilated, usually by losing their heads.<sup>197</sup> This was accompanied by a newly devised doctrine, the *Interpretatio Christiana*, which gave theological cover for abandoning the absolute prohibition of visual images as 'idoltrous' that Paul of Tarsus, Augustine of Hippo, Tertullian of Carthage, and many other predecessors had appropriated from the ancient Jewish religion and its sacralized texts.

The change of Byzantine imperial policy saved the leaders in provincial cities such as Athens from having to incur the vast expenditure that knocking down and rebuilding would have involved. It also saved the imperial centre from having to deal with the opposition that they might have provoked had they tried to insist on and impose the older policy. In modern terms, the policy reversal turned the rhetoric of the buildings from active competitors in a continuing intellectual contest for the allegiance of minds into a dead and defeated piece of built heritage.

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196 Sturm, Jaqueline P., 'The Afterlife of the Hephaisteion, The *Interpretatio Christiana* of an Ancient Athenian Monument', in *Hesperia*, vol. 85, no. 4, October-December 2016, 795-825. Local attitudes are also discussed by Bazzechi, Elisa, 'Athenian Identity in Late Antiquity: An Investigation of the Urban Elite and their Connection with the Monumental Aspect of the City', in L. Bombardieri-A., D'Agostino-G., Guarducci-V., Orsi-S., Valentini (Hrsg.), *SOMA 2012, Identity and Connectivity. Proceedings of the 16th Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology, Florence, Italy 1-3 March 2012, BAR International Series 2581* (Oxford, 2013), 467-74. Sturm quotes from *The Theodosian code and novels*; and, *The Sirmondian Constitutions / a translation with commentary, glossary, and bibliography by Clyde Pharr in collaboration with Theresa Sherrer Davidson and Mary Brown Pharr; with an introduction by C. Dickerman Williams* (Union NJ: Lawbook, 2001). For the Latin text see *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes / consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae ediderunt Th. Mommsen et Paulus M. Meyer* (Berlin: Apud Weidmannos, 1905).

197 The mutilation of the central slab of the Parthenon frieze, and how an understanding of the aims and practices of Christian mutilation of images can contribute to recovering what had been presented before the mutilation is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



## 5. Communities, Real and Imagined

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Besides the two main warring parties in the Greek Revolution, there were other communities, real and imagined, that participated in the struggle; either directly by, for example, supplying arms, or indirectly by helping to construct and maintain the stories of imagined pasts and aspired-to futures that real communities inherited, built on, emphasized, curated, and probably needed if they were to maintain the assent of their members.

The Ottoman authorities, we can be confident, could understand why many of the ‘Romans’ [Ρωμαίοι], as the Orthodox inhabitants of the former Empire of the ‘New Rome’ of Byzantium called themselves, might want to resort to violence to discontinue their allegiance to the Ottoman sultan, as some had done without success as recently as 1770. They could understand too that the Orthodox Christian community liked to celebrate Constantine’s victory at the battle of the Milvian Bridge. Their own capital city was still called Constantinople in the main languages, and even their own Turkish vernacular name, Istanbul, preserved its Greek and Christian root.

But, as they translated the first proclamations of the Greek Revolutionaries of 1821, they may have been puzzled. Who were these ‘Hellenes’ (Turkish ‘Yunanlar’) who demanded ‘liberty’? Why were the battles of Marathon and Thermopylae relevant to the present crisis? In 1821, the year of the outbreak, the Ottoman Government established a translation office as part of a long-standing ambition to join the European system of international diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> The Ottomans had plentiful practice in identifying rebel leaders and dealing with them in accordance with

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1 Alloul, Houssine and Martykánová Darina, ‘Introduction: Charting New Ground in the Study of Ottoman Foreign Relations’ *International History Review*, 2021, 3. How the British Ambassador, Stratford Canning, was able to dangle the possibility

their own laws and customs, but who were these new-comers, or rather these resurrected old-comers, General Epaminondas and General Thrasybulus? How could they and their invisible armies be brought to battle and defeated?<sup>2</sup>

As Hakan Y. Erdem has explained, in official Ottoman eyes, anyone who attempted to revolt against the millet settlement had abrogated the pact founded in religious law ('dhimma/zimmet') that regulated the relationships between the communities of the millet and the Ottoman state. Rebels reverted from protected persons ('zimmis') to warring non-Muslims ('harbis') liable to the severest penalties.<sup>3</sup> In theory, if a revolt occurred, the law distinguished between the guilty and the innocent, but mostly in terms of local communities, such as towns, rather than individuals. The numerous killings of unarmed men over the age of fourteen classified as rebels, who fell into the hands of the Ottoman forces, the enslavement of women, girls, and boys, and their sale through the slave markets of Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria, and elsewhere, that occurred during the Greek Revolution, as well as the seizure of property, although referred to in many accounts by Europeans as 'atrocities', 'crimes', 'acts of barbarism' and so on, were not, for the most part, aberrations, or instances of breakdown of law and discipline, but the norms of Ottoman understanding of Islam as interpreted by the religious authorities, 'muftis', of which there had been many precedents in recent centuries. The Grand Mufti, the Ottoman Government's most senior adviser on Muslim law, (sheikh al-Islam), was amongst the most powerful members of the Ottoman court, the only official who, in theory at least, could depose a sultan. In addressing the Grand Mufti, for example, it was customary for the sultan to call him: '... the wisest of all wise men, in all forms of knowledge, most excellent of all excellencies; and who takest care not to do things unlawful: source of truth and of true science; heir of the prophetic and apostolic doctrine; who solvest

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of acceding to that ambition in exchange for saving the Parthenon from being destroyed a focus for neo-Hellenic nationalism, is discussed in Chapter 18.

2 Discussed by Erdem, Y. Hakan, "'Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers": Ottoman responses to the Greek Revolution', in Birtek, Faruk and Thalia Dragonas, eds, *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005). Hakan Erdem found the translation of the 1821 proclamation of Ypsilantes in the Ottoman archives, 78.

3 Erdem, 67.

the problems of faith; who illustrateth its orthodox articles; who art the key of the treasuries of truth; the light of obscure allegories; and who art fortified with grace from the Supreme director and Legislator of mankind.<sup>4</sup> But when, at the outbreak of the Greek Revolution, the then Grand Mufti refused to endorse the putting to death of those suspected of being sympathetic to the Greek Revolution and the rounding up men from among the Orthodox community in Constantinople with family connections in the revolted territories to be sent to work in the dockyards, he was disgraced and replaced with a more biddable cleric.<sup>5</sup> When, following the judicial putting to death of the Orthodox Patriarch and a number of Orthodox bishops, the western ambassadors urged the Ottoman Government to do more to separate the innocent from the guilty, they were told that those put to death had been guilty even if judged in accordance with their own European terms. The Patriarch had been put to death, it was explained, not because he was head of the Orthodox Christians but for conspiring to rebel, just as his predecessor as Patriarch, Parthenius, had been put to death in 1655, a precedent that a search in the files of the French embassy in Constantinople was able to confirm.<sup>6</sup> Letters that they had intercepted, the Ottoman Government said, proved that the Patriarch had been in correspondence with the Revolutionaries but when they offered to show them, to the British Ambassador Lord Strangford, he declined on the grounds that, under the European doctrine of sovereignty, internal security was indeed a matter for individual governments, and he was duty-bound not to interfere.<sup>7</sup>

The Greek Revolution can, therefore, be conceptualized, although not of course exclusively so, as a moment when two main geo-political

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4 Habesci, Elias, *The present state of the Ottoman empire,; containing a more accurate and interesting account...of the Turks than any yet extant. Including a particular description of the court and seraglio of the Grand Signor...translated from the French manuscript of Elias Habesci, many years resident in Constantinople, in the service of the Grand Signor* (London: Baldwin, 1784), 111, translated from an actual document.

5 'It is said that the disgrace of the Mufti originated in his refusal (supported by the Koran) to authorise the sanguinary proscription of the Greek Rayahs resident in Constantinople'. Ambassador Strangford to British Foreign Secretary 31 March 1821, Kew FO 78/98, 56.

6 Kew FO 78/100.

7 Strangford to Foreign Secretary, June 1821, Kew FO 78/99 22. The interception of letters, a feature of the war, is discussed in Chapter 6. The intercepted letters that helped to save the Parthenon are discussed in Chapter 17.

concepts met. On one side was the status quo, identity being essentially one of religious affiliation, given institutional form in the Ottoman millet system. On the other side was the arriving notion of 'nation', as it had been institutionalised in the western European 'Westphalian' model, named after the series of treaties concluded in 1648 that had begun to wind down the religious wars and population cleansings that had occurred over the previous two centuries, but that stuttered on intermittently in many places until much later and whose traces are still observable, and by some still celebrated, today.

At the time of the Greek Revolution, among the Greek-speaking Orthodox, there were pro-Ottomanists as well as pro-nationalists, and although in the historiography after the Revolution, those who found themselves on the losing side of the national history tended later to be treated as traitors, at the time of the Revolution they had reasonable grounds for fearing for themselves and for their families and for expecting that the Ottoman state would win. If we conceptualize the Revolution as a moving of geo-political plates from a religious to a nationalist identity, it is striking how consistently the Orthodox patriarchy urged its memberships to return to their obedience, even when the success of the Revolution was assured.<sup>8</sup> And such divisions of opinion were to be the norm later in the nineteenth century amongst other ethnic and religious constituencies in the Ottoman territories as the geo-political plates continued their apparently inexorable grind towards the north and the east.<sup>9</sup>

In deciding to send armies and navies to put down the Greek Revolutionaries by force, the Ottoman Government was following the same policy, within the same legal, religious, and customary framework as they had successfully deployed in 1715 when their army re-conquered the Morea (Peloponnese). The Venetians had held the territory since the 1680s as a result of the campaign in which the European army they led had bombarded the Acropolis of Athens and done great damage to the Parthenon.<sup>10</sup> The written ultimatum dated 28 June 1715 addressed

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8 A selection of primary documents which illustrate this, often neglected, presence in the Revolution, is transcribed in English translation as Appendix E.

9 A point made explicitly by, for example, Caglar Keydar in his introductory chapter to Birtek, Faruk and Thalia Dragonas, editors, *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005), 3.

10 Discussed in Chapter 7.

by the grand vizier to the Venetian commander of the Acropolis of Corinth, with his seal, officially translated into French verbatim and in full, has been printed, as has the letter of rejection by Minetto, the Venetian commander. In the letter the grand vizier claims that the Ottoman sultan, 'the most powerful emperor in the universe and the most eminent of monarchs in the world', has ancient rights, and unless the place is surrendered, then he 'with the assistance of God, will kill all the men and enslave the women.'<sup>11</sup>

In 1785 was still to be seen outside the voivode's palace at Tripolitza in the Peloponnese the remains of a carefully constructed pyramid of one thousand five hundred skulls set up six years before so as to face the palace gate. The men, who had mostly not been killed in battle, had been decapitated by the Ottoman authorities after the putting down of the uprising named after the Russian admiral Orloff who had failed to come to the aid of the Revolutionaries.<sup>12</sup> In retrospect we can see that the Ottoman authorities had, in their own terms, been successful in carrying into the provinces the practices of display and performance that had long been practiced at the imperial court at Constantinople as its main means of demonstrating and projecting its power.<sup>13</sup> Their centuries-old as well as their recent experience help to explain why the Ottoman authorities of 1821 felt confident that their ancient laws and practices, as endorsed by their religious authorities, would continue to be successful, and why the Greek Revolutionaries, as well as those

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11 Brue, Benjamin, *Interprète du roi près la Porte Ottomane, Journal de la Campagne que le Grand Vesir Ali Pacha a faite en 1715 pour la Conquête de la Morée* (Athens: Karavias 1976), 14. Reprinted from the edition published in Paris by Thorin in 1870.

12 D'Ansse de Villoison, *De l'Hellade à la Grèce, Voyage en Grèce et au Levant (1784-1786)* edited by Étienne Famerie (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2006), 78. This work, not known until 2006, is edited from more than five thousand pages of manuscript notes compiled by D'Ansse de Villoison over a long life, including many years spent continuously in libraries and nine years of travels, including some as a member of the travelling academy of the Comte de Choiseul Gouffier discussed below. The author, who had hoped to produce a history of Greece from Homer to [his] present day, adds much that was not previous known as well as providing a warning to overambitious scholars. The skulls were also seen also by Castellan, A. L., *Lettres sur la Morée* (Paris: Nepveu, second edition, 1820), part of a three-volume work, at iii, 226. The 1770 rising, that had been coordinated as part of a Russian-Turkish war, was regarded by Pouqueville, one of the first historians of the Greek Revolution of 1821, as the start of that Revolution.

13 As described in Chapter 6.

who were drawn willy-nilly into the conflict, knew what to expect if the Revolutionary enterprise failed.<sup>14</sup>

Although the bodies of executed criminals and rebels were a common sight in western European countries, the Ottoman punishments gave Europeans a special frisson of horror as examples of what they saw as exotic oriental barbarism. Henry Gally Knight, for example, later a British Member of Parliament who in 1816 served on the Parliamentary Select Committee that recommended the purchase of Lord Elgin's collection of antiquities, wrote of an episode he had witnessed on his travels before the Revolution: 'a massacre takes place in the town where he [the traveller] resides—he sees the victims driven to execution, and their wives led into bondage; these circumstances, however revolting to his feelings as a man, are favourable to his views as a poet.'<sup>15</sup> As was to be repeatedly explained by the Ottoman leadership to western ambassadors during the Greek Revolution, to be put to death according to perceived degree of guilt in accordance with a tariff of degrees of cruelty, including sudden strangulation with a bowstring by a eunuch or a deaf servant surprising the victim from behind, formal decapitation by a sword, impaling, and staking, was the legal punishment for adult males, and being sold as slaves was the punishment for women, girls, and boys.<sup>16</sup> Sometimes, in order to maximize the period of time during which body parts performed their intended deterrent function, the skins of executed men were stuffed with straw.<sup>17</sup> By these elaborate devices that were related more to the status of offenders than to the nature of the crimes, the Ottoman state, which had forbidden itself the use of pictures, attempted to display the actual live performance of its power and not just the fact of its having been exercised, and to prolong the deterrent effect as long as possible. This was achieved by,

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14 The heap of skulls set up by Reschid was a display of what the people of Athens could expect when he marched his army there. The role of the Parthenon in the outcome will be discussed in Chapter 11.

15 Knight, Henry Gally, Esq., *Eastern Sketches in Verse*, 3rd edition (London: Murray, 1830), Preface, vii. Knight's visit was in 1819.

16 Numerous reports in the documents at Kew from 1821 and 1822, including, for example, FO 78/108, 70, Lord Strangford, British Ambassador, to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry (formerly Castlereagh), 25 May 1822.

17 Chishull, Edmund, the late Reverend and Learned, B.D., Chaplain to the Factory of the Worshipful Turkey Company at Smyrna, *Travels in Turkey and back to England* (London: Printed by W. Boyer in the year MDCCLXVII, 1767), 70.

in effect, turning the bodies of the offenders into moving and then static pictures.<sup>18</sup> Knight was not untypical in reporting the effects of the scene on his own emotions, objectifying the unfortunates whose sufferings provided him with his frisson.<sup>19</sup> The western visitors, making minimal concessions to their normal dress, not only observed the landscape but inserted themselves into it. They were the 'Franks', a distinctive and privileged community, with access to the Ottoman imperial authorities in Constantinople through a network of consulates and ambassadors.

As for the third constituency of actors in the conflict, the European powers who were attempting to manage the international system found themselves facing questions that went to the heart of what constituted 'identity', whether collective or individual. As their *de facto* leader, Count Metternich, the foreign minister of the multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic and multi-religious Austrian Empire, asked in a letter to Count Esterhazy, his ambassador in London: 'What do we mean by the Greeks, do we mean a people, a country, or a religion? If either of the first two, where are the dynastic and geographical boundaries? If the third, then upwards of fifty million men are involved.'<sup>20</sup> As Katerina Zacharia has pointed out, Metternich's question can be compared with an ancient Athenian formulation of Hellenic identity that was put into the mouths of an Athenian delegation to Sparta by Herodotus, as their answer to the charge that they were being un-Hellenic in making an alliance with the Persian king. The markers can be roughly translated as 'people of the same blood, with the same language, having common sanctuaries and practices when sacrificing to the gods, and practising the same customs.'<sup>21</sup>

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18 My discussion of how the early Christians, who also denied themselves the use of pictures, used displays of the act of mutilation of the images on the Parthenon to show their triumph over their ideological enemies, incidentally allowing some of the images to survive through the long millennium and enabling our generation to take a more informed of how the classical temple may have appeared in pre-Christian times is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

19 Another example of detachment, Edgar Quinet in 1829, when the misery was in post-Revolutionary Athens, is noted in Chapter 13.

20 Quoted by Livianos, Dimitris, 'The Quest for Hellenism: Religion, Nationalism, and the Quest for Collective Identities in Greece, 1453–1913', in Zacharia, 237–69.

21 Quoted in Greek with English translation by Zacharia, Katerina, 'Herodotus' Four Markers of Greek Identity', in Zacharia, 21–36 from Herodotus 8.144, 1–3. I have altered the translation of 'religion', always a difficult term to apply to ancient Hellas, to bring out that it was more of a sharing of religious localities, pan-Hellenic sites such as Delphi and Olympia, and a similarity in the practises of animal sacrifices and shared feasts than a common belief system. The phrase reads

As a geographical concept, 'Greece' had been invented by the Romans as 'Graecia', an area that was mainly inhabited by speakers of forms of Greek and others who knew the literary language, but that excluded many others who lived in Hellenic cities from Sicily to the Black Sea, as well as in Egypt, Syria, and especially in Ionia in modern western Turkey where cities such as Miletus had been leaders in Hellenic thought and innovation since the time of Homer. The ancient Hellenes had also celebrated their differences, inventing a mythical family that provided a symbolic system of ancestral eponyms, Hellen, from whom all Hellenes were descended, and his son. What did they have in common that distinguished them from non-Hellenes? This question had confronted the designers and the builders of the classical Parthenon, as will be discussed later.<sup>22</sup>

The governments of Britain and France, while claiming to be neutral in the conflict, did not strive to stop the flow of material support and volunteers to the Revolutionaries, although in most cases such activities were illegal under their own laws. The contradiction was hard to explain to the Ottoman authorities without offering a long history lesson in ancient Hellenism, the start of a recovery of interest in the epoch of European humanism and the Renaissance, and its later adoption into modern societies elsewhere. From the beginning it opened the western ambassadors to charges of hypocrisy. And, as was more obvious to the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople, even if the Revolutionaries regarded themselves as Hellenes, the main institution of the Greek-speaking peoples, the Orthodox Church and its patriarchs and higher clergy regarded such ideas as a snare designed by the Devil and his demons to bring down Christianity.

Examples of episodes in the past being selectively appropriated and mythologized as a means of establishing an identity for the present are, it scarcely needs to be repeated, normal components in the constructions of modern 'nations' and how they are rhetorically presented by themselves and by others, both to insiders and outsiders. In the case of Greece, unusually, we can see that a reverse colonization was also occurring. As modern scholars have noted, during the nineteenth century the central

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αὔτις δὲ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐὼν ὁμαιμὸν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον καὶ θεῶν ἰδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἡθεὰ τε ὁμότροπα, τῶν προδότας γενέσθαι Ἀθηναίους οὐκ ἂν εὖ ἔχοι.

22 In *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



unifier of Modern Hellas was Ancient Hellas.<sup>23</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, the philhellenic assumption that the modern inhabitants of Greece shared an identity with the ancients, which had begun in the countries of western Europe, had been successfully transplanted, and like the eucalyptus trees introduced into Greece in the 1860s, had become indigenous.<sup>24</sup>

From the beginning, amongst the classically educated overseas Greeks and populations of Europe, the ancient ruins were central to the iconography of the Revolution as is illustrated by Figure 5.1, a composition of 1821.



Figure 5.1 Frontispiece to *Σάλπισμα πολεμιστήριον* [A Trumpet Call to War], pamphlet by Adamantios Korais. Copper engraving.<sup>25</sup>

The question of how much the Ottoman leaderships knew about ancient Greek history has not yet been deeply researched, nor how far

23 For example, Mouritsen, Henrik, 'Modern nations and ancient models: Italy and Greece compared' in Beaton, Roderick (with David Ricks), *The Making of Modern Greece: Romanticism, Nationalism and the Uses of the Past* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 43–49.

24 Discussed by Hamilakis, Yannis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

25 The quotation appears to be an adaptation of a passage in the *Odyssey* Book 14, lines 339–40: 'ἀλλ' ὅτε γαίης πολλὸν ἀπέπλω ποντοπόρος νηῆς, αὐτίκα δούλιον ἦμαρ ἐμοὶ περιμηχανόωντο' when Odysseus has secretly arrived back in Ithaca after his long absence and many misfortunes and is about to reclaim his inheritance by killing the usurpers.

the Ottoman leaderships had access to the huge literature in European languages that attempted to draw lessons from that past for the then present.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, like the Europeans, some knew antiquity mostly from stock quotations. Ibrahim, for example, the son of Muhammad Ali, the ruler of Egypt, and perhaps the most ruthless of the Ottoman commanders in the Greek Revolution, is recorded as remarking at an abortive meeting aimed at exchanging prisoners, that 'ancient history records them [the Greeks] what they are now, always fighting and at variance among themselves.'<sup>27</sup> This was a comment made by some in the ancient world, repeated by others in subsequent history, and still heard today, that Greeks are a warrior people.<sup>28</sup>

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26 As discussed in Chapter 8.

27 Report by the British naval officer Captain Hamilton, 25 September 1826, in Kew FO 78/141.

28 An example from the guide books given to British soldiers in Greece in the 1940s is given in Chapter 23.

## 6. The Evidence

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Any attempt to understand why the Greek Revolution took the form that it did, and the role played by the Parthenon and the other ancient monuments, involves examining a documentary record that is huge, rich, and varied. We have many official statements of their aims by the main active participants, a huge body of diplomatic correspondence, much of it printed, plus numerous personal reports of how the war was experienced by those who fought, some written by generals and admirals, others by officers, soldiers, and sailors. There are numerous accounts by onlookers, some of whom, in modern terms, would be regarded as war correspondents. We also have occasional reports of the voices of people, such as enslaved women and girls, that seldom featured in the main historiographical traditions that began during the Revolution and that have, in many cases, been followed by others until recent times.<sup>1</sup>

Of the printed accounts by eye-witnesses written in Greek, English, French, German, and Italian, some are immediately contemporaneous and others composed soon after with hindsight. By several orders of magnitude, the majority of such accounts were composed by foreigners who brought their own horizons of expectations to their interpretation of the events they recorded. What is reassuring, as far as reconstructing the course of events is concerned, is that the accounts, although composed independently by people from different backgrounds and from opposing sides, are largely consistent both with one another and with the smaller corpus of testimony used by predecessors. In many cases it is not hard to judge how far the accounts have been imbued, consciously or unconsciously, with the retrospective myth-making on which imagined communities depend and thrive, including notions of providentialism and determinism in their many forms.

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1 Noted occasionally as they occur and in Chapter 14.

Printed records are, inescapably, socially produced within the constraints of the book industries as they existed at the time and within the contexts of particular cultural and political economies, including technology, intellectual property, and the textual controls of censorship and self-censorship. Since they were expected to be encountered by wider constituencies of implied and intended readers than were known to the authors personally, it is useful to think of them as speech acts composed for a particular occasion. Besides the printed records, there is however also a large body of personal records in manuscript, much of it scarcely explored, that both adds to the printed accounts and, in some cases, since we know who were the intended and actual readerships, enables us to understand why the printed records took the form that they did.

Those documents written in Greek, including decrees by the Provisional Government, memoirs, and other papers composed by combatants and politicians, are extensive and are gradually being published online.<sup>2</sup> However, as it happens, only a few bear on the situation in and around Athens over which, for most of the time, the authors had little direct control. Indeed, some of the documents that are most directly relevant to recovering the role of the Parthenon in the conflict are at present only known from transcriptions, translations, and extracts made by others.<sup>3</sup>

As for the other main party to the conflict, around one hundred and fifty million documents produced by the Ottoman Government from its foundation around 1300 until its formal dissolution in 1920 are known to have survived, of which Esin Yurusev, in a book published in 2004, estimated that about twenty per cent had at that time been classified

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- 2 Notably 'The Greek Revolution of 1821: Digital Archive. Greek archives relating to the Revolution of 1821.' A database of documents, including those of the Greek Government and provisional governments before independence, with more planned, is in progress. They are summarised by Beaton, Roderick, *Byron's War, Romantic Rebellion, Greek Revolution* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), pp. 318–29. [https://www.act4greece.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/1821\\_act4greece\\_EN-PDF-1.pdf](https://www.act4greece.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/1821_act4greece_EN-PDF-1.pdf)
  - 3 They are noted as they occur. Among the most notable are some of those transcribed by [Jourdain] *Mémoires historiques et Militaires sur Les Evénements de la Grèce, depuis 1822, jusqu'au Combat de Navarin; par Jourdain, Capitaine de frégate de la Marine Royale, Colonel au Service du Gouvernement Grec* (Paris: Brissot-Thivars, 1828), cited as they occur.

analytically.<sup>4</sup> Writing in a book published in 2005, Caglar Keydar estimated that of 50,000 catalogue entries under just one classification: ‘imperial decrees’, in western terms often loosely referred to as firmans, around ten per cent relate to the Greek Revolution.<sup>5</sup> Among other documents known to exist but that have scarcely been noticed except in the pioneering work of Şükrü H. İlicak, are the almost daily reports of the grand vizier to the sultan, the minutes of the Imperial Council, numerous manuscript comments by the sultan, and decrees sent to provincial governors almost every day.<sup>6</sup> Until the evidence of these documents is brought to bear, histories of the Greek Revolution are bound to remain incomplete and liable to be superseded. However, as far as the role of the Parthenon is concerned, although more documents are likely to be found, including the texts of some of the numerous firmans summarized in Appendix A and elsewhere, enough is already available to enable the history of the building to be recovered to such a high degree of coverage, chronology, and detail that its contribution to the Revolution is unlikely to be superseded except at the margin.

As for the role of the foreign powers, multi-volume edited collections of official documents that reported the international negotiations surrounding the establishing of the Greek state were printed long ago.<sup>7</sup>

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4 Yurusev, Esin, ‘Studying Ottoman Diplomacy: A Review of the Sources’, in Yurdusev, A. Nuri, editor, *Ottoman Diplomacy, Conventional or Unconventional?* (London: Palgrave, 2004), 169.

5 In his introductory chapter to Birtek, Faruk and Thalia Dragonas, editors, *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005), 3.

6 İlicak, H. Şükrü, *A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence 1821–1826*, PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 14 September 2011, 9 and 21.

7 Notably British Foreign Office, *Papers relative to the affairs of Greece, 1826–1832* (London: Harrison, 1835); Ubcini, *La question d’orient devant l’Europe: documents officiels manifestes, notes, firmans, circulaires, etc., depuis l’origine du différend / annotés et précédés d’une exposition de la Question des Lieux-Saints par M.A. Ubcini* (second edition Paris: Dentu, 1854); Driault and Lhéritier, *Histoire diplomatique de la Grèce de 1821 à nos jours* edited by J. E. Driault and Michel Lhéritier. With bibliographies (Paris: 1925–1926) and Prokesch-Osten, Anton, Graf von, *Geschichte des Abfalls der Griechen: vom türkischen Reiche im Jahre 1821 und der Gründung des hellenischen Königreiches aus diplomatischem Standpunkte* (Vienna: Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1867). Strupp, Charles, *La Situation Internationale De La Grèce (1821–1917): Recueil De Documents Choisis Et Édités Avec Une Introduction Historique Et Dogmatique* (Zurich: Die Verbindung, 1918). One hundred and forty-one official papers, mainly British, but including some Austrian and French, were published by Fleming, D.C., ed., *John Capodistrias and the conference of London (1828–1831)* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1970). And there are other documents

In 1833, even before all the outstanding questions had been settled, the Greek Government itself printed a summary of the main agreements under which independence would soon be internationally recognised.<sup>8</sup> Substantial extracts from the diplomatic correspondence of Lord Strangford, British Ambassador in Constantinople from 1821 to 1824, have been published online and in printed form, with commentary and many other primary materials, by Theophilus C. Prousis.<sup>9</sup> The diplomatic documents are indispensable for any attempt to understand the motives and changing policies of the powers as they developed year by year, month by month, letter by letter, conference by conference. The collections are, however, also monuments to assumptions about the ability of foreign governments to understand and to steer the course of events in faraway countries with different languages and traditions, not all of which were understood even by the Ottoman leaderships in Constantinople. And, even at the time, there were diplomats who questioned the usefulness of bombarding the Ottoman Government with unwelcome, often ill-informed, advice, if indeed the documents were ever even read except by the interpreters ('dragomans') through whom all communication passed.<sup>10</sup>

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produced by representatives of other western countries besides Britain and France that have scarcely been explored. For example Argenti, Philip. ed., *The Massacres of Chios: described in contemporary diplomatic reports, edited with an introduction by Philip P. Argenti* (London: Lane, 1932) was able to include diplomatic records from the embassies and consulates of Prussia, Austria, the Netherlands, the Two Sicilies, and Spain, and a financial document relating to a ransom from the Ralli family archives.

- 8 *Recueil des Traités, Actes et Pièces Concernans la Fondation de la Royauté en Grèce, et le Tracé de ces Limites* (Nauplia, Imprimerie Royale, 1833). The texts of the formal treaties and protocols governing British relations with the Ottoman Empire, the protectorate over the Ionian Islands and their later incorporation into Greece, and some Ottoman decrees or 'firmans' are usefully collected in a semi-official publication, Xenos, Stephanos, *East and West* (London: Trübner, 1865).
- 9 Noted with full references in the Bibliography.
- 10 For example Fontanier, V., *Voyages en Orient entrepris par ordre du gouvernement français de l'année 1821 à l'année 1829* (Paris: Mongie, 1829), 55 and 72. The crucial role of the dragomans is vividly shown in many of the documents printed in British Foreign Office, *Papers relative to the affairs of Greece, 1826–1832* (London: Harrison, 1835), which include examples of the dragomans being invited to conduct negotiations, sometimes in collaboration with the dragomans assigned to other countries, and the verbatim reports they produced of who said what to whom and when during meetings with Ottoman officials. A disparaging word portrait of the British Ambassador, Stratford Canning, who had some success in influencing the policies of the Ottoman leaderships by giving advice and who played a leading, probably decisive, role in the saving of the monuments of Athens from destruction during

As for the realms of ideas, discourses, and justifications, that both helped to drive the course of events and responded to them, the evidence, although also plentiful, reflects the huge differences in the historical circumstances, as well as in the laws, customs, and practices, of the participants. And there were huge differences too in the understanding among the active participants of the contribution of the fourth party to the conflict, the ancient Greeks, and what had survived from classical times both as written texts and as buildings on the ground, of which the Parthenon and the other monuments in Athens were, at the time of the Revolution, the most insistent visual reminders.

In terms of potential ability to get their message across, both locally and to wider publics and policy-makers overseas, the Greek Revolutionaries and their supporters had many advantages over their opponents. From the beginning a vast literature of printed books, contemporary memoirs and histories, proclamations, pamphlets, engravings, and later lithographs, poured from the bookshops and print shops of Europe and North America, almost all favourable to the Greek Revolutionary cause.<sup>11</sup> This body of texts, most of which circulated only in Europe, was one of the main means by which the prestige of the ancient Greeks was mobilized in support of the moderns. The Revolutionaries themselves began to receive printing presses from overseas from 1824, enabling them to make and circulate multiple copies of documents both in Greece and abroad. Although levels of literacy appear already to have been high in some regions, particularly in Athens, and many of the main participants were able to depend on oral reports and on others doing the reading and translating on their behalf, the Revolutionary side was able to mobilize the potentialities of print far more effectively than their opponents.<sup>12</sup>

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the war and its aftermath, to be discussed in Chapters 18 to 22, as the hectoring ‘Sir Hector Stubble’, is discussed in Chapter 20.

- 11 Many printed writings are noted by Droulia, L., *Philhellénisme: ouvrages inspirés par la guerre de l'indépendance grecque 1821–1833, répertoire bibliographique* (Athens, Publications du Centre de recherches néo-helléniques de la Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique, [n.d.], 1974) and more have been discovered since. Much information about other forms of mediation, including pictures, newspapers, and material objects, such as ornamental pottery especially for France, is in Barau, Denys, *La Cause des Grecs, Une Histoire du Mouvement Philhellène (1821–1829)* (Paris: Honoré Champion Editeur, 2009).
- 12 The languages in use and the extent of literacy in Athens before the Revolution are discussed in Chapter 4.

By contrast, the Ottoman Government in Constantinople, right until the end of the war, while producing thousands of documents written in manuscript, did not possess a single printing press with which it could prepare multiple copies.<sup>13</sup> The Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople, the supreme authority of the Greek-speaking Orthodox, and itself an Ottoman institution participating in the millet system that acted as censor and licenser of texts printed in the Greek language, also did not print extensively at this time.<sup>14</sup> The extent of literacy among the many communities who lived within the Ottoman territories has not yet been systematically studied, but it was at best patchy, as was access to such written texts as they may have been able to read. The two main forms of the Albanian language, for example, spoken by the inhabitants of many places in what is geographically and politically now Greece, including Athens and its hinterland, and by many of the imperial troops recruited from the territories of modern Albania for the Ottoman army, were not yet written languages nor were their dialectics mutually comprehensible.

### Visual Display and its Uses

At the time of the outbreak of Greek Revolution, the Ottoman Government, having largely denied itself the use of print and engraving, the two main technologies able to carry information and ideas across distance and time, relied mainly on public display and performance, as it had for hundreds of years, and on the reports, whether oral or written, that fanned out from witnesses of these displays and performances. One of the sights most commonly encountered by residents of Constantinople over many centuries was the Friday (the Muslim sabbath) procession of the sultan and the senior office-holders of the government, with their staffs, to and from the mosque. These processions, which were especially magnificent during the Festival of Bairam, were caught in visual form by a French artist, Antoine Ignace Melling, a long-term resident of the city, around 1800 when Selim III was sultan. A version, in reduced size, was

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13 Noted by Stratford Canning, Kew FO 78/155, 28. As a voracious and indefatigable author and collector of official and other documents, Canning's remark deserves to be given respect, although there was, or had been until recently, a local press producing books and translations as will be discussed in Chapter 8.

14 For its reliance on the British state, and its warships, to send letters securely see the examples in Appendix E.



included in two pictures inserted as frontispieces into a book published in France in 1817, reproduced as Figure 6.1.



Figure 6.1. 'The march of the sultan to [and from] the mosque during Bairam' Hand-coloured engravings.<sup>15</sup>

- 15 Tancoigne, J.M. *Voyage à Smyrne, dans l'archipel et l'île de Candie, en 1811, 1812, 1813 et 1814; suivi d'une notice sur Péra et d'une description de la marche du Sultan*. Par J. M. Tancoigne, attaché en 1807 à l'Ambassade de France en Perse, et depuis Interprète et Chancelier du Consulat de la Canée; Ouvrage orné de deux gravures, chacune quadruple du format in-18, et représentant le Cortège du Sultan, d'après un dessin colorié de M. Melling (Paris: Nepveu, 1817). Both images slightly abridged. A fuller description is given by Pertusier, Charles, Officier au Corps Royal de l'Artillerie, attaché à l'Ambassade de France près la Porte Ottomane, *Promenades pittoresques dans Constantinople et sur les rives du Bosphore, Suivies d'une notice sur la Dalmatie* (Paris: Nicolle, 1815), i, 391–411. Descriptions in words of the performance of power in the long eighteenth century, including ambassadorial audiences with the sultan and the grand vizier, are frequent. Visual presentations, which are more rare, are included in books such as Baltimore, Lord, *A tour to the East, in the years 1763 and 1764, with remarks on the city of Constantinople and the Turks; also select pieces of Oriental wit, poetry and wisdom* (London: printed by Richardson and Clark, 1767), who made a point of claiming that he was not influenced by predecessors. A later picture that shows the entrance to the palace where the Friday procession began, one of the most frequented areas of central Constantinople, is shown as Figure 6.2.

It was the custom for money to be scattered, and for the sultan and many of the high officials to sacrifice three sheep daily during the festival, one of which was publicly killed by the sultan's own hand. The meat that was distributed was enough, it was said, to provide food for the poor for several months, and also to enable the Ottoman leaderships to present themselves as protectors.<sup>16</sup> And there were many other such displays, including the ceremonies marking the arrival of foreign ambassadors and the public performance of international friendship.<sup>17</sup> In this society where display and performance were of greater importance than words or pictures, outsiders, including the settled European community, understood the need to translate the former into terms with which they and their fellow-Europeans were not only more familiar, but that gave a durability and mobility to these other media of communication that consumed themselves as they occurred. In innumerable books prepared by western European writers and artists who lived there, the Ottoman Empire, including the territories that were to become the nation state of Greece, was presented as a vast and varied costumed theatre, caught momentarily in static form.

What the local residents of Constantinople made of the displays is hard to recover without potentially confusing the responses of actual viewers with those implied, and hoped for, by the rhetorics. Those observers, like some of the viewers of the picture, might recognize the office-holders from their distinctive ceremonial costumes, such as the procession led by the grand admiral on horseback, (capitan pasha) who had special responsibilities for the islands of the Archipelago, and followed by the grand vizier and others. The bearded rider at the right of the first image is the Reis Efendi, the secretary of the sultan's council, who, in the absence of a Foreign Minister at this time, was the official

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16 Habesci, Elias, *The present state of the Ottoman empire, containing a more accurate and interesting account ... of the Turks than any yet extant. Including a particular description of the court and seraglio of the Grand Signor...translated from the French manuscript of Elias Habesci, many years resident in Constantinople, in the service of the Grand Signor* (London: Baldwin, 1784), 105.

17 Descriptions of some of the ceremonies of welcome, including transcribed speeches by the Dragomans, are given by Ferté-Meun, Comtesse de la, *Lettres sur le Bosphore, ou Relation d'un voyage en différentes parties de l'Orient, pendant les années 1816, 1817, 1818 et 1819, Deuxieme édition revue, corrigée et augmentée de deux lettres et de la Chapelle de la dernière heure, l'histoire grecque* (Paris: Locard et Davi, 1822) who was present at some in 1817. Those in English, by Byron, Lady Elgin, and others, that are better known, are consistent with her account.

that the ambassadors normally dealt with. The sultan himself is shown in the second image.

Non-Muslims would, we may be confident, understand that, whatever rights and privileges were accorded to other communities recognized by the millet system, the Ottoman Empire was primarily a Muslim state, in which the civil and religious authorities shared power, reinforcing one another's claim to legitimacy, including in relation to the Shia Muslim state located in what in modern terms is called Iran or previously Persia. Individual Ottoman office-holders were frequently disgraced, sometimes summarily put to death. A map of the courts of the Seraglio made in the 1820s shows the 'Niches in which Heads are laid' on either side of the 'Sublime Porte', the only gate from the outside world into the first court of the imperial palace, which performed their cautionary role whether or not they were occupied.<sup>18</sup> In the middle of the first court where all visitors were kept waiting and had time to look around was a 'Pillar where Pashas' heads are exposed', a reminder that none, however elevated, could escape Ottoman justice.<sup>19</sup> After the displays of power came the displays of glory, including a library of religious books, numerous female slaves, mostly white-skinned Georgians and Circassians, and male eunuchs, mostly black-skinned from Africa, and a collection of jewelled turbans, all presented among colourful carpets and mirrors that intensified the perceived size of the room. Those 'presents' made by foreign ambassadors that were 'composed of massive gold or silver' were mostly sent to the mint to be melted down, coined money being a convenient way of mobilizing real resources, including armies and navies, that provided the enforcement.<sup>20</sup> Unlike in Europe, the Ottoman Government was not a hereditary or family-based aristocracy. Those non-Muslims who were willing to

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18 Inserted in Walsh, Rev. R., L.L.D., *A Residence in Constantinople during a period including the commencement, progress, and termination of the Greek and Turkish revolutions* (London: F. Westley & A.H. Davis, 1838), i, opposite 349. The two niches were described, at a time when they were empty, by Pertusier, i, 408. At the time of the presentation of Ambassador Adair in May 1810, when Canning arranged for Byron to participate in the procession, one of the niches exhibited 'among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdat, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance.' Footnote to Byron's *Bride of Abydos*, first published in 1813. They are not mentioned in any of the elaborate ceremonies described by Ferté-Meun.

19 Walsh, i, opposite 349.

20 Dalloway, 24.

change their religious affiliation, and even slaves who were granted freedom by their masters could rise to high office, as many did.

For centuries the ambassadors of European countries were obliged to comply with elaborate ceremonies, fixed, arranged, and enforced down to the last detail as if they had been scripted and the participants coached and rehearsed. We have many descriptions of these. Some took the form of ritual humiliation, at least in their origins, aimed at viewers who might be impressed by such treatment of foreigners. Of course, the foreigners themselves, the centres of attention, while sometimes being co-opted into the staging, saw things differently, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century they were not only excused from such discourtesies but treated with elaborate respect.

Figure 6.2, a picture made following a visit by an artist in 1834, when the fighting of the Revolution was mostly over, shows a party of dignitaries emerging from the entrance to the sultan's palace on the viewer's left, with the niches where sacks of severed ears and heads were frequently displayed during the Greek Revolution clearly visible.



Figure 6.2. 'Fountain near the Baba Hummayoun, or Great Entrance into the Seraglio' Steel engraving.<sup>21</sup>

21 Allom and Walsh, *Constantinople and the Scenery of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, Illustrated in a Series of Drawings from Nature by Thomas Allom. with Descriptions of the Plates by the Rev. Robert Walsh, L.L.D., Chaplain to the British Embassy at the Ottoman Porte* (London: Fisher, 1838), ii, 6.

Besides the frequent displays in times of peace, the Ottoman Government also relied on display in times of war and of internal rebellion, including during the Greek Revolution, when the same instruments were applied as in earlier centuries. Much of what was, until recently, recounted by historians about Ottoman public displays of victories over their enemies, external or internal, came from accounts by western Europeans, some of whom had resided and done business there, and in recent times these accounts have been liable to be discounted by post-colonial theorists as so deeply imbued with western orientalism as to be untrue. However, with the increased availability of primary records, and without implying any kind of moral equivalence, a more evidenced account becomes possible. To take one example, the practice of displaying the severed heads of defeated enemies and disgraced officials, with brief notes in words, 'titlets', as the Europeans said, or 'Yafta', affixed like labels in modern museums, as shown in Figure 6.3, for example, was portrayed by a long-term resident who was present when this was done.

The pillar that displayed the severed head (from which the soft tissue had been carefully extracted) was an unignorable fixture between the first and second courts of the palace, whether it was in use or awaiting its next exhibit. On the wall was what the British Embassy chaplain, the Rev. Robert Walsh, shown in western costume in this image, called a Yafta. It was said that a British businessman offered to buy the head so that it could be shown to paying visitors as a freak show in London, but since Ali's head was to be given an elaborate funeral with the heads of his sons who were also judicially put to death, this was refused.

Since the Yafta had served its purpose Walsh was able to obtain it and make a copy in lithograph, as shown in Figure 6.3.

And, thanks to the gradual, long delayed translation into western languages of the long work of Evliya, those who cannot read the Ottoman text can now appreciate that these practices were not aberrations from a norm, or outbreaks of disorder, but were deeply embedded in the traditions of Ottoman society. In his account of the wars of the 1690s in which Evliya took part, he notes many instances of prisoners being put to death, of the cutting off of heads, of the practice of scalping and salting the severed heads, usually performed by prisoners awaiting their turn to be put to death, and the loading of wagons with the heads among other trophies to be sent on a long march through the passes

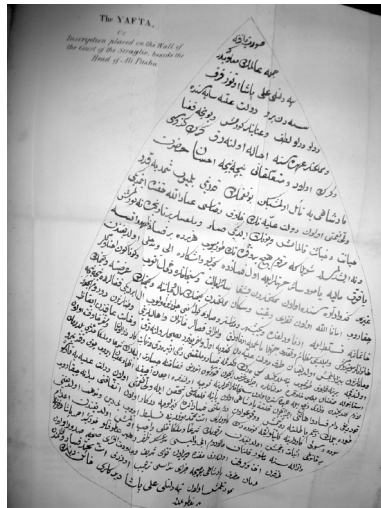


Figure 6.3. ‘The Yafta inscription placed on the Wall of the court of the Seraglio beside the head of Ali Pasha’, 23 February 1822. Lithograph.<sup>22</sup>

and the main towns for display at Constantinople.<sup>23</sup> For one celebration in Constantinople, Evliya describes a parade of the senior officials of the court in the presence of the sultan with their formal identifying costumes, with soldiers, guns, and captured booty, including thousands of severed heads with six thousand fixed on the points of the lances of the Ottoman cavalry, plus eleven thousand handcuffed prisoners on their way to the galleys and dockyards, described by Evliya as ‘all full of sorrow and oppressed by their slavery and looking round dejectedly’.<sup>24</sup>

The Revolutionaries themselves also sometimes proudly displayed the severed heads of their enemies, and used images to carry the fact of such displays to wider viewerships.<sup>25</sup> They also put male prisoners

22 In Walsh, Rev. R., LL.D, M.R.I.A., *Narrative of a journey from Constantinople to England* (London: Westley, second edition, 1828), opposite 429, with translation into English at pp. 429–32.

23 Numerous examples in Evliya Çelebi, *The Book of Travel (Selected fragments of volume 5)* edited by Helena Dolińska, from translation by Andrej Doliński (London: Caldra, 2001).

24 *Ibid.*, 121.

25 For example, an image dated 1827 reproduced by Beaton, Roderick, *Greece, Biography of a Modern Nation* (London: Allen Lane, 2019), no 5, entitled in faulty classical Greek, ‘Trophy of the Hellenes against the Barbarians, erected by General Karaiskakis, in the place Plovarma.’

to death and enslaved women. An instance was noted by John Carne, a correspondent, as having fallen ‘under the writer’s observation in Greece, during the atrocities of the war’, written later in a vaguely biblical style that presented himself as the hero of his story: ‘In the storming of one of the towns, a Turkish aga had been desperately wounded, and afterwards closely imprisoned: his wife and daughter were forbidden all access to him. In what accents of despair and anguish did they implore to be admitted but for an hour to his presence; for they were told of his sufferings and loneliness, and fancy coloured the picture darkly. Each day, also, they dreaded to hear that he was put to death; for he was a man of rank and wealth, and had fought bravely against, the Greeks. The traveller had free access to the captive, and each day that he visited the wife and child, his coming was to them like that of an angel, for he brought tidings of his safety, and imparted brighter hopes of the future. But their eager affection and solicitude, the look of despondency and then of rapture, the breathless attention with which they listened to the father’s message — were inexpressibly moving. They also were captives in the gloom of a dim and spacious chamber, where few friends or acquaintance cheered the weariness of the day: each prayer for liberty was offered to the oppressor in vain: and the prisoner was slain, even when he believed that “the bitterness of death was past.”’<sup>26</sup>

## Ottoman Attitudes and Policies

During the Greek Revolution, and during some particularly eventful periods of the conflict almost every day, the hand-written public imperial decrees of the Ottoman Government, or firmans, by which the authorities attempted to direct events and influence opinion, were posted on the Porte where they might be understood by those who knew the language and could read its scripts. Firmans were also posted in mosques, although whether in provincial cities or only in Constantinople, I have been unable to ascertain.<sup>27</sup> At times during the

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26 Carne, John, *Lives of Eminent Missionaries* (London: Fisher, 3 volumes, 1833–1836), ii, 321. Carne had first visited the eastern Mediterranean in 1821, accompanied by a nephew of the famous traveller, Edward Daniel Clarke, as a prospective missionary. His account of refugees in the Peloponnese in a later journey, towards the end of the Revolution, is noted in Chapter 14.

27 An example from 1827, a measure forbidding residents to move during the crisis, is reported in Kew FO 352/17 B.

war, the British and French ambassadors employed a member of the embassy staff, usually Monsieur Chabert (sometimes Chaubert), the Oriental Secretary, to visit the Porte, to copy or summarize the new firmans, and to translate them into French. A selection was copied by clerks and sent to capitals in Europe, with many now available among the British National Archives at Kew.<sup>28</sup> Until more become available direct from the archives in Istanbul, the reports and copies that made their way to Kew are the main resource for understanding Ottoman attitudes and policies to the Greek Revolution. Fortunately they are voluminous.

Most of the presently available Ottoman documents offer a view from the top, and it cannot be assumed that the ideas and policies promulgated at the centre were shared at the peripheries. In an attempt to control news, the 'rumour-mongers' who queried, supplemented, or offered alternatives to the officially-approved versions of events were sometimes put to death.<sup>29</sup> And laws against what was translated as 'witchcraft' were used to silence those who predicted disaster. In general, on the Revolutionary side too, those who wrote the documents were, with important exceptions, not those did the fighting. However, even on the Ottoman side, where the problem of recovering opinion is especially acute, a few texts have recently become available that suggest that the differences between central and local discourses were not great.<sup>30</sup>

The highest offices in the Ottoman Empire were open to all comers, irrespective of family, but the main dragomans were hereditary

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28 I give dates in the current, 'New Style' Gregorian, calendar introduced in western European countries from 1582, but in Greece not till 1923, by which time the difference from the 'Old Style' calendar was about two weeks. For Ottoman documents, that used a Muslim calendar, I have also used the modern calendar, although since the sources are not always explicit about which calendar is being used, errors in dating may have occurred.

29 Erdem, Y. Hakan, "Do not think of the Greeks as agricultural labourers": Ottoman responses to the Greek Revolution' in Birtek, Faruk and Thalia Dragonas, editors, *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2005), 76.

30 Notably Laiou, Sophia, 'The Greek Revolution in the Morea According to the Description of an Ottoman Official' in Pizaniyas, Petros, ed., *The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European Event* (Istanbul 2011), 241–55. Laiou prints the text of a manuscript in the University of Marburg that contains an account, composed not later than 1823 by Mîr Yusuf el-Moravî, a Muslim of Nauplia, survivor of an agreement involving the Acropolis of Nauplia, in whose negotiation he participated, which was followed by a massacre and expulsion similar to what occurred at Athens. One feature is the absence of the language of nationalism, which suggests that it was still unfamiliar.



dynasties, some with a continuous history back to Genoese merchants who had settled in the city centuries before. British ambassadors might come and go, some already experienced, some out of their depth, but their dragomans, such as those from the Pisani family, who were expected to speak and write in half a dozen languages, were permanent.<sup>31</sup> Formally members of the Ottoman court, the dragomans did more than translate documents from one language to another, fraught with difficulties though that was at a time when the Ottoman leaderships did not share many of the assumptions of the western diplomatic representatives. Like other intermediaries, they tended to arouse suspicion in both sides. Were the dragomans accurately reporting the views of western envoys? Could they be trusted to keep confidentiality? As a guild, the dragomans appear to have shared knowledge with one another, so that, for example, communications by the British ambassador to the Porte might find their way to the French ambassador and vice-versa. An image of the most important of the dragomans is reproduced earlier in this book as Figure 4.7.

In translating even an uncontentious speech of welcome to a foreign ambassador by the grand vizier, the Dragoman of the Porte was expected to affect to tremble and stammer as a bodily sign that performed the great respect that he was presumed to feel.<sup>32</sup> And they were in constant danger of being accused of plotting against the state. Among the first to be judicially put to death on the outbreak of the Revolution was the Dragoman of the Porte, Prince Constantine Mourousi, whose name suggests that he was an Orthodox Greek, whose head was displayed on 16 April 1821 with the explanation given here as filtered from an Ottoman version by the British embassy staff: 'This is the head of the traitor Costaki, the current *dragoman* of the Divan, who dared to join and to become allies with the accursed who have had the temerity of starting the sedition and the treason in Wallachia and in Moldavia; and having been confirmed that he took part in this affair, and his treason having

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31 The role of the dragomans is discussed in a number of essays in Yurdusev, A. Nuri, ed., *Ottoman Diplomacy, Conventional or Unconventional?* (London: Palgrave, 2004), and de Testa, Marie and Gautier, Antoine, *Drogmans et diplomates européens auprès de la Porte ottomane* (Istanbul: Isis, 2013).

32 Ferté-Meun, Comtesse de la] *Lettres sur le Bosphore, ou Relation d'un voyage en différentes parties de l'Orient, pendant les années 1816, 1817, 1818 et 1819*, Deuxieme édition revue, corrigée et augmentée de deux lettres et de la Chapelle de la dernière heure, *l'histoire grecque* (Paris: Locard et Davi, 1822), 80.

been brought to light, it is for this reason that he has suffered capital punishment.<sup>33</sup>

Since 1936, when G.M. Young remarked that ‘the greater part of what passes for diplomatic history is little more than the record of what one clerk said to another clerk’, greater attention has been paid to the contribution of public opinion to the processes of policy formation.<sup>34</sup> And, since Young’s time, there have been numerous printed studies of the opinions of various publics, especially in western European countries, that helped to influence the attitudes of governments as well as individuals, and therefore, ultimately, to help shape the course of events. Some of these studies make extensive use of contemporary manuscripts, and include letters and reports direct from participants in Greece. The letters by the Austrian consul and antiquary, Georg Gropius, written from on the spot in Athens are especially valuable, not because he was a foreigner but because of his unique opportunities to witness what occurred. As much a participant as an observer, Gropius had made his life in the city with his Greek wife and family in the years before the outbreak of the Revolution; he remained there as the events of the conflict unfolded, and for some years later.<sup>35</sup> In addition to those letters that have made their way as copies into the British archives at Kew, others from the archives in Paris of the French consul and antiquary Fauvel have recently been published.<sup>36</sup> More may be discoverable in Vienna.

## Communication Difficulties during the Revolution

The war was fought at sea as much as on land. The modern map at Figure 6.5 shows the main locations with their political boundaries. At the start of the Revolution the whole territory shown was part of the Ottoman Empire apart from the Ionian Islands, formally ‘The United

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33 Kew Ambassador Strangford to Foreign Secretary Castlereagh 21 April 1821, FO 78/98, 86–89, transcribed by Prousis.

34 The phrase quoted by Talbot, Michael, *British-Ottoman Relations, 1661–1807: Commerce and Diplomatic Practice in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2017), 1, from *Victorian England* (Oxford: OUP, 1936), 103.

35 A portrait with his family made shortly after the Revolution is included as Figure 13.1.

36 Clairmont, Christoph W. ed., *Fauvel: The First Archaeologist in Athens and his Philhellenic Correspondents* (Zürich: Akanthus, 2007), 180–87.

States of the Ionian Islands', that were a British protectorate. During the war the islands, including the outlier Cerigo, were garrisoned. Much of the business of the British authorities there involved the ships of the Ionian merchant marine, which flew the British flag and were able to claim British protection.

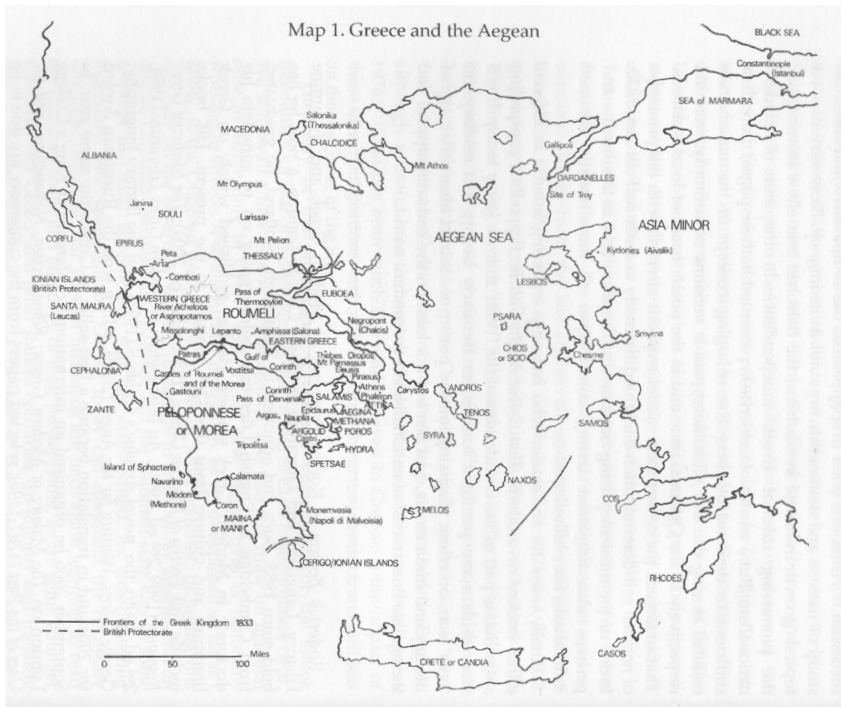


Figure 6.5. Greece and the Aegean at the time of the Revolution. Modern map.<sup>37</sup>

In an age before steam ships and electric telegraphs, the speed of communication both within the regions where fighting was occurring and beyond was heavily dependent on the technology of sailing ships and on messengers on foot or on horseback carrying packages across the mountain passes. The geographical limitations are more easily imagined using a contemporary map, as shown in Figure 6.6.

<sup>37</sup> From St Clair, William, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, revised edition (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2008), opposite 1.



Figure 6.6. Contemporary map illustrating the places principally involved in the Greek Revolution. Folded engraving.<sup>38</sup>

This map, chosen as typical from among many to be found in accounts prepared at the time, brings out the crucial importance of the sea for communications and how the deep gulfs and reliance on mountain passes limited the movements of armies and their supplies by land.<sup>39</sup> The geography also offered many opportunities to intercept messengers by land and by sea, making communications, whether written or oral, both risky and uncertain.

During the long eighteenth century, as in earlier times, vessels sailing down or up the Adriatic from or to Venice were reasonably secure. But those sailing through the Mediterranean from west or east faced greater risks. The dangers faced by sailors in the narrow strait between the island of Cerigo and Crete, known as 'The Arches',<sup>40</sup> were discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>38</sup> Inserted in Emerson, James, *Letters from the Aegean* (London: Colburn 1829).

<sup>39</sup> As another good candidate, a 'theatre of war' map was provided by Jourdain, *Mémoires historiques et Militaires sur Les Evénements de la Grece, depuis 1822, jusqu'au Combat de Navarin; par Jourdain, Capitaine de frégate de la Marine Royale, Colonel au Service du Gouvernement Grec* (Paris: Brissot-Thivars, 1828).

<sup>40</sup> Wines, quoted by Larrabee, *Hellas Observed*, 211. Rapalje, who was there in 1822, provides much information about life at sea in these waters in the era of small

Typical times for transmitting information to Paris, one of the main centres to which and from which information flowed, have been compiled from primary contemporary sources:

Constantinople 31–45 days  
 Athens 52–61 days  
 St Petersburg 18–31  
 Vienna 11–20 days  
 London 4 days.<sup>41</sup>

Much of what was regarded as news in the western European capitals was therefore unavoidably out of date. And the dates of reading could be widely separated from the dates of writing. Much information was misleading and some had been falsified.<sup>42</sup> The times taken for policy guidance sent from the European capitals to reach embassies in Constantinople were also long and unpredictable, even if decisions were made quickly as seldom happened. Although, during the Greek War, the international negotiations reported in the printed collections may have appeared to be occurring almost continuously and there was far more consultation and exchange of information among the main powers than ever before, the extent to which decision-making could ever be centralised was more severely limited than it was to become with the advent of steam ships in the later 1820s.

When the crisis broke in the spring of 1821, the British Ambassador Lord Strangford, for example, received no dispatches from Foreign Secretary Castlereagh (then known as Lord Londonderry) in London until September of that year and only seven in the whole of 1822.<sup>43</sup> Long though these delays were, they were however a dramatic improvement over what was normal during the decades of European war that had come to an end with Napoleon's defeat in 1815. When the twenty-four-year-old Stratford Canning first went to Constantinople as British minister plenipotentiary in 1810, letters from the government

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sailing ships, 231. Lord Baltimore in his book describes his tour to the East as 'from Naples through the Arches to Constantinople in the Year 1763'.

41 Dimakis, Jean, *La Presse Française, face à la chute de Missolonghi et à la bataille navale de Navarin: recherches sur les sources du Philhellénisme française* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1976), 51–53.

42 'nouvelles fausses'. Dimakis, 56.

43 Noted by Cunningham, 'Lord Strangford and the Greek Revolt', in *Anglo-Ottoman Encounters*, i, 191.

in London had to make a three-thousand-mile journey by sea, and on one occasion Canning did not receive a single official communication for fifteen weeks.<sup>44</sup>

The ambassadors of Britain and France were able both to gather and to send information with the help of a squadron of naval vessels, whose commanders, although not under their direct command, normally took guidance from them. Other European countries, including the Russians and Austrians, also sent warships to the war zone, to be followed latterly by the Americans. The British and French, and to a lesser extent the others, also had access to reports from a network of consuls in numerous ports all over the eastern Mediterranean who, in theory, although not in practice, were excluded from discussing political matters.<sup>45</sup> Consuls and their staff enjoyed valuable privileges, being exempt from tax, free to travel throughout Ottoman lands without the need for internal documents, exempt from arrest and allowed to leave when recalled. Under local law their houses could not be entered or sealed off. And in the event of danger, consuls were permitted to wear a white turban, becoming temporary honorary Muslims without incurring any of the obligations of that status.<sup>46</sup> It was common for the same local man to hold the consulships of two or more European countries, flying its flag and wearing a different uniform on different days, although M. Paul, at Patras, who held a consular appointment from eight different European countries was exceptional.<sup>47</sup> The honorary Franks, whose appointments were often in effect hereditary in old established local families, were not always respected by their less privileged Orthodox neighbours and they caused some visitors to

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44 Lane-Poole, Stanley, *The Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, K.G.* (London: Longman, two volumes, 1888), i, 92.

45 See especially the reports by William Meyer, the Consul-General in Albania of which examples are given in Appendix E.

46 Copy of translation of a berratt given by Sultan Mahmoud, 'the conqueror of the world whose authority is derived from the Divine Will' in Wilkinson, William, late British Consul at Bucharest, *An account of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia: with various political observations relating to them* (London: Longman, 1820), 199–202.

47 B Bartholdy, J.L.S., *Voyage en Grèce fait dans les Années 1803 et 1804 Contenant des détails sur la manière de voyager dans la Grèce et l'Archipel; la description de la vallée de Tempe'; un tableau pittoresque des sites les plus remarquables de la Grèce et du Levant; un coup-d'œil sur l'état actuel de la Turquie et de toutes les branches de la civilisation chez les Grecs modernes; un voyage de Négrepont, dans quelques contrées de la Thessalie, en 1805, et l'histoire de la guerre des Souliotes contre Ali-Visir, avec la chute de Souly en 1804. traduit de l'allemand, par A. du C\*\*\*\** (Paris: Dentue, 1807), ii, 50.

raise a sardonic eyebrow, but on many occasions during the war, with no more power than the authority of their flags, the consuls were to save many lives.

For the western countries, having secure communications was itself an instrument of policy. In the spring of 1821, for example, in response to a request from the Ottoman Government, Ambassador Strangford arranged for ships of the British navy to carry Ottoman orders to the semi-independent Barbary states, in which they were commanded by the imperial government to send their ships to help put down what were then seen as local disturbances in the Aegean islands. Operating out of Algiers, Tunis, and other North African ports, the Barbary states, with their fast ships, preyed on Mediterranean shipping, enslaving, selling, and ransoming any human beings that had an exchange value. By the time London heard what Strangford had done, by which time it was obvious to all that a full-scale revolution and international crisis was rapidly unfolding, he was instructed in a personal letter, to which only he had the cypher, never to mention the episode, a secret that has been kept out of the history books till now.<sup>48</sup>

Among other direct means of attempting to shape events that were available to the foreign ambassadors, money was the most often used but also the best hidden. Drawing on the credit of their governments, ambassadors were able to borrow and spend large funds on, for example, contracting with merchant shipping for a wide range of purposes, including taking refugees and freed slaves to safety. Exchanging gifts was normal, especially on formal occasions such as the arrival of an ambassador or the concluding of a treaty.<sup>49</sup> And it was not then the custom on the Ottoman side to distinguish between presents given as a mark of personal favour and those that were official and public. Nor were official promises always honoured or honoured quickly. For example, in 1810, Sir Robert Adair, the British ambassador was still attempting to claim the gift of money that had been made to Lord Elgin as part of the exchanges that formed part of the treaty of 1800, but by then, as a result of the falling exchange rate of the Ottoman piastre, the value of the claim

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48 Foreign Secretary to Strangford 5 August 1821 Kew FO 78/97, opposite 43.

49 Lists of presents given by and to Lord Elgin on 25 May 1799, and others exchanged by his successors in 1809 on the resumption of peace, are in Kew FO 78/64, 3.

in pounds sterling terms that had been 2,000 at the time was not much more than half.<sup>50</sup>

The ambassadors also paid money to influential officials. In a letter to the Foreign Secretary Castlereagh in January 1822, Ambassador Strangford sought approval to pay the immense sum of one thousand Ottoman purses (between twelve and thirteen thousand pounds sterling in the money of the day) to the Reis Efendi (Reis ül-Küttab) Halet (Meḥmet Sa'îd Hâlet Efendi) who was 'too wealthy to be tempted by an inconsiderable sum.'<sup>51</sup> In the absence of a foreign ministry, Halet was responsible for Ottoman relations with foreign countries, and he was the adviser to the sultan with responsibility for the policy of violent repression. If the proposed gift of the money, as Strangford hoped, averted or postponed a war between Russia and Turkey, as seemed likely, and the outbreak of the Revolution presaged the extermination of the Orthodox, it would have been money well spent.<sup>52</sup>

The file does not record whether Strangford obtained approval either to make this payment or some lesser amount. Around 1903, the file was marked 'not to be shown to strangers', and contrary to the provisions of the British Public Records Acts, it was not opened until 7 May 1959. The files do however record that in July 1821, some months before, when it still looked as if the Greek Revolution could be quickly crushed, Halet had, at Strangford's request, arranged for an imperial *firman* ('Vizieral letter') to be sent to the commander of the Ottoman forces in Greece and to the local *cadi* in Athens ordering them to protect the ancient monuments of Athens. That episode will be discussed in Chapter 7 with the main documents transcribed in Appendix C.<sup>53</sup>

As for what the parties knew about what was actually happening during the Revolution, what is now known as intelligence, in some western European countries, letters were routinely intercepted and read by the local secret police. The British routinely read diplomatic correspondence sent from London. Their officials in Corfu and the

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50 Adair to Foreign Secretary, 15 June 1810, Kew FO 78/68, 251.

51 Kew FO 78/106 15.

52 For the importance attached by Castlereagh to preventing such a war: Prousis, Theophilus C., *Lord Strangford at the Sublime Porte (1821): The Eastern Crisis*, volume i (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 38, 52.

53 Hamet, who had served as Ottoman Ambassador to France, and is pictured in the ceremony of coronation of Napoleon, was suspected of having become too close to the French and was put to death by order of the sultan in 1822.



other Ionian Islands over which Britain exercised a formal protectorate, intercepted and copied letters under the pretence of quarantine.<sup>54</sup> Some correspondents knew that their letters were being read and may have been guarded or oblique in their choice of words.<sup>55</sup> But we only know of the attempts of Edward Blaquiere to circumvent what he called 'the old game of Humbug' because his letter was intercepted and made its way into the British official archives.<sup>56</sup>

In the places on land and sea where the Revolutionary War was fought, communication was especially difficult and unreliable. As far as the European powers were concerned, letters sent by sea were reasonably secure, for even if the ship itself was likely to be captured, a packet of letters could be kept tied to a cannon shot, ready to be dropped overboard.<sup>57</sup> But, in a war in which sea piracy was common, only warships could ensure that important messages reached their intended recipients. The provisional Greek Government, while always claiming to be in control, and aiming to give that impression in their statements and decisions, found it hard to persuade commanders of local forces to unite or even to move their men. The Revolutionary factions, always afraid of allies changing sides or making accommodations, stationed agents on the roads to intercept the correspondence of rivals.<sup>58</sup> The British embassy, as another instrument of policy, sometimes provided secure communications to participants, helping, for example, to ensure that a formal letter from the Patriarch of Constantinople, the head of the Greek Orthodox Church, asking the Greek Revolutionaries to return to their allegiance to the Ottoman sultan was delivered.<sup>59</sup>

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54 See Dakin, Douglas, *British Intelligence of Events in Greece, 1824–1827: A Documentary Collection* (Athens: National Historical Society, 1959).

55 Noted with references to primary documents by, for example, Bouvier-Bron, Michelle, Jean-Gabriel Eynard (1775–1863) *et le Philhellénisme Genevois* (Geneva: Published by Association Gréco-Suisse, 1963).

56 Dakin, *British Intelligence*, 152.

57 Noted by Charles Robert Cockerell, later a famous architect in the neo-Hellenic style, who had direct experience, in Cockerell, C.R., *Travels in Southern Europe and the Levant, 1810–1817. The Journal of C.R. Cockerell, R.A. edited by his son Samuel Pepys Cockerell* (London: Longman, 1903), 5.

58 An example noted by Jourdain, ii, 216. For interceptions among the different revolutionary forces, see, for example Howe, Samuel Gridley, *Letters and Journals* (Boston: Estes, c.1907), i, 201. An example from 1829 noted by Finlay, *The Journals and Letters*, i, 4.

59 Transcribed in Appendix D.

Missives among the Greek Revolutionary forces were liable to be intercepted, as were messengers thought to be carrying oral communications, for example those caught attempting to slip through enemy lines during a blockade or siege were liable to be interrogated. Men found carrying mathematical instruments and drawings were sometimes summarily put to death.<sup>60</sup> And, in mainland Greece, a terrain of high mountains, narrow passes, and deep gulfs, official letters by Ottoman commanders carried by hand by the corps of runners known as ‘tartars’, were likewise liable to be intercepted by the Greek Revolutionary forces. Sometimes the information obtained was passed to representatives of the powers, although because, with some exceptions, we only have versions that have been translated into European languages or summarized, we cannot be certain that the texts were not manipulated.<sup>61</sup> And, as was discussed in Chapter 4, a detailed map of Athens and the Acropolis made by a French military engineer in 1826 at the behest of the Greek Revolutionary commander, Gouras, is so misleading about its military strength that it may best be explained as a *ruse de guerre*, intended to deceive.

There is also one printed document of extraordinary value that deserves its own mention alongside the extensive archive of papers that have also been preserved. When Thomas Gordon wrote in the Preface to his two volume *History of the Greek Revolution* published in 1832, that ‘the contest between the Greeks and Turks has employed so many pens, that he who now ventures to write on that hackneyed and apparently exhausted subject must begin by explain his reasons,’ his claim to be adding to and correcting predecessors was more than a conventional apologia.<sup>62</sup> Having lived in Ottoman lands even before the Revolution, and already in 1821 fluent in the Turkish and Greek as well as modern

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60 An example noted by William Meyer in a letter of 6 July 1822. Meyer, William, Consular reports, ii, 149.

61 Examples in Appendix C, to be discussed in Chapter 14. An intercepted letter from an Ottoman commander setting out his military plans in the spring of 1824 is referred to as having been sent to the British philhellene Edward Blaquiere as evidence of the urgency of the need for arms, but unfortunately was not transcribed; it is noted in Stanhope, 335.

62 Gordon, Thomas, *History of the Greek Revolution* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood and Cadell, 1832). Since the Preface is dated 1 November 1832, it is unlikely that the book became available to be generally read until 1833.

languages, as well as being a wealthy man who knew many of the Revolutionary leaders personally, who took part in the conflict both as an experienced soldier and as a supplier of arms and money, and who made his home in Greece after independence, Gordon's qualifications to write on the matter were unsurpassed.

People who knew him in Greece on campaign found him silent and dour.<sup>63</sup> And, as many of his own letters attest, he could be sardonic.<sup>64</sup> But in public at least he never doubted the justice of the Greek cause or the value of the Revolution, to the extent of sometimes deliberately preventing news of what was actually happening in Greece from being broadcast while the war was still raging and its outcome uncertain.<sup>65</sup> Indeed in his printed history he sometimes comes across as admiring prowess in war for its own sake. He recounts the fights and victories of both the Greeks and their enemies in a heroic tradition that, like the many commemorative pictures of the war that circulated throughout the nineteenth century, seems especially hard to sympathize with in a modern world that has experienced two world wars in which nationalism was amongst the main drivers. Well versed in the historiographical conventions that modern Europe had revived from the ancient pioneers, Hecateus, Herodotus, and Thucydides, Gordon sought out primary evidence, gathering and reprinting contemporary documents, comparing them with oral accounts, and describing events in extraordinary detail, especially the numbers involved: those killed and wounded; weapons used; even in many cases the number of artillery and mortar shots fired. Indeed the fact that his work breaks off shortly after the Battle of Navarino in 1827, at a moment before the war was over and while Athens was still in the hands of the Ottoman army, and that his intended third volume, which may have included general reflections, was never completed, reinforces the impression of his history that he sees and understands the war mainly as one violent

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63 His 'prudence, caution, taciturnity', said to be characteristics of people from Scotland, were noted by Charles Fallon, General Sir Richard Church's secretary during the fighting for the Acropolis of Athens in 1827. Church papers BL Add MS 36566, daily journal of Charles Fallon, 2.

64 An example is quoted in Chapter 16. But see also his ill-informed dismissal of the 'trumpery firman' in Appendix C.

65 Noted in Chapter 16.

event after another occurring simultaneously as well as sequentially in different places on land and sea. More a chronicle than an analytical history, his two volumes provide a near contemporary record of battles and campaigns from which it is easy for the modern reader, if he or she wishes, to offset the author's implied ideology and to identify the silences, such as, for example, his lack of interest in justificatory narratives or in the role of ancient monuments. Paradoxically it is Gordon's attention to establishing military facts narrowly defined that gives his book its unique modern value.

### The Ottoman Perspective

In the historiography of the Greek Revolution, extensive though it has been from soon after the fighting ended, and at times before when authors thought it had ended, what has been conspicuously missing until recently has been any access to the mindsets, worldviews, opinions, policies, memories, and aspirations of the Ottoman Governments, leaderships, and populations, except for what was filtered through the reports of others, mainly from the west, who often brought misunderstandings as well as prejudices to encounters. Among the biggest changes in recent times, whose full potential for understanding the past of many countries will take years to unlock, has been the gradual cataloguing and making available of the vast archive of Ottoman records held in Istanbul, and the emergence of scholars and historians able not only to read them but to situate them in wider contexts, including the misunderstandings and prejudices the Ottomans brought to the same encounters, and the efforts made by the warring parties to explain their attitudes and policies.

As Nuri A. Yurdusev has written: 'The Ottoman Empire was a composite polity with multilingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious communities. It ruled over a vast area that extended from Central Europe to Transcaucasia, from Poland to Yemen, and from Morocco to the Persian Gulf.' Its historical experience over six centuries cannot be 'reduced to sweeping generalizations.'<sup>66</sup>

Although during the Greek Revolution there were few occasions when anyone anywhere was reasonably well-informed with

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66 Yurdusev, A. Nuri, editor, *Ottoman Diplomacy, Conventional or Unconventional?* (London: Palgrave, 2004), 3.

up-to-date news or intelligence on what was occurring, what we can say with confidence is that for much of the time the British and French ambassadors in Constantinople were better informed than either of the main belligerents. While the war itself was fought with weapons and, asymmetrically, with words and images, the historiography both at the time and for long afterwards relied, to an extraordinarily extent, on documents collected, transcribed, and translated in the books of foreign visitors both private and official.

Among the British National Archives at Kew are tens of thousands of contemporaneous manuscripts, records of how the British Embassy, supported by the consulates and the warships, corresponded with all parties in the conflict both at the highest governmental level, including the sultan, his cabinet, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, and locally, including with the provisional Greek Government, and the Revolutionary and the counter-Revolutionary military commanders. As for documents first produced in Athens itself, they were probably plentiful, but since almost none survived the Revolution when the town of Athens was burned down, they are now mainly known from the copies made by others.<sup>67</sup>

Especially useful to the British Ambassadors were the reports of William Meyer, Consul-General for the region that is now north-western Greece and Albania, stationed in Preveza.<sup>68</sup> Most British consular officials were drawn from locally born families employed by the Levant Company, whose direct knowledge of Britain was at best at second hand, and whose education and expertise was largely confined to dealing with local matters of tariffs, trade, and shipping, including the interests of citizens of the Ionian Islands, whose shipping enjoyed British protection.<sup>69</sup>

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67 The paucity is noted by Stathi, Katerina, 'The Carta Incognita of Ottoman Athens', in Hadjianastasis, Marios, ed., *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 182, referring to the then-forthcoming work by Balta, Evangelia, *Ottoman Studies and Archives in Greece* (Uxbridge: Gorgias Press, 2016).

68 A large selection of his reports during the early years of the Revolution was published in *Epirus, Ali Pasha and the Greek Revolution, Consular Reports of William Meyer from Preveza*, edited by E. Prevelakes; K. Kalliatake Mertikopoulou (Athens: Academy of Athens, 1996). Two volumes covering 1821 and 1822.

69 The network of British consulships, with explanation of their status, is discussed, with extracts, by Prousis, Theophilus C., *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval, 1815–1830* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2008).

William Meyer, by contrast, who arrived in 1820, the year before the Revolution broke out, had been recruited in Britain especially for the role as part of a professionalization of the instruments of British policy. Son of an immigrant from Germany, and educated in the ancient classics at Eton College and Cambridge University, Meyer spoke several modern European languages and quickly learned Greek and Turkish.<sup>70</sup> Although, as a consular official, Meyer was formally forbidden from discussing political matters, he was the recipient of many communications from both the Greek Revolutionaries and the Ottomans. In particular as early as 1822 he established a personal relationship with Reschid, at that time a rising officer in the Ottoman army, who was to be responsible for the capture of Missolonghi in 1826 and of Athens in 1827, and who was to be appointed grand vizier, the highest office of the Ottoman Empire, a post he held from January 1829 to 17 February 1833.<sup>71</sup> Reschid, whose role in the saving of the Parthenon during the Revolution, and in the negotiation that ended the war, was to be as important as that of any individual mentioned in this book, used Meyer as a trusted channel of communication with the British Government.

When Stratford Canning was the British ambassador in Constantinople, the embassy collected innumerable documents, including eye-witness accounts, whenever they could, many written in Greek, others in Ottoman Turkish and in other languages. Every morning, after a cold bath and prayers, the indefatigable Canning would be in his workroom by six, taking breakfast with members of his staff at nine. The room was arranged into many tables, one for each topic, and he shifted his chair from one to another, reading and writing, 'quill in his hand', for ten or twelve hours.<sup>72</sup> Canning, in modern terms a workaholic, was tireless in pressing his government's diplomatic aims on the governments to which he was accredited, demanding meetings as well as sending diplomatic notes. And it was not only his own words

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<sup>70</sup> Summarised from the Biographical Note in Meyer, *Epirus*, i.

<sup>71</sup> The fullest account in English of Reschid's extraordinary career that I know of is in David Urquhart's *Spirit of the East*, ii, 331–34. Reschid was also known by his previous title, Kutayah Pasha, variously spelled in European transcriptions, and later as Roumeli Valessi or superior governor of southern European Turkey, as was noted by Urquhart, *Spirit*, ii, 334. He is not to be confused with Mustafa Reschid Pasha, with whom Canning worked closely in the 1840s and later in implementing the modernizing reforms. Lane Poole, ii, 104.

<sup>72</sup> As described by Cunningham, i, 161.

that Canning wanted to be heard and heeded. He relentlessly drove the junior embassy staff to translate and copy documents and send them to London. Some of his dispatches have so many attachments that they can be read as excursions into contemporary history. And as Steven Richmond, his recent biographer, has remarked: 'Throughout his career his colleagues were also worn down by his relentless capacity for work.'<sup>73</sup> Later in his career Queen Victoria, normally a conscientious reader of dispatches from embassies, complained that 'he [Canning] has always so much to say it is sometimes quite alarming.'<sup>74</sup> In 1896 after Canning's death his family deposited a huge collection of personal papers in the national archives at Kew, some of which allow us to see behind the tidied-up documentation sent to London.

Documents, especially diplomatic documents, however apparently comprehensive, do not normally record the off-the-record conversations when bargains were suggested, explored, or provisionally struck. They omit what David Urquhart, who at a critical moment acted as Canning's confidential messenger in his dealings with Grand Vizier Reschid, called the 'whispers' with which diplomacy 'changes all things past, corrupts all things present, and disposes all things to come.'<sup>75</sup> Whispers were however, it turns out, more frequently turned into documents than Urquhart realized, and much of what he thought was personal correspondence was printed long ago.<sup>76</sup>

As for the French, extracts from the archives of the French Admiralty, including personal reports by Admiral de Rigny, who played a large part in saving the Parthenon and other monuments from being destroyed, are included in printed works.<sup>77</sup> But, at present, we only know of some

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73 Richmond, Steven, *The Voice of England in the East: Stratford Canning and Diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire* (London: Tauris, 2014), 140. We have an account of how one member of his staff in the early 1850s, Eustace Clare Grenville Murray, harboured a deep dislike of the ambassador that he exposed in a series of anonymous publications, as will be discussed in Chapter 19.

74 Quoted by Richmond, 13, with a note on the source, Charlotte Canning, the wife of George Canning's son, later a Viceroy of India.

75 Quoted by Robinson, Gertrude, *David Urquhart [sic], some chapters in the life of a Victorian knight-errant of justice and liberty* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1920), xii, from Urquhart's *The Portfolio* New Series ii, no v.

76 Bolsover, G.H., 'David Urquhart and the Eastern Question, 1833–37: A Study in Publicity and Diplomacy', *The Journal of Modern History*, 8 (4), December 1936, 444–67.

77 Notably Jurien de La Gravière, le vice-amiral, *La station du Levant* (Paris: Plon, 1876) and Debidour, A., *Le général Fabvier: sa vie militaire et politique* (Paris: Plon, 1904).

important documents and of the decisive events to which they refer from the archives of other countries including those of the Ottoman Empire.

In addition, at the British Library, there is another large, and also mostly still unexplored, archive of the personal and official papers of General Sir Richard Church who was the employed commander-in chief of the Greek Army in 1827 at the time of the battles and the surrender of the Acropolis to the Ottoman army. He and his staff kept a military diary of events day by day and also conducted a huge correspondence, partly in preparation for writing a history of the Revolution, of which he drafted many chapters but that he never completed. Those who wrote the papers in the Richard Church archive, being members of the Greek forces and not officials of the British government, had no knowledge of the behind-the-scenes talks described in the archives at Kew, although it is possible that at one moment of crisis, which involved the monuments, he was the recipient of whispers.<sup>78</sup>

And there are other archives, notably the papers of Thomas Gordon, another participant, who was both a funder and a historian of the Greek Revolution, held at Aberdeen University. We have the journals of Comte de Caraman in the British Library along with other manuscripts, and yet more primary materials in the Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects.<sup>79</sup> Among these papers there are documents about the role of the Parthenon and the monuments in the war whose evidence I am able to deploy in this book for the first time. And we can expect more. We may, for example, learn whether the Ottoman military documents that relate to Reschid's army's operations in Athens in 1826 and 1827, which are archives as yet unexplored at the time of writing, may require the account I offer in this book to be modified and not just amplified.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile we already have more than enough to go on.

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78 Discussed in Chapter 19, 'The Silence'.

79 Noted in Bibliography and footnotes as appropriate.

80 The existence of the papers, with the Ottoman reference numbers, is noted by Stathi, Katerina, 'The Carta Incognita of Ottoman Athens' in Hadjianastasis, Marios, ed., *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 181. They are likely to feature in the full publication of the Ottoman map edited by Tolia and Eldem to be discussed in Chapter 4, said at the time of writing to be underway.



## 7. The New Science and its Enemies.

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Of the three main ‘ways of looking’ at the Parthenon that arrived in Athens at much the same time, a century and a half before the Greek Revolution, the first was that of the ‘viewer as topographer’. He, or occasionally she, preceded the arrival of the ‘viewer as connoisseur’ who professed to admire the ancient remains for their artistic, or, in recently invented western eighteenth-century terms, their ‘aesthetic’ qualities, and the ‘viewer as philosopher’ who hoped that, by studying the remains, he could discover universal laws of human history that, when applied, would improve the quality of decision-making in his own time.<sup>1</sup> Taken together, the three viewing genres, with their overlaps, variants, and subdivisions, constituted a mental world that, with only a few harbingers from before that time, began to overlay, and to an extent to displace, the viewing genres recommended by the leaders of the local communities in Athens.

The topographer, by systematically comparing what was visible in the landscape above ground with information about ancient Athens that was recorded, often only incidentally, in the writings of the ancient authors accessible in his time, attempted to build a knowledge of the geography of the ancient city. In his imagination he reversed the physical changes of the intervening centuries.<sup>2</sup> As a young English poet later wrote in a composition that won a prize at Oxford University:

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- 1 To be discussed in Chapters 10 and 9. For the convenience of readers I will use the generic ‘he’ to include all practitioners, irrespective of gender, community, nation, religious affiliation or other identities.
  - 2 Set out explicitly by, for example, Wilkins, William, *Atheniensiā, or, Remarks on the Topography and Buildings* (London: Murray, 1816), 77–78.

Yet still Oblivion seems to toil in vain,  
For what she razes, Fancy rears again.<sup>3</sup>

Topography was the collecting of primary evidence and regarding it as data, valuable in itself, but also foundational for any attempts to answer more complex questions about the societies of the ancient world and their mental worlds. The topographer, we see looking back, was the predecessor of the 'archaeologist' who, since the early nineteenth century, has been able to dig and bring to the surface objects previously hidden.<sup>4</sup> In more recent times, the 'survey archaeologist' has extended the possibilities further by studying the landscape as a human construct, and who, with the help of drones and X-ray cameras, can look at what lies beneath the surface without destroying the site's potential for yielding future knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

The topographers who arrived in Athens from the 1670s were better equipped to recover the cityscape of ancient Athens than any of the local peoples or visitors during the previous thousand years and more. Intellectually they carried into the Ottoman territories the principles of what is conventionally called the 'scientific revolution', although that phrase risks exaggerating the suddenness and extent of a change that co-existed with older ways of thinking, rather than, as in political revolution, superseding them. They were participating in an intellectual

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- 3 From 'The Parthenon' by Burdon, Richard, in *Oxford Prize Poems, being a collection of such English poems as have at various times obtained prizes in the University of Oxford*, sixth edition (Oxford: Parker, 1819), 151–54. In the English language, usage of the time, 'fancy' was almost synonymous with 'imagination', a key concept of literary romanticism widely defined, although a distinction was sometimes made.
  - 4 By 1837, William Wilkins, by then a famous British architect in the neo-Hellenic style who had personally studied the ancient buildings when the Acropolis was still an Ottoman fortress, was already distinguishing the 'archaeology' then being practiced, from the 'topography' that was all that was possible when he wrote his earlier book, Wilkins, William, *Prolusiones Architectonicae; Or, Essays On Subjects Connected With Grecian And Roman Architecture* (London: J. Weale, 1837), 6. Among the buildings he designed in London are the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, much of University College, London, and the former St George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner, now a hotel, unusual for its pilasters copied from the Thrassylos monument on the north slope of the Acropolis to be discussed in Chapter 17.
  - 5 The nineteenth-century excavations on the Acropolis of Athens, which were pioneering in their day and are described in Chapter 21. Drones are now being used with success in some countries to spot the illegal digging up of objects that feed the international antiquities market and cause irreparable losses of knowledge. An example from Aphrodisias in Turkey was reported in the *Archaeological Newsletter* from Hurriyet on 9 November 2020.

movement that aimed to reduce the reliance on sacralized texts, oral traditions, and the authority of the institutions that interpreted such texts as sources of knowledge. Suspicious of backward-looking approaches that implied that the past is wiser than the present, the men and women of the new science planned to build a body of knowledge founded on observation, on critique of the observations reported by others, and on actively embracing provisionality as part of an ongoing relationship between evidence, interpretation, and degree of reliability of the resulting knowledge.

The new science, which took as its purview the whole domain of intellectual inquiry, had been pioneered in a few cities in northern Europe, notably Leiden, Paris, and London. By the late seventeenth century, especially in France and England, it had been given institutional form in the founding of learned academies under royal patronage. The men of science, (in France the *savants* or *çavans*), were in many cities both a real community who met regularly, and an imagined community held together by personal correspondence by letter, and by sharing their findings with others not known to them in specialist journals. The members of this new community regarded social class, gender, wealth, income, and hereditary privilege as irrelevant to the collective intellectual enterprise. In their work, in word if not always in deed, many tried to ignore differences in nationality and in the systems of belief professed by members of religious organizations, insofar as that was possible at a time when almost everyone was so identified.

### A Tiny Republic of Letters: Spon, Wheler, Vernon and Eastcote

Jacob Spon, a medical doctor from Lyon, who visited Athens in 1676, brought not only the new way of seeing and thinking, but a specialist vocabulary that he had invented himself, which he set out later in a sumptuous volume.<sup>6</sup> Written in Latin, dedicated to the Dauphin, the King

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<sup>6</sup> Spon, *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis: in quibus marmora, statuae, musiva, toreumata, gemmae, numismata, Grutero, Ursino, Boissardo, Reinesio, aliisque Antiquorum Monumentorum collectoribus ignota, & hucusque inedita referuntur ac illustrantur ...* (Lyon: at author's expense, with royal privilege granted in 1681, 1685). A bibliography of Spon's extensive publications prepared by Henriette Pommier is included in Spon, Étienne and Mossière, *Jacob Spon. Un humaniste lyonnais du XVII<sup>ème</sup> siècle* edited by Étienne, Roland and Mossière, Jean-Claude (Paris: Bocard, 1993), 53–78.

of France's eldest son and heir, and prepared and published at his own expense, Spon's *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis* suggested the overarching term archaeography (Latin *archaeographia*) that Spon defined as the description of the physical remains of the objects and monuments that the ancients had employed in their religious practices, in their politics, and in all the writings, visual arts, and sciences of their time. He exuberantly subdivided the new science into numismatography, the study of coins; epigraphy, the study of ancient inscriptions; architectonography, the study of buildings; iconography, of statues; glyptography, of gems; toreumatography, of low-reliefs; bibliography, of manuscripts; and finally the science of angeiography, the study of the instruments employed in the making of each type of ancient artefact, an idea he took from the specialist surgical instruments that, as a medical practitioner, he knew well.

As a taxonomy arranged by the physical nature of the objects of study, Spon's list may now appear to have been too concentrated on form rather than function, following the Linnaean system of classifying animals and plants. But Spon, perhaps anticipating this line of criticism, also suggested four 'auxiliary sciences', that he named dipnographia, the study of banquets; irnatographia, the study of clothes; doulographia; the study of slavery; and taphographia, the science of funerary customs and of the commemoration of the dead.<sup>7</sup> Spon, the most thoughtful of the pioneers, was already moving away from describing ancient objects as in a museum catalogue arranged in accordance with modern European material categories (statue, picture, vase, coin, etc.) towards an anthropology of the cultural practices of the ancient world, an approach that attempted to discover the uses to which objects were put by the human beings and institutions who had first caused them to be brought into existence in ancient times.

The words Spon invented and proposed could have been formed as — ologies rather than as — ographies, that is, as divisions of knowledge rather than as divisions of writings about knowledge, but as Spon's choice implied, the dissemination of the results of researches to those able to engage with them was as much part of the intellectual aims

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7 Spon, *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis: in quibus marmora, statuae, musiva, toreumata, gemmae, numismata, Grutero, Ursino, Boissardo, Reinesio, aliisque Antiquorum Monumentorum collectoribus ignota, & hucusque inedita referentur ac illustrantur ...* (Lyons: at author's expense, with royal privilege, 1685), Praefatio, unnumbered.

of the new science as the work of research itself. By writing in Latin, Spon could hope that his work would reach learned readers outside as well as inside France, although only at the cost of excluding many more, including most women.

Looking back across the subsequent developments in the ways of seeing and studying that Spon proposed, it is noticeable that, although some were carried forward by successors under different names, his proposal to develop a formal knowledge of the instruments and tools by which ancient objects were brought into existence long remained dormant. For centuries, the study of how and why ancient buildings such as the Parthenon had been brought into existence was pushed aside by a western romanticism among whose rhetorics was a disdain for the materiality of what they called 'art', and for the political economy, widely defined, within whose conventions they were used and meanings made.<sup>8</sup>

Spon and Sir George Wheler, along with Francis Vernon and Sir Giles Eastcote, constituted themselves into a real community, a tiny republic of letters in Athens, although they had arrived there unknown to one another by different geographical routes and with different aims and expectations.<sup>9</sup> They turned to the distance media of their day to widen their small actual community into a larger imagined community. Spon himself conducted an extensive correspondence, some of which he published in print as well as writing a book describing his travels and discoveries.<sup>10</sup> Vernon, a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, published an initial report in *Philosophical Transactions*, the printed journal of the Society.<sup>11</sup> Neither Spon nor Wheler, whose two names were to be

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8 The rhetorics of western romanticism are discussed in Chapter 9. The nineteenth-century discovery of the remains of the ancient workshop on the Acropolis and the fate of the ancient tools found there are discussed in Chapter 21. The importance of metaphors from the tools used in the building industries to be found in the literature and discursive practices of classical Athens is described with examples in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

9 All four, having journeyed together from Venice, when they had a copy of Guillet's book with them, appear to have been together in Athens for only a short time in August 1675. Eastcote died when visiting the Peloponnese from a sudden illness soon afterwards. Vernon was murdered in Persia in 1677. Summarized from mentions in Constantine, David, *Early Greek Travellers and the Hellenic Ideal* (Cambridge: OUP, 1984).

10 Notably in Spon, Jacob, *Recherches Curieuses de l'Antiquité* (Lyon: Amaulry, 1683). See also Omont, H., 'Athènes au XVIIe Siècle, Relation du P. Robert de Dreux, Lettres de Jacob Spon et du P. Babin (1669–1680)', in *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, xiv (Paris: Ledoux, 1901).

11 In *Philosophical Transactions*, 1676, full title and URL in Bibliography.

conjoined from the beginning in the title pages of their books, paid much attention to the western distinction between ‘works of art’ and other ancient objects, except to recommend that modern artists should study the masterpieces of antiquity.<sup>12</sup>

The sudden quickening of interest in the Parthenon that had brought the four men to Athens was, to a large extent, a consequence of a political shift, and a result of the decisions by the Governments of France and the Ottoman Empire to develop closer commercial ties, a process that culminated in trade agreements, known as ‘capitulations’, by which French trading companies were accorded privileges. The embassy led by the Marquis de Nointel, which was sent to Constantinople to ratify and publicize the new relationship with public ceremonies, returned to France after two years. In December 1674 on their way home, Nointel and his staff made a detour to Athens, where they were received with honours, including the privilege of visiting the Acropolis.

At that time the Parthenon was a working building that had scarcely changed externally since it had been converted into a church at the end of antiquity and subsequently into a mosque. Nointel was ‘ravished’ by ‘these miracles’, as he declared in his report to the French king. He wished to know what the ancient authors had written about Athens and he suggested that the king might commission him to make another visit.<sup>13</sup> Nointel had been permitted by the Ottoman authorities to employ a French artist to make drawings of the pediments, metopes, and frieze of the Parthenon, which were soon to become an indispensable resource for anyone who wished to understand how the Parthenon had appeared in ancient as well as in Byzantine, Frankish, and Ottoman times.<sup>14</sup> And

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12 Examples of the visual presentation of their joint authorship in Figures 7.2 and 7.5. The full titles as they appear on the title pages of their books are given in the Bibliography.

13 Quoted by Vandal, Albert, de l’Académie Française, *L’Odyssée d’un ambassadeur; les Voyages du Marquis de Nointel (1670–1680)* (Paris: Plon, 1900), 165. Nointel assumed that the damage had been done by the Turks. He gave the other monuments the local names, ‘the Palace of Pericles’ [Olympian Zeus], the ‘Tomb of Socrates’ [Tower of the Winds]. The ‘lantern of Demosthenes’ [Choragic monument of Lysicrates] that Spon and others were to show were later re-namings

14 Summarized by Theodore Bowie and Diether Thimme, *The Carrey Drawings of the Parthenon Sculptures* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1971). Some contemporary reports were included in Vandal and in two nineteenth-century works that remain indispensable, Laborde, Comte de, *Athènes aux XVe, XVIe et XVIIe siècles, d’après des documents inédits, etc par le Comte de Laborde, membre de l’Institut Langues français* (Paris: J. Renouard, two volumes, 1854), and Omont, Henri, editor, *Athènes au XVIIe siècle. Dessins des sculptures du Parthénon attribués à*

it was partly as a result of reports circulated in court circles and among the internationally-minded savants by Nointel and by members of his staff that we see a rush to Athens and a flurry of books in the years that followed.

## Objects, Stone Inscriptions and Artifacts: What They Could Tell

In his earliest researches, Spon, working mainly with Roman-era objects, but with some Greek including a few from Athens, showed how his methods could recover knowledge not available to those who only had ancient literary texts, as in his reconstruction of ancient music-making, and of how it was related to dance, and to social occasion, as shown as Figure 7.1, in which he put together images from different objects to form a tableau.



Figure 7.1. Ancient music and dance as shown on ancient objects. Copper engraving.<sup>15</sup>

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*J. Carrey et conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale, accompagnés de vues et plans d'Athènes et de l'Acropole* (Paris: Leroux, 1898). An example of the artist's work that, I will suggest, has led to a misunderstanding of the west pediment, the most often-seen of the stories in stone presented on the classical Parthenon, is reproduced in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

15 Spon, *Miscellanea eruditae antiquitatis*, 21. The image was compiled from separate engravings that were used again in other contexts.

Spon showed that studies of ancient objects could add to an understanding of ancient literary texts, including, in this case, a passage in the Epistle of Paul of Tarsus (St Paul) to the Corinthians, familiar to anglophone readers as: 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.'<sup>16</sup> Quite suddenly the study of the ancient world as it was practiced in a few European centres was moving from a mainly self-contained philological study of ancient written texts, as had been the dominant mode during the centuries since the Italian humanists of the fifteenth century, to one in which material remains and the written texts, including biblical texts, could be studied together, with benefits to the understanding of both, but also as a new contribution to an understanding of the societal conditions and cultural practices within which they had come into being. Besides the physical remains and the writings of ancient authors, the topographer had access to a third type of evidence: ancient inscriptions mostly on stone, often fragmentary, that he had either seen and transcribed himself or that had been transcribed and published by others. In 1663, one of the five academies founded in Paris to advance and apply knowledge in accordance with a scientific paradigm, the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres ('Academy of Fine Literature and Inscriptions') took the study of antiquity as its main focus. Ancient inscriptions, that could often be dated, and could sometimes be related directly to passages in ancient authors, were a rapidly growing resource. Spon was to devote a whole volume of his three-volume *Voyage* to transcriptions of inscriptions, deliberately making them available in provisional form even when he knew his transcriptions could be improved on, so that others could take account of them. Only gradually was it appreciated that, unlike the literary texts surviving from the ancient world that had been copied and recopied across centuries, inscriptions on stone and on other durable materials were primary documents almost contemporaneous with the events they recorded, which had been socially produced and approved; in many cases they were the public statements and speech acts of some collectivity such as the ancient city made after the event that caused them to be set up.

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16 English-language Bible, authorized 'King James' version, 1 Corinthians 13:1.



If inscriptions on stone were to be used as evidence for the ancient past, it was therefore necessary to understand how and why they had come into existence in their material form, and how their rhetorics could be historically recovered and understood within the conventions of the time they were first displayed on durable stone. As few at the time of the excitement of their rediscovery explicitly or fully understood, the inscriptions also bring out the fact that the ancient classical world, including those who commissioned and built the Parthenon, had made use of documents on perishable material, such as papyrus and wax tablets, of which no examples were found until much later.<sup>17</sup>

The topographer also collected and applied information from a fourth type of evidence: ancient coins ('medals'), ancient vases, and other artifacts, including ancient statues, that were themselves often inscribed with words, and inscribed bases that had survived even when the statues had not. These were another source of knowledge that also required an understanding of the ways in which they had come into being in material form, of their rhetorics, and of their later history as objects.

Spon and the others also recorded a fifth type of evidence, the stories about the ancient monuments that were told locally in Athens by the people who lived there, including senior churchmen. But whereas the evidence of the other four types mostly cohered with one another, and often with discoveries made later, and so offered reassurance that the methodology was a secure means of recovering knowledge of the past, the local stories were frequently contradicted by the ancient literary texts as collected by Meursius. Spon, for example, immediately realised that the cave below the Thrassylos monument on the south slope of the Acropolis, to be discussed and shown in Chapter 17, although locally said to be the Cave of Pan, could not be the Cave of Pan mentioned by Euripides and Lucian, which had to be on the north slope.<sup>18</sup> When a smaller cave on the north slope was explored, inscriptions and artefacts that associated the place with cults of Pan were found, and the passages in the ancient authors in which the cave was mentioned made greater sense.<sup>19</sup> In one of many examples of how 'publication' has

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17 The culture of classical Athens, broadly defined, with my suggestions for how we might deal with the systemic gaps in the evidence, is described in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

18 It was a point on which Meursius had been mistaken. Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 161 and 167.

19 Spon, ii, 167; Wheeler, 370. On this point Spon was able to correct Meursius.

to reach readers if it is to make any impact, the wrong cave was still being pointed out to visitors as late as 1816, when the authorities of Ottoman Athens arranged for Louise Demont, the lady's maid of the British Queen Caroline, to be given a special tour as part of an elaborate welcome.<sup>20</sup>

Spon also saw at once that the tall 'Frankish Tower', which was to be removed in the 1870s and which was built into the Propylaea was not of ancient date, and that its local name, 'the Arsenal of Lycurgus', had been bestowed by people who had little knowledge of the history of their city.<sup>21</sup> The choragic monument of Lysicrates, easily identifiable by its Greek inscription, was known locally as 'the Lantern of Demosthenes', the famous orator, or sometimes as 'the Lantern of Diogenes', the philosopher who distrusted received conventions.<sup>22</sup> The Tower of the Winds, another monument identifiable from its Greek inscriptions, was known as 'the Prison of Socrates' or sometimes 'the Tomb of Socrates.' The massive columns of the temple dedicated to Olympian Zeus, that had been completed in the second century by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, were 'the palace of Theseus' or 'the palace of Pericles.' The Nike temple, which could be seen from a distance, even although the Acropolis was not normally open to visitors, was 'the school of Aristophanes', the comic dramatist, or the 'school of Pythagoras,' the mathematician and metaphysician, both names evidently thought of as 'philosophers', a word used as a term of contempt, whose 'schools' Justinian the Byzantine emperor had forcibly closed in c.529 CE after a continuous history of about a thousand years.<sup>23</sup> To the local peoples, the Parthenon and other

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20 Demont, Louise, *Journal of the Visit of Her Majesty the Queen to Tunis, Greece, and Palestine ... translated by Edgar Garston* (London: T. and J. Allan, 1821), 26. Demont, author of one of the few non-elite western accounts, records other fantastical stories. At Mount May [perhaps a printer's error for the Hill of Mars, that is, the Areopagus] she saw 'the spot where St Paul preached to ten thousand Athenians, who became converts the same day', Demont, 29. She believed, or at least reports, a story that the wooden horse of Troy had had 'ten thousand men enclosed within it', Demont, 33.

21 Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 142.

22 Pictured in Figures 14.3 and 14.4. The reference to 'Herodotus Atticus' [for Herodes Atticus] in Demont, 27 is, however, more likely to be a mistranscription by the printer.

23 Kaldellis, Anthony, *The Christian Parthenon, Classicism and Pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), xiii. Some examples and pictures, including the text of the hymn that celebrates the expulsion of the philosophers were given in my essay, St Clair, William, 'Looking at the Acropolis of Athens from Modern Times to Antiquity' in Sandis, Constantine, ed., *Cultural Heritage Ethics: Between Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2014), 57–102.

monuments were what the modern tourist industry calls 'dark heritage', visited and remembered not to be celebrated but as uncomfortable and disconcerting warnings from the past to the present.<sup>24</sup>

The surprising aspect of the interest in the monuments of ancient Athens is that it did not happen much earlier. The western European quest to recover a knowledge of the ancient Hellenic world had begun in Italy in the fifteenth century, with a systematic search in institutional libraries for manuscripts of texts from the ancient Greco-Roman world in hopes of adding to the small corpus that had been continuously copied and read between the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west and the period known opaquely as 'Christian humanism.' With the discovery of manuscripts that coincided with the arrival of print technology came a rich harvest of editing, scholarship, and dissemination of the results. By 1500, a huge number of clearly printed copies of most of the recovered ancient Latin and Greek authors were available to be bought at cheap prices all over western, although not eastern, Christendom, with increasing numbers of the populations of western countries able and eager to read them and to recommend them to young people as part of their education.

The ancient world that was recovered during this humanist phase was, however, almost exclusively one of words, and its method of study philological. Even those ancient authors whose works cried out to be compared with what may still have remained on the ground, especially Pausanias, but also writers of practical advice books such as Dioscorides who described the medicinal properties of plants found in Greece, were, for centuries, only annotated with reference to the written words of other ancient authors.<sup>25</sup> In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Demetrios Chalkokondylas, an Athenian scholar of ancient Greek living in Italy who taught in Perugia, Florence and Milan, went several times to the Acropolis of Athens, which was then in the jurisdiction of the Acciaiuoli family, to whom he was related—but he is not known to have paid any attention to the Parthenon or the other monuments.<sup>26</sup> At present no adequate explanation is available for the humanist corralling of ancient Hellas into an exclusively textual world.

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24 The revival of this way of seeing in the nineteenth century is discussed in Chapter 22.

25 This emerges from the summaries of the early editions in *Following Pausanias*.

26 I record my thanks to Antonio Corso for this point.

Many of their successors inhabited a self-contained world of literary and historiographical texts untethered from the geography and climate of the places in which they had been composed and from the ancient remains that were still to be seen there. This was the case even after the findings of Spon and the early topographers became available and through to the time of Korais and other members of the so-called Greek Enlightenment.

Although the printed works of Spon and Wheler were widely circulated in translations into several languages, it took a long time for the change in the ways of seeing the monuments that they championed to undermine the older traditions. A generation after their work it was still possible for a high-ranking French churchman, writing in an expensive book with a royal privilege, to say that the Parthenon was dedicated to Jupiter/J Zeus and to express no opinion on the damage that had been caused by bombardment by the western army under the command of the Venetian general Morosini, which caused the Parthenon to blow up.<sup>27</sup>

Among the local Orthodox population, the Parthenon was sometimes called 'the Temple to the Unknown God,' easily recognizable as a memory of 'the altar to the unknown god' mentioned by the author of the biblical Acts of the Apostles as having been seen by Paul of Tarsus during his brief visit; like other examples of renaming, this had altered over time.<sup>28</sup> And there were local stories about Paul's visit, such as those told to visitors who were taken to see the well in which he was said to have hidden to escape pursuers who wanted to kill him.<sup>29</sup> As the French

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27 He mentions that the interior columns that he presumably saw on the ground were of black marble and porphyry, as had been seen by Spon when they were in place and also noticed by the anonymous manuscript account of Athens published as St Clair, William, and Robert Picken, 'The Parthenon in 1687: New Sources', in Michael Cosmopoulos, ed., *The Parthenon and its Sculptures* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004).

28 'Les Chrétiens du pays disent que ce temple est celui même qui étoit dédié au Dieu incognu, dans lequel Saint Paul préscha; a présent il sert de mosquée, et les Turcs y vont faire leurs oraisons.' Laborde, i, 63 from Deshayes, Louis, Baron de Courmenin, *Voilage de Levant fait par le commandement du Roy en l'année 1621 par le Sr. D. C.* (Paris: Adrian Taupinart, 1624). Noted also, from Laborde, by Hobhouse, 1858 edition, ii, 438.

29 The history of this local story, which continued to be promoted and credited at least until the later nineteenth century, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*. The tradition included an ambiguity between whether the Parthenon was called the temple to the unknown god in Paul's day or had later been appropriated as a piece of ironic triumphalism, and the alleged connexions with Dionysios the Areopagite,

churchman Robert de Dreux heard, when he was shown round Athens in 1669, a few years before Spon's visit, some of the fanciful names were the starting point for stories about Demosthenes, Socrates, Paul, and the others that, for anyone familiar with the works of the ancient authors, had little or no historical validity.<sup>30</sup> Nor were traditional names only used by local uneducated people in a popular tradition that existed alongside a more evidence-based knowledge among the more educated classes. The popular and ecclesiastical traditions were much the same.

As for the Muslim community, to judge from the account by Evliya, who visited Athens in 1667–1668, the Muslims had conferred on the monuments a different set of names. Some were associated with the 'philosophers' that the Muslim religion, like the Christian, claimed to have superseded. The 'Tower of the Winds' was 'Plato's Pavilion'.<sup>31</sup> The columns of Olympian Zeus were all that remained of the 'Pleasure-dome of the Queen of Sheba'.<sup>32</sup> As in the Christian traditions, names morphed into other similar names, for example Solon became Solomon. And they too were the starting points for stories that owed little to historicity or even plausibility. For example, Evliya, the educated and privileged traveller and formerly high-ranking official, reported that Plato had harangued the people from the Christian pulpit in the now Muslim Parthenon.<sup>33</sup> If we compare the names selected by the Muslims for commemoration, however, the inclusion in the lists of Hippocrates and Galen, physicians; of Aristotle and Ptolemy, describers of the natural world; and of Plato, the theist's friend; may be traces of some ambition to save the ancient knowledge regarded as useful while disregarding the rest.<sup>34</sup>

The ancient monuments of Athens and elsewhere were nonetheless present in the lives of the local communities, and when the record is

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mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. I will also discuss the ideological purposes that the attribution served in places far from Athens, especially in France, for many centuries.

30 See Dreux, Robert de, *Voyage en Turquie et en Grèce du R. P. Robert De Dreux*, published and annotated by Hubert Pernot (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1925) and Omont, H., 'Athènes au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, Relation du P. Robert de Dreux, Lettres de Jacob Spon et du P. Babin (1669–1680)', in *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, xiv (Paris: Ledoux, 1901).

31 Evliya, 288.

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*, 282.

34 A list in Evliya, 290, some names not identified.

searched, even although it consists mostly of reports by visitors, there are many examples of local resistance to the removal of antiquities, and to foreigners breaking off parts of buildings, even when consent was given by local political and religious leaders.<sup>35</sup> Whether it is useful to call such examples of local engagement ‘indigenous archaeology’, the phrase favoured by Yannis Hamilakis, may be queried.<sup>36</sup> The naming of cultural practices with words ending in ‘-ology’ implies a more structured approach to studying and understanding the ancient past than we find in the record.

### Reading versus Observation: Contested Ways of Seeing

There is little evidence to suggest that, until a few decades before the Greek Revolution, the Greek or the Turkish-speaking societies of Athens and elsewhere in Greece knew much about the ancient world or were concerned to discover more. Nor did they have the means even if they had been so inclined. Although, for example, the text of Pausanias was known to Greek Orthodox communities in Venice and elsewhere among the Greek-speaking diaspora since it was first printed, there is no evidence that, at the time of the visit of Spon, Pausanias’s description of Athens was known to anyone in Athens outside the tiny foreign community, and even amongst them it had only arrived a few years earlier.<sup>37</sup> The local Orthodox population and their leaders, with whom

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35 Many examples given in Thomasson, Fredrik, ‘Justifying and Criticizing the Removals of Antiquities in Ottoman Lands: Tracking the Sigeion Inscription’, in *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 17:3, 2010, 493–517. Other examples, some not picked up by earlier authors, are noted by Tolia, George, ‘“An Inconsiderate love of the Arts”: The Spoils of Greek Antiquities, 1780–1820’ in Bahrani, Zeynep and Eldem.

36 For example Hamilakis, Yannis, ‘Indigenous Archaeologies in Ottoman Greece’ in Bahrani, Zinab, Zeynep Çelik, Zeynep, and Eldem, Edhem, 49–71.

37 In Appendix F, I make available some locally written accounts, including one published for the first time. The first printed book in modern times about Athens written in Greek that includes knowledge of Pausanias is the work by Kondares, a Serbian, that he says was compiled from Italian sources, *Ιστορία παλαιού και πάλυ ωφέλιμοι της περιφημου πόλεως Αθήνης* (‘Ancient and Useful Stories of the Famous City of Athens’) that was printed in Venice in 1676 and never reprinted. Discussed by Tunali who quotes the opening words in translation: ‘Therefore, the Holy Scripture teaches us that is God’s will to try and save what is worthy of narration from the old stories, that is the lives of famous men and cities. So we will begin writing the history of Athens, not by using rhetorical praise or excessive words (because that should be avoided according to Lucian), because it is not the work of a historian to mix narration with poetry and rhetoric. Therefore

Spon, Wheler, and Vernon conversed, can be regarded as applying an inherited Byzantine way of seeing, not quite dancing on the graves of the defeated ‘pagans’ and their despised philosophical schools, but demonstrating an active indifference.

But, if Meursius’s *Cecropia* made possible the move from the library overseas to the actual site, the topographers such as Spon did not have matters all their own way, even amongst those who were most sympathetic to their enterprise. The title page and frontispiece of the second volume of *L’Utilité des Voyages, et de l’avantage que la recherche des antiquitez procure aux sçavans* (‘The usefulness of travels and the benefit that the study of antiquities brings to learned men’) by Charles-Caesar Baudelot de Dairval, a lawyer and, as he called himself, a new arrival in the republic of letters, is reproduced as Figure 7.2. As with other early modern frontispieces, it includes viewers within the picture. Readers are invited to identify with the ancient philosophers pictured and to share their methods of inquiry.

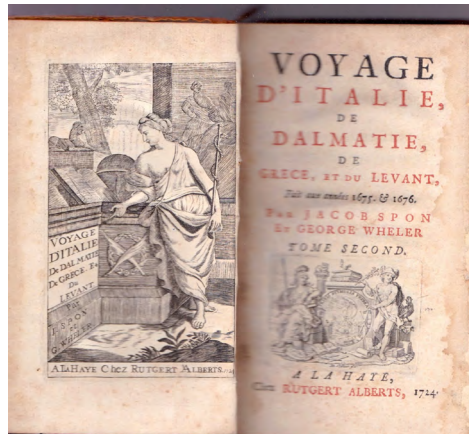


Figure 7.2. *The Usefulness of Travels*. The title page and frontispiece of the second volume of the edition of 1693.<sup>38</sup>

Reversing the dismissive comment of the narrator of the Acts of the Apostles that the men of ancient Athens were always chasing new ideas,

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we will narrate the facts simply, without exaggerations, how I found them in old Greek and Italian books, which I translated into the common language. And we have not left anything out nor added on our own words.’ There is no evidence for this book having reached Athens or changed local attitudes to the monuments. It is, however, one of the first to refer to the contemporary Greeks as Hellenes.

Baudelot reminded his readers that, although the ancients had not been Christians, they had made great progress in knowledge. Noting in his Dedication that it is experience that leads to perfection, and that now 'the sciences are on the throne and reign in sovereignty,' he called on the savants of Paris, a city that he dubbed the new Athens, to raise their eyes from their old books, to look forward to the future, and if they could not themselves go to see strange lands, to read the books of those who did, especially Pausanias and Spon.<sup>39</sup>

Paradoxically, in one respect, Baudelot's book is itself an example of the older thinking that Spon wished to supersede, a tendency to accord high value to ancient authors, just because they were ancient. Baudelot could scarcely write a sentence or offer a thought without quoting from half a dozen ancient authors, all carefully referenced and transcribed in Greek and Latin, as his authority and support. Nor did Baudelot ask for much real, as distinct from imagined travelling. At its heart of his book is a plea to discover the remains of antiquity, including those held in western museums, as a modern resource that would be useful and enlightening for educated men of modern times as it had been for those who had lived in antiquity, more a form of modern education than an inquiry into the actuality of the past.

But, if Baudelot's work can be regarded as a precursor of the not-yet-theorised eighteenth-century aesthetic, or as a revival of the ancient notion of 'paideia' as a process of instilling an official ideology, the other challenges that Spon had to face were more serious. And it was on a matter concerning the topography of Athens that he found himself personally caught up in a dispute in which the point at issue was the nature of authority itself. In 1675 in Paris had appeared a short book that in its English translation published the following year was entitled *An Account of a late Voyage to Athens, containing the estate both ancient and modern of that famous City, and of the present Empire of the Turks: ... By*

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39 The sneer by the narrator of the Acts in describing the visit of Paul of Tarsus to Athens is noted, along with numerous examples from ancient authors and some modern, without acknowledging that, by contextualizing, he has changed the meaning, in Baudelot, *Utilité*, i, 20. A discussion of the remark, which runs contrary to the advice in ancient rhetorical manuals never to insult whole groups of people, is included in *The Classical Parthenon*.



*Monsieur de la Guillaatiere ... Now Englished.*<sup>40</sup> The book purported to record the experiences of a French military man who, while serving in the wars against the Ottoman armies in Hungary, had been captured, enslaved, and later freed on the payment of a ransom. Monsieur de la Guillaatiere, it was claimed, had visited Athens with a party of savants and had sent the topographical notes he had made on the spot to his brother in Paris, a published author called Guillet de St. Georges, who edited and published them. Monsieur de la Guillaatiere claimed to have adopted the methods of a modern topographer, reading up on the ancient authors before visiting a particular locality, explicitly mentioning Pausanias and Meursius, and sometimes giving the exact date on which he had written up his observations.<sup>41</sup>

Spon, who had obtained a copy of Guillet's book in its first edition before he set out, read it on his journey, and had it with him in Athens, where he shared it with Wheler and his other companions. In the third volume of his own book describing Athens, Spon had affirmed his commitment to the 'Republic of the Savants' [so capitalised], by making available copies of the inscriptions he had found before he had fully researched them, in a small book that could be accessed by those who were not savants.<sup>42</sup> Unlike some savants, he noted, he would not play the Cerberus and guard his discoveries from scrutiny. And he occasionally footnoted the book by Guillet, in cases where he was in agreement.

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40 Full titles of the French and English versions are in the Bibliography under Guillet and others relating to the controversy under Spon. The spelling Guillaatiere in the English translation appears to have been an error. The debate between Spon and Guillet is discussed by Laborde, two-volume edition, ii, 1–55, with many extracts and references to relevant documents. Strangely, the modern spelling edition of Spon's account of his visit, Spon, Jacob, *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce, et du Levant 1678, Textes présentés et édités sous la direction de R. Etienne* by A. Duchêne, R. Étienne et J.-Cl. Mossière (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), does not discuss the dispute with Guillet except for a mention in one brief footnote. The Guillet episode is summarised by Augustinos 109–12. Discussed by Constantine, David, *Early Greek Travellers and the Hellenic Ideal* (Cambridge: OUP, 1984), 1–9, brushing aside the deception, and making a defence of the imposture as having in the end highlighted what was authentic in Guillet's book, namely, for Constantine, his imagined response to place, although that too was artificial and conventional as has already been discussed.

41 'When we had reposed our selves a little at our Lodgings, as our custom was we fell to our Memoirs, and set down what we had observed.' Guillet, English version, 316. See also 127.

42 Spon, *Voyage*, iii, 7–8.

However, while declaring that M. de Guilletiere wrote well, Spon, the physician, said playfully that his book was in need of medical attention.<sup>43</sup> Adopting a tone of puzzlement, he noted his surprise at some of the descriptions of what M. de la Guilletiere had seen. To an alert reader the implication was clear. Spon suspected that the alleged author of *Athènes ancienne et nouvelle, et l'estat present de l'Empire des Turcs ... avec un plan de la ville d'Athènes. Par le Sieur de la Guilletière* had never been to Athens but had run it up in a library in Paris, making much use of Meursius. As Spon's companion, Francis Vernon wrote more directly to the Royal Society in London, in a letter published soon after in *Philosophical Transactions*, Guillet's book was 'meer fancy and invention'.<sup>44</sup> In a few words the credibility of the book was damned in the publication that, with the *Journal des Savants* in Paris, carried the highest authority of the emerging new scientific age.

In facing his Galileo moment, Spon's first response had been amused detachment. But when, soon afterwards, M. de la Guilletiere produced another book, this time about the antiquities of Sparta, again with exact dates for his alleged visit there, and drawing heavily on another work by Meursius, for a savant like Spon there could no longer be any doubt.<sup>45</sup> Guillet had seen a gap in the market and, with the resources of the royal library in Paris to which he had privileged access, he pretended to have been to places that he had only read about.<sup>46</sup>

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43 Spon, Étienne edition, 310. Vernon notebook, 25, 'read Meursius, read Pausanias, read Guillet, later Vitruvius'. Vernon arrived in Athens shortly before Spon and Wheler. Spon pays tribute to the fact that his measuring skill was able to correct an ancient error about the latitude on which Athens stands. 'Monsieur Vernhum Gentilhomme Anglois.' Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 60.

44 In *Philosophical Transactions*, 1676, full title and URL in Bibliography.

45 Guillet, *Lacédémone ancienne et nouvelle, où l'on voit les moeurs, & les coûtumes des Grecs modernes, des Mahométans, & des Juifs du pays. Et quelques particularitez du séiour que le Sultan Mahomet IV a fait dans la Thessalie. Avec le plan de la ville de Lacédémone. Par le sieur de La Guilletière* (Paris: Ribou, 1676) and two later editions. He drew on Mersius, *Miscellanea Laconica, sive variarum Antiquitatum Laconicarum Libri IV., nunc primum editi cura S. Puffendorffii* (Amsterdam:1661).

46 According to researches made by the Marquis de Laborde in the nineteenth century (Laborde, 2 volume edition, i, 215), Guillet was born in the Auvergne in 1625 and died in 1705. The unpublished manuscript described by an unknown later hand as 'Description de la ville de Constantinople et de ses Antiquités par Guillet de la guilletiere' that, in its Preface, mentions the books on Athens and Lacedaimon, provides no evidence that Guillet had ever visited the places mentioned or that his brother de la Guilletiere was ever more than a literary device to give the authenticity of an alleged on-the-spot eye-witness to what was in reality a compilation from the works of others made in a library in Paris.

An event in Athens in the 1670s shows how older, local ways of seeing operated in practice, and may have done for centuries before. We know of it only because it was recorded by the author of one of the first modern accounts of Athens, written as a letter by someone present at, and participating in, the transition between old and new, which Spon caused to be printed in a small edition in Lyon with some explanatory notes of his own drawn from Meursius and others.<sup>47</sup> The anonymous author was long thought to be Father Babin, a Jesuit missionary, but it is more probable that it was composed at least in part by Jean Giraud of Lyon who served as French and later as English consul.<sup>48</sup> The author records that in the 1660s when masons were making repairs to the episcopal church of Dionysios the Areopagite, they came across a three-dimensional statue of a woman and child, which was assumed to be of the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus. The archbishop immediately ordered it to be destroyed.<sup>49</sup> His fear, Spon reports in printing the account, was that 'the Latins' [Roman Catholics] would use the existence of the statue as an argument against 'the Greeks' [Orthodox Christians] such as himself. The westerners might claim that the doctrine on three-dimensional images ['les images en bosse'] that their church allowed, but that, since the ecclesiastical Council of Nicaea of 787, the Greek Orthodox Church did not, would be questioned. If it became known that a three-dimensional religious statue had been found in the ruins of the house of Dionysios the Areopagite, the first bishop of Athens, then its manufacture must have been assented to either by Dionysios himself or by his ecclesiastical successors as bishops of Athens.<sup>50</sup>

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47 Spon and Babin, *Rélation de l'état présent de la Ville d'Athènes, Ancienne Capitale de la Grèce, bâtie depuis 3400 ans, avec un Abregé de son Histoire & de ses Antiquités* (Lyon: Pascal, 1674), reprinted Paris: J. Renouard et Cie., 1854, and in the collection by Laborde, 1854. Dreux, *Lettres de Jacob Spon et du P. Babin (1669–1680)*, *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, xiv, 1901 (Paris: Ledoux, 1901). For the circumstances of publication in print: 'Dans la relation même du R. P. Babin de la même Compagnie, que je fis imprimer il y a trois ans ...' Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 141.

48 Collignon, Maxime, 'Le Consul Giraud et sa Relation de L'Attique au XVIIe. Siècle', in *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, volume xxxix (Paris: 1913).

49 The archbishop was Anthimos III (1655–1676). Sicilianos, 347.

50 Babin, *Relation* 16. The story is mentioned more briefly by Spon, in his *Voyage* ii, 355, noting that the bishops and priests of the Orthodox Church do not allow 'figures en bosse pour leur rendre quelque veneration'. Paradoxically one of the literary works attributed to Dionysios the Areopagite, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as having been converted by Paul, uses a metaphor of a sculptor finding the statue within by chiselling off the extraneous marble. The detail may have been

It is just possible that what was uncovered was the work by Kephisodotos of 'Peace holding Wealth in her arms' which is mentioned by Pausanias as having been dedicated in the Agora at Athens in 370 BCE and of which later copies survive.<sup>51</sup> The one in Munich is pictured in Figure 7.3.



Figure 7.3. 'Peace holding Wealth in her arms' by Kephisodotos. Photograph of the version in Munich.<sup>52</sup>

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intended to reinforce the seventh-century author's claim to have been writing at the time of Paul, but since the reference to the practice of making statues in the round is not condemned, it could be used, as it was in the breakaway Roman Catholic church to justify their setting aside of the clear prohibitions in the Old Testament. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *Mystic Theology*, chap. 2, section 1. The structured display of mutilation of many of the images presented on the Parthenon and how, when we reverse the damage, we can to recover what was lost and why is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

- 51 Wigram, an English churchman, and a favourite lecturer on Hellenic Travellers' Club cruises, made the same suggestion in the 1930s. Wigram, 45.
- 52 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eirene\\_Ploutos\\_Glyptothek\\_Munich\\_219\\_n1.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eirene_Ploutos_Glyptothek_Munich_219_n1.jpg)

In modern terms, the archbishop was destroying a work of art. In scientific terms, he was destroying evidence that did not fit his explanatory paradigm or his institutional interests. In pre-modern terms, he may have seen his office as entitling him to control the memory and therefore the minds of his flock by monument cleansing.

When faced with Spon's critique, however, Guillet did not back away, as he might have done by saying that he had invented the brother as a literary device. Instead he counter-attacked, raising the stakes. In his Epistle Dedicatory to his patron, which was included in a second edition of his book, he apologised for his brother's mistakes, which he said were a result of his not having been there long enough, and declared that his work was therefore not of as high standard as both he and the Dauphin ('we savants') would have liked. In this battle of his own choosing, Guillet, we can now see, offered an implied compliment to the new science and its protocols. And shortly afterwards he raised the stakes even higher. In a pamphlet that he published soon afterwards, Guillet claimed that he was the victim of cold-blooded aggression by a bilious critic.<sup>53</sup> In his rush to victimhood, a rhetorical device well-known in modern times, he offered a long list of alleged errors in Spon's book. He also adopted a tone of menace. He was 'a man of the sword', he reminded Spon, implying a threat to challenge him to a duel.<sup>54</sup> By couching his remarks in the form of an imagined meeting of savants, for whose remarks he, as narrator, did not have to assume responsibility, he implied that Spon himself had never actually visited Athens, an obvious absurdity but enough to accomplish the rhetorical trick of implanting doubt. How dare a mere medical man from the provinces cast doubt on the works of the savants of Paris, he sneered? How could a mere 'antiquary', a word he used disparagingly, presume to discuss the highly specialised field of ancient inscriptions? By casting doubt on the work of his brother, *le Sieur de la Guilletière*, Guillet declared, Spon was casting doubt on his brother's authorities, including the works of

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53 Guillet, *Lettres écrites sur une dissertation d'un voyage de Grèce publié par Mr. Spon, Medicin Antiquaire* (Paris: Chez Estienne Michallet, 1679). Père la Chaise is said to have been 'extremely annoyed' for he had only given Guillet permission to reply to Spon provided he was honest. Noted in *Conferences*, 16. I have so far been unable to access the 1908 work by J. and G. Monval where the letter is said to be cited at page 53.

54 He had written a book on the topic, *Art de l'homme d'épée, ou le dictionnaire du gentilhomme*, 1678.

the great ancient authors, Strabo and Pliny, as well as on the greatest of modern scholars, among whom he mentioned Meursius.

And there was another consideration whose implications did not need to be spelled out. Members of post-Reformation churches, of whom Spon and his family were members, had been allowed to live and work in France under the Edict of Nantes of 1598, but only on sufferance. Agitation to have the Edict of Nantes revoked was already under way. An intellectual gap was opening up between the ways of thinking of the republic of letters and those of the monarchical-ecclesiastical state of His Most Catholic Majesty. In his dedication to the Dauphin, Guillet called on the monarchy to protect him from being 'confounded into eternity'. His battle with Spon, he declared, like those of the recent religious wars, was being fought not just on earth but in heaven. In daring to adopt a critical stance towards ancient authors such as Pausanias, Guillet declared, Spon was committing 'blasphemies and heresies', and deserved to be hauled before a 'divine tribunal'.<sup>55</sup>

Spon, on his travels in Ottoman lands, had worn the costume of an Armenian, and presented himself in that dress in a portrait frontispiece to his book as shown as Figure 7.4.<sup>56</sup>

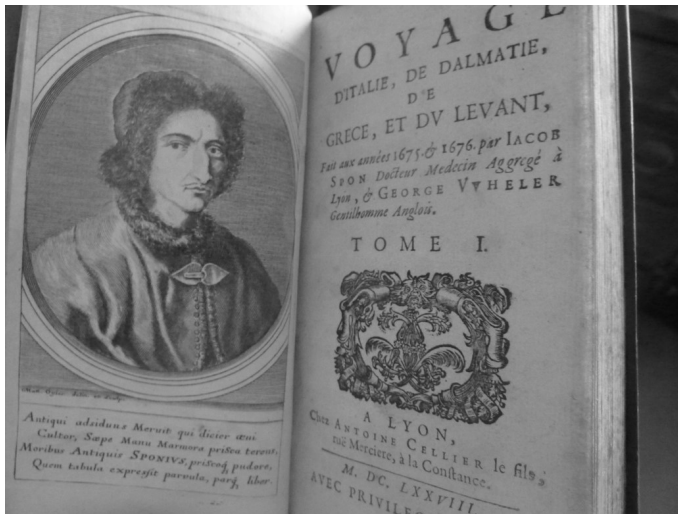


Figure 7.4. Title page and frontispiece of Spon's *Voyage*. Engraving and letterpress.

55 Guillet *Lettres*, 85.

56 Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 371, discussed by Laborde, ii, 20.

Why he should have chosen to do this has not been explained. In the Ottoman territories, where external appearance was the main marker of civic and religious identity, it separated him from the Orthodox, the Muslims, the Jews, but also from the Roman Catholic Franks, linking him instead with one of the smaller communities of the millet.<sup>57</sup> But to some, including Guillet, his self-portrait may have been seen as a provocative flaunting of difference. In the book allegedly written by Guillet's brother, the French consuls in Athens are reported as complaining bitterly about the unfair competition they faced from the Armenians.<sup>58</sup>

But Guillet may have been more enraged by the frontispiece to another of Spon's books, as already shown above as Figure 4.1. The medical doctors and lawyers of Lyon were permitted to wear a sword and be ranked as noblemen.<sup>59</sup> In the picture Spon included a portrait of himself, recognizable from his long nose, carrying a sword and dressed as a gentleman ('gentilhomme'). His companion with the feathered hat may represent his travelling companion, Sir George Wheler, a church-and-king English clergyman of the time of the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, whose leaders enjoyed flaunting their differences from the plainly dressed Puritans whom they had replaced in government.<sup>60</sup>

As was the case with other French cities at around this time, Spon's home town of Lyon was frequently gripped by illnesses that neither the potions of the physicians nor the prayers of the churchmen could alleviate, a recurring plague that caused dysentery and an illness of the lungs that was probably tuberculosis. Interpreted by some as a punishment for sin, the illnesses may have contributed to the unrest, the search for scapegoats, and the demands to expel non-Catholics, beginning with apothecaries and physicians whose unsuccessful attempts to deal with the illness could be misrepresented as conspiracies to spread it.<sup>61</sup> In Lyon, the signs of an impending, state-encouraged religious cleansing were becoming more obvious. Spon's father, Charles Spon, who had

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57 See Chapter 8.

58 'The Armenians do likewise create us much trouble, for having no right of Consulship of their own, the other Consuls repine to do their business, which turns often to their ruine'. Guillet, *Athens*, English version, 113.

59 Mollière, Antoine, le Docteur, Ex-Interne suppléant des Hôpitaux, *Une Famille médicale lyonnaise au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Charles et Jacob Spon* (Lyon: Rey, 1905), 18.

60 Confirmed by Mollière, 19.

61 Mollière, 17.

immigrated into France from Germany and was now a burger of the city and physician to the French king, saw his co-religionists put under surveillance.<sup>62</sup> In post-Reformation London, a reciprocal process saw the great plague of 1665 and the great fire of 1666 officially presented as divine punishment incited by a conspiracy instigated by Roman Catholics.<sup>63</sup>

Among the claims made in Guillet's book was that his brother had seen an inscription on the pediment of the Parthenon dedicating the building to the 'Unknown God', an apparent confirmation of the local story, As M. de la Guilletiere wrote, in the English version: 'Upon this Frontispiece, it was, that with great Joy and Veneration we read that Famous Inscription mentioned in Scripture, To the unknown God: it is not ingraven upon the door of a little Chappel, as some People would have it, who do not remember, that in the Mosca's there are neither Chappels nor Altars permitted to remain.'<sup>64</sup> The story was well established, having long been curated by the Orthodox archbishop and his 'xenagogue', the priest whose duty was to welcome visitors.<sup>65</sup> It was part of the Orthodox way of seeing and discussing the monuments of antiquity.

When Spon and Wheler looked for the inscription, they could not see it, nor could they find anyone who remembered having seen it. In his own book Spon did not directly contradict the story, perhaps sensing that it was prudent to stay away from matters of religion, or perhaps anticipating objections by the censor.<sup>66</sup> He did, however, mention from his own prior reading in the library that the story had reached western Europe when the German professor Martin Kraus (Crusius) in the previous century had published a letter from an Orthodox monk of Constantinople, 'more a savant of his breviary than of ancient history' as Spon sardonically described him, who did not even know that the building was the Parthenon.<sup>67</sup> It was now evident that Guillet had picked up the story from an old book, for example, the work by the

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62 Mollière, 28.

63 For example on the Monument to the Fire in London that still stands, although the inscription that blamed Roman Catholics for the disaster was later amended.

64 Guillet, English version, 183.

65 Noted by Travlos and Franz, 193. Noted c.1602 by Arnaud 52, transcribed by Travlos and Franz, 195.

66 Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 151.

67 'plus sçavant en son Bréviaire que dans l'Histoire ancienne.' Spon, *Voyage*, ii, 150. It is unlikely, for example, that Cerbilas or any of his colleagues knew the reference



sixteenth-century German scholar Heinrich Bünting, much reprinted across Europe, including in an English version by Adam Islip, famous as the publisher of the first folio of Shakespeare.<sup>68</sup> To Wheler, the claim was another of Guillet's 'manifest untruths.'<sup>69</sup>

Visible on the Parthenon there are a number of holes where an inscription had once been hung, whose text was first reconstructed in 1906 by an American archaeological student, Eugene P. Andrews, who climbed on the building and made squeezes.<sup>70</sup> It turned out to be in praise of the emperor Nero, put up at the time of his visit to Athens in 67 CE. But if Spon was turning away from confrontation, Guillet was now being forced into a binary choice between loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and capitulation to the heretic.<sup>71</sup> There were, he declared in his pamphlet, 'men of faith' living in Paris who in 1669 had not only seen the inscription but seen it more than a hundred times. By his insinuation, he claimed, Spon was impugning their honesty as priests and the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. If the inscription that his brother had seen in 1669 was no longer there at the time of Spon's visit in 1676, it must have become detached, he said, blaming the usual duo, the Turks and the ravages of time.<sup>72</sup> In what he must have regarded as a clinching piece of evidence, Guillet published in their entirety recent letters from two of the Capuchin missionaries who had lived in Athens for several years. In his letter, Father Barnabé duly confirmed that he had seen the inscription. Father Simon was more circumspect, noting that there was an inscription with damaged letters that people said was the dedication to the unknown god, apparently support for Guillet but in effect siding with Spon in treating local stories with scepticism.

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in Pausanias, i, 4: 'Here [near Phaleron] there is also a temple of Athena Sciras, and one of Zeus some distance away, and altars of the gods named unknown'.

68 'The vppermost part of the citie, where formerly the temple stood dedicated to the unknown God, is now wholly and absolutely in the hands of the Turkes, in which they have built a strong and almost inuincible Castle, which hath commande of the rest of the towne'. *Itinerarium Totius Sacrae Scripturae, or, The Trauels of the holy Patriarchs ... with a Description of the Townes and Places to which they travelled, and how many English miles they stood from Ierusalem* (London: Adam Islip, 1638), 543. There were other editions in English as well as in other languages.

69 Wheler, *Journey*, 363.

70 Discussed by Carroll, Kevin K., *The Parthenon Inscription*, in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Monographs*; no. 9 (Durham, N.C: Duke University, 1982).

71 Guillet, *Lettres*, 122, 128–30, 159–66.

72 *Ibid.*, 129.

How far the two churchmen were leaned on is not known, but it is hard to avoid the conclusion that neither was being entirely honest. And their silences were as much a giveaway as their words. Neither man, for example, claimed to have seen M. de la Guilletiere, or his alleged named travelling companions, the Italians Boccanegra and Bianchi, the Germans Hermerstat and Hoenighen, and the Englishman Drelingston (a name more plausible in France than in England) who were named as the scholars, two versed in mathematics and chemistry and all five in ancient and modern history, who had, according to Guillet, lived in Athens in 1669 and travelled widely elsewhere in Greece as a travelling academy. All five, as well as M de Guilletiere, remain otherwise unknown.<sup>73</sup>

Spon was however still not ready to be browbeaten or to slink away. In a printed reply that he himself prepared, the provincial doctor adopted a different stance from that of his metropolitan enemy, not pugnacious counterattack or offended indignation, but sardonic amusement. He evidently had difficulty in getting the reply printed. Letters published from manuscripts in 1901 show Spon complaining to one of the editors of the *Journal des Savants* that since approval to print was being deliberately delayed by the censors, his complaint should be published.<sup>74</sup> He prayed to God, he said, to convert Guillet from abusing his talent in telling readers what he thought would please them at the expense of the truth.<sup>75</sup> In the old days, he wrote in his own Dedication to the Dauphin, when the book was printed, our ancestors fought duels before the king to decide who would win noble women. The lady that he and Guillet were now contending for was three thousand years old. He gave a list of answers to one hundred and twelve points raised by Guillet, some trivial, but also now fastened on the wider issue. As his first sentence began: 'Criticism is a very useful and delicate science.'<sup>76</sup> He had great respect for the great savants of the past, Scaliger, Casaubon, and Meursius, but everyone's work was open to 'Critique'. And not only that of modern scholars. One of the jibes that Guillet had thrown

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73 Guillet, *Athènes* French version 7–8: English version 7.

74 Omont, H., 'Athènes au XVIIe Siècle, Relation du P. Robert de Dreux, Lettres de Jacob Spon et du P. Babin (1669–1680)', in *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, xiv (Paris: Ledoux, 1901), 14.

75 Dreux, Robert de, 15.

76 'La Critique est une science très utile et très delicate'.

at Spon was that in describing Mount Kythnos on the island of Delos he had contradicted the great ancient geographer Strabo. And yes, it was true, Spon noted, that even Strabo was a fair object of criticism. If observation on the spot cast doubt on the text of Strabo, whose work was already becoming understood as a compilation, then observation was to be preferred.

Spon listed one hundred and eleven points where he considered Guillet's book to be in error.<sup>77</sup> In answer to the innuendo that he himself had never visited the places described, he transcribed in full the passport in the form of a personal letter of introduction written on his behalf by the French ambassador, the Marquis de Nointel.<sup>78</sup> Nearly half of the book was devoted to a French translation of Vernon's letter to the Royal Society of London, and transcriptions of other letters sent in his support, including one by a savant unnamed who was evidently a lawyer, possibly a judge, who made a point-by-point comparison between the two books and dismissed the story that the early Christians had dedicated the Parthenon to 'the unknown god' as an absurdity. To anyone patient enough to follow the whole correspondence, it was now established that M de Guilletiere had never existed, that Guillet's book had been run up in France with the help of Meursius and notes by the Capuchins, and that Spon had been unjustly attacked and shamefully treated.

As the anti-Protestant mood intensified, Spon had considered going into exile to a country where, as he wrote, 'he could speak freely'. Nonetheless, it was only when he went with his friend Moze, an apothecary, to research mineral springs in France and was falsely accused of carrying circular letters to churches containing material for forbidden preaching, that he realised he was in personal danger. The peaceful coexistence between the republic of letters and the monarchical ecclesiastical state was about to come to an end, or rather, the savants of Paris were about to be incorporated, outwardly at least, into the professed ideology of that state. On 30 July, the exercise of the reformed religion in episcopal towns in France was forbidden; on 6 August non-Roman-Catholic physicians who refused to join the official state religion were expelled from the medical schools, a measure that on 15

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<sup>77</sup> Spon, *Réponse*, 303–20.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 321–22.

September was extended to apothecaries. Deprived of the opportunity to earn a living in France, and correctly foreseeing that the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was imminent, Spon and another apothecary called Dufour fled to Switzerland, but on their way they lost their belongings and their papers. Arriving penniless and ill at Vevey, a city later to be a centre of exiles from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the two were taken into the hospital where Dufour died on 3 December and Spon on 25 December.<sup>79</sup>

What the Dauphin or his advisers made of the printed exchanges, assuming that they took any interest at all, is not recorded. Despite the overwhelming evidence that Guillet's book was not what he claimed it was, and that he invented, bullied, blustered, and did harm to the reputation of the savants of Paris, he did not suffer any setback. On the contrary, in 1681, the year when all non-Catholics were expelled from the academies of Paris, Guillet was awarded a well-paid post as historiographer of the Academy of Fine Arts. One reason for the appointment, for which he had no qualifications and which has puzzled historians of the academies, may have been that his devotion to the Roman Catholic cause was regarded as outweighing his ethical failures.<sup>80</sup> As for Spon, one of his last recorded actions before he died in 1685 was to write a letter to the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* ['News of the Republic of Letters'] published in the Netherlands to escape the censorship in France, complaining that he had been treated unjustly.

Nor, despite the episode with Guillet, were Spon's research methods adhered to by his successors. It is striking that the Abbé Gedoyn, writing nearly fifty years after Spon in his edition of Pausanias, figured as Figure 4.3 above, chooses largely to ignore his work, apart from his manifesto and a few footnotes. Although his book is addressed to the Royal

79 Bayard, Françoise, 'La Vie de Jacob Spon (1647–1685)' in *Jacob Spon. Un humaniste lyonnais du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. edited by Étienne, Roland and Mossière, Jean-Claude (Paris: Bocard, 1993), 36.

80 *Les conférences au temps de Guillet de Saint-Georges, 1682–1699 / édition critique intégrale sous la direction de Jacqueline Lichtenstein et Christian Michel; texte établi par Bénédicte Gady ... [et al.] / édition critique intégrale sous la direction de Jacqueline Lichtenstein et Christian Michel; texte établi par Bénédicte Gady ... [et al.]* (Paris: Beaux-arts de Paris, 2 volumes, 2008), i, 15–16. In *Lacedaimon*, Father Simon is said to have enjoyed much success in converting boys from their schismatic and heretical Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism. And whenever visitors asked him the way to antiquities, he offered to hear their confessions and give absolution.

Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, of which he is a member, Gedoyn almost pooh-poohs the work of the 'Learned Antiquary' (sçavant Antiquaire) with his inscriptions and his coins.<sup>81</sup> Gedoyn took Pausanias back into the world of ancient texts, with its commentaries that consisted largely of extracts from, and comparisons with, other ancient texts, putting him safely back in the library. However, images of the Parthenon derived from Spon and Wheler began to appear in textbooks and in universal histories printed outside France where the intellectual property (privilege) restrictions did not apply, although they were still largely presented as additions to the words rather than as sources of knowledge that could add to, and in some cases modify, the exclusively textual conception of antiquity that was then coming to an end.<sup>82</sup>

### Controlling the Narrative: The Counter-Scientific Backlash

Although the topography of Athens might appear to be amongst the less important of the contested subjects in Counter-Reformation Europe, we see other examples of this counter-scientific reaction. Its very marginality in the grand struggle between contested world views, and the rewards each offered, enables us to isolate how individuals made their choices. In 1730, for example, the Abbé Fourmont was sent to Greece and the Levant by the French government with plenty of money as part of a long-sustained search for manuscripts by ancient authors. Fourmont, who might have been Spon's successor and carried forward his work, devoted his sixteen months in Greece to copying ancient inscriptions, determined, as his letters constantly claim, to find more inscriptions than Spon and Wheler and to correct their errors. With the

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81 The full title of Gedoyn's edition, with the qualifications he claimed, is noted in the reference to Figure 8.4 above and in the Bibliography.

82 For example Baumgarten, Siegmund Jakob, *Uebersetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie die in Engeland durch eine Gesellschaft von Gelehrten ausgefertigt worden: nebst den Anmerkungen der holländischen Uebersetzung auch vielen Kupfern und Karten* (Halle: Johann Justinus Gebauer, volume 5, 1747), opposite 187 and 189; and in later editions of Potter. This is a different Baumgarten from the author who invented the concept of 'aesthetics' as an autonomous domain of meaning discussed in Chapter 9.

help of local Orthodox and Ottoman officials he hired local workers to dig out inscriptions, including many from Athens, sometimes even going personally down into wells.

In his letters to Paris, Fourmont was open about his practise of knocking down buildings to remove inscriptions built into them. After he and his team had copied the inscriptions, he ordered them to be mutilated with hammers to make them unreadable. On his return to France he withheld his transcriptions from other savants, and it was later discovered that he had faked and forged as well as destroyed. As one of his achievements, Fourmont claimed, for example, to have found not only examples of the actual metal instruments used in human sacrifice in ancient times, but celebratory inscriptions allegedly set up in front of a temple where the human sacrifices had taken place.<sup>83</sup> Soon after the Greek Revolution, a number of knowledgeable archaeologists, who had a commitment to science and evidence, went to Sparta and other places where Fourmont had allegedly copied inscriptions. It emerged that, although some of his transcription work was vindicated, most was questionable, and evidence was found of deliberate damage.<sup>84</sup>

In scientific terms, Fourmont was hoping to make a reputation for making discoveries, but without enabling his empirical data to be checked. In ecclesiastical terms he was reviving an old Christian slur derived from the mythic stories of Iphigeneia and others, that the ancient Greeks of the classical period has practised human sacrifice. But, as was suspected later, he appears also to have been motivated, at least in part, by a pre-modern, pre-scientific sense that, as a churchman in *ancien régime* France, he had the right to control the official collective memory, what modern political spin-doctors call the 'narrative'.<sup>85</sup>

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83 Discussed by Lord Aberdeen in 'Letter from the Earl of Aberdeen to the editor relating to some statements made by M.R. Rochette on his late on the authenticity of the inscriptions of Fourmont', in Walpole, *Travels*, 489.

84 For example Phillipe le Bas, sent by the French Government, noted of one surviving piece: 'Il est impossible de ne pas voir dans l'état actuel de ce monument une nouvelle preuve des mutilations dont Fourmont s'est rendu coupable et dont il se faisait gloire'. Le Bas, 'Voyages et Recherches archéologiques de M. Le Bas, en Grèce et en Asie Mineure' in *Revue archéologique* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1844), 709. Fuller details of this publication in the Bibliography.

85 Discussed by Augustinos, Olga, *French Odysseys, Greece in French Travel Literature from the Renaissance to the Romantic Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994), 89–92.

Other pre-modern ideas persisted even longer. When Spon and Wheler looked at Athens and its ancient monuments, for example, each thought he could detect the workings of Providence, although what is more obvious to our generation is the continuing power of Providentialism itself, among even the most fearless of the champions of the new science. And neither Spon nor Wheler were willing to apply the new science to their own religion or its history. In his dispute with Guillet, Spon can be regarded as a martyr to the new science, but it was his decision to refuse to change his religious affiliation, a way of thinking that put strength of belief and personal commitment to an imagined community before science or pragmatism, that brought about his death. As for Wheler, who had been born in the Netherlands where his family had lived in exile during the period when the English monarchy had been abolished, and who was able to repossess an extensive fortune in 1666 after the institution had been reinstated in 1660, he was both a victim of the new and a beneficiary of the old. In the mass exodus brought about by the decision of the French monarchy, many of Spon's co-religionists were given refuge in England. And it may have been partly with his dead friend in mind that Wheler made charitable gifts to help resettle French refugees in the Spitalfields quarter of London, including building a chapel.

Spon may have gone to his death thinking that, like Galileo, he had been crushed by the church. But before long, his dispute with Guillet was forgotten and the value of his topographical work, and of his scientific approach, was recognized. As Jan ten Hoorn, the publisher of the offshore Dutch translation of his book, produced in the Netherlands where the censorship was minimal, wrote in his address to the reader, picking up a metaphor being used with success by the European Enlightenment, with Spon 'a light has come'.<sup>86</sup> And within a generation, in the bringing together of the ancient texts with the ancient stones, research in the library with autopsy on the ground, the editors of a work that Meursius had left unfinished at his death returned the favour and annotated Meursius with excerpts from Spon.<sup>87</sup>

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86 Spon, Jacob, *Voyagie Door Italien, Dalmatien, Grieeckenland, En de Levant. Gedaan in de Jaren 1675 en 1676* (Amsterdam: Jan ten Hoorn, 1689).

87 Meursius, J. *Meursii Theseus, sive de ejus vita rebusque gestis liber postumus. Accedunt ejusdem Paralipomena de pagis Atticis, et excerpta ex ... J. Sponii Itinerario de iisdem pagis* (Utrecht: Halma, 1684).

In a frontispiece to one of the posthumous editions, printed offshore in the Netherlands, Athena herself is presented as commending the work of Spon and Wheler, as shown in Figure 7.5.

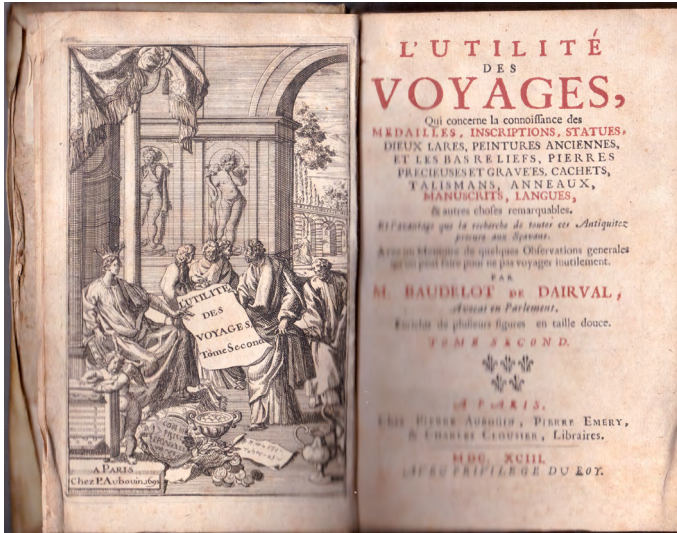


Figure 7.5. Athena (Latin 'Minerva') commends the work of Spon and Wheler to the reader. Frontispiece to volume 2 of an edition produced offshore in the Netherlands, 1714.<sup>88</sup>

Athena was at last returning home, revived and renewed, after her long exile in the darkness of hostility, neglect, and oblivion.

<sup>88</sup> Spon and Wheler, *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce, et du Levant Fait aux années 1675 et 1676, par Iacob Spon et George Wheler* (The Hague: Alberts, 1714).



## 8. Towards a Practical Theory of History

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Among the classically-educated visitors who arrived in Athens from western Europe during the long eighteenth century, the commonest way of looking at the Parthenon was through the eyes of a philosopher of history. Those who attempted to theorize the past and its relationships with the present and the future into a unifying narrative coexisted in time both with the topographers already discussed and with those who claimed to appreciate the 'aesthetic' qualities of ancient objects, to be discussed in the next chapter.<sup>1</sup> Whatever other interests the visitors might pursue, and most were antiquity collectors if opportunity offered, they were all, with scarcely an exception, whether explicitly or implicitly, in search of models that would link the experience of the ancient Greeks as evidenced by the monuments of ancient Athens with their own world. As the young Nicholas Biddle wrote in 1806 in a personal letter to his family in the United States that picked up the common thought: 'we are instructed by the melancholy but pleasing philosophy of ruins.'<sup>2</sup> Or in the phrase of John Galt, not yet famous, who was in Athens soon after, the Acropolis and its monuments were 'venerable monitors' that, if heeded, might save their own and future generations from suffering the fate of the ancient world.<sup>3</sup> The aim of the philosophers was to find 'laws' of collective experience, that would not only explain the past and predict the future, but enable offsetting action to be taken in the present,

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1 The rhetorics of romanticism and the damage they have caused, and continue to cause, to the building up of an evidence-based understanding of the actual historical classical Athenians and their ways of thinking are discussed in Chapter 9.

2 *Nicholas Biddle in Greece, the Journals and Letters of 1806*, edited by Richard A. McNeal (Philadelphia: Penn State University Press, 1993), 219.

3 Galt, John, *Letters from the Levant* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1813), 138.

when events seemed to be proceeding in a dangerous direction as many then thought they were.

As most visitors realised as soon as they arrived, the Acropolis of Athens had always been more important than any individual building, including the Parthenon.<sup>4</sup> And it was the fact that it constituted a human as well as a geographical text, that even the most casual observer could see was the result of additions and subtractions across centuries, that made it such a promising candidate for revealing, and perhaps explaining, the forces that governed human affairs over the long term. The Acropolis was not only a rich and potentially exploitable store of historical experiences, including pasts and hoped-for futures caught and presented in material form, but a laboratory where provisional hypotheses could be examined and, to an extent, used for mental experiments by the observer.<sup>5</sup> This offered an opportunity to widen the study of the ancient Greek world away from its reliance on the texts of ancient authors, which had been the dominant tradition since the fifteenth-century humanists and from which Spon and his successors had broken. But it also appeared to provide a needed corrective to the arranging of the past as a linear narrative of selected events arranged along a chronological axis, with or without commentary by the author, a tradition that itself owed much to the historiographical practices of the ancient Greeks.<sup>6</sup>

Looking at the monuments through the eyes of a philosopher was therefore more than critiquing what was recorded in the ancient authors against modern criteria, 'second-guessing', or comparing the moral and political life of one great man against another; such 'exemplary history' had been practised in the ancient world, notably by Plutarch. It had higher ambitions than the many modern micro-studies of what is misleadingly called 'reception' that take two or more slices of recorded

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4 The Acropolis as a landscape text that sets its own frame was discussed in Chapter 1.

5 For the aspiration of Adam Smith and David Hume, the most innovative of the anglophone philosophers, to devise a 'science of man', see Phillipson, Nicholas, *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 2, 64, 70. They were participating in a movement led mainly by men and women living in France that included others across Europe, including some writing in the Greek language such as Adamantios Koraes.

6 The works of many of the stay-at-home narrative historians who wrote during the eighteenth century are summarized by Moore, James, Morris, Ian Macgregor, and Bayliss, Andrew J., *Reinventing History, the Enlightenment Origins of Ancient History* (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2008).

experiences (e.g. 'events') or of cultural productions (e.g. literary, visual, or performative texts) produced during different epochs, and compares and contrasts them against present day norms selected by the author.<sup>7</sup>

Some philosophers, notably Montesquieu, who did not visit Greece, as well as many who did, knew that the generations of classical Athenians who had commissioned, built, and then used the Parthenon in their civic lives, notably Plato and Aristotle, had attempted to provide theoretical answers to the same questions in the circumstances of their own day and with the same aim in mind.<sup>8</sup> It was less well known, indeed scarcely noticed then or even now, that the main theory of history available in classical Athens, what I will call the 'emergence from brutishness' narrative, was so deeply internalized and entrenched that we can be confident that it underlay many decisions, including the decision to build the classical Parthenon. Since most European histories of ancient Greece written during the long eighteenth century drew heavily on the work of Thucydides, which, although primarily a narrative of events, also summarized that ancient 'philosophy of history' model, it was almost as if the philosophers and historians of classical Athens were themselves being invited into the discussion to consider whether their theories stood up or needed to be modified, as a kind of Enlightenment sociability across the intervening centuries. Partly because the implicit ideologies and rhetorical practices of Thucydides and other authors had not yet been recognized for what they were, the philosophers as much as the historians of the long eighteenth century tended to present the past from the top-down point of view of those who governed rather than of those who were governed.<sup>9</sup>

By examining the material remains of antiquity as they had come down to their own time, the philosophers of history hoped to critique, and if necessary, to overturn, the accounts and prescriptions of library-bound historiographers. Many disdained the practice of the stay-at-homes of reshuffling the narratives of the ancient historians with little

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7 Its limitations as a way of understanding the past, and my suggestions for how they and other limitations can be avoided are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with my experiment in recovering how it might have been applied along with other features of the discursive environment.

8 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

9 Discussed by Ceserani, Giovanna, 'Modern histories of ancient Greece: genealogies, contexts and eighteenth-century narrative historiography', *Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics* Paper No. 020805, 2008, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1427422>

added except comments that pleased their patrons. C.S. Sonnini, for example, who made an extensive officially-sponsored tour of the eastern Mediterranean lands, was contemptuous of the work of Cornelius de Pauw, author of *Philosophical Reflections on the Greeks*, who 'buried in his closet, pretends to observe better what he does not see', and who, in a betrayal of the professional ethics of a modern scientist or philosopher, squeezed the facts to fit his theories and his policy prescriptions.<sup>10</sup> As those who took part in the exchanges may have known and consciously repeated, the post-classical ancient historian Polybius, a man of action, had criticized Timaeus of Tauromenium for spending all his time in libraries.<sup>11</sup> But the stay-at-homes may also have known that both Timaeus and Ephorus of Cyme, described by a modern commentator as 'one of the least notable for any active participation in the events from which history is made' had each enjoyed great success in their time.<sup>12</sup>

## The Role of Topography and Climate in History

In some respects the philosophical viewers were anticipating the approach of the twentieth century French 'Annales' school of historians,

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10 'It would be extraordinary if such an opposition of sentiment should not be met with between the observer who reports what he has seen, and the man of science, who, buried in his closet, pretends to observe better what he does not see. Guided by a rage, by no means *philosophical*, of rejecting facts that would be in contradiction -with the system which he has formed for himself, M. de Pauw admits those only by which he can support it, at the same time accompanying them with argument.' Sonnini, 6. He was referring to *Philosophical dissertations on the Greeks / translated from the French of Mr. De Pauw* (London: Faulder, 1793) first published in French in Berlin in 1788. Sonnini was mentioned in Chapter 6 in the discussion of imperial travelling firmans. In German-speaking countries, where numerous authors wrote on ancient Greece, and how its literature and art might be made relevant to their modern times, few had direct experience of the Greece of their time, and although most of the French- and English-language travel accounts were translated into German, few authors showed any interest. The printed writings are summarized, in accordance with the parliament of texts model that largely ignores questions of production, access, readerships, and influence, by Valdez, Damian, *German Philhellenism, The Pathos of the Historical Imagination from Winckelmann to Goethe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2014).

11 Polybius, *History*, 12, 25, referred to by Stephen Usher, in his edition of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Critical Essays* (London: Harvard UP, 1974), i, ix. Summarized from Sonnini, *Travels in Greece and Turkey, undertaken by order of Louis XVI, and with the authority of the Ottoman court by C.S. Sonnini; illustrated by engravings and a map of those countries; translated from the French* (London: Longman, 1801).

12 *Ibid.*, ix.

founded by Ferdinand Braudel, who suggested that the human past can best be understood as the changing result of the constant interactions among 'structures', 'conjunctures', and 'events', while accepting that individual agency was never absent and had sometimes been decisive as turning points within wider contexts.<sup>13</sup> Among the first results of the encounter in the 1670s by Spon, for example, had been a realisation that the land, the sea, and the climate of Greece, including the microclimate of Athens, had scarcely changed since the descriptions given in ancient times and that these natural phenomena, in Braudel's term, 'structures', were still available to be directly experienced. The mountains and the seas, the sun, the moon, and the stars, the islands, the winds, the treacherous currents of the Archipelago, the climate and the local microclimates, the rivers and the fresh water springs, were, the philosophers appreciated, not an inert backdrop to human decisions, but active factors in the unfolding of events, and they constituted a form of recoverable knowledge that could be factored into any emerging explanations. Indeed, some 'structures' had continued to be limitations through to their own long-eighteenth-century times, notably the shortage of fresh water in Athens, as the events of the Greek Revolution were soon to prove.<sup>14</sup> However, although from what was knowable in the long eighteenth century, the philosophers were probably right in thinking that there had indeed been a long period of climatic stability, we can now see that they were mistaken in regarding 'Nature' as constant. There had been changes in land use, notably in the type of crops planted, and a consequent disruption of political structures, which were changes acknowledged in the ancient model. The societies of the ancient world had brought about changes in the environment through deforestation, overgrazing, intensive agriculture, and extraction of water for irrigation, as well as by deliberate destruction in wars, conquests, and enforced movements of populations.<sup>15</sup> And there had been further changes since:

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13 Notably in Braudel, Ferdinand, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II* translated from the French by Sian Reynolds (London: Collins 1972 and 1973). First published in 1949 as *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Époque de Philippe II*.

14 The role of the microclimate in the ancient Athens of the classical period is discussed more fully in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with my suggestions for how we ought to treat it as an element in what is now called 'distributed cognition' and its rhetorics.

15 Discussed by Hughes, J. Donald, *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and Romans: Ecology in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,

abandoned towns, some of which may have been struck by earthquakes, were the most obvious evidence of this, as well as towns that had shrunk in size, such as Athens itself.<sup>16</sup>

The philosopher of history hoped, however, to do more than extend the boundaries and explanatory frameworks within which the ancient past could be understood and presented in a linear narrative historiography of a succession of events. If by the middle of eighteenth century, as most of the educated western world had accepted, Isaac Newton had discovered universal laws of 'Nature', by which he meant mainly physics and optics as applicable to the 'natural' external world, which appeared to apply without exception across time and place and were repeatedly shown to do so until the twentieth century, the next big prize was to discover the laws of 'Man', a category seen as an opposite of 'Nature' in a strong binary.<sup>17</sup> Inheritors of a long tradition that accorded 'man' a unique place in the universe, only a few of the philosophers, notably Chateaubriand, seem to have understood that their view had not been shared by the most influential ancient thinkers, Plato and Aristotle, both of whom noted that a sharp divide between 'Man' and 'Nature' was a linguistic convention, imbued with a selfish, anthropocentric pride. Both ancient philosophers had gone on to argue that some living creatures, for example storks and cranes, had developed complex, regular, and successful political and moral customs and organizations, 'laws', in accordance with their 'natural' disposition, that humans would do well to imitate.<sup>18</sup>

Although the word 'law' as used by Newton was applied more loosely by the philosophers of history, the general research approach was the same. Some, who already had a wider model in mind, inserted the recorded experience of ancient Greece into the conjectural historical narratives that were common among historians of the Enlightenment in Scotland such as David Hume, Adam Smith, William Robertson, and

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second edition, 2014).

- 16 The classical Athenian attempts to understand and use the time-scape as it was recoverable at that time is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>
- 17 In most European languages, the word 'man' is gendered to exclude the roles of women and children.
- 18 This topic, together with the documentary evidence and its implications for understanding the minds of those who built the temple is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

Adam Ferguson, who postulated a 'stadial' progression from hunting, through pasturage and agriculture, to modern commerce. And others went further. The churchman William Rutherford, for example, from reports arriving of local societies in lands now being explored by Europeans for the first time, particularly in North America, postulated that the ancient Greeks had practiced cannibalism as the Caribs had done. As he wrote: 'The aborigines of Greece, like the first inhabitants of every country, were composed of savage tribes, who wandered in the woods without government or laws, and had little intercourse or communication with one another. They cloathed themselves with the skins of wild beasts; retreated for shelter to rocks and caverns; lived on acorns, wild fruits, and raw flesh; and devoured the enemies whom they slew in battle.'<sup>19</sup>

The philosophical viewers did not necessarily set themselves up in opposition to the topographers, who were now becoming more widely defined to include the whole post-Spon scientific tradition. Indeed they depended upon them, and many made their own contributions. But they had an advantage that no amount of assiduous library or topographical work could match. Instead of having to study the past linearly and chronologically as it had been turned into words and tidily arranged within its own conventions, they could attempt to comprehend the systemic complexity of a long past and what it implied for the future by direct visual observation from the viewing station of the present, both synoptically and simultaneously. By deliberately putting themselves into a physical and bodily position where the mute stones would appear to tell their own stories, the philosophers could allow their minds to dart from thought to thought, temporarily liberated both from linearity and from any particular theory. They could use their imaginations to converse with what the stones suggested, following up the ideas that such acts of contemplation suggested as explanations that they could later write up for the benefit of others. And nowhere in the world that they knew was so much experience concentrated in so manageable a microcosm as in Athens. As was noted by Johann Gottfried von Herder, one of the stay-at-homes who followed the publications of the on-the-spot discoveries

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19 Rutherford, Rev. William, D.D., Master of Uxbridge Academy, *A View of Antient History; including the progress of Literature and the Fine Arts, in two volumes, third edition corrected* (London: Longman, 1809), i, 325.

and scholarly debates from the security of his library, Athens seemed to offer a completed story of human development of growth, maturity and decline.<sup>20</sup> Or, as the author of *Ruins of Sacred and Historic Lands* wrote, it offered 'world history written in the uncorrupted marble'.<sup>21</sup>

## Telling Histories, Constructing Narratives

After nearly two hundred years of research on the physical Acropolis, we now understand that the philosophers in the long eighteenth century were historically incorrect in attributing to the Acropolis the power to explain their world view. These philosophers were aware that time had shaped the survival of the ancient stones, in response to historical processes that were replete with contingencies which were not obvious to the eye, but which might be open to investigation. They could see too that indifference, as well as hostility and admiration, on the part of the leaderships who had controlled the geographical site, had shaped the Acropolis of the stones, and to that extent there was a broad correspondence with what was usually presented by the historiographers as a decline into moral decadence. The philosophers did not, for the most part, actively look for gaps, explicitly consider counterfactuals, or, as is among the aims of the present study, systematically search for the succession of presented perceptions of past presents, of past pasts, and of past futures.

Our generation can, however, see that, in practice, the on-the-spot western viewer, however imaginative he or she attempted to be, was never entirely free from his or her own intellectual times and usually operated within many of the same assumptions and explanatory paradigms as the stay-at-homes. One assumption, shared even by the many philosophers who rejected or doubted the claims of Christianity, was that the world

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20 Noted by Güthenke, Constanze, *Placing Modern Greece: the Dynamics of Romantic Hellenism, 1770–1840* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 29.

21 Jackson, William Fulton, *Ruins of Sacred and Historic Lands* (London and Edinburgh: Nelson 1850), 10. The author, in dismissing other forms of inquiry in the first sentence of his book, ('cumbered by the tedious minutiae of the professed antiquary, and the extravagances of the unbridled theorist'), picks up a remark by John Ruskin in his 'Lamp of Memory' essay in *The Lamps of Architecture*, 'How cold is all history, how lifeless all imagery, compared to what the living nation writes and the uncorrupted marble bears!' Comments on the Ruskinian view and on attempts to put it into practice are offered in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



had been 'created' by a unique 'God' at a specific moment in the past, a date that some thought had already been calculated by a scrutiny of the chronologies of ancient writers.<sup>22</sup> But if, as many had discovered, the date of creation was difficult to establish, if indeed it had occurred as a single event, then a methodologically acceptable substitute for the purpose of establishing a starting point for the modern philosopher's trajectories might be the Great Flood, one of the first events recorded, apparently independently, by the surviving texts of several ancient societies. There were evidently some common features between the myth of Noah's flood as recorded in the ancient Jewish texts, and the ancient Greek myth of Deucalion, whose son Hellen was constructed as the eponymous founder of the Hellenes. Indeed, according to the local ancient Athenian myth it was at the site of the huge temple to Olympian Zeus, the largest of the ruinous ancient buildings of which a large fragment still survives in Athens, where the first new human beings had come into existence after the waters receded.

Isaac Newton himself had struggled with the problem of how to reconcile the reports of what he called the 'first memory of things in Europe', an indispensable preliminary step in establishing the calendar chronologies within which modern models might be fitted. In a posthumously published book he revealed his exasperation at the myths of ancient Athens: 'And so they have made two Pandions, and two Erechtheus's, giving the name of Erechthonius to the first; Homer calls the first Erechtheus: and by such corruptions they have exceedingly perplexed Ancient History.'<sup>23</sup> Newton, from the information available to him, was not to know that, in the world of the tragic drama, the authorities of classic Athens had encouraged the retelling of old myths in new variants as a means of enabling moral and public questions to be presented dialogically without direct allusion to current politics, an innovation as extraordinary as the invention of the tragic drama itself.<sup>24</sup>

J.B.S. Bartholdy, for example, had no answer to the puzzle of why the monuments of Athens had survived through to his own time except

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22 For an example among many, Williams, William, of St. John's College, Cambridge, *Primitive History, from the Creation to Cadmus* (Chichester: Seagrave, 1789).

23 Newton, Isaac, *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* (London: Tonson, Osborn, and Longman, 1728), 5.

24 As noted, with the historical evidence, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

to credit 'mysterious providence', but to others the same stones could be studied as the results of human agency over the long run, without resort either to theism or determinism.<sup>25</sup> And, if some philosophers remained traditional Christian providentialists, others pushed providentialism back in time as a means of coping with the problem of the 'good pagans', who, under most statements of Christian core beliefs, having lived before the time of Jesus of Nazareth and therefore never having the opportunity to become Christians, were destined never to be eligible for membership of the imagined community of 'the saved'.<sup>26</sup> For example, the opening words of William Robertson's much-reprinted *History of Ancient Greece*, first published in 1778, assert not only that a Christian providentialism had been at work before Christianity but that its main features had been fixed in writing. As he wrote: 'Ancient Greece seems to have been peculiarly chosen by Heaven as the scene on which mankind were destined to display, in the utmost perfection, all the superior faculties that distinguish them so highly above the other animals on this earth.'<sup>27</sup> Robertson was giving a Christianizing twist to persistent narratives of the human development from brutishness that some ancient authors deployed from their own traditions and observations, and that were part of the discursive environment in which the decision to build the Parthenon had been taken.<sup>28</sup> Some may have noticed that classical Athenian authors, notably Plato, had developed their own models ('paradeigmata') of historical processes that were drawn from the physical plans used in the building industry. Nor is this surprising. The discussions leading to the decision to build the classical-era Parthenon and other buildings on the Acropolis in the form that they took, as well as the actual construction work and the bringing of

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25 Bartholdy's comment was noted in Chapter 6.

26 'The problem of the 'good pagans', such as Socrates, is discussed in Chapter 22.

27 That Robertson's invocation of 'Heaven' was not just a literary device by a minister in the official Scottish church is proved by his formal defence of Christian providentialism in his sermon, *The situation of the world at the time of Christ's appearance, and its connexion with the success of his religion*, delivered and published in 1775. And as has recently been shown by Ceserani, *Narrative*, Robertson took much of his material from the work of the providentialist universal historian Rollin. The problem of the 'good pagans', especially Socrates, also puzzled the western Christians who established their own cultural practices on the Areopagus hill in the nineteenth century as will be discussed in Chapter 22.

28 Robertson, William, *The history of ancient Greece, from the earliest times till it became a Roman province* (Alletz: Pons Augustin, 1793). Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

the building into use, had forced themselves on to the experience of local people over the generations that in retrospect are identified as the classical period.<sup>29</sup>

To some of the long eighteenth century, the survival of the ancient buildings on the Acropolis seemed enough to offer a confirmation of the truth of providentialism. As Valentine Mott, an American anatomist, wrote about his visit in the early 1840s, shortly after the Greek Revolution: 'It is the partial regeneration and commencing civilization of this oppressed and unfortunate people, who, during that long epoch, with the proudest monuments of human genius constantly before their eyes, to remind them of their degradation, have, from the inscrutable designs of Providence, been visited, as it were, with a moral and political death, and left to wander through a long and gloomy night of deplorable barbarism.'<sup>30</sup>

Earlier, John Bigland, a library philosopher, who was unusual for his time in extending his purview of the ancient past beyond what could be gleaned from the texts of the ancient Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers, noted that 'when Athens was the seat of science and literature, abounding in seminaries of learning, and crowded with philosophers, orators, legislators, and heroes, London and Paris, at this time the two central points of all that is great and elegant, were nothing but woody swamps.'<sup>31</sup> However, while appreciating the roles of contingency and historical processes in having taken him to his station as observer, in drawing his conclusion, he too was unable to escape from the power of the ancient theory. 'The philosopher', he wrote, 'who takes a retrospective view of the history of mankind, and contemplates, with a spirit of observation and reflection, the complicated and interesting drama of human existence, throughout all its successive and variegated scenes, from the earliest period of historical record to the present day, will, perhaps, find no difficulty

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29 Both are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with my suggestion of how such theories played a part in the decision to build the Parthenon.

30 Mott, Valentine, *Travels in Europe and the East* (New York: Harper, 1842), 179. Mott's contemplation of the dead of the Revolution on the Acropolis and the lessons he drew about race and nationality is discussed in Chapter 15.

31 Bigland, John, *Letters on the study and use of ancient and modern history: containing observations and reflections on the causes and consequences of those events which have produced important changes in the aspect of the world, and the general state of human affairs* (London: Longman, 1806).

in perceiving that imperious circumstances fix the destiny of nations and of individuals; that various combinations of physical and moral causes, incalculably numerous, and extremely complex, determine the political, religious, intellectual, and social condition of mankind; that all things concur to the accomplishment of one vast and mysterious plan; and that the history of human affairs, and the history of Divine Providence, are essentially the same.'

He scolds the ancient historians for celebrating the great conquerors, 'destroyers of mankind' instead of reflecting philosophically on the 'tears of the widows and orphans'; on imagining 'the groans of the wounded and dying'; and on drawing the right general lessons. Were the peoples who practised human sacrifice that were being discovered by explorers in many places round the world, Bigland asked, worse than the 'blood-smearred idol' [Napoleon] who had already 'laid his thousands and his tens of thousands in the dust' and who in 1806, when Bigland wrote, was just getting into his stride.<sup>32</sup> And, picking up on an idea he had read about in ancient authors, he went on to advise his readers to think of themselves as performing in a play, when it is 'of little consequence to the actors which of them appears in the character of the prince, or which in that of the peasant, since all are equal as soon as the play is ended; so it is an affair of trifling importance what part we are destined to perform in the drama of human life; the great point of consequence for us is how our respective parts are acted.'<sup>33</sup>

It was commonly assumed too, by the visitors as much as by the stay-at-homes, that 'Nature' was designed, unchanging, and benevolent, that its complexity and apparent beauty, the latter perceived as a primary and intrinsic characteristic, not as an observer-conferred value, was itself evidence of a 'natural theology', that is, of the existence of a creating god. For philosophically-minded visitors from the west, many of their acts of viewing the Acropolis of Athens were, as a result, attempts to use their imaginations to fill the gap between the laws of

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32 Bigland, 37. He refers to the passage in the Judaeo-Christian Bible at 1 Samuel 18:7 in which the women who are celebrating the conquest of the Philistines cry out 'Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands'. The phrase is inscribed on the British war memorial to the machine-gun corps of the First World War to be seen at Hyde Park Corner, London.

33 Bigland, 610.

'Nature', which they perceived as fixed, and the works of 'Man' which were always in flux.<sup>34</sup>

## The Stories and the Place: Athens and its Relationship to the History-Makers

Looking at the Acropolis through the eyes of a philosopher was different from the romantic aesthetic approach of those who wanted to see and to possess what they called ancient art, although many who thought of themselves as philosophers were also grave robbers, exporters, collectors, and traders in antiquities. As a precondition, for example, philosophical viewing required a long apprenticeship. Long before the philosopher set out for Athens, he had to have been educated as a boy and as a young man in the ancient Greek and Roman classics in the original languages, the writings of the ancient biblical Jewish writers, usually in translation, and in a wide spectrum of modern knowledge collected in printed books. He was also expected to have already reflected deeply. These were not skills that could be learned or applied on the spot. As Chateaubriand, who spent some weeks in Athens in 1806, noted: 'A moment is sufficient for a landscape painter to sketch a tree, to take a view, to draw a ruin, but whole years are too short for the study of men and manners, and for the profound investigation of the arts and sciences.'<sup>35</sup> The philosophical way of viewing was only possible for a small number of people drawn from the ranks of the educated elites of western Europe.

With only a handful of exceptions until shortly before the Greek Revolution, it was a way of seeing that was not available to many of the local peoples of Athens, or to those living in the wider Ottoman or formerly Byzantine territories of which Athens formed a part, even if they had wanted to attempt it. Senior local Orthodox churchmen, even if they could read biblical and patristic Greek, as many could, did not have the sustained access to the printed texts of the pre-Christian ancient Hellenic authors, nor to the works of the scholarly tradition that had begun in western Europe at the time of the Renaissance. They

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34 A point made explicitly by Chateaubriand: 'Cette mobilité des choses humaines est d'autant plus frappante, qu'elle contraste avec l'immobilité du reste de la nature'. Malakis edition, i, 289. Discussed by Güthenke.

35 Chateaubriand, Preface to the first edition.

inhabited a cultural world that not only knew little of ancient Hellas, but whose leaderships had for over a thousand years regarded it as their ecclesiastical duty to condemn it.<sup>36</sup>

To the philosophers of history, their visit to the Acropolis was therefore not the start but the culmination of the research process, the field-work stage before the systematic thinking and the subsequent writing up of results. And from the many autobiographical accounts we have of philosophical viewing of the Acropolis in practice, we can reconstruct the main common features of how the philosophers set about their task. Some viewers, such as Thomas Jolliffe, who was in Athens in 1810, tried to imagine themselves transported back to classical times. Figure 8.1 reproduces an image of how he presented himself in his book, as an ancient Athenian holding an ancient scroll, with the Acropolis in the background, looking at the reader of the book who is invited to join him on the quest.



Figure 8.1. 'T.R.J. 1817'. Hand-coloured lithograph, the frontispiece to Jolliffe's book.<sup>37</sup>

36 Discussed, with consideration of the key texts, in *The Classical Parthenon*.

37 Jolliffe, T.R., *Narrative of an Excursion from Corfu to Smyrna* (London: Black, Young, and Black, 1827). 'Drawn on stone by M. Gauci P[ublishe]d. by Engelmann G.C. & Cy'.

As befitted a process that required years of study, the philosophical viewer was keen to maximise the benefits of his period of field-work. He typically spent weeks contemplating the ruins in the town, the views of the Acropolis from many angles, looking at it from far away as well as from nearby. He topographised. And he turned to Pausanias, and occasionally to Meursius, to reset his mental calendar from contemporary to ancient times. From time to time, often as a culmination, the philosopher found a place to sit on the Acropolis, preferably alone and in as much silence as the birds and animals allowed, and induce himself into a semi-conscious state in which he imagined himself walking and talking among the great men of the classical period, only to be woken back into his present day by the call of the muezzin or the music of the black slaves.<sup>38</sup>

As was noted by Alessandro Bisani, who spent a day on the Acropolis in July 1788: 'these ideas present to the imagination a succession of scenes ever new and ever pleasing; my heart is penetrated with them; it palpitates; a soft melancholy succeeds these ecstasies; I yield to the pleasing illusion, and indulge in reveries till at length they vanish like "the baseless fabric of vision"'.<sup>39</sup> Some philosophical viewers, such as Chateaubriand, used the words 'réflexions' and 'rêveries' interchangeably.<sup>40</sup> Others talked of 'meditations'. By composing the thoughts in verse, as even those with little talent often attempted, the re-awakened philosopher led his or her readers into a mental zone between consciousness and fancy.<sup>41</sup>

Just as in silent reading the meanings of printed words seemed to enter the reader's mind straight from the ink on the paper, so in silent viewing, or in semi-conscious reverie, the meanings appeared to come direct from the mute stones. In turning their swirling mental states into comprehensible ordered words so that they could be read by others, the awakening philosopher sometimes claimed to be relating what 'Athena'

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38 For example Forbin, 4.

39 Bisani, 60.

40 For example Malakis, 71.

41 The master was Byron, who provided a model for others and whose reflections were often quoted by later writers. Less successful practitioners of verse philosophizing include Byron's predecessor William Haygarth, *Greece, A Poem in Three Parts; with Notes, Classical Illustrations, and Sketches of the Scenery* (London: Printed by W. Bulwer ... sold by Nicol, 1814); Alexander Baillie Cochrane, *The Morea: with some Remarks on the Present State of Greece* (London: Sauters and Ottley, 1840); Matilda Plumley, *Days and Nights in the East* (London: Newby, 1845); and Nicholas Morrell, *Ruins of Many Lands, A Descriptive Poem, with Illustrations* (London: Tegg, 1849).

had revealed to him.<sup>42</sup> As Byron wrote of the ideas and reflexions that arose in his mind: ‘They came like truth — and disappear’d like dreams.’<sup>43</sup> Byron thought he was able to retrieve enough of them later, and he wrote them down for others to share, as many did, but he maintained a critical scepticism about the truth-value of meditating. As he wrote: ‘for waking Reason deems/Such overweening fantasies unsound,/ And other voices speak, and other sights surround.’ As Byron and others seem to have appreciated, not only was he choosing what thoughts to include as he fixed a tumble of inner experiences into words and narrative, such accounts were seldom more than an appropriation of a revived classicizing literary trope whose conventions, and content, were already known to the reader.

Charles Eastlake, an artist who had visited Athens shortly before the Revolution later produced a famous picture called ‘Byron’s Dream’ in which he is presented as foreseeing the Revolution and its success. Figure 8.2 reproduces a small watercolour painted by Frederick Mercer:



Figure 8.2. Frederick Mercer, *Byron Dreaming that Greece Might Still Be Free* (1832). Watercolour, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frederick\\_Mercer\\_-\\_Byron%E2%80%99s\\_Dream\\_-\\_Mercer-98399.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frederick_Mercer_-_Byron%E2%80%99s_Dream_-_Mercer-98399.jpg)

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- 42 A device employed by, for example, the non-Christians Byron, and Ernest Renan as discussed in Chapter 22.
- 43 *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto 4, stanza vii, referring to his experiences contemplating the ruins of Rome.



In contrast to what had gone before in the Christian centuries, no philosophical dreamer on the Acropolis seems ever to have seriously thought that his or her thoughts came from outside the body. They arose from the mixing of present experience with past reading, the collecting of ideas, and the organising and putting them into a communicable order, a distributed cognition, not the passive receiving of information or advice from some external agent.<sup>44</sup> In this practice, the philosophical viewer of the Enlightenment distanced himself from the Christian predecessors whose reports of visions of saints appearing to them in dreams seem to have been thought of as actual visitations from some metaphysical entity. He or she also distanced himself or herself from the many western Christians who looked at the Acropolis in the years after Greek independence.<sup>45</sup>

Philosophical viewers had usually pre-dreamed Athens at home long before they re-dreamed it on the spot. Eliot Warburton, for example, realised that the Acropolis was already present in his unconscious mind. As he wrote of his first sight from the sea: 'Now the Acropolis of Athens greets us like some-well remembered vision'.<sup>46</sup> Or, as the American Christian preacher Thomas de Witt Talmage wrote: 'I had read so much about it and dreamed so much about it, that I needed no magician's wand to restore it'.<sup>47</sup> Visiting the Acropolis was, for many, an actualisation of an experience that had already been pre-figured and internalized by pre-reading, by pre-viewing of pictures, and by pre-visioning.

The book that most helped to spread and entrench the philosophical way of seeing was *The Ruins* by Count Volney, his meditations on the ruins of empires, first published in French in 1788 on the eve of the French Revolution and, with its omnipresent engraving, soon to be well known over Europe and particularly valued by those on the liberal end of the political spectrum. As Volney wrote of his investigative method:

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44 The notion of 'distributed cognition' and its basis in neuro-science is discussed briefly in Chapter 1.

45 Discussed in Chapter 22.

46 Warburton, Eliot, Esq., *The Crescent and the Cross, or Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel* (London: Colburn, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 1851), 396, on his first sight from the sea.

47 Talmage, T. de Witt, *From the Pyramids to the Acropolis, Sacred Places seen through Biblical Spectacles* (Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Company, 1892), 272.

‘I will dwell in solitude amidst the ruins of cities: I will inquire of the monuments of antiquity what was the wisdom of former ages.’<sup>48</sup>

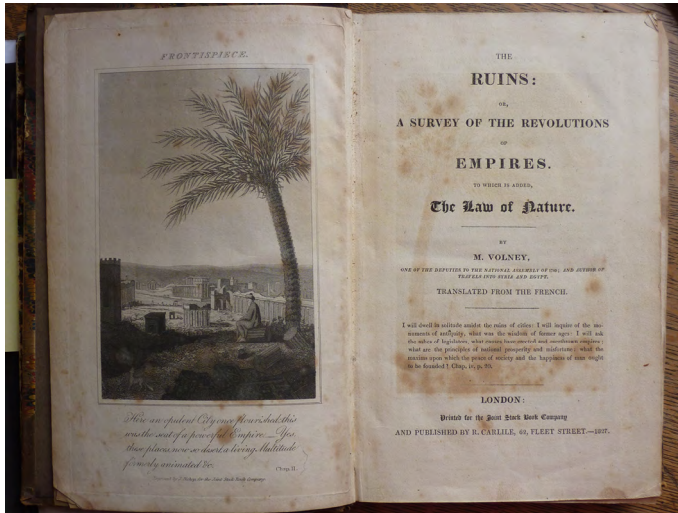


Figure 8.3. Title page and frontispiece of an English translation that followed the French closely, with the same image. Copper engraving.

Disowning what he called the ‘mathematical’, by which he meant the Newtonian notion of laws, Volney adopted what he called the moral, in modern terms anthropological, approach to understanding the fluctuations of human historical experience.<sup>49</sup> Soon after he first wrote, his model appeared to have been vindicated as a practical predictor and not just a theory. And he was ready to draw on the experience of the moderns as well as the ancients. When, for example, in the year before the fall of the Bastille and the rapid success of the French Revolution, which came to many as a surprise, he wrote of the Ottoman leaderships, that when ‘they shut themselves up in their seraglios, benumbed by

- 48 *Les Ruines, ou Méditation sur les Révolutions des Empires* (London: Carlile, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 1827) and quoted on title page of most editions and translations from chapter iv. The ideas were also set out and developed, drawing on the experience of the French Revolution in Volney, C.F., *Leçons d’histoire, prononcées à l’Ecole normale, en l’an III de la République française* (Paris: J. A. Brosson, 1799) and later editions. An English language edition, *Lectures on History* (London: printed at the Oriental Press, 1800). Volney, C.F., *New Researches in Ancient History ... Translated in Paris under the superintendance of the author by Colonel Corbet* (London: Lewis, 1819).
- 49 Volney, *Considerations on the War with the Turks. Translated from the French of M. de Volney* (London: Debrett, 1788), 5.

indolence, satiated even to apathy, and depraved by a the flattery of a slavish court, their minds contracted with their enjoyments, their inclinations were vilified by their habits and their government grew as vicious as themselves', the parallel with the Versailles of *ancien régime* France was not hard to discern.<sup>50</sup> And his claim to have predicted the Revolution while contemplating the ruins of Palmyra did not seem like the wisdom of hindsight, especially as he had himself anticipated and pre-empted that sneer.<sup>51</sup>

As with the other ways of seeing, philosophizing from ruins owed much to practices already well established in western countries. The ruins of Rome had long been regarded as providing a moral and philosophical education, a practice caught by the image shown as Figure 8.4, which a young English lady preserved in her commonplace book.



Figure 8.4. 'Wisdom receiving instruction from the history of States and Empires'. Copper engraving, c.1800, unidentified.<sup>52</sup>

50 *Ibid.*, 21.

51 *Ibid.*, 86, where he compared himself to Columbus who was ridiculed by contemporaries who later pooh-poohed his achievement on the grounds that 'All this was simple enough; indeed everybody guessed it long since'.

52 'Pasted into the commonplace book of Miss H. Pearson'. Private collection.

Nor were the lessons or explanatory models that emerged from a philosophical study thought only to be useful as a guide to public policy—albeit many of the visitors, as aristocrats, would be expected to contribute to the development of such policy. The Acropolis, if observed and studied correctly, was potentially what the Germans called a *bildung* and the ancient Greeks a *paideia*, an education not as a process of accumulating useful knowledge, but of developing morally according to civic values. Studying the remains of ancient Greece would, according to this view, help to emancipate modern men and women from the provincialism of mind into which nations and pre-national polities had commonly fallen. By introducing themselves to difference and facing its implications, the philosophical viewers liberated themselves from the assumption that their own customs and beliefs were necessarily superior. Philosophizing among the monuments would stimulate their imaginations and clarify their powers of reason.<sup>53</sup>

### ‘Living Inscriptions’: Custom as a Form of Ancient Knowledge

Until the later eighteenth century, the western quest was almost exclusively concentrated on the materiality that ancient Hellas had left behind; first the manuscripts in which works of ancient authors had been carried across time, and the physical remains above and below ground, topography and archaeology. Although the scope was sometimes widened by applying emergent theories drawn from experience elsewhere, this was an object-centred study of things—not of how they were used in the lives of the peoples of the ancient past. But was it possible, some eighteenth-century visitors began to wonder, that there was another source that could help to improve modern understanding of ancient Hellas? As the early topographers had discovered, the stories that were told by the people of Athens about the monuments turned out to be of little value as information about ancient times. But could the living people whom they encountered

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53 A typical statement of this common claim is to be found in, for example, the translator’s Preface to *Voyage dans la Grèce Asiatique, à la Péninsule de Cyzique, à Brusse et à Nicée ... Traduit de l’italien de l’Abbé Domenico Sestini* [by J. C. Pingeron] (London and Paris: Leroy, 1789).

themselves be carriers of knowledge from ancient times? Did remnants of ancient Hellenism remain inscribed in the customs of the people? Were they 'living inscriptions', a phrase that had been used by the early-eighteenth-century French botanist Tournefort to describe his hope that the local people he met might have retained reliable information about the medicinal qualities of plants described by the ancient botanical authors Theophrastus and Dioscorides, which were still discoverable and identifiable growing on the ground of Greece.<sup>54</sup> And if the people had retained traces of the ancient past, was there still time, even in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, to find such remnants before they were irreversibly subsumed by the rapidly expanding advance of European modernity? If so, how could they be collected, studied, and deciphered? Was it possible to disassemble and rearrange the layers of oral traditions? Was it possible, we might say in modern terms, to reverse-engineer the 'experiential history' that had been passed from generation to generation in myths and stories into evidence-based knowledge? As only a few understood, the ancient Hellenes had themselves attempted to fit old narratives, such as those that clustered round the Trojan war, into calendar time, and had, in their tragic theatre and public civic art, such as temple architecture, with its stories in stone displayed on sacred buildings such as the Parthenon, maintained a sharp boundary between evidence-based histories and those stories that were largely dependent on oral traditions.<sup>55</sup>

As the early post-encounter travellers to Athens discovered, the ancient gods had not entirely gone away but had been overlaid by later stories or renamed. Since Athens had had a classically educated foreign colony of western settlers and visitors since the 1670s, it was not the most promising site in which to dig for buried mentalities. But perhaps in the remoter regions least affected by contact with the west, traces might still be found? And where better to look than on Mount Olympus, in whose unvisited, snow-capped peak, the twelve gods of the Olympian pantheon had, according to Hellenic religion, made their principal abode? In 1838 David Urquhart, who was perhaps the first human being to climb to the summit of Mount Olympus with that idea

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54 Quoted by Lack and Maberley in Sibthorp, 11.

55 This is discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

in mind, found no traces of the Olympian gods.<sup>56</sup> When he was told that ‘heaven and earth had once met upon its summit, but that since men had grown wicked, God had gone higher up’, he thought he might have discovered a pre-Hellenic myth that was even more ancient.<sup>57</sup>

Or could knowledge of the ancient world be recovered by a study of what they called ‘folklore’? When in 1809 John Galt heard that the young women of Athens who were in search of a husband put out an offering of honey, salt and bread on the night of the new moon at a place where Pausanias had seen a statue to Aphrodite, he assumed that it was a custom handed down from antiquity.<sup>58</sup>

If Jacob Spon is the father of looking at the ancient monuments of Athens scientifically as the material records of the ancient past, and Meursius is the grandfather who collected and collated the written documentary record, the first to carry the approach from archaeology to anthropology, from things to people, from dead stones to living customs, was a French trader living in Constantinople, Pierre-Augustin Guys, whose influential book first appeared in 1771. If most of the philosophers tried to understand the ancient past by contemplating the material ruins, Guys looked at the people as a linear narrative of continuity.<sup>59</sup> Like an antiquary who finds an old coin, he declared, he would remove the encrustations to reveal the bright metal underneath.<sup>60</sup>

During the nineteenth century, when many of the people living in Greece were not yet much affected by European modernity, a huge effort was made to collect songs, stories, and customs surviving in the rural areas and the islands where traditions from ancient times might have survived, albeit with an overlay of Christianity that a modern anthropologist might be able to peel away. As Walter Woodburn Hyde noted in 1923: ‘We are fortunate in having many many collections of such songs and tales, which have been made from the time of Leo Allatius, the Chiote theologian and folklorist of the early seventeenth century, down to our own day.’<sup>61</sup> The list of such collections comprises

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56 Urquhart’s secret mission to the Ottoman commander, Reschid, will be discussed in Chapter 18.

57 Urquhart, *Spirit of East*, i, 417.

58 Galt, *Letters*, 109. His informant was Padre Paulo, with whom he lodged in the Capuchin convent.

59 A point made explicitly by Constantine, *Early Greek Travellers*, 150.

60 Guys, 1771 edition, i, 338–39.

61 Hyde, Walter Woodburn, *Greek Religion and its Survivals* (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1923), 60. He names a long list of local as well as foreign researchers and theorists,

many distinguished names of French, German, English, and Greek scholars—Fauriel and Legrand, Passow, Schmidt, and von Hahn, Abbott and Garnett, Polites, Zampelios, and a host of local Greek historians.<sup>62</sup>

Unlike the other imported ways of seeing that initially were practiced almost entirely by foreigners, this enterprise was local and international. However it was all too tempting in the nineteenth century, when books by the historical novelist Walter Scott had by far the widest European circulation, to discern long traditions.<sup>63</sup> As Lucy Garnett, who had studied Greek lore for many years, wrote: ‘The caves in which the crystal drops of water appear to be distilled from the living rock were no less delighted in by the nymphs of antiquity than were the perennial spring; but all such natural temples are now appropriated by the Virgin Queen of Heaven, and a Panaghía Spelaiótissa, or “Virgin of the Grotto,” now receives from the Greek peasant women honours similar to those paid in classical times to the nymphs of whose temples she has usurped possession.’<sup>64</sup>

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including Fauriel and Legrand, Passow, Schmidt, and von Hahn, Abbott and Garnett, Polites, Zampelios,

62 Hyde *Greek Religion and its Survivals*, 60.

63 See St Clair, William, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 240.

64 Garnett, *Greece of the Hellenes*, 173.





# 9. Romanticism and its Rhetorics

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## Romantic Aesthetics and the Place of the Parthenon

Could it be, some classically-educated men of eighteenth-century western Europe began to ask, that the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Acropolis of Athens and elsewhere preserved an essence of ancient Hellenism? One that was independent of their associations with the great historical figures and writers of that age?<sup>1</sup> Had the designers, artists, and workmen of classical Athens, it now began to be asked, discovered and applied principles that were timeless and universal? And, if so, could these principles be recovered by study and then applied to the design of modern buildings in modern countries? Those who were of the opinion that the main appeal of the monuments to viewers lay in their design were, as only a few appreciated, setting themselves up in opposition to the thought offered by Cicero when he had visited Athens in 79 BCE: ‘whether it is a natural instinct or a mere illusion I cannot say but one’s emotions are more strongly aroused by seeing the places that tradition records to have been the favourite resort of men in former days than by hearing their deeds or reading their writings.’<sup>2</sup>

Although the dominant genres of looking at the building practised by the visiting western classicists during the long eighteenth century were the philosophical and the topographical, indications that a notion of an aesthetic value was emerging can be found from the first days of the encounter. As was noted by Sir George Wheler: [The Parthenon is]

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- 1 The question was asked explicitly by Aberdeen, Earl of, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Beauty in Grecian Architecture* (London: Murray, 1822), 3. Aberdeen, already mentioned as a collector of antiquities in Chapter 6, was later, as British Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister, to play a role in the political settlement at the end of the Greek Revolution, as will be discussed in Chapter 18.
  - 2 Cicero, *de Finibus*, 5.1.2.

‘not only still the chief Ornament of the Citadel; but absolutely, both for Matter and Art, the most beautiful piece of Antiquity remaining in the World.’<sup>3</sup>

The caption to a lithograph prepared in France in 1824 in the middle of the Greek Revolution, as shown as Figure 9.1, with its mention of ‘meditations’ captures the transition from the philosophy-of-history way of seeing, where the making of meaning is regarded as a transaction made by the active mind of the viewer as he or she engages with a material object, to a western romanticism that holds that meaning can inhere in the object itself.



Figure 9.1. ‘Un matin Lord Elgin interrompé ses méditations’ (‘One morning Lord Elgin interrupts his meditations’). Lithograph, 1824.<sup>4</sup>

Champions of this western genre of viewing, which, at least according to their own defence, finds nothing questionable in disassociating artworks from the contexts that gave them their meaning when they were made, were at first inclined to postulate that only men who were endowed with a rare sensibility, ‘taste’, could appreciate the visual productions of

3 Wheler, *Journey*, 360.

4 Frontispiece to volume 1 of du Heaume, Hippolyte, *Voyage d’un Jeune Grec à Paris* (Paris: Fr. Louis, 1824). Lith. De Cahier Pl[ac]e du [?] No. 30. Image slightly sharpened.

the ancients.<sup>5</sup> At one level, since romanticism did not require viewers to do much prior work, it appeared to be democratizing, allowing viewers to mobilize their imaginations, which were usually assumed not to have been mediated; it could therefore claim to be open to anyone whatever his or her level of knowledge or education.

With its claim to be an autonomous cognitive domain that stood outside the contingencies of history, it also appeared to justify the digging up and removal of artefacts so that they could be displayed in new contexts; any informational value that could have been obtained from a study of the artefacts as documents that could help inquirers to recover a more secure knowledge of the ancient world was subordinated to an 'aesthetic' emotional experience allegedly felt by the modern viewer.

The word 'aesthetic' had been coined in Latin by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten in a book called *Aesthetica* published in Latin in 1750, and it was soon adopted into the modern European languages.<sup>6</sup> In the eighteenth century, William Hogarth attempted to systematize the rules of universal aesthetics by reference to the ancient statues known in his time from examples found in Italy. He illustrated his conclusions on the best shapes and proportions in an engraving, as shown in Figure 9.2.

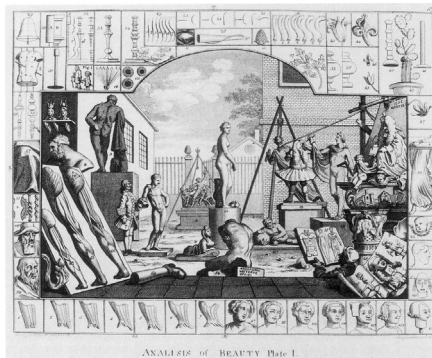


Figure 9.2. William Hogarth, 'Analysis of Beauty' (1753). Copper engraving.<sup>7</sup>

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- 5 What I will call the perils of presentism are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279> and pursued in the subsequent chapters.
- 6 *Aesthetica scripsit Alexand. Gottlieb Baumgarten* (Tubingen: Kleyb, 1750). He is not the Baumgarten who edited the universal history of 1745 that included images of the Acropolis buildings derived from Spon and Wheeler, noted in the Bibliography.
- 7 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Analysis\\_of\\_Beauty\\_Plate\\_1\\_by\\_William\\_Hogarth.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Analysis_of_Beauty_Plate_1_by_William_Hogarth.jpg)

Hogarth and others were picking up on a tradition pursued over centuries in ancient Greece, notably by the sculptor Polycleitos, to develop a 'kanon' of ideal proportions, the word being taken from the long, thin measuring rods used by architects and sculptors in ancient and modern times.<sup>8</sup> By the nineteenth century, the idea that the Parthenon and other Athenian monuments had achieved a timeless perfection had become so prevalent, so familiar, so uncontested, and so internalised, that few realised that it was as historically and as culturally contingent as the other ways of seeing already discussed. As the artist William Linton wrote: 'Their excellences are not esteemed from their being definable by dates, or traceable to epochs; but because they are based upon those immutable principles which belong to all time; principles that are as new to-day as they were twenty centuries ago; and which, unless the world again relapses into barbarism, will never cease to be appreciated and revered.'<sup>9</sup> 'The fifth century is the first time in the world's history when the art of sculpture was cultivated and enjoyed for the sake of its beauty alone, and not for the teaching or information it might convey' wrote Albinia Wherry, one of the first women to have her views printed.<sup>10</sup> And, for many, the Parthenon was not only the most perfect work of art ever achieved, but, as a continuation of the justification promoted by Lord Elgin, a school from which from artists would be able to learn for all time.<sup>11</sup>

This public justification offered by Elgin for his removals, namely that he was providing physical material models to be studied and copied by modern artists, was already a commonplace when he first deployed it in 1798 and again later when he and his allies persuaded the British Parliament to buy the collection. The subject set for the Oxford Prize Poem of 1806, for example, was 'A Recommendation of the Study of the

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8 An image of a real measuring rod is shown as Figure 26.8, with a discussion of the metaphorical use of the instruments and tools used in the building industry in ancient times for the acts of seeing and cognition themselves, as they were then misunderstood. The implications are explored in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

9 Linton, William, *Scenery of Greece and its Islands* (London: published privately by the artist, 1856), 5.

10 Wherry, Albinia, *Greek Sculpture with Story and Song* (London: Dent, 1898), 111.

11 For example: 'l'école éternelle des architectes et des sculpteurs de tous les pays et de tous les temps.' Breton, Ernest, de la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France, etc., etc., *Monuments de tous les peuples, décrits et dessinés d'après les documents les plus modernes* (Brussels: Librairie historique-artistique, 1843), ii, 424.

Remains of Ancient Grecian and Roman Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting' which the winner turned into verse:

Rise, slumbering Genius, and with throbbing heart  
Adore these trophies of unrivall'd art;  
Till each fine grace that gifted Masters knew  
In fairly vision floating o'er thy view,  
Perfection crown once more the living stone,  
And Britain claims a Phidias of her own.<sup>12</sup>

The artist Hugh William 'Grecian' Williams was one of those who wondered aloud in print whether the admiration that he felt was dependent on associations or was implicit in the physical nature of the objects themselves. Although he declined to engage with the neuropsychology ('although unpracticed in untwisting the gossamer threads of thought and sentiment'), he favoured the latter view, providing an example of a still emerging romanticism.<sup>13</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, the high noon of romanticism, we find artists and others deliberately clearing their minds of any information about the ancient culture within which the Parthenon had been produced. Joseph Pennell, for example, an American artist, in preparing for his visit to Athens deliberately avoided reading any ancient author, 'even in translation', or any book about architecture or proportion.<sup>14</sup> Colonel J.P. Barry, a medical doctor from India, visiting the Acropolis a few years earlier in 1905, who had also hoped to experience 'impressions not derived from reading', claimed that: 'The most valuable impressions for the traveller are those he makes his own not those made for him.'<sup>15</sup> But deliberately cultivating ignorance of the ancient world

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12 Wilson, John, 'A Recommendation of the Study of the Remains of Ancient Grecian and Roman Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting' in *Oxford Prize Poems, being a collection of such English poems as have at various times obtained prizes in the University of Oxford*, sixth edition (Oxford: Parker, 1819), 91.

13 Williams, *Travels*, ii, 314.

14 *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Lithographs and Etchings of Grecian Temples by Joseph Pennell* (New York: Frederick Keppell, 1913). Although, in some respects, Pennell remained indebted to the traditions of the picturesque, he described in words, as an ephrasis to his own pictures, how he was bowled over by the geographical situation and its changing light.

15 Barry, Lieut-Col J.P., A.B. M.B., *At the Gates of the East: A Book of Travel among Historic Wonderlands* (London: Longman, 1906), 17.

for fear that such knowledge might sully an 'aesthetic' experience, perceived as occurring beyond the contingencies of time and place, was hard to sustain in practice. And Pennell and the many others who looked at the Parthenon, and even more so those who looked at the detached pieces in London, soon understood that, whether they chose to submit, to resist, or to negotiate, and whether in the event they were confirmed in their expectations or 'agreeably disappointed', the recommended seeing agenda, including the romantic aesthetic which they attempted to practise, had been set by others.

### Walter Pater and the Western Romantic Aesthetic

Was the essence of Athenian Hellenism visually exportable? And could it be applied in the landscapes and cityscapes into which modern buildings in modern countries were set? It was increasingly clear that much of what had hitherto been regarded by Spon and others as 'ancient' art was made during the period of the Roman imperial centuries and owed much to Hellenic models, as the ancient writers had not tried to conceal, but whose style had been altered, coarsened many thought, in the processes of translation and adaptation, or to use the modern term 'reception'.<sup>16</sup> With knowledge of ancient Hellenic architecture now being recovered, was it not time to go back to the purity of the source?

The quest for universal laws of beauty, for an aesthetic free of contingency, for a 'taste' that all educated viewers could recommend, arrived in Athens from the west as part of the encounter when Athens was under Ottoman control. Although universalizing was also attempted for sculpture, and for representations of an ideal human body in particular, the most promising set of candidates were the ancient buildings. The architect, William Wilkins, who was to design many buildings in a neo-Hellenic style in England, recommended viewers to divest their minds of the associations of the Parthenon sculptures 'and endeavour to consider them abstractedly as works of art'.<sup>17</sup>

The writer who can be regarded as high priest of the nineteenth-century cult of the western romantic aesthetic at its apogee as it was

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16 For the limitations of 'reception' as a way of trying to understand the ancient past, see *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

17 Wilkins, William, *Atheniensiâ, or, Remarks on the Topography and Buildings of Athens* (London: Murray, 1816), 117.

applied to ancient Athens was Walter Pater. He had intended to write an evidence-based historical book to supersede the speculative, psychological, and near-metaphysical ideas of Winckelmann, who never saw Greece and whose history of ancient art was compiled mainly from his experience of engravings and of white plaster casts, but as he drafted his chronological narrative of development, Pater was constantly being overtaken by events: ancient sites, including the Acropolis of Athens, were being excavated and new materials from other epochs of antiquity, both before and after, were found and described. Unlike some of his contemporaries, who thought that meaning inhered in the stones, Pater did occasionally give an active role to the viewer, as when he wrote: 'the fire of the reasonable soul will kindle, little by little, up to the Theseus of the Parthenon and the Venus of Melos.'<sup>18</sup> By using the word 'reasonable', Pater protected himself from the charge that he was universalizing a way of seeing that was specific to himself, to his social class, and to his historical situation. But, for all his qualifications, discursively he remained entrapped in the tradition of seeing the past as a parade of producers, with little interest in the experience of the ancient consumer. He was also a direct descendant of those who shivered and gushed at the first sight of the Acropolis in the long eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup> In the name of 'art', always distinguished from non-art, he sacralized objects and then projected his own, largely predetermined, emotional reactions on to them, as if they offered an independent source of knowledge and moral education.

### Venerating Pheidias: Attitudes Towards the Ancient Sculptor

It was a short hop from admiring the works to admiring the 'artist' who allegedly designed and made them. Rennell Rodd, later Sir Rennell, a British diplomat to Greece in the late nineteenth century, caught the romantic way of envisioning the role of Pheidias in a series of verses in a much-reprinted book, of which the following is an extract:

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<sup>18</sup> Pater, Walter, *Greek Studies, A Series of Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1895 and later editions), 230.

<sup>19</sup> As discussed in Chapter 6.

Here wrought the strong creator, and he laid  
 The marble on the limestone, in the crag  
 Morticed and sure foundations, line to line  
 And arc to arc repeating, as it grew;  
 Veiling the secret of its strength in grace,  
 Till like a marble flower in blue Greek air  
 Perfect it rose, an afterworld's despair.  
 And here man made his most divine appeal  
 To the eternal in the heart of man,  
 The mute appeal of beauty, crying still  
 Dimly across the ages that are dumb.<sup>20</sup>

Rodd's invocation acknowledges skill, experience, and training. But later in his book, he puts into the mouth of Pheidias, the 'creator', many of the sentiments associated with what came to be called 'romantic agony'; those caught up in the rhetorics of romanticism preferred to think that Pheidias went up to Mount Olympus and learned truths direct from the gods, rather than that he was a successful member of the guild of visual-image makers, with long apprenticeships, traditions, trade secrets, managerial skills, and business practices.<sup>21</sup>

The 'rapture', a feeling allegedly experienced by the viewer, was soon being imputed to the artist of the rapture-inducing work, with Pheidias, who was both the maker of the cult statue and other works, and for a time the overseeing manager of the whole project, constructed as a unique genius, divinely inspired, as, for example, in a poem written by one of the visitors to the Parthenon when it became accessible after independence. '[Pheidias] touched the marble — willed — and it was done, /On godlike image stamped the godlike mind; His soul has past into the riven stone.'<sup>22</sup> Pheidias was imagined as suffering from what

20 Rodd, Rennell, *The Violet Crown, and Songs of England* (London: D. Scott, 1891), 12. The 'violet crown' as a quotation from Pindar, and the importance of the phrase for recovering an understanding of the Parthenon in classical Athens are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

21 Quoted from the *Anthologia Planuda*, epigram 81 by Davison, Claire Cullen, with the collaboration of Brite Lundgreen, edited by Geoffrey B. Waywell, *Pheidias The Sculptures and Ancient Sources* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, three volumes, 2009), ii, 916. Noted by a compiler of mainstream attitudes, Adams, W.H. Davenport, *Temples, tombs, and monuments of ancient Greece and Rome. A description and a history of some of the most remarkable memorials of classical architecture* (London: Nelson, 1871), 23.

22 Cochrane, Alexander Baillie, *The Morea: with some Remarks on the Present State of Greece* (London: Sauders and Ottley, 1840), 20.



were later to be called romantic agonies. As an extreme example, I offer an extract from a poem composed by an American who saw the Parthenon in 1839, six years after the Acropolis was vacated by the Ottoman army:

In olden time, when Art was young,  
 In Grecia's ancient years of glory,  
 When Phidias wrought, and Homer sung  
 Lamented Troy's too tragic story,  
 An artist, his creative will  
 To one sublime conception turning,  
 Dwelt on the loved idea, till  
 His brain with phrenzy's heat was burning.  
 Then, from his genius-guided hand,  
 Came forth the spirit's beau-ideal  
 Of human grace, so true that, fanned  
 To life, the mortal had been real.  
 'Twas done—the artist's work of pride!  
 He gazed awhile, in mute devotion,  
 Rushed to its arms, kissed, fell and died;  
 Yes, died, of over-wrought emotion.<sup>23</sup>

A substantial volume of fictional compositions, both verbal and visual, that celebrated the unique and unsurpassable genius of Pheidias could be compiled: pictures, works in verse, novels, imaginary conversations, and plays.<sup>24</sup> Occasionally too, in addition to the many images of the Parthenon restored to its perfect state at the moment of completion, pictured usually as sterile as a hospital and as emptied of people as a papier-mâché model, we find attempts to imagine the construction work in progress as a social enterprise involving the whole city and real people. An example, composed by an unknown artist in Germany in the later nineteenth century, is reproduced as Figure 9.3.

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23 Earle, Pliny, *Marathon, and Other Poems* (Philadelphia: Henry Perkins, 1841), 15. As another example: 'He touched the marble—willed—and it was done, /On godlike image stamped the godlike mind; /His soul has past into the riven stone;— /Tis there, but like the lightning and the wind, We know not whence that innate power is won.' Cochrane, Alexander Baillie, *The Morea: with some Remarks on the Present State of Greece* (London: Saunders and Ottley, 1840), 20.

24 For example, Beulé.

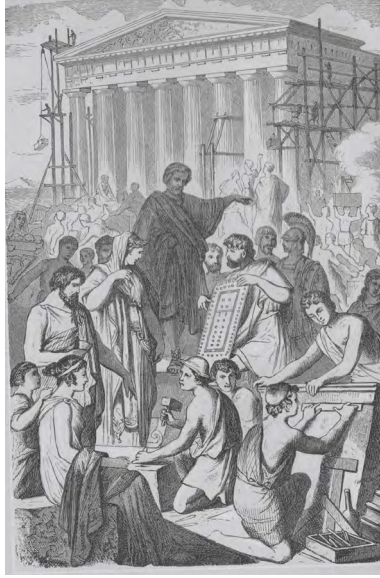


Figure 9.3. 'The building of the Parthenon' by an unnamed artist in Germany, c.1880. Engraving of a composition by an unnamed artist in Germany, c.1880.<sup>25</sup>

Looking back, we can see that this image of Pheidias directing the building of the Parthenon is set within the ways of seeing and assumptions of its own time. Materially it claims, for example, the realism and truthfulness of the photograph, a technology then still new. Rhetorically, while at one level reminding its viewers that the Parthenon had to be designed and built with the participation of many agents besides Pheidias, and that there were not only material plans ('paradeigmata') but processes of approval and acceptance to be negotiated, it also presents the sculptors as copying direct from living models, from 'life', from 'nature' in accordance with romantic aesthetics retrospectively applied. The bodies of the living classical Athenians who are shown building the Parthenon are presented as looking much the same as the idealized bodies shown on the Parthenon frieze. Historically and factually this was an error, as was known to the producers of the book and the image, but rhetorically the youthful German viewers of the image were being encouraged

<sup>25</sup> Frontispiece to volume 2 of Wägner, Wilhelm, *Hellas* (Leipzig and Berlin: Verlag von Otto Spamer, 5th revised edition by A. Dittmar, 1882).

to think of themselves as neo-Hellenes, with implications for their understanding of their imagined past as Aryans with a pedigree that they genealogically shared with the classical Greeks.<sup>26</sup>

And if the ancient Athenians allegedly resembled the cleansed marble-white Athenians pictured on the Parthenon, might the resemblance still be present in the contemporary population? So deeply internalised were the then modern constructions of the nature of 'art', and of the external markers of continuities of biological 'race' and nationality, that many saw what they expected to see, anecdotal observation appearing to confirm ideology. As was noticed by an American journalist around the same time: 'Near old Ereso [in Lesbos] the women preserve the type of that indestructible beauty, and in the large brown eyes, voluptuous busts, and elastic gait one may deem that he sees the originals of the antique statues.'<sup>27</sup> As an unnamed visitor to Aegina in 1879 wrote of the boys he saw there, perhaps revealing a greater affinity with the customs of ancient Athens than he realised: 'we noticed more heads and faces of the type familiar to us in old Greek sculpture than we had met hitherto or were destined afterwards to meet in the Greece of today. Three or four of these young fellows, with their large eyes, low foreheads, finely-cut profiles, and luxuriant heads of hair, might have sat as models for the Pan-Athenaic procession with which Phidias adorned the frieze of the Parthenon.'<sup>28</sup>

For the opening of the First International Congress of Archaeology held at Athens in April 1905, the French School laid on a short verse play written by a famous writer of the time.<sup>29</sup> *Chez Pheidias*, set on the ancient Acropolis, in front of the Parthenon follows the conventions of an ancient drama. The play opens with the 'modern visitor' conjuring up the ghost of Pheidias, who is addressed as a divine thinker in the reverential terms that romanticism had adopted from the language of

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26 The appropriation of the Parthenon and of other ancient Greek artifacts in support of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theories of essential racism is discussed in Chapter 23.

27 Warner, Charles Dudley, author of *In the Levant* (London: Samson Low 5th edition, after 1876), 270.

28 Anonymous, 'A week in Athens' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, cxxviii, September 1880, 329. Instances of a lack of awareness of 'Socratic love' are noted in Chapter 22.

29 Blémont, Émile, *Chez Pheidias, Poème Dramatique, Représenté à l'École française d'Athènes le 9 avril 1905 Premier Congrès internationale d'Archéologie* (Paris: Lemerre, 1905).

religious prostration. Pheidias is at first irritated at being disturbed by an impious barbarian, but when he is introduced to the honest men from all quarters of the world, whose fervent desire is to save the remains of the Parthenon, the greatest masterpiece, he relents. Speaking in the third person, as befits a god-like genius, he reveals that 'I Phidias of Athens, son of Charmides have had intimations of "the golden key of the infinite, the great second Law, the beginning and the end of the world."' To some listeners, his words may have been taken as a claim that he was almost a Christian *avant la lettre*, an idea that had long been applied to Socrates, and was being promoted by the many visitors to Athens at the same time as the Congress.<sup>30</sup> Others may have heard the other late-nineteenth-century trope that Pheidias had shaped into marble the metaphysical ideas of Plato.<sup>31</sup>

## Romanticism versus Reality

Romanticism's discourses of individual genius, creativity, and of the autonomous artist as a seer standing outside society, a set of ideas that was always at odds with the empirical record, are still often deployed. Much modern writing silently accepts a distinction between 'art' and non-art, adopting a top-down socially divisive discourse in which one group of privileged talks with another, and tries to separate 'art', regarded as good partly because it disowns any overt wish to be regarded as a rhetoric, from 'propaganda' regarded as bad partly because its rhetorical purpose is less well concealed. As far as the ancient world is concerned, however, the main decisions on what should be made and displayed, as the plentiful record confirms, were taken not by 'artists' but by what in modern terms can be called the clients, the citizen officials appointed by the institutions of the city as part of its democracy. This can be acknowledged while also affirming that artists (among whom we may include architects, sculptors, painters, metal workers and others, in so far as such trades were differentiated) were important agents in the design as well as in the execution of the iconography of the Parthenon, and that some were far more skilled, more innovative, and more successful than others.

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30 As will be discussed in Chapter 22.

31 As described by, for example, Ellen Jane Harrison.

In classical Athens when the Parthenon was first designed and built, there was evidently little sense of romanticism in its modern eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sense, of 'great art' that offers timeless truths irrespective of context. The ancient Greek words commonly used for categorizing material objects that are today perceived of and presented as 'works of art' often contain the implied viewer and the implied purpose within the actual words and their cognates, as for example *theoremata*, *agalmata*, *mnemeia* 'things to be viewed', 'things to be wondered at', 'things to be remembered—or perhaps even 'things that cause you, the viewer, to look carefully, to feel awe, to remember'. The Greek words, which contain their associated dynamic verbs within them, and that are therefore, to an extent, consumer genres, are unlike the words used in modern languages such as 'picture', 'statue', or 'monument', which imply a static, bounded physicality and tend to exclude the human viewer as the co-maker of meanings. Indeed the notion of 'art' as a category that is applied to some objects and not to others, let alone of the 'fine arts' or the 'plastic arts', is probably more of a hindrance than a help if we wish to recover an understanding of the purpose and role of the Parthenon in classical Athens.<sup>32</sup>

Many of the systems of ancient production, which required the cooperation of agents with specialist skills including the making of visual images and the writing of poems and songs, appear to have been arranged in accordance with pre-modern guild systems. In such systems, as in later market-based systems, the client or patron who commissions the work and who is able to arrange the financing, whether a private individual or a collectivity such as the city of Athens, was always supreme, as was never likely to have been doubted by the ancient viewer who encountered the many inscriptions on the bases of ancient statues.<sup>33</sup> In considering how the classical Parthenon came to be designed and constructed in form it took, it is therefore necessary to decolonize our minds and explanations from western romanticism and its rhetorics of explanation that are based on the individual genius

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32 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

33 Discussed with quantification, for free-standing dedicatory marble images found in Attica by Hochscheid, Helle, *Networks of Stone: Sculpture and Society in Archaic and Classical Athens* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2015).

of the 'artist'.<sup>34</sup> Emancipating ourselves from the chains of modern romanticism does not, it hardly need be emphasized, detract from the astonishing artistic achievement represented by the Parthenon. It does, however, require us to recall that this was a huge building for which the client was the Athenian city-state, and if we are to avoid the circularities of argumentation to which romanticism is liable, we must pay particular attention to recovering a historicized understanding of the aims of the collectivity that was the client, and to take account of how proposals to build the Parthenon were justified to the decision-takers, including those who authorized and commissioned the financing.<sup>35</sup>

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34 Discussed with my suggestions of how we do that, and with what results, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

35 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

## 10. The Choices

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The outbreak of the Greek Revolution caught most of the people of Athens by surprise. Or rather, the local leaders thought that they knew what was happening and were prepared. When, shortly before the Orthodox Easter festival of 1821, a band of men were reported to be encamped on the hills to the north, and the authorities called upon the people of Athens to man the town wall, they were responding to the precise situation against which Voivode Haseki had arranged for the wall to be hurriedly built nearly half a century before.<sup>1</sup>

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- 1 The Greeks of Athens ‘believed that a numerous gang of robbers had started up but that tranquility would soon be restored.’ ‘The Siege of the Acropolis of Athens in the Years 1821–1822. By An Eye-Witness’, in *The London Magazine*, IV, January to April 1826, 193. Thanks to the careful work of Christian Gonsa, who has kindly shared his findings with me, the authorship of this article can now be confidently attributed to the Swiss philhellene Andreas Stähele, sometimes called Stähelin (1794–1864), as I had speculated in *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 363. When Stähele arrived in Greece in early 1822, he was already one of the most highly educated, multilingual, and socially well connected of all the philhellenes of that time and many details can be corroborated. He acted as Secretary to the Austrian Consul, Georg Gropius, already mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, the only consular official from the powers not to have left, and who played at active part right through the Revolution and beyond. Stähele’s 1826 article was published in German in *Das Ausland* (Nr. 174, 176, 177: 23, 25 and 26 June 1829), and it now seems certain that Stähele was also the author of ‘A journey from Athens to Missolonghi in the autumn of 1822’, in *London Magazine*, vol. 3, May 1829, 481–495, where, again, many details, such as his correct naming of villages, can be corroborated. He moved to London after his time in Greece, met and corresponded with famous people, including Hobhouse, applied unsuccessfully to be professor of German at the newly established University College, London, and later pursued a long career in scholarship and journalism. Although, since his 1826 article was published a few years after the events described, it necessarily contains elements of hindsight, there is no reason to doubt its authenticity or veracity. The author describes his account as ‘from the Journal of one who passed above a year in Greece, shortly after the beginning of the war; who had an adequate knowledge of the language to carry on a familiar intercourse with all classes, and was therefore enabled to collect information whenever it was wanted, from different quarters’. Stähelin, 193. As an example that tends to confirm that he maintained a journal, the local names he gives of the numerous villages in Boeotia that he passed through,

With its gates and towers, Haseki's wall could keep out marauders or even an armed force for a time, but only if the majority of the population co-operated. The sixty lightly-armed soldiers, the gendarmerie of the garrison in the Acropolis, were not numerous enough defend the wall on their own, but when joined by local men and women, they could reasonably expect to hold out until help arrived or the marauders moved to softer targets elsewhere. People were needed to serve as lookouts and messengers, and, if an attack happened, to carry stores and weapons, and to be able to ensure that any breaches in the wall were quickly filled in with stones. If a state of war or internal revolt was officially declared by the Ottoman political and religious authorities, the young men of the local Muslim community, in effect military reservists, of whom there were about three hundred in Athens, could be given firearms if any were available—but at first that was not done.<sup>2</sup>

So decisive and complete was the eventual triumph of Greek nationalism, however, that within a few years of the arrival of the Revolution in Athens, it was already becoming difficult to imagine how the many other possible futures had appeared to those caught up in the crisis. The English churchman, Rev. George Waddington, for example, who visited Athens in 1824 and collected information about what had happened in 1821 and 1822, was already applying nationalist hindsight when, in his account published in 1825, he wrote of the decision of the Ottoman authorities to call on the town to help in its own defence: 'For this purpose, (shall I be believed?) they posted Greeks upon various parts of the walls, with orders to inform them, should the rebels approach; while themselves reposed in stupid security round the fires which they had lighted within the gates.'<sup>3</sup> Soon it was being said that the 'Hellenes' had tricked the Turks into believing that the situation was a civil disturbance and that the threat from the gang of robbers on the hill could be dealt with in the normal way.<sup>4</sup> In the event, sympathizers inside the town cooperated with the outsiders, breaches were opened in

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which are now confirmed as accurate by Christian Gonsa, to whom I record my thanks, could not have been compiled from any map.

- 2 I use the figures given by Gordon *History*, i, 174. He describes the Albanians as 'good soldiers'.
- 3 Waddington, Rev. George, *A Visit to Greece in 1823 and 1824* (London: Murray, 1825), 47. His book on the history of Christianity is mentioned in Chapter 22.
- 4 'with artful dissimulation.' Staehelin, 'Eye-witness of 1821', 194.



the wall, men were killed on both sides, the gates were opened, and the Revolutionaries took over the town. How far those who fired the first lethal shots knew they were starting a revolution, or had even planned to do so as members of the secret society, the Philiki Etairia, which had organised the first stages of the revolt from Russia, is not known.

In the autumn of 1817, passing through Athens, the socially well-connected Thomas Jolliffe met a local family of whom he wrote: 'Our host at Athens was a personage of great worth and integrity, enthusiastically attached to the ancient institutions of his country, and professing a most profound contempt for the degenerate follies of her present inhabitants. His house, which was situated near the foot of the Areopagus, commanded a most delightful view of the magnificent scenery that surrounds the plain, including the outlets which lead to Thebes and Marathon. He has three sons, who are named Themistocles, Pericles, and Alcibiades. On the night of our arrival, his family received an addition by the birth of a daughter, since called Aspasia.' Among the songs that were sung by the teenage boys was the composition of Rhigas, which included the lines: 'Sons of Greece, arise! to arms! That the blood of our oppressors may flow in torrents beneath our feet.'<sup>5</sup> It seems certain that the Revolutionaries knew enough about Ottoman laws and customs to appreciate that by killing Ottoman soldiers, representatives of the Ottoman state, they were forcing whole communities to choose whether to join actively or to face Ottoman justice. Since, in Athens, it was hard to regard the Orthodox community as oppressed, the decision to commit themselves and their families to a future of unknowable horror was, in effect taken for them by men committed to violence

In Athens there had been little visible build-up of pre-Revolutionary unrest, nor signs that preparations were being made to meet a crisis. The British architect John Lewis Wolfe, who visited Athens several times in 1820 and 1821, including during a week in March 1821, went about

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5 Jolliffe, T. R., *Letters from Palestine: descriptive of a tour through Gallilee and Judaea, with some account of the Dead Sea, and of the present state of Jerusalem* (London: Black, third edition, 1821), i, 251. The first edition, dated 1819, omits the name of the author and the passage about his visit to Athens. The violent philhellenism of Rhigas is discussed elsewhere. It was probably the same family that Joseph Woods, who was in Athens a few months later, heard singing songs that 'lamented the lost glory of the nation and called upon their countrymen to remember and imitate the deeds of their ancestors.' Woods, ii, 285.

his sketching and measuring on the Acropolis without noticing, or at least not noting in writing, any pre-tremors of the convulsion that would occur only a week later.<sup>6</sup> The British army officer, Charles Napier, who was in Athens from 7 to 11 March 1821, visited all the usual sites, spent time in the Turkish baths, and cast his military eye over the harbours, apparently without sensing that anything was abnormal.<sup>7</sup> A visitor in 1818 tells of a pleasing party at the house of a consul in which the songs the Greeks sang were of the lost glory of the nation and the need to imitate their ancient ancestors, but the visitor also met a local poet who wrote Greek verses in praise of the Pasha of Negropont (modern Chalcis) in whose jurisdiction Athens lay.<sup>8</sup> The Orthodox people of Athens, except for a number who were members of the Philiki Etairia, were unlikely to have fully appreciated that their town stood exactly on the fault line between various geo-political forces—religious and national, ‘Europe’ and ‘the East’, ancient Hellas and modern Greece—that had been moving towards one another for decades and were now about to collide.<sup>9</sup>

At the time of writing, a few physical traces of the fighting during the Revolution can still be seen on the Acropolis. For example, the broken remains of a small metal cannon, and of a few metal and marble balls, lie on the summit near the east end of the Parthenon, along with what may be the remains of a Second World War concrete pillbox, as shown in Figure 10.1.

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- 6 Sketchbooks of John Lewis Wolfe, especially SKB/376/3 and SKB /376/5 RIBA.
  - 7 Napier notebook, BL. As another example: ‘I visited Pentelicon, shot over Hymettus, and almost lived in the Parthenon—enjoyed the drawings of Lusieri—the museum of M. Fauvel, and the hospitality of Logotheti — read Pausanias, and amused myself by sketching, and thus passed some of the most grateful days of my life.’ Henniker, Sir Frederick, Bart., *Notes during a Visit to Egypt, Nubia, The Oasis, Mount Sinai, and Jerusalem* (London: Murray, 1823), 322. His visit was in 1820.
  - 8 Woods, Joseph, F.A.S. F.L.G. F.G.S., and Corresponding Fellow of the Society of Georgofili at Florence, *Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy, and Greece* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1828), ii, 285 and 283.
  - 9 Alexandros Soutsos, a volunteer from the Ionian Islands, and author of one of the earliest histories, believed correctly that members of the Philomuse Society were also members of the conspiracy as ‘invisible motors’. Soutsos, Alexandros, *Histoire de la révolution grecque, par Alexandre Soutzo, témoin oculaire d’une grande partie des faits qu’il expose* (Paris: Didot, 1829), 13. In his list of the principal places where the Philiki Etairia conspiracy had branches at page 22, however, Athens was not mentioned.



Figure 10.1. Broken cannon with metal and marble cannon balls found on the Acropolis.<sup>10</sup>

Since the conflict in and around Athens was fought with old as well as with newly imported weapons, and the Acropolis had been bombarded by a western army in 1687 using much the same range of military technology, it is hard to know when these weapons were first made and by which army they were first used. But, except for the invention of howitzers that could lob more accurately than mortars, and of techniques for making shells red-hot before they were fired, technologies that had been developed by the Ottoman forces and adopted by European armies, the weaponry had not much altered in the meantime.<sup>11</sup> Metal, whether the lead used for making musket bullets or the iron used in the bombs and shells, was always in short supply and worth collecting for recycling into objects designed for other purposes.

Since the cannon shown in Figure 10.1 still has a metal ball lodged in its barrel, it may have exploded from overuse and overheating, or for lack of a gun carriage to absorb the ricochet, a constant hazard. Given

10 Author's photograph, 2018. Other marble balls, some of much larger size, some broken, can be glimpsed through the wires in the netted pens of assorted marble fragments near the Acropolis entrance.

11 For the capabilities of Ottoman artillery, in addition to the numerous remarks in contemporary accounts and in standard military manuals, I have drawn on modern essays by William E. Johnson and others available at: <http://magweb.n1uro.com/sample/sdra/sdr12gsi.htm>

how few cannons the Greeks in the Acropolis had at their disposal when they took control in 1822, it may be the very weapon that, according to the manuscript account of a Greek fighter not yet published, during the later siege of 1826/27, caused Ioannes Makriyannis, one of the Greek leaders, to be wounded in the head 'from stones thrown by the explosion of a cannon.'<sup>12</sup> Two round balls made from Pentelic marble, the material from which the Parthenon and other monuments were constructed, were sent to London later in the Revolution to encourage the philhellenic effort.<sup>13</sup> Made by the chained Muslim prisoners whom the Greek Revolutionaries employed in gathering antiquities, they are likely to have been cut from fractured pieces lying on the Acropolis.<sup>14</sup>

Broken metal cannon balls and shells, then known as 'bombs', lay scattered on the summit for much of the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> Visitors also saw larger marble balls designed for mortars of large calibre known as bombards, as well as broken grenades and lead bullets.<sup>16</sup> In May 1840, Aubrey de Vere noted that: 'All around lay

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12 Manuscript account by a Greek fighter, not yet identified, dated 7 October 1826. The presence of the document in the exhibition is noted in Makriyannis, Georgopoulou, *Ioannis Makriyannis, Vital Expressions*, English-language version of the catalogue of an exhibition held at the Gennadius Library, Athens, 2018, edited by Maria Georgopoulou and others (Athens: Kapon, 2018), 18. The quotation is transcribed from the label.

13 Blaquiere, Edward, *Narrative of a Second Visit to Greece, Including Facts Connected with The Last Days of Lord Byron, Extracts from Correspondence, Official Documents, &c.* (London: Geo. B. Whittaker, 1825), 95.

14 The fact that the prisoners were 'ironed' was noted by Black, 166.

15 Still noticed, for example, at the time of the visit of Benjamin Dorr in April 1854. Dorr, Benjamin. *Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Holy Land, Turkey, and Greece* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1856), 137.

16 Noted by, for example, Baird, Henry M., *Modern Greece: A Narrative of a Residence and Travels in that Country* (New York: Harper, 1856), 33, who says they were made from fallen columns of the Parthenon and Propylaea. Emerson, *Greece in 1825*, i, 282, remarked that 'Numbers of the fallen but lately perfect columns have been broken up, as a substitute for balls to supply the cannon of the fortress.' The cannon balls were also noticed as having been made 'from the elegant white marble of the Parthenon' by Wilson, Rev. S.S., Member of the Literary Society of Athens, *A Narrative of the Greek Mission or, Sixteen years in Malta and Greece; including Tours in the Peloponnesus, in the Aegean and Ionian Isles; with remarks on the religious opinions, moral state, social habits, politics, language, history, and lazarettos of Malta and Greece* (London: John Snow, 1839), 426. 'Cannonballs, bombs, and grenades' Predl, F.M.X.A. von, *Erinnerungen aus Griechenland in den Jahren 1832, 1833, 1834, und 1835* (Würzburg: Hellmuth, 1836, and another edition, 1841), translated, 78. 'delle palle e delle mitraglie' De'Virgillii, P., *Lettere Sull'Oriente Dirette da P. De' Virgillii A. F. Lattari (Estratte dal Poliorama Pittoresco e dal Progresso)* (Naples: Reiggiobba, 1846), 50. For the use of larger shells, relevant to the questions surrounding the lack of damage to the monuments discussed in Chapter 13, 'a mixture of soil, stones, bricks, fragments

triglyphs and metopes, trunks of centaurs, heads of horses, manes of lions, and among them the workers of the ruin — flattened cannon-balls, and splinters of Turkish shells.<sup>17</sup> Like others he assumed that the human remains that were coming to light in the clearances of the summit at the time of his visit were those of the Greek defenders and that the bombs were those fired by Turkish attackers.<sup>18</sup>

At the time of writing, an iron cover of indeterminate date was to be seen lying among the fragments of marble laid out alongside the Parthenon, as shown in Figure 10.2. The cover, which dates from before a time when fresh water could be pumped up to the summit by steam or electrical power, is a reminder of what, for millennia, was the single most important fact about the Acropolis as a military fortress: the limitations on the extent to which its defenders could collect and store drinkable water.



Figure 10.2. Iron cover on the Acropolis summit.<sup>19</sup>

Compared with the Acropolis of Corinth, with its gushing fresh-water springs, which was visible on the horizon to a lookout standing on

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of earthenware, cement, and sculptured marble, among which are interspersed human bones, and shot and shells of enormous size', Garston, Edgar, *Greece Revisited and Sketches in Lower Egypt in 1840, with Thirty-Six Hours of a Campaign in Greece in 1825* (London: Saunders and Ottley, 1842), i, 128. According to Cusani, Francesco, *La Dalmazia Le Isole Jonie e La Grecia (Visitate nel 1840)* (Milan: Pirota, 1846 and 1847), ii, 260, the summit was covered 'di ossa, di scheggie, di bombe, di pezzi di marmo d'ogni grandezza'.

17 De Vere, *Picturesque Sketches*, i, 77. The date of his visit is noted in his *Search after Proserpine* vi. 'Recorded also by Morot, Jean-Baptiste, *Journal De Voyage: Paris a Jérusalem, 1839 Et 1840* (Paris: J. Claye, second edition 1873), 45: 'Le sommet de l'Acropole est jonché de boulets'.

18 Discussed further in Chapter 12.

19 Author's photograph, October 2014.

the top of the Parthenon, the Acropolis of Athens was dependent on whatever water it could bring up from the town and store in cisterns or jars.<sup>20</sup> The water that bubbles up on the Acropolis summit at some seasons of the year is so permeated with lime and other salts from having flowed through the Acropolis rock that it cannot be tolerated by humans or animals.<sup>21</sup> In an emergency, when mixed with fresher water, it can postpone death, although only by causing great suffering.<sup>22</sup>

When the town fell to the Revolutionaries, most of the Muslims took refuge in the Acropolis, taking hostages and of their most useful moveable goods with them, to await help from outside, as the contingency plan implied by the design of the town wall dictated.<sup>23</sup> And, as had been normal since time immemorial, as in the Persian invasion in 480 BCE, when it was reported that an Ottoman force led by Omer Vryonis was on its way from the north, the Orthodox population, who were now regarded as Revolutionaries whatever they may have individually thought about the wisdom of revolt, left Athens for the greater security of the island of Salamis, enabling Omer to retake the town, kill the few Greeks who had remained—mostly old men—destroy houses and churches, and restock the Acropolis with food and water. He also sent his troops into the country to try to terrorize the inhabitants into subjection by conspicuous acts of cruelty. Some of the hostages from amongst the leaders of the Orthodox in Athens, a few of whom had volunteered themselves out of a sense that it was their duty if that could avert a catastrophe, were put to death.

By the autumn of 1821, with the Ottoman army having come and gone, taking with it members of the former military garrison, and the

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20 A vignette showing the view from the Parthenon towards the Acropolis of Corinth, at the time of the Revolution sketched by the author, is in Clarke, *Travels, part the second, section the second*, 1814), 569.

21 Geologically the Acropolis is composed of layers of limestone resting on harder and less permeable schist, with the result that rain water falling on the summit percolates through the sandstone only to be stopped by the harder layer below and to bubble back up. Discussed by Hurwit, Jeffrey M., *The Acropolis in the Age of Pericles* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 9.

22 This natural phenomenon was presented on the west pediment of the classical Parthenon in mythological form, as Poseidon, the sea god, striking the rock with his trident and bringing forth sea water, as will be discussed in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

23 According to French archives, five hundred of the eight hundred Muslims besieged in the Acropolis were ethnic Albanians. Noted by Ilicak, 'Revolutionary Athens', first page.

townspeople having returned, the two communities who had shared in the government and in the social life of the Athens, had become physically divided: the Muslims immured in the Acropolis, the Revolutionary Greeks again in control in the town. Anyone who attempted to cross the line was liable to be summarily killed, as some were.

At first the Greek insurgents used artillery and mortars against the Acropolis, mounting their guns on the Pnyx, but they did not make much difference. Soon, however, philhellene advisers, some of whom had brought modern artillery with them as part of their contribution to the cause, recommended that the Greeks should rely instead on the effects of starvation and thirst forcing a capitulation, as indeed happened. The Greeks knew too that bombardment put at risk the Parthenon and other ancient monuments that had already become symbolic of the nationalist struggle, and the French artilleryman Colonel Voutier, who was acting as military adviser, was specifically instructed to try to avoid damaging them.<sup>24</sup> For a time, thirty mortar bombs were lobbed into the Acropolis every day, including one timed to coincide with Muslim evening prayers.<sup>25</sup>

The number of people immured in the Acropolis when the siege began was reckoned at the time to be one thousand six hundred and sixty two.<sup>26</sup> They consisted of some men, of whom only one hundred and eighty were fighters or capable of becoming fighters, the rest being old men, women, and children. The besieged had food and animals, but when the Greeks seized control of the enclosed area of the slopes known as the Serpenji described in Chapter 2, they had no drinking water other than what had been stored on the summit. In normal years, the winter

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24 Voutier, 1823 edition, 230, 239; Raybaud, i, 80. Every half hour, thirty a day. Gordon, i, 408.

25 Jarvis, George, *His journal and related documents, Edited with Introduction, sequel and notes by Georgios Georgiades Arnakes, Americans in the Greek Revolution* (Thessaloniki: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1965), 33. Another account: 'I had taken a part in an unsuccessful assault on the fortress. I had watched with anxiety a bombardment which threatened to destroy the beautiful monuments of the place'. Staehelin, 'Eyewitness of 1822', 'A journey from Athens to Missolonghi in the autumn of 1822', *London Magazine*, vol. 3, May 1829, 483.

26 Gordon, *History*, i, 276. Jurien, who had access to records made by the French consuls and navy gave a figure of eleven hundred and fifty that looks like a rounding. Jurien de La Gravière, le vice-amiral, *La station du Levant* (Paris: Plon, 1876), i, 213. Jurien had access to records made by the French consuls and navy. Other contemporary documents are published in Fauvel, *Clairmont*.

would have brought the seasonable rains and an opportunity to catch it, and every day both sides in the now-polarized conflict looked anxiously at the sky.<sup>27</sup> According to one account, before the first assault on the Acropolis by the Greeks on 29 April 1821, the archbishop of Athens, in leading prayers for their success, claimed to see the sign of the cross in the clouds.<sup>28</sup> He was recalling the story of Constantine's vision at the battle of Milvian Bridge, one of the foundation myths of all the Christian churches. And indeed, for those who took portents seriously, during the winter of 1821/22 the Christian God did seem to be favouring the insurgent. Weeks passed and although there were a few showers in the town, not a single drop fell on the Acropolis. It was said that, in their desperation, the besieged Muslims hung out cloths at night in hopes of catching the morning dews. Some licked the marble.

At last in June 1822, when the summer heat had returned and the besieged were at the final stages of distress, a surrender agreement was made, negotiated by the foreign consuls. Under its terms, the Muslims would surrender the Acropolis as it stood, keeping half of their moveable possessions, with individuals offered the choice of either staying on in Athens or being taken at the expense of the provisional Greek Government to Asia.<sup>29</sup> It was a formal agreement to implement what would now be regarded as ethnic cleansing and seizure of property.

The number of persons who came out of the Acropolis under the terms of the agreement was put at one thousand one hundred and fifty, most of whom were severely ill, and sixty of whom died within a few days.<sup>30</sup> The bodies of their five hundred and twelve co-religionists who had died in the siege were left behind.<sup>31</sup>

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27 The micro-climate of Athens at this time, including the normal patterns of rainfall, is described in Chapter 24.

28 Staehelin, 'Eye-witness of 1826', 202.

29 The text in Greek and English translation, but without the names of the signatories in Waddington, 235 and 62. As he wrote: 'having, in my possession, the names of the Archbishop, of the two Commissioners of the central government, of the ten Ephori, and the eleven Capitani, who signed this Convention, I shall not publish them. Because I am not aware, to which of them, or whether to any of them individually, belongs the guilt of its violation; and I should be sorry that any innocent person should be involved in the infamy which must ever attend on all who were concerned in this execrable transaction'. The names are printed in the version given by Staehelin, 'Eyewitness of 1821'.

30 Gordon, *History*, i, 411.

31 The uncovering of the dead in the post-independence clearance of the site is discussed in Chapter 15.



What happened next is recorded in a number of letters from Gropius, mostly only known from manuscript copies at Kew. In a letter of 3 July 1822 to Fauvel, the consul of France who was temporarily away from Athens, he alludes to the critical situation of the Turkish families that they have 'saved'. He begs Consul Fauvel, who was then at Syra, an island that had escaped the Revolution, to try to arrange for a French warship to come and take the necessary measures to ensure that their status as consuls was respected and 'save us from the fury of the people'.<sup>32</sup> In a letter dated 25 July 1822, which was circulated amongst the ambassadors, Gropius gave a compressed report on what had happened next: 'I am very sorry to inform your lordship that the Capitulation on the faith of which the Turkish garrison in the Acropolis of Athens had surrendered has been violated in the most barbarous and disgraceful manner. For some days after the Capitulation (which was signed in the House of the Austrian Consul, under the guarantee of that gentleman and of M Fauvel, the French Consul) the Greeks treated their prisoners with indulgence and humanity. But on the eleventh ultimo [July] a report having reached Athens that a corps of fifteen thousand Turks was marching against their city from Negropont the Greeks came to the atrocious resolution of butchering their captives without distinction of age or sex. Eight hundred of these unhappy wretches were accordingly put to death. The remainder took refuge in the Houses of the foreign consuls. The Greeks were on the point of forcing them when fortunately two French corvettes arrived, the commanders of which Messrs. Reverseau and Argous (who appears to have acted with the most heroic resolution and to have exposed their Crews to the utmost peril) succeeded in saving the remainder of the Turks, amounting to about four hundred, and in embarking them on board their vessels. The French ships have since landed them safely at Smyrna.'<sup>33</sup> The number of survivors landed in Smyrna was reported as exactly three hundred, mostly women and children.<sup>34</sup>

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32 Fauvel, *Clairmont*, 63. The editor of Clairmont's uncompleted work, an archaeologist, transcribes 'fouilles Turques' [Turkish excavations] but I suggest that the author is more likely to have written 'familles Turques' [Turkish families].

33 Part of the fuller letter in Kew FO 78/109.

34 Noted by Ilicak, 'Revolutionary Athens', 4, from Ottoman archives.

Most of the other survivors of the siege left later, with the result that, with the exception of a few high-status individuals with a significant exchange value, and an unknown number who were enslaved, the Muslim community of Athens ceased to exist. According to Andreas Stähelin, the Swiss philhellene who was then living as a member of the consul's household, Gropius ransomed a number of individuals, some of whom Stähelin conversed with and heard singing together in lamentation. They included 'several Turkish ladies of distinction, as the wife of Hassan Aga and her daughter and two sisters of Mehmet Aga, the wife of the waiwode, with two Circassian slaves, the wife of the disdar, or the Turkish governor of the castle, and the cadi and his wife. Born at Athens, they all spoke Greek as well as Turkish, and some knew the Arabic language.'<sup>35</sup> They knew that family members had been put to death and wondered about the fate of the children who had been enslaved. According to Stähelin's chilling phrase, most 'behaved with that dignity which becomes deep and silent grief'. Among the women was the widow of the young bey (deputy) of the elderly voivode who had received Ambassador Strangford in January 1821 with elaborate courtesies, described at that time as 'just married to the daughter of the Vayvode of Athens.'<sup>36</sup>

As far as is I have been able to ascertain, Stähelin is the only author to have given even scraps of information about the women who lived on the Ottoman Acropolis, veiled and segregated, in some respects privileged but not in practice much more free than their slaves. What happened to them after they were evacuated from Athens is not known, nor is there any record of whether it was the Ottoman state, or Gropius with Austrian funds or credit who put up the ransom money. What we do know is that, four years later, the British Ambassador redeemed another group of survivors of high exchange value, including at least one woman and two children, as part of a plan to persuade the Ottoman commander not to destroy the Parthenon.<sup>37</sup> A British naval captain, noted for the thoroughness of his observations, in 1823 visited the territory from where Circassian slave women were obtained. Some were captured

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35 Stähelin, 208.

36 Walsh, i, 120.

37 Discussed in Chapter 17.

by the Cossacks in the wars with the Russians who treated them with contempt. Girls who were thought beautiful were, however, sold by their parents to the Turks ‘and other rigid Mahometans’ who paid high prices, and treated them with greater kindness in their seraglios than did local families.<sup>38</sup>

Roughly a third of the Muslim population of Athens had been killed, another third had died from deprivation, and the final third were consigned to the charity of co-religionists across the sea whose language they did not share and who were already overwhelmed with refugees. In October 1914, at another moment when geopolitical plates were again clashing, a donor gave the Epigraphic and Numismatic Museum in Athens a cache of forty-seven Ottoman coins. Dated to the reign of Sultan Mahmoud II (1807–1839) and in value equivalent to the price of about two days’ food, they had been found hidden near the entrance of the Acropolis. The coins may have belonged to a family who had hoped to retrieve them later but never returned.<sup>39</sup>

Whether the actions of the Greek Revolutionaries and their opponents would now be regarded as genocide under the United Nations legal definition can be debated, and if the killings and expulsions were to be officially renamed, that decision would affect both the historical presentation of the Revolution and the politics of today, including how the anniversary was commemorated in 2021. Most observers from western Europe who, at the time, attempted to make sense of the violence, saw it through the lens of their experience of the international wars that had occurred in Europe between 1793 and 1815, with their elaborate codes for truces, parleys, surrenders, treatment of prisoners, protections for civilians, and discourses of ‘natural rights’, and they saw the Greek Revolution as an aberration from those norms. Those who were most sympathetic to the Greek Revolutionaries, and to the philhellenic, national continuity, mythic narrative imported from ‘Europe’, discovered that the theories suggested by the philosophers of history could not explain what was happening before their eyes all over

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38 Jones, George Mathew, Captain, R.N., *Travels in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, and Turkey; and on the coasts of the sea of Azof and of the Black Sea; with a review of the trade in those seas, and of the systems adopted to man the fleets of the different powers of Europe, compared with that of England* (London: Murray 1827), ii, 165–74.

39 Summarised from the label explaining the coins when they were exhibited at the Gennadius Library, Athens, in 2015.

Greece. The learned Swiss Andreas Stähelin, for example, who tried to relate the events he witnessed to geo-determinism, found himself drawn into contradictions. Deeply educated in the ancient classical Athenian authors, he knew that they themselves claimed that the clear air of Attica, the pleasant climate, the healthy diet, and the outdoor life, had made them sharp-witted, poetic, artistic, and brave in war.<sup>40</sup> But in the centuries before the Greek Revolution, the same environment had supposedly made the once-vigorous and warlike Turks of Athens lethargic, lazy, and cowardly.<sup>41</sup> It was left to the Prussian general Baron von Valentini, the author of a professional military manual, to point out the similarities with ancient practice.<sup>42</sup> Thucydides recounts, without comment, that the Athenians killed the men of military age and enslaved the women and children of the island of Melos in 416 BCE when, after a siege, the Melians surrendered on terms, and that the Athenians then resettled the island with their own colonists.<sup>43</sup>

What occurred was, in modern terms a case of an outbreak of violence that, once started, created its own momentum. We hear, for example, that it was survivors from places where revolts had been put down forcibly by the counter-Revolutionary Ottoman forces who regarded the conflict as a religious war of mutual extermination, and who were most insistent that none of the Athenian Muslims should be left alive.<sup>44</sup> By all the directly participating parties, the violence was regarded and treated as an existential struggle, but also an episode in a divinely guided destiny.

As the reports poured in from all over the eastern Mediterranean region of the killings, gratuitous tortures, and enslavements of men,

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40 Discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

41 'The conduct of the Turks evidently betrayed pusillanimity and cowardice. But the Turks of Athens had a long time ago ceased to be warlike; the mildness of the climate, and a life spent in luxury and pleasure, without exertion or labour, had subdued and broken the original vigour of their character; they fed upon the produce of a country, in the conquest of which their blood had not been spilt. Women, and good fare, were all they cared about'. Stähelin, 'Eyewitness of 1826', 195.

42 Valentini, *Traité sur la guerre contre les Turcs. Traduit de l'Allemand du Lieutenant-Général Prussien Baron de Valentini par L. Blesson* (Berlin: Finke [and named agents in Paris, London, St Petersburg, Warsaw, Leipzig, and Brussels], 1830), 205. Valentini is not being ironic in speaking of the revolutionaries as 'the Hellenes of our days'.

43 Thuc. 5.116.

44 Gordon, *History*, i, 414, referring to refugees from Chios and Aivalik.

women, and children, it is hard not to disagree with Ambassador Strangford's comment that, for those caught up in the swirl of events, it was less a matter of choice than of situation whether they became the perpetrators or the victims.<sup>45</sup> However, although from a modern perspective the events may appear as a breakdown of order, there are traces of conventions dating back to the Crusades and counter-Crusades that continued into the early modern period. It is striking, for example, and at first sight puzzling, that in 1688, when the Ottoman forces in the Acropolis agreed to surrender on terms after a prolonged bombardment by the western army led by the Venetian general Morosini, one of the four articles declared that if it turned out later that the defendants still had ammunition, water, and provisions, that is, an ability to continue to resist, the agreement was null and void and those who surrendered lost all rights and put themselves entirely at the mercy of the besiegers.<sup>46</sup> The leaders of all parties, whether perpetrators or victims, categories that could rapidly be reversed, were prisoners of sets of ideas, mostly abstract, some theistic or metaphysical, of which some were recent imports and others inventions of many hundreds of years before. All concerned were caught up in a situation that at one level was a Darwinian struggle for physical survival, but at another was driven by notions of saving a community, its identity, and its institutions, outside which they had no future as individuals.<sup>47</sup>

Because the contemporary accounts of what happened are so plentiful and detailed, we can recover some knowledge of how individuals who found themselves caught up in the crisis made the choices that determined whether they and others lived or died. A

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45 'They are both, and perhaps equally as circumstances present the occasion the authors or its victims.' Strangford to Foreign Secretary 5 August 1821. Kew FO 78/97 44.

46 'IV. That in case there shall be at present found any want of Water, or any scarcity of Ammunition or Provisions, then these Articles are to be void and of no effect, and that the Defendants shall run the risc of being compell'd to surrender at Discretion'. *A Journal of the Venetian campagne, A.D. 1687, under the conduct of the Capt. General Morosini, General Coningsmark, Providitor Gen. Cornaro, General Venieri, &c. Translated from the Italian original, sent from Venice, and printed by order of the most Serene Republick. Licensed, Decemb. 16. 1687, R. L'Estrange* (London: Printed by H.C. and sold by R. Taylor, near Stationers-Hall 1688), 40.

47 For the priests of the Orthodox Church giving absolution to those who had taken part in the killings, see Chapter 11. For stories that for turned the events into a chivalric nationalist romance, see Chapter 18.

memoir written by Angelos Sotirianos Gerondas, a member of one of the prominent Athenian families who governed the internal affairs of the town, described the moment of crisis as he remembered it. The Muslim population of Athens, seeing that an armed rebellion was afoot, and that they had weapons and the Orthodox majority had not, were only restrained from killing them by the *cadi* who urged them to obey the law and await the formal *fatwa*. Gerondas, along with other local leaders offered their guarantee that the Muslims would not be attacked, and they were imprisoned in the Acropolis as hostages. When in the summer the Revolutionaries took over the town, some of the hostages were put to death, and when the Ottoman army of Omar Vryoni recaptured the town, the others were put on trial. The *cadi* pleaded that they were personally innocent and some, including Gerondas, escaped, but there could be no return to the *status quo ante*.<sup>48</sup>

As another local example, Pietro Ravelaki, a native of Athens who had been employed by the British consulate, and who had acted as a guide for visitors, personified the change in identity.<sup>49</sup> One of a growing number in pre-Revolution times who had adopted the attitudes to antiquity and its remains of the local European community, he was among the first local scholars to make a contribution to the recovery of the topography of ancient Hellas.<sup>50</sup> Before the Revolution, he was also among those many who were affronted by Elgin's removals from the Acropolis, especially the loss of the Caryatid. As was reported by Rev. Robert Walsh, one of the entourage of Lord Strangford who was welcomed in Athens in January 1821 on his way to take up his position as British Ambassador in Constantinople: 'even my mild companion could not contain the bitterness of his gall.'<sup>51</sup> Walsh was surprised to be told by Pietro Ravelaki, who acted as his guide, that revolution was imminent. The conversation, he noted, took place when they visited the ancient cemetery of the Cerameikos, where Pericles had delivered the 431 BCE

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48 Summarised from the translation into English given by Sicilianos, Demetrios, *Old and New Athens* (London: Putnam, 1960), 156–57. Gerondas's memoir is summarised by Dimaras, 277.

49 He is mentioned in this role in the manuscript journal of Thomas Burgon.

50 He is said to have discovered the battlefield of the Second Archidamian War. Avramiotti, Giovanni Dionisio, *Alcuni cenni critici ... sul viaggio in Grecia che compone la prima parte dell' itinerario da Parigi a Gerusalemme del Signor F.R. de Chateaubriand. Con varie osservazioni delle antichità greche* (Padua: 1826), 66.

51 Walsh *Residence*, i, 124.

funeral oration over the dead of the previous year's wars, the occasion for one of the most celebrated of the Thucydidean speeches.<sup>52</sup> When the Revolution arrived a few weeks later, Ravelaki joined the insurgents but was struck by a musket ball when trying to climb the Acropolis walls and was fatally injured from his fall. As he lay dying on the island of Zea (ancient Ceos), to which he had been evacuated, he asked to change his name to Miltiades, the victor at Marathon.<sup>53</sup>

Drawn by the symbolic power of the Parthenon and the Acropolis, men from elsewhere joined in the siege, including contingents from Aegina, Zea, and Cephalonia, one of the British protectorate of the Ionian Islands. Athens also attracted a number of philhellenes, some with experience of siege warfare, and some who were able to bring guns and artillery. As one of them remarked, the foreign volunteers 'burned to contribute to the conquest of the Parthenon'.<sup>54</sup> A French cartoon of the time catches the motley nature of the men from many western European countries who, for a variety of individual as well as political and economic motives, decided to go to Greece to fight for the Revolution.

An inscription formerly to be seen on the wall of the Theseion, shown as Figure 10.4, appears to mark the grave of Marius Wohlgemuth of Strasburg, who took part, with the traditional western symbols of an artilleryman.<sup>55</sup>

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52 He 'made an oration over his fallen countrymen as if it was an event of yesterday, at which he himself had been present. As we walked over the plain afterwards, he surprised me by sentiments, which I thought it impossible he could entertain. He said that the time was near at hand when his countrymen would no longer crouch under the dominion of the Turks, no more than his ancestors under that of the Persians, and their object was to establish a free constitution, similar to that of the Ionian Islands, and if possible, under the protection of England. At this time the most distant rumour of such an event had not transpired; I supposed what he said was the chimera of a heated imagination, excited by the place in which we stood, and I little thought that a few weeks would realize it'. Walsh, *Residence*, i, 134. The Thucydidean speech on which Ravelaki's speech was modelled is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

53 Walsh *Residence*, i, 139.

54 'Un grand nombre d'étrangers brûlaient de contribuer à la conquête du Parthénon', Raybaud, ii, 231.

55 If other reports that record him as dying of illness in Poros are correct, his body may have been moved to Athens. Among the names of philhellenes who participated in the siege recorded by Jarvis, who was present, in his *Journal*, 33, and by others, are Voutier, Bourdon, Blondel, van Deyck, Count Strahlendorff, Wohlgemuth, and Raybaud. Blondel was also among the philhellenes who, as part of Fabvier's force,



Figure 10.3. 'An assembly of European Officers, going to the help of Greece in 1822.' Lithograph.<sup>56</sup>

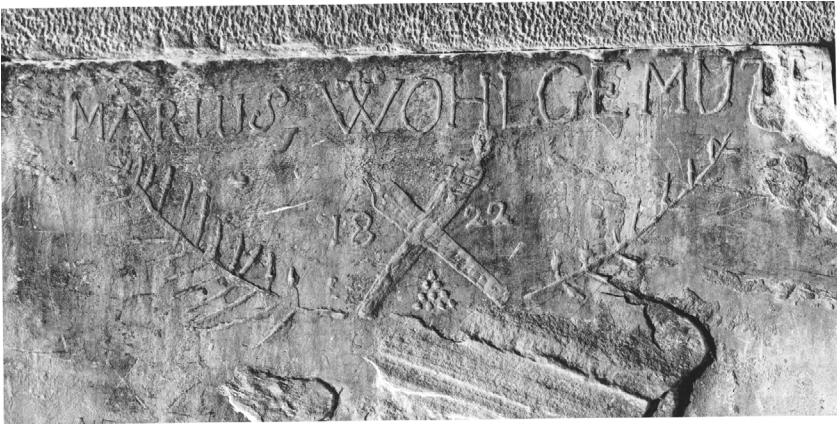


Figure 10.4. Inscription on wall of the Theseion.<sup>57</sup>

took part in the defence of the Acropolis in 1826. Killed by a musket shot, his name was formerly to be seen carved on a column of the Parthenon, presumably as a memorial. See Bryer, Anthony, 'The Acropolis in October 1838: The Evidence of William James Muller', in Marouli-Zilemenou, 97–102.

56 Lithographie de A. Cheyère, rue de l'Epron, n°3. Private collection. Frequently reproduced.

57 Author's photograph, 1960s.



Without implying that the testimony of the Austrian consul, Georg Gropius, written on the spot in Athens immediately as the events of the Revolution unfolded, is more trustworthy than that of others simply because he was a representative of a western country, his letters are especially valuable, particularly for recovering the course of events. In addition to those that made their way into the British archives at Kew, others from the French archives in Paris have recently been published.<sup>58</sup>

Some commentators attempted to explain the tumble of incidents by presenting the speeches allegedly made by participants, adopting the convention that had been perfected by Thucydides of providing a text of what speakers should, or could, have said. As a historiographical genre, seldom now used, in some circumstances this can offer readers a fuller understanding of the openness of the future and of the unevenness of the survival of documents than traditional narrative composed by an outside observer.<sup>59</sup> Andreas Stähelin, who understood the situation and its competing discourses, put a Thucydidean speech into the mouths of the two senior Ottoman officials in Athens who came down from the Acropolis and attempted to defuse the situation. As Stähelin suggested:

They declared to the Greek magistrates, that the Turks were grown weary of this bloody warfare, and although they were enabled to hold out at least a month longer, (there being plenty of provisions in the citadel, and water enough for that time,) still they felt disposed to put an end to this war, which they had not begun, which, in the midst of tranquillity and peace, had come unawares upon them, and the cause and origin of which they had always been at a loss to find out. Have we not lived (continued Hassan Aga) for centuries together in friendship and peace? Why, then, this sudden rebellion, this dreadful, sanguinary war? If you have suffered wrongs, why did you not complain? have we never given redress? We have heard that you have taken up arms for your faith. Who molested you for it? have we ever forced you to embrace ours, and was it not in our power for centuries to have done it? Have we not all one God, and are we not all his children? Is it for his glory that you have murdered so many of us, that our houses are burnt, and that you take the fruit of our trees? We have conquered this country, it is true, but not

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58 Clairmont, 180–87.

59 My own experiment in reviving the genre as a means of offsetting the unrepresentative quality of the sources that we have for classical Athens is discussed and presented in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

from you, from the Franks: and were they better masters than we? You have had some success; but have you heard that Turkey has perished? Let us make a fair agreement. These words flowed from the lips of the venerable-looking old man with much dignity and animation.<sup>60</sup>

It seems likely that one of the two speakers to whom the words were attributed was the *cadi*; according to Thomas Gordon, the actual *cadi* of Athens had, at an earlier stage, twice rejected a proposal to kill the Christians as rebels as Ottoman law allowed, insisting that the authorities wait for a formal fatwa from the religious authorities. For his well-intentioned delay, which was to prove fatal to his religious community, he was judicially put to death by decapitation in Constantinople.<sup>61</sup> As for Gordon, to whose printed history, published later, we owe much of our knowledge of the events of the Revolution, his unpublished papers show that when he returned temporarily to Britain, he spent money dissuading returning philhellenes from publishing eye-witness accounts of what they had actually seen, on the grounds that the truth would undermine support for the cause and therefore the flow of arms and money.<sup>62</sup>

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60 Staehelin, 'The Siege of the Acropolis of Athens in the Years 1821–1822. By An Eye-Witness', in *The London Magazine*, IV, January to April 1826, 203. Other Thucydidean speeches were provided by Soutsos, Alexandros, *Histoire de la révolution grecque, par Alexandre Soutzo, témoin oculaire d'une grande partie des faits qu'il expose* (Paris: Didot, 1829) from where they made their way into other accounts printed in western countries such as Keightley, Thomas, *History of the War of Independence in Greece* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1830). The general validity of Staehelin's composition has increasingly been supported by documentary evidence found later. For a discussion of the conventions of the Thucydidean speech in ancient times and my suggestion for how it could be adapted to solve a problem of presentation of the arguments about the ancient Parthenon, see *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

61 Gordon, *History*, i, 174.

62 Commandant Persat, an experienced Napoleonic officer who had taken part in almost every military conflict since 1815, and was to participate in many others after the Greek Revolution, had witnessed the massacres in 1821 and 1822, and had taken into his care a young Muslim woman survivor whom he later married. He was amongst those whose silence was purchased by Thomas Gordon to prevent eye-witness information from being published and damaging the reputation of the revolutionaries and of the revolutionary cause. Gordon's successful efforts to suppress the memoirs of Persat are known from manuscripts in Gordon archive, Aberdeen University Library, MS 1160/160 and 163, with others relating to the philhellenes Voutier and Justin in the same file.

## Safe Against Siege: Finding the Water Fountain

The discovery of the tunnel to the klepsydra fresh water fountain was the most practical gift the ancient Hellenes of Athens gave to the modern during the Revolution. As the British Major Bacon, who saw the Acropolis later in the war remarked: 'The total want of water from the failure of the tanks compelled the Turkish garrison to surrender this otherwise impregnable fortress to the Greeks at the commencement of the Revolution; the spot where this treasure, a copious supply of water, lay concealed, and unknown.'<sup>63</sup> When, as was arranged shortly afterwards, the Acropolis was stocked with food and ammunition, and the cisterns filled with fresh water that could be replenished from time to time through the tunnel, it became a fortress that could potentially hold out for months, including over a winter when campaigning was usually suspended and seasonal rainwater could be collected. It provided the Greek Revolutionaries who occupied the Acropolis from 1822 to 1827 with the confidence that, even with modest forces, they were safe against siege.

More than one person later claimed the credit for the discovery, including Kyriakos Pittakis, who was to be the first Greek warden ('ephor') of the Acropolis as a heritage site after the Revolution.<sup>64</sup> However, the initial discovery, as distinct from the realisation of the value of the discovery, appears to have been accidental. In the sporadic fighting on the south slope in 1821, the entrance to a tunnel was discovered which turned out to have become blocked with stones that had fallen probably as a result of earthquakes long ago. Again, destiny was invoked as having intervened. When Waddington declared that the discovery 'could never have been predestined to any Mussulman', he was not only noting that the discovery had required a knowledge of the ancient authors, he was invoking a Christian providentialism as an explanation that he and many others believed in.<sup>65</sup> The Christian God who, according to Bartholdy, had providentially saved the monuments

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63 *Journals and Travels of Major d'Arcy Bacon, in Greece in 1826*, Bodleian Library, 161.

64 Discussed by Parsons, 195. Odysseus was credited with finding it by applying his skill at finding water even in the most arid mountains. *Journals and Travels of Major d'Arcy Bacon*, 161. Staehelin claimed the credit for the discovery, saying that he used his copy of Pausanias.

65 Quotation from Waddington, *Visit*, 91.

of Athens, was again showing a newly found philhellenism towards the ancient peoples whose religions he and his followers had providentially destroyed.<sup>66</sup>

In 1822 a bastion was built to protect the tunnel that gave access to the Klepsydra. It contained an inscription giving Odysseus Androutsos credit for its construction. The complex structure was sketched by the French archaeologist Emile Burnouf shortly before the bastion collapsed in an earthquake and was later removed, as shown in Figure 10.5.

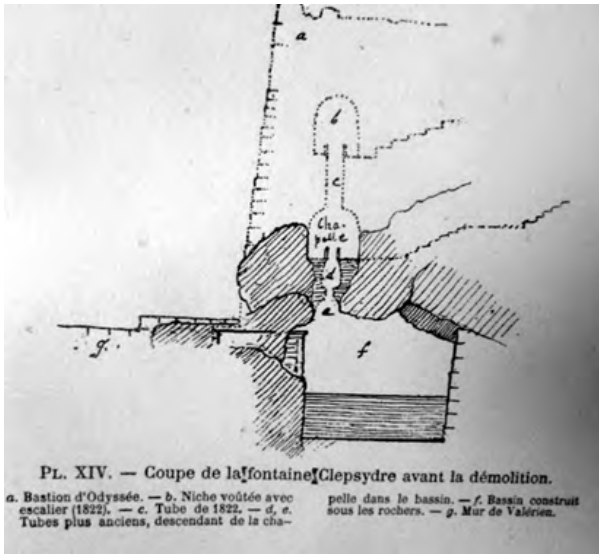


Figure 10.5. Cross-section of the bastion built by Odysseus in 1822 to protect access to the Klepsydra. Woodcut engraving.<sup>67</sup>

Christopher Wordsworth, the poet's nephew, who was in Athens in 1832 when the Acropolis was still in Ottoman hands, copied and later published the inscription, with a translation into English. It was the first public inscription composed in classical Greek to be erected on the Acropolis for at least fifteen hundred years. It is also the first inscription

66 The other tunnel, built in the late Mycenaean age, and not continuously in use, was not discovered until the twentieth century. Hurwit, Jeffrey M., *The Athenian Acropolis, History, Mythology, and Archaeology, from the Neolithic Era to the Present* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 78–79. For the use of this tunnel in 1941, see Chapter 23.

67 Detail from Burnouf, Émile, *La Ville et l'Acropole d'Athènes aux diverses époques* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1877), plate XIV.

to refer to the Revolutionaries as ‘Hellenes’. Since Odysseus Androutsos, who was more warlord than nationalist, had later intended to change sides, and was assassinated by his former lieutenant Gouras in 1824, it had been hard to place him among the heroes of the Revolution, and it is understandable that the inscription that honoured him would have become an embarrassment to the neo-Hellenizing project. Since, as far as I can discover, the engraving is the only record of a key moment in this changing identity, I show it, with Wordsworth’s translation, in Figure 10.6. The wall collapsed for a final time in an earthquake in 1894, was removed and the inscription lost.

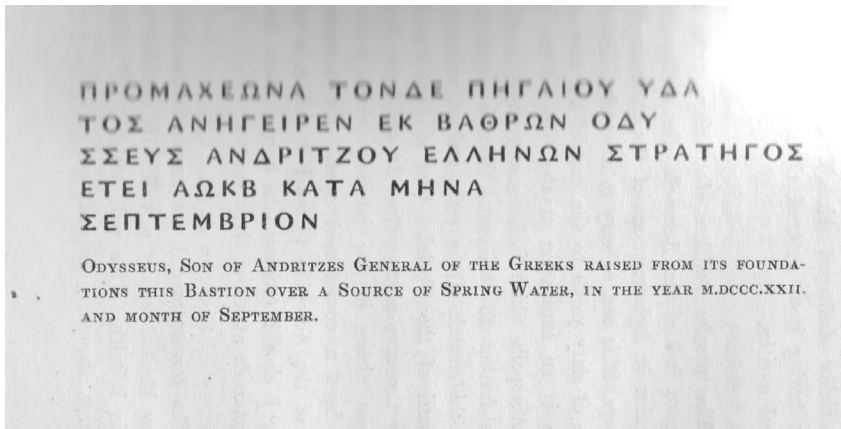


Figure 10.6. Inscription erected by Odysseus Androutsos in 1822, now lost. Copper engraving.<sup>68</sup>

The discovery of the elaborate water systems also helps to answer a question that ought to have caused more puzzlement than it has. Why did the institutions of the Athenian polis of the classical era choose to display the contest between Athena and Poseidon on the west pediment of the Parthenon, the most prominent and most often seen of all the stories in stone presented by the Periclean Acropolis? Was there an element of bravado in making a virtue of what everyone knew was the

68 From Wordsworth *Athens*, second edition, 84. Who composed the inscription is not known. The finding of the tunnel and the building and subsequent fate of the bastion are described by Parsons, Arthur W., ‘Klepsydra and the Paved Court of the Pythion’, in *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 12 (3). The American Excavations in the Athenian Agora: Twenty-Fourth Report, July–September 1943, 191–267.

greatest weakness the Acropolis possessed? Even an assertion that the water problem had been solved? Can we use what may at first sight appear to be a puzzle or a paradox to help recover more of the attitudes to the built heritage, and the ways of seeing and using it, prevalent among the classical Athenians themselves?<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile in Constantinople, Lord Strangford, the recently arrived British ambassador, who was receiving daily reports of the inter-religious violence raging in many places in the Empire, including Constantinople, and of the many attacks on mosques, synagogues, and churches, decided, on his personal initiative, to do what he could to save the ancient monuments of Athens.<sup>70</sup> In August 1821, perhaps partly as a result of the huge gift of money that he had asked approval to make to Reis Efendi Hamet, he arranged for the Ottoman court to send an imperial vizierial letter (firman) instructing the Ottoman military commander in Greece and the *cadi* of Athens to preserve the ancient monuments, of which the text is now first published.<sup>71</sup> Strikingly, the document makes no reference to the rapidly growing symbolic value of the monuments to the Revolutionary cause. Instead, the reason given is that the monuments are valued in 'Europe'.<sup>72</sup>

The copy that was sent to Mehmet Ali, the governor of the Morea, in the autumn of 1821 evidently arrived and was acted upon. In his report to Constantinople of how his forces had recaptured Athens and restocked the Acropolis, he noted that he had done so without damaging

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69 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

70 When in March 1823, members of the Jewish community of Salonica (modern Thessaloniki) were detected in conveying letters from the revolutionaries in the Morea [Peloponnese] to the Orthodox community in Salonica, the community, fearing reprisals and confiscations, offered to rebuild three Ottoman army barracks, and other buildings destroyed in a recent fire, at the expense of the community. Reported in a letter from Stratford Canning to his cousin George Canning, 25 January 1823 in Kew FO 78 114, 213.

71 The primary documents on the obtaining of the 1821 firman, an episode not hitherto noticed in the history of the Parthenon and the other monuments, are transcribed in Appendix C.

72 '... as the antiquities and the ancient monuments of Athens have always deserved the attention of Europe as a whole, it behoves the dignity of the Sublime Porte to take the measures necessary for these ancient monuments to survive and be preserved in their present state, in order to give pleasure to the said Sovereign'. Full text in Appendix C translated from the French version in Kew FO 78/100, 164.

the monuments.<sup>73</sup> The copy sent to Athens could not have survived the events of 1821/1822, from which no local documents are known to have escaped. Hamet was disgraced, then summarily put to death by order of the sultan, and his head exposed, at the end of 1822.<sup>74</sup> His downfall was publicly attributed not to political failure but to personal extravagance, including heavy drinking, encouraging the sultan to travel in a carriage, and paying eight thousand piastres for a Circassian slave, although it was thought that his real crime was to have quarreled over the ownership of a farm that yielded seven thousand piastres a year.<sup>75</sup> A copy of the firman was however preserved among the British Embassy files, from where it was fished out by Stratford Canning, a later ambassador in 1826, with decisive consequences for the survival of the Parthenon.<sup>76</sup>

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73 Noted by Ilicak, 'Revolutionary Athens', 2, from a letter dated 17 November 1821 in the Ottoman archives.

74 A full report by Terrick Hamilton, the Chargé d'Affaires at the embassy, on the circumstances transcribed from documents at Kew in Prousis, ii, 325–29.

75 Strangford to Foreign Secretary, 10 November 1821, in Kew FO 78/102.

76 Discussed in Chapters 9, 14 and 15, drawing on another set of primary documents transcribed in Appendices D and E.





## II. The Siege of 1826 and 1827

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At the end of 1822, events appeared to have turned in favour of the Greeks. The suppression of the revolts by the Ottoman forces had caused innumerable humanitarian disasters, and had ruined much of the economy, but it had not won the war. In the campaigning season of 1822, the Ottoman Government had mounted a large-scale expedition of 30,000 men with a baggage train carried on pack animals, including camels, but it had been ambushed as it entered the narrow passes into the Peloponnese and again when it tried to retreat across the mountains to Corinth and was almost totally destroyed. Soon authors were writing as if the war was over.<sup>1</sup>

In 1825 and 1826, however, the Ottoman Government embarked on more patient strategy for the re-conquest of Greece that, given the immense disparity of resources between the warring parties, seemed likely to succeed. While the Ottoman navy recovered control of many of the islands, the Ottoman army began systematically to roll up the whole area of continental Greece north of the Isthmus, village by village, town by town, province by province. They allowed some communities to return to allegiance in return for being spared the full force of Ottoman law and custom. At the same time the Viceroy of Egypt, a territory only nominally a dependency of the Ottoman Empire, was invited to send an army by sea with the promise that the whole province of the Morea/Peloponnese would be ceded to him, to be religiously cleansed of Christians and resettled with Muslims from North Africa.

The blockade, siege, and capture of Missolonghi in western Greece in 1825/1826 by the Ottoman army and its newly arrived allies, conducted

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1 For example Raffenet, M.C.D., *Continuation de l'histoire des événemens de la Grèce: avec des notes critiques et topographiques: témoin oculaire des principaux faits: formant, avec la première partie publiée en 1822, une histoire complète de cette guerre; par M.C.D. Raffenet, ouvrage orné de quatre portraits* (Paris: Dupré, 1824).

in accordance with the Ottoman norms of the time, confirmed its reputation for patient siege warfare.<sup>2</sup> Soon after the town fell to Ottoman forces on 23 April 1826, Reschid reported to Constantinople that he had put 2,750 men to death.<sup>3</sup> For years, visitors to Missolonghi saw a pyramid of human skulls and bones, a trophy of victory and a display of Ottoman power. Over time the pyramid gradually diminished as visitors took mementos, another means by which, in accordance with Ottoman preference for display and performance, the body parts of the dead disseminated news and ideas.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the women and children who were captured and enslaved were sold to dealers at temporary slave markets at Preveza and Arta, and many were taken to the permanent markets in Egypt. According to Charles Deval, an interpreter at the French Embassy, who visited the scene of war in the Peloponnese in 1826, one of the senior Ottoman commanders had in his harem eighteen women and a dozen children aged from ten to fifteen, all from Missolonghi.<sup>5</sup> A large sum (51,000 francs), raised in Italy, Switzerland, and other western European countries, was spent, with the help of an agent in the Ionian Islands, on redeeming about two hundred women and children. However, such humanitarian interventions, by driving up the prices, also increased the

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2 For example: 'The Ottomans, who are the best soldiers in the world for a siege'. Madden, i, 75.

3 Erdem, 69, from Ottoman archives.

4 For example, David Urquhart, visiting in 1830, took away a skull he picked out from the heap, 'grazed across the forehead by a pistol-ball; behind, on the right side, two back-hand sabre strokes had ploughed, but not penetrated the bone, and a deep cleft gaped over the left brow.' Urquhart, *Spirit*, i, 50. Urquhart, who found the skull a nuisance to carry, later abandoned it. The pile of skulls at Missolonghi and the fact that they were being taken by western visitors was also noted in 1836 by Prince Pückler-Muskau, *Entre l'Europe et l'Asie ...* (Paris: Werdet, 1840), i, 11. The Ottoman preference for technologies of display and performance over those of inscription was discussed in earlier chapters, picking up on the introduction to the usefulness of the terms in Chapter 1.

5 'Pendant mon séjour à Modon, Mehemet-Ali-Aga, oncle d'Ibrahim, et un des chefs de l'armée, vint à mourir. Cet homme avait dans son harem dix-huit femmes, enlevées à Missolonghi, et une douzaine d'enfants grecs, tous âgés de dix à quinze ans, qui lui servaient de pages'. Deval, Charles, *Deux années à Constantinople et en Morée, 1825-1826, ou Esquisses historiques sur Mahmoud, les janissaires, les nouvelles troupes, Ibrahim-Pacha, Solyman-Bey, etc.; par M. C..... D....., élève interprète du roi à Constantinople; ouvrage orné d'un choix de costumes orientaux soigneusement coloriés, et lithographés par M. Collin, élève de Girodet* (London: R.G. Jones, 1828), 202. According to Deval, when the master died they were due to be liberated but instead his heirs sent them to the local slave market.

economic incentives for the Ottoman army, and the individual soldiers of which it was composed, to repeat what they had done at Missolonghi as they prepared to reconquer the rest of central mainland Greece, including Athens.<sup>6</sup>

When the defenders of Missolonghi realised that they were certain to be overwhelmed, many of the women chose to immolate themselves rather than submit, killing their children and blowing themselves up. Figure 11.1 reproduces a picture that follows the contemporary written accounts.



Figure 11.1. The Greek women exploding the mine at Missolonghi. Print of a picture by Peter Johann Nepomuk Geiger, first put on sale in 1840.<sup>7</sup>

The provisional Greek Government, in so far as it was able to co-ordinate the actions of local Revolutionary leaders, considered how it could best

6 Bouvier-Bron, Michelle, *Jean-Gabriel Eynard et le Philhellénisme Genevois* (Geneva: Published by Association Gréco-Suisse, 1963), 41–42, from primary contemporary documents in Geneva University Library.

7 Private collection.

deploy its forces to forestall the new threat. In February 1826, while Missolonghi was still holding out after many months of siege, after considering the possibility of sending their forces across the devastated country to offer relief, the government decided instead to try to cut off the Ottoman supply line in eastern Greece by seizing the Ottoman naval post on the island of Negropont (modern and ancient Chalcis). The French philhellene Charles Fabvier, an experienced and tireless middle-ranking Napoleonic officer who had spent months training a force of Greek soldiers and philhellenes in the methods of the most modern European armies, may have appreciated that, from a strategic point of view, the Acropolis of Athens was of little value.

Instead, a raid against Negropont by a well-led modern force would, Fabvier calculated, secure central Greece, including Athens, against invasion. His force consisted of regular infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with supporting irregular forces; around 1,200 to 1,400 men set out in February 1826.<sup>8</sup> An unpublished manuscript in French that has survived among the papers of the philhellene Edgar Garson, and has some of the characteristics of an eyewitness account intended for a book, recounts the difficulties that the expedition encountered: cannon that burst when fired for the first time; replacements obtained from Athens whose calibre did not match the balls; days without food except from occasional tortoise meat; and dread of being wounded and dealt with according to Ottoman custom.<sup>9</sup> Fabvier's force was fortunate to be taken off by Greek ships a few weeks later with the loss of more than a third of its men. As the pre-Revolution topographers had reported, of the three hundred villages on the island, most were inhabited by Muslims, whose families were thought to have changed their religious affiliation, including from Roman Catholicism and Judaism, long before, and whose lands had also been devastated and who were unlikely to have been universally or wholly sympathetic to the Revolutionaries.<sup>10</sup>

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8 Discussed by Debidour, A., *Le général Fabvier: sa vie militaire et politique* (Paris: Plon, 1904), 276–300, drawing on Fabvier's papers and reports by Admiral de Rigny in the archives of the French Ministry of Marine.

9 Garson papers, copy kindly supplied by Ian Watson.

10 For example, Dodwell, *Classical and Topographical Tour*, ii, 350. Dodwell, who, like the other topographers, experienced the landscape directly on foot or on horseback, also plausibly suggested that it was because, in ancient times, an enemy controlling the port could prevent imports of food reaching Athens, so the Athenians had attempted to reduce their vulnerability by opening up sources of supply in the Black Sea that they could control by planting settlers there.

But if the capture of Missolonghi was a victory for the Ottoman forces, and a demonstration of the effectiveness of their age-old methods of putting down uprisings, to others the events carried other messages. As Samuel G. Howe, the American philhellene, historian, and philanthropist wrote on 1 August 1826, Missolonghi had only been captured after many months of struggle against a starving population behind mud walls. Reschid, he went on, whose army was already encamped near Athens, would be unable to capture a well-prepared and well-stocked Acropolis.<sup>11</sup> But it was when reports reached European countries a few weeks later that the events at Missolonghi had their effect on the course of the Revolution. The more sacks of heads and ears that were displayed at Constantinople, the Ottoman authorities may have assumed, the greater the terror they may have instilled in the local populations, whether Greeks or others, including Muslims. But when translated into print and picture and carried abroad in fixed form, the more intolerable did the policies of the three powers appear to their own publics. One leading French newspaper, for example, painted a word picture of their ambassadors making their way through the gate of the sultan's palace, on which the body parts were exposed on specially designed niches, to offer their congratulations and to pay their homage to the triumph of legitimacy.<sup>12</sup> Although, in the western European countries there had been a steady flow of images of the war, almost all composed by artists reliant on written accounts and not personal experience, the news from Missolonghi produced an immediate surge. Some pictures were in heroic mode, others allegorical.<sup>13</sup> The salons of Paris exhibited pictures by the famous artists of the day, and there were numerous prints. Dramatic versions were hurriedly put on stage, and poets produced occasional

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- 11 Summarized from an unpublished letter to Garston among the Garston papers, copy kindly provided, with permission to make use of it in this book, by Ian Watson.
  - 12 Described with summaries and quotations by Dimakis, Jean, *La Presse française face à la Chute de Missolonghi et la Bataille navale de Navarin* (Thessaloniki: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1976), with the remarks about the ambassadors at page 70. The Gate, with the niches, is shown as Figure 6.2. Canning's letter of 4 June to Reschid, that refers to his 'success, enough to preserve the diplomatic niceties before offering a bargain about preserving the monuments of Athens' is transcribed in Appendix D.
  - 13 Many images of the siege of Missolonghi and its aftermath are reproduced by Tsoulios, G. & T. Hadjis, *Historical album of the Greek war of independence, 1821. An illustrated chronicle. (Award of the Academy of Athens)*, English translation by K. Psyllides and P. Stavrou (Athens: Melissa, n.d., 1971).

verses with the proceeds going to relief funds and to the philhellenic committees mobilizing arms and volunteers for the Greek cause.<sup>14</sup>

When Reschid announced that his next target was Athens, the Greek forces who had taken over the town and Acropolis in 1822 knew what they and their families could expect. Some reports of Reschid's army on the march towards Athens, with its killings, enslavements, and laying waste, that were believable because they were normal, picked out the sexual element that the western ambassadors were sometimes reluctant to make explicit, as for example: '... many a beautiful village was surprised, and shared the usual fate—the butchering of its old men and women; the brutal usage, and unnatural abuse of the women and children; their mutilation and torments, and their being obliged to end by becoming the slaves of the soldiery who would load them with the spoils of their own homes, and make them follow like beasts of burden.'<sup>15</sup>

When compared with the military situation that they had faced at the time of the outbreak in 1821, the people of Athens were better prepared. Under the energetic leadership of Gouras, a local commander who was as much warlord as nationalist, the cisterns on the Acropolis were cleaned and filled with potable water. The villagers in the surrounding countryside, although themselves on the verge of starvation, were compelled to hand over provisions, enough, it was reported, to resist a siege of many months.<sup>16</sup> Odysseus Androutsos had already turned the mosque inside the Parthenon into a food store stocked with enough grain to supply the garrison for two years.<sup>17</sup> The Frankish Tower was heightened so as to give lookouts a wider and longer field of view and to enable the defenders to communicate with friends outside by signalling with mirrors and fires. Much of the town itself had not been repaired since the events of 1822 and was still in ruins.<sup>18</sup>

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14 Discussed, with many pictures reproduced, by Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, Nina M., *French Images from the Greek War of Independence (1821–1830): Art and Politics under the Restoration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 66–83. Many images of the siege of Missolonghi and its aftermath are reproduced by Tsoulios and Hadjis.

15 Howe, *Historical Sketch*, 326.

16 'The pale and trembling figures of women, who stand like spectres by the walls of their falling habitations; the half-naked and starving infants, who shiver at their breasts ...' Letter dated from Athens, February 1824, in Waddington, *Visit*, 95.

17 Raybaud, ii, 435.

18 In April 1824, for example, the surgeon on a British warship noted that most of the streets were deserted and untrodden: 'here and there an aged woman or solitary

When Reschid's army arrived outside the town wall of Athens and a blockade began, the Greeks of Athens announced their intention of fighting to the end, and of following, if necessary, the example of Missolonghi. And since by this stage in the war, the Parthenon and other ancient monuments had become symbolic of the neo-Hellenic cause, they declared that in immolating themselves, they would destroy the monuments as well. As their leaders declared: 'But, if God abandons his children, if our fellow-countrymen fail to help, if Europe is content with her role as spectator, then, and we call as witnesses those we have called on for help, then death, as we make a sortie from the debris of the Propylaia, will bury us under the ruins of the Parthenon, [and] the temples of Neptune and Erechtheus.'<sup>19</sup>

On 15 July Reschid's army duly began a bombardment. In the month of August 1826, Gordon, who was present for much of the time, noted: 'Kutahi's [Reschid's] artillery discharged against the town and castle [Acropolis] 2120 cannon-balls, and 356 bomb and howitzer shells; the garrison returned 76 bombs, and 854 round shot.'<sup>20</sup> 'From the 1st to the 25th of September, the besiegers threw 2,015 projectiles, the garrison 521.'<sup>21</sup> At some times during the 1826/27 winter months, Reschid's firing was sporadic, 'pouring in daily a few vollies from his batteries.'<sup>22</sup> On one occasion in October 1826, Gordon counted a thousand shots fired in a single day.<sup>23</sup>

Nor were the Ottoman weapons inadequate for the task. In a full report dated 19 October, based on information he had received from the Ottoman army encamped in Athens, Consul Meyer mentions that 'some of the ordnance brought from Negropont is of a very high calibre', using the word to mean able to be fired with accuracy.<sup>24</sup> In the battles near Athens the Ottoman army manoeuvred 'four long

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female with her child crossed the street; and in some places an old grey-headed man was seen dragging out from the mass of rubbish the half-burnt beam or piece of wood for his fire'. Black, *Narrative of Cruises*, 154.

19 The texts are given in Appendix C.

20 Gordon, ii, 339.

21 Figures from Gordon, ii, 339, 340, 341, 376. Numbers for lesser number of shots fired by the defenders from the Acropolis are also given.

22 Gordon, ii, 376.

23 *Ibid.*, 341.

24 Transcribed by Prousis, Theophilus C., *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval, 1815–1830* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2008), 94–97.

five-inch howitzers'.<sup>25</sup> During the siege the army included an artillery train 'of twenty cannon, four large mortars, and two howitzers; among his battering guns were forty-eight and forty-two pounders, and his fieldpieces were harnessed, equipped, and manoeuvred in a way that would have done no discredit to Europeans.'<sup>26</sup> Although, seen from the west, the Ottoman Empire appeared to be disintegrating, and western providentialists were inclined to welcome the working out of some pre-ordained divine plan, many among the Ottoman leaderships were military modernizers and innovators. It was the Ottoman army that developed both hot shells and howitzers, before they were adopted by western armies.<sup>27</sup>

Among the most commanding sites were on the Hill of the Muses, near the monument of Philopappos and from the nearby Church of Demetrius 'the Bombardier'.<sup>28</sup> Figure 11.2 shows an artilleryman's view of the Parthenon on the Acropolis from this military vantage point.



Figure 11.2. 'Monument of Philopappus at Athens, Greece.' Steel engraving with captions in English, French and German. 'Drawn by Wolfensberger Engraved by R. Brandard.'<sup>29</sup>

25 Finlay, *Greek Revolution*, ii, 132.

26 Gordon, ii, 333.

27 Described by Chesney, a colonel in the British Royal Artillery, 387, drawing on the professional military histories and manuals of the early nineteenth century.

28 'The Turks had gun emplacements and strong points all round the place and kept up a fire with cannons, mortars, grenade-throwers, and small arms'. Makriyannis, *Memoirs*, Lidderdale edition, 100.

29 Wright, ii, 65. As far as I know, the Rev. G.N. Wright, who supplied the words that accompanied the pictures, never visited Athens.



The image is an engraving of a drawing made by Johann Jakob Wolfensberger, a professional artist from Switzerland, who was in Athens in November 1832 while the Acropolis was still in Ottoman occupation.<sup>30</sup> The Parthenon is just over five hundred metres away, within easy range.<sup>31</sup> In 1829, the highly experienced French diplomat, the Baron de Beaujour, in his published survey of the military strength of the Ottoman Empire, declared that the Acropolis of Athens, being within easy range of artillery of the surrounding hills, had no value as a fortress. The only way it could be defended, he added, was for a network of defended towers to be built, armed, and garrisoned on at least four of the hills, a cost, he implied, that no-one would ever be willing incur even if they had the resources.<sup>32</sup>

On 28 June 1826, when Haseki's town wall was breached, the town of Athens was taken by Reschid's forces, with Reschid personally leading a charge against a battery during which he was wounded.<sup>33</sup> His army, closely investing the Acropolis from all sides, was now able to fire at the Acropolis from ground level in all directions, at a range of fifty metres or even closer. In 1825, the only way in which the Revolution could reasonably expect to save the Acropolis was by mounting a force able to relieve the siege by land. In terms of the military aims of the war, it was debateable whether the Greek Revolutionary forces and their philhellenic allies and funders were right to choose to do this, when compared with other choices open to them that might have brought more important military gains. In January 1827, the American philhellene, Samuel Howe, described what he saw: 'Athens seems to be

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30 Lacour, 163 and 172, records meeting Wolfensberger in Athens in November 1832.

31 That the Parthenon was within easy range was confirmed explicitly by Admiral de Jurien. Jurien, ii, 95.

32 'Athènes ne mérite plus aucune considération comme place de guerre, parce que ses murs ne pourraient pas résister à de l'artillerie, que sa citadelle est mal armée, qu'elle est dominée vers le nord-est par le mont Anchesme et que vers le sud-ouest elle peut être battue du mont Musée, qui n'en est éloigné que de 300 toises, et même du plateau du Pnyx et de la colline de l'Aréopage, qui en sont encore plus près. Il faudrait, pour la défendre, construire sur tous ces monticules de petits forts et les lier au corps de la place'. Beaujour, L. Felix, Baron de, *Voyage Militaire Dans L'empire Othoman, Ou: Description De Ses Frontières Et De Ses Principales Défenses, Soit Naturelles, Soit Artificielles, Avec Cinq Cartes Géographiques* (Paris: Didot, 1829), 112.

33 Reported by Meyer, the British consul in Arta, from information sent to him from Athens by the Ottoman authorities. Kew FO 352/15 B, part 6, 513. An extract from the letter from Athens is at 525. Other sources give a slightly later date for the taking of the town.

in a worse condition than I had imagined it. They have not a stick of wood to burn, are deficient in clothing, and a violent disease is raging among them. The Turks seem to have come to a fixed resolution not to abandon the siege; during the winter they have partly encircled Athens with a ditch, cut down all the olive-trees, and formed with them a sort of fence for their ditch. They have about ten thousand troops, including servants, etc. Letters from within call loudly for relief, and government, feeble in means, is doing all that is possible for them [*letter breaks off*].<sup>34</sup> The military case, reinforced by the silent presence of the ambassadors of ancient Athens, was regarded as overriding, and it was decided to attempt to mount an operation to relieve the siege.

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34 Howe, *Letters and Journals*, i, 199.

## 12. The Surrender

The events leading up to the surrender of the Acropolis to the Ottoman army on 7 June 1827 can be re-imagined from two near-contemporary images. The first, at Figure 12.1, is a map prepared for Thomas Gordon's *History of the Greek Revolution* first published in 1832. Gordon, who had been present, was concerned, as a military man, to explain the military operations that, at the time, could best be conveyed by combining words with images, including icons, such as those for olive plantations.

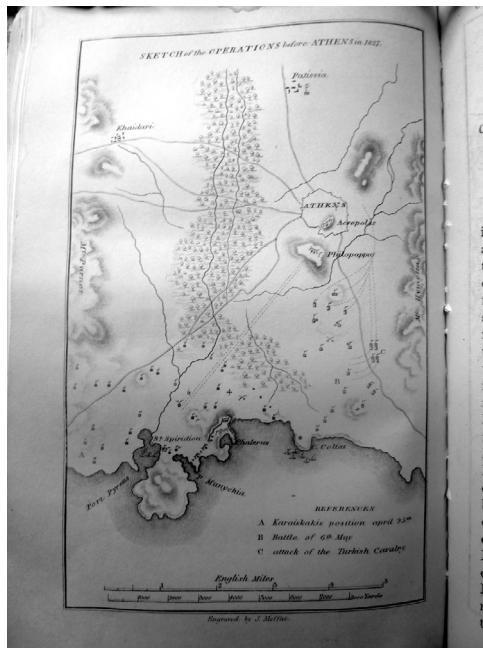


Figure 12.1. 'Sketch of the operations before Athens in May 1827' Copper engraving.<sup>1</sup>

1 In Gordon, *History*, ii, opposite. 375. The engraver was J. Moffat. Since no designer's name is given, we may presume that it was prepared by Gordon from personal

The landscape of cultivated olive trees between the sea and the Acropolis had apparently changed little for hundreds of years. In the 1680s an official surveyor counted 50,000 olive trees in and around Athens.<sup>2</sup> When the scene was celebrated by the Chorus in the *Trojan Women*, a tragedy by Euripides first produced in 415 BCE, the olive groves had existed for at least two centuries. The rivers of Attica, although too small and shallow to be navigable, intermittent in their flow of water, and always at risk of being overexploited, had in ancient times enabled the production of olive oil to become the mainstay of the local economy and one of the foundations of the success of the classical city.<sup>3</sup>

The other image, a view from the ground, made on the spot soon afterwards by a professional western artist, reproduced as Figure 12.2, shows the same landscape as it was at the time within the sightlines of the Greek forces on the coast.



Figure 12.2. The Acropolis as seen from the heights of Munychia, 1827. Lithograph of a picture 'from nature' by the Bavarian artist Karl Krazeisen.<sup>4</sup>

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observation at the time and later. Another, more complex, military map of the military operations, made by Captain Jochmus, is reproduced by Dakin, *British and American Philhellenes*, Plate VIII, from a version in the Church papers. It is reproduced also in Lane-Poole, Stanley, *Sir Richard Church C.B. G.C.H. Commander-in-chief of the Greeks in the War of Independence* (London: Longman, 1890). This short book had appeared as articles in *The English Historical Review*, 1 January 1890, vol. 5, no. 17, 7–30; 1 April 1890, vol. 5, no. 18, 293–305; and 1 July 1890, vol. 5, no. 19, 497–522.

- 2 Randolph, Bernard, *The Present State of the Morea, Called Anciently Peloponnesus* (London: 1686), p. 21.
- 3 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The olive tree pictured on the most visible part of the Parthenon is also discussed there.
- 4 'Nach der Natur gez. v. Krazeizen. Selb lith. Auf Stein gez. Von Fr. Hohe'. From *Bildnisse ausgezeichneter Griechen und Philhellenen/Portraits des Grecs et des Philhellènes*

With the help of funds from Europe, the provisional Greek Government had recently appointed a British general, Sir Richard Church, as commander-in-chief of the army and a British admiral, Lord Cochrane, as commander-in-chief of the navy, both of whom were experienced officers with reputations for success, including, in the case of Church, around twenty years before having successfully raised, trained, and commanded a force of Albanians and Greeks mainly drawn from displaced populations living on the Ionian Islands. He is said to have spoken Greek perfectly and to have been highly respected by his men. The relieving force was well supplied with food and weapons, including about a million ball cartridges, a range of artillery pieces of different calibre, plus a modern steam-driven warship able to give covering fire from the sea.<sup>5</sup> It was possible to communicate with those besieged in the Acropolis with flags and flares, and perhaps reflecting mirrors, observable by telescope, although with the risk of revealing information to the enemy.<sup>6</sup>

The plan was that the Greek Revolutionary forces, assembling on the high ground on the coast, would cross the plain and use their field artillery against the Ottoman artillery installed on the hill of Philopappos. As they approached the Acropolis, they would be joined by their besieged comrades who would make sorties. The Greek forces consisted of about 10,000 men, the largest army the Revolutionaries had ever assembled in the war. It was, as the Greek Minister of Justice declared in 1873 at the funeral of General Church, like the army that besieged Troy, made up of soldiers and sailors from all parts of Greece.<sup>7</sup> For the first time during the Revolutionary War, the newly created nation state of Hellas had a national army and a national navy. But, from the map and pictures,

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*les plus célèbres ...* by Karl Krazeisen, published in parts in Munich, with text in German and French, between 1828 and 1831. Krazeisen accompanied von Heideck and the Bavarian philhellenes to Greece in 1826 where he served as a junior officer. Although this picture may have been drawn, or sketched, on the spot, the artist has exaggerated the steepness of the west side of the Acropolis. The drawings, which I have not seen, are in the National Gallery, Athens. [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Karl\\_Krazeisen](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Karl_Krazeisen)

5 A detailed estimate by Church, Church papers BL Add MSS 36,563, 47.

6 The picturing of what appears to be a large shield used for signalling with the help of the sun's rays, is discussed in Chapter 21.

7 Church, Richard, *Funeral orations pronounced at the Greek cemetery of Athens on March the 15/27th 1873 over the tomb of the late General Sir Richard Church by the Hon: P. Chalkiopoulos, Minister of Justice, and Mr. John Gennadius, Secretary of Legation* (Athens: Press of the Journal of Debates, 1873), 8.

it is also easy to understand the hesitation of the leaders of the Greek army, who were being pressed by their western commanders to leave the defended high ground on the coast.

An army well trained and disciplined in western tactics was able to cross open ground by being ready, at a word of command, to form squares, fix bayonets, fire in volleys, and beat off assaults even by cavalry. But the Greek forces, used to fighting as individuals moving from one temporary defensible work ('tambour') to another, had little confidence in the plan. They were being invited to advance in full sight of the Ottoman outposts on the hills surrounding the Acropolis, and then attack the besieging forces from their rear, with no element of surprise. And from recent experience they knew the risks. In February a force of several thousand fighters under the command of the Greek General Constantin Bourbaki had landed at Eleusis, but on their march to Athens were put to flight by the Ottoman cavalry with more than three hundred and fifty killed.<sup>8</sup>

After Greece became independent, the scene before the decision to advance to save the Acropolis was presented in a heroic, nation-building picture, showing Georgios Karaiskakis, the commander of the Greeks, and the Greek and philhellene officers and troops, as shown as Figure 12.3.

When Cochrane's ship first arrived in the Bay of Salamis, in an elaborate ceremony staged on high ground so as to be within sight of the Ottoman as well as of the Greek army, he had presented the Greek leaders with a large silk flag that he had brought from Marseilles. It combined the blue and white of the national flag of Greece with the owl of ancient Athens, and was mounted on a tall pole decked in blue and white.<sup>9</sup> The Greek Government too, whatever the wider range of motivations had been in 1821, was now heavily invested in the national

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8 *Campaigns of the Falieri and Piraeus in the Year 1827, or Journal of a Volunteer, Being the Personal Account of Captain Thomas Douglas Whitcombe, edited ... by C.W.J. Eliot* (Princeton: Gennadeion monographs V, 1992), 2.

9 The flag itself had long before been the object of our solicitude, and had been for some time in preparation, the silk for it having been purchased by me when at Marseilles. It was about ten feet long, and six feet wide, and entirely of light blue silk, except-a diamond shaped space in the middle, of about three feet by four, which was of white silk; and upon this white ground was painted an enormous owl, of a grey colour, — this bird being the national emblem of Greece. The bird had been very well executed, by a Peruvian whom Lord Cochrane had brought from that country, and on account of his having shewn some talent in drawing, had placed him under a very able master in England. The flag was fastened to a pole of about twelve or thirteen feet long, at the top of which was a large tassel of blue and

continuity story of which the Acropolis of Athens had already become the principal embodiment. The seal attached to all official letters, of which an example is shown as Figure 12.4, displays the three principal identity markers of classical Athens: the owl, the olive tree, and Athena as armed protector.



Figure 12.3. Karaiskakis and other Greek and philhellene officers prepare to relieve the siege of the Acropolis of Athens. Oil painting by Theodore Vryzakis (Munich, 1855).<sup>10</sup>



Figure 12.4. Seal of the Greek Government, 1827. From an official letter.<sup>11</sup>

white silk. The staff was also painted blue and white, and the covering was of blue silk'. Cochrane, George, *Wanderings in Greece* (London: Bentley, 1837), i, 48.

- 10 Wikimedia commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vryzakis-Stratopedo\\_Karaiskaiki.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vryzakis-Stratopedo_Karaiskaiki.jpg). Frequently reproduced, for example, by Tsoulis and Hadjis.617; Zographos, *O Strategos Makruγιάννης kai e Eikonographia tou agônos* (Athens: Catalogue of Exhibition, 2009), 77. A copy of a lithograph made in Paris is reproduced in *Pictorial Records on 1821* (Athens: Aspioti-Elka, 1971), 26–27. The artist has made efforts to capture the unusual lightscape discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
- 11 Greek Government to Admiral Codrington 1 July 1827. Kew FO 78/162. By adopting the iconography of ancient Athens into a symbol of nationalism, the Provisional

In the hopes of many, the battle for the relief of the Acropolis of Athens would mark the victory of the modern Hellenes. However, the shift from a religious to a national identity was still recent, and changes in the aspirations and the memories of a community do not always immediately follow changes in symbols. Although the Greek flag was now the emblem of the new nation, when the 'banner of the white cross' had first been raised by Orthodox Bishop Germanos at Patras at the start of the Revolution in 1821, the design alluded to the cross in the sky that Constantine had allegedly seen after his victory at Milvian Bridge.<sup>12</sup>

Cochrane's secretary, Edward Masson, in a speech in Greek declared: 'Soldiers, whoever of you will lodge this flag on the summit of the Acropolis shall receive from Lord Cochrane, as a reward for his bravery, a thousand [Spanish] dollars, and ten times shall be [...] the recompense to the force that accompanies him.'<sup>13</sup> If Cochrane's appeals and incentives had worked and the Acropolis had been captured, we can be confident that printed accounts and engraved pictures would have poured from the presses of Europe, and he would have been inscribed in the history books as a saviour.

As for Reschid, the Ottoman policy of crushing rebels by any means approved by the religious authorities, of which he was a conscientious practitioner, was well known. It was reported that he had paid his soldiers twenty-four piastres for each severed head they brought him, a huge incentive for troops who, before the Revolution, had been paid ten piastres a year, even allowing for a depreciation in the purchasing

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Government was not only adopting an Athenocentric view of ancient Hellas but converting a symbol of difference that promoted the practice of almost continuous war amongst the classical Hellenic states. After the end of the Revolution, it was adopted by the Christian hierarchy of Patmos, an island assigned to the Ottoman Empire, as illustrated by a woodcut of the seal reproduced in Brewer and Barber, 20, although the Orthodox church and its breakaway institutions had come into existence on a rhetoric of defeating and superseding ancient Hellenism. A discussion of how the triad of symbols, the figure of Athena, the olive, and the owl, were adopted in classical Athens is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

12 Noted at the time by Urquhart, David, *The Spirit of the East* (London: Colburn, 1839), i, 34, without implying that he was offering an interpretation and by Nugent, Lord, *Lands Classical and Sacred* (London: Knight, 1846), i, 7. The flag was adopted by the National Assembly of the Revolutionary government on 15/27 March 1822, in accordance with Decree No. 540.

13 Quoted by Dakin, *British and American Philhellenes*, 150.



power of the currency.<sup>14</sup> For centuries the Ottoman leadership had regarded it as worthwhile to divert soldiers from the actual fighting to the gathering of trophies to put up as displays, and the Greeks were sometimes able to flee to safety while the enemy was beheading their dead and wounded.<sup>15</sup> Church, who understood the customs, may have remembered that when he had fought alongside the Ottoman army in the 1801 campaign in Egypt, he had reported that the rate then was only five paras for a Frenchman's head, there being forty paras to a piastre, although, with this price too, the purchasing power and international value of the currency had changed.<sup>16</sup>

In skirmishes near the coast, the Greeks killed around sixty Ottoman soldiers, encouraging Cochrane to declare to the Greek Government: 'henceforth commences a new era in the system of Modern Greek Warfare.'<sup>17</sup> But, shortly before the main battle, it became clear that the new flags and ceremonies had not altered what had earlier been the norms. A garrison of the Ottoman army, consisting of about two hundred Muslim Albanians, had managed to maintain themselves in the Monastery of Saint Spiridhion, although closely besieged and with little prospect of being relieved. As had happened in Athens in 1822, a capitulation was negotiated that would have allowed the soldiers to be taken to safety by sea, with Karaiskakis and others acting as hostages to guarantee good faith. But when the soldiers left the monastery, they were set upon by some members of the Greek army and one hundred and twenty-nine were put to death. The event was personally witnessed by numerous foreigners, who also saw the attempts by Karaiskakis and some of his officers to stop the killing, in some cases, by shooting their own men.<sup>18</sup>

Despite his reservations, Karaiskakis agreed to the plan to march to relieve the Acropolis, although he himself was wounded in a skirmish and died before it could begin. The predictable and indeed

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14 E. Gauttier d'Arc, 52. He was in Athens in May 1830 during the Ottoman re-occupation. Omer Pasha was said to have paid 25 piastres per head in 1821. Staehelin, 'Eye-witness of 1821', 197. The pre-war rate was noted in Chapter 4.

15 As discussed in Chapter 6.

16 Lane-Poole, *Church*, 6.

17 Quoted by Dakin, *British and American Philhellenes*, 151.

18 Discussed, most fully, by Dakin, *British and American*, 151–52, making use of the Church papers in the BL.

predicted disaster duly occurred.<sup>19</sup> As soon as the Greek forces were too far forward in the open ground to retreat to the protection of their guns, the squadrons of Ottoman cavalry, who had been out of sight beyond the Acropolis, rode in with their sabres, caused the Greeks to break ranks, and the horsemen easily cut down both those who stayed where they were in their holes and those who attempted to run away. In the irregular form of fighting that was all that most of the Greek fighters knew, advancing as individuals from one small emplacement to another, they could neither advance nor retreat. And as usual, the numbers of casualties would have been higher if the Ottoman troops had not stopped to kill the wounded, strip the dead, and cut off heads, so enabling others to escape to the coast where, having thrown many of their heavy weapons into the sea, they were taken to safety in boats. When, in the afternoon, the scale of the disaster became clear, Admiral Cochrane took to a boat and, 'doing the duty of a lieutenant', rowed from ship to ship ensuring that they gave covering fire to the soldiers fleeing to the beaches: General Church, by contrast, retired to his cabin where, it was reported, he 'drank tea and read the bible'.<sup>20</sup>

The staff of the headquarters of the Ottoman army besieging the Acropolis had kept Ambassador Canning in Constantinople informed of the success of their operations in a series of letters sent to Consul Meyer at Prevesa.<sup>21</sup> And, soon after the battle, the Ottoman Government in Constantinople posted a bulletin about the battle of Athens on the gate of the imperial palace (Serail) in Constantinople.<sup>22</sup> Eight flags and eight drums, it noted, had been captured. Three captains had been taken alive. The heads of twenty-five dead captains and two thousand and one hundred ears were exposed.<sup>23</sup> Shortly afterwards another bulletin was posted that reported the scattering of three hundred and sixty-six ears from the Ottoman victories against the rebels in the Morea.<sup>24</sup> They were seen displayed there by Rev. John Hartley, a British missionary.<sup>25</sup>

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19 The disaster, giving the reasons why it was likely to occur, was also predicted by Howe, *Letters and Journals*, i, 209.

20 *The Journals and Letters of George Finlay*, edited by J.M. Hussey (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1995), i, 27–28.

21 For example, a letter signed Machmoud Bey Monastirli in Kew FO 352/15 B, 525.

22 Shown as Figure 6.2.

23 Kew FO 78/154, 64.

24 Kew FO 78/154, 81.

25 'I saw the ears of the Greeks who had fallen at the battle of Athens thrown before the gate of the Seraglio. There were also several heads. To the adjoining wall was

According to a French nobleman who, in the summer of 1827, was shown the sights of Constantinople by members of the French Embassy, the niches were not then occupied.<sup>26</sup> The baron noticed too that, instead of the crowds who had previously turned out to see the weekly procession of the sultan, only about fifty or sixty people were there, perhaps an indication that, after six years of wars and massacres, displays were no longer as effective as they may once have been. The niches were, however, to be replenished soon afterwards by new supplies sent by Reschid from Athens. Two hundred and forty prisoners from the battle there, it was learned, had been marched to Reschid's field headquarters at Patissia, where two hundred and thirty eight were decapitated in batches.<sup>27</sup> According to an unpublished account written at the time by the French naval officer, Captain Leblanc, who visited the camp: '[R]ound the Tent of the Vizir even to the very door lay human bodies, those of Greeks who had been decapitated at different times, and numbers of heads and limbs in every direction and in every possible state of putrefaction. On stepping out of the Vizir's tent you could hardly avoid stepping on these remains of human beings, and it was impossible to put your foot down even close to the Tent without putting it into blood and filth. Executions took place daily at the Tent door.'<sup>28</sup> The announcements that accompanied the displays in Constantinople, including some that amended the numbers given in earlier announcements, which were copied and translated by Chabert,

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attached the titlet notifying the crimes of the delinquents'. Hartley, 185. What Hartley calls a 'titlet' was evidently a 'yafta' placed in the same place as that recording the crimes of Ali Pasha reproduced as Figure 6.3.

- 26 Renouard, de la Bussierre, le B[ar]on, Th., *Lettres sur l'Orient écrites pendant les années 1827 et 1828* (Paris: Strasbourg, and Brussels: 1829), i, 51. Renouard, a diplomat and later French politician who upheld doctrines of 'legitimacy' was a member of a rich banking family. Since he travelled in style in his own ship supplied by Admiral de Rigny, he saw little of the post-war suffering in the islands of the Archipelago, but on seeing Chios, he remarked that the women could have served as models for Zeuxis, Pheidias and Praxiteles.
- 27 Jurien, ii, 129. The exceptions were Kalergi, who was ransomed with his ears cut off, and lived to play a leading role in post-war Greece, and Drako, who knowing that the ransom money could not be raised, took his own life. Slightly different numbers are given by Church in his unpublished memoir. 'The loss to the Greek forces seven hundred killed 300 prisoners ... the heads of the prisoners with the exception of four officers for whom high ransoms were expended were cut off a few days later by orders of the vizier Kioutahi [Reschid] in cold blood at his headquarters'. Church papers, BL Add MSS 36,563,69 and 73.
- 28 Church papers, BL Add MSS 36,563, 98.

now the Oriental Secretary at the French Embassy, seem to have been accurate.<sup>29</sup>

Some of Revolutionary leaders are also said to have paid bounties for enemy heads and ears. In late August 1825, for example, the philhellene Edgar Garston, serving with Colocotronis, reports that 'a Spanish dollar per head was paid for each Arab slain or captured.'<sup>30</sup> The fighters, he described as: 'bearing as trophies the swarthy and gory heads of the fallen foes and others having the ramrods of their guns ornamented with their ears.'<sup>31</sup> And there is some evidence that the Revolutionary Greeks too also proudly displayed the severed heads of their enemies as formal trophies.<sup>32</sup>

The failed attempt to relieve the Acropolis, a disaster for the thousands of Greeks who lost their lives and for their families, changed the strategic situation of the war. The remnants of the defeated army withdrew from Munychia on the coast, having abandoned most of their heavy weapons. They were short of supplies, had no money to buy food, and many soldiers deserted. Since a second attempt to relieve the siege of the Acropolis was out of the question, it seemed inevitable that it would soon fall, opening the way for Reschid's army to take control of a large swathe of territory in central Greece from Missolonghi to Negropont, and then to march to the Isthmus and subdue the Peloponnese. The papers of Richard Church, which include his reports to the Greek Government, confirm that the implications were understood at the time.<sup>33</sup> A few years later, however,

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29 Reports include Quinet, Edgar, *De la Grèce Moderne et de ses Rapports avec l'Antiquité* (Paris: Levrault, 1830), 371; Trant, Captain T. Abercromby, *Narrative of a Journey through Greece* (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830), 279. With Reschid's despatches to Constantinople reporting his capture of the Acropolis, the messengers, 'Tartars', brought with them 'several bags of ears and three heads of the Greek Chiefs'. Kew FO 352/17, file 5 item 595.

30 Garston, *Greece Revisited*, ii, 276, an excerpt from a journal made at the time.

31 *Ibid.*, ii, 300.

32 For example, an image in watercolour dated 1827 reproduced by Beaton, Roderick, *Greece, Biography of a Modern Nation* (London: Allen Lane, 2019), no. 5, entitled in Greek, 'Trophy of the Hellenes against the Barbarians, erected by General Karaiskakis, in the place Plovarma'. It is also shown as *Greece at the Benaki Museum edited by Angelos Delivorrias and Dionisis Fotopoulos* (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1997), no. 932, opposite 524, attributed to Athanasios Iatrides. The practice did not however enter the tradition of displaying heroic battle scenes, from which those killed in battle were not excluded, which is a strong feature of the post-Revolutionary picturing of the War.

33 Copies of letters sent immediately after the battle in BL Add MS 36550, 138–41.

a story that was almost a complete reverse of what the contemporary records show was being put about in Athens, namely that Church had been persuaded into launching the attack against his advice, but had 'effected a masterly retreat'.<sup>34</sup>

With the loss of their toeholds on the coast, and the withdrawal of their remaining fighters, the Greek forces and the philhellenes blockaded inside the Acropolis now had two choices. They could hang on as long as possible in the hope that something unexpected might happen, for example, that the Ottoman army, with its long supply lines, might be forced to abandon the siege or withdraw when winter arrived. Under that scenario, if Reschid's army were able to maintain the siege, the most likely outcome for those inside was slow attrition of their numbers, with more falling sick and dying from thirst and lack of food, and more bodies unburied, to be followed by the survivors being captured and put to death by judicial beheading and body parts sent to the sultan's palace. Alternatively, the besieged could attempt to make a break-out, as their fellow countrymen had done at Missolonghi six months before. And by blowing up the Parthenon and the ancient monuments on the Acropolis as they had publicly promised, they could make the ancient Hellenes work for them in a specular act of neo-Hellenic self-immolation. Such heroism, they might hope, would shock the conscience of the European powers and European opinion, even more than Missolonghi, that had no ancient monuments, was already doing. As Church wrote after the scale of the disaster had become clear, only a 'miracle' could save the Acropolis.<sup>35</sup>

But who could conjure up such a miracle? Maybe the ancient Hellenes, speaking this time through the voice of the French admiral de Rigny? To the surprise of many it was suddenly agreed that the Greek and philhellene forces, with the non-combatants, which included men too weak to fight as well as numerous women and children, would agree to leave the Acropolis, if they were specifically commanded to do so by Commander-in-Chief Church in writing. A previous proposal, of which a draft survives, in which Church only gave them permission to accept the terms if they chose to do so, had been rejected. Church addressed his letter to the French philhellene Colonel Fabvier, as if it were he who

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34 Nugent, Lord, *Lands Classical and Sacred* (London: Charles Knight, 1846), i, 11.

35 Church papers, BL Add MS 36550, 140.

was in command of all the troops in the Acropolis rather than just a contingent, and Fabvier refused even to meet the French naval officer who tried to deliver it to him.<sup>36</sup> Church, belatedly understanding how insulting his letter had been, then sent it again, this time addressed to 'the chiefs' and the next day it too was indignantly rejected until it was again amended.

In the final version of his order to accept safe passage guaranteed by the French navy, Church offered two justifications. He noted, firstly, the desperate state of the non-combatants, a consideration that might have touched a chord among some readers, but would also have shown Reschid and the Ottoman forces that they were on the verge of achieving their objectives. Church then added a second reason, presented almost as an afterthought: 'Considering that the monuments of ancient Greece so dear to the civilised world are there too, and desiring that they should be saved from the destruction of War, I order you to agree to the surrender set out below.'<sup>37</sup> On the face of it, equating the fate of around eighteen hundred lives with that of the ancient buildings may seem insulting, as well as confirming the 'idolatrous' western regard for old stones for which Reschid had voiced his contempt.<sup>38</sup> And indeed, almost immediately, some of those foreign officers who understood how Church had sent an army to predictable disaster did regard the order as insulting.<sup>39</sup> He was ordering the Greek forces not to carry out their public promises to immolate themselves as the inhabitants of Missolonghi had done. And, just as those besieged in the Acropolis themselves had done in their public declaration, he constructed the ancient monuments that he was ordering them not to destroy as symbols of 'Europe'.<sup>40</sup> Those

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36 Debidour, A., *Le général Fabvier: sa vie militaire et politique* (Paris: Plon 1904), 329, with the text of Fabvier's reply from Fabvier's papers.

37 Full text in Appendix C. There is no mention of the need to save the monuments in the contemporary documents on the surrender quoted, cited, and discussed by [Fabvier] Debidour, A., *Le général Fabvier: sa vie militaire et politique* (Paris: Plon 1904), pp. 301–33.

38 See his intercepted letter in Appendix C

39 Discussed in Chapter 14.

40 A contemporaneous account by a participant that describes the initial rejection of the terms, the leaders claiming that, as Hellenes, they chose a 'theatre of heroism' as Missolonghi had done, and how they were ordered by Church to surrender, is given in Müller, Friedrich, *Denkwürdigkeiten aus Griechenland in den Jahren 1827 und 1828* (Paris: Herausgegeben von P.O. Brønsted, 1833), 52–55, but without mentioning that Church's countermanding order invoked the monuments.

besieged in Athens were to be excused from following the example of the besieged in Missolonghi on the grounds that there were no Parthenons in Missolonghi.

It was not known, either to the Greeks or to the local agents of the powers, quite how desperate was the situation of the besieging Ottoman army. Reschid was reporting to Constantinople that he had run out of money and was paying the commanders in personally guaranteed IOUs that they only accepted after he humiliatingly kissed their hands. On 1 June, he was unable even to distribute the daily ration of bread.<sup>41</sup> It seems likely, now that we have Ottoman documents, that Reschid would have been obliged by lack of supplies to withdraw his army almost immediately. As events turned out, he was able to take possession of a large quantity of stores that had been stockpiled in the Acropolis. The long-term shifts in the geo-political plates that we can now discern with hindsight were being interrupted at the time by insistent short-term contingencies.

The Parthenon and the other ancient buildings had provided the besieged with some physical protection against the Ottoman artillery. Since the trees on the summit had been cut down for firewood and the houses stripped of their timber, they were the only shelter from the summer sun. Now they gave symbolic cover against the charge that they had surrendered a fortress, a province, and probably the Revolution, without even putting up a fight.

The exodus from the Acropolis was well planned; carefully choreographed, we might say. Captain Kerviler, a French naval officer who helped in the escorting of the survivors to the coast and their embarkation on to overloaded French and Austrian warships for the short voyage to Salamis, described the scene over several hours as the survivors made their way out of the Acropolis.<sup>42</sup> First came the two thousand Greeks, of whom eight hundred were non-combatants, women, children, and old men, the sick and the wounded, with whatever baggage they were able to carry. They had been subsisting on barley and wheat grain, that could not be baked into bread because,

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41 Noted by Ilicak, 'Revolutionary Athens', 14, from Ottoman archives.

42 Kerviler, J. Marie Vincent Pocard, *Souvenirs d'un vieux capitaine de frégate* (Paris: Champion, 1893), 84–85. The number of non-combatants was noted by Debidour, 351, from Fabvier's papers.

since January 1827, there had been no more wood to burn. They had, thanks to Gouras's cleaning and filling of the cisterns, some drinking water but it was becoming putrid, and there was now little prospect of rain except for an occasional summer shower, until the winter. They were dressed in rags, and none had washed for over a year. Since the trees on the summit had been cut down for firewood and the houses stripped of their timber, the only shelter from the sun and from the artillery barrage was among the ruins of the ancient monuments. About sixty persons had died during the siege, mostly from illness brought on by deprivation, of whom some were buried in the Serpenji while it remained in Greek hands, but most bodies were left to rot on the hard ground of the Acropolis summit among the scattered marble.<sup>43</sup>

The other contingent consisted of the regiment of about five hundred Greeks, including forty philhellenes, trained in European tactics under the command of the French philhellene Colonel Fabvier. They had daringly brought sacks of gunpowder into the Acropolis on the night of 30 November 1826, but had been unable to leave.<sup>44</sup> It was never explained why they had not made a sortie or even used their artillery during the attempt to relieve the siege, as had been part of the plan.

Reschid and his army actively assisted the exodus by providing horses. Surprisingly, Fabvier's force had kept seven horses, described as 'fine', sharing the food and water with them, rather than killing them for meat that might be shared with the starving Greeks. According to the surrender agreement, the horses were due to be left behind, but Reschid donated them to the refugees. As they emerged through the gate, the Ottoman soldiers, angered at how their comrades at Munychia had been put to death when they had surrendered, itched to attack them, but were kept in check by Reschid and his officers, and the agreement was carried out to the letter. Admiral de Rigny whose country had guaranteed the agreement, with three Albanian Ottoman officers as hostages, personally marched at the rear of the column.<sup>45</sup>

On their way to the sea, the column passed the putrefying corpses of the Greek and philhellene soldiers who had been killed in the attempt to relieve the siege just a month before. Almost all had been decapitated.

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43 The figure of sixty, derived from Fabvier's papers, is given by Debidour, 326.

44 Eliot, Whitcombe, 2.

45 Debidour, 322, from de Rigny's report to the French Ministry of Marine.



Some of the bodies were still being picked over by scavenging birds, but others were already just bones whitened by the wind.<sup>46</sup>

As George Finlay, the philhellene and historian, wrote about the peaceful surrender of the Acropolis without loss of life in 1827: ‘The conduct of Reschid Pasha on this occasion gained him immortal honour’, a prediction that was not fulfilled.<sup>47</sup> According to Finlay, Reschid in his despatches to the sultan declared that he had re-established Ottoman authority across the whole of central Greece from Missolonghi to Athens, leaving only the Peloponnese as the responsibility of Ibrahim and the Egyptian army.<sup>48</sup> Finlay does not record how he knew what Reschid had written, but if true, Reschid not only established himself as the most successful Ottoman military commander of the war and, if the despatch were to be made public, protected himself in advance against a possible charge that he had broken Ottoman law, but he also laid down the materials for the way the story could be told in the future: the planting of a victory narrative being as important as the actual, more confused, situation on the ground.<sup>49</sup> Reschid had also demonstrated that the Ottoman army was a disciplined force, able to carry out agreements, and that he was prepared, in some circumstances, to accept European conventions of war.

In the fighting at sea, the Revolutionaries not only remained undefeated but scored some notable successes. At some time in 1827, by the ruse of hoisting Austrian colours, one of the modern Greek frigates that was mainly manned by philhellenes captured a ship that was carrying ‘some stores and part of the part of the harem of Kiutahi Pacha’ [Reschid] from Prevesa to Navarino. George Cochrane, the nephew of Lord Cochrane, commander in chief of the Greek navy, who was an eyewitness, described the Pasha’s favourite as ‘of no great beauty [...] quite Turkish in her appearance’ with dark eyes and sallow complexion,

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46 Kerviler, 83.

47 Finlay ii, 153.

48 Finlay, *History*, Tozer edition, vi, 433.

49 I am grateful to Christel Müller, who at a seminar on 12 March 2020 at the Institute of Classical Studies in London, offered a theoretical model for understanding how a transition was effected and fixed in the accounts of ancient authors, after the Achaean war of 146 BCE, that took place over the same terrain. Among other parallels, Mummius, the Roman Commander, like Reschid, decided against destroying the Parthenon, as discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

attended by Greeks. In a letter to Reschid, Lord Cochrane announced his intention of releasing the whole party into the hands of the Ottoman forces without ransom, to which Reschid responded by releasing a hundred prisoners in a demonstration that Ottoman generosity was greater than European.<sup>50</sup>

There had been no fewer than ten warships of various foreign powers at the time of the surrender, all watching and reporting what they thought was happening to their governments as international observers, including one warship from the United States, a recent arrival on the world stage. And although only the French navy guaranteed the safety of those who surrendered, it was rumoured on board the British warships that they too might land forces.<sup>51</sup> Their captains may have known that representatives of the three main powers, Britain, France, and Russia were meeting in London to discuss coordinating their policies towards the war, but it is unlikely that those who made the agreement known as the Treaty of London on 6 July could have known about the surrender in the previous month, or that it influenced the policy of 'pacific intervention' that it inaugurated and was to prove decisive a few months later.<sup>52</sup> Reschid had performed a transition and had done so with the eyes of 'Europe' looking on.

Uniquely, on 14 June, before the Acropolis was closed to all non-Muslim visitors for the next three years, the officers of the American naval ship made a request to Reschid for permission to visit the Acropolis and permission was given for two parties to visit on successive days. The Rev. George Jones, a chaplain, who chose to go with the second party,

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50 Cochrane, George, *Wanderings in Greece* (London: Bentley, 1837), i, 97–101. The precise date of the episode cannot be ascertained from the account. The ruse was to forestall the likelihood that, if in danger of being captured by the Greek revolutionaries, the captain of the ship would immolate himself and his vessel. Whether any wider implications can be drawn from the episode is doubtful — beyond the likelihood that it may have strengthened Reschid's understanding of the benefits to the Ottoman Empire of accepting Canning's offer to have it recognised as a 'European' state discussed in Chapters 18 and 19.

51 Noted in Neale, William J., *Cavendish; or, the Patrician at sea* (London: H. Colburn & R. Bentley, 1831), ii, 85. This work, like Charley Chalk, appears to be based on a first hand account, and was cited as such by *Charley Chalk*, 277.

52 As discussed in Chapter 18. News, deriving from de Rigny, had reached Melos by 12 June 1827. Canning's official report to London on the capitulation of the Acropolis, which derived from information obtained by Captain Hamilton on the spot and sent by sea to Constantinople, is dated 14 June 1827. Kew FO 78/155, 71.

the date for the first being a Sunday, noted that the patinated brown columns of the Parthenon were 'marked in many places, with white spots, by the balls, but they have done nothing more than bruise them a little'.<sup>53</sup> In a letter about his visit printed in an American newspaper soon afterwards, Jones declared, in a phrase that was omitted from his book, that he was 'a little disappointed in not being able to carry away a few specimens of the Marbles'.<sup>54</sup>

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53 Jones, George, *Sketches of naval life with notices of men, manners and scenery on the shores of the Mediterranean in a series of letters from the Brandywine and Constitution frigates. By a "civilian"* (New-Haven, Howe, 1829), ii, 29.

54 Quoted by Larrabee, *Hellas Observed*, 89, from *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 20 October 1827.



# 13. The Last Days of Ottoman Athens

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When Reschid's army reoccupied the Acropolis on 7 June 1827, the Ottoman Government planned that their stay would be permanent. They appointed Omer Pasha as voivode (governor) of the two provinces of Attica and Negropont (modern Euboea), with Youssouf as the local bey (deputy governor) in Athens, plus a *cadi* (judge), a *disdar* (military commander of the Acropolis) and an imam (Muslim religious leader). The first *disdar* was Şehla (the 'cross-eyed') Ibrahim Pasha, but he was soon replaced by Osman Agha, a major in the reformed Ottoman army. The garrison consisted of five hundred and forty-four men, both infantry and cavalry.<sup>1</sup>

For a time almost the only inhabitants of Athens were the Ottoman officials and army but gradually the Greek population drifted back, and in 1828 most of the Ottoman military forces were withdrawn north to take part in a war that had broken out between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. In 1831, the garrison was thought to consist of one hundred and forty men, mostly Albanians, not much larger than it had been in 1821 at the outbreak of the Revolution.<sup>2</sup> With artillery batteries mounted on the Hill of Philopappos, which was now surrounded by a defensive ditch, as well as on the Acropolis, the Ottoman forces were able to dominate the town and re-impose the pre-1821 normality.<sup>3</sup>

In prolonged negotiations among the powers for a settlement, it was decided that the province of Attica, including Athens, should become

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- 1 Noted by Ilicak, 'Revolutionary Athens', 15, from Ottoman archives.
  - 2 Edward J. Dawkins, the British Representative, to Foreign Office, 3 February 1831, from Nauplia, Kew FO 32/20, 31.
  - 3 Röser, Jacob von, *Tagebuch meiner Reise nach Griechenland. in die Türkei, nach Aegypten und Syrien, im Jahre 1834 bis 1835* (Mergentheim: by subscription, 1836), 97.

part of the new state. Although the Treaty of London included a face-saving device for maintaining a nominal Ottoman suzerainty, this was a clear interference in the affairs of a foreign country, contrary to one of the provisions of the post-Westphalian system of European nation states. And it was yet another insulting demonstration of the non-European status of the Ottoman Empire, as the Ottoman leadership at once pointed out.<sup>4</sup>

But even after the Ottoman Government was induced to give grudging consent to a plan to tolerate a peace settlement involving some measure of internal autonomy, the Ottoman army was in no hurry to leave Athens. Sometimes it was said that the new war with Russia nullified the treaties and agreements to which Russia had been a party. Later it was claimed that Ottoman claims for financial compensation for lands and properties near Thebes, part of a buying-out of long-established Muslims and the sources of income of many of their mosques ('vacoufs') had not been settled.<sup>5</sup> An area comprising the Peloponnese and some islands became a *de facto* state, with its capital in Nauplia, but no peace had been agreed and the frontiers were not settled.

Western visitors, including artists, authors, architects, and military and naval men had begun to visit to Athens again in small numbers after the fighting ended in May 1827, and were soon again an established community centred on a hotel run by Pierre Gaspary, who doubled as French consul and *de facto* representative of the interests of the provisional government of Greece. And, as in pre-Revolution days, the Ottoman authorities gave the western visitors every welcome. In August 1832, Bey Youssouf, seated with a white greyhound at his feet, and attended by twenty silent and armed personal slaves, honoured the young French poet Alphonse de Lamartine with tobacco served in amber pipes decorated with silk ribbons and with coffee provided in tiny china cups basketted in silver filigree thread.<sup>6</sup> As had been a custom for as long as anyone could remember, when the bey heard that an

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4 Discussed by Chesney, Colonel R.A., *The Russo-Turkish campaigns of 1828 and 1829: with a view of the present state of affairs in the East*, 3rd ed. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1854), 7, with quotations from the reports of official Ottoman reactions at 13–15.

5 Reports of the negotiations for the Ottoman forces to leave Athens and Attica, with some letters from the Ottoman side, in Kew FO 32/36.

6 Lamartine, i, 86. Another description of the courtesies in Trant, 260.

important visitor had arrived at the borders of his jurisdiction, he sent a man with a horse to welcome his guest. Variouslly referred to by western visitors as Seyktar and Selictar, Youssouf was the cousin, sword-bearer, and deputy in Athens of Pasha Omar in Negropont.

Lamartine also met Georg Gropius, the Austrian consul, who had now lived in Athens for thirty-two years, again welcoming visitors and showing them round the ancient sites as he had done before the Revolution. He had memories of Byron and of happy days, as well of the sieges of the Acropolis in 1821 and 1826–1827, in which his interventions had saved many lives. A picture of the meeting between Lamartine, accompanied by his wife and sick daughter Julia, and Gropius and his local family that took place at his consular house, was included in a near contemporary translation of Lamartine's book, as shown as Figure 13.1.

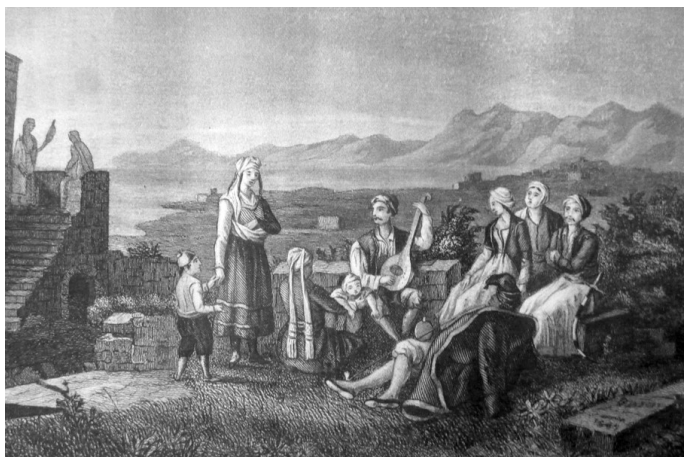


Figure 13.1. 'M<sup>r</sup> de Lamartine with the Greek Family of M<sup>r</sup> Gropius'. Engraving.<sup>7</sup>

Lamartine, already famous in France as a poet and politician, claimed to be the new Byron.<sup>8</sup> And he sympathized with Gropius who maintained that Byron had been unfair to him in the successive editions of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, protesting that he had never 'profaned' the scholarly

7 *Travels in the Holy Land; or, a visit to the scenes of our Redeemer's life by Alphonse de Lamartine, in 1832–1833. Translated from the original Paris edition by Robert Huish* (London: printed [for] William Wright, [n.d.], [1837]), opposite 92. No attribution given.

8 'c'était moi, j'étais lui'. In his *Dernier Chant de Childe Harold* published in 1827, iv, 8.

work in recovering knowledge of antiquity by becoming a dealer in antiquities.<sup>9</sup> Whether he had forgotten his earlier life or was simply re-inventing himself for new times, the documents show that before the Revolution he had been both an agent and a dealer; that he had lost clients whom he tried to deceive; and that he had made the arrangements for many antiquities to be exported to collectors, including a marble foot broken from a metope from the Parthenon.<sup>10</sup>

When in 1830, three years after the 1827 surrender, western visitors were again allowed into the Acropolis, they had to be accompanied by Youssouf's guards and were required to keep to set routes.<sup>11</sup> Bey Youssouf refused entry to any woman not wearing a veil, a condition that at least one western woman refused.<sup>12</sup> Muslim men were admitted only if they wore a turban, an item of dress that was now emerging as an external marker of Muslim identity although turbans of a kind had been worn by Orthodox Greeks before the Revolution, and were being replaced across the Ottoman territories by the fez.<sup>13</sup> Youssouf, who spoke fluent Greek and some Italian but not Turkish, may have been a Muslim born in the territory that was to become part of independent Greece, one of many for whom their previous identity was no longer an option.<sup>14</sup>

Youssouf reintroduced the Ottoman practices that had helped to stoke resentment before the Revolution of 1821. In 1832, having monopolized

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9 'M.Gropius ne rendait point offense pour offense à la mémoire du grand poète; il s'affligeait seulement que son nom eût été traîné par lui d'édition en édition, et livré à la rancune des fanatiques ignorants de l'antiquité; mais il n'a pas voulu se justifier, et quand on est sur lieux, témoin des efforts 'constants que fait cet homme distingué pour restituer un mot à une inscription, un fragment; égaré à une statue, ou une forme et une date à un monument, on est sûr d'avance que M. Gropius n'a jamais profané ce qu'il adore, ni fait un vil commerce de la plus noble et de la plus désintéressées des études, l'étude des antiquités'. Lamartine, *Ceuvres complètes de M.A. de Lamartine, nouvelle édition* (Paris: Gosselin and others, 1850), 5, 102.

10 Discussed with plentiful references to contemporary documents, including some in German not previously used in modern accounts, by Bracken, C.P., *Antiquities Acquired. The Spoliation of Greece* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1975), 70, 99–100, 126, 129, and 143–53.

11 'et suivre machinalement', Lacour, 173.

12 Lacour, 173. She is noted as 'Mlle D'.

13 The requirement for visitors is mentioned by Michaud and Poujoulat, i, 104. The changes to headgear were among the reforms brought in by the Ottoman Government after the Revolution.

14 His lack of Turkish emerges from the remark of Gauttier d'Arc, 121. He was also a noted drinker of rum. The bey is mentioned under his various names, by Trant, 274; Frankland, i, 300; Lacour, 173; and in the manuscript correspondence of Dawkins, the British representative, at Kew.



the supply of food to the Greek food shops, he demanded 18 paras an 'oke' for beans, and when the representative of the Greek shopkeepers said they could only pay fourteen, he was knocked down by one of the guards and died next day.<sup>15</sup> There followed calls among the Greeks to massacre the Muslims, to set fire to the bey's house, and to start the Revolution again.<sup>16</sup> But Ottoman forces were on hand and Ottoman justice was rightly feared. Two French doctors told Edgar Quinet, who visited in 1829, that they had 'witnessed the putting to death of a man first flayed alive and then hung up to a tree by iron hooks fastened in his breast' where he remained alive for a week.<sup>17</sup> And although in the surrender of 1827 the Greek soldiers had been allowed to leave the Acropolis with their lives, any who were later captured faced Ottoman justice and its practice of public display and performance. Lekkas, one of the captains who had led the demand to kill the surrendering Muslims in Athens in 1822, was put to death by staking, the most prolonged and painful of the Ottoman capital punishments.<sup>18</sup>

The older Ottoman traditions of diplomacy by antiquities were also revived. When J.-B. Bory de Saint Vincent, the commander of the scientists and archaeologists who accompanied the French military force, arrived at Phaleron in the autumn of 1829, wearing the uniform of a colonel in the French army and accompanied by two French soldiers, he demanded to be taken to meet the bey or the pasha. If the bim bachi (military equivalent of sergeant major) did not do what he asked, he declared, he would write to the king of France who would write to the sultan who would then cut off his head. Such was the effect of Bory's

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- 15 An oke was roughly equivalent to three pounds in the imperial measures of weight still widely used in the Anglophone world. There were 40 paras to a piastre, 100 piastras to 1.05 British pounds sterling as the exchange rate stood at the time. Noted by Claridge, R.T., *A Guide along the Danube from Vienna to Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, the Morea, the Ionian Islands and Venice ...* (London: F. C. Westley, 1837), a book that reports many prices. After 1833, the official local currency was changed to the drachma, equivalent to about 3 per cent of a pound, which was divided into 100 lepta.
- 16 Letter from Finlay to Sir Richard Church, Athens, 5 December 1832. Church papers BL Add MSS 36566, 44. The actions of Bey Youssouf, who was said to be already rich, were also noted in a letter from Gaspary to Fauvel, from Athens, 14 September 1830, transcribed by Fauvel Clairmont, no. 91, 242.
- 17 Heath, Richard, *Edgar Quinet, his early life and writings ... With portraits, illustrations, etc.* (London: The English and Foreign Philosophical Library, vol. 14. 1877), 113, an account that adds other details to those in Quinet's printed book.
- 18 Finlay, *History*, Tozer edition, vi, 285.

'aplomb' on 'these animals,' as he wrote in a private letter, that he was immediately escorted to meet Youssouf and accorded every courtesy. Next day, according to Bory's account, Youssouf volunteered to let him take away the whole Monument of Lysicrates to be transported to the French ship then at anchor in the Bay of Salamis. He may have known that Napoleon had commissioned a replica of the monument to be built at St Cloud outside Paris.

Bory, more interested in the flora and fauna than in the antiquities, accepted some Hymettan honey instead, but there is no reason to doubt the story. The Ottoman authorities knew that General Maison, the commander-in-chief of the French expeditionary force who was itching to seize Athens, had already established a military observation on the border at Megara in preparation, and was only stopped from invading when the British representatives, including Stratford Canning, insisted that the international mandate, that extended only to the Peloponnese, should not be breached.<sup>19</sup>

The Acropolis had been stocked with enough provisions and ammunition to resist a three-year siege, Youssouf told visitors, and his forces would never give it up 'although the Sultan commanded it'.<sup>20</sup> He told the foreign community that if the Ottoman authorities were forced by the powers to cede Athens, they would destroy the ancient monuments as Reschid had planned to do in 1826.<sup>21</sup>

In other ways too, the conflict sputtered on. When bands of armed irregulars from beyond the still-unsettled northern frontier began to make raids against the returning Greek population, the Ottoman troops did not interfere, effectively conniving at a slow cleansing of the Greek population, little different from what was to be practiced by the expansionist Greek state later in the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> There was talk among the Greek leaders too that territories whose inhabitants had played a bigger role in the Revolution, and which had suffered more than Athens, notably Crete and Samos, ought to be given preference as

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19 The episode is described in Bory de Saint-Vincent, J.B., 'Le Voyage en Grèce (1829)', edited by Adrien Blanchet in *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé Year 1937*, vol. 55, no. 1, 26–46, especially 42–44. Bory seems to have confused the names of the Monument of Lysicrates and the Tower of the Winds.

20 Alcock, Thomas, *Travels in Russia, Persia, Turkey, and Greece, in 1828–9* (London: privately printed, 1831), 179.

21 Alcock, 178.

22 Dawkins, the British Representative, to Foreign Office, 24 February 1831, from Nauplia, Kew FO 32/20, 247.

the boundaries were negotiated. However, in the minds of the Greek Government now established at Nauplia and later at Poros, and of the powers and their publics, Athens was symbolically too valuable to be traded. Lord Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary, who had visited Greece before the Revolution, and who was himself a collector of antiquities and author of a thoughtful book on Hellenic architecture, wrote in his instructions to Sir Robert Gordon, a member of his family, when he was appointed British Ambassador: 'it must in truth be admitted that it may not be very easy to make a Turkish Plenipotentiary fully comprehend what are the real motives, which, in opposition to reasons founded upon geographical, statistical and political considerations, make us desirous of including Attica within the boundary of the Greek State.' But if the British were prepared to be pragmatic, he continued, the French would insist on the symbolic. They would, he declared, 'sacrifice their notions of strict right to the claims of imagination and sentiment'.<sup>23</sup>

In June 1830, the French diplomat Achille Rouen, the local representative of the three powers, personally informed Omar that the powers must insist that the Ottoman Empire remove all its forces from Athens by September of that year.<sup>24</sup> However, two years later, the red flag still fluttered on the Acropolis. At last, in early 1833, the powers decided that they must enforce their will, if necessary by force. A Bavarian military contingent arrived with Otho, the second son of King Ludwig I, who at the London Conference the previous year had been chosen by the great powers to be king of Greece. On 1 April, according to the account of Franz X. von Predl, a Bavarian officer who was present, a contingent of three hundred Bavarian troops were welcomed to Athens by the people.<sup>25</sup> On 4 April talks began with the *disdar*, named as Ali Alendar, who had

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23 Aberdeen to Robert Gordon, 8 April 1829, Kew FO 78/179. His book on Greek architecture was discussed in Chapter 9.

24 Michaud and Poujoulat, i, 87–89.

25 A plain account is given by Predl, F.M.X.A. von, *Erinnerungen aus Griechenland in den Jahren 1832, 1833, 1834, und 1835* (Würzburg: Hellmuth, 1836, and another edition, 1841), 76–95. A sardonic account by Temple, Sir Grenville, Bart., *Travels in Greece and Turkey; being the second part of excursions in the Mediterranean* (London: Saunders and Ottley, 1836), i, 83, who arrived some days later, presents the episode as one of muddle. Finlay, who was present, noted: '12 April. The Bavarian troops took possession of the Acropolis with the usual military order, the Turks quitting in little bands of 10 & 12 with dirty ragged clothes. 2 richly caparisoned horses, a mule & and a man pulling a ram by the horns — a good picture'. Finlay, *Journals and Letters*, i, 67. Slightly different dates, which can be explained by the use of the two calendars, were given by Klenze, quoted in English translation by Hamilakis, *Nation*, 59.

only been in post for about four weeks, and had evidently been sent in order to arrange the transfer. In accordance with Ottoman courtesies, he sent horses to enable the Bavarian commander and his staff to visit the Acropolis as his guests, where he entertained them with coffee and tobacco. A few days later, the Ottoman garrison, of whom there were sixty to seventy men, marched to Negropont (Chalcis) to be taken by sea to an Ottoman-held territory soon afterwards. On 12 April, the Bavarian commander Colonel von Baligard arranged a fork supper ('dejeuner à la fourchette') at a table set up within the Parthenon, which 'Bavarians, Greeks, Turks, Arabs, and many artists and scholars' attended.<sup>26</sup> The three senior Ottoman officers present at this feast are named as Osman Effendi, Ali Alendar, and Dervend Ali, all of whom acknowledged the toast to King Otho.<sup>27</sup> In their handover of the Acropolis, the Ottoman authorities adhered, to the letter, to the conventions of European war and of how European wars were then ended. In military terms, the decisive event had taken place at Negropont some days before, when the Ottoman army, in the presence of British warships ready to fire their heavy cannon at the Ottoman positions, vacated the naval port and the island of Euboea, so making it impossible for the Ottoman Government to supply their troops in Attica by sea.<sup>28</sup>

It seems likely that these pre-surrender events had been choreographed in advance. Indeed, as the negotiating parties knew, imagined futures had already exercised their economic as well as symbolic and political power. As the negotiators knew, much of the land in Attica and Euboea hitherto owned by Muslims had been bought by western speculators, including some prominent philhellenes, who correctly sensed a one-way bet if Athens were to become the capital of a new state.<sup>29</sup> In settling the boundaries of independent Greece, the territory was divided more or less on the line where fighting had ended, each side taking what it held. Exceptionally, in the case of Athens and Attica, the ancient Hellenes and

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26 Predl 83. Many, we can be confident, were officers of warships and Predl mentions Finlay as being in Athens at the time.

27 Predl, 82.

28 Discussed in letters from James Dawkins, the British representative to Greece, who was present, in FO 32/36, notably his letter of 25 April 1833 from Nauplia, at 233.

29 For example: 'The Swedish commissioner is extremely anxious to conclude the sale of property in Attica and Negropont, a fourth of which belongs to himself, but he does not adopt so readily as might have been expected the Presidents' proposal to purchase it in one lot on account of the Greek Government'. Report from Dawkins, the British resident minister from Nauplia, the then capital, 11 August 1830. BL Aberdeen papers, 43, 235, 142.

their modern champions, who had provided much of the justification for the conflict, as well as mobilizing foreign resources, were also given their share.

A junior Bavarian officer, Christoph Neezer, later claimed that he was the first to spend a night on the post-Ottoman Acropolis, using a fallen marble column as a pillow, evidently preferring symbolism to comfort.<sup>30</sup> On a day soon after, all the inhabitants of Athens were invited into the Acropolis to witness the ceremonial hoisting of the new blue and white national flag.<sup>31</sup> Simultaneously, on 3/15 April 1833, by Royal decree a secretariat was established 'to support the excavation and discovery of lost masterpieces of art, to look after the safeguarding of those already existing and to exercise vigilance to ensure that they are not taken abroad.'<sup>32</sup> This was a reference to Elgin and to the many others who had been permitted to remove antiquities in the pre-Revolutionary era.

In the archives at Kew, there are many boxes of contemporary documents that record the international negotiations week by week, year by year, including reports from ambassadors, reports of conversations among diplomats, drafts of possible agreements regarding boundaries, external affairs, defence, constitution, judiciary, army and navy, finances, rights of citizens and of foreigners, amnesties—indeed the whole panoply of what was needed to establish a modern European nation state that had almost no existing institutions to build on. What is striking to anyone familiar with the rapid emergence of the Acropolis as one of the most famous places in the world, is that none of the main negotiating or reporting documents mentions Athens, whether the documents were prepared by the Ottoman Government, the provisional Greek Government, or the governments of European countries. Neither the city nor the Acropolis is mentioned in the Treaty of London of 6 July 1827 nor in the ratification documents.<sup>33</sup> In the collection of official documents published by the provisional government of Greece in 1833, the only reference to Athens is in a Response by Capodistria, the

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30 A paraphrased translation into English from his *Memoirs* (in Greek) published in Athens in 1836, is given by Norre, 202. Another extract translated into English by Fani Mallouchou-Tufano in *Dialogues*, 299. Quotations from other sources in German in Seidl, Wolf, *Bayern in Griechenland. Die Geschichte eines Abenteurers* (Munich: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1965), 96. I have not been able to reconcile the dates mentioned in all cases, partly because the two calendars were in use.

31 Klenze quoted in translation by Hamilakis, *Nation*, 59.

32 Quoted by Amalia Pappa in Tsarouchas, 19.

33 Transcribed with its protocols, in Recueil, 1–14.

president of the provisional government, to James R. Dawkins, the British representative, about the surrender of fortresses on the coast: 'It is not impossible that the feeble garrison of Athens and of two three other places, comprised in the delimitation set out in the first article of the protocol of 22 March follow the examples of the garrisons of western Greece.'<sup>34</sup> As Gropius remarked, almost as an aside, not as a secret but as a fact so well known that it did not need to be pointed out, the proposed Austrian terms had included a draft article: 'All the fortresses in Greece shall be destroyed, and the Greeks shall construct no others without the consent of the Porte. The Acropolis of Athens and perhaps of Corinth shall be excepted: they are not maritime and are of little importance.'<sup>35</sup> Unlike the fortresses that could be supplied by sea, neither Athens nor Corinth could be held for long against a hostile force able to besiege them by land. The geo-military and hydro-military weaknesses of the Acropolis of Athens noted long ago by Thucydides and proclaimed in the stories in stone of the Periclean Parthenon and Acropolis did not need to be explicitly spelled out. At the time of the 1833 handover, the military value of the Acropolis was now almost nil and what form the future symbolic value for the neo-Hellenes would take was still to be decided.<sup>36</sup>

The Bavarian garrison remain encamped on the Acropolis for two years until, on 18 March 1835, it was formally handed over to the civilian control of a Bavarian-led, local Greek National Archaeological Service.<sup>37</sup> On that day, for the first time in more than five millennia, the Acropolis of Athens ceased to be a fortress, and apart from brief periods during the two world wars, it has remained so ever since.<sup>38</sup> It had become heritage.

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34 Response of Capodistria, the president of the provisional government, to Dawkins, the British representative 11/23 May 1829. Recueil 18, my translation.

35 Kew FO 352/22, papers of Stratford Canning. Undated c.1829. The texts of the formal treaties and protocols governing British relations with the Ottoman Empire, the protectorate over the Ionian Islands and their incorporation into Greece, and some internal Ottoman decrees or 'firmans', are usefully collected in a semi-official publication, Xenos, Stephanos, *East and West* (London: Renshaw, 1865). These documents contain no reference to the ancient monuments.

36 To be discussed in Chapter 21.

37 Summarised from the primary sources, with particular attention to what they record about the Parthenon and other ancient monuments by Norre, 119. The Archaeological Service was formally established in 1837.

38 A point made explicitly at the time of the completion of the change by Nolhac, Stanislav de, *La Dalmatie, Les Iles Ioniennes, Athènes et le Mont Athos* (Paris: Plon, 1882), 196.

# 14. The Living

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When, in the late 1820s and early 1830s, the war eventually shuddered to an end, the human price that had been paid was everywhere to be seen. On the mainland, along both sides of the long, jagged, disputed, and still unofficial border that separated the warring parties, all the villages were in ruins.<sup>1</sup> The people were pale and malnourished and, in some places, starving. In 1827, the whitening bones of men and animals were still to be seen almost blocking the pass where the Greek insurgents had destroyed the army of Dramali in 1822. The local people, who showed them off proudly, were however on the edge of starvation, unable to eat the little food they had, a handful of rice a day, without being sick.<sup>2</sup> In 1833, another eyewitness reported that the bones were almost blocking the pass.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 The miseries of the population, including the widows and refugees, are unflinchingly described in 'Notes on Greece in 1829. From *The Journal of an Officer*', in *United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine*, London, 1830, 649–59. For example: 'Wherever you travel you are invariably struck with the emaciated, fever-like appearance of the inhabitants. Whether this arises from the state of filth they exist in, impurity of the air, poverty of food, or what evil cause, is not exactly decided upon'. Other eyewitness accounts include: '[With the single exception of Nauplia] every town and village on the mainland — I do not speak hyperbolically-is in ruins', Macgregor, 17, describing his visit in 1832; and 'Ruined houses, mosques with their tower only standing, streets utterly rased ... great patches of ruin a mile square as if a swarm of locusts had had the power of desolating the works of man as well as those of God'. Disraeli, *The Letters of Benjamin Disraeli*, edited by John Matthews *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982–2014), i, 168, describing Ioannina in October 1830.
  - 2 Barber and Brewer, 355–57. Brewer, an American missionary, who gave them copies of Greek New Testaments, notes the presence of orphans from Athens.
  - 3 Strong, Frederick, Esq, Consul at Athens for their Majesties the Kings of Bavaria and Hanover, *Greece as a kingdom: or, A statistical description of that country, from the arrival of King Otho, in 1833, down to the present time: drawn up from official documents and other authentic sources* (London: Longman, 1842), 88. Strong says the bones were cleared away soon afterwards, and although anything of value is likely to have been taken, one day the remains may be excavated and subjected to analysis.

In May 1828, near Corinth, the Comte de Caraman saw people eating grass.<sup>4</sup> An eye-witness tells of a man who had hanged himself rather than face slow death by starvation.<sup>5</sup> There were reports of cannibalism.<sup>6</sup> In 1834, on the island of Melos, with its strategically valuable harbour that was assigned to Greece, the pre-Revolution town of eight thousand inhabitants was, according to Colonel Temple, 'reduced to twenty sickly cadaverous looking peasants.'<sup>7</sup> A visitor to Crete, which was assigned to the Ottomans, in the same year reckoned that, as a result of cleansing, illnesses, and migration, the population had fallen to half the level of 1821 and that the balance had swung heavily towards the Christians.<sup>8</sup>

In some regions there were scarcely any men to be seen other than the very old. Some survivors had lost limbs, or been blinded, had their tongues cut out or their ears cut off to be sent in bags to Constantinople, to be displayed alongside the severed heads and scattered in the streets as food for the dogs.<sup>9</sup> Nor did fugitives arriving from elsewhere fare much better in a land unable to feed its own people. Near Navarino, John Carne who in 1822 was a visitor passing through in the tradition of the eighteenth-century travellers, described meeting a long, slow-moving column of survivors of the massacres in Chios (Scio) who had reached Greece by sea: 'the women were some of them dreadfully ill, reduced by famine and suffering, yet carrying their infants in their arms; the men were all on foot; the few surviving branches of families, strangers, orphans, and widows, were all blended together in one common bond

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4 Caraman MS, British Library, i, opposite 31.

5 Cornille, 294.

6 Madox, John, *Excursions in the Holy Land, Egypt, Nubia, Syria, &c* (London: Bentley, 1834), i, 193. He reports, at i, 204, that he took away marble from the temple at Sounion.

7 Temple, i, 20. He was one of the few to doubt publicly whether the Revolution had been worth the human cost. A general view was offered by another visitor: '... de la Grèce, dispersés aujourd'hui sur des rochers, ne rappellent rien d'autrefois, et semblent placés là, pour contempler avec apathie, ce sol abandonné de leur vieille patrie. Dans tout cela, je ne vois point la Grèce! cette terre que je parcours n'est que la dépouille des âges accumulée sur un cadavre'. Cornille, Henri, *Souvenirs d'Orient* (Paris: Bertrand, 1836), 194. The relevance of the harbour, discussed in Chapter 5, to understanding the Melian dialogue composed by Thucydides is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

8 Pashley, Robert ... *Travels in Crete* (Cambridge and London; Murray, 1837), ii, 325–26.

9 Noted by many, including Tietz, M. von, Prussian Counsellor of Legation, *St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and Napoli di Romania in 1833 and 1834* (London: Richter, 1836), ii, 295.



of misery. We gave up our horses for the relief of some of the young and delicate girls of the party.’<sup>10</sup>

A heap of whitening bones was to be seen on the island of Sphacteria in the Bay of Navarino, where a troop of Greeks who had sought refuge there had been massacred by the army of Ibrahim.<sup>11</sup> The camels of the Ottoman, and later of the Egyptian, army that had survived and gone feral devoured anything green.<sup>12</sup> Travellers were robbed and kidnapped for ransom.<sup>13</sup> Beggars, many mutilated, crowded the doors of the few churches that remained in use.<sup>14</sup> Most were casualties of the Revolutionary Wars, but others had taken part in the civil wars between Revolutionary factions, whose differences, other than a competition over spoils, contemporaries found it hard to understand. History shows that these are such a common feature of revolutions that they demand to be factored into any attempt at a theory of such convulsions, almost as a model.

From 1827 onwards, as the scale of the humanitarian disaster became known, a large and well-sustained relief effort was mounted by philhellenic societies abroad, mainly in Switzerland and in the United States, who now sent food and clothing when previously they had sent money and armaments. The islands of Aegina and Poros, where the American relief effort was concentrated, were soon packed with refugees, mainly women and children but also mutilated and elderly

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10 Carne, John, *Letters from the East* (London: Colburn, 1826), 498.

11 Michaud, *Correspondence d'Orient*, i, 36. The island had been made famous by Thucydides, as the place where the Athenians cut off a party of the Spartan army; and by Homer, as the named city of Nestor of Pylos, whose Mycenaean ‘palace’, when excavated in the twentieth century, yielded numerous inscriptions written in Linear B.

12 Noted by D’Estourmel, i, 84.

13 Described by Finlay, George, *The Hellenic kingdom and the Greek nation* (London: Murray, 1836), dated from Athens, 25 July 1836. Many examples mentioned in *The Journals and Letters of George Finlay*, edited by J.M. Hussey (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1995), at, for example, i, 46, 50, 72, 97. Among those attacked were Christopher Wordsworth and the French artist Eugène Peytier, to be discussed in Chapter 16, who is said to have lost the use of a hand.

14 ‘The old and infirm, the youthful and deformed, the cripple, the madman, the moping idiot, — in short, all that one ever meets of distortion in shape and wretchedness in condition, among mendicants, was there.’ Sanborn, F.B. ed., *Memoirs of Pliny Earle, M.D.: with extracts from his diary and letters (1830–1892) and selections from his professional writings (1839–1891)* (Boston: Damrell & Upham 1898), 130. He was in Athens in 1839.

men. Jonathan Miller, a former colonel and philhellene, who was put in charge of distributing the supplies from the United States, recorded each distribution of food and clothing, including some to the survivors of the siege of the Acropolis of Athens, in detail.<sup>15</sup> One widow, with five children, whose husband had lost his life there, who was recommended by the Austrian consul Gropius, was given 'half a barrel of bread, and 15 yards of cotton cloth', more than the normal ration but still only short-term relief, especially as she was obliged to share it with others.<sup>16</sup> Miller helped two men whose hands had been cut off and another who had lost both his feet.<sup>17</sup> As he saw the scale of the suffering, the religious faith that he had adopted when he was younger was sorely tested. As he wrote about one party of refugees: 'What were my feelings, when at evening I saw seven women and three children, who escaping from Ibrahim Pacha at Gastouni [part of Elis in western Greece], arrived at this place in such a state of distress and wretchedness as cannot with modesty be described. The three children were as naked as when they were born, and their mothers but a little better off. When I first saw them, I involuntarily raised my hands to Heaven. Alas! said I, why were these wretches brought into existence?'<sup>18</sup>

As late as 1840, when the economy of Greece was developing rapidly, partly as a result of an international loan they received, there were many unfortunates who, as was noted with some disgust by a German tailor who had come to Athens in search of work: 'on all hands crawl about the streets and beset strangers in importunate shoals'.<sup>19</sup> In different parts of Greece, the local people are recorded as gathering limpets on

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15 Miller, Col. Jonathan P., of Vermont, *The condition of Greece, in 1827 and 1828; being an exposition of the poverty, distress, and misery, to which the inhabitants have been reduced by the destruction of their towns and villages and the ravages of their country, by a merciless Turkish foe ... As contained in his journal, kept by order of the Executive Greek Committee of the city of New-York; commencing with his departure from that place in the ship Chancellor, March, 1827, and terminating with his return in May, 1828; during which time he visited Greece, and acted as principal agent in the distribution of the several cargoes of clothing and provisions sent from the United States to the old men, women, children, and non-combatants of Greece; Embellished with plates* (New York: Harper, 1828).

16 Miller, *Condition*, 110.

17 Noted in *ibid.*, 111.

18 *Ibid.*, 46.

19 Holthaus, *Wanderings of a journeyman tailor through Europe and the East, during the years 1824 to 1840*. By P.D. Holthaus. Tr. from the 3rd German ed. by William Howitt (London: Longman, 1844), 251.

the beaches, snails in the hills, and carrion wherever it could be found, reverting to the hunter-gatherer economy of the first humans during the neolithic age.

Most of the suffering was, however, hidden and unrecorded except in the cold statistics of the census of population compiled after independence. Thousands who had sought shelter in caves in the mountains are thought to have died from illnesses brought on by weakness.<sup>20</sup> Much of the livestock had been seized by the armies and the irregular forces (in modern terms 'militias') or by casual marauders, men who were themselves often on the edge of starvation. It was unusual, one visitor wrote, to see the bullocks without which the hard soil of Attica could not be ploughed, and donkeys and pigs 'seemed quite extinct.'<sup>21</sup> Only the wild dogs, the rats, the scorpions, the snakes, and the scavenging birds thrived, some near the sites of camps or 'where skeletons lay along the shore' or along the routes taken by travellers and the places where they were obliged to stay.<sup>22</sup>

Trying to make sense of what he saw, the English churchman, the Rev. John Hartley, who spent some weeks in the Peloponnese in 1828, was reminded of the biblical *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, quoting: 'We are orphans and fatherless; our mothers are as widows [...] Our necks are under persecution [...] For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up [...] neither can men hear the voice of the cattle: both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled.'<sup>23</sup> Were the prophecies of Ezekiel, the ancient Jewish writer, Hartley also wondered, now being fulfilled in Greece? But if, as he thought, he was witnessing a divine retribution, what were the sins that Divine Providence had chosen this moment to punish? If whole communities were being destroyed or

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20 Described by St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 334–47.

21 Summarised from Heath, Richard, *Edgar Quinet, his early life and writings ... With portraits, illustrations, etc.* (London: The English and Foreign Philosophical Library, vol. 14. 1877), 111.

22 *Ibid.* The dangers from dogs, snakes, and scorpions are noted by the painter Francis Hervé who visited the plain of Argos in the early 1830s.

23 Hartley, Rev. John, *Researches in Greece and the Levant*, 2nd ed. (London: Seeley and Burnside, 1833), 25. Hartley also quotes the descriptions of desolation by Isaiah, and other Old Testament authors.

scattered for the sins of their members, the misery fell on those who had least responsibility for the war. At least two other visitors who published printed accounts of their experiences made the same comparison with the description in Ezekiel.<sup>24</sup>

Hartley was told by Orthodox priests that they were giving absolutions to killers who made death-bed confessions, some men admitting to having killed not only Muslim and Jewish men and women but personal enemies from within their own Orthodox community.<sup>25</sup> George Finlay, a former philhellene who decided to settle in Greece, tells how, when he was researching for his *History of the Greek Revolution*, he was shown round the sites of the killing by the men who had carried them out.<sup>26</sup> Visitors heard of cases where the Muslims had surrendered on terms only to be massacred or enslaved as in Athens in 1822, for example at Salona (ancient and modern Amphissa, near Delphi.<sup>27</sup> According to Ambrosios Phrantzes, an Orthodox priest, one of the earliest historians

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24 'l'enceinte de la ville ressemble à la vallée d'Ezéchiél.' Michaud, *Correspondence d'Orient*, i, 47; and Zambelli, D[omenico], 'Atene nel 1841', in *Giornale arcadico di scienze, lettere ed arti*, 93, 1842, 235.

25 Hartley, 315–16. That the Orthodox priests would grant 'absolution' for a fee was noted by Tietz, von M., Prussian Counsellor of Legation, *St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and Napoli di Romania in 1833 and 1834* (London: Richter, 1836), ii, 287. When the French Roman Catholic churchman, Abbé Pègus, one of many sent to Greece to try to bring the Orthodox Church into the jurisdiction of its Roman Catholic rival, made a list of the differences between the two churches based on his years in the region, he noted that perjury was not a mortal sin when intended to deceive an enemy. 'Ils croient qu'il est permis de tromper son ennemi de quelque manière que ce soit, quand bien même il faudrait se parjurer, et qu'il n'y a pas, en cela, de péché mortel'. Pègus, l'Abbé, *Histoire et phénomènes du volcan et des îles volcaniques de Santorin: suivis d'un coup d'oeil sur l'état moral et religieux de la Grèce moderne composés en 1837 par M. L'abbé Pègus* (Paris: A l'imprimerie Royale, 1842), 525.

26 'murder' and 'murderers' are his words. Finlay, George, *A History of Greece from its Conquest by the Romans to the Present Time, B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864*, 7 vols. edited by H.F. Tozer (Oxford: Clarendon, 1877), vi, 162fn. Finlay, at vi, 192, is also the source of the proverb, 'The moon devoured them' that I quoted without citation in St Clair, William, *That Greece Might Still Be Free* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2008), 1.

27 "We first drove them out of the city into the citadel, and when they surrendered, we sent them, according to the terms of the capitulation, to the villages of the province from whence—" "From whence, what?" Instead of giving a reply, the young chief turned his countenance, and gave a significant motion with his hand, which meant, what he did not wish to express—from whence, contrary to the stipulations, they were sent to the devil'. Perdicaris, *Greece and the Greeks*, i, 159, reporting a conversation in 1837.

of the Revolution who had been an eye-witness of similar events of which he was ashamed, it was a Greek proverb that ‘the moon devoured them.’<sup>28</sup>

Widows and children were to be found in almost every Greek-speaking village. Some families had taken in orphans, but others, who had sold all their possessions in order to redeem their enslaved daughters, had nothing to spare.<sup>29</sup> In many villages, boys aged between fifteen and sixteen were married to girls aged as young as ten or eleven, that is, as soon as they reached menarchy, one effect of which was gradually to restore the gender imbalance brought about by the Revolution.<sup>30</sup> Some girls and boys had turned to prostitution.<sup>31</sup> Others were given help. We hear of ‘an Armenian beauty, who had run away from the Turkish capital and her home, with Mr. L., a gentleman more deeply tinctured with a love of adventure than is usual among the sober sons of Scotia. She was now his bride, speaking just enough English not to be able to disguise her feelings, and with a native accent that made her imperfect sentences still more pleasing.’<sup>32</sup>

At the end of August 1828, ten months after the battle of Navarino, a small French expeditionary force arrived, under the terms of the Treaty of London, to oversee the return of the Egyptian forces to Egypt. When they arrived at the camp of the Egyptian army commanded by Ibrahim, they found girls who had been enslaved at the fall of Missolonghi two years before. The French Government later hung a picture at Versailles of General Maison freeing the slaves, shown as Figure 14.1.

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28 Quoted by Finlay, *Greek Revolution*, i, 184, from Phrantzēs, *Ambrosios, Epitomē Tēs Historias Tēs Anagennētheisēs Hellados* (Athens: Typographeas hē Vitōria tou K. Kastorchē kai syntrophias, 1839–1841), i, 335.

29 Pukler Muskau, le Prince de, *Entre l’Europe et l’Asie ...* (Paris: Werdet, 1840), i, 6.

30 Strong, 12. The young age of brides in classical Athens is noted in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with a discussion of some of the implications, including on the design of the Parthenon frieze.

31 Noted by, for example, Howe, *Letters and Journals*, i, 332. ‘When I think of the miserable lot of those who, deprived of father, mother, brother, or protector, have grown up corrupted, to follow the horrid trade of prostitution ...’

32 Colton, Rev. Walter, late of the United States Navy, *Land and Lee in the Bosphorus and Ægean; or Views of Constantinople and Athens, edited from the notes and manuscripts of the author*, by Rev. Henry T. Cheever (New York: Barnes, 1851), 239.



Figure 14.1. The meeting of the two generals at Navarino in September 1828. Oil painting by Jean-Charles Langlois.<sup>33</sup>

Like many nineteenth-century presentations of war, it shows the women as beautiful actresses, still gorgeously dressed despite the years of siege and starvation, and, as in this case, with hints of nudity that might have reminded learned viewers of ancient statues. Although dozens of girls and women are shown huddled together, none of the enslaved boys can be seen, perhaps as an act of self-censorship by the artist or his patron.

To the dismay of the French, who saw themselves as liberators, some of the young women and girls refused to be released. Even among those who knew the name of the town or village where they had previously lived, and had relatives alive, preferred the comparative security of their situation as concubines and chose to accompany their masters as the army returned to Egypt in merchant vessels arranged by the powers.<sup>34</sup> Nor were such cases isolated. The heroic picture does

33 Wikimedia Commons from the Collections du château de Versailles, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrevue\\_du\\_g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral\\_Maison\\_et\\_d%27Ibrahim\\_Pacha,\\_%C3%A0\\_Navarin,\\_septembre\\_1828\\_\(d%C3%A9tail\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrevue_du_g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral_Maison_et_d%27Ibrahim_Pacha,_%C3%A0_Navarin,_septembre_1828_(d%C3%A9tail).jpg). A fine engraving, which took the image in monochrome to a wider viewership, was included in *Galerias historiques de Versailles*, a large book that celebrated the military history of France, published, as part of a royalist mythologizing of the Napoleonic 'heritage', in 1838.

34 Mangear, J-s, *Souvenirs de la Morée* (Paris: Igonette, 1830), 27. The same observation was made by Marchebeus, *Voyage de Paris à Constantinople par bateau à vapeur nouvel*

not show the brothels of 'courtesans' established at the camps and seaports frequented by the French soldiers and sailors that provided another alternative.<sup>35</sup>

Horried at what they had seen of Ibrahim's camp, with its filth, insects, dysentery, ophthalmia, snakes and scorpions, the French force was delighted at the prospect of some real soldiering, and attacked the fortress of Navarino itself and then the other coastal fortresses of Coron and Modon, which were still in Ottoman hands and which provided possible bases to which troops could be sent and a re-conquest mounted, but they surrendered with only a token show of resistance. The two castles that commanded the western entrance to the Gulf of Corinth did resist but were soon overcome. The French general and his troops were keen to march on the Acropolis of Athens, but his orders were countermanded when he was reminded by the British officers who were, in the theatre of operations in effect, members of his staff, that the Treaty did not permit him to operate outside the Peloponnese.<sup>36</sup>

In 1828, the European consuls in Alexandria in Egypt had also been set the task of buying back those who had been enslaved in the capture of Missolonghi, many of whom had been sold at low prices by the Ottoman soldiers to dealers at Preveza two years before.<sup>37</sup> There is a record of about one hundred and fifty being redeemed and brought

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*itinéraire orné de vues et vignettes sur acier, avec tableaux indiquant les lieux desservis par les paquebots à vapeur, sur la Méditerranée, l'Adriatique et le Danube, le prix des places et des marchandises, les distances et la valeur des monnaies* par Marchebeus, architecte du gouvernement (Paris: Artus, 1839), 76, although he is reporting accounts of others whom he met later.

- 35 Michaud and Poujoulat, *Correspondance d'Orient 1830–31* par M Michaud de l'Academie Française et M Poujoulat (Paris: Ducollet, 1833–1835), i, 51. Michaud also discusses, in his account of Constantinople and its slave markets, how Ottoman masters usually treated their slaves with kindness, as family members, with many later freed and some promoted to high positions, as is noted later in the chapter, including the case of an enslaved woman from Lesbos who was reluctant to face the ceremony of again becoming a Christian.
- 36 Summarized from the plain log-book style account of the junior French officer Duheume, M.A., Capitaine au 58<sup>e</sup> Régiment d'Infanterie de ligne, *Souvenirs de la Morée pour servir à l'histoire de l'Expédition Française en 1828–1829* (Paris: Anselin, 1833).
- 37 Kew FO 78/164, 117. We see the same patterns when the revolutionaries captured a town, as, for example, was reported by the Italian philhellene Brengeri who was at Corinth in 1822: 'Turkish girls and women were publicly sold for thirty or forty piastres each, according to their age or beauty'. Brengeri, 'Adventures of a foreigner in Greece no III', in *The London Magazine*, NS VI, September to December 1826, 179.

back by ship, and of searches being made 'for slaves of Christian parents' in the harems of Cairo.<sup>38</sup>

At Athens in 1841 Hans Christian Andersen noticed a few black-skinned families who had been slaves during the Ottoman period, now living in poverty.<sup>39</sup> Their links with the African societies from whom they had been taken before the Revolution, never strong, had long since been irreparably broken. The same may be said of the women and girls who had been enslaved when the Greek Revolutionaries had captured a town, for example, as was reported by the Italian philhellene Brengeri who was at Corinth in 1822: 'Turkish girls and women were publicly sold for thirty or forty piastres each, according to their age or beauty'.<sup>40</sup>

A picture of the slave market in Constantinople composed from sketches made during a visit made in 1834, when the numbers sold had reverted to pre-Revolution levels, is given as Figure 14.2

When the Greek Revolution finally ended, the turnover of the slave markets at Constantinople, Smyrna, and Alexandria reverted to more normal levels, the women and boys now supplied from wars and uprisings in the wider Middle East, as well as by slave traders from Africa for black-skinned people, and from Georgia and Circassia for white-skinned people.<sup>41</sup> The chaplain of an American warship, who was shown round by an Armenian guide at some time in the late 1830s, described a veiled girl from Georgia, aged about fifteen, who was dressed in an 'extremely thin and pliant robe' that showed off her body underneath. The dealer had, it was reported, taught her how to perform in front of potential customers.<sup>42</sup>

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38 Kew FO 78/166, 402, 409. Richard Church, the commander-in-chief of the Greek army, who led the forces that recaptured Missolonghi, wrote in 1830 of the 'happy meeting of women and children restored to their fathers, to their husbands, to their brothers, and to their homes after nine years of desolation'. Church, Sir Richard, *Observations on an eligible line of frontier for Greece as an independent state* (London: Ridgway, 1830), 21.

39 Andersen, H.C., *A poet's bazaar / from the Danish of Hans Christian Andersen, by Charles Beckwith* (London: Bentley, 3 vols, 1846), ii, 171.

40 Brengeri, 'Adventures of a foreigner in Greece no III', 179.

41 An eye-witness description of the Constantinople slave market in 1835, with comments on how many of the senior members of the Ottoman Government had themselves been slaves, is given by the much-travelled Elliott, C.B., M.A. F.R.S., Vicar of Godalmin (late of Bengal Service), *Travels in the Three Great Empires of Austria, Russia, and Turkey* (London: Bentley, 1838), i, 381–84.

42 Noted by Rev Walter Colton in the various editions of his book, such as *Land and Lee*, 79. The full titles of the various editions are given in the Bibliography.





Figure 14.2. 'The Aurut Bazaar, or Slave Market'. Steel engraving.<sup>43</sup>

Although according to an estimate, in the mid-eighteenth century, around 20,000 persons a year had passed through the market in Constantinople alone, only occasionally do the enslaved momentarily emerge from the historical records as individuals.<sup>44</sup> As far as the Greek Revolution is concerned, Robert Pashley, who explored Crete in 1833, met the daughter of the leader ('proedros') in a remote village who had been captured and enslaved during the war, sold through the slave market at Alexandria, but been formally given her freedom after twelve years, and who now spoke both Turkish and Arabic as well as her native Greek.<sup>45</sup> Whether she was voluntarily manumitted, as seems likely, is not known, but for those whose only hope was to be redeemed, the prices were high. According to Richard Claridge, who visited the Constantinople slave market in 1836, young black boys and girls could at that time be obtained for the equivalent of £10 to £20 each, much

43 Allom and Walsh, *Constantinople and the Scenery of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, Illustrated in a Series of Drawings from Nature by Thomas Allom. with Descriptions of the Plates by the Rev. Robert Walsh, L.L.D., Chaplain to the British Embassy at the Ottoman Porte* (London: Fisher, 1838), plate i, 37.

44 Baltimore, Lord, *A tour to the East, in the years 1763 and 1764, with remarks on the city of Constantinople and the Turks; also select pieces of Oriental wit, poetry and wisdom* (London: printed by Richardson and Clark, 1767), 74–75.

45 Pashley, Robert Esq., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, *Travels in Crete* (Cambridge: Pitt Press, and London; Murray, 1837), i, 66.

the same price as for a luxury Persian shawl.<sup>46</sup> And, we could add, much lower than the price of a set of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*.<sup>47</sup> White women, Claridge noted, 'are shown in rooms adjoining the bazaar, and sell according to their youth and beauty, at from £20 to £150', prices only affordable by the very rich.<sup>48</sup> In 1824, probably the year during the war when the market was most glutted, girls aged around fifteen years from Greek-speaking Chios and from Psara, another island where the Revolution had been violently suppressed, were on sale at about £30 equivalent, much higher than for black girls from Africa, and passed to new owners.<sup>49</sup> The English medical doctor R.R. Madden had raised a subscription to buy a Greek girl taken in Chios and she was sent home.<sup>50</sup> But, at such prices, only a handful of the hundreds of thousands of women and children who were enslaved during the Revolution could hope to be redeemed. The American travel writer, J.L. Stephens, who visited the slave market in Constantinople in 1835, was surprised to find how easy it was to evade the rule that only Muslims were permitted to buy slaves by employing a middle-man. Since only black women, whom he assumed, through racist eyes, suffered less than whites, were at that time available, and since some openly flirted, ('displayed and performed'), in hopes of being bought by a wealthy buyer, he relied on a guide as he compiled his description of the boom days of the Greek Revolution when 'during the whole of that dreadful struggle, every day presented new horrors; new captives were brought in, the men

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46 Claridge, R.T., *A Guide along the Danube from Vienna to Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, the Morea, the Ionian Islands and Venice ...* (London: F. C. Westley, 1837), 154. Other prices that are largely consistent with those quoted by Claridge, gathered from a variety of first-hand accounts of about this time, are given by Knight, *Outlines*, 294. They all show white-skinned slaves as priced at around three times the price of the black-skinned, and children as extremely cheap.

47 In 1841 in London a set of all five volumes of the first edition was priced at £26/5/0, Bohn Catalogue 21881; the second edition in four volumes was priced at £10/10/0. Bohn, 2317.

48 Claridge, 154.

49 Madden, R.R., Esq. M.R.C.S., *Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, and Palestine, in 1824, 1825, 1826, and 1827* (London: Colburn, 1829), i, 2 and 6. Stratford Canning's visit to Psara and account of what he saw are described in Chapter 17.

50 The translation of an alleged autobiography of an enslaved woman who was redeemed by foreign funds and managed to make her way back to Greece is given by the philhellene Villeneuve, 257. Although heavily edited and, to an extent adapted to the genre and style of a traditional fiction, it seems to contain plausible features.

raving, struggling, and swearing eternal vengeance against the Turks, and the women shrieking distractedly in the agony of a separation [...] with hundreds of young girls, with tears streaming down their cheeks, and bursting hearts [...] sold to the unhallowed embraces of the Turks for a few [United States] dollars a head.<sup>51</sup> Few mentioned the part of the market where slaves who were 'blind, lame, and deformed; some crawling about on crutches. others unable to use their distorted limbs' were sold in job lots 'for a mere trifle' to speculators who hoped to be able to find some use for one or two.<sup>52</sup>

In Greece, Samuel Gridley Howe, who was helping to arrange a relief effort, met some of the returnees redeemed from Egypt when they were disembarked at the island of Poros in December 1828. In listening to their stories, it was evident to him that many had lost all recollection of where they had come from. As he wrote: 'Some had nearly lost the uses of their native language, others were mutilated, others had their ankles worn sore by chains; all had suffered, all were wan-looking and discoloured, some were blind, many were still suffering from ophthalmia and other eye diseases.'<sup>53</sup> It was however already becoming clear that many members of the Ottoman leaderships wanted to ameliorate the traditional Muslim laws and customs of slavery as punishment. But also, as was noted by many at the time, slavery did not necessarily imply ill-treatment. Of the women and children taken to Egypt, many were reported to have been bought by 'local grandees' as acts of humanitarianism.<sup>54</sup>

Individuals occasionally appear in the accounts, although seldom for more than a moment or in stories recorded by visitors. In 1857, for

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51 Stephens, J.L., *Incidents of travel in Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland by the author of "Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land." with a map and engravings. In two volumes, fifth edition* (New York, Harper & brothers, 1838), i, 238.

52 Skene, Felicia, *Wayfaring Sketches among the Greeks and Turks, and the Shores of the Danube. By a Seven Year's Resident in Greece* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857), 199–200. Skene's visit was in 1845. A note in the book says that the market had since been closed.

53 Howe, *Letters and Journals*, i, 311–12.

54 See the documents transcribed in Appendix F. Even during the massacres and enslavements at Chios in 1822, some of the Ottoman leaders who had unleashed the terror had attempted to mitigate its effects. For example Strangford to Londonderry, dated 10 May 1822: 'The Captain pasha has redeemed with his own money a vast number of the wretched women and children whom the Turkish troops had sold as slaves. This act of generous humanity is perfectly characteristic of this most excellent man'. Kew FO 78/108 29.

example, the American travel writer Bayard Taylor met 'George', who had been sent to Egypt as a boy slave with his mother and sisters after his father had been killed at Missolonghi, and who had managed to return home after seven years and was now working in Greece as a courier.<sup>55</sup> In 1850, James Henry Skene, who had lived in the Ottoman territories and in Greece for twenty years and knew some of the languages, met a man at Vidin in present-day Bulgaria who had been enslaved at the age of five after the massacres in Chios in 1822. The man remembered how, as a child, he and his two sisters, along with many other children, were thrown into hampers, strapped to horses, and taken to Constantinople. When the master who had bought him died, he became the property of the sultan and was made to serve in the navy, but when Skene met him he had a good position with the local pasha, for whom he had great respect, and had no wish to go back to Chios.<sup>56</sup>

The Ottoman system that had produced a Reschid still turned enslaved boys of Christian parentage into loyal Muslim military commanders. In 1855, Fustel de Coulanges, already famous as historian and topographer, who was then making a survey of the island of Chios, reported that, on an Egyptian warship that was carrying troops to the Crimean war, both the captain and the colonel of the embarked regiment had been born in Chios, sold in Alexandria, and were now holding high positions in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>57</sup>

Among many other former slaves was the bey of Tunis. It was said that Ibrahim Edhem Pasha, grand vizier in the 1870s, had been bought as a boy in the slave market at Smyrna after the suppression of the Revolution in Chios, an episode that he himself could not remember and that he may have attempted to disown. There was nothing unusual

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55 Taylor, Bayard, *Travels in Greece and Russia with an excursion to Crete* (New York: Putnam, 1859), 35. There is no mention of what happened to his mother and sisters.

56 Skene, *Frontier Lands*, i, 251. A thoughtful description of the Constantinople slave market in 1835, with comments on how many of the senior members of the Ottoman Government at that time had themselves been slaves, is given by Elliott, C.B., M.A. F.R.S., Vicar of Godalmin (late of Bengal Service), *Travels in the Three Great Empires of Austria, Russia, and Turkey* (London: Bentley, 1838), i, 381–84.

57 Coulanges, Fustel de, 'Mémoire sur l'Île de Chio', *Archives des Missions scientifiques et littéraires ... Tome V* (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1856), 641. De Coulanges reported that the pre-Revolution order in Chios had been restored, including amity between the Christians and Muslims, with the help of a successful policy of actively forgetting the events of 1822.

about such a transformation in fortune under Ottoman law and custom, nor in the reputation of many of the leaders, which seems to have been well-deserved, for treating their slaves with kindness and care. But we can see too that a summary on-the-spot decision by an Ottoman soldier, based on the absence of bodily hair implying that a boy was under fourteen years of age and therefore qualified to be enslaved rather than put to death, became increasingly hard to justify in the increasingly 'European' country that the leadership of the Ottoman Empire wished to become.

We hear of a prominent Greek man from Athens, not named, who after years of searching managed to locate and redeem his mother and his sisters, except for one sister who had already been bought by, and was now married to, an Italian merchant of Salonika.<sup>58</sup> A French philhellene officer, in a matter-of-fact account of his experiences in Greece, printed a translation of an alleged autobiography of a woman, whose husband had been put to death at Tripolitza, who was sold as a slave at Smyrna, taken to Egypt, redeemed by foreign funds and managed to make her way back to Greece. Although to an extent adapted to the style of a traditional fiction, her account seems to contain plausible features.<sup>59</sup> Sir Richard Church, who led the forces that recaptured Missolonghi in one of the last campaigns of the war, in a pamphlet published in 1830 that was, partly at least, intended to help rehabilitate his reputation after the disaster at Athens in 1827, wrote of the 'happy meeting of women and children restored to their fathers, to their husbands, to their brothers, and to their homes after nine years of desolation'.<sup>60</sup> Church declared too that the Ottoman forces, having been treated in their defeat in accordance with the European military customs of war, were as pleased as if they were sitting down to tea after a game of village cricket in England. Rather than unexpectedly being permitted to remain alive in a war marked by attempts at extermination, the soldiers, Church wrote, stretching plausibility further, conceded that their former enemies deserved to win: 'having heard the solemn and hearty thanks offered

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58 Morris, i, 47.

59 Villeneuve, M. Eugène de, *Capitaine de Cavalerie dans l'Armée Hellénique, Journal fait en Grèce pendant les Années 1825 et 1826* (Brussels: Tarlier 1827), 257–75.

60 Church, Sir Richard, *Observations on an eligible line of frontier for Greece as an independent state* (London: Ridgway, 1830), 21.

up to the Almighty, and even the fierce Albanians, on leaving the country in which they had been fairly overcome in the field, partaking of the bread of their conquerors and embracing them gratefully for the good treatment they had received at their hands, and declaring that the Greeks had a right to the enjoy the country they had so fairly won'.<sup>61</sup>

Occasional stories of slaves returning home, however, although vaguely reassuring to some as examples of an indomitable spirit, cannot disguise the sheer scale of the norm to which they are rare exceptions. Estimates made in 1828 showed the changes in population that had occurred since 1821 according to the old, now replaced, identity categories. In the Peloponnese, out of a pre-war population of 458,000 Christians and 42,750 Muslims, there were now only about 400,000 Christians and no Muslims apart from 'some isolated individuals'.<sup>62</sup> In suppressing the revolution in Chios (Scio) in 1822, the Ottoman forces were estimated to have killed 23,000 men, and captured 47,000 women and children, most of whom were sold through the slave markets.<sup>63</sup> The Orthodox population of the island was estimated to have fallen from around 120,000 to 20,000.<sup>64</sup> The number of Muslims, 1,000 before the war, had risen to 8,000.<sup>65</sup>

But the Greek Revolution had its individual winners as well as its losers. In many parts of Greece were warlords who had become rich by seizing the lands, houses, animals, and moveable goods of the Muslims who had now gone as a result of the cleansings.<sup>66</sup> Although in the Peloponnese, the most extreme case, the Muslims had been in the minority, they had owned twice as much land as the Christians, all of which was taken over by the Revolutionaries.<sup>67</sup>

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61 *Observations*, 21. Although such stories cry out to be disbelieved, there is evidence, to be discussed in Chapter 18, that, under the leadership of Reschid, who was now grand vizier, a change had occurred.

62 Kew FO 78/167, opposite 153.

63 Kew, FO 352/22, file 3.

64 See Prousis, Theophilus C., *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval, 1815–1830* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2008), who made use of primary evidence, 144.

65 Kew FO 78/167, opposite 153.

66 Examples of men, such as Colocotronos and Gouras, who had become rich are given by Makriyannis, 6, 96–97.

67 This emerges from the survey made in 1828 quoted in tabular form by Dalègre, Joëlle, *Grecs et Ottomans, 1453–1953: de la chute de Constantinople à la disparition de l'empire ottoman* (Paris: Harmattan, 2002), 62.

Most of the enslaved had no alternative but to make the best of their new situation. All over the Ottoman Empire, women, girls, and boys who had been seized after their male relatives had been killed in the fighting or put to death after capture, lived in alien communities speaking alien languages, geographically far from their birthplaces with which they had no contact. We find a few accepting their fate, some thriving, and a handful reaching high office, but the majority of those who had any memory of their former state, we may be confident, were condemned to lifetimes of hopelessness however well they were treated in their new lives.

In the long negotiations for Greek independence, some facts could be altered by decision. Armies could withdraw from some locations and occupy others. Frontiers and maps could be redrawn, amnesties given, claims for financial compensation considered, money from loans and grants devoted both to immediate relief and to longer-term reconstruction, exports of antiquities refused or permitted, and new identities forged. What could not be reversed, except for occasional exceptions, was the displacement of the enslaved. Even if a general repatriation had been suggested, as the mountains of diplomatic documents suggest that it never was, such a policy would have been impossible to carry out. As a group, the enslaved of the Greek Revolution, with only a handful of exceptions, largely disappeared from the recorded history, although not from the genetic makeup of the Balkans and Middle East. In the national liberation histories of Greece, they were scarcely mentioned, and, unlike the men who were killed and the women who took their own lives, they were seldom shown or memorialized in the visual presentations of the Revolution. Like the mosques, the minarets, and the Muslim graves, they were cleansed from the national story.

Of the total Greek-speaking Orthodox Christian population of the Ottoman Empire before the Revolution, only about one third lived in the territories that were to be assigned to independent Greece.<sup>68</sup> In the three years of 1834, 1835, and 1836, moreover, 60,000 people emigrated from newly independent Greece, many of them to territories still under Ottoman rule.<sup>69</sup> There was, we can be confident, a range of motives and pressures, but this and other population movement contributed to

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68 Clogg, *Concise History*, 46.

69 Noted by, for example, Slade, Adolphus, *Turkey, Greece And Malta* (London: Sauders and Otley, 1837), i, 253.

turning Greece into a culturally uniform country. At the same time many immigrants arrived from Constantinople and from Europe, some as refugees but others as colonists and investors hoping to take advantage of new opportunities. In area and population Greece was the smallest of the European kingdoms, an enclave, 'the last fastness of the European world', as was noted at the time.<sup>70</sup>

Nor was there any certainty, despite the international guarantees, that the Ottoman Empire, with its immense resources, and now a state that was also modernising fast, would not at some future crisis reconquer the breakaway territories. As Youssouf Bey, who was in command in Athens in 1830, told an English visitor: 'God willing, as soon as we have recovered from the last war, we will conquer Greece again.'<sup>71</sup> And indeed, sixty-seven years later, Athens lay at the mercy of a victorious Ottoman army that advanced to within three days' march before an armistice was hurriedly patched together by the European powers.<sup>72</sup>

And would the new nation state itself be content with boundaries that excluded much of the territory that in ancient times had been among the heartlands of Hellas? Were the maps of ancient Hellas that mainly showed the classical moment in the 5th century BCE, as fixed as if it were set in marble, to be the arbiters of the fate of the living people of the present? Were the ancient Hellenes to be allowed to cleanse or resettle communities of Orthodox and Muslim, and the others such as the Albanian-speakers and the nomadic Vlachs whose ancestors had been brought there by the vagaries of a long past and had little sense of belonging in the nation that wanted to assimilate them?

Nor did the formerly dominant Orthodox identity, with its own real and mythographised pasts and its aspired-to futures, disappear when overlaid with nationalism. Had not Admiral Cochrane in urging the Greek forces to relieve the siege of Athens in 1827 declared that he

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70 The phrase used by Lord Carnarvon who visited in 1839. Carnarvon, Earl of, *Reminiscences of Athens and the Morea, extracts from a journal of travels in Greece in 1839* (London: Murray, 1869), 38.

71 Trant, 276.

72 In the 'Thirty Days War' between Greece and Turkey, 18 April to 18 May 1897, whose contradictions, such as Allied forces defending Ottoman Crete against the Greeks are notably described by Nevinson, Henry W., *Scenes in the Thirty Days War between Greece and Turkey* (London: Dent, 1897).



wanted to plant the national flag on the church of the Holy Wisdom (Aghia Sophia) in Constantinople? From the beginning, there are indications of a growing feeling that the whole neo-Hellenic project was a fantasy of philhellenic foreigners, and that those who had fought the Greek Revolution, a war of religion, needed a more contemporary ideology and one more closely related to their more recent identity and experience. As an unnamed Greek literary figure told the visiting British political economist Nassau Senior in 1857: 'We do not consider the Parthenon as our national temple. The Parthenon belongs to an age and to a religion with which we have no sympathy. Our country is the vast territory of which Greek is the language, and the faith of the orthodox Greek church is the religion. Our capital is Constantinople; our national temple is Santa Sophia for nine hundred years the glory of Christendom. As long as that temple, that capital, and that territory are profaned and oppressed by Mussulmans, Greece would be disgraced if she were tranquil.'<sup>73</sup> Already, there was talk of another imagined future, in which Greek independence was the new beginning of an inexorable, perhaps a providentially ordained, historical process that would see Constantinople again become the capital of a new Byzantine Christian Empire, a way of thinking, 'the great idea', that was to lead to the disastrous Greek military invasion of what is now Turkey in 1922, another shift of the geopolitical plates that led to another huge movement of refugees, and forced exchanges of populations.

And, for some western visitors, the peoples of Greece, even in their post-Revolution miseries, were seen through eyes conditioned by immersion in the writings of the ancients. For example, Edgar Quinet, who in Athens during the last days of Ottoman rule noted that the widows in their black veils reminded him of the *Suppliants* in the play by Euripides of that name. As he declared, he regarded himself as fortunate, ('une bonne fortune'), to be seeing Athens in the same state as it had been in 480 and 479 BCE immediately after it had been destroyed by the army of Xerxes.<sup>74</sup> It was a description in a fictional drama set in a mythic age that Quinet recalled, not an eye-witness account, but

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<sup>73</sup> Senior. Nassau W., *A Journal kept in Turkey and Greece in the autumn of 1857, and the beginning of 1858* (London: Longman, 1859), 358. The literary figure is only identified as 'Zeta'.

<sup>74</sup> Quinet, 368.

his remark, which readers may have thought was treating real people with cold detachment, reminds us that wars in the classical period were conducted in accordance with norms that are not dissimilar and whose indirect victims were seldom given more than a passing mention in the ancient historiographical tradition. It was the orator Demosthenes, whose works owe their survival more to the fact that they could be used to teach the arts of rhetoric than to their content, who described a journey from Athens to Delphi through the territory of the city of Phocis where he saw 'homesteads levelled with the ground, cities stripped of their defensive walls, a countryside all emptied of its young men; only women, a few small children, and old men stricken with misery.'<sup>75</sup> And what Quinet may not have fully appreciated is that *The Suppliants* was an intervention in an actual debate that took place in classical Athens about how refugees and other defenceless victims of war should be treated in a state that prided itself on its unique progress from brutishness to civilization.<sup>76</sup>

There was a more direct, more reliable, and more hopeful parallel with that time, the recovery of the natural environment after the Revolution. Theodore Aligny, a French artist unusual for his age in picturing the landscape of Attica without buildings or human figures, caught a moment when the vegetation, and especially the olive trees, were rapidly recovering, as reproduced as a detail from a larger composition in Figure 14.3.

On the viewer's right is an olive tree that has been cut down, sprouting back into life with new shoots, a phenomenon that, to the Athenians of the classical era who designed and built the Parthenon, had been adopted as the most potent symbol of the success, the continuity, and the resilience of the ancient city.<sup>77</sup>

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75 Dem. 19 64

76 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. The play contains one of the fullest statements of the progress from brutishness claim.

77 As discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



Figure 14.3. Théodore Caruelle d'Aligny, *Attica Viewed from Mount Pentéli* (1845).  
Etching on ivory China paper.<sup>78</sup>

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78 The Chicago Art Institute, Public Domain, <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/158216/attica-viewed-from-mount-penteli>



# 15. The Dead

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For years after the surrender of the Acropolis to the Ottoman army in June 1827, Athens was a scene of desolation. Apart from the small Ottoman military garrison, there were scarcely any people. The eerie silence, the 'funeral quiet' as one visitor called it, was occasionally broken by the owls 'winging their way over the ruins of the city, and uttering doleful cries, as if wailing for its destruction.'<sup>1</sup> Many of the olive trees had been felled to enable the Ottoman cavalry to operate in corridors in the plain between Athens and Piraeus.<sup>2</sup> In July 1830 a fire that burned for three days destroyed more trees.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from a dozen or so houses built in the European style that belonged to the foreign consuls, such as that of Gropius, it was recorded that 'scarcely a tenth of the houses remain standing.'<sup>4</sup> And they had been

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- 1 Quotation from Trant, 263. An 'almost uninhabited town.' Disraeli, *The Letters of Benjamin Disraeli*, edited by John Matthews *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982–2014), i, 176.
  - 2 John Auldjo, in Athens on 16 April 1833, noted: 'We walked towards Athens, along the old road, and struck into the olive grove, very little of which now remains, it having been destroyed by both Greek and Turk'. Auldjo, John, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople and Some of the Greek Islands* (London: Longman, 1835), 21; But, since we read of the olive groves soon after the ending of the fighting, he may have exaggerated. The link with cavalry operations was noted by, for example, Gringo, Harry [Lieutenant Wise, US Navy], *Scampavias from Gibel Tarek to Stamboul* (New York: Scribner, 1857), 96.
  - 3 Finlay, who was present, *Journals and Letters*, i, 30.
  - 4 Eye-witness descriptions include: 'a collection of narrow streets and winding lanes, half obstructed by heaps of modern ruin.' Faber, Frederick William, *Sights and Thoughts in Foreign Churches and among Foreign Peoples* (London: Rivington, 1842), 580; 'A l'exception de cinq ou six palmiers on encore debout, qui dominant les toits, en ne remarque aucune végétation dans la ville.' Morot, Jean-Baptiste, *Journal De Voyage: Paris a Jérusalem, 1839 Et 1840* (Paris: J. Claye, second edition, 1873), 44. Macgregor, *Sketches in Greece and Turkey* (London: Ridgeway, 1833), 72; 'Almost every house in the city was destroyed ... 'every house roofless', Disraeli writing from Athens, 30 November 1830. Disraeli, *Letters*, i, 175–77. 'every house roofless' ... 'almost uninhabited town', Claridge, 259. 'The houses were mostly

stripped of anything usable. According to the American N.P. ('nosy-parker') Willis, who was in Athens in September 1833, all the houses had been 'pulled down to the very cellars and [were] lying choked in the rubbish [...] The inhabitants thatch over one corner of these wretched and dusty holes with maize-stalks and straw, and live like beasts.'<sup>5</sup> As he wrote: 'Scarce one stone is left upon another.'<sup>6</sup> The only way to move about other than on foot was by crouching with knees up under the chin, on the special saddles of the small Turkish horses used for riding on steep and rocky mountain paths.<sup>7</sup> An Italian periodical, perhaps relying on printed accounts, published an image, shown as Figure 15.1, of a party of western visitors picking their way through the destroyed streets and discovering the people of Athens living in makeshift shelters that they shared with their animals and domestic fowls, and with the rats, a species that had done well out of the war.<sup>8</sup>

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burned or knocked down.' Frankland, Charles Colville, Captain, *Travels to and from Constantinople in 1827 and 1828, or, Personal narrative of a journey from Vienna ... to Constantinople* (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830), i, 302; 'literally a mass of ruins—the inglorious ruins of mud houses and wretched mosques, forming in all quarters such undistinguishable piles, that in going about I was wholly unable to fix upon any peculiarities of streets or buildings by which I might know my way from one part of the capital to another'. Quin, Michael J., *A Steam Voyage down the Danube, with sketches of Hungary, Wallachia, Servia and Turkey, etc.* (London: Bentley, 1835), ii, 199; 'The houses are nearly all in ruins and deserted: a soldier here and there, and one or two men with lemons in the bazar, were all the living objects I met with: our way was generally over heaps of rubbish, and no desolation can be more complete, than that of this city, so dear both to the scholar and artist.' Jones, ii, 29; '[W]hole streets lie prostrate in the dust', Burgess, Rev. Richard, *Greece and the Levant: or, Diary of a summer's excursion in 1834: with epistolary supplements* (London: Longman, 1835), i, 275. Much of Athens had already been in ruins before the surrender: 'The city presents a wretched picture of desolation: its narrow streets are half blockaded by the ruins of its houses, three-fourths of which seem to have been overthrown; and those which still remain, are, with the exception of the residences of the consuls, miserable, tottering hovels, devoid of all comfort or convenience'. Emerson, *Picture of Greece in 1825*, i, 269. Gropius's house was shown as Figure 14.1.

- 5 Willis, N.P., *Pencilings by the Way* (London: second edition, three volumes, Macrone, 1836), ii, 131. The ancient Athenian account of civilization being an advance from living like brutes, but always at risk of slipping back, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
- 6 Willis, *Pencilings*, ii, 131.
- 7 Noted by Willis, *Pencilings*, ii, 129, 131, and 145. As another example 'pestiferous and unwholesome'; [that]'proceeds from the general filth of the town, and may have been aggravated by the interment, without caution or order, of the victims in the late wars, whose putrid remains have infected the atmosphere'. Standish, Frank Hall, esq., *The Shores of the Mediterranean* (London: Lumley: 1837 and 1838), ii, 47. Standish visited in September 1835.
- 8 Noted by Chalk, Charley, *Charley Chalk; or, the Career of an artist; being sketches from real life ... With illustrations by Jacob Parallel* (London: G. Berger, [n.d.], c.1840), 289. There

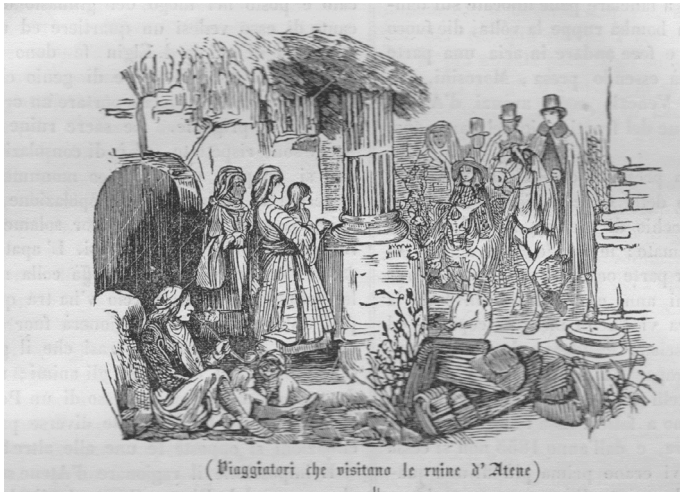


Figure 15.1. The modern and the ancient ruins of Athens, 1830s. Woodcut.<sup>9</sup>

On the road from Piraeus, visitors passed a monument to Karaiskakis, his remains brought from Salamis where he had died of his wounds, his coffin displayed within a metal paling. Nearby was a tumulus where, at some time after 1833, the dry bones of those who had been killed in the fighting at and around Athens in 1827, or put to death later, were buried in a mass grave.<sup>10</sup>

Elsewhere in Greece too, as the towns had been destroyed, the population found shelter among the ancient ruins, as caught, for example in Figure 15.2.

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are enough externally checkable references in this book, notably in its reference to travelling with the family of Thomas Gordon, for the passages on Greece to be regarded as sincere.

- 9 Woodcut from 'Atene. Viaggiatori che visitano le ruine d'Atene', in *Museo letterario artistico e letterario*, Turin, 16 February 1839, 56. A possible source may be 'dirty and infectious haunts in which some Greek families are crowded together, and as it were, buried alive.' *Travels in the Holy Land; or, a visit to the scenes of our Redeemer's life* by Alphonse de Lamartine, in 1832–1833. Translated from the original Paris edition by Robert Huish (London: printed [for] William Wright, [n.d.], 1837), 93. A few other pictures of Athens in its ruined state are reproduced in monochrome in Angelomatis, Christos, Αγγελομάτης, Χρήστος, *Η Απελευθέρωση των Αθηνών, Ο Μεντρεσές και οι αναμνήσεις του* (Athens: Skiadas, 2007).
- 10 Perdicaris, *The Greece of the Greeks*, 38, and 29fn. Perdicaris estimated the number as 1,500 left on the battlefield and 400 taken alive and beheaded, the first number much the same as was estimated at the time, the latter somewhat greater.



Figure 15.2. Corinth, 1843, local people sheltering among the ancient Roman Ruins. Lithograph of a picture made on the spot by Theodore du Moncel.<sup>11</sup>

Most churches had been destroyed by the Ottoman armies in 1822 and those few that were not had been desecrated.<sup>12</sup> During the Revolution, when Ottoman forces captured a Christian village, they had ridden their horses into the church, the mutual fouling of sacred buildings being part of the performance and display of the conflict. By 1839, in accordance with a neo-Hellenic programme of monument cleansing, all the minarets of Athens had either been destroyed in the fighting or had been taken down.<sup>13</sup> Among the most conspicuous monuments to go was the large Muslim cemetery situated in marshy ground in front of the Acropolis entrance where much of the fighting had taken place. Edgar Quinet, who visited in 1830, noted that the new marble tombs with turbans proclaimed that a large number of ‘chiefs’ had recently died in the Acropolis.<sup>14</sup> At that time the cemetery gave off an odour, as did the

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- 11 Private collection. Reproduced in du Moncel, Vicomte Théodore-Achille-Louis, *De Venise à Constantinople à travers la Grèce et retour par Malte, Messine, Pizzo et Naples ...* (Paris: Bry, 1846). Reprinted with other versions in lithograph in Du Moncel, Théodore, *Οδοιπορικό του 1843 από την Αθήνα στο Ναύπλιο* (Athens: Olkos, 1984), 113.
- 12 Letter from Gropius dated 15 April 1824 from Athens printed in Blaquiére, *Second Visit*, 154.
- 13 Carnarvon, Earl of, *Reminiscences of Athens and the Morea, extracts from a journal of travels in Greece in 1839* (London: Murray, 1869), 15.
- 14 Quinet, 354. Among them may have been a commander, killed in a sortie from the Acropolis, said to have been ‘a man of importance ... dearly loved by [Reschid]’. Makriyannis, *Memoirs*, Lidderdale edition, 103.



dead bodies lying above ground elsewhere in the town.<sup>15</sup> Unusually, we have a view of how the Muslim cemetery appeared ten years after the Greek state took over the Acropolis, an amateur sketch shown as Figure 15.3.



Figure 15.3. 'View of the Areopagus & sacred road from under Acropolis'. Pencil and watercolour sketch made on the spot by George Nugent Grenville, Baron Nugent, in 1843–44.<sup>16</sup>

'The Koran could not ever put down roots in Athens', the nineteenth-century national myth-maker Dimitris Kambouroglou was later to write, 'for the dust of the ancient Hellenes buried there would prevent them from growing and would eventually uproot them'.<sup>17</sup> In my explorations of the area, much of which now lies in the frontier zone where the tourist buses usually park, I have noticed marble paving stones that, from their rhomboid shape, seem to have come from Muslim tombs made from ancient marble.<sup>18</sup> Nor was Athens exceptional. All over independent Greece, deliberate damage had been done to the cemeteries of the Muslims. 'Their very memory seems to be detested' wrote an American visitor, 'for in all Greece, I did not see a single Turkish cemetery which had not been violated, its cypresses cut down, and the tomb-stones

15 Quinet, 355.

16 Private collection. On the reverse, 'Sketched by Lord Nugent' as a pencil annotation, perhaps added later. Nugent's visit to Athens in 1843–44 is reported in his *Lands Classical and Sacred*. Since the original is faded, I have edited the image.

17 Quoted by Hamilakis, *A Nation*, 61.

18 The frontier zone is discussed in Chapter 24.

overturned and broken'.<sup>19</sup> They had been cleansed even in places where there had been no fighting, including at Nauplia, the provisional capital.<sup>20</sup>

Among the visiting foreigners, the modern ruins of Athens did not evoke the same emotions as the ancient. Men accustomed to conventions of bitter-sweet melancholy and admiration that they had inherited from the philosophical histories and picturesque viewing conventions of the previous century, saw only despair and felt only disgust.<sup>21</sup> Among the buildings, euphorbous plants, whose exhalations were thought to be poisonous, spread in profusion, and innumerable lizards, now safe from the storks, springing out unexpectedly, added to the biblical scene.<sup>22</sup> The modern ruins were, according to a visitor in 1840, like the bloody corpse of stabbed victim.<sup>23</sup> Nor was this merely a figure of speech. The decomposing bodies of up to two thousand Greek fighters who had been killed in the failed attempt to relieve the siege of the Acropolis in May 1827 still lay, stripped of anything valuable, disturbed only by the

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- 19 Morris, E. Joy, *Notes of a Tour through Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Arabia Petraea to the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1842), i, 75.
- 20 'the mosques and different shrines of the prophet have been demolished, and now appear sad deformities in the place — having their entrances all choked up with rubbish; and the courts which surround them are dépôts for filth, while their burying-grounds can now scarcely be recognized amid the ruin and neglect around them'. As for the coloured tombstones, 'Nature, hiding from the face of day the contemptible effects of human vanity and passion, has coloured over the rifled sepulchre with the rankest of her vegetation'. Black, *Narrative of Cruises*, 140. He was writing in April 1824.
- 21 The differences were noted explicitly by Quinet, 334. And by Richard Monckton Milnes: 'There is so much that is separate, and fallen, and falling, that admiration is checkt by mourning'. Milnes, Richard Monckton, *Memorials of a Tour in some parts of Greece* (London: Moxon, 1835), 126. His visit was in 1832 shortly before the handover. René Spitaels, who felt mainly disgust and contempt for the Greeks in their misery, described Athens as 'a chaos of the prosaic ruins of today'. Spitaels, René, *De Bruxelles à Constantinople par un touriste flamand* (Brussels: Librairie polytechnique, 1839–1841), 162. Noted also by Marchebeus, *Voyage de Paris à Constantinople par bateau à vapeur nouvel itinéraire orné de vues et vignettes sur acier, avec tableaux indiquant les lieux desservis par les paquebots à vapeur, sur la Méditerranée, l'Adriatique et le Danube, le prix des places et des marchandises, les distances et la valeur des monnaies par Marchebeus, architecte du gouvernement* (Paris: Artus, 1839), 102; 'I know not anything so desolate-looking and so uninteresting as these modern ruins [in the Peloponnese]'. Hervé, Francis, Esq., *A Residence in Greece and Turkey; with notes of the journey through Bulgaria, Servia, Hungary, and the Balkan*, Illustrated by tinted lithographic engravings from drawings by the author (London: Whitaker, 1837), i, 115.
- 22 d'Arc, E. Gauttier, 118; 'The scorpion lurks, the lizard breeds secure'. Hill, George, 'The Ruins of Athens', in *Titania's Banquet. Pictures of Woman and Other Poems* (New York: Appleton, 1870), 63.
- 23 Michaud, i, 164.

scavenging animals and birds, along a corridor from Philopappos to the sea.<sup>24</sup> Near the site of Plato's academy, where Reschid had established his headquarters in 1826 and 1827, lay the bleaching skulls of seventy Greek fighters who had been taken alive and put to death. The local boys, who picked them up, mocked the visitors by pretending that the skulls were laughing at them.<sup>25</sup>

According to Alphonse de Lamartine, who visited Athens in August 1832, it was 'sombre, sad, dark, arid, desolate — a weight on the heart.' As he remarked, invoking a Christian providentialism: 'It is a land of apocalypse, that seems struck by some divine malediction, by some great word of prophecy; a Jerusalem of the nations, in which there is no longer even a tomb!'<sup>26</sup> The population in Athens in 1830 was put at three hundred and fifty, perhaps the lowest point since the place was first settled in neolithic times.<sup>27</sup> Gradually however the Greek population returned from Salamis, Poros, Aegina, and from their refuges in the caves and monasteries in the Attic hills. They began to repair the houses, build new ones, replant the crops and rework the fields, and by 1833 the numbers were back to the thousands and increasing.<sup>28</sup> But in 1835 Athens was struck by a deadly infectious illness that some attributed to 'the general filth of the town, and [it] may have been aggravated by the interment, without caution or order, of the victims in the late wars, whose putrid remains have infected the atmosphere.'<sup>29</sup>

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24 That the bodies were left unburied was noted by Quinet, 334. After the Ottoman withdrawal they were later gathered into a memorial. Noted by Baird, 18.

25 'The groping antiquary pores, to spy— A what? a name, perchance ne'er graven there; At whom the urchin, with his mimic eye, Sits peering through a skull, and laughs continually'. Hill, 63.

26 Lamartine, i, 75.

27 Macgregor, 72. Claridge, 259, looking back eight years later, put the number at the lowest point at '500 or 600 inhabitants'.

28 The extraordinarily rapid social and economic progress of independent Greece, with the help of the guaranteed loan, and how closely it followed Thiersch's proposals of 1833, is vividly illustrated by the tables of statistics in Strong, Frederick, *Greece as a kingdom: or, A statistical description of that country, from the arrival of King Otho, in 1833, down to the present time: drawn up from official documents and other authentic sources* (London: Longman, 1842). He had personally observed the changes during his residence in the country for eight years.

29 Standish, Frank Hall, esq., *The Shores of the Mediterranean* (London: Lumley: 1837 and 1838), ii, 47. Standish visited in September 1835. In accordance with mainstream medical opinion at the time, Standish thought that infectious illnesses were spread by 'miasma' in the air. He notes however that the crew of an Austrian ship, who fell

As for the Acropolis, by April 1833, when the Greek state took over from the Ottoman army, the six summers and winter rains had allowed nature to work its changes. In many places a thin layer of greenery had taken root among the stones.<sup>30</sup> Nothing, it emerged, had been touched since 1827. Even the broken rope that the assassinated Odysseus Androutsos had supposedly used in his alleged escape attempt in 1825 still hung from the Frankish tower.<sup>31</sup> No repairs had been made and no further damage had been done. The sight of the scattered fragments of marble sculptures reminded a visitor in 1852 of ‘mangled bodies on a dreadful battle-field’.<sup>32</sup> Nor was this just a figure of speech. When the Bavarian and Greek forces took over the Acropolis in April 1833, they found bones and skulls lying among the broken marble and the rusting shells.<sup>33</sup> In the summer of 1835, two years after the Ottoman forces left, one visitor described the ‘shot and shell, numbers of which are still lying where they were exploded’ and ‘in one big hole [...] a pile of skulls and bones of those who were killed in the siege’.<sup>34</sup>

A.L. Koeppen, a military instructor from Denmark, later a professor of classics in the United States, was on the Acropolis at some time in the late 1830s when a Greek woman, as he describes her, came to retrieve the bodies of her husband and her son who had been killed by the same cannon ball.<sup>35</sup> It was possible, Koeppen noted, to tell the Muslim dead from the Christian, the former buried face up, the latter lying on their sides, and some graves of prominent persons may have been marked.<sup>36</sup>

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ill from drinking the water, which suggests that the illness was due to the pollution of the water supply.

30 As picked out by some of the first artists to visit, notably Cole.

31 The rope was still to be seen in 1840, for reasons that are not obvious. Buchon, 67.

32 Hettner, Hermann, *Athens and the Peloponnese, with sketches of Northern Greece* (Edinburgh: Constable 1854), 8.

33 Noted by, for example, ‘Francis’, 258; Andersen, ii, 154, 156; and Baird, 43. When in a letter dated 6 May 1827, Reschid claimed that the interior and exterior of Acropolis had been ‘cleared and purified of the filth of the brigands’ bodies’, he was evidently referring to living revolutionaries not to corpses. Noted by Ilicak, ‘Revolutionary Athens’, 14, from Ottoman archives.

34 De Ross, Lord, *Journal of a tour in the principalities, Crimea, and countries adjacent to the Black Sea in the years 1835–36* (London: Parker, 1855), 26.

35 Koeppen, Prof A.L., *Sketches of a traveller from Greece, Constantinople, Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine* (Chambersburg, PA: Printed by Kiefer, 1854), part 2, 19.

36 A photograph of unsorted fragments of Muslim tombs untidily heaped near the Propylaea on the Acropolis is reproduced by Hamilakis, Yannis, ‘Indigenous Archaeologies in Ottoman Greece’ in Bahrani, Zinab, Zeynep Çelik, Zeynep, and

Visitors remarked on the 'shot and broken shell, mingled with human skulls and bones'.<sup>37</sup>

The metal seems mostly to have soon been removed for re-use, but the bleached bones lying among the broken marble remained among the sights on the Acropolis for much of the nineteenth century.<sup>38</sup> It became a custom for visitors to take skulls as souvenirs. As the German Prince Pückler-Muskau, who had seen the stealing of the skulls piled at Missolonghi wrote, the British took whatever they wanted from above ground or below. He wrote, with the disdain of one who did not have to work for his living, that, not content with having stripped poor Greece of her artistic masterpieces, 'the islanders' were now taking the bones of the heroes of the Greek Revolution to be gawked at by button-makers in London.<sup>39</sup> When, on 23 January 1851, the French author Gustave Flaubert went to see the excavated Parthenon slabs displayed inside the Parthenon, he saw a gnawed human thigh bone there too.<sup>40</sup> As late as 1879, an anonymous visitor noted that: 'I saw a considerable number of men's skulls and other bones in shallow open holes in the Acropolis of Athens, which the local dragoman told me were the remains of Greeks and Turks who had fallen in the war of independence fifty years ago'.<sup>41</sup>

It would have been difficult by then to separate the dead from the first siege of 1822 from those of the second of 1826/27, the Greeks from the Turks, the Christians from the Muslims, the women from the men, the fighters from the non-combatants, or those who had been killed in the fighting from those who had died as a consequence of lack of water

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Eldem, Edhem, opposite 59, no date for the photograph given. They may be from the Muslim cemetery on the low ground cleared and awaiting re-use as part of the monument cleansing, rather than evidence for the existence of a Muslim cemetery on the summit.

- 37 [Francis, 'our hero', who accompanied the author], *Thoughts and Sketches by the Way* (London: published by subscription, many names are titled, 1845), 285. '[S] tumbling now and then over one of the rusty bomb-shells or cannon-balls.' Murray, E. Clare Grenville, *From Mayfair to Marathon* (London: Bentley, 1853), 420.
- 38 'Even the struggles of Turk and Greek have left their memorials in bones and skulls, with which a deep pit is filled'. Chase, Thomas, M.A., *Hellas, her Monuments and Scenery* (Cambridge MA, Sever and Francis, 1863), 147.
- 39 Pückler-Muskau, *Entre l'Europe et l'Asie*, i, 11. The 'islanders' was still being used by the German army in the Second World War, as mentioned in Chapter 23.
- 40 'Dans le Parthénon, aux pieds d'une des tablettes, un fémur rongé, tout gris'. Flaubert, *Voyage*, 434.
- 41 'To Constantinople by the Shipka Pass — October 1879' in *Blackwood's Magazine* CXXVII, February 1880, 247.

or food. When, in the 1840s, Charles Ernest Beulé, with funding from France, began his excavations on the Acropolis, some of the human remains he turned up were still putrefying. What was assumed to be the skull of an Ottoman soldier was kicked about by the Greek workmen. Another skull, which had belonged to a man who had lost all his teeth, was given to a foreign visitor who was fascinated to see how his gums had adapted to his attempts to chew his food without teeth.<sup>42</sup> A tinted sketch of the inside of the Acropolis gate made in 1853 by Harald Conrad Stilling, a professional artist from Denmark, shows two human skulls perched on gathered fragments of an Ionic ancient building with a scattering of large and small cannon balls, evidently an attempt to use the debris of war then being turned up in the clearances to display and commemorate the Revolution.<sup>43</sup>

How many people had been killed or who had died in the Acropolis during the Greek Revolution is not known, but the numbers were not trivial. As the Greek general Makriyannis, who was present during most of the 1826/27 siege, wrote in his *Memoirs*: 'The men were slaughtered by the shells and mortar bombs; the graves up on the citadel became full, and we buried the dead at Serpentzé', the walled area on the south slope.<sup>44</sup> The French military philhellene, Fabvier, who lived through the last months of the siege and was amongst those who surrendered, estimated that sixty Greeks and philhellenes had died during the siege of 1826/27.<sup>45</sup> But when in 1840, Edgar Garston, who had fought in the war as a philhellene volunteer, said that the number of human skulls piled on the Acropolis was then more than fifteen hundred, that may have been an exaggeration.<sup>46</sup>

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42 Beulé, *Fouilles*, i, 16. That foreigner he refers may have been the American anatomist Benjamin Mott, discussed below although the dates do not quite fit.

43 Bendtsen, Margit, *Sketches and Measurements, Danish Architects in Greece 1818–1862* (Copenhagen: Royal Academy of Fine Arts *et al.*, 1993), figure 19 and description at 370, dated July 1853. It is possible that this is a picturesque composition, not intended to be a realistic presentation of an actuality, but that was not Stilling's style, either generally or in the picture. Since the metal cannon balls that had a monetary value as scrap seem to have been collected early on, the balls shown are probably those made of marble.

44 *Memoirs*, ed. H.A. Lidderdale, 102. The Serpenji, the walled area on the south slope, was discussed and illustrated in Chapter 4.

45 Debidour, 332 from archives.

46 Garston, Edgar, *Greece Revisited and Sketches in Lower Egypt in 1840, with Thirty-Six Hours of a Campaign in Greece in 1825* (London: Saunders and Ottley, 1842), i, 127.

At that time, it was planned to bury them together along with any others found as the summit was cleared.<sup>47</sup> But in the 1850s, visitors smelt the stench from the cisterns in which ‘some hundreds of skulls and skeletons’ were still to be seen.<sup>48</sup> The grilled door to the chamber under the Parthenon, where the human remains had been gathered, is shown in the detail of a photograph made in the 1850s, by James Robertson, as reproduced as Figure 15.4. They were not to be removed until the 1870s.<sup>49</sup>



Figure 15.4. The Parthenon from the west, detail. Photograph by James Robertson. ?1850s.<sup>50</sup>

47 Garston, i, 127.

48 ‘I never saw so many ravens together as I saw around and on the Acropolis. Their hoarse croaking was mournful and in horrid keeping with their presence; and I must say with disgust I saw, and to the shame of the present generation, on the southern side of the Parthenon, an open vault where some hundreds of skulls and skeletons lie exposed,— the remains of those who lost their lives in the last revolution for their country. The sight was revolting, the smell still offensive’. Corrigan, Dr., *Ten days in Athens: with notes by the way: summer of 1861* (London: Longman, 1862), 110. Eliza C. Bush in 1867 recorded that: ‘looking into what appeared the bed of a cistern, I beheld a number of human skulls and bones’. Bush, Eliza C., *My pilgrimage to eastern shrines* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1867), 34. ‘Even the struggles of Turk and Greek have left their memorials in bones and skulls, with which a deep pit is filled’. Chase, Thomas, M.A., *Hellas, her Monuments and Scenery* (Cambridge M.A., Sever and Francis, 1863), 147. He visited in 1853.

49 The Greek Government ‘a aussi démoli au sud du Parthénon certains hypogées ou l’on avait jeté pêle-mêle une grande quantité d’assements humains’. Burnouf, 16.

50 Private collection from a modern scan of an unidentified copy. Published also in Robertson, James, *Photographs, ‘Athens and Grecian Antiquities 1853–1855’, From the*

Another practice among visitors was to pick up a skull as a prop for a philosophical meditation on the transience of lives and empires. The custom was caught in an engraving, shown as Figure 15.5.



Figure 15.5. 'Temple en ruines.' Wood engraving.<sup>51</sup>

Although not named, nineteenth-century viewers throughout Europe and beyond would instantly have recognised the cloaked man shown holding the skull as Byron, author of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, wearing the dark cloak that had been adopted as a mark of Byronism since 1814. Many would also have picked up the allusion to Hamlet's 'Alas poor Yorick' speech. A diminishing number would have remembered the older, Christian, meaning that is also alluded to. In the early modern period, 'temple' had been commonly used to connote the human body as the seat of the soul.

An update was later supplied by another poet, Sir Edwin Arnold, who is known to have visited the Acropolis and may have personally performed the meditating convention.

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*Photographic Archive of the Benaki Museum* (Athens: Museum of Cycladic Art, 1998), no 1, 60.

51 Wordsworth, Christopher, *La Grèce, Pittoresque et Historique, Ancienne et Moderne*, translated by E. Regnault (Paris: Curmer, 1841), 67, noted as engraved by Orrin Smith, no artist named. As far as I can ascertain the image did not appear in any of the English editions.



**'Inscribed on a skull picked up on the Acropolis at Athens'.<sup>52</sup>**

I am the skull of Nedjim, a Turk,  
     Who fought at Athens with the Giaour;  
 When cannon-balls were hard at work  
     Shattering the Parthenon — that hour  
 A classic fragment took me fair  
     Under the waist-cloth, and so made  
 "Ruins" of me. For long years there  
     My remnants with the rest have laid.  
 Scant burial got we from the Greek —  
     The green fly and the hooded crow  
 Helped the hot sun to leave me sleek,  
     Till, as thou seest, my pate did grow  
 White as new Parian. At the last  
     A Briton spied me, as he passed  
 Roaming the strewed Acropolis,  
     And lightly fashioned me to this.  
 Drink! if thou wilt; and, drinking, say  
     Never did ancient craftsman make  
 Cyathus, Krater, Patera  
     Fitter a mighty thirst to slake.  
 But! call not me a thing of the clod!  
     The Parthenon owned no such plan!  
 Man made that temple for a God,  
     God made these temples for a man!

Arnold was familiar with the languages and customs of the peoples of India as well as having had a traditional classical education. His allusions would have been picked up by many readers, as would his reference to Byron's having made a drinking cup out of a skull of a pre-Reformation monk that was found at Newstead Abbey, one of many religious buildings that had been seized by the English monarchs and awarded to their supporters during the European Reformation.

To others, however, the skulls lying on the Acropolis were more than invitations to ponder. In the early 1840s, a famous American anatomist, Dr Valentine Mott, who had travelled extensively, made a collection of skulls on the Acropolis, along with other bones found in Greece, that were boxed up, and over three years shipped to New York, where

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52 Arnold, Sir Edwin, *The Secret of Death, from the Sanskrit, with some collected poems* (London: Trübner & Co., 1885).

they formed part of the largest collection of anatomical specimens ever assembled.<sup>53</sup> Mott's aim, as was shared by those who built up other large collections in London, Edinburgh, and other cities with medical schools, was primarily to use anatomical specimens in the teaching of anatomy to students. But they were also being increasingly used in the practice of phrenology, a semi-scientific attempt, never confirmed as having any validity, to determine the character of the inner immaterial mind of an individual from the external characteristics of the material skull.

Mott, who was confident that he knew which skulls had belonged to which communities and was, to an extent, arguing in a circle, was not departing far from the mainstream of his day, when he noted that the skull of the Turk was 'more spherical, from the early habit of bearing the turban, whereas the Greek is of full volume, and bold and expressive outline, comprising in its ensemble those full and salient prominences that denote the highest traits of intellect'.<sup>54</sup> One might have expected, from what was already known about the movements of populations, some voluntary, some forced, and from the seizures, rapes, enslavements, and harem-life of women, some recent, some dating back centuries, and from the continuous importation of slaves of both sexes from far away, that continuity in the gene pool ('blood') was not to be expected. But Mott evidently thought that the philhellenic claim of the identity of the modern with the ancient Hellenes was genetic, and was making more than a poetic point when he declared that Pittakis 'studied the monuments of Greece with Greek eyes and Greek feelings'.<sup>55</sup> Also insufficiently critical, we might judge, was the high-ranking Scottish churchman, Rev. John Aiton, D.D., who attempted to phrenologize directly from the living people he saw in Greece in 1851: '[...] a frivolous, foppish, and self-conceited set of beings. Their head is remarkably small, and their forehead low and everyway contracted

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53 Mott, Valentine, *Travels in Europe and the East* (New York: Harper, 1842), 297. Mott's accounts of his visits to Greece are summarised by Larrabee, *Hellas Observed*, 241–43. I have not been able to ascertain the dates of his two visits to Athens but they appear to have occurred towards the end of his journeying. Mott's skulls were destroyed when the New York Medical School building burned down in 1866.

54 Mott, 197.

55 Mott, 180. On the title page of his guidebook, Pittakis described himself as 'Athenian'.

[...] St Paul pronounced them to be liars always; and they are so still, without exception, and on every occasion'.<sup>56</sup>

Among the discoveries from the first excavations into the soil of the Acropolis were ancient vases containing cremated human remains and other grave goods, confirming that the ancient Acropolis had, among its many other functions, been a repository for the dead, although probably only for those who were accorded the honour by the city.<sup>57</sup> An ancient helmet with the skull of the dead soldier preserved inside would today provide DNA evidence about the genetic make-up of an individual who was privileged in his time.<sup>58</sup> And it began to be assumed by nineteenth-century visitors that real ancient Athenians had looked like the ancient Athenians presented on, for example, the frieze of the Parthenon. They ignored the portrait busts and descriptions of the appearances of Pericles, Socrates, and of numerous other individuals that showed a wide variety, to the extent that a huge literature had been composed in ancient times that offered advice on how to discern inner character from external bodily appearance. The reverse imagining from an artistic presentation of an ideal to a real, from the marble to the human was soon to be among the most persistent misapprehensions of the western tradition.<sup>59</sup> To James Dalloway, for example, who lived in the Levant for many years and travelled extensively before the Revolution: 'The contour of Grecian statues, and the profiles on their medals, are still to be seen in the faces of their degenerate successors.'<sup>60</sup> However the

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56 Aiton, John, D.D., *The Lands of the Messiah, Mahomet, and the Pope* (London and Edinburgh: Fullarton, 1852), 467.

57 'des urnes lacrymatoires, des vases renfermant des ossements humains'. Poujoulat, Baptastin, *Voyage à Constantinople, dans l'Asie Mineure, en Mésopotamie, à Palmyre, en Syrie, en Palestine et en Égypte, par m. Baptistin Poujoulat. Faisant suite à la Correspondance d'Orient* (Brussels: Wouters, 1841), 11. Poujoulat's visit was in October/November 1836.

58 Baruffi, G. F. Professore di Geometria della R. Univ. di Torino, Membro di Parecchie dotte Societa ecc., ecc., *Viaggio in Oriente* (Turin: Silvestri, 1847), 120.

59 For example, 'Les fronts nouveaux, les nez camus, les pommettes saillantes, la face courte et large n'étaient pas des raisons suffisantes pour écarter tout d'abord la supposition de crânes du peuple antique'. Salle, Eugene de, *Pérégrinations en Orient, Orient, ou: Voyage pittoresque, historique et politique en Egypte, Nubie, Syrie, Turquie, Grèce, pendant les années 1837–38–39*, second edition (Paris: Pagnerre, 1840), ii, 203.

60 Dalloway, James, *Constantinople, Ancient and Modern* (London: Bensley, 1797), 6. He was however sceptical of the cultural continuity claims of Guys, discussed in Chapter 8. For example, 'In the highly coloured pages of De Guys, and his forced comparison of the ancient with the modern inhabitants of Greece, taste and

practice of phrenology also presaged another shift that Disraeli, who was proudly pro-semitic, had welcomed. The imagined community of religious affiliation was morphing, through the imagined community of nation, into modern racism, perceived as an identity, genetically ('racially') constituted and implying a moral character or disposition, from which it was impossible to resign.

It was around the same time as Mott was looking at the Parthenon and collecting his skulls in Athens that in Edinburgh another eminent anatomist, Robert Knox, later to be fictionalized in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson, was applying his specialist knowledge to the pieces of the Parthenon displayed in the British Museum. Full of admiration for the knowledge of human anatomy that the ancient marble sculptors demonstrated in their work, he too was among many who uncritically assumed that real classical Athenians had physically resembled the idealized Athenian men and women presented on the Parthenon frieze, among whose characteristics is that, except in what they are presented as wearing, they show little individuality.<sup>61</sup>

In the faces of some of the centaurs on the Parthenon metopes, Knox recognized those of modern Russians. In the Coptic gallery, he was struck by the resemblance between one statue and some of its contemporary viewers. As he wrote: 'Astounding fact in the history of Man! For nearly forty centuries the world rolled through space since this inimitable bust was carved; raised on the banks of the Nile, the admiration of the then living generation; now gazed at under the smoky, murky skies of England, by a race ignorant of its history, careless of its origin; whilst around it, in groups or singly, walks the Israelite, the descendant of the Copt, unaltered by clime or time, as unchangeable as the enduring rock from which the busts of his forefathers have been hewn'.<sup>62</sup> Nor was the Knox tradition without its champions in the wider anglophone world, although his recommendations for eugenic cleansing were not actively followed up. Writing in 1883 of the so-called Theseus from the east pediment, Lucy Mitchell, the American author of what she

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ingenuity abound, but the positive establishment of his hypothesis must be waved'. Dalloway, *Constantinople*, 9.

61 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

62 Knox and Fau, *The anatomy of the external forms of man: intended for the use of artists, painters and sculptors* By J. Fau; edited with additions by Robert Knox. With an atlas of twenty-eight plates (London: J.B. Baillière, 1849), 231.

misleadingly claimed to be the first English-language history of Greek sculpture, perceived that ‘the skull has those strong, square, proportions peculiar to intellectually superior races.’<sup>63</sup> The essentialist notion of race as biologically fixed was to be developed in other European countries and the United States, with consequences that the modern world is still living with.<sup>64</sup>

So deeply internalised were biological errors about ‘race’ that many saw what they expected to see. To Edward Blaquiere, who made two visits to Greece during the Revolution, it was not a surprise that the ancients had excelled in sculpture when ‘the models were abundant and beautiful.’<sup>65</sup> The American E. Joy Morris, who visited Greece soon after the Revolution saw ‘...several Greek young men, whose graceful forms, and fine heads immediately brought to mind the classically-moulded limbs and features of the Belvidere Apollo.’<sup>66</sup> Of the people Hermann Hettner saw in 1852, ‘the entire plastic art of the ancients speaks to us livingly from their forms’,<sup>67</sup> while the visitor to Aegina in 1879 and first quoted in Chapter 9 wrote of the boys: ‘Three or four of these young fellows, with their large eyes, low foreheads, finely-cut profiles, and luxuriant heads of hair, might have sat as models for the Pan-Athenaic procession with which Phidias adorned the frieze of the Parthenon’.<sup>68</sup>

Among the other consequences of the Revolution was the disappearance of the storks. When, in the winter of 1832/33 during the final months of Ottoman military occupation, the Swiss artist Johann Jakob Wolfensberger depicted the Doric Portico in Athens, the nesting sites on top that had been a familiar sight for centuries were no longer to be seen. His picture of the ruined town is shown as Figure 15.6, as engraved.

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63 Mitchell, Lucy M., *A History of Ancient Sculpture with numerous illustrations, including six plates in phototype* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, 1883), 353.

64 The development of theories of essential racism in Germany and how authors and artists as well as politicians drew on the authority of the ancients in the self-fashioning of the German nation is discussed in Chapter 23.

65 Blaquiere, Edward, *The Greek Revolution, Its Origin and Progress* (London: G. & W.B. Whittaker, 1824), 291.

66 Morris, E. Joy, *Notes of a Tour through Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Arabia Petraea to the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1842), 20.

67 Hettner, Hermann, *Athens and the Peloponnese, with sketches of Northern Greece* (Edinburgh: Constable, 1854), 3.

68 [Anonymous of 1879], ‘A week in Athens’, in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, cxxviii, September 1880, 329.



Figure 15.6. 'The Agora, Athens, Greece.' Steel engraving.<sup>69</sup>

No storks' nests are shown in the drawing of the Portico made by Christian Hansen in 1833, nor in any other pictures made around that time.<sup>70</sup> Artists did not always include elements that might detract from the main features that they wished to present, usually the ruins of an ancient building, and some images can be regarded as explicitly rhetorical acts of picturing intended to persuade towards a philosophical narrative rather than to act as documentary records of an actuality. At least one engraver omitted the storks and their nests when he re-copied from engravings made by others.<sup>71</sup> But when we reach the greater trustworthiness of the

69 'Drawn by Wolfensberger, engraved by J.B. le Keux.' Wright, ii, opposite 52. Lacour, 163 and 172, records meeting Wolfensberger in Athens in November 1832.

70 Reproduced in Bendtsen, Margit, *Sketches and Measurements, Danish Architects in Greece 1818–1862* (Copenhagen: Royal Academy of Fine Arts *et al.*, 1993), 116. Not pictured in Cole, William, *Select Views of the Remains of Ancient Monuments in Greece, as at Present Existing, from drawings taken and coloured on the spot in the Year 1833* (London: for the Author, Ackermann, 1835) nor in the 1843 watercolour by Ippolito Caffi reproduced in Tsigakou, *Recovery*, 144–45.

71 An Italian re-engraving of the Stuart picturesque views attributed to Trojani, 1833, which in other respects are reasonably faithful copies, omits the storks that Stuart showed. No nests are shown on the Portico in the views by Thürmer, Joseph, *Ansichten von Athen und seinen Denkmahlen. Nach der Natur gezeichnet und radirt von J. Thürmer. Vues d'Athènes, etc* (Rome: De Romanis, no date, but some of the views are noted as etched in 1825) reproduced by Matton, Lya, and Matton, Raymond, *Athènes et ses Monuments du XVIIe Siècle à nos jours* (Athens: Institut français d'Athènes, 1963), LXI, but since they were also commonly shown in the settled days before the Revolution they were probably elided by the artist or engraver. The role of the storks

light-on-chemical era of photography, the absence continues. There is, for example, no nest shown in the aquatint of the daguerreotype of the Portico made by Girault de Prangey in 1842.<sup>72</sup>

The storks, a feature of the cityscape of Athens since ancient times, had entirely disappeared.<sup>73</sup> In the spring of 1829, they had arrived in Athens as they had done since time immemorial, but they did not nest.<sup>74</sup> And 1829 appears to have been their last year. In May 1830, although Athens was again under Ottoman rule, E. Gauttier d'Arc looked without success for the storks' nests he had read about in Chateaubriand's account written a generation earlier, when they had been central to Chateaubriand's developing theory of history as man and nature.<sup>75</sup> And, as was noted by another visitor in the summer of that year: 'the faithful stork has not found a hospitable roof and has sought another dwelling for herself and her family.'<sup>76</sup> The nests had been destroyed in the burning of the town or used as firewood, and some birds may have been killed for food, but, whereas after earlier disasters they had returned and gradually rebuilt their nests stick by stick, this time they did not. Plato, in the *Laws*, rejecting the binary of Man and the rest of the living world, understood that storks, cranes, and some other birds and animals, such as bees, had developed a complex culture of their own,

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in classical Athens is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

72 Reproduced in *Athens a Photographic History*, no. 6.

73 Although there are many pictures made before the Revolution that show storks and their nests, notably those by Stuart, Dodwell, and Dupré, others elided the nests even although the written record shows that they were present. J-B-G D'Anse de Villoison says of his visit in 1785, that 'almost all the buildings of Athens and Thebes were covered with storks'. D'Anse de Villoison, J-B-G, *De l'Hellade à la Grèce, Voyage en Grèce et au Levant (1784–1786)* edited by Étienne Famerie (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2006), 112. The protection given to the storks and their nests was also noted by Hunter, William, *Travels in the year 1792 through France, Turkey and Hungary ...* (London: second edition, Bensley, 1798), i, 267–269. There are no nests shown on the Doric Portico, a long established site, in the drawing by Christian Hansen in 1833, nor in any of the other pictures made around that time. Some may not have been included in the compositions or may have been elided by the engraver. A set of re-engravings of the Stuart picturesque views made in Italy in 1833 and attributed to 'Trojani', which in other respects are reasonably faithful copies, omits the storks that Stuart showed.

74 Quinet, 346, 347.

75 Gauttier d'Arc, E., *Fragmens d'un Voyage en Italie, en Grèce et en Asie pendant les Années 1829–30* (Paris: Aufray, 1831), 116.

76 Michaud and Poujoulat, ii, 106.

and he would not have been surprised at the thought that the storks, as a species with memory and perhaps some sense of possible futures, had abandoned Athens.<sup>77</sup>

The misfortunes of the storks had begun in 1821 as soon as the Greek Revolutionaries took over Athens. As one witness reported, the Greeks: 'commenced a terrible persecution of the storks, driving them from the chimney-tops and old ruined columns, where they had enjoyed, under Mahometan protection, so many centuries of hereditary security. The sight of this barbarity is believed to have enraged the Turks even more than the destruction of their houses and the violation of their mosques'.<sup>78</sup> According to Muslim lore, every autumn the storks went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, returning in the spring, hence their name 'Baba Hadji' ['father pilgrim'].<sup>79</sup> In Siphnos, the philhellene colonel Jourdain recorded a local story that swallows were carried across the sea to Africa on the backs of storks, who also carried food for their journey.<sup>80</sup> In what was to become independent Greece, although the ruins of the ancient buildings were now carefully preserved, the untidy and smelly piles of sticks with which many had been crowned, and which feature in many picturesque engravings of the landscape, had no future.<sup>81</sup> Although some of the former feeding grounds, such as the marshy land in front of the Acropolis and on the way to Piraeus, were drained or filled in, there were plenty of frogs and snakes elsewhere.

All over the territory of newly independent Greece, the storks suffered the same fate. Any returning birds that attempted to build their nests on the broken stumps of destroyed minarets had been forced to

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77 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

78 Waddington *Visit*, 58, footnote. As noted earlier he was able to draw on reports by Gropius who had been present.

79 Garnett and Stuart-Glennie, *Greek folk poesy; annotated translations from the whole cycle of Romaic folk-verse and folk-prose by Lucy M.J. Garnett. Edited, with essays on The science of folklore, Greek folkspeech, and The survival of paganism*, by J.S. Stuart-Glennie (Guildford for the authors, 1896), i, 402.

80 Jourdain, ii, 100.

81 The storks' nests on the Doric portico in Athens, with their old and the young birds, had been described as 'filthy' by Craven, Lady, *A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople. In a series of letters from the Right Honourable Elizabeth Lady Craven to His Serene Highness the Margrave of Brandebourg, Anspach, and Bareith. Written in the year MDCCLXXXVI* (London: G.G.J. & J. Robinson, 1789), 258.



give up.<sup>82</sup> As John Hartley, a Christian missionary, wrote in apocalyptic terms during his visit to the desolated Peloponnese in 1828: 'The fowl of the heavens are fled: I do not recollect to have seen a single stork all the time I was in the Morea.'<sup>83</sup> 'The Greeks have carried their antipathy to the Turks to such a pitch', he wrote, 'that they have destroyed all the storks in the country. On inquiring the reason, I was informed, "The stork is a Turkish bird: it never used to build its nest on the house of a Greek, but always on that of a Turk!"'<sup>84</sup> The storks were as thoroughly cleansed as the minarets, the cemeteries, and the human populations.<sup>85</sup>

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82 Noted by Bowden, John Edward, *The Life And Letters of Frederick William Faber, D.D. Priest of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri* (Baltimore: Murphy, 1869), 122; Faber *Sights and Thoughts*, 446, and by others.

83 Hartley, 25.

84 *Ibid.*, 366.

85 'In [independent] Greece, where they once abounded, scarce a solitary straggler is to be seen'. *The militiaman at home and abroad ... with sketches of the Ionian Islands, Malta, and Gibraltar by Emeritus, with illustrations by John Leech* (London: Smith Elder, 1857), 215. The author noted that, in Ottoman territory, the storks roosted fearlessly within touching distance of the humans, as 'strange silent sentries.'



## 16. 'The World had need of them'

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There was, however, one puzzle that none of the returning residents or newly-arrived visitors could explain. Having heard, or read about, the reports that the Ottoman army planned to destroy the ancient monuments, and having in some cases been personally assured by high-ranking Ottoman officials that this was the intention, they were amazed to find that, without exception, the ancient monuments of the town were not only still standing but were undamaged. As was reported by a visitor in 1832 who was struck by the contrast with the ruins of the modern town, the churches and the mosques: 'The perfectness of the other monuments, however, is a great compensation, and their very fewness makes it the more wonderful that so many others should have gone down into the dust without a trace, and these selected ones still standing very nearly the same as when they were gazed at by old Athenian eyes'.<sup>1</sup> The contrast was inescapable.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the stinking, rat-infested remains of the town in which the people sheltered with

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- 1 Richard Monckton Milnes in a letter from Athens, dated October 1832, quoted by Reid, T. Wemyss, *The life, letters, and friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes, first Lord Houghton*. (London: Cassell, 1890), i, 133. 'Les monumens avaient peu souffert', Cornille, Henri, *Souvenirs d'Orient. Constantinople -Grèce -Jérusalem -Egypte. 1831-1832-1833* (Paris: Ledoux, 1833), 340.
  - 2 Fuller, 542. 'It is surprising how its monuments have escaped as they have out of the fury of the revolution'. Burgess, i, 291. '[T]he highly interesting remains of antiquity have, with scarcely an exception, been preserved uninjured'. Green, Philip James, *Sketches of the war in Greece: in a series of extracts, from the private correspondence of Philip James Green, Esq., late British Consul for the Morea with notes by R.L. Green* (London: Hurst, 1827), 113. 'The least ruined objects here, are some of the Ruins themselves.' Wordsworth *Journal*, 1st edition, 51. A description of Athens in 1829, noting the astonishing survival of the monuments among the ruins, and the welcome given by Bey Yousouf, with other details, in Blouet, Abel, and others, *Expédition Scientifique de Morée, Ordonnée par le Gouvernement française* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1831-1838), iii, 60-63. As another example, Athens was 'un vaste sanctuaire fermé à tout ce qui n'est pas ancien', Michaud and Poujoulat, i, 164.

their animals, the ancient buildings looked, as another visitor wrote, like 'pearls in a dunghill'.<sup>3</sup>

The Theseion in particular stood out, 'in almost uninjured beauty'.<sup>4</sup> What had been, for more than a thousand years, one of the largest churches in Athens was, during the seven years after the surrender of 1827, used as a stable for the horses of the Ottoman cavalry. The Christian paintings inside were obliterated or defaced, as had happened in many other churches, and the tombs were broken and covered in dung.<sup>5</sup> But, as far as the fabric of the building was concerned, 'not a column and scarcely a stone has been displaced'.<sup>6</sup> The exterior, including the ancient sculptured frieze, remained unharmed: no damage had occurred since Elgin's agents had removed pieces of the ancient roof between 1801 and 1803.<sup>7</sup>

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3 Mure, ii, 45. According to the French architect Marchebeus, who visited with a large party in 1834, soon after the last Ottoman units left, the modern ruins revealed the richness, elegance, and majesty of the ancient. Marchebeus, *Voyage*, 102 with his mission described in Chapter 21.

4 Hamilton, William J., i, 36. Other comments include: 'apparently quite perfect'; 'the venerable Temple of Theseus but the rest of the town a mass of ruins', Trant, 259; Of the Theseion, 'not a column, and scarcely a stone has been displaced; the roof, the friezes, and the cornices still remain ...[and] the first impression of the mind on beholding it, is doubt of its antiquity', Macgregor, 72; 'there is now scarcely any building at Athens in so perfect a state as the Temple of Theseus', Wordsworth *Journal* 1st edition 51; 'uninjured', Green, 113; 'still perfect', Allan, 74; 'Almost as perfect as when first erected', Haight, Sarah, *Letters from the old world by a Lady of New York* (New York: Harper, 1840), ii, 296; '[A]s perfect as if it had survived only twenty years instead of two thousand', Frankland, Charles Colville, Captain, *Travels to and from Constantinople in 1827 and 1828, or, Personal narrative of a journey from Vienna ... to Constantinople* (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830), i, 303; '[W]onderfully preserved', Canning in Lane-Poole, *Canning*, i, 501; 'conservé presqu'intact', Spitaels, 164; '[W]ondrously survived', Tischendorf, 283.

5 'The fanaticism of the Turks has induced them to deface the saints and virgins, which decorate in gaudy fresco colouring the walls round the altar; while most unaccountably the bassi relievi of the friezes have escaped from their iconoclastic fury.' Frankland, i, 303. 'Part of the roof has been destroyed, and the pictures which once covered the interior walls, have been obliterated, though a considerable part of the stucco upon which they were painted yet remains. The walls, columns, and main body of the edifice, are uninjured'. Morris, E. Joy, *Notes of a Tour through Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Arabia Petraea to the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1842), i, 92. For the stabling of horses, see Trant, 268, who noted that he was able to make out the tombstone of Admiral Watson under the dung. The Christian religious paintings had already been mutilated, the graves broken into, and the bones scattered in 1822, when the Ottoman armies had been temporarily in control of Athens, in a classic case of monument cleansing. Noted by Raybaud, ii, 82–83.

6 Macgregor, 72.

7 'The fanaticism of the Turks has induced them to deface the saints and virgins, which decorate in gaudy fresco colouring the walls round the altar; while most

And besides the evidence of the many reports in words, we have pictures, including a number by the professional Swiss landscape artist Johann Jakob Wolfensberger, who had arrived in Athens in July 1832, and who stayed in Greece for a number of months after the surrender of the Acropolis in April 1833.<sup>8</sup> Figure 16.1 shows an engraved version of Wolfensberger's picture of the Theseion standing intact despite the destruction of the surrounding buildings.

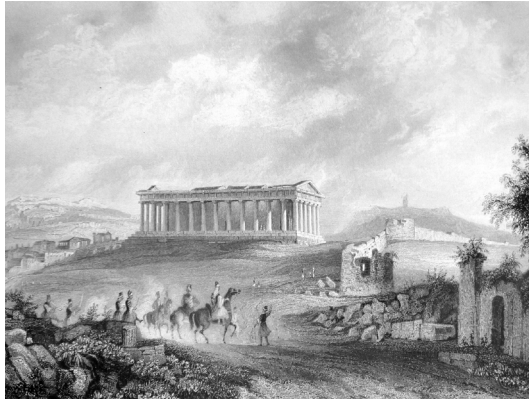


Figure 16.1. The Temple of Theseus. 'Drawn by Wolfensberger, engraved by A. Le Petit. Fisher, Son, & Co. London & Paris.' Engraving on steel.<sup>9</sup>

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unaccountably the bassi relievi of the friezes have escaped from their iconoclastic fury'. Frankland, i, 303. 'Part of the roof has been destroyed, and the pictures which once covered the interior walls, have been obliterated, though a considerable part of the stucco upon which they were painted yet remains. The walls, columns, and main body of the edifice, are uninjured'. Morris, E. Joy, *Notes of a Tour through Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Arabia Petraea to the Holy Land* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1842), i, 92. The stabling of horses was noted by Trant, 268, who reported that he was able to make out the tombstone of Admiral Watson under the dung. For Elgin's removals from the building, see Chapter 20. The pieces from the ancient roof ('soffits') are listed as among the many antiquities shipped in HMS Braakel, as noted by Smith, *Lord Elgin*, 254.

- 8 The French nobleman d'Estourmel, who had met him when both were on their way to Greece and who wanted him to join his party as part of a proposed tour of the Levant, had to leave him in Athens, as noted in d'Estourmel, i, 7, 133, and elsewhere. Whether by his own mistake or that of a printer, d'Estourmel calls him 'Wolfenberger'. Lacour, 163 and 172, records meeting Wolfensberger in Athens in November 1832. Not long afterwards Wolfensberger took his picturesque landscape painting skills to Constantinople and its vicinity, where he shared accommodation with the British portrait painter Francis Hervé who had also gone there in search of work. Noted as 'Wolfenburger' by Hervé, *Residence*, ii, 129.
- 9 Wright, Rev. G.N., *The Rhine, Italy, and Greece. In a series of drawings from nature by Colonel Cockburn, Major Irton, Messrs. Bartlett, Leitch and Wolfensberger. With historical*

Although Wolfensberger's images are described in the books in which they appeared as 'from nature', these words do not claim that they are accurate presentations of the scene, only that the artist had actually visited the places pictured.<sup>10</sup> Because they were created by the recently perfected technology of engraving in steel, they were not only able to be simultaneously published in several countries, but they could be reproduced in unlimited numbers both in books and individually at falling marginal cost, and therefore price, almost indefinitely—in practice, for decades after the ruins of the modern town had been cleared and the actual post-Revolution cityscape transformed.

Another view of the Theseion standing isolated and untouched, made on the spot by James Hore in 1835 and not reproduced until now, is given as Figure 16.2. The stable had already been turned into a repository for antiquities found in the town, a proto-museum in the

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and legendary descriptions by the Rev. G.N. Wright (London: Fisher and Son, [n.d.] [1840]), ii, 79. In order to maximise the size on the printed page, I have trimmed the captions that appear in English, French and German, a phenomenon discussed in Chapter 7. A watercolour by Wolfensberger showing a party of soldiers making their way through the ruins of the town of Athens, with the undamaged Theseion and the emerging 'merman', was shown in an exhibition prepared by Rachel Misdrahi-Kapon and Angeliki Kokkou held between 25 September and 15 November 1985 by the Goulandis-Horn Foundation. Catalogue entitled *Αθήνα απο τελος του αρχαιου κοσμου ως την ιδρυση του ελληνικου κρατους Athens from the End of the Ancient World till the Establishment of the Hellenic State* (Athens: Ministry of Culture, 1985), number 257. The picture was then in the collection of the archaeologist Homer A. Thompson.

- 10 Other images of the ancient monuments in the immediate post-Revolution years in Athens that add further confirmation to the visual evidence of those I have reproduced are to be found in, for example, Stoneman, Richard, ed., *A Luminous Land, Artists Discover Greece* (Los Angeles: Getty, 1998), notably 46, 'Greeks Fetching Water from the well at the Tower of the Winds in Athens, 1836' by Martinus Rørby, and Tsigakou, Fani-Maria and Dollinger, Anja Sibylle, *Glanz der Ruinen Die Wiederentdeckung Griechenlands in Gemälden des 19. Jarrhunderts Aus den Beständen des Benaki Museums, Athen und des Rheinischen Landesmuseums Bonn* (Cologne: Rheinland-Verlag GmbH, 1995) notably 'Das Lysicrates-Denkmal 1838/39' by Jean Nicholas Henri des Chacation, number 23, plus many images including sketches reproduced in Bendtsen, Margit, *Sketches and Measurements, Danish Architects in Greece 1818–1862* (Copenhagen: Royal Academy of Fine Arts *et al.*, 1993), especially Figure 22, Christian Hansen, 'The Parthenon in 1836', Figure 57, Christian Hansen, 'The Thrassylos monument in 1834'. Some less skilled pictures from 1838, by which time restoration and excavation were under way, are reproduced in colour in Skene, James, *Monuments and Views of Greece, 1838–1845, Foreword Stephen Cozi Agetastos, Introduction Fani-Maria Tsigakou*, text in Greek and English (Athens: Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, 1998).

open air, and a facility that provided secure storage against tourists with their money and their hammers.



Figure 16.2. The 'temple of Theseus'. Watercolour by James Hore, 1835.<sup>11</sup>

With the Monument of Lysicrates too, to the surprise of visitors, although the complex of buildings and gardens into which it had been built had been destroyed, the Monument itself stood untouched and now isolated among the debris.<sup>12</sup> It had been a working building, bought in the seventeenth century for the French Capuchins who had been permitted by the Ottoman authorities to establish a small community in Athens, since which time it had been a place where visiting Franks could stay as at a hotel, meet their friends, and engage local people to provide them with services.<sup>13</sup>

The astonishing difference since pre-Revolution times can be seen by comparing the image of Figure 16.3, made shortly before the Revolution, with the engraved picture by Wolfensberger shown as 16.4. Inside the former we may catch a glimpse of Padre Paulo, the long-time resident, the reports of whose conversations have been used in recovering an understanding of conditions in Athens before the Revolution.

<sup>11</sup> Private collection. Subject to copyright restrictions.

<sup>12</sup> For example Quinet, 365.

<sup>13</sup> As discussed in Chapter 5.



Figure 16.3. 'Monument of Lysichrates'. Copper engraving of a view taken in 1805 or earlier.<sup>14</sup>

Wolfensberger's post-war image, reproduced as Figure 16.4, shows how the town, including almost all of the buildings previously still in use, had been destroyed, in many cases deliberately so, by setting them on fire, leaving the Monument standing in isolation.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 16.4. 'The Lantern of Diogenes'. Engraving on steel.<sup>16</sup>

14 'S. Pomardi del., Cha.<sup>s</sup> Heath Sculp., London, Published June 1, 1819, by Rodwell & Martin, New Bond Street' in Dodwell, Edward, *A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, and 1806* (London, 1819), i, opposite 269.

15 'the convent ... has been left in a very ruinous state by the vicissitudes of the late wars, but that delicate monument has happily escaped uninjured'. Garston, *Greece Revisited*, i, 150.

16 'Drawn by Wolfensberger, engraved by W. Floyd. Fisher, Son, & Co. London & Paris.' Wright, Rev. G.N., *The Rhine, Italy, and Greece. In a series of drawings from nature by*



Another effect of the destruction of the town was to reveal a large ancient statue, still standing on its pedestal, almost complete apart from its head. The 'Merman' or 'Triton', as the statue was immediately named, which had been used as a corner post where four houses met, had been completely concealed.<sup>17</sup> And this discovery seemed set to be only the first. The level of the unpaved modern streets that turned to mud when it rained, was sixteen or eighteen feet above the level of the well-paved streets of ancient Athens, with each layer replete with the debris of the intermediate centuries, and even more below.<sup>18</sup>

The 'Merman' is shown in Figure 16.5, another picture made on the spot by James Hore, but not yet worked up in the studio.



Figure 16.5. 'The Merman', uncovered among the ruins of post-Revolution Athens. Watercolour by James Hore, 1835.<sup>19</sup>

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*Colonel Cockburn, Major Irton, Messrs. Bartlett, Leitch and Wolfensberger. With historical and legendary descriptions by the Rev. G. N. Wright* (London: Fisher and Son, [n.d.], [1840]), i, 40.

17 This detail, which helps to explain how and why it had survived, is recorded by Wines, 302. The emergence of the statue is also noted by Trant, 272, with a woodcut illustration, and by Quinet, 360; Röser, 100; Hamilton, William J., 37; and others later.

18 Measured by the geologist Hamilton, William J., i, 36

19 Private collection. Subject to copyright restriction.

From reports from Athens, the French archaeologist Raoul-Rochette suggested that the image was one of Erichthonios, one of the eponymous heroes of ancient Athens. He made his identification principally from a remark by Pausanias who had thought that Erichthonios was half-man, half serpent.<sup>20</sup> In a learned pamphlet he published a reconstruction of how the statue might have looked, drawn by Louis Dupré, shown as Figure 16.6.

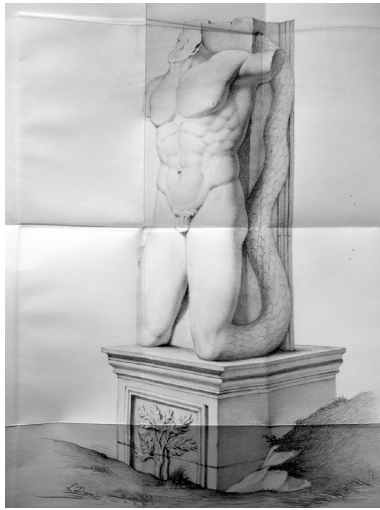


Figure 16.6. 'Erichthonios' Drawing by Louis Dupré. Large folding lithograph.<sup>21</sup>

Dupré, although he had spent time in Athens in 1819, had seen nothing of the Revolution, but was now becoming famous for the coloured lithographs in one of the most gorgeous books ever prepared, which presented the Revolution in heroic terms. It is likely that he had not himself seen the statue but made his image from descriptions.<sup>22</sup> Dupré appears to have had access to presentations on vase painting, of which

20 Paus 1.24.7. Discussed by Loraux, Nicole, *The Children of Athena, Athenian Ideas about Citizenship and the Division between the Sexes*, translated by Caroline Levine (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 223. The original French edition was published in 1984.

21 Inserted in Raoul-Rochette, M., *Lettre à M.L. de Klenze, sur une statue de héros attique récemment découverte à Athènes* (Paris: Bourgogne et Martinet, 1837).

22 Dupré, Louis, *Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople, ou Collection de portraits, de vues et de costumes grecs et ottomans, peints sur les lieux* (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1825 but almost certainly some years later, perhaps as late as 1839. A heavily adapted edition in Greek with much additional information, and pictures of Greece by other artists, edited by Manoles Vlachos (Athens: Folio, 1994). Dupré died in 1837.

one is shown as Figure 16.7, an image that, as is normal, shows events as if they were occurring simultaneously. The half-man, half-serpent figure to the present viewer's left, is now thought to represent Kekrops, the first king of Athens, and Erichthonios is usually shown as fully human, as here.



Figure 16.7. 'The Birth of Erichthonios', kylix from Tarquinia, 440–430 BCE.<sup>23</sup>

As the French scholar and museum manager Raoul-Rochette noted, although the newly discovered statue was probably made in post-classical times, it was a link in the mythic chain that connected the people of ancient Athens directly with the earth, supporting the self-fashioning of some families as 'autochthonous', and therefore unlike other Hellenes who had come to their cities as immigrants from elsewhere.<sup>24</sup> What could be more appropriate at the moment of rebirth of the new nation than the unearthing of such a potent symbol? The modern philhellenic myth, that increasingly emphasised a 'blood' and not only a language continuity, connected the modern with the ancient Greeks.

But there were difficulties. Kekrops, after which Meursius had named his book, *Cecropia*, was certainly the first king, and in the tragic drama of

23 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Birth\\_of\\_Erichthonios\\_kylix\\_from\\_Tarquinia\\_440-430\\_BC\\_Berlin\\_2537\\_141637.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Birth_of_Erichthonios_kylix_from_Tarquinia_440-430_BC_Berlin_2537_141637.jpg). My suggestion that the naming ceremony of a recently born infant is shown on the frieze of the Parthenon is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

24 The 'autochthone par excellence.' Raoul-Rochette, 6. The autochthony claim, and its relevance to the decisions on the design of the classical-era Periclean Parthenon, and of local opposition to that design is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

Athens, the Acropolis of Athens was often called the hill of Kekrops, but even in ancient times the characters of Erichthonios and his son Erechtheus tended to be run together. Isaac Newton, notably, at the beginning of the scientific revolution, who may have read Meursius, was among many who had struggled with the problem of how to reconcile the reports of what he called the ‘first memory of things in Europe’, as a step towards establishing calendar chronologies. In a posthumously published book, Newton used the stories to express his exasperation at their lack of fixity: ‘And so they have made two Pandions, and two Erechtheus’s, giving the name of Erichthonius to the first; Homer calls the first Erechtheus: and by such corruptions they have exceedingly perplexed Ancient History’.<sup>25</sup> On closer examination, the unearthed statue, which at the time of writing still stands in the open air in Athens, was later shown to be a triton with fish scales, so losing much of its symbolic power.<sup>26</sup>

Those who expressed amazement at the survival of the ancient buildings in the town of Athens had not been allowed into the Acropolis. To those looking up towards the entrance during the years before the Ottoman army left in 1833, the Frankish tower and the Agrippa Monument were flecked as can be seen in a contemporary picture at Figure 16.8.

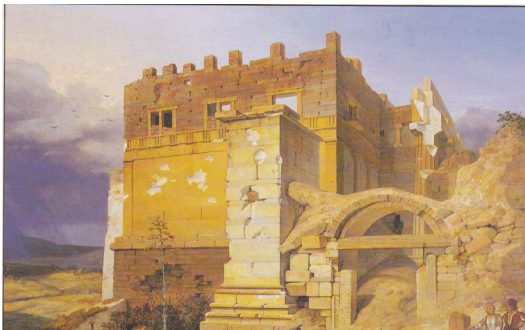


Figure 16.8. Entrance to the Acropolis, 1835. Painting by Karl Heideck. From a modern reproduction not further identified.

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- 25 Newton, Isaac, *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* (London: Tonson, Osborn, and Longman, 1728), 5.
- 26 Thompson, Homer A., ‘The Odeion in the Athenian Agora’ in *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, vol. 19, no. 2, American Excavations in the Athenian Agora: Thirty-Ninth Report, April–June 1950, 31–141. The episode however makes a neat prelude to a series of questions that still overhang much discussion of the Parthenon, namely what are the myths that are displayed in its complex sculptural components, and how were they seen and used in ancient times, as will be addressed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

The lacerations marked where the marble had been struck in the bombardments, the crystals of the exposed white subsurface glistening in the sun, an effect that lasted for many decades.<sup>27</sup>

When late in 1830, non-Muslims were permitted by the Ottoman military authorities to enter the Acropolis for the first time for nine years, they were surprised at what they found. According to the twenty-five-year-old Benjamin Disraeli, who had arrived in Athens from having interviewed his hero Reschid in Ioannina in western Greece, in a letter to his father: 'The ancient remains have been respected. The Parthenon and the other temples which are in the Acropolis, have necessarily suffered during the siege, but the injury is only in the detail — the general effect is not marred — we saw hundreds of shells and balls lying among the ruins'.<sup>28</sup> Or as another visitor wrote: 'stumbling now and then over one of the rusty bomb-shells or cannon-balls'.<sup>29</sup> When the Ottoman army left in 1833, the pieces of broken bombs and shells lying on the surface were used to illuminate the whole Acropolis, every embrasure in the battlements sporting a makeshift metal lamp.<sup>30</sup>

And when others who had read reports of the fighting and the bombardments were allowed to examine the monuments on the summit, including the Parthenon, they too were astonished.<sup>31</sup> The Parthenon was

27 Garston's comment on the monuments at the entrance that 'it is a matter of surprise that they have not fallen' seems exaggerated. Garston, *Greece Revisited*, i, 121.

28 Disraeli, *The Letters of Benjamin Disraeli*, edited by John Matthews [and others] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982–2014), no 104, page i, 174, dated 30 November 1830. In a novelized version, *Contarini Fleming*, published soon after his return to England and destined to be kept in print for mainstream reading for the rest of the century, which included extracts verbatim from his letters, he altered 'balls' to 'cannon-balls'. Disraeli's account of his visit to Reschid, which was also based on letters but was drastically altered in *Contarini Fleming* is described in Chapter 18.

29 Murray, E. Clare Grenville, *From Mayfair to Marathon* (London: Bentley, 1853), 420. Murray's sustained attack on Stratford Canning is reported in Chapter 19.

30 Noted by the military officer, Sir Grenville Temple, who was present. Temple, Sir Grenville, Bart., *Travels in Greece and Turkey; being the second part of excursions in the Mediterranean* (London: Saunders and Ottley, 1836), i, 81. The metal fragments were presumably used as cups that held olive oil and wicks.

31 For example: 'plusieurs des monuments d'Athènes étaient restés dans un état extraordinaire de conservation, notamment le Parthénon.' D'Estourmel, i, 96. In October 1839, when much new building was under way, the British colonel Edward Napier, on a brief visit, noted that: '[The Parthenon and the other ancient buildings] strike the stranger mute with astonishment, and make him wonder how such monuments of splendour and magnificence could have ... so long withstood the ravages of time and the elements, or the more desolating effects of fanaticism and war'. Napier, Lt. Colonel E., *Excursions along the Shores of the Mediterranean* (London: Colburn, 1842), ii, 370. .

in much the same state as it had been after Elgin's removals.<sup>32</sup> One of the earliest images made after the reopening, a watercolour of the west end of the Parthenon made by Leo Klenze in September 1834, shows extensive damage to the houses on the summit but none to the monument.<sup>33</sup> In 1858, twenty-two years after the end of the fighting, a visitor remarked on the 'tawny gold of two thousand years staining its once spotless marble, sparkling with snow-white marks of shot and shell'.<sup>34</sup> In 1846 the buildings were described as 'gashed like forked lightning'.<sup>35</sup> So slow had been the pace of change of the colour of the marble in the clean air of Athens that it was possible to distinguish the damage done during the bombardments of the Greek Revolution from the damage done in the previous siege in 1687.<sup>36</sup>

The artists of the nineteenth century, before the patina was eroded by recent air pollution, displayed the white flecking on the west end of the Parthenon as in the example at Figure 16.9, a painting by the American artist Frederick Edwin Church.



Figure 16.9. Frederic Edwin Church, *The Parthenon from the West*, 1871. Oil on canvas. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.<sup>37</sup>

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- 32 [The Parthenon] 'is not, however, in such a state of ruin as we had been led to imagine'. Morris, i, 83.
- 33 Stillwell, Richard, 'The Parthenon in 1834', in *Record of the Art Museum, Princeton University*, vol. 19, no. 1, Special Number in Honor of the Director Ernest Theodore DeWald on the Occasion of His Retirement, 1960, 93–97.
- 34 Taylor 40. 'Blackened columns 'with spots of dazzling whiteness'. Lamartine, i, 25.
- 35 Gadsby 70. Noted also in 1844 by Reynaud, 21.
- 36 Comment by Penrose quoted by Jenkins and Middleton from *Proceedings of the RIBA* 1st series 1851–1852, AH (3) 8–9 and in St Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, 284.
- 37 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon\\_\(1871\)\\_Frederic\\_Edwin\\_Church.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon_(1871)_Frederic_Edwin_Church.jpg)

Although paintings cannot be trusted in detail, nineteenth-century photographs, which even in monochrome emphasise the red in the spectrum, also confirm the remarks of visitors that the flecking was slight, with none on the other sides of the building.<sup>38</sup> Jules Fleutelot, who visited in the summer of 1836, was unusual in regretting that, apart from its surface having been reddened by the climate, the marble was 'almost immortal'.<sup>39</sup>

When in 1833 it became possible for the Greek authorities to examine the monuments on the summit, they met the same puzzle. The small town that had stood there before the war was gone, as were the gardens, orchards, and trees, casualties of two sieges when every scrap of vegetation and of wood had been used. But nothing had been touched and no attempt had been made to bury the bodies whose bones lay in profusion amongst the marble. It was as if the Ottoman army had scrupulously preserved the evidence, as on a modern crime scene, that would exonerate them in any later investigation into, or audit of, their stewardship of the monuments since 1826.

As for the buildings, the mosque within the Parthenon appears to have been entirely undamaged, as was the large house that had been the residence of the military governor. All the other houses were destroyed.<sup>40</sup> And as for the classical buildings on the summit, the Nike temple, which had not yet been reassembled, was much as it had been before the war.<sup>41</sup> As for the Propylaea, the Erechtheion and the Parthenon, it was generally assumed the Ottoman artillery bombardment had aimed to destroy them, not only because of their symbolic value for the neo-Hellenic nationalism of the Revolution but because they were the only substantial structures within which the Greek and philhellene soldiers had been able to shelter from the shelling.<sup>42</sup> The Propylaea, having been enclosed in mediaeval fortifications was only flecked.

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38 'slightly injured', Grosvenor, ii, 146.

39 Fleutelot, Jules, *Retour d'un voyage en Orient par Malte, la Sicile et l'Italie: juillet–octobre 1836* (Paris: Duberger, 1837), 22.

40 'enormous heaps of rubbish, the remains of generations of frail dwellings'. Hill, S.S., 92. His visit was not later than 1842.

41 The Nike temple had mostly had been dismantled to provide materials for the refortification in the early eighteenth century. A visitor in June 1831 noted: 'Two elegant fluted Doric columns and one pilaster in the same style, supporting the two lower members of the entablature, with insignificant portions of the walls of the cella, are all that is left of that once beautiful edifice'. Wines, ii, 215.

42 For example: 'It is surprising to see how the column forming the south west angle resisted their repeated efforts to destroy it. The intention of the Turks was to bring

As for the Erechtheion, it was in ruins, with one of the Caryatids lying on the ground, and the roof fallen in.<sup>43</sup> For a while it was assumed that the building had been destroyed by the Ottoman bombardment, a story that was frequently repeated later by those who relied on Gordon's *History of the Greek Revolution*.<sup>44</sup> But that book had been published in 1832, when the Acropolis was still occupied by the Ottoman army and Gordon had not at that time personally seen the building.<sup>45</sup> And since it was known to the Ottoman forces that the gunpowder magazine had been located there until they lost control in 1822, it was an obvious target.

The influence of Lord Elgin had been so great among the Ottoman authorities that the entrance to the magazine in the Erechtheion had been specially opened to enable his agents to remove antiquities and then bricked up later.<sup>46</sup> And the magazine was still there. In the spring

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down the remainder of the temple upon the Greeks, who were then in possession of the fortress, and had taken refuge in the interior of the ruin.' Cole, unnumbered page describing the view, 'West Front of the Parthenon'.

- 43 'The Erechthaeum has not suffered much lately, though one of the Cariatides is lying on the ground'. Temple, i, 81: he visited in April 1833 immediately after the Ottoman army left. It was also the considered opinion of Pittakis that the building had 'fallen down'. Hobhouse, 1858 edition, ii, 448 from personal communication. A line drawing of the Erechtheion, made in 1843 at the time of the initial clearances, showing the brick vault and a block that had fallen on to it, is reproduced in Dalgabio, Jean-Michel, Lyon, Athènes, *Constantinople: les dessins du voyage de 1843* (Lyon: University of Saint-Étienne, 2002), 68.
- 44 The false story entered the scholarly tradition, repeated, for example, in Curtius, Ernst, *Die Akropolis von Athen: Ein Vortrag im Wissenschaftlichen Verein zu Berlin am 10 Februar gehalten* (Berlin: Besser, 1844), 31.
- 45 Gordon, ii, 376. D'Estourmel, who did not visit the Acropolis, heard the story that the Erechtheion had been targeted in the bombardment and that children were killed, d'Estourmel, 116. The story that the damage was due to the bombardment was repeated by Cusani, ii, 262; von Arnim ii, 32, 'gänzlich zerstört', and Damer, i, 42. Makriyannis, writing later, gives the names of the male family members, describes the heaping over with earth, and also says the temple was destroyed by bombardment, with only one boy not killed. *Memoirs* ed. H.A. Lidderdale, 102–03. Paton in Stevens et al, *Erechtheum*, 305–09, notes the evidence then available for the state of the Erechtheion and the comments on whether it had collapsed or been struck by gunfire, including the opinion of Sir Richard Church in his unpublished memoir in the British Library that it had collapsed. That the Erechtheion had collapsed from the weight of earth was the opinion of Auldjo, 24, and of the well-informed Gropius, who had lived in Athens since long before the Revolution as related to Trant, 271. Collapse was the explanation of Henri Cornille, who visited the Acropolis in the winter of 1832/33 when it was still occupied by the Ottoman army and before Gordon's *History* was locally available. Cornille, 313. He notes that Fabvier had established a battery nearby.
- 46 Elgin, *Memorandum*, 1815 edition 25.



of 1826 Georg Gropius, the Austrian consul, pleaded with the French consul Fauvel to press the Greek authorities to move it to somewhere less dangerous.<sup>47</sup> Whether, as is unlikely, it was moved to a less exposed position, before Reschid's army began its bombardment later that year I have not been able to discover. What seems to have happened was that when, in 1826, news arrived in Athens that Reschid's army was on its way, an attempt was made by Gouras and the Greek defenders to make the building safer by piling clods of earth on the Byzantine-era brick arches inside. A few months later, the winter rains added to the weight and one night it collapsed; the widow and extended family of Gouras, at least eleven people, were crushed to death.<sup>48</sup> It was still in its collapsed state when the Acropolis reverted to Greek control. The Ottoman army, it turned out, had not even removed the bodies.<sup>49</sup> According to the Bavarian officer Neezer, one of the first to see inside, the skulls and bones of the dead still lay where they had died, and it was the Bavarians who began the task of gathering them and putting them into the cisterns near the Parthenon.<sup>50</sup> Since the Erechtheion had not been struck or blown up, nor the marble shattered by bombardment, the fallen pieces lay ready to be put back in place, a process that began soon after independence.<sup>51</sup>

We have a picture of the Parthenon made soon after 1833, reproduced as Figure 16.10, which shows the mosque inside also undamaged.

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47 Gropius to Fauvel, March 13, 1826: 'Le vestibule du temple de Minerve Polias sera sauvé du danger de sauter un jour dans l'air; on va construire *sans délai* une autre poudrière en chateau'. Noted by Lesk, 592 from Bibliothèque national de France, MSS, *Fonds fr.* 22874, fols. 220 and 221.

48 'Gouras had prepared for himself a famous temple, which he had heaped over with earth to stop bombs breaking in... He brought [his family and friends] into the citadel, put them in the cellar where they ate and drank without one of them ever setting foot outside the cellar door. For outside there were bombs and grenades and cannon-shell, and every man went in danger, but in the cellar there was a snug safety'. Makriyannis, 102. A line drawing, made in 1843 at the time of the initial clearances, showing the brick vault and the fallen blocks, in Dalgabio 68. Many more are reproduced by Lesk

49 Paton in Stevens et al., 558, quoting Ross and Thiersch.

50 Neezer, quoted by Norre, 202.

51 'it seems to have been borne down by the weight suddenly added to that of the other objects laid upon the roof for its protection, rather than to have been dissevered by the explosion of the shell, it is probable that its restoration will be fully as effective as that of the Temple of Victory'. Garston, i, 126. Noted also by Milnes, 127. A photograph of a bruise on the marble surface caused by a projectile is shown by Lesk, Figure 199, p. 1082. Whether it was caused by flying splinters or by musket fire cannot be ascertained. It tends to confirm that the damage to the Erechtheion caused by the bombardments during the Revolution, like that to the other ancient buildings, was superficial.



Figure 16.10. Painting by Captain Pierre Peytier, The Ottoman mosque built in the ruins of the Parthenon after 1715 (1830s). The scene was personally observed between 1833 and 1836.<sup>52</sup>

Jean-Pierre-Eugène-Félicien Peytier, an engineer captain in the French army who was employed in mapping Greece with modern trigonometric instruments, arrived in Athens in April 1833, and he left Greece in 1836. Consequently, he saw the Acropolis immediately after the Ottoman army left, perhaps participating in the ceremonies, and before the restoration work had started in earnest.<sup>53</sup> A visitor in June 1834 confirms the accuracy of the picture, describing the Parthenon as ‘surrounded by deformity and heaps of rubbish; the interior filled by an ugly building, now a barrack, once a mosque’.<sup>54</sup> And from the images we can see the whiter gaps from where Elgin’s agents had removed the metopes, around thirty years before.

We also have an oil painting by Johann Jakob Wolfensberger, the professional artist from Switzerland, who was in Athens in November 1832 and later. This picture too, reproduced as Figure 16.11, has to be dated to some time soon after the Ottoman army left in April 1833, and we can be confident that any drawing made on the spot was worked up in the studio.

52 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peytier\\_-\\_Mosque\\_in\\_the\\_Parthenon.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peytier_-_Mosque_in_the_Parthenon.jpg)

53 Much information about Peytier and his career, with numerous illustrations, although not this one, in *Peytier Album*.

54 Burgess, i, 287.



Figure 16.11. Johann Jakob Wolfensberger, *The Acropolis looking west* (c.1832–1835). Oil painting.<sup>55</sup>

This picture shows the Acropolis stripped and bare, with a few ruined houses, but the Parthenon and its mosque undamaged. It also shows the Hill of Philopappos where the Ottoman guns that had killed so many people were sited, within easy range in both directions.<sup>56</sup> Other paintings were made soon after the departure of the Ottoman forces, at a time when the clearances had only just begun. Although these are not necessarily to be taken as literal representations, they also show that if any damage was done to the Parthenon on some sides, it was almost imperceptible, without even a scar on the deep brown patinated surfaces.<sup>57</sup>

55 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zentralbibliothek\\_Z%C3%BCrich\\_-\\_Die\\_Akropolis\\_in\\_Athen\\_-\\_500000156.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zentralbibliothek_Z%C3%BCrich_-_Die_Akropolis_in_Athen_-_500000156.jpg)

56 A watercolour by Wolfensberger, dated 1834, a picturesque view of the Parthenon from the northwest, with what may be intended as Greek revolutionary soldiers and a local woman, and showing the same pattern on the building of occasional white chips on the brown patina, now in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, is reproduced in colour in Valavanis, Panos, *The Acropolis Through its Museum; Translation Alexandra Doumas* (Athens: Kapon, 2013), 97, from the original now in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow.

57 For example, those made in 1834, by Martinus Röyerbe and Ludwig Lange reproduced in colour in Papageorgiou-Venetas, Alexander, ed., *Briefwechsel Klenze-Ross 1834–1854* (Athens, Archäologische Gesellschaft zu Athen, 2006), 243.

How could it have happened that all the monuments of Athens had survived?<sup>58</sup> The word ‘miracle’ occurred to more than one puzzled visitor.<sup>59</sup> Others, invoking the inscrutable designs of Providence, suggested that the ruins had been preserved as a perpetual reminder to Athens of what she had once been and might again be if reborn.<sup>60</sup> To the astonished German historian, Georg Gervinus, the fact that the monuments had not been destroyed could only be explained by suggesting that the ‘divine art’ of the Acropolis had exercised some miraculous, mysterious, and magical spell over the barbarians who wanted to destroy them.<sup>61</sup> The same question occurred to Charles Lévêque, a French archaeologist who first visited Greece in 1846 when the country was recovering from the Revolution. What mysterious power, he asked, had protected the Parthenon since 1453? It never seems to have occurred to him that the systematic mutilations to the frieze and the metopes had not been perpetrated by the Muslims but by the early Christians nearly a thousand years before that date.<sup>62</sup> He too offered

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58 As for the hill of the Muses, the Ottoman artillery position was bombarded by the Greek forces besieged in the Acropolis but the Monument of Philopappos itself was not damaged. ‘the Monument of Philopappos on the hill of Museum — here the ground is thickly strewn with fragments of shells, and round shot, a battery having been established on this spot to bombard the Acropolis, and it is really surprising that the monument escaped the citadel’s fire so well.’ Temple 77.

59 For example Cole, William, *Select Views of the Remains of Ancient Monuments in Greece, as at Present Existing, from drawings taken and coloured on the spot in the Year 1833* (London: for the Author, Ackermann, 1835), Preface, ‘miraculously preserved’; [Of the Monument of Lysicrates] ‘Its preservation seemed miraculous’ Alcock, 178.

60 ‘Its preservation is owing to that respect and awe which works of art inspire in the rudest and most savage breasts.’ Morris, i, 86. ‘It is the partial regeneration and commencing civilization of this oppressed and unfortunate people, who, during that long epoch, with the proudest monuments of human genius constantly before their eyes, to remind them of their degradation, have, from the inscrutable designs of Providence, been visited, as it were, with a moral and political death, and left to wander through a long and gloomy night of deplorable barbarism. Since the day that St. Paul preached on the Areopagus at Athens, it has been for that people one continued and unbroken endurance of the tyrant’s despotic chains, until the light of Christianity again burst over the pagan temples in Greece, and now gives promise that she shall be redeemed, and disenthralled, and restored to her pristine rank.’ Mott 179.

61 ‘Dans toutes les dévastations terribles que la Grèce a subies, l’acropole d’Athènes avait été protégée par un sort miraculeux et mystérieux, ou pour mieux dire, par le charme magique d’un art divin qui frappa d’admiration les barbares mêmes et qui les empêchait de la détruire entièrement.’ Gervinus, G.-G., *Insurrection et régénération de la Grèce, Traduction française par J.-F. Minssen [et] Léonidas Sgouta* (Paris: Durand, 1863) 116.

62 Lévêque Charles, ‘Les monumens d’Athènes et les études archéologiques en Grèce’ (Paris: *Revue des Deux Mondes* T.11, 1851), 638.

a providentialist explanation imbued with western romanticism. The Parthenon was 'perfect', Lévêque claimed, because it conformed with the designs of 'the Creator', something that the ancient Greek 'artists' had understood. It had only by a 'miracle' escaped Elgin. Since the time of Sulla, who had not destroyed Athens in 87–86 BCE, he suggested, the famous dead Greeks who were present in the works had watched over the living, and if bad days came again, they would protect them again.<sup>63</sup>

Edgar Quinet, who saw Athens at its lowest point, had been sent into Athens by the French expeditionary forces with the specific task of assessing the state of the monuments. He reported that all were standing and in good condition.<sup>64</sup> How could they have escaped without the loss of a single stone, he asked himself. His answer: it was their destiny. It was as if the monuments had been saved because 'the world still had need of them'.<sup>65</sup>

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63 *Ibid.*, 660. The decision by Sulla is discussed as an example of ancient rhetoric in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

64 In his report he included the Parthenon and other monuments on the Acropolis that he was not able to enter, relying on distant views and conversations with local Ottoman officials and others. His mission is described with transcripts of archival documents by Bondonio, P. M., 'La Mission d'Edgar Quinet en Morée', *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire De La France*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1936, 418–19. A summary of his report was published in Paris in the *Moniteur Universel* of 12 August 1829. It is just possible that Quinet had been sent to check on whether the agreement with Reschid to be discussed in Chapter 14 was being observed, but if so, he seems not to have been told about it.

65 'Je me sentais pénétré pour ces restes de ce respect qu'inspire une destinée qui vient d'échapper à de grands dangers. Une haute fortune en avait pris soin et venait de les sauver, comme s'ils étaient encore nécessaires au monde'. Quinet, 335 The passage is also in the 1830 edition.



## 17. The Secret

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How could it have happened that, among all the deaths, injuries, and miseries of the people, the severe damage to the churches, and the almost total destruction of the houses of the town, that every one of the twelve main ancient monuments of Athens still stood? How had the Ottoman army, in a siege of ten months, during which they fired tens of thousands of mortar bombs and artillery shells into the Acropolis, caused only superficial injury to the Parthenon? How could it have happened, as one surprised visitor wondered, that all the monuments of Athens were 'defying the crumbling sand of time, or the more destructive hands of the barbarians'.<sup>1</sup> Or, as an immigrant who intended to settle posed the question, why, despite six years of war followed by six years of Ottoman military occupation, had there been no damage to the Parthenon since Elgin's day?<sup>2</sup> It is easy to understand why observers turned to the language of miracles, providentialism, or destiny. At the time, no other explanation could be imagined. And even the real explanation might have seemed almost as hard to believe.

It was while Reschid's army was already on the march from Missolonghi towards Athens in the spring of 1826 that Stratford Canning received a copy of an intercepted letter, in which Reschid told his government that he intended to obtain experienced mine-workers from Albania and destroy the ancient monuments on the Acropolis by 'overturning the whole mountain'. The exact status of the letter is not clear, but there is no reason to doubt that, as a report

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1 Torrey, F.P., *Journal of the cruise of the United States ship Ohio, Commodore Isaac Hull, commander, in the Mediterranean, in the years 1839, '40, '41* (Boston: Printed by S.N. Dickinson, 1841), 33.

2 'Notwithstanding the events of 1827, the monuments of Athens were left much in the same condition to which they had been reduced by the pillagings of the notorious Elgin'. Perdicaris, G.A., *The Greece of the Greeks* (Boston: Paine and Burgess, 1845), 39.

of what Reschid intended, it was true.<sup>3</sup> And, in terms of Ottoman aims, the policy described in the letter is understandable, rational, and even predictable. If, at the beginning of the Revolution, the Ottoman authorities had been puzzled by the reappearance of the ancient Greeks and their stories, by 1826 that was no longer the case. On the contrary, since 1821, there had been scarcely a book, a pamphlet, a picture, or a conversation with westerners from which the ancients were absent. To the Ottoman leadership, the Acropolis of Athens was a prime candidate for heritage cleansing, offering the opportunity for a more contemporary, and perhaps more effective, display and performance of Ottoman power than the destruction of yet more churches, the desecration of yet more Christian graveyards, sending yet more bags of ears to Constantinople, or building yet more pyramids of skulls. If the Greek Revolutionaries were asserting a neo-Hellenic nationalism, what better way to combat that idea than by destroying what was, by far, the most visible reminder of ancient Hellenism in all the revolted provinces?

It was after reading the intercepted letter that Canning decided to make a direct appeal to Reschid. More than most, he understood that the Greek Revolution was a clash of ideologies and traditions, and that the standard western political rhetorics ('oriental barbarism'; 'national liberation'; 'atrocities on both sides') were inadequate as explanations, let alone as guides to policy. Nor could the war be understood solely in tactical or strategic military terms without giving weight to the need of both sides, but especially the Ottoman, to perform for multiple audiences, including the foreign powers and their publics.

Although in his dealings with foreign governments he did more than his share of urging, Canning seldom scolded. And he was scrupulous in adhering to the external niceties and formalities, including paying compliments, that enabled representatives of countries with widely different views and traditions to separate their personal from their official selves, and so to maintain professional relationships. Unlike most of the opinion formers and policy makers in Constantinople and in the European capitals, Canning not only had shelves of reports by eyewitnesses piling up in the embassy, enabling him to be among the

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3 Transcribed from a translation in Appendix C. In the correspondence we have, Reschid never denied or disowned it.



best informed of all the principal actors, but he had seen for himself the effects of what he was to call 'the antipathies of 'race and creed'.<sup>4</sup>

And he was about to see more. On 1 December 1826, when Reschid's army was already in Athens besieging the Acropolis, the ship in which Canning was travelling put in to the small island of Psara, whose insurgency had been forcibly put down. The port town was empty and in ruins, and along the coast he saw the bodies of those who had thrown themselves from the cliffs, including women who had first killed their children. When his party ventured inland they met two survivors whom he described as 'worn nearly to skeletons by fear and anguish and famine, the very types of hopeless misery, with haggard eyes and loathsome beards and tattered rags by way of clothing, they told without language the history of their sufferings'.<sup>5</sup> On his arrival at the British Embassy, Canning may have read the *Yafta* dated 14 July 1824 that declared that it was a sacred duty, with the help of Allah, to punish the rebels. The island had been purified, and a booty of ten captains, five hundred prisoners, ten ships, and a hundred pieces of cannon divided among the Muslims. The heads of the five hundred prisoners had been displayed along with around twelve hundred ears.<sup>6</sup> It was about the same time that Robert Walsh, the British Embassy chaplain, on his way back to England by land, met a party of Ottoman soldiers who had taken part in the destruction, with large baskets strapped on the sides of their horses containing boys and girls aged from three or four to nine or ten, on their way to be sold in the slave market at Constantinople.<sup>7</sup>

Canning's letter to Reschid, which he sent in his official capacity after hearing of Reschid's intention to destroy the Parthenon, made no criticism of Ottoman codes and customs.<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, he

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4 Lane-Poole, Canning, i, 389, from Canning's manuscript memoirs to which he had access but have not subsequently been found.

5 Lane-Poole, Canning, i, 398–90 from Canning's manuscript memoirs.

6 Reported by Ambassador Strangford in Kew 78/123.

7 Walsh, Rev. R., LL.D, M.R.I.A., *Narrative of a journey from Constantinople to England* (London: Westley, second edition, 1828), 126. The case of a boy taken from Chios who remembered the baskets was noted in Chapter 14.

8 Full text of the English version in Appendix D. This letter and some internal Ottoman documents on the considerations that caused the Ottoman Government to agree to the request, found in the Ottoman archives, were also discussed by Professor Edhem Eldem at the conference 'The Topography of Ottoman Athens' held in Athens on 23–24 April 2015. Videocast at <http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/index.php/News/newsDetails/videocast-the-topography-of-ottoman-athens.-archaeology-travel-symposium>

congratulated Reschid on his military success at Missolonghi, in effect publicly accepting that, under both European and Ottoman norms, suppressing rebellion was an internal matter. Instead, as has been noted by Professor Eldem, who discovered documents from the Ottoman side of the correspondence in the archives in Istanbul, the letter goes on to offer a ‘rhetoric of anticipated satisfaction’.<sup>9</sup> Canning writes as if ‘European’ attitudes were already shared by the Ottoman leadership, and that he and Reschid shared the condescending, almost contemptuous, attitude that, in private at least, European elites took towards the rank and file of their armies. By making a remark in a letter that he could not have said in a public forum, Canning’s language tried to co-opt Reschid into a shared intimacy, inviting him to join an imagined community of men who know what power is and how the world actually works. The Ottoman Government is certain to have known that, when the Concert of Europe was established at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Britain and Austria had wanted to include the Ottoman Empire but had been unable to persuade the other powers.<sup>10</sup> They knew that Canning had spent much of 1825 and 1826 rumbling across Europe’s bad roads in a carriage, visiting the courts of Europe in order to discuss the future of Greece with their highest officials, including the emperors of Austria and Russia and the kings of Prussia and of the Two Sicilies.<sup>11</sup> Canning’s letter was a scarcely disguised offer to revisit the 1815 decision, with the prospects for the future that such a change in relationship would offer.

By invoking the ‘beauty’ of the ancient monuments, Canning sought to move the negotiation away from the political (‘though of small importance in the eye of Reason or of Religion, and wholly unconnected with affairs of State’), and from the age-old Muslim discourses of idolatry (‘viewed by Turks even of the higher class with contempt or at best with indifference’). While acknowledging, with a touch of disdain, the emerging new status of the monuments as neo-Hellenic symbols sustaining a nationalist rebellion (‘under a fixed persuasion that those enduring records of the former glory of that Country contribute in a

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9 In Appendix C, I include a summary of discussions on the Ottoman side, that were published by Professor Eldem from official Ottoman Government documents.

10 Noted by Siemann, Wolfram, Daniel Steuer (translator), *Metternich* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 2019), 628.

11 Lane-Poole, Canning, i, 314–516, mainly from Canning’s own reminiscences and non-diplomatic correspondence.

great degree to render the present generation of Greeks discontented with the Turkish Government'), he urged Reschid to think of the longer-term political interests of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>12</sup>

Canning's letter implied that the decision of whether or not to destroy the ancient monuments was one to be taken by Reschid as military commander. He did not suggest that Reschid was bound by the 1821 vizieral letter (firman), but as part of his letter he sent him a copy, a document that Reschid may not previously have known about.<sup>13</sup> And we know from Canning's letter to London that he also told the Ottoman Government of his request to Reschid, so opening up the thought that if someone at court wanted, in modern terms, to throw the book at him, Reschid's plan might be regarded as disobeying a vizieral order made in 1821 that had been implemented in that year and never been countermanded or withdrawn.<sup>14</sup>

Canning entrusted the responsibility for delivering his letter to Captain Hamilton, the commander of the British naval squadron in the region, guaranteeing the funds to employ messengers so that Reschid would receive the letter before his army reached Athens.<sup>15</sup> And, almost simultaneously, before he had received Reschid's answer, Canning had been able to demonstrate the practical value of his goodwill. On 8 July 1826, with funds advanced by Canning, Captain Hamilton redeemed and took on board his ship twenty-five named Ottoman individuals whom the Greeks of Athens had held captive. Some may have been among the prisoners whom Edward Blaquiere saw on the Acropolis on 24 July 1824 then employed making cannon balls from the marble.<sup>16</sup> According to Colonel Stanhope, whose access to international funds gave him influence, it was he who, a few months before, had suggested the idea to Odysseus, a claim there is no reason to doubt. Turning the mosque within the Parthenon, hitherto used as a granary, into a museum of antiquities displayed the romantic philhellenism

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12 Canning to Foreign Secretary, 6 June 1826, full transcription in Appendix D.

13 For the 1821 firman see Appendix C.

14 The documents from Ottoman archives discovered by H. Sükrü Ilicak are summarized in Appendix C.

15 Correspondence in Kew FO 352/15A/3.

16 'Near the door of this miserable edifice [the mosque in the Parthenon], I found a party of Turkish prisoners hewing shot out of the fragments of pentelic marble and granite columns that were strewed about in such abundance'. Blaquiere, *Second Visit*, 95.

that linked the moderns to the ancients. Using Muslims to do the work was a performance of the transformation of free Greece into a modern European state that did not put captured enemies to death.<sup>17</sup>

On the list of persons who were offered as part ransom in exchange for not destroying the Parthenon, some are noted as having been captured at various localities including Cyprus and from vessels at sea, but the three named imams who are noted as 'captured in Athens' and who appear to have been accompanied by '1 woman and 2 children' may have been survivors of the massacres of 1822.<sup>18</sup> The total price is not recorded, but when one individual is reported as having cost three hundred Spanish dollars, we can estimate a total of several hundred pounds sterling equivalent. Since, as Canning had recognized, his chances of reclaiming the money from the Ottoman Government were not high, Canning's action was humanitarian, but it can also be regarded as an upfront payment.

Canning appreciated that, as part of Reschid's ambition that the Ottoman Empire should be accepted as a reliable and European-style partner. He therefore could not be bribed with money. And, if so, he was right. When the French Admiral de Rigny, who was also involved in separate negotiations, offered money directly, his offer was refused with contempt ('The ruler of the world has no need of money'), a fact only known at present from the Ottoman records.<sup>19</sup>

At the time Canning wrote his letter to Reschid, it seemed inevitable that the monuments of Athens could not survive the forthcoming attack. If they were not destroyed by the artillery of attacking Ottomans, they would be destroyed by the gunpowder charges of the defending Greeks as they immolated themselves. And it was against this contingency that Canning invited Captain Hamilton, on his way to Athens to deal with the ransoming of the Muslims, to use the same channel to sound out the possibility of making another offer to Reschid.<sup>20</sup> If Reschid insisted

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17 Stanhope, the Honourable Colonel Leicester, *Greece, in 1823 and 1824: being a series of letters and other documents on the Greek revolution, written during a visit to that country. A New Edition containing numerous supplementary papers, illustrative of the State of Greece in 1825, Illustrated with several curious fac-similes, to which are added Reminiscences of Lord Byron* (London: Printed for Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, 1825), 130, 136.

18 'List of Turkish prisoners delivered by the Governor of Athens to Captain Hamilton CB of His Majesty's Ship Cambrian 8th July 1826.' Kew FO 352/15A/3, 450.

19 Reschid to the Ottoman Government, 23 August 1826 in Appendix D.

20 Full text in Appendix D.

on destroying the monuments, Canning indicated, he would be in the market to buy some of the pieces either in advance or after the buildings had been knocked down. Canning knew that, if he were to buy pieces of the monuments, he risked being classed with Elgin ('the danger of being despised with the Goths and the Elgins of other times would not deter me from offering to become a purchaser of the Caryatides and of the reliefs which still remain on the Parthenon' [*so underlined*]), although, if the circumstances had arisen, that would have been unfair. If Canning's letter to Captain Hamilton made any difference to Ottoman policy, no record has yet been found.

In the event, the fall-back was not needed. Reschid and the Ottoman Government evidently understood that a bargain was being offered, one that Canning did not need to spell out in writing in his initial letter, but that he was to do soon afterwards when a wider bargain came to be discussed.<sup>21</sup> By including a range of face-saving devices, Canning enabled Reschid, who had received instructions from his government, to send a reply to Canning in which, without admitting that he had changed his mind or that he had been overruled, he promised to do his best to save the monuments from being destroyed in the battle for Athens that could not be long delayed<sup>22</sup>

In telling London about the intercepted letter and the Ottoman army plan to 'overturn the mountain', Canning, who had never visited the Acropolis, had wondered whether such a plan was feasible.<sup>23</sup> He, unlike Reschid, may not have known that the Acropolis is permeated with caves, some very deep, and that explosives set off within the caves could cause such vibrations that the walls would be liable to crumble as in an earthquake. In particular, for any military commander intent on destroying the Parthenon, the Panaghia Speliotissa under the monument of Thrassylos would have been a perfect place to start. The deepest of the Acropolis caves are on the south slope. The monument that was built above the entrance, which was then being restored to its ancient appearance, is shown as Figure 17.1.

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21 Discussed in Chapter 18.

22 Transcribed in Appendix D.

23 'notwithstanding some difficulties in its execution'. From Stratford Canning's letter to the Foreign Secretary, 30 September 1826, transcribed in Appendix C.



Figure 17.1. The Monument of Thrassylos under restoration 2013.<sup>24</sup>

As it stood during the Revolution, the Cave, situated high on the open slopes but outside the walled and fortified Serpenji, was potentially a strongpoint both for defenders and attackers. With its bricked up entrance, slit-holes for muskets, and plentiful storage room behind, it was an advance post from which a large area of the approaches to the Acropolis rock could be commanded.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the fact that the Ottoman authorities chose to close the ancient church a few years before the outbreak of the Revolution, and oblige the Christians to relocate to another cave church set into another hill, may indicate that they were aware that the pre-Revolutionary sentiment in Athens was more than a literary movement.<sup>26</sup> That it would be possible to bring down the walls of the Acropolis by putting explosives in this cave was not a secret, being noted even in the printed compilation from local reports by published by Guillet in 1675.<sup>27</sup>

24 Author's photograph. The conservation was completed in January 2018.

25 An account of how the Cave appeared from a distance by Lord Bute is quoted in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

26 'About 1818 the cave became a stronghold, and the greater part of the buildings of the church were then demolished; the altar, however, according to Pittaces [Pittakis], was taken to the subterranean church of St. Marina, near the Observatory, probably from an idea of keeping it still in a cave. Thither the devotion has followed it'. Bute, *Essays*, 122.

27 '... it was admired by some of us (more verst in Warlike Affairs than the rest) that the Christian Corsaires, among their many Designs and Enterprizes upon the Turks, never thought of making use of that hole as of a Mine half made to their hands for

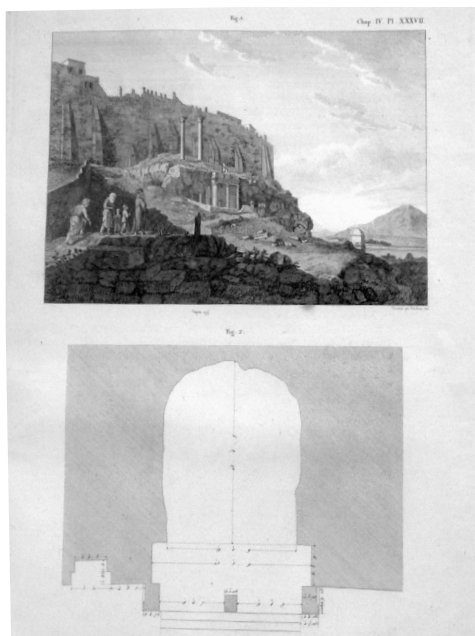


Figure 17.2. 'The Choragic Monument of Thrassylus etc'. Copper engraving,<sup>28</sup>

The Cave had been artificially enlarged at some unknown time so that stretched deep into the Acropolis rock.<sup>29</sup> Until shortly before the Revolution, as a Christian site, it appears to have been second in importance only to the Christianized Theseion. When the young

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blowing up the Castle, which in their judgment ten or twelve Barrels of Powder would easily and effectually have done' ... 'and for the Castle, he would have taken that by the hole I mentioned before; to effect this, the Candiot desired only eight hundred Men, and three or four Field-Pieces (more for terrour than execution) with ten barrels of Powder for springing the Mine.' Guillet in English, *An Account of a late Voyage to Athens, containing the estate both ancient and modern of that famous City, and of the present Empire of the Turks: the Life of the now Sultan Mahomet the IV. With the Ministry of the Grand Vizier, Coprogli Achmet Pacha. Also the most remarkable passages in the Turkish Camp at the Siege of Candia. And divers other particularities, etc. By Monsieur de la Guillatiere [sic] ... Now Englished* (London: Printed for J[ohn] M[acock], Herringman, 1676), 172. The story by Guillet was reported by Clarke, *Travels, part the second, section the second*, 1814, 481, a book of which a copy was probably available in Athens in the Philomuse Society collection of books, but after hundreds of years of military occupation, they probably did not need a westerner to tell them.

28 Stuart and Revett, new edition, *The Antiquities of Athens. Measured and delineated by James Stuart FRS and FSA and Nichols Revett, painters and architects. A New edition* (London: Priestley and Weale, 4 volumes, 1825), ii, opposite 90.

29 'natural formation enlarged by art'. Stuart and Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, ii, 86.

architect Charles Robert Cockerell fell ill in Athens in 1810, his recovery was attributed to the power of the 'Panagia Castriotissa.' 'Our Lady of the Castle', with whose cult the Cave was associated.<sup>30</sup> As can be seen from the image shown as Figure 17.5, it lay outside the walls of the Serpenji, and could be approached directly by any hostile force that had breached the town walls.

The Cave appears to have been continuously in use back to the remotest antiquity. The picture, reproduced as Figure 17.3, made in 1805 before the Revolution, is one of the few that are known of the inside of any of the Acropolis caves when they were in active use as holy places.



Figure 17.3. 'Athens, Panaghia Speliotissa' ['All-holy lady of the Cave']. Copper engraving of an image composed on the spot in 1805.<sup>31</sup>

The Cave was so brightly painted and gilded with Christian images inside that it was known as the Chryssospeliotissa, the 'golden cave'.<sup>32</sup> The three Caves are shown, along with the Theatre of Dionysos, but not the Thrassylos monument or the two columns that were erected later,

30 Noted by Hughes, Thomas Smart, *Travels in Sicily, Greece and Albania* (London: Mawman, 1820), i, 252. Garnered from drips inside, the water may have occasionally produced beneficial placebo effects, but if consumed in other than small quantities, it would have gradually have acted as a poison. I was told a few years ago that holy water from the Cave was still on sale in Athens if you knew where to ask.

31 S. Pomardi del., Engraved by Chas Heath, published June 1, 1819, by Rodwell & Martin, New Bond Street, in Dodwell, *Classical Tour*, i, facing 300. A full description of the interior of the church as it was reclaimed for Christian use after the damage done during the Revolution is given by Bute, *Essays*, 121–25.

32 So called by, for example, Makriyannis, *Memoirs*, ed. H.A. Lidderdale, 100.



which can be seen on a Roman imperial low-denomination bronze coin of the first century CE or later—one of only two visual presentations of the Acropolis that survive from the ancient world, and the last to be made locally until 1835, a millennium and a half later.<sup>33</sup> At least two variations have been found, both from an implied bird's-eye or god's-eye viewing station, and each with artistic features that select what is recommended as important to the implied viewer. Since photographs of coins are hard to read, even if they are easy to find, I show instead an engraving from what was then a unique example in Figure 17.4.



Figure 17.4. The Theatre and Caves on the Acropolis south slope. Engraving of a low denomination Roman imperial copper coin.<sup>34</sup>

In the event, when the Greek forces retreated into the Acropolis on 3 August 1826 and Makriyannis, with others, attempted to use the Cave for military purposes, it proved to be of little value. Since it lay within range of the Ottoman artillery batteries on both Philopappos and Lycabettos, it was targeted and most of the defenders were killed or wounded.<sup>35</sup> Later the Ottomans appear to have brought up a piece of ordnance and fired it directly into the mouth of the Cave.<sup>36</sup> It was sketched on the spot

<sup>33</sup> Discussed, with an explanation of why the making of images ceased in Chapter 14.

<sup>34</sup> Stuart and Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, ii, 86. Frequently photographed, for example, in Kraay, C.M., *The Coins of Ancient Athens* (Newcastle: Minerva Numismatic Handbooks, 1968), Plate VIII, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Makriyannis, 100.

<sup>36</sup> Fauvel, Clairmont, 95.

by James Hore in 1835 in its immediate postwar state soon after the Ottoman army left, as shown in Figure 17.5.



Figure 17.5. The Cave and remains of the Thrassylos monument, 1835. Pen and wash drawing by James Hore.<sup>37</sup>

How far what was left of the Thrassylos monument after Elgin's removals was further damaged in the years before the Greek Revolution cannot be easily established, but the two ancient columns remained undisturbed, and there was no attempt to bring down the Acropolis walls by destroying the buttresses. Reschid, in promising Canning that he would do his best to preserve the monuments during the military operations to retake Athens, had left himself a way out: 'in the present war carried on against obstinate and frantic Rebels, they may take refuge in some of the aforesaid Monuments and there fortify themselves; in which case I shall be under the necessity of employing violence against them, but even in this case I will endeavour to preserve the aforesaid Monuments'.<sup>38</sup> With the Monument to Thrassylos, Reschid had carried out his promise to Canning to the letter.

So here we have one answer to the question posed in the title of this book. The reason why the Parthenon and the other ancient monuments

<sup>37</sup> Private collection. Rights reserved.

<sup>38</sup> From Reschid's letter to Canning, received c. 25 September 1826, transcribed in full in Appendix D.

of Athens were not damaged during the Greek Revolution, we can confidently conclude, is that the Ottoman army ensured that they were not. The Parthenon was saved by carefully targeted and well-executed shooting, carried out in accordance with explicit orders from the Ottoman military high command, acting under instructions from the sultan, to kill and terrorize those whom they regarded as rebels and infidels while causing minimum damage to the monuments. Nor is this my personal judgement with hindsight prompted by the revelations in the documents, nor is it the result of building a Venn diagram that shows the overlap of the different sets of evidence, documentary, visual, and material/archaeological, although both of these approaches would lead to the same conclusion. It was the professional military judgement of Adolphus Slade, a senior British naval officer, later an admiral in the Ottoman navy, who travelled extensively in the Ottoman Empire tasked with observing the capabilities of its armed forces. Knowing nothing of the firmans, nor of what had gone on behind the scenes, nor of the bargain made by Canning with Reschid, Slade volunteered the opinion from what he saw in Athens in the spring of 1834, that the Ottoman army had not only directed their artillery with skill, but had done better than a European army would have done. As he wrote: 'It must have required great care to preserve its ruins, more than would be shewn in modern civilized warfare'.<sup>39</sup>

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39 Slade, Adolphus, *Records of Travels in Turkey, Greece, &c: and of a cruise in the Black Sea, with the capitan pasha, in the years 1829, 1830, and 1831* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833), ii, 228. In the same passage he noted that 'the Osmanleys are not such indiscriminate destroyers [of ancient buildings] as is usually believed'. His visit to Athens is dateable from a work published later, Slade, Adolphus, *Turkey, Greece And Malta* (London: Sauders and Otley, 1837), 253.



# 18. The Bargain

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Why did the Ottoman leadership actively preserve the Parthenon and the other ancient monuments of Athens during the six years of the Revolutionary War? And why during the six years of military occupation that followed the surrender, did they continue to do so? And why, when it was made known to them that the European powers would compel them to leave Athens and Attica, if necessary by force, did they not carry out their often-repeated threat to destroy the monuments? It was not, we can be confident, the result of a sudden outbreak of respect for the ancient, let alone for the modern, Greeks. In exchange for not destroying the monuments, the Ottoman leadership gained something far more valuable to them: a reputation for being able to act as a power with a disciplined army, whose confidential promises could be trusted and whose bargains implemented. By their actions in Athens from 1827 to 1833, the Ottoman authorities demonstrated that they were committed to reforming their Ottoman institutions on the European model, as had been their own long-term policy and as the ambassadors of the powers had urged on them from the beginning of the Greek Revolution and long before.<sup>1</sup> In preserving the monuments, the Ottoman authorities had demonstrated to 'Europe' that they deserved to be treated as a European power.

The monuments were, therefore, not just hostages and pawns in a multilateral diplomatic negotiation, although they played these roles too. As the focal point of a bargain that gave the different parties what each immediately wanted, they were able to act as a pivot on which a geopolitical shift could occur. And never was the need for such a shift more apparent to all parties than during the six years

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1 The reputation of the Turks for keeping promises was noted by Alcock, Thomas, *Travels in Russia, Persia, Turkey, and Greece, in 1828–29* (London: privately printed, 1831), 128.

when the Parthenon was saved from destruction. For the western European countries, enabling the Ottoman Empire to be redefined as a European state was a further step in withdrawing from what was now embarrassing and burdensome juridical and ecclesiastical teaching, which stretched back through the Crusades to the Mediaeval period and claimed that there was an essential and unbridgeable difference between Christendom and 'barbarous nations'.<sup>2</sup> It had the potential to enable the international system to work more effectively in one of the regions where it had apparently so far failed. For the western countries, the Parthenon represented the classical antiquity to whose intellectual and artistic achievements they claimed to be the heirs. For them to allow it to be destroyed would proclaim their weakness. To the neo-Ottomans as to the neo-Hellenes, by contrast, the ancient monuments represented an aspired-to future as part of 'Europe.' For all the parties concerned, as Edgar Quinet had remarked when he had seen the monuments standing undestroyed among the ruins of modern Athens, it was as if the future had need of them.

And when, as a result of Reschid's success in reconquering Athens, he was appointed grand vizier, the highest office in the Ottoman Empire, the benefits of the bargain soon began to flow. Even before the Ottoman army had left Athens, the British invited senior Ottoman officials to visit one of their modern warships and gifted twenty guns 'to the Sultan'.<sup>3</sup> Soon a new European style-army was being trained with the help of French instructors, to replace the now militarily ineffective Corps of Janissaries whom Sultan Mahmoud had caused to be put to death *en masse* in 1826. In 1831, a second printing press was established in Constantinople mainly to print military works, which employed lithography, then the most advanced technology for circulating manuscripts, maps, and visual illustrations in cases where these were permitted.<sup>4</sup> In January 1836, the Ottoman Government established *Le Moniteur Ottoman* as an official newspaper, an example of modernization but also of the

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2 Discussed by Malcolm, Noel, *Useful Enemies, Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought 1450–1750* (Oxford: OUP, 2019), 19 and later.

3 Ponsonby to Foreign Office, dated 30 March 1833. Kew FO 78/220, 17 and 43.

4 Neumann, Christoph K., 'Book and newspaper printing in Turkish, 18th–20th century', in Hanebutt-Benz, Eva, Dagmar Glass and Geoffrey Roper, eds, *Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution: A Cross-Cultural Encounter. A Catalogue and Companion to the Exhibition* (Mainz: Gutenberg Museum Mainz, Internationale Gutenberg-Gesellschaft, 2002), 235.

downgrading, if not the dethroning, of the former techniques of display and performance.<sup>5</sup>

While the Ottoman leadership angrily rejected the humiliation of being dictated to by foreigners, they also now found themselves becoming increasingly aligned with the foreign policies of the British and French leaderships. As one group after another, beginning with the Circassians of the Crimea, and then Poles, demanded that the powers listen to their claims for independence, they began increasingly to realize that the arriving idea of 'nation' would not stop at the geographical borders of Europe or of Greece, but could be taken up by many other communities as indeed happened. Greece might draw political support, sympathy, and legitimacy from the ancient Hellenes whose ruins dotted the landscape, but other nationalisms could thrive on other myths either already in existence or invented for the purpose. In July 1830 a second French Revolution broke out in Paris that, although not as successful as the first, showed that the post-Waterloo attempt to return to pre-1789 forms of *ancien regime* monarchical government could not be sustained. Might Britain, where agitation for reform of Parliament looked increasingly unstoppable, itself be on the verge of a popular revolution? Had the policy of supporting revolutionary movements been a mistake?<sup>6</sup>

When in 1833, after a succession of defeats and concessions, the Ottoman Government made a treaty with Russia, with secret articles, a fear, approaching panic, that the whole Ottoman system might collapse and the city of Constantinople and the seaways to the Black Sea fall under the control of Russia, gripped the foreign offices of Britain and France.<sup>7</sup> The imagined community of the Orthodox Christians of which Russia was the leading member, and that in Greece had recently been overlaid by a secular philhellenism, had not gone away and there was a strong pro-Russian constituency in independent Greece, eager to join a

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5 Noted by Coller, Ian, 'Ottomans on the Move: Hassuna D'Ghies and the 'New Ottomanism' of the 1830s, in Isabella, Murizio and Zanou, Konstantina, eds, *Mediterranean Diasporas, Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 97–115.

6 The internal discussions in London that led to the shift in policy, with contemporary documents transcribed, are summarised in Balfour, Lady Frances, *The life of George, fourth earl of Aberdeen, K.G., K.T.* (London: Hodder, 1922), i, 216–244.

7 The Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, then commonly spelled Unkiar Skelessi, signed on 8 July.

new Russian-led alliance.<sup>8</sup> The policy advocated by Volney and others in the previous century, which had been to hasten the apparently inevitable break-up of the Ottoman Empire, with much it going to Russia, was losing support.<sup>9</sup> The new answer to what now came to be known as the 'Eastern question' was to try to prop up the Ottoman Empire politically and militarily as a counterweight to Russia.

In Britain, it was the young Benjamin Disraeli who was now the coming man. Indeed, by his writings, he helped to change the policy. When, in October 1830, aged twenty-five, Disraeli arrived in the Ionian Islands, he was hoping to join the Ottoman forces as a military volunteer. And he was already viscerally pro-Ottoman. As he wrote on his arrival: 'I am glad to say the Porte every where triumphant'.<sup>10</sup> And even after he reached the mainland and had seen for himself the devastation and misery that the Revolution had brought about, he wrote that: 'I detest the Greeks more than ever'.<sup>11</sup> Writing later, he declared that, 'always having had a taste for a campaign', he had intended to volunteer to fight on the Ottoman side and had been disappointed to find that the fighting was over.<sup>12</sup> When, on his first arrival in the Ionian Islands, he was asked by the British High Commissioner to act as personal courier of a letter that the he wished to send to Grand Vizier Reschid, Disraeli jumped at the chance.<sup>13</sup>

Disraeli, who spent ten days at Ioannina, where Reschid had established the headquarters of his army which was engaged in crushing an insurrection in Albania and Epirus, knew that the grand vizier wished to lead the Ottoman Empire towards European-style reform. We hear of new military books being studied and comparisons being made with Peter 'the Great' who had modernized Russia. As Disraeli wrote of his interview with his hero: 'Suddenly we were summoned to the

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8 Discussed by Ković, Miloš. *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*; translated by Miloš Damnjanović (Oxford: OUP, 2010).

9 Notably by Volney, *Considérations sur la Guerre Actuelle des Turcs* (Londres: [but actually Paris]: 'printed by Cole and Hoddle', 1788). Volney was honoured with a gold medal by the Russian Empress Catherine.

10 Disraeli, *The Letters of Benjamin Disraeli*, edited by John Matthews *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982–2014), i, 164.

11 Disraeli *Letters* 30 November 1830, i, 174.

12 *Ibid.*, 27 December 1830, i, 107.

13 Sir Frederick Adam, the High Commissioner, had been among a party of foreigners who explored Athens in 1818, in the period of misleadingly peaceful normalcy before the outbreak of the Revolution in 1821. Woods, ii, 274.



awful presence of the pillar of the Turkish Empire, the man who has the reputation of being the main spring of the new system of regeneration, the renowned Reschid, an approved warrior, a consummate politician, unrivalled as a dissembler in a country where dissimulation is the principal portion of their moral culture'.<sup>14</sup> In what appears to be the only description of Reschid as a man to be recorded, Disraeli described how he bowed to 'a little, ferocious looking shrivelled, careworn man, plainly dressed, with a brow covered with wrinkles and a countenance clouded with anxiety and thought'. After pipes and coffee, the room was cleared, and as Disraeli continued the account in his letter: 'We congratulated him on the pacification of Albania. He rejoined that the peace of the world was his only object and the happiness of mankind his only wish'. Disraeli reported in letter to Edward Bulwer, who was already a successful novelist, that, although Reschid was impatient to bring the interview to a close, he himself was flattered by the 'delight of being made much of by a man who was daily decapitating half the province'.<sup>15</sup>

An extended version of the account, with many of the same phrases, was included in Disraeli's own novel *Contarini Fleming*, first published anonymously in 1832 and whose authorship was publicly acknowledged in 1845. In the novel, frequently reprinted for much of the century after Disraeli became a famous politician and prime minister, the fictionalized Disraeli achieves his wish to take part in an actual battle, which he greatly enjoys, after which he is congratulated by Reschid and, as a special honour, is given a draw on the grand vizieral pipe.<sup>16</sup>

As with his visit to Reschid, so too for Disraeli's visit to the Acropolis of Athens, we have the evidence both of his on-the-spot letters and a fictionalized account put into the mouth of Contarini Fleming, from which I quote: 'For myself, I confess I ever gaze upon the marvels of art with a feeling of despair [...] The arts are yielded to the flat-nosed

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14 Disraeli *Letters*, i, 170. The editors note that a printed account 'A Visit to the Grand Vizier' appeared the *Court Journal*, no. 92, 29 January 1831, 66–67, but I have not been able to find a copy.

15 Disraeli *Letters*, 18 November 1830, i, 173.

16 The description of his time with Reschid, which mainly follows the evidence and wording of the letters, is in pages 460 to 467 of the undated nineteenth-century Ward Lock edition of the works, after which page it slides into fiction and fantasy. Since the Victorian editions were made from the same stereotype plates, the pagination of the British editions is usually the same.

Franks. And they toil, and study, and invent theories to account for their own incompetence. Now it is the climate, now the religion, now the government; everything but the truth, everything but the mortifying suspicion that their organisation may be different, and that they may be as distinct a race from their models as they undoubtedly are from the Kalmuck and the Negro'.<sup>17</sup>

Readers of the novel would have recognized Disraeli's summary of the arguments that had been offered by the philosophers of history in the long eighteenth century and the emerging consensus that the only explanation lay in positing essential racial difference. Earlier in the novel, that with its subtitle, 'A Psychological Romance', has some of the characteristics of a German 'bildungsroman', the character of Fleming had been awarded a gold medal by his university for writing an essay on the Dorians, an allusion to the work of Karl Otfried Müller that was to play a part in providing legitimation for the genocides perpetrated by the modern German state in the 1940s.<sup>18</sup> As the narrator explains, picking up the word frequently used from the time of Volney and Chateaubriand: 'These are a few of my meditations amid the ruins of Athens. They will disappoint those who might justly expect an ebullition of classic rapture from one who has gazed upon Marathon by moonlight and sailed upon the free waters of Salamis'.<sup>19</sup>

Already by 1832, when the Ottoman army was still in occupation of the Acropolis, Disraeli's fictionalised self, a Byron-like resister of humbug, was ridiculing the pieties of philhellenism that Byron himself had helped to entrench across western Europe and beyond, including within Greece itself.<sup>20</sup> But the young Disraeli who, behind the mask of an autobiographical fiction, was attacking the narrative of moral degeneration and regeneration associated with philhellenism, and indeed, of the search for a philosophy of history itself, was championing another explanation: racial essentialism, that, being allegedly genetic

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17 Ward Lock edition, 474. The reference to 'flat-nosed Franks' is an example of Disraeli's philo-semitism or perhaps of anti-anti-semitism. Disraeli's description of his actual visit to the Acropolis was discussed in Chapter 16.

18 As will be discussed in Chapter 23.

19 Disraeli, *Contarini Fleming*, 474–75.

20 Disraeli's novel had been commended to the publisher as '*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* in prose' by the ecclesiastic and historian H.H. Milman, as noted by Sultana, Donald, *Benjamin Disraeli in Spain, Malta, and Albania 1830–32; a monograph* (London: Tamesis, 1976), 22.

and 'psychological' in a scientific sense, offered little or no prospect of social, moral, or intellectual improvement.<sup>21</sup>

In November 1831, Stratford Canning, who had returned home and was now a Member of Parliament, was sent by London on a special mission to Constantinople, tasked by Lord Palmerston, and the other two powers, with the specific aim of settling the international borders of Greece.<sup>22</sup> He had been reluctant to accept the request. His first wife, Harriet had died in childbirth with their child in 1816, the year after their marriage, and his second wife, Eliza, to whom he was married in 1825, was pregnant and had already lost one child by miscarriage. Canning hated leaving her.<sup>23</sup> But, as he would have regarded the choice, he put his duty to nation above his duty to family. If 'England' called, Canning could not refuse. In Canning's day, 'England' was not so much a political or a geographical term, but rather, as 'Hellas' had been to the ancient Greeks, an imagined community and rhetorical construction that could not be adequately displayed on maps.

Canning had been instructed to conclude the negotiation speedily, as he himself also wanted, and attempts were made to keep him on a tight leash. Formally on a 'special mission' to territories in which accredited British diplomatic representatives were in already in place and who might legitimately feel aggrieved at being sidelined, he arranged for his letters of accreditation to be made out, unusually, not only to the Emperor of the Empire, but to the grand vizier, so giving him authority to deal direct with Reschid, as he done so successfully in the correspondence about saving the Parthenon and the other monuments of Athens.

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21 An example of the contradictions involved in trying to catch in words the mobility of inner thoughts is given in his summary, Disraeli, *Contarini Fleming*, 746: 'Ardently I hope that the necessary change in human existence may be effected by the voice of philosophy alone; but I tremble, and I am silent. There is no bigotry so terrible as the bigotry of a country that flatters itself that it is philosophical'. In the novel, Contarini Fleming goes on to have an interview with the sultan in his palace in Constantinople, when the pair discuss political reform and 'regeneration'.

22 Lane-Poole, *Canning*, i, 483.

23 Richmond, Steven, *The Voice of England in the East: Stratford Canning and Diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire* (London: Tauris, 2014), 140, 133, 158. Canning's mission and the ways in which he communicated with the Ottoman authorities without involving the official ambassador, Sir Robert Gordon, are described by Richmond, 193–98, without mention of the detour to Athens.

And his visit appears to have sealed the bargain of 1826. He also brought something to Constantinople that was as valuable to the success of British policies as his experience and personal links. In August 1828, in one of the fires that frequently struck Constantinople, the British embassy building, shown as Figure 18.1, despite being surrounded with extensive open grounds, was burned down. With the loss of the archives of the embassy, the official ambassador, Sir Robert Gordon, had lost one of the main instruments of British influence.

Figure 18.1 appears to be the only image ever made of the place where Canning had dictated so many letters and had driven his clerks to translate and copy so many of the documents on which much of the present book draws. It appears to have been modelled upon Broomhall, Lord Elgin's house in Scotland, which is now a repository of much of the correspondence and other documents relating to Elgin's removals, and where they are conserved for public use.

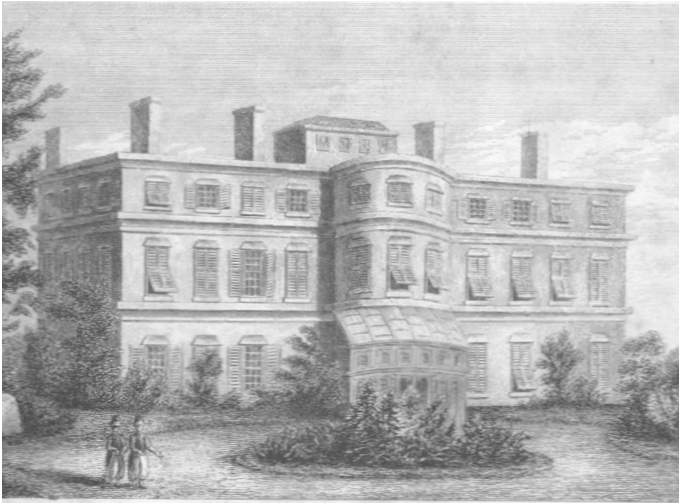


Figure 18.1. The British Palace in Constantinople. Lithograph.<sup>24</sup>

Not for the first or last time, Canning's tireless energy had come to the rescue. As part of his mission he brought dozens of cases of documents that he and his predecessors had sent from Constantinople, transcribed by clerks from the copies that Canning, the workaholic, had sent to

<sup>24</sup> Walsh, *Residence*, frontispiece to volume 1.

London and which were now on their way back as new copies of the copies.<sup>25</sup>

The bargain that Canning had to offer, with the authority of the powers, which had been trailed in his correspondence with Reschid about the monuments, was now made explicit in a written diplomatic note prepared by Canning for the Ottoman Government, namely 'to see her [The Ottoman Empire] in a situation to receive the full tide of European civilization [and] [...] take her proper place in the general councils of Europe.'<sup>26</sup> The Ottoman Empire was being promised a seat at the top table alongside the three powers who, with mixed and belated success, were attempting to manage the world's first international political system.

Canning also knew that, whatever the formal position, the sultan in Constantinople would not come to a decision on a matter of such importance without the approval of his grand vizier. And since Reschid was on campaign in Albania, and had taken many prominent men with him, Canning appreciated that the real centre of power was where Reschid himself happened to be. As part of the plan hatched in London, when Canning arrived in Greece he sent Reschid a personal letter introducing his personal confidential representative, David Urquhart, who made his way from London to Scodra in Albania by way of the Ionian Islands at the same time as Canning set sail to Constantinople.

Urquhart, who had taken part in the battles round the Acropolis in 1827 as a philhellene officer on board the Greek steam warship, the *Hellas*, and later on land, had now become an eager supporter of the Ottoman Empire, and had learned enough of the Turkish language to be able to correct the interpreter.<sup>27</sup> It was at almost exactly the same time as Canning's visit to the Acropolis that Reschid, now the grand vizier,

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25 Summaries of what the cases contained are given in Kew FO78/208.

26 Quoted by Lane-Poole, *Canning*, i, 508.

27 Urquhart's role in directing the field artillery during the battle of Athens of 1 May 1827 is noted by Jourdain, whose claim there is no reason to doubt, at ii, 339–44. Urquhart's knowledge of Turkish and his adopting of Turkish manners and dress are described from contemporary sources by Robinson, Gertrude, *David Urquhart* [sic], *some chapters in the life of a Victorian knight-errant of justice and liberty* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1920), 46. Despite his having, in effect, changed from phil-hellene to phil-ottoman, Urquhart's name was added to the roll of honour of names of philhellenes prepared by Makriyannis as 'an act either of ignorance or magnanimity'. The identification was made by Eliot, C.W.J., 'Makriyannis, Zographos, and the Roll of the Philhellenes' in Nind, T.E.W., ed., *The Mediterranean World, Papers presented in*

was writing a letter to five selected Ottoman boys who were being sent to Paris for advanced modern military training, a city that he described as 'the very metropolis of science' and 'this fountain of light'. The letter included the thought: 'You belong to a nation which has long been thought incapable of taking part in the sciences and arts of Europe and in the advantages which result from them. Prove that we have been wrongly judged'.<sup>28</sup> Until the Ottoman archives are explored these are the last words of which we have a record.

In 1833 Urquhart published a book that described the reforms that Reschid, 'the grand vizir, a man of strong and original mind, and unconnected with the intrigues of the Porte, [who] was alone capable of carrying such a reform into execution', was carrying out in the region of what is now mainland Greece that remained under Ottoman control. Determined not only to reconcile the inhabitants to the new status but to tackle the causes of the Greek Revolution, Reschid had abolished taxes on trade and given powers to localities. He also abolished the external distinctions of dress that had helped to set one community against another and had facilitated the genocides.<sup>29</sup> And he

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*honour of Gilbert Bagnani, D.Litt, F.R.S.C., LL.D, 26 April 1975. Published in typed version by Trent University, Ontario, 1976, 120, 133.*

- 28 Brewer and Barber, *Patmos and the Seven Churches of Asia, together with places in the Vicinity, from the Earliest Records to the Year 1850, compiled principally from the MS. Journals of Rev. Josiah Brewer, Missionary to Asia Minor, by John W. Barber, Author of Connecticut and Massachusetts His. Collections etc.* (Bridgeport: Bradley and Peck, 1851), 74. The letter, which was said to have been furnished by the boys' teacher for publication in the Paris newspapers, is, we may guess, too near to what the French public was expected to want to hear to be a spontaneous composition, but even if it was run up, there is no reason to doubt that Reschid and the Ottoman leadership had long resented the centuries of humiliation and exclusion and were eager to embrace the new opportunities that acceptance as 'European' offered. The modernization of the Ottoman state was conventionally regarded as having been carried forward by Reschid's near namesake, Mustafa Reshid, who orchestrated the Tanzimat decree of 1839. At the time the elder Reschid wrote the letter, the younger Reschid who was not related by family, was Ottoman ambassador to Paris.
- 29 '... in the commencement of this year (1832) I observed with no less gratification than surprise in passing through Turkey in Europe. The Greeks are allowed to wear turbans, yellow slippers, and generally any dress and any colours they chose. This may appear a mere trifle, but it is far from being so. The marks of distinction between Greek or Christian and Turk, are dress, name, and mode of salutation; the most important, however, is dress ...' Urquhart, David, *Turkey and its resources: its municipal organization and free trade: the state and prospects of English commerce in the East: the new administration of Greece, its revenue and national possessions* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833), 5. Given the dedication to the British king, who is

encouraged the rebuilding of churches.<sup>30</sup> Urquhart recorded a remark by a Vlach, a member of one of the smaller communities: 'If the grand vizir lives ten years longer we shall sup with the Turks in Lent, and they will dine with us in Ramazan', and how the Turks had playfully asked the Greeks, 'Why they had not added four minarets to it'.<sup>31</sup>

Urquhart spent over ten days as Reschid's guest, with many meetings. In his long, almost verbatim record of the visit, Urquhart noted that Reschid never once called him a *giaour* (infidel) and, in effect, discussed the problem of how to bring the Greek Revolution to an end as if he was already sitting at the top table. The phrase in Canning's 1826 letter about the Athenian monuments, 'though of small importance in the eye of Reason or of Religion and wholly unconnected with affairs of State', on which the personal trust between the two men had been founded, had evidently matched his own sentiments which he now reflected back to Canning and the powers in a virtuous feedback circle.

Reschid, who told Urquhart that he had planned to march his army south to subdue Greece, a task that he had expected to be militarily easy, had now pragmatically adopted another strategy that led him in a different direction. The interests of Greece and Turkey, he was prepared to agree, now coincided. The 'regeneration' of the one could help the 'regeneration' of the other. After conversations that continued into the night, the care-worn Reschid promised Urquhart that he would advise the sultan to accept Canning's proposal. He even made a joke that would eventually make its way back to Foreign Secretary Palmerston and his colleagues in London. As Urquhart reported, describing Reschid's giving an assurance that he would write immediately: 'the delays, he added smiling, "will not be occasioned by me."<sup>32</sup> And Canning's visit does

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praised for philanthropy and enlightenment, it seems likely that the book was semi-official.

30 'At the time to which I allude, in approaching Constantinople, I met several deputies returning with firmans for the erection of churches. The difficulties thrown in the way of the building and repairing of churches by the Turks are well known, as also the heart-burnings thereby caused to the Greeks. Now, not only was permission freely granted, but the grand vizir himself subscribed 80,000 piastres towards the erection of one at Monastir, which was erected of solid stone masonry, in an incredibly short period, the whole Greek population contributing labour as well as money, and was completed by the end of 1831'. *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid.*

32 Urquhart's long, almost verbatim, report of his meetings with Reschid dated 1 February 1832 is in Kew 78/209.

appear to have marked the consummation of the political bargain that had been offered and accepted in 1826. The first international protocol to mention the Ottoman Empire as a party to an agreement with the powers is the 'Arrangement' of 30 August 1832, which, although signed in London, reported the recent discussions in Constantinople and elsewhere in which Canning had participated.<sup>33</sup>

This was another shift of the geopolitical plates. As recently as April 1828, Reschid had sought out a meeting with William Meyer, the British Consul-General in Albania, to deliver a personal message that he knew would be passed to Canning and the British Government.<sup>34</sup> In many hours of confidential talks with Meyer, the still only recently appointed grand vizier had set out an apocalyptic vision of what would happen if the powers attempted to impose on the Ottoman Empire, as set out in the Treaty of London of 1827, a settlement 'repugnant to their conscience; subversive of their Religion and Laws; and incompatible with their honor'. The whole Ottoman leadership, he declared, had 'resolved on offering up the whole Nation as a sacrifice to such an overruling destiny; that they would begin by destroying their Women and their Children, and would then perish swords in hand against their foes'. Meyer remembered the self-immolation of the ancient Jews in the face of the Roman army in CE 70, but the more immediate parallel was with Missolonghi in 1826 and the declarations of the besieged Greeks in the Acropolis of Athens that had been successfully set aside. Although we can only recover occasional and indirect indications of Ottoman thinking, Reschid seems to be imploring the British and French to come up with a solution on the lines of the agreement he had made in Athens.

In *The Spirit of the East*, a famous book that Urquhart wrote about his mission, Reschid's efforts to bring about Ottoman imperial reform are reported and praised. The sufferings of the Greek Revolutionaries in accordance with the old Ottoman laws and customs were replaced by a display of admiration for Reschid's charisma and success. As Urquhart wrote: 'True, he had ordered executions ruthless in their severity. He had caused the heads of the guilty to fall, and had made use alike of treachery and wholesale execution; but he had never shed blood wantonly, and

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33 The text is in Strupp LXIII, 139 and 144–46.

34 Transcribed in full in Appendix D from Kew FO 78/168, 65.



his purple vengeance had fallen without partiality'.<sup>35</sup> Although nowhere does Urquhart mention that he was on an unofficial British Government mission, his book can be regarded as a semi-official announcement of a successful change of policy negotiated at the highest level.

As Edmund Spencer, a well-informed British military explorer, wrote from personal knowledge, Grand Vizier Reschid was then 'at the very zenith of his glory'. It was generally agreed, Spencer went on, that he had 'saved the Turkish Empire from imminent peril, if not total ruin'. Reschid, it was now being claimed, had been consistent in his aim of maintaining the Ottoman Empire by any means, fair or foul, killing enemies by fighting, execution, and trickery, but always ready to accept and reward surrender. It was said that, as a true Muslim, if the sultan, as calif, had commanded it, Reschid would have become a Christian.<sup>36</sup>

If the monuments of Athens were mentioned in the talks with Urquhart, the fact was not reported either in his book or in his personal report. However, if Urquhart was reticent about some matters involving Greek antiquities, he was less so in others. At Battis, near Salonica (modern Thessaloniki) he reports that he saw men rebuilding their village after the damage done in the war. There were, he noted, 'not twenty houses roofed; they were, however, busy re-building, their quarry being old Hellenic blocks; and, to my horror, I saw the fragments of a statue piled in a limekiln by the hands of Greeks'.<sup>37</sup> It is generally supposed, he went on, that 'Mussulmans mutilate and deface ancient structures', but that assumption, he declared, was not the case, as Joseph François Michaud had also confirmed. He was referring to the observations of Joseph Michaud, soon to be famous as the historian of the Crusades, who had been in Athens in June 1830, and whose reports of his travels across the Middle East with his assistant Jean J.F. Poujoulat were already being published in a multi-volume series.<sup>38</sup>

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35 Urquhart, *Spirit of the East*, ii, 341. To the French admiral Jurien, Reschid was also honourable in accordance with his own standards that he saw as those of early modern Europe. 'Reschid-Pacha, brillant, chevaleresque, véritable Murat ottoman'. Jurien, ii, 88.

36 Spencer, Edmund, *Travels in European Turkey, in 1850; through Bosnia, Servia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Thrace, Albania, and Epirus; with a visit to Greece and the Ionian Isles* (London: Colburn, 1851), ii, 126.

37 Urquhart, *Spirit*, ii, 55.

38 Michaud, J. Fr., *Correspondance D'Orient, 1830-1831* (Paris: Ducollet, 1833-1835).

Linking the Parthenon in Athens with the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem, Urquhart quoted Michaud as saying: 'posterity will learn with amazement, that to the Turks we are indebted for the conservation of the two noblest relics of religion and the arts'.<sup>39</sup> Urquhart also noted, 'there is a saying of Mahomet to this effect: Let the man be a reprobate who sells a slave, who injures a fruit-bearing tree, and who makes lime from chiseled marble'.<sup>40</sup> In a single footnote Urquhart had dismissed the claim made by Lord Elgin that he had 'saved' the sculptures of the Parthenon from suddenly, after four hundred years, being pounded into lime by the Turks.

The Ottoman side exploited the political leverage of the new situation immediately. It was at almost exactly the same time as Canning's visit to the Acropolis that Reschid was writing his letter to the five Turkish boys already mentioned. And on 9 August 1832, Canning was told at a personal meeting with the sultan that the Ottomans wanted to make an alliance with Britain against Egypt and Russia.<sup>41</sup> He was pressing on an open door, as is shown by the cartoon reproduced as Figure 18.2.

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39 Urquhart *Spirit*, ii, 55. The passage he was referring to reads: 'Lorsqu'on lira dans l'avenir l'histoire des ruines de l'Orient on s'étonnera que deux grands monumens, le Parthénon d'Athènes et l'église du Saint-Sépulcre de Jérusalem, soient restés debout au milieu de la destruction générale; mais la surprise sera bien plus grande encore, lorsque la postérité apprendra que ces deux monumens, auxquels se rattachent les plus grands souvenirs et les plus nobles pensées, les traditions de la religion chrétienne et celles de la philosophie, en un mot toutes nos idées de civilisation dans les temps modernes, ont été conservés par les Turcs !' Michaud, *Correspondence d'Orient* i, 173. As far as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is concerned, Michaud may have had prior knowledge that the firman issued in 1853 for the restoration and preservation of the site and guaranteeing the rights of access of the competing religious communities was under consideration, or was already being observed on the ground in practice. That 1853 firman, translated and transcribed, for example, by Chesney, 402–04, was a reaffirmation of a policy of toleration of non-Muslim religions that went back to the earliest days of the Ottoman conquest of Palestine. The full series of firmans and much of the accompanying diplomatic correspondence is set out Ubicini, *La question d'orient devant l'Europe: documents officiels manifestes, notes, firmans, circulaires, etc., depuis l'origine du différend / annotés et précédés d'une exposition de la Question des Lieux-Saints par M.A. Ubicini* (second edition Paris: Dentu, 1854). Chesney's version uses the Latin phrase 'ab antiquo' (from ancient times) that also occurs in the 1801 firman given to Lord Elgin in 1801, set out in Appendix A.

40 Urquhart, *Spirit*, ii, 56. I have not found any reference to this saying in the English-language editions, whether modern or prepared in the early nineteenth century, that I have consulted.

41 Letter transcribed in Appendix E.



Figure 18.2. Le Dejeuner a la Fourchette ['fork supper] 1829. Contemporary cartoon.<sup>42</sup>

The Russian bear is shown about to gobble up the Ottoman Empire, 'Turkey', taking over Constantinople and becoming the dominant power in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

In a short-lived serial publication that he edited in which he published many primary documents on current international affairs, Urquhart, who knew the role that intercepted correspondence had played in British policy-making, published a sardonic 'intercepted' cartoon such as might have appeared in Russia, where the Ottoman sultan has become a Russian puppet of the Russian bear, and the powers are made to dance, rather badly, to the bear's military fife and drum (see Figure 18.3).

Almost immediately Britain began supplying modern weapons, warships, and expertise. The Ottomans, now accepted as a European power, were given a seat at the top table in the conference that led to the Treaty of Constantinople, and not long afterwards were formally invited to join the concert of Europe.<sup>43</sup>

42 'Pubd. by J. Field, 65 Quadrant, Piccadilly.' October 1829. Private collection.

43 The first international protocol to mention the Ottoman Empire as a party is that of 30 August 1832, that, although signed in London, reported the recent discussions in Constantinople in which Canning participated. Strupp LXIII, 144–46.



Figure 18.3. 'Intercepted Caricature'. Lithograph, dated 1st June 1836.<sup>44</sup>

As for Reschid, he played little part in the follow-up to the bargain. In 1832 he was called upon to use his military talents against Ibrahim, his former ally in the Peloponnese, whose father Mehmet Ali had not only made Egypt independent but was now attempting to conquer Syria. A description of Reschid's march from Albania to confront Ibrahim and his Egyptian army near Konya is given from Ottoman sources by Adolphus Slade, the senior British naval officer employed as an admiral by the Ottoman Government as part of their modernizing effort.<sup>45</sup> As Slade, a military man, remarked, the tactics that Reschid had used with such success against the Revolutionaries in Greece were ineffective against an army trained to European standards, and he succumbed to catastrophic defeat in December 1832. When the situation became hopeless, Reschid allowed himself to be captured, the only grand vizier in the history of the Ottoman Empire to be so humiliated, but he was allowed by Muhammad Ali, Ibrahim's father who was ruler of Egypt, to remain as nominal grand vizier, installed in a palace in Cairo. He died in 1836.

Despite Reschid's downfall, the bargain was a gift that went on giving. During the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Government issued

<sup>44</sup> Urquhart, David, ed., *The Portfolio*, vol iii, 1836, 195. Private collection.

<sup>45</sup> Slade, Adolphus, *Turkey, Greece and Malta* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), ii, 7–14.

firmans to enable the British state, with the help of the British navy, to remove the remains of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Many of the pieces had been built into what was then an imperial Ottoman fortress, and detached metopes and pieces from the friezes had been fixed to the walls by the Frankish Crusaders, apparently without their knowing what they were—but this allowed them to survive as symbols of a superseded past. A view of the courtyard before they were removed is shown as Figure 18.4.

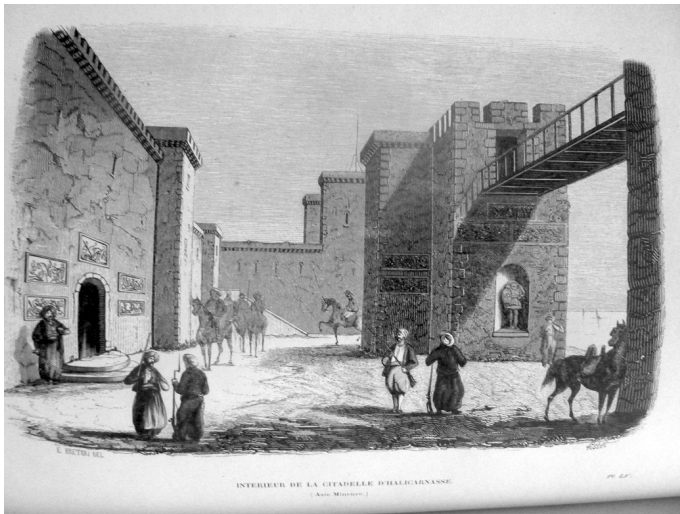


Figure 18.4. 'Interior of the Citadel of Halicarnassus' Engraving on steel.<sup>46</sup>

Even larger gifts of antiquities were made to the French, as anyone who visits the Louvre can now see. In 1846, at a time when there were as yet no representative institutions, the Ottoman Empire founded its own museum of antiquities, mainly, as Wendy M.K. Shaw has noted, as a way of showing that it too was a European country, had European cultural institutions, and had positioned itself as yet another claimant of the ancient Hellenic heritage.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Breton, Ernest, de la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France, etc., etc., *Monuments de tous les peuples, décrits et dessinés d'après les documents les plus modernes* (Brussels: Librairie historique-artistique, 1843), i, 267. Derived from a plate of a drawing by Mayer, Luigi, *Views in the Ottoman empire* (London: Bowyer, 1803).

<sup>47</sup> Discussed by Shaw Wendy M.K., 'From Mausoleum to Museum' in Bahrani, Zeynep and Eldem, 423–41.

And within a generation of the establishment of the kingdom of Greece, British and French armies were deployed in the Crimea against Russia in defence of the Ottoman Empire. In January 1854, in the midst of that war, during a visit to Constantinople by a senior member of the British royal family who was the nominal commander-in-chief of the British army, the then sultan took the highly symbolic step of visiting the British ambassador's house. As the *Illustrated London News* reported, in publishing a picture of the reception. It was a 'startling innovation [...] to comply with Christian usages so far as to allow the presentation of ladies'. The picture of Canning, now ennobled as Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, as he presented his wife and daughters is shown as Figure 18.5.

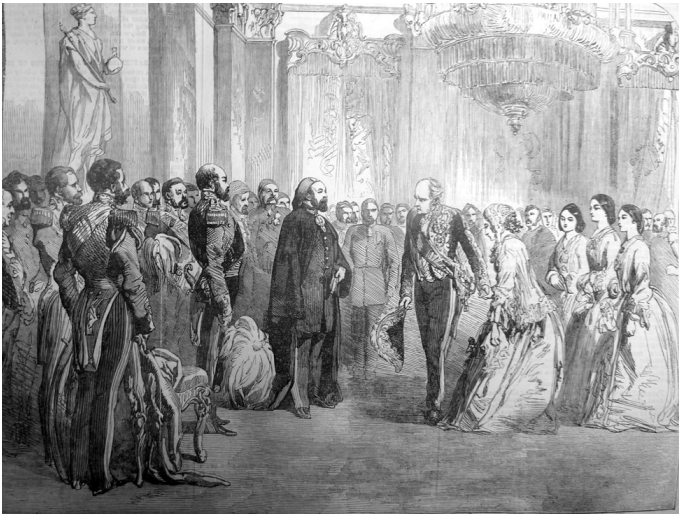


Figure 18.5 'Visit of the Sultan to the Duke of Cambridge at Constantinople'.  
Woodcut.<sup>48</sup>

Who could now doubt that the Ottoman Empire had become a 'European' country, if not yet quite a 'nation'? And, as many who were present knew, less than half a century had passed since the young Canning, as a junior attaché, had been among those kept waiting to be presented to a previous sultan in accordance with the age-old Ottoman ceremony of the public humiliation of foreigners.

<sup>48</sup> Reproduced from the *Illustrated London News*, 13 January 1855, 33. Private collection.

## 19. The Silence

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Why has the history of the saving of the Parthenon, which Michaud and Urquhart so confidently predicted would soon be known to posterity, taken nearly two hundred years to piece together? Although the Ottoman records were inaccessible until recent decades, the copies at Kew have been publicly available for over a century. Part of the answer may lie in the sheer quantity of documents that Stratford Canning generated. His first biographer, Stanley Lane-Poole, admitted that he had on occasions allowed himself to be defeated by the amount, and he claimed to be doing his readers a favour by not writing up in full all the information he claimed to have read or perused. As he wrote about a crisis in the 1840s in which Canning played a large and perhaps a decisive role: 'To relate a tenth of the negotiations, proposals and counter-proposals, intrigues, disputes, promises and retractations, that came at this time under supervision, would demand a separate volume. The correspondence about Greece alone is enough to dismay the stoutest heart that even a biographer of diplomacy can boast'.<sup>1</sup> Lane-Poole's modern successor, the late Alan Cunningham, who, for his planned biography, devoted the last twenty-five years of his life to investigating the documentary records, including those at Kew, appears not to have known of the correspondence.<sup>2</sup>

Lane-Poole seems sometimes, in accordance with the norms of his age, to have resorted to self-censorship. It is hard to believe that, when

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1 Lane-Poole, *Canning*, ii, 117.

2 The results of his extensive researches were posthumously published as Cunningham, Alan, *Eastern Questions in the Nineteenth Century: Collected Essays*, in two volumes edited by Edward Ingram (London: Cass, 1993). Canning's most recent biographer, Richmond, Steven, *The Voice of England in the East: Stratford Canning and Diplomacy with the Ottoman Empire* (London: Tauris, 2014) makes no mention of the episode. Given the interest in the Parthenon and its exported pieces that has grown steadily any suggestion that Cunningham and others knew of the documents, but did not think it worthwhile draw them to public attention can be confidently ruled out.

he wrote his biography, he knew nothing of the biographical material published anonymously by a member of Canning's staff, which accused him of being a 'hectoring' diplomat of the kind whose 'minds were made up on most points several centuries before they were born, and their creed rigidly enjoins complete abstinence from fresh ideas', a man who clung 'to an orthodox belief in the miracles and mysteries of a diplomacy secret, tortuous, and incomprehensible'.<sup>3</sup> The author, easily identifiable at the time as Eustace Clare Grenville Murray, a son of an English aristocrat, drew a portrait of 'Sir Hector Stubble' whose 'chief pastime is asserting his own grandeur, and causing the world to tremble generally whenever he has a fit of the gout'.<sup>4</sup> In a caustic word portrait, unsoftened by humour, Murray caricatures the myth of Stratford Canning as a man who shaped the future of nations: 'Sir Hector has become one of the beliefs of the age: he is a sublime mystery; he is fearfully and wonderfully made; he is the only ambassador now going on the face of the earth; he is his own prophet; he is an effulgent wonder; he is the unknown man'.<sup>5</sup> Later Canning was presented by Murray as 'Lord Loggerhead', who quarrelled with all his colleagues and had no personal friends, scarcely looking up from his official papers to acknowledge the presence of his young wife.<sup>6</sup> In a general attack on the British class system, Murray, who as an illegitimate son of a peer enjoyed only a few of the advantages of that system, lifted the lid on what he called the 'cousinage', an informal network of privilege that offered rich opportunities for placement in public office, while respecting its own unwritten codes.

Murray, in publicly asking how a man as respected as Sir Hector could have made himself so disagreeable to the members of his staff, offered his own answer: 'He [Canning] was a person of fair average capacity indeed, hard-working, continent, careful of his own interests, a patriot according to his dim lights, and a gentleman in speech when he

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3 [Murray, Eustace Clare Grenville] *The Roving Englishman in Turkey: sketches from life reprinted in part from "Household words"* (London: Routledge, 1855) and in a revised edition, still anonymous, in 1877), vii. He was also the anonymous author of [Murray, E. Clare Grenville] *From Mayfair to Marathon* (London: Bentley, 1853) that describes some of his personal experiences in Greece and in the Ottoman territories.

4 [Murray] *Roving Englishman*, 100. Canning is known to have suffered from gout.

5 Murray, *Roving Englishman*, 341.

6 Discussed by [Murray, Eustace Clare Grenville] Berridge, G.R., *A diplomatic whistleblower in the Victorian Era, The Life and Writings of E.C. Grenville-Murray* (Istanbul, Isis Press, second printed edition, 2017).



was not crossed; but a more hard, unkind, unjust, unlovable man never stood within the icy circle of his own pride and ill-temper'. He was, Murray wrote, 'haughty and petulant beyond anybody I have ever seen. He trampled on other people's feelings as savagely and unflinchingly as if they had been soulless puppets made to work his will. He was essentially a narrow-minded man, for he had favourites and jealousies, and petty enmities; he had small passions, and by no means an intellect strong enough even to keep them decently out of sight [...] he would have figured well as the governor of a penal settlement, or the master of a reformatory'.<sup>7</sup> It was a far cry from Canning's first tour in Constantinople in 1810, when visitors had heaped praises on the coming man.<sup>8</sup>

Murray may have been unfair both to Canning and to his reputation among his staff, but the ambassador certainly worked them. As was noted by Lord Carlisle, a British politician who visited him in Constantinople on the eve of the Crimean war, Canning's opinion was sought and listened to with great respect, and on one occasion, the British dispatch was delayed until seven o'clock in the morning 'which indicates that Lord Stratford and his attachés spent the whole night writing'.<sup>9</sup> Murray's contempt never abated. As he wrote: 'Stratford Canning. Has received no less than thirty-four different appointments. Was Emperor of Turkey for nearly fifty years. Was Member for King's Lynn, my Lord Stanley's borough, but did not Bagge his seat—it was given him. Received generally Commissions from the Crown whenever he applied for them; and often held half-a-dozen at the same time. Culminated in a small book of poems, and then collapsed utterly'.<sup>10</sup> And it is easy to see why Murray's books were ignored.

As far as the episode of the saving of the Parthenon is concerned, the protocols of professional historical inquiry do not demand that every

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7 Murray, *Roving Englishman*, 17.

8 John Galt, for example, in the preface to an expensive book on trade prospects that showed how much he needed lessons on the art of rhetoric, had praised 'the singular purity of his mind, contrasted with the diplomatic offal in the Ottoman metropolis. Should the book reach his hands, he will discriminate the respect that is paid from a motive which had not its origin in considerations for his public situation, nor in return for any favours proposed or received.' *Voyages and Travels*, vii.

9 Carlisle, *Diary*, 120. Murray, if he knew the book, might have dismissed such remarks as examples of cousinage.

10 *The Queen's Messenger: a weekly gazette of politics and literature*, 1869, page 241. The reference is to Canning, Stratford, *Shadows of the Past in Verse* (London: Macmillan, 1866) presented by the author as 'a pleasant and not unuseful relief from official drudgery.'

haystack should be examined, stalk by stalk, in hopes of unexpectedly finding a needle. But, even in the readily accessible printed record, as the many examples already noted and quoted show, there were enough scattered indications, notably in the books by Walsh and Gordon, for a curious inquirer to check if any primary documents, such as the 'trumpery firman', had survived. Stories that there had been a secret deal had started immediately after the surrender of the Acropolis in 1827.<sup>11</sup> It was because I assumed that the most obvious place, the British National Archives at Kew, must already have been explored that I began my own search with the Gordon papers in Aberdeen University Library.

The long silence therefore raises another set of questions. Why did no one who was in on the secret later disclose what he or she knew? Why did no-one claim the credit?<sup>12</sup> And why did no-one come forward to refute the puzzled invocations of Providence and destiny, and correct the fictions that soon pervaded the historiography? Among those who were in on the secret at the time of the surrender of the Acropolis, besides Canning in Constantinople, the other main actor was the French Admiral de Rigny on board his ship in the harbour of Piraeus, who was in direct and, at some critical times, almost hourly touch with all parties, including Reschid. At the time of the surrender, de Rigny knew that orders had been issued not to destroy the monuments, as did the resident foreign consuls in Athens, who had been told but who could not be sure that the orders might not later be reversed, as was openly threatened during the years of the resumed Ottoman occupation between 1827 and 1833. Although extracts from de Rigny's reports to the French Ministry of Marine in Paris have been published, none mentions the bargain nor the offer de Rigny made to buy antiquities from the Acropolis, a correspondence that we still only know of from recently retrieved Ottoman sources.<sup>13</sup>

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11 For example, British Vice-Consul in Milo [Melos] dated 14 June 1827: 'Two days ago a Roman Catholic Priest passenger on board Admiral de Rigny's ship arrived here who told me that he knew the way in which Admiral de Rigny gained over the Greeks of the Acropolis to surrender but that he was not at liberty to speak clearly as he was a guest of the French consul at this place, but acknowledged that the Acropolis was not surrendered for want of provisions, that it was furnished with every necessary for six months.' Kew FO 78/155 147.

12 As an exception, the book by Rev. Robert Walsh, who claimed the credit for Lord Strangford's firman of 1821 is noted in Appendix B.

13 Extracts in Jurien de La Gravière, le vice-amiral, *La station du Levant* (Paris: Plon, 1876).

Another candidate for someone in the know is Sir Richard Church, who, as commander-in-chief of the Greek army, had suddenly claimed in his order to the besieged to surrender the Acropolis that his purpose was 'to save the monuments'.<sup>14</sup> To the French naval and military officer, Jean-Philippe-Paul Jourdain, writing in his document-packed history published in 1828, this claim was the ultimate insult to the dead soldiers, the crowning disgrace of the military disaster for which Church carried much of the responsibility. Thomas Gordon, who in 1821 had been an eyewitness of the Revolutionaries' way of fighting, and who had foreseen what was likely to happen if it was repeated in 1827, told the Greek General Makriyannis in a private letter that Church was 'an insufferable vain coxcomb made up every bit of him of gold lace, mustachios and froth'.<sup>15</sup>

Even Church's own military staff felt betrayed, especially when it emerged that the Acropolis had had at least three months' supply of food and water, not just enough for three days as was claimed by the besieged in a letter that, like all communications with the Acropolis at this time, was carried by the French mediators.<sup>16</sup> On the face of it, Church deserved the scorn of his former comrades. Thousands of lives had been lost, an army squandered, and the fate of the whole Greek Revolution hazarded on what, even if it had succeeded, was not the best available military option for winning the war but more a piece of theatre aimed at audiences in Europe and at harvesting personal glory.<sup>17</sup>

Was Church, when he ordered the surrender of the Acropolis, taking part in a diplomatic dance whose moves had already been choreographed? Was the sudden mention of the need to 'save the monuments' a reminder to Reschid that the bargain he had made with Canning was still on offer? Was Church, in allowing himself to be ridiculed, taking one for the team? Although more documents relating to the episode may emerge

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14 Full text in Appendix C.

15 From Gordon ms 1160/72 12 January 1828, quoted from the Gordon archive by Kasdagli, Aglaia E., 'Exploring the papers of the Scottish philhellene Thomas Gordon (1788–1841)' in *Kampos, Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek*, 3 (1995), 66.

16 See, for example, the remarks attributed to 'my friend Colonel F[allon], a British officer, who was present en amateur, or rather as a friend of General Church, at the unfortunate affair of Athens, in the spring of 1827' quoted by Macfarlane, Charles, *Constantinople in 1828 ... To which is added an appendix, containing remarks and observations to the autumn of 1829* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1829), i, 272.

17 Jourdain, ii, 354.

in due course from the primary records, none of these explanations is plausible. Nor is there any need to construct a conspiracy theory. Greek forces could be regarded as fighting for the neo-Hellenic dream that the Parthenon represented, and the military leaders of those besieged in the Acropolis had claimed the right to immolate themselves as the ultimate defiance, as the heroes of Missolonghi had done, preparing the way for the construction of a myth about the failure of 'Europe'.<sup>18</sup> But how could the Greek Revolutionaries protect the ancient monuments by surrendering the Acropolis to their enemies? Church's order, if carried out, could save the monuments by releasing the besieged Greek forces from their promise to immolate themselves in what was then called a 'holocaust', but he could not, unless by prior collusion, speak for the Ottoman enemy. Among the Church archives I have, however, found no indication that Church had any such intentions or that he even knew about the bargain.

After the war, Church settled in Athens where he lived out a long and respected life until he died in his ninetieth year in 1873, a link with the Revolutionaries of 1821 and of the philhellenes who had fought with them. Church, after the defeats in Athens, had had some military success in western Greece, with the result that a large area of Achaëa and Acarnania was assigned to Greece in the settlement of frontiers, and he was employed by the government against internal opposition. He seems to have begun to regard himself as a successful general. According to Gordon, whose contempt never wavered, he thought of himself as 'the third great general the world has seen Alexander & Caesar in ancient times, & Napoleon was not the greatest in modern, *argue* Church is.'<sup>19</sup>

In the memorial speech given in 1855 on the Acropolis when news arrived of the death of Fabvier, an event at which Church may have been present, Fabvier was praised for his daring exploit of carrying gunpowder into the besieged Acropolis in 1827, with no mention of the surrender soon afterwards.<sup>20</sup> Indeed the claim in the official decree that Fabvier's exploit had helped 'to save the city of Athens' crossed

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18 Full text in Appendix C.

19 Finlay *Journals and Letters*, i, 109. Journal entry of 2 May 1836, the ambiguous punctuation left as transcribed by the editor.

20 Rangabé, M.A.R., *Discours prononcé à d'Acropole par M.A.R. Rangabé, membre du Conseil Municipal d'Athènes à l'occasion de la solennité célébrée en mémoire du Général Fabvier* (Athènes: Vilaris and Liomis, 1855), 15.

the generous limits of what is permissible in eulogies. Step by step, by selection and omission, with small exaggeration added to small silence, the events of 1826 and 1827 were transformed into a comforting national myth.

Church himself prepared an autobiographical account, which he wrote in the third person like Julius Caesar, and which remains unprinted in manuscript in the British Library. He offered a vindication of his conduct that did not give away any secrets, if he had ever been entrusted with any. I have not discovered when the autobiography was written and why it was never printed. At Church's funeral in Athens, tributes were paid and the events of 1827 were alluded to in guarded terms.<sup>21</sup> After his death a short book was prepared by Stanley Lane-Poole, with the help of the autobiography and the voluminous other papers that at that time were still in the hands of the family.<sup>22</sup> In the spirit of an obituary, and its conventions of *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, a practice that Lane-Poole had already adopted in his biography of Stratford Canning, he recalled what he termed 'the great disaster' of 1827: 'Yet on Church's behalf it may fairly be urged that what success there was, was his doing, and what failure there was cannot be set down to his discredit'.<sup>23</sup> Despite Church's having held the appointment of commander-in-chief, Lane-Poole put the blame for all that had gone wrong militarily on others, notably Admiral Cochrane, but also on the Greek troops under Church's command whom he had sent to their deaths.

A passage that Lane-Poole printed from Church's unpublished autobiography gives an indication of how Church saw himself during the brief time between the defeats of early May 1827 and the surrender in June: 'Early on the morning of 27 May [to quote his own narrative], the general-in-chief walked round the entrenchments of the Phalerum [Phaleron], and when on the summit of this renowned hill, once an

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21 [Church, Richard] *Funeral orations pronounced at the Greek cemetery of Athens on March the 15/27th 1873 over the tomb of the late General Sir Richard Church by the Hon: P. Chalkiopoulos, Minister of Justice, and Mr. John Gennadius, Secretary of Legation* (Athens: Press of the Journal of Debates, 1873).

22 [Church, Richard] Lane-Poole, Stanley, *Sir Richard Church C.B. G.C.H. Commander-in-chief of the Greeks in the War of Independence* (London: Longman, 1890). This short book had appeared as articles in *The English Historical Review*, 1 January 1890, Vol.5 (17), pp. 7–30; 1 April 1890, Vol.5 (18), pp. 293–305; and 1 July 1890, Vol.5 (19), pp. 497–522.

23 Lane-Poole, *Church*, 56.

impregnable fortress, the glorious surrounding scenery impressed his mind with the most powerful sensations: Athens on one side, closely blockaded by a barbarous multitude incessantly occupied in discharging ponderous volleys of heavy artillery against the Acropolis, shells bursting over the Parthenon; in front of the Phalerum the long line of the Turkish camp stretching from the sea near Cape Kolias to the Peiraeus, forming almost a semicircle, in order the better to envelop the few Greek troops posted in their front; the immense number of standards and of tents of all colours, the plain covered with horses, mules, camels, and sheep; on the other side, the island of Salamis, always ready to receive the Greeks when driven out of Attica; further off the mighty Gerauleion and Mount Oenion, the bulwarks of Peloponnesus; and Aegina directly in front, whence came Aristides to aid his immortal rival in their efforts for the salvation of their country on the awful night preceding the battle of Salamis. The Greeks who accompanied their general were evidently impressed with the scene and its associations, and it was with a sore sense of the contrast between the past and the present that they retraced their steps, and prepared to leave the historic soil of Attica.<sup>24</sup> Church, whether unconsciously composed from half-remembered reading or from a more explicit wish to give readers what he thought they wanted to hear, presents himself as a new Themistocles, refusing to despair. The ancient Athenians of 480/479 BCE had, on Themistocles's advice, decided to abandon the Acropolis and allowed its monuments to be destroyed by the invading Persians in order to be able continue the fight, and by their later victories had enabled the post-Persian-War generation of Pericles to turn the rebuilt Acropolis into a monument of the enduring spirit of eternal Athenianness.<sup>25</sup> In his autobiographical apologia, however, Church came near to suggesting the opposite, namely, that the stones of the Parthenon were more valuable than the lives of his troops and the winning of the war.

One explanation for the pervasive silence that carries conviction is that Stratford Canning had himself kept silent. He had had many

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24 Lane-Poole, Stanley, *Sir Richard Church C.B. G.C.H. Commander-in-chief of the Greeks in the War of Independence* (London: Longman, 1890), 58. The ancient oracle about Cape Colias, mentioned in the account by Herodotus on which Church is drawing for his meditation, is noted in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

25 To be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

opportunities to say what he knew, and especially after he retired from public office. One that he did not take up was in a long article called 'Recollections of the Revival of Greek Independence', which he wrote for the journal *Nineteenth Century*, then a must-read for the entire British political class, in an issue that appeared in two parts in 1878.<sup>26</sup> The occasion was the publication of official British papers relating the recent Congress of Berlin, and Canning quietly corrected the historical record on the coming of Greek independence half a century before by quoting from contemporary papers, including the instructions he had received from London.

Readers accustomed to steam ships, steam trains, and electric telegraphs able to carry messages more quickly than ever before were taken back to a distant age, its wars already heroized and its men and women already morphing in the memory into the costumed romance of an age of elegance. Canning's readers were reminded of long journeys by horse-drawn carriage in winter snow, of weeks spent on board sailing ships, of his meetings with the emperors of Russia and Austria, with Wellington and Metternich, with King George III and Sultan Mahmoud. Canning might have mentioned Byron, against whom he had played cricket in the Eton and Harrow match, whom he had entertained at Constantinople in 1810, and he said nothing about Annabella Milbanke, to whom he had proposed marriage in 1813 and who 'in an evil hour' became Byron's wife, and whose daughter Ada, in her work with Charles Babbage was already foreshadowing the computer age.<sup>27</sup> In *The Eastern Question*, another collection published posthumously in book form in 1881, Canning gave details about Athens not available elsewhere but, again, he said nothing about the saving of the Parthenon<sup>28</sup>

The diplomatic practice of not crowing over success, nowadays often set aside, is enough to explain both the short-and the medium-term silence, especially when laid alongside the other rhetorical

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26 *Nineteenth Century*, August 1878, 377–92 and November 1878, pp. 932–54. The whole article was reprinted in the posthumous *The Eastern question / by the late Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe; being a selection from his writings during the last five years of his life; with a preface by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley* (London: Murray, 1881).

27 Lane-Poole i, pp. 18, 84–86, 196, 206.

28 *The Eastern question / by the late Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe; being a selection from his writings during the last five years of his life; with a preface by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley* (London: Murray, 1881).

practice of downplaying error and failure. And to Canning, who was dealing with peace and war, and the fate of empires and nations, and who latterly began to see himself as an instrument of Providence, the monuments of Athens may have seemed unimportant, a sideshow that could be left forgotten.<sup>29</sup> But, as the years and decades passed, and the Parthenon came to be regarded around the world as the greatest work ever produced by the mind of man, lack of interest is not an adequate explanation. Although Providence does not normally explain its inscrutable workings, those who cast themselves as its instruments usually like to inscribe themselves in the citation. And, as with the history of the events, so with the history of the historiographies, the documents help explain why a self-imposed silence was preferred to the alternatives.

It was when Canning was at Malta in 1831 and Urquhart was about to meet Reschid in Albania that he persuaded the British admiral to lend him the only steam vessel in the British Mediterranean fleet, giving him a pretext for making a diversion from his direct route by way of Greece on the grounds that a steamship, unlike a sailing ship, would not have to wait at the Dardanelles for favourable winds as well as for a firman.<sup>30</sup> Although on his mission Canning wrote numerous detailed letters at short intervals to Prime Minister Palmerston about his negotiations with the Greek Revolutionary parties at Nauplia and Argos, and about his conversations with the Ottoman governor of the provinces of Attica and Negropont Ismael Bey, in which Ismael confirmed that he had received no orders to evacuate Athens, Canning did not mention that he had visited Athens. Indeed, a reader in London might have reasonably concluded from his phrase ‘passing along that part of Roumelia which comprizes the most interesting points of the territory requisite to complete the North Eastern boundary of Greece’ that he had never

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29 Canning’s construction and presentation of himself as ‘a humble instrument’ ‘acting under Providence’, a characteristic he shared with many British Victorians, and the tendency of British historiography to exaggerate his influence over the course of Ottoman historical development, is discussed by Richmond, pp. 228–29. In 1932, the biographer Elizabeth Malcolm-Smith had suggested that Canning saw himself as a Moses figure, picking up on contemporary references, some tintured with irony collected and quoted by Richmond, 29, although the claim that he was helping along ‘the bloodless conquests of humanity over barbarism’ scarcely matched what had been done by Moses and his successors as reported in the ancient Jewish texts.

30 He could also have mentioned the delays at ‘The Arches’ discussed in Chapter 5.



landed.<sup>31</sup> And his silence may have been deliberate. Within the British Cabinet, a faction led by Lord Aberdeen wanted independent Greece to be confined to the Peloponnese, giving the country a frontier more easily defended and therefore more practical for Britain and the other powers to guarantee. They suspected Canning of being a sentimental philhellene, as indeed he was.<sup>32</sup>

However, in his private memoirs, which Canning expected would be published one day, he wrote a full account of the visit, rather in the style of other visitors during the last days of Ottoman Athens. 'Past, present, and future', he wrote as he gazed on the undamaged monuments, 'stood before me'.<sup>33</sup> On 16 January 1832, Canning paid his first ever visit to the Acropolis of Athens, although he had seen it from the sea several times before.<sup>34</sup> His diplomatic mission was to impress on the Ottoman authorities that if they did not withdraw, Britain and France would use force to compel them to do so. He was giving them advance notice of the barely concealed set of ultimatums that he was tasked to present to the Ottoman Government when he reached Constantinople. And in his few days in Athens he met some of his fellow countrymen settled there, notably George Finlay, and was able to bring himself up to date on the current situation among the Greek Revolutionaries that were near to civil war.

Canning, like other visitors to the Acropolis after 1827, saw that the ancient monuments still stood, not unscathed but certainly undestroyed. The firman of 1826 that Canning had played such a large part in obtaining, and the personal assurances he had received from Reschid, had not only been honoured but honoured to the letter. If he saw the Thrassylos monument and the Cave (discussed in Chapter 17 and pictured in Figure 17.5), he would have reached the same conclusion.

*The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe* K.G. G.C.B. D.C.L. L.L.D. &c. from his memoirs and private

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31 Canning to Palmerston from Therapia in Constantinople 31 January 1832. Kew FO78/209, 159. His previous had been dated 13 January 1832 from Nauplia FO 78/209, 149.

32 On his first sight of Greece on a later visit in 1853, he wrote that 'a mist bedims my gladden'd eye.' Canning, *Shadows of the Past*, 114 footnote. Although in that book of verses he mentioned the Elgin Marbles controversy he gave no hint of the part he had played in preventing the destruction of the monuments.

33 Canning in his memoirs quoted by Lane-Poole, *Canning*, i, 501.

34 Lane-Poole, *Canning* i, 501.

and official papers, a work that preserves many documents, was first published in two large volumes in 1880. It is an example of the type of biography that, early in the twentieth century, the Bloomsbury group of English intellectuals saw as contributing to the organised hypocrisy of the Victorian age, indeed as one of the instruments by which social class was constituted and promoted. As Lytton Strachey wrote of the genre in 1910: 'Those two fat volumes, with which it is our custom to commemorate the dead—who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style, their tone of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design? They are as familiar as the cortege of the undertaker, and wear the same air of slow, funereal barbarism. One is tempted to suppose, of some of them, that they were composed by that functionary as the final item of his job.'<sup>35</sup>

It was common, normal even, for the personal manuscripts from which such works were compiled to be destroyed, so controlling the main agenda of history for posterity, and that appears to have happened to many of the private papers of Stratford Canning which were quoted in print by Lane-Poole.<sup>36</sup> However, since Lane-Poole evidently did not know the story of Canning's dealings with Reschid, he allowed a tell-tale letter to be printed that explains more than he, as biographer, realized. On 16 January 1832, Canning wrote a private letter to his wife that has not hitherto been noticed in the history of the Parthenon:

'... do not tell L.B. on any account [so underlined] how nobly indignant I felt against her noble uncle for having spoiled the temple of its finest ornaments. I had taken his part a few years before, on the ground of his having intended to forestall the French, then masters of Egypt and threatening Greece; but when I heard that one whole side of the reliefs was, and still is, buried under the ruins, occasioned by an explosion of gunpowder many years ago, I could not help thinking that the Scottish Earl might have better employed his time and money in fishing these up, than in pulling down those reliefs that were still in their place.'<sup>37</sup>

35 Preface to *Eminent Victorians*, first published in 1918.

36 That was the conclusion of the article on Canning by Muriel E. Chamberlain in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, published in 2004, that contains lists of known manuscript correspondence held in libraries and record offices.

37 Stratford Canning to his wife Jane, dated from Athens 16 January 1832, printed in Lane-Poole, Stanley, *The Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, K.G.*... (London: Longman, 2

L.B. is readily identifiable as Louisa Bruce, 1802–1870, daughter of the 7th Earl of Elgin's younger brother Charles, and a friend of his wife.<sup>38</sup> So the secret is out. Even at the time, Canning saw that Elgin had not 'saved' the Marbles from the Turks as the justificatory narrative has claimed, and which had taken in many people, including himself. If Elgin had really wanted to save the monuments, he could have used his influence to ensure that they remained safe where they were, as Canning himself had done. And among the reasons that Canning kept his secrets, apart from a private wish not to embarrass members of his immediate family and their friends, was that he knew revealing what he had done would reopen public questions about the legitimacy of Elgin's removals.<sup>39</sup>

Canning was now agreeing with the thought that had occurred to the Muslim authorities in Athens when, against their will, under the authority of the firman engineered by Elgin in 1801, they had been persuaded to allow Elgin's agents to remove pieces of the buildings. It was not a piece of counterfactual hindsight applied to a different past, but well-documented advice offered at the time that had been ignored and overridden. As was reported by Edward Daniel Clarke who was present: 'We confessed that we participated in the Mahometan feeling in this instance, and would gladly see an order enforced to preserve rather than to destroy such a glorious edifice.'<sup>40</sup>

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volumes, 1888), i, 502. The later one-volume 'popular' edition omits these remarks, with the effect that most readers of Lane-Poole's book did not see them. Although printed, this letter has not hitherto been noticed in histories of the monument or of the Marbles. As far as I can discover from online catalogues the manuscript itself has not been noted in any of the collections that contain other correspondence.

- 38 See Checkland, Sydney, *The Elgins, 1766–1917: A Tale of Aristocrats, Proconsuls and Their Wives* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1988), 267. An undated and incomplete letter from Louisa Bruce in Kew FO 352/19B, part 7, a stray from Canning's private papers into his official correspondence, mentions 'uncle Elgin' as having been 'elected' and that she is going to walk to Dunfermline to see him. This may refer to Elgin's election as one of the representative peers of Scotland, an office he assumed on 11 April 1820 and held till his death in 1841.
- 39 The notion that overlapping circles of 'kinship' could cause individuals, even gods, to deviate from the demands of exact justice, was well known in classical Athens as will be explored in *The Classical Parthenon*, with suggestions of how kinship is celebrated in the stories told by the Parthenon.
- 40 Clarke, *Travels, part the second, section the second*, 1814, 483. '[A]nd Lusieri told us that it was with great difficulty he could accomplish this part of his undertaking, from the attachment the Turks entertained towards a building which they had been accustomed to regard with religious veneration, and had converted into a mosque. We confessed that we participated the Mahometan feeling in this instance, and

A near-contemporary picture made by William Gell, who was present during some of the removals and which has recently become available, is reproduced as Figure 19.1.



Figure 19.1. Sir William Gell, *The removal of the Sculptures from the Pediments of the Parthenon by Elgin* (1801). Painting. Benaki Museum, Athens.<sup>41</sup>

And, as if the Providence that almost everyone mentioned in this book invoked had decided to intervene to prove Canning's judgement right, a few slabs of the Parthenon frieze and a metope came to light soon after the Ottoman army left in 1833, when a path was cleared through the marble débris for King Otho's first ceremonial visit.<sup>42</sup> These pieces, and others found soon afterwards, were put on display inside the Parthenon, where they were photographed in the 1850s, as shown in Figure 19.2.

According to a French architect who was present at the ceremony at which the first discoveries, two pieces of the Parthenon frieze, were shown to King Otho, it was the finding of fallen pieces, some unmutilated, that convinced him and many others that the accumulated

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would gladly see an order enforced to preserve than to destroy such a glorious edifice.' 'Why not exert the same influence which was employed in removing them, to induce the Turkish Government to adopt measures for their effectual preservation!' *Ibid.*, 485.

41 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gell\\_Sir\\_William\\_-\\_The\\_removal\\_of\\_the\\_Sculptures\\_from\\_the\\_Pediments\\_of\\_the\\_Parthenon\\_by\\_Elgin\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gell_Sir_William_-_The_removal_of_the_Sculptures_from_the_Pediments_of_the_Parthenon_by_Elgin_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

42 They are referred to as recent discoveries in a letter dated 15 August 1833 printed in Clairmont, letter number 94, page 245.

soil of the Acropolis, like that of the town of Athens where excavations were already under way, was likely to contain far more, as has proved to be the case.<sup>43</sup>



Figure 19.2. Parts of the Parthenon frieze displayed inside the Parthenon. Photographs unidentified.<sup>44</sup>

By the early 1830s the works of Lord Byron were established all over the Europeanized world as the mainstream way of regarding Greece and its history. And although Byron had written mainly of the Ottoman period before the Revolution and his death in Greece in 1824, a stream of new publications, including numerous reports of conversations, ensured he still frequently bobbed up posthumously to contribute to the formation of opinion. In 1832/33, for example, the editors of the *Life and Works of Byron*, prepared with the help of his friends and with access to many unpublished manuscripts, had published for the first time a passage in

43 On venait de découvrir au pied du Parthénon, pour en faire les honneurs au nouveau souverain, deux précieux bas-reliefs de trois pieds de haut, représentant une procession et un sacrifice' that convinced him, and many others, that the accumulated soil of the Acropolis was likely to contain much more, as proved to be the case. Marchebeus, 110.

44 Private collection. Both photographs noted as 'Frise déposée dans le Cella du Parthénon.'

verse that had been drafted for *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, A Romaunt*, which had been omitted at the time of first publication in 1812 as an act of self-censorship.<sup>45</sup> In the passage Byron had extended his attack on Elgin to include the practice of digging up antiquities for export and display more generally, not on the modern grounds that dilettantism destroys knowledge, but because of the nexus of hypocrisies he had observed when he was in Athens as well as in England. Among those Byron mentioned as culpable were Lord Aberdeen, now in 1832 the Foreign Secretary and soon to be Prime Minister, and others, including William Gell, and Thomas Hope who displayed what he thought was a piece of sculpture from the Parthenon in his grand house in London.<sup>46</sup>

As for Stratford Canning as an ambassador, with Aberdeen as his official master, and Byron, his old school friend, lifting yet more veils from the 'humbuggery', it is understandable why he thought the silence of national, class, and family solidarity was the most prudent option. That the dictates of 'duty', a word seldom absent from Victorian discourse, should on occasions be overridden by the ties of 'kinship', or in Murray's word, 'cousinhood', was an idea that had been promoted by the ancient Athenians who had built the Parthenon.<sup>47</sup>

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45 First published in Byron, *The Works of Lord Byron: With His Letters And Journals, And His Life, by Thomas Moore, Esq.* (London: John Murray, 17 volumes 1832–1833), vi, 72.

46 The claim that the piece, a man's arm and hand, was part of a metope from the Parthenon, was disproved by Michaelis, Adolf, PH.D., Professor of Classical Archaeology in the University of Strassburg, *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain, Translated from the German ...* (Cambridge: CUP, 1882), 285.

47 As discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

## 20. The Stories

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In a much-reported speech made in Oxford in 1986, the late Melina Mercouri, then the Greek Minister of Culture, repeated an old story about an episode in the Greek Revolution. When, in 1821, she said, the Turks were besieged in the Acropolis by the Greeks, they began to dismantle the columns of the Parthenon in order to extract lead to make bullets. The Greeks, according to the story, offered to share their own ammunition with the enemy if they would spare the ancient buildings, an offer that the Turks accepted, the Greeks giving up their lives ‘in defense of their patrimony’. Mercouri, who was then respected not only as an actress and film star but for her opposition to the military rule of the Colonels that lasted from 1967 to 1974, repeated versions of the story on other occasions, often under the auspices of UNESCO, sometimes with additions. For example:

At the time, the Turkish army had taken over the Acropolis and they were under siege by the Greeks led by Odysseus Androutsos. The enemy had run out of ammunition and they started to tear down the pillars of the Parthenon temple gouging out the lead inside them in order to melt it and cast bullets. The Greeks found out and the terrible news spread like wildfire among the troops. One of the few things that the average Greek has always been very sensitive about is the protection of the Parthenon from further harm. Led by this sensitivity, the Greeks delivered to the Turks a load of lead with the famous phrase: “Here are your bullets; don’t touch the pillars.” [...] As Athena had guessed, the Greeks had responded in the only way possible. They had virtually redeemed the pillars from the enemy with their blood seeing that the delivered lead was meant for their own chests.<sup>1</sup>

The first mention of that story in the printed record so far found is in 1859, at a time when only a few veterans of the Revolution were still

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1 Texts available on the website of the Melina Mercouri Foundation at: <http://melinamercourifoundation.com/en/speeches1/>

alive and even fewer able to remember the days before the Acropolis had been transformed into a national monument.<sup>2</sup>

If, as is likely, the printed story is derived from earlier oral traditions, the telescoping of time would be explainable. But although the historicity of the story was dismissed by Greek scholars almost immediately, it continued to be repeated, sometimes with variations on 'it is said that' or 'legend has it', a rhetorical device for having things both ways that enables an idea to be planted but relieves the speaker or writer of responsibility for investigating whether it deserves to be recirculated.<sup>3</sup> In its earliest version, the story did not disguise its nation-building agenda: 'The Greeks paid with their blood, giving the enemy bullets to kill them, so the precious marbles would remain intact to witness the nation's rebirth after so many centuries of deep sleep.'<sup>4</sup> The story was given a further twist not long afterwards by Alexandros Rizos Rangabé, an eminent scholar of the history of the Greek language, who praised the Revolutionaries who allegedly shared the bullets by saying that 'those who in the old days fed their starving enemies performed an act of philanthropy, but no nobler action in time of war than this, worthy of the highest civilisation can ever have been undertaken'.<sup>5</sup>

As James Beresford has noted, the story turned what had been a shameful episode, even by the standards of those who had resorted to local genocides, into one of self-sacrifice. It was a collective equivalent of the death-bed absolutions that the Greek Orthodox priests gave to individuals with heavy consciences, but without the need to confess to any guilt.<sup>6</sup> Although what had actually happened in Athens in 1821 and 1822 had already been recounted in evidence-based histories, the rhetorics of nationalism that require that all events be fitted into an

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2 Beresford, James A., 'Alchemy on the Acropolis: Turning Ancient Lead into Restitutionist Gold.' *The Historical Journal*, 2016, Vol. 59.3, pp. 903–26.

3 For example Hitchens, Beard.

4 A. Valaoritis, *Life and Works of Aristotle Valaoritis: Vol. A* (Athens, 1908), pp. 521–23. (Translated from the original Greek). Quoted by Beresford, 8.

5 Quoted with other examples of the same anachronising of the past to meet the ideological aims of a succession of presents, by the late Christopher Hitchens, a British journalist, in *The Parthenon Marbles: The Case for Reunification* (London: Verso: 2008), pp. 59–60. Hitchens introduced his book with 'we know that' and accused those who queried the historicity as repeating 'a common lie about Greek indifference.'

6 The confessions noted by Hartley are described in Chapter 14.



overarching narrative of continuity and celebration treated any challenge as disloyalty.

Meanwhile other well-documented historical episodes were being turned into self-serving stories. At the time of independence, it was widely expected that the

British authorities would return the pieces of the ancient buildings of Athens taken by Lord Elgin's agents, and so help to secure, at the foundation of the new nation state, the goodwill built up by British support during the Revolution.<sup>7</sup> And when, in 1834, the government of Greece made overtures for the return of some of the pieces of the Nike temple removed by Elgin's agents so that they could be included in the rebuilding, the request was deliberately couched not in terms of neo-Hellenic nationalism, which were explicitly disowned, but as an appeal to contribute to the reassembly of an ancient building, from which everyone who valued the monument would benefit.<sup>8</sup> No reasons were offered by the British authorities for turning down the request, but they were already beginning to rely on backward-looking arguments about the firman of 1801 under whose dubious, and subsequently countermanded, mandate Elgin's agents had removed pieces of and from the buildings.<sup>9</sup> Appeals to Ottoman law, which have continued to be repeated through to the present day, were however unlikely to have convinced the mutilated former fighters, the widows, the orphans, and the boys, girls, and women now immured in seraglios far from Greece, who had survived a conflict conducted in accordance with Ottoman laws that the Ottoman Government itself had already disowned.<sup>10</sup>

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7 Skene, *Sketches*, 621. The discoveries from the earliest excavations were described in a letter from Ludwig Ross to William Martin Leake dated 16/28 October 1835, transcribed in [Finlay] *The journals and letters of George Finlay Edited by J.M. Hussey* (Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1995), ii, pp. 492–94. Describing the finding of the blocks of the Nike temple, and plans to re-erect it, he noted, almost as a point that scarcely needed to be said, that 'it will now be time for England to give back the four pieces of the frieze, which the Earl of Elgin carried off.'

8 Documents transcribed in Tsarouchas, Costas [publisher], 'Akropolis von Athens' that consists of facsimiles, with translations, and comments on, a selection of twenty documents from the official papers in a file of the Bavarian Regency Government, 1834 to 1842, (Athens: Alethea, 2012), pp. 19–142.

9 The Firman arranged by French Ambassador Brune in 1806, that saved the west porch from being dismantled is discussed in Appendix A.

10 The most recent example of the 'legally acquired' argument was in March 2021, when it was reported, for example in the *Guardian* of 13 March, that the British Prime Minister had ruled out the return of the pieces of the Parthenon held in the British Museum to Greece, on the grounds that they 'had been legally acquired.'

It was part of Elgin's claim that he had 'saved' the Marbles from the French, and it was reasonable for him, as a counterfactual, to suggest that if Fauvel had had the same opportunities, he would have chosen to do same. But, in the event, as was known at the time when the first claim for return was made, it was French Ambassador Brune who had saved what remained of the Parthenon after the scale of Elgin's removals became known. When he heard that Elgin's agents were planning to remove the west frieze by dismantling the west porch, the last reasonably complete part of the building still standing, and therefore the most valuable, he arranged for a new firman to be sent from the imperial court, ordering them to stop.<sup>11</sup>

Why then, the question arises, in the case of the survival of the Parthenon during the Greek Revolution and its aftermath, which is as richly documented and evidenced as any historian could wish, has the

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It is also puzzling that a former director of the British Museum, who is bound by the standards of conduct applicable to the British public services, and who, as Accounting Officer had a personal responsibility to Parliament for propriety, should claim in an official history published by the organisation, that 'the [Select] Committee [of 1816] vindicated Elgin's actions as totally legal.' Wilson, David M., *The British Museum: A History* (London: British Museum Press, c.2002), 73. Apart from the point that no Accounting Officer should need to be reminded of, that it is not for select committees to determine matters of law, let alone of Ottoman law, and that Wilson presumably knew the sensitivity of the matter and chose his words with care, the Committee made no such claim. Their words were 'The Turkish ministers are ...the only persons in the world, if they are still alive, capable of deciding the doubt' and they went on to say they reached their conclusion, on balance, to recommend the voting of funds 'by conjecture and reasoning, in the absence and deficiency of all positive testimony.' Many have been misled by the Wilson account, treating it as authoritative, including the staff of the Museum who write the labels and brochures, as well as others, as I know from my post. It is puzzling too that those who advised the Prime Minister, have allowed him to repeat the language of 'legally owned by the British Museum's trustees' rather than 'held in trust', a misunderstanding of the responsibilities of British public trustee bodies that is also to be found in statements by the trustees of and members of their staff voting of funds 'by conjecture and reasoning, in the absence and deficiency of all positive testimony.' But even if the reference had been accurately quoted, select committees have no authority to decide on matters of law. In 1962, British representatives in Greece were advised by the Foreign Office to say that 'the collection and removal of the Marbles was done with proper authority and in an expert manner,' the latter part of the sentence straining credibility to breaking point even from what was known at the time, Kew FO 371/163479/1. Opened to the public on 1 January 2013 after 50 years, the last date on which the public records could legally be withheld from public scrutiny, as part of democratic accountability.

11 By the firman obtained in 1805 by the French ambassador Brune, that put a stop to Elgin's removals from the building before he had completed his plans. As shown by the documents recently published noted in Appendix A.

normal course of more evidence leading to a fuller understanding been so intermittent? The notion of ‘saving’ is, of course, a counterfactual not a factual statement, an assessment by someone looking back of what would have happened if there had not been an intervention. And a monument can be saved more than once, and can act as a pivot as often as leaders may choose to make it perform as such. We can see too that, in the case of the Greek Revolution, anyone who resorts to a rhetoric of ‘we will never know’ is, in effect denying the possibility of recovering a knowledge of any past in order to keep open a question that, until some yet more unexpected new evidence comes to light, should be regarded as settled.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile another mythic story was being constructed and curated round the pieces from the Parthenon held in London. In 1833, the year in which the Acropolis was surrendered intact by the Ottoman authorities, Sir Henry Ellis, the secretary of the trustees, principal librarian, and, in effect, the director of the British Museum, wrote in a book produced ‘under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge’ for a mass readership: ‘If Lord Elgin had not removed these marbles, there is no doubt that many of them would long since have been totally destroyed; and it was only after great hesitation, and a certain knowledge that they were daily suffering more and more from brutal ignorance and barbarism, that he could prevail on himself to employ the power he had obtained to remove them to England.’<sup>13</sup> The claim, often including the tell-tale ‘no doubt’ that implies a hesitation, was repeated in official and semi-official publications through much of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Although published in 1833 when the Greek Revolution was

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12 ‘If Lord Elgin had not taken them it is likely that the French or Germans would have. Years later, the Acropolis would be battered again in the Greek Wars of Independence, when it was besieged twice. Elgin may, or may not, have rescued the sculptures. We will never know.’ Jenkins, Tiffany, *Keeping Their Marbles: How the Treasures of the Past Ended Up in Museums — And Why They Should Stay There* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), 99.

13 [British Museum] [Ellis, Sir Henry] *Elgin and Phigaleian Marbles* (London: Knight, 1833), ii, 215. He was extending a more limited claim about Elgin’s own assessment of the choices he faced made in an earlier publication ‘All these [pieces from the west pediment] were removed from their situations by Lord Elgin, but not before he had ascertained, on incontrovertible evidence, that certain and rapid destruction awaited them, if such means were not taken for their preservation.’ [British Museum] *A Description of the Collection of Ancient Marbles in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, part vi, 1830).

14 For example in [British Museum] Jerrold, W. Blanchard, *How to See the British Museum in Four Visits* (London: 1852), 111.

over, and when the absence of damage was already confirmed, Ellis had mentioned the Revolution in only two paragraphs that may be late interpolations.<sup>15</sup> The wording suggests that Ellis knew about the firman obtained by Stratford Canning as well as the earlier one obtained by Strangford, but chose not to discuss them, let alone admit that his own sentences were now superseded.<sup>16</sup> He could be confident that most of the readership, for example the members of the working classes who belonged to Mechanics Institutes, at whom the series was aimed, would be unlikely to have access to the more expensive books written by the eyewitnesses that gave more truthful accounts.

It had often been assumed by visitors before the Revolution that the damage to the ancient monuments that had occurred hitherto had been caused by the Ottoman Turks out of hatred of 'idolatry'.<sup>17</sup> Blaming 'time and the Turks' had been a cliché of travel writing since the first classically educated visitors from the west arrived in the seventeenth century.<sup>18</sup> That he had personally seen the soldiers of the Acropolis garrison pounding down marble to make lime for mortar for their houses was central to Elgin's justification for his removals. Indeed he claimed that it was the discovery that sculpture that had fallen from the Parthenon had been converted into lime that persuaded him that he had to act to save what remained.<sup>19</sup> That Elgin had exaggerated the risks posed by

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15 'In 1821 Athens underwent a siege, but neither then, nor in 1826, when the Seraskier, Redschid Pasha, again besieged the town and bombarded the Acropolis, was serious injury done to the temples. In the former year, at the instigation of Lord Strangford, who was then ambassador to the Porte, orders were issued from the Grand Vizier to the Governor-General of the Morea, for the protection, as far as the Turks could ensure it, of the monuments of antiquity.' [Ellis] *Elgin and Phigaleian Marbles*, i, 68.

16 His main source may have been Gordon's *History* published at the end of 1832 from which the phrase 'as far as the Turks could ensure it' may have been taken.

17 Notably D'Ansse de Villoison, 174, with a specific mention of the sculptures of the Parthenon.

18 For example, 'the barbarousness of Turkes and Time, having defaced all the Monuments of Antiquity.' Lithgow, William, *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures & Painful Peregrinations of long Nineteene Yeares Travayles, from Scotland to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Africa* (Glasgow: Maclehose reprint, 1906), 65, part II, 72 in earlier versions. The first edition of this much reprinted work was in 1609; there were at least twelve during the long eighteenth century, as well as an abridgement and chapbook versions later.

'Rescued from the barbarous hands of the Turkes' Elmes, James, *A General and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Fine Arts* (London: Tegg, 1826) in his article on Elgin Marbles, unnumbered pages.

19 '... the Turk, who had been induced, though most reluctantly, to give up his house to be demolished, then exultingly pointed out the places in the modern fortification,

Turkish lime-makers was noted shortly afterward by the artist Hugh William 'Grecian' Williams who, in 1817, spent some weeks observing and sketching on the Acropolis. In his book published in 1820 on the eve of the Revolution, he devoted a section to 'Reflections regarding the breaking and pounding of Sculptured Marbles by the Turks' in the form of a letter written on the spot in Athens.<sup>20</sup> In his comment on 'the story of the Turk and his furnaces', he did not directly accuse Elgin, whom he knew personally, of being deliberately untruthful but of building a general argument on an untypical 'odd and unnatural' episode, that is, employing a rhetorical device much used by makers of myths.<sup>21</sup> Noting, as others had, that the ancient buildings had not been much altered in recent times, except for piecemeal damage by western tourists that the Ottoman authorities did their best to limit, and that there was plenty of broken marble lying about on the summit if any was needed for making lime, Williams listed the monuments in the town of Athens that still stood. And he suggested his own western romantic aesthetic version of the providentialist 'world has need of them' argument: 'The Temple of Minerva was spared as a beacon to the world, to direct it to the knowledge of purity of taste.'<sup>22</sup> By the end of the century Elgin was not only credited with having 'saved' the sculptures, but with having, as a result, helped to win the war of the Greek Revolution.<sup>23</sup>

What we see is an example of invented stories being repeated so frequently, and with such apparent authority, that they come to be regarded as true, so deeply internalized that the questions that they give rise to are regarded as settled and closed. We see not a disagreement about the past but a competition between invented myths and how they are rhetorically deployed.

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and in his own buildings, where the cement employed had been formed from the very statues which Lord Elgin had hoped to find. It was, in fact, afterwards ascertained, on incontrovertible evidence, that these statues had been reduced to powder, and so used. Then, and then only, did Lord Elgin employ means to rescue what still remained exposed to a similar fate.' Elgin *Memorandum*, 1815 edition, 15.

20 Williams, *Travels*, ii, pp. 316–23.

21 *Ibid.*, ii, 319.

22 *Ibid.*, 323.

23 Elgin 'saved what could be saved. By removing the Parthenon sculptures to England he helped to arouse the interest of Europe and America in little Greece, and thus was instrumental in bringing about the liberation of Greece from the Turkish yoke.' Mach, Edmund von, Ph.D., *Greek Sculpture, Its Spirit and Principles* (Boston: Ginn, 1903), 98.

It became common to attribute the damage done to the Parthenon by Morosini and by Elgin to 'the shot and shell of the Turk' fired during the Greek Revolution.<sup>24</sup> An apparently supportive remark was made in the 1842 book by the geologist William J. Hamilton, who picked up stories on his visit to Athens for a few days in October 1835, two and a half years after the Ottoman forces left. 'Chosrew Pacha during the last year of Turkish rule', he wrote, threw down of a corner of a pediment so that they could get at a hive of honey. Confusing Pasha Chosrew with Pasha Reschid, Hamilton went on to claim that the 'wanton act of barbarity' was 'a satisfactory answer to the angry attacks against Lord Elgin for removing to England so many master-pieces of Greek sculpture, now secured from further ravages within the walls of the British Museum'.<sup>25</sup>

Hamilton's father, William Richard Hamilton, who had been Elgin's private secretary and played a prominent part in obtaining the collection, was now a prominent figure in British public life, permanent secretary of the Foreign Office and a trustee of the British Museum.<sup>26</sup> At the time when his son's remark was published, he had recently presided over an inquiry into the state of the surfaces of the pieces of the Parthenon and other ancient Athenian buildings then in London. Following yet more confirmation from examinations of the buildings in Athens and from pieces found in excavations that many parts of the ancient buildings and their sculptural components had been brightly coloured, and the Erechtheion covered with brightly-coloured beads, a search was mounted to see if any colour remained on the pieces in London, during which advice was obtained from Michael Faraday, the most eminent chemist of the time. Much polychromy, it turned out, was still to be seen on the architectural fragments, as it still can be at the time of writing when the architectural fragments are displayed in a basement of the British Museum, but since the sculptured pieces had twice been washed down

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24 For example: 'Were I not a Christian and a clergyman, I would this morning, on looking upon these shot-riven columns execrate the vandalism that could level their artillery against these works of art and beauty.' Black, Archibald Pollok, M.A., F.R.S.A.E., *A hundred days in the East: A diary of a journey to Egypt, Palestine, Turkey in Europe, Greece, the isles of the Archipelago, and Italy* (London: Shaw, 1855), 515.

25 Hamilton, William J., *Researches In Asia Minor, Pontus, And Armenia* (London: Murray, 1842), i, 36.

26 W.R. Hamilton's role in a ruse to obtain the part of the Elgin collection detained in Athens is discussed with extracts from a letter he sent on Elgin's behalf in Appendix A.

in acid during the process of making plaster casts for sale, such colour as had remained when they first reached London had gone, with only one possible exception identified at the time.<sup>27</sup> Although not comparable in extent with the damage done by agents of Lord Duveen in the 1930s, it was yet another casualty of Winckelmann's western ideas and hierarchies as they had been imputed to the world of classical Athens.

The younger Hamilton was among a long line of apologists who, perhaps out of some sense of national, institutional, or class solidarity, have been drawn into making exaggerations. The fallen corner was put back soon after independence, but the pieces removed by Lord Elgin are still held in a basement of the British Museum, alongside other detached fragments of ancient buildings, occasionally visited, sometimes admired as objects of archaeological study or aesthetic appreciation, but seldom if ever now used as models for copying as was Elgin's stated purpose.

Despite over two hundred years of historical scholarship, a much fuller understanding of speech acts and their rhetorics and of the processes of myth-making, and the fact that all the ancient monuments in Athens still stand in much the same state as they had before the Revolution, the claim continues to be repeated in much the same, vaguely condescending and orientalist, form as Elgin had deployed it in 1816. Like the story that the Turks had damaged the Parthenon in the Revolution, it was presented as immune to falsifiability.<sup>28</sup> Like the story of the sharing of the bullets, it has not only remained frozen in much the same form as it was when it was first deployed at the time of the British Parliament's voting for funds to purchase the Elgin collection in 1816, but it has attracted accretions.

And like story of the sharing of the bullets, the accretions can be seen as driven by ideology, not by evidence. By 1962, when the Duveen Gallery was reopened after twenty-three years, British representatives in Greece were advised by the Foreign Office to say that 'the collection

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27 [RIBA] 'Report of the Committee appointed to examine the Elgin Marbles, in order to ascertain whether any evidences remain as to the employment of color in the decoration of the architecture or sculpture' In *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects of London, vol. I, part II* (London: Longman, 1842) 102–08.

28 For example: 'Although it is customary to condemn the procedure of Lord Elgin, it is well to remember that he had obtained permission from the de facto owner. It is moreover likely that during the subsequent unsettled and war-like conditions of Greece, these remains of ancient art would have been scattered and lost to civilization.' Zerbe, Prof. A. S., Ph.D., Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio, *Europe through American Eyes* (Dayton, Ohio: Reformed Publishing Company, 1886), 214.

and removal of the Marbles was done with proper authority and in an expert manner'.<sup>29</sup> In 2014, under the headline 'Lord Elgin was a hero who saved the marbles for the world', Dominic Selwood—a member of a profession, the law, that claims expertise in evaluating evidence, but also practises the arts of rhetoric—in elaborating on the old stories about the marble being ground down to be sold as lime, went on to say that: 'Furthermore, any art lover who has read up the real story will know that the collection of marbles in the British Museum simply would not exist today without Elgin because they were being systematically destroyed in Athens. If Elgin had not intervened, they would be a mere memory, like the Afghani Buddhas at Bamiyan, dynamited into oblivion by the Taliban in 2001'.<sup>30</sup>

Since ancient Hellas, and ancient Athens in particular, was one of the few civilizations in recorded history to understand and theorize the difference between myth and history, between rhetoric and truth-seeking, between presentations of the past to serve an ideological present and provisional, evidence-based, inquiry, the repetition of such stories, especially when presented as homage to the ancient Greeks, is especially unfair.<sup>31</sup>

Soon after the purchase of the Elgin collection by the British state, the claim that Elgin had 'saved' the pieces from the Parthenon was joined by a claim that they were now 'safe'. In the words of the Victorian scholar, Walter Copland Perry, who, in the spirit of his times, presented the Marbles as works of art that could be 'pressed into the service of truth and holiness', they were lodged in an 'inviolable asylum'.<sup>32</sup> The two main features of the story, rescue and stewardship, were still being officially employed as justificatory rhetorics at the time of writing, despite the fact that they cannot be reconciled with the overwhelming evidence of what actually happened.<sup>33</sup>

29 Kew FO 371/163479/1 Opened after 50 years on 1 January 2013.

30 London *Daily Telegraph* on 21 October 2014.

31 To be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

32 Perry, Walter Copland, *Greek and Roman Sculpture, A Popular Introduction to the history of Greek and Roman Sculpture, with two hundred and sixty-eight illustrations on wood* (London: Longman, 1882), 249 and 674.

33 Notably Waagen, G.F., *Works of art and artists in England* (London: Murray 1838). A translation of *Kunstwerke und Künstler in England und Paris* (Berlin: 1837 and 1838).



## 21. Which Pasts, which Futures?

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Work to transform the Acropolis of Athens into a monument to Hellenism, old and new, began soon after the last units of the Ottoman army left in April 1833. As part of the peace settlement, the frontiers of the newly established nation-state had been formally guaranteed by Britain, France, and Russia, and were soon recognized by other countries.<sup>1</sup> It could, therefore, be confidently assumed that another attempt at an Ottoman military reconquest would not be made in the foreseeable future.

On 29 September 1834, in the presence of King Otho, who had recently arrived in Athens from the provisional capital of Nauplia, one drum of a fallen column of the Parthenon was laid on top of another.<sup>2</sup> The ritual was the culmination of a formal procession through Athens by members of the different ranks of Greek society, loosely modelled on what was known about processions in ancient times, such as the one pictured on the frieze of the Parthenon.<sup>3</sup> The symbolic act of rebuilding ('anastelosis') of the Parthenon, albeit merely token at that time, scripted by the German architect Leo von Klenze, displayed and performed the first step in the planned rebirth ('anastasis') of the Hellenic nation.<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 There were wars between Greece and the Ottoman Empire later in the century, notably in 1897, mentioned later in the Chapter.
  - 2 The events and debates are described and critiqued, with the help of numerous contemporaneous sources, by Bastéa, Eleni, *The Creation of Modern Athens: Planning the Myth* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000). The ceremony was commented on by Balanos, Nicholas, *Les Monuments de l'Acropole. Relèvement et conservation* (Paris: Massin and Levy, 1938), 7.
  - 3 The mythic event that, I will suggest, was presented to ancient viewers of the processions pictured on the frieze of the Parthenon is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
  - 4 Sometimes spelled 'anastylosis', perhaps from a false etymological association with 'style.' According to Balanos, 7, what he calls the 'neologism anastylosis' [so spelled] was first officially used at a meeting of academies in Brussels in 1925, and

An image made in 1843 by Theodore Aligny, who had been commissioned by the Paris School of Fine Arts to report on the state of the ancient monuments of Greece at the beginning of the new era, is reproduced as Figure 21.1.



Figure 21.1. Théodore d'Aligny, 'Athens, the Pnyx, the Areopagus, the Acropolis, and Hymettos' (1845), etching on chine collé.<sup>5</sup>

Aligny, who was the etcher as well as the artist, offered a reasonably realistic view of the Acropolis and of the Pnyx—whose steps had been uncovered by digging financed by Lords Aberdeen and Elgin—although not of their geographical relationship. He showed a landscape that was entirely deserted, without even a few costumed humans to give the scale as had been a convention of the western picturesque.

The Acropolis revealed its many pasts, not layered as in an archaeological dig or in a conventional 'history of art' arranged by dates of first production, but as a historical moment, a fleeting conjuncture of moments of invention, reaction, and adaptation, of building and conservation, of knocking down and deliberate mutilation that had occurred over its many centuries. It showed, for example, the changes brought about the recently ended Revolution, with its tottering bastions,

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was 'consecrated' at the meeting in Athens in October 1931 of which the Athens Declaration, a predecessor of the Venice Declaration of 1974, was one of the outcomes. To be discussed in Chapter 25.

5 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ath%C3%A8nes\\_Le\\_Pnyx,\\_l%27Ar%C3%A9opage,\\_l%27Acropole\\_et\\_l%27Hymette\\_-\\_Aligny\\_Claude\\_Fran%C3%A7ois\\_Th%C3%A9odore\\_Caruelle\\_D%27\\_-\\_1845.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ath%C3%A8nes_Le_Pnyx,_l%27Ar%C3%A9opage,_l%27Acropole_et_l%27Hymette_-_Aligny_Claude_Fran%C3%A7ois_Th%C3%A9odore_Caruelle_D%27_-_1845.jpg).

and the complex of extruding walls that had been built to renew its military capability after the brief occupation of Morosini's army in 1687. The Propylaia was scarcely recognizable as an ancient building, since the gaps between its columns had been closed up with masonry when it had been converted into a mediaeval palace in a western style. The temple to Athena Nike, which had been largely intact when Spon and Wheeler saw it in 1671, had disappeared, some of its stones reused to strengthen the defences after the retreat of the Venetian-led western European army in 1688, others taken by Elgin. The 'Frankish Tower', built at some time in the past then still unknown, had played a part in the Revolution and some recognized a few monuments of Roman date, notably the untenanted structure known as the monument of Agrippa on which statues of Mark Antony and Cleopatra had once briefly stood.<sup>6</sup>

A printed notice accompanying Aligny's image encouraged its viewers to regard the scene as a historic turning point.<sup>7</sup> Greece, it proclaimed, which had long been thought incapable of liberty, had purged its soil of its stupid oppressors, and was preparing to renew itself with marvellous zeal. Adopting the rhetorical device of speaking in real time ('*enargeia*'), the image tells its viewers that it takes only a few years to efface the last traces of Ottoman domination and for the names used by Homer and Thucydides again to become as familiar to the ignorant as they already are to the learned.<sup>8</sup> The land of Greece herself, as the clouds are blown away, is repossessing the clear light.

In 1834, no-one in authority seems to have suggested conserving the Acropolis or the Parthenon in its post-Revolution moment. The question was, what new form should it take? From contemporaneous documents, most not available until recently, we are now able to appreciate not only what was suggested and why, but the realities that inserted themselves between what was thinkable and what was practicable.<sup>9</sup> At one end of a long spectrum was a proposal by the architect Karl-Friedrich Schinkel that would have made the Acropolis the seat of the new Kingdom,

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6 More on this monument with an illustration in Chapter 24.

7 As with another set of images of the time, of which an example, was given as Figure [ ], they were not bound into a book but kept loose, so enabling them to be passed round and discussed as a drawing room practice.

8 A reference to the language agenda of Korais that was to be pursued alongside that of changing what today would be regarded as changing the buildings and therefore the visual 'heritage' as an embodiment of the collective memory.

9 Described and critiqued, using numerous contemporaneous sources, by Bastéa.

with the construction of a new marble royal palace and other modern buildings in and around the ancient ruins, as shown in Figure 21.2.

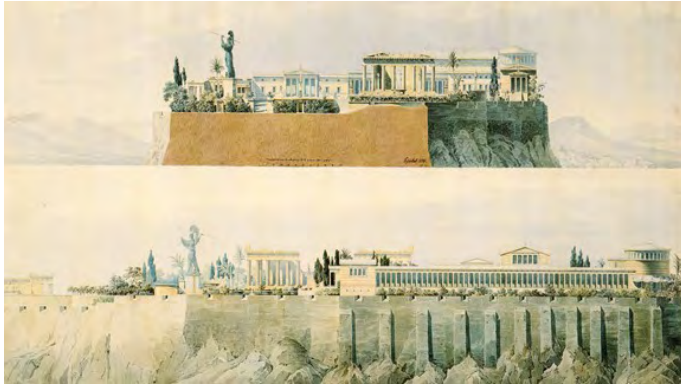


Figure 21.2. Views of the royal palace to be built on the Acropolis as proposed by Karl-Friedrich Schinkel (1834). Watercolour. Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich.<sup>10</sup>

Schinkel's proposal would have involved constructing new buildings and a full-scale attempt at a replica of the bronze statue now known as 'Athena Promachos' that had dominated the skyline in classical times. The ancient ruins were to be shored up and partially restored, notably by painting the marble surfaces in bright colours where it was now certain that they had been painted in ancient times. If executed, the plan would have made the Acropolis a living town with a contemporary political function, a role it had seldom played during its long history. Whether the palace would have met the requirement of King Ludwig of Bavaria, father and mentor of Otho, that it should be located at a place 'where neither bullet nor bomb could reach it' was doubtful—this would have likely been impossible, even with the weapons available at the time.<sup>11</sup> However, besides the fear that the new buildings would upstage the ancient, the plan would have required skills and resources far beyond what were then obtainable locally. The plan was not financeable even with the help of foreign funds, nor, at a time when many of the population were still sheltering in the ruined houses of the modern town, was it easily justifiable.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Wikimedia Commons,

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in translation by Bastéa, 91.

<sup>12</sup> The letter by Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau sent in 1836 informing Schinkel that his proposal had been rejected said that it was just as well that he had not seen

Schinkel may not have fully understood that, if the Acropolis were to be drastically repurposed as he suggested, the quantities of fresh water that would have to be carried up every day by human and animal power, even with the building of new conduits as he proposed, would have imposed heavy ongoing running costs. The earthenware vessels used to store fresh water kept it cool, but only enough to protect it from the constant risk of evaporation in the warm, dry air.<sup>13</sup> In the Ottoman period, even with trees, gardens, deep soil, and tall chimneys to catch the breezes, the Acropolis had been an uncomfortable place to live, and the new king and members of government, we can be confident, would have wanted to escape to the lower town whenever they could.<sup>14</sup>

A rival proposal, made by the French Government architect Jean-Baptiste Marchebeus, would have seen an area in front of the Acropolis raised with infill from the earth and from other débris already being removed from the summit, and the building of a palace and other public buildings in an artificially flattened, enclosed space, defensible against mobs or future revolutionaries, with a parade ground, as shown in Figure 21.3.

The French plan, besides removing the cityscape of hills celebrated by the classical Athenians that linked their identity to their land, may have been driven not only by the fears of King Ludwig who saw revolts occurring in independent Greece, but by the French experience of revolutions, of which the most recent was 1830, which was soon to lead to the bulldozing of avenues through the streets of old Paris.<sup>15</sup> The plan, which would have separated the rulers from the ruled, and was also prohibitively expensive, seems not to have been seriously considered.<sup>16</sup> The image, like many others, exaggerates the extent to which the Parthenon was visible from ground level, and the clouds that the new medium of engraving on steel encouraged gives Athens an untypical northern look.

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the New Athens, 'a miserable shanty town that would cause you to faint under the columns of the Parthenon.' Quoted in translation by Bastéa, 91.

- 13 Described for the nineteenth century by [Horton and Linson] Horton, George, *Modern Athens, Illustrated by Corwin Knapp Linson* (London: Bullen, 1902), 16. It seems likely that this phenomenon, including the cooling potentialities of earthenware, was also known in ancient times.
- 14 The tall chimneys designed to catch the breezes, commonly found at that time across the whole of the eastern Mediterranean region are shown in Figure 4.10.
- 15 The building and rhetorical deployment of the cityscape in classical Athens is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
- 16 Not mentioned by Bastéa.



Figure 21.3. 'Plan for a New Athens in front of the Acropolis' Engraving on steel.<sup>17</sup>

Some voices called for the removal of Acropolis walls, on the grounds that they were 'a sad drawback to the Parthenon' and therefore only of interest to veterans of the Revolution.<sup>18</sup> But that proposal, in the tradition of moderns scolding the ancients for not sharing their own ways of seeing, was politely rejected by the Regency government, who wished to preserve the 'picturesque' quality of the site. It seems not to have occurred to anyone concerned that the authorities in classical Athens had designed the Parthenon so as to be visible from certain viewing stations both far and near, and not from others, in particular with hoped-for effects on those who were on the move, including those participating in festival processions.<sup>19</sup>

It was soon decided that the transformation of the Acropolis would take two forms. Firstly, the Parthenon and the other classical-era

17 [Marchebeus] *Voyage de Paris à Constantinople par bateau à vapeur nouvel itinéraire orné de vues et vignettes sur acier, avec tableaux indiquant les lieux desservis par les paquebots à vapeur, sur la Méditerranée, l'Adriatique et le Danube, le prix des places et des marchandises, les distances et la valeur des monnaies* par Marchebeus, architecte du gouvernement (Paris: Artus, 1839), opposite 113. The large tiled-roof building shown on the slopes has not been identified: it may be part of the proposal, outbuildings intended to house soldiers, workmen, or horses. The role of the ancient cityscape, with its hills, in the self-fashioning of classical Athens is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

18 For example: 'Raze the walls of the Acropolis, clear away the earth, leave the rock bare, and the Parthenon will be even more admirable — it will seem expanded.' Slade, *Turkey*, ii, 293.

19 The 'problem' that the Parthenon was not in sight from the Areopagus hill is discussed in Chapter 22. My suggestion for how the classical Athenians conceived of the Parthenon and why they caused it to be built in the form that it took is offered in my attempt to recover the discursive environment in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with the results set out there also.

buildings would be conserved and partially rebuilt; and secondly, the buildings and other reminders of the Ottoman and Frankish periods, that is, more than half a millennium of building works since 1208, would be removed. These centuries were now deemed to have been a period of foreign occupation, an interruption to the imputed continuity of ancient through to modern Greece. Like the huge Muslim cemetery in front of the Acropolis gate, which had evidently been in continuous use for hundreds of years, they were to be expunged from the built environment, and therefore from the national memory and the national story, by monument cleansing.<sup>20</sup>

The first substantial rebuilding was that of the temple dedicated to Athena Nike ('Athena as Victory') that was reassembled in the 1830s from the marble blocks of its walls, which had been moved by the Ottoman authorities in the early eighteenth century and were still lying nearby.<sup>21</sup> They had been dismantled in an effort to improve the military defences of the Acropolis, whose weaknesses in the age of modern artillery had been exposed by the siege and capture in 1687. A moment during that first anastelosis, as sketched by a visitor in February 1836, is shown as Figure 21.4.



Figure 21.4. The temple to Athena Nike in the course of being rebuilt, February 1836. Lithograph.<sup>22</sup>

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- 20 The cemetery was pictured, shortly before it was removed, as Figure 15.3.  
 21 Discussed, as part of a general history of the monument till his time of writing by Mark, Ira S., *The Sanctuary of Athena Nike in Athens: architectural stages and chronology* (Princeton: *Hesperia Supplement* 26, 1993).  
 22 Giffard, Edward, *A Short Visit to the Ionian Islands, Athens, and the Morea* (London: Murray, 1837), frontispiece 'from a drawing by F.W. Newton.' This was a different

Figure 21.5 reproduces a sketch made by Francis Schroeder, the secretary to the commander of a United States naval squadron, on 17 July 1846 when the anastelosis had recently been completed.



Figure 21.5. 'The Temple of Victory'. Engraving on copper.<sup>23</sup>

Another example is shown in Figure 21.6.

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Newton, from Charles, later a keeper of antiquities in the British Museum, who was to be responsible, with the help of firmans obtained by Stratford Canning, for bringing antiquities from the Ottoman territories, including pieces from the tomb of Mausolos that were built into an imperial castle in Halicarnassus (modern Bodrum) to the British Museum.

- 23 Schroeder, Francis, Secretary to the Commodore Commanding the United States Squadron in that Sea, 1843–1845, *Shores of the Mediterranean, with sketches of Travel* (New York: Harper, 1846), i, opposite 92. Engraved by W.G. Jackman from a drawing by F. Schroeder. The pieces of carved marble built into the wall that are visible in the sketch, two victories sacrificing a bull, Acropolis Museum, inv. 972 and 2680, were from the Nike temple parapet. They were also noted by Flaubert, Gustave, *Voyage en Orient (1849–1851): Egypte, Liban-Palestine, Rhodes, Asie Mineure, Constantinople, Grèce, Italie; édition présentée et établie par Claudine Gothot-Mersch; annotation et cartes de Stéphanie Dord-Crouslé* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), pp. 707–08. The slab had been noticed by Lord Sandwich in 1738, perhaps an indication that it had been put in place, and not destroyed, either at the time the Ottoman authorities dismantled the Nike temple as part of their modernization of the Acropolis defences after 1688. See [Sandwich] *A Voyage Performed by the late Earl of Sandwich round the Mediterranean in the Years 1738 and 1739, Written by himself* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1799), 61.





Figure 21.6. The Nike Temple. Lithograph.<sup>24</sup>

The Nike temple has since been dismantled and reassembled more than once in order to accord with a better understanding of how it had been positioned when it was first built.<sup>25</sup>

The images show how useful the platform had been, in ancient times as well as modern, for looking out from the Acropolis to the sea, the direction from which hostile forces were most likely to come, as had happened in 1827 when the Greek Revolutionaries were besieged and on other occasions back to antiquity. They bring out the long sightlines that the clarity of the air made possible, helping us to understand how, in ancient times, it was possible to imagine Aegeus, the father of Theseus, leaping to his death from the Acropolis and providing a memorable eponym for the Aegean Sea.<sup>26</sup>

To viewers in the early nineteenth century, accustomed to looking at ancient ruins as relics of the greatness of a long-gone past, the result was a pleasing reversal. The rebuilding of the Nike temple marked a shift from a policy of repair and recycling, such as had been the norm since the end of antiquity, to new ideas involving a rhetoric of national

24 From a drawing by F. von Dardel, 1884, in Wachtmeister, Hans, Count, *Medelhalskizzer. Dagboksanteckningar under en resa i Norra Afrika. Grekland och Turkiet år 1884 ... Med teckningar af F. von Dardel* (Stockholm: Norstedt & Söner, 1884), opposite 87.

25 It will be shown as Figure 24.4, as it stood after the recent conservation.

26 The legendary story is specifically linked to this place by Pausanias, i, xxii, 4. 'From this point the sea is visible, and it was here, they say, that Aegeus cast himself down and perished.'

continuity and notions of inter-generational stewardship for the recently adopted ‘heritage’. By 1841 the temple looked ‘new but unfinished [...] its white marble columns and walls glittering in the sun, with a splendour little short of that which they displayed when fresh from the chisels of their original constructors’.<sup>27</sup> For the first time for over a thousand years, those in charge of the Acropolis site invited visitors to regard the ancient buildings as having a future as well as a past.<sup>28</sup> By changing the visual presence of the past, they changed the stories that would be commonly told, and therefore, over time and by habit and repetition, the mentalities of viewers.

The four blocks of the frieze that Elgin had removed and that remained in London, although much mutilated, appear to have been designed not only for displaying the mythic scenes pictured, but so as to be seen from a particular set of viewing stations by those approaching the Acropolis through the main gate on the western side. Figure 21.7, for example, the most visible, appears to show a large shield or mirror attached to a tree, such as might be used for signalling with the help of the sun’s rays.



Figure 21.7. Part of the west-facing slab of the temple to Athena Nike frieze.<sup>29</sup>

27 Mure, William, of Caldwell, *Journal of a Tour in Greece and the Ionian Islands, with remarks on the recent history—present state—and classical antiquities of those countries* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1842), ii, 69. The implications for understanding why the classical Athenians built the Parthenon are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

28 ‘It is an allegory in itself.’ Warburton, Eliot, Esq., *The Crescent and the Cross, or Romance and Realities of Eastern Travel* (London: Colburn, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 1851), 400, describing how the restored building appeared to him on his visit in 1843.

29 Engraving, from *Ancient Marbles in the British Museum*, Part IX, opposite 41.

That in ancient times the Acropolis was routinely used as a place from which to look out, as well as to be seen and to communicate—sometimes with the help of bonfires—appears to be confirmed by a remark attributed to Antigonus by the second-century-CE author Plutarch, albeit as a metaphor, in his work on Demetrius: ‘Athens, the beacon-tower of the whole world, would speedily flash the glory of their deeds to all mankind’.<sup>30</sup>

### ‘I confess I felt ashamed of it’: Changing Attitudes to the Removal of Antiquities

In the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the three other classical-era buildings on the Acropolis of which substantial portions still remained standing were partially rebuilt. The extent of the changes is shown by before-and-after photographs that Nicholas Balanos, who had been appointed the architect in charge of the programme in 1895, proudly published in 1936, almost exactly a hundred years after the end of the Greek Revolution. They are reproduced as Figures 21.8 and 21.9.



Figure 21.8. Parthenon and Erechtheion, before and after. Photographs.<sup>31</sup>

30 Plut. Demetr. 8.2. The possible relevance of this evidence to the question of why the classical Acropolis took the form that it did, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

31 Balanos, Plate 147.

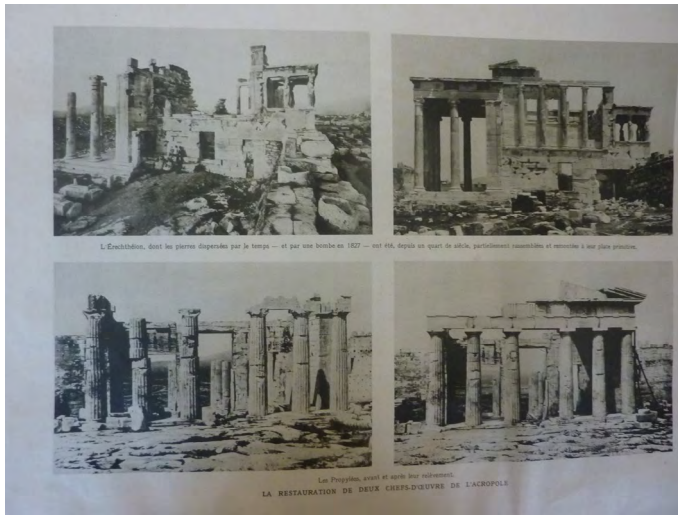


Figure 21.9. The Erechtheion and the Propylaea, before and after. Photographs c.1929.<sup>32</sup>

In May 1833, just one month after the Ottoman army left, a group of tourists visited Athens travelling on board the *Francesco Primo*, one of the new steamships that were transforming travel not only within the Mediterranean and across the oceans, but also, by navigating the Danube, from the heart of continental Europe.<sup>33</sup> The party of about sixty included the brother of King Otho, princes, marquises, counts, barons, and other titled nobility, women as well as men, drawn from half a dozen European countries, as well as architects, medical men, and military officers; it was as representative a sample of the community of leaders of 'Europe' as could be assembled. All could see that the Parthenon still stood, its brown ancient surface, scarcely flecked during the Revolution, offering a sharp contrast to the white gaps that marked the parts of the building from where Elgin's agents had prized out pieces from 1801 until 1805, the year when the Ottoman Government ordered them to stop.<sup>34</sup>

32 Charbonnier, André, 'Les Travaux de Relèvement des Monuments de l'Acropole' in *l'Illustration*. No 4530, 28 December 1929, 818.

33 Marchebeus.

34 The contrast can be seen in a watercolour made around 1830 reproduced in Peytier, Eugène, *The Peytier album in the Stephen Vagliano collection. (Liberated Greece and the Morea Scientific Expedition.) Presented with an introduction by Stelios A. Papadopoulos.*

As was remarked by C.R. Baynes, a British military officer who was present, the reaction of most visitors was now much the same:

I confess I felt ashamed of it, when in company with an American and a Greek I first visited the Acropolis. The most plausible excuse given for their removal is, that it saved them from destruction by the Turks. Now, setting aside the question whether the Turks, having spared them so long, would at that particular time have destroyed them, we must confess the invalidity of the pretext, unless it be held lawful to rob whoever we may choose to suppose in danger of being robbed by others; or at least no such proceeding could be justified, save by a sincere intention and purpose on the part of the anticipating pillager, to restore the property when the danger which he observed threatening it, should have passed away.<sup>35</sup>

The question 'Who saved the Parthenon?' now presented itself directly to the eyes of a growing and influential international constituency in the same stark terms as it had to Stratford Canning just over a year earlier.<sup>36</sup> And, as with Canning, the direct juxtaposition of the damage Elgin's agents had done with the rhetoric of salvation brought about, in the minds of many, a change of opinion. As Baynes wrote: 'If we [the British] do not replace them, we act as an individual who, having taken part of his neighbour's property into his house to preserve it during a conflagration, should refuse to return it, when the flames were extinguished, and he stood most in need of it'.<sup>37</sup>

Because, in the clear microclimate, the difference between the brown of the historic marble surface and the glistening white of the subsurface from where Elgin's agents had cut out sculptured pieces remained stark for most of the nineteenth century, some viewers drew other conclusions from what they had been told at home. As was remarked in 1834 by Adolphus Slade, the senior naval officer who had realised that the Ottoman forces had aimed their guns so as to avoid damaging the

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*Notes on the plates by Agapi A. Karakatsani* (Athens: National Bank of Greece, 1971), plate 30. The evidence for the 1805 firman (vizieral letter) that ordered Elgin's agents to stop is noted in Appendix A.

35 Baynes, C.R., *Notes and reflections, during a ramble in the east: an overland journey from India, visit to Athens, &c.* by C.R. Baynes, Esq., of the Madras Civil Service (London: Longman, 1843), 219. 'Baynes, capitaine anglais' is on the passenger list in *Marchebeus*, xvi.

36 As reported in Chapter 19.

37 Baynes, *Notes and reflections*, 219.

ancient monuments: 'No words are strong enough to designate the cant preached the last thirty years [...] We [the British] have been victims to the grossest deception.'<sup>38</sup>

And soon, we seen signs of a hardening of attitudes among the local population. In his *Memoirs*, Makriyannis tells a story of an episode during the Revolution. As he wrote in the rough demotic style of a self-taught palikar, when he came across soldiers who were preparing to sell ancient statues to Europeans: 'I took the soldiers aside and spoke to them: "Even if they give you ten thousand talara, don't allow for these statues to leave our homeland. These are what we fought for."'<sup>39</sup>

The first law forbidding the export of antiquities from independent Greece, which came into force on May 1834, presented the philhellenic claim to continuity as acknowledged fact: 'All objects of antiquity within Hellas, being works of the ancestors of the Hellenic peoples, are considered national property belonging to all Hellenes in general'.<sup>40</sup> Among the collections exported before the ban came into force was that made by agents of Lord Strangford, whose efforts as British ambassador in 1821 to secure an imperial firman (vizieral letter) to prevent the destruction of the Parthenon and other monuments have been described earlier in this book and the main documents made available.<sup>41</sup> During the Revolution Strangford had employed an agent, Luigi Canquitz of Smyrna, to buy antiquities on his behalf, his position as British Ambassador giving him opportunities, as it had for Elgin, not available to others.<sup>42</sup> No record has been found of what formed the Strangford collection, nor of how and where the pieces were obtained. It was a typical assortment of ungrounded and unprovenanced pieces.

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38 Slade, *Turkey*, ii, 304. Slade's professional opinion on the targeting skill of the Ottoman artillery was noted in Chapter 17. The change in the air quality and lightscape that began at the end of the nineteenth century is discussed, and illustrated in colour, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

39 From the first edition, ii, 303. The phrase, that was made famous by Seferis, was adopted as the title of an online exhibition in 2019. Lagogianni-Georgakarakos, M. and Koutsogiannis Th. (eds) 'These are what we fought for' — Antiquities and the Greek War of Independence (Athens: Archaeological Resources Fund, 2020). An online exhibition.

40 Quoted by Galanakis, 8 from Section 3, chapter A, article 61 and drawing on the longer study by Kokkou, Angelikē, *Hē merimna gia tis archaiotētēs stēn Hellada kai ta prōta mouseia* (Athens: Kapon, 2009).

41 In Appendix B.

42 Kew FO 352/15 B, 444.

Among those that later made their way to the British Museum, some by gift, others by purchase from Strangford's family, was a marble archaic dedicated male figure (kouros), the 'Strangford Apollo', reported to have been obtained from the small Aegean island of Anaphe, which had been assigned to independent Greece when the frontier was settled.<sup>43</sup> Another was the so-called 'Strangford Shield', made of Pentelic marble that suggested it had been made in Athens.<sup>44</sup>

Foreigners did not however pay much attention to the spirit of the new law. In early 1835, for example, Lord Prudoe, asked James Dawkins, the British Government's representative in Athens, to intervene to allow the export of his collection of antiquities as an exception on the grounds that they had been acquired before 1822, the year when a provisional Greek Government had first been formed.<sup>45</sup> In the areas that remained under Ottoman control, exports, with or without firmans, continued uninterrupted much as before.



Figure 21.10. The 'Strangford shield' with a statuette showing where a shield was situated on the colossal cult state of Athena Parthenos. Composite photograph of post-classical pieces held in different places.<sup>46</sup>

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- 43 An image is available on Wikimedia Commons. At some time since it was ungrounded, it appears to have been polished to make it accord with prevailing attitudes of how Greek sculptured images should appear. The village built by the workers from Anaphe on the slopes of the Acropolis is discussed and illustrated later in this Chapter.
- 44 Shown as Figure 21.10, it appears to be a copy made much later of the shield of the Athena Parthenos.
- 45 Kew FO 32/50, letters from Lord Prudoe to James R. Dawkins, the minister (representative) of the British Government to the Greek Government, 1 January and 19 February 1835.
- 46 Murray, A. S., L.L.D., F.S.A., Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, *The Sculptures of the Parthenon* (London: Murray, 1903), opposite 126. A

In post-independence Greece too, occasional exceptions to the law against exports were allowed. In 1890, the American preacher, Thomas de Witt Talmage, who carried a letter of introduction from Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, was permitted to export a sculptured piece of the Parthenon that has since disappeared.<sup>47</sup> In 1858 Cornelius Felton, President of Harvard University, was officially presented with another piece also now lost.<sup>48</sup> From elsewhere in Athens, Felton removed at his own expense a piece of marble, ‘the fragment of a tablet, or statue, or seat, ‘that he intended to have cut and polished with the word Pnyx’, also since lost.<sup>49</sup> He was, however, not allowed to buy ‘the highly ornamented sarcophagus conventionally called “the tomb of Theseus”’ that for years stood outside the Theseion.<sup>50</sup>

In the 1850s, an architectural block from the Parthenon was officially sent to Washington, D.C. to be incorporated into the monument then being built to memorialize George Washington. It has a Greek inscription, of which the following is a translation: ‘To George Washington, the hero, the citizen of the new and illustrious liberty: the land of Solon, Themistocles, and Pericles—the mother of ancient liberty—sends this ancient stone from the Parthenon as a testimony of honor and admiration.’<sup>51</sup> At the time the Washington monument was built, slavery, and trading in slaves, was still an integral part of the society, the law, the economy, and the self-fashioning of most of the leaderships in the southern states, as it had been in classical Athens.

Some time between 1847 and 1853, in an effort to reduce pilfering, Kyriakos Pittakis, the superintendent of the Acropolis, arranged for the fragments lying around on the summit to be collected and built as walls. John Gadsby, a professional lecturer and journalist, noted in 1858 how things had changed from his earlier visit in 1847: ‘so that instead of

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detail is given in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279> as part of a discussion about the possible contribution of Pheidias and Pericles.

47 Pictured as Figure 17.2. Talmage, T. de Witt, *From the Pyramids to the Acropolis, Sacred Places seen through Biblical Spectacles* (Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Company, 1892), 279. His part in the debates on the Areopagus hill is discussed in Chapter 22.

48 Felton, Cornelius Conway, *Familiar Letters from Europe* (Boston MA: Ticknor and Fields, 1865), 330.

49 Felton, 325.

50 Harrison, James Albert, *Greek Vignettes. A Sail in the Greek Seas, Summer of 1877* (Boston: Houghton Osgood, 1878), 183, reporting a story by his guide.

51 The full circumstances, with documentation, are noted in: [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/wamo/stones.pdf](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/wamo/stones.pdf)



having to scramble over ruins and being able to pick up divers pieces as in 1847, we now had a regular footpath, and had no chance of picking up a scrap. Indeed had there been any pieces lying about, we could not have taken them, as a watchman kept close to our heels the whole time we were there.<sup>52</sup> The Pittakis walls can be seen in the wood engraving at Figure 21.11.



Figure 21.11. 'The north west angle of the Parthenon in 1855'. Wood engraving by E. Whymper.<sup>53</sup>

A woodblock copied from a photograph, once manufactured, could, by this time, produce an almost unlimited number of impressions and carry the same image to geographically widely separated viewerships. As a piece of capital plant, like a steel plate, it could be worked to produce ever cheaper copies in a wider range of media, including newspapers, for decades after the actuality had changed. The same image appears, for example, in almost identical form in books and magazines in France, Germany, and the English-speaking world in the later nineteenth century, either pirated or by arrangement.<sup>54</sup>

When we recover its history as an image, it emerges that it was copied from a photograph made by James Robertson, reproduced as

52 Gadsby, John, *A Trip to Sebastopol* (London: Gadsby, 1858), 117.

53 Hobhouse, 1858 edition, i, facing 296.

54 Among the books in which I have found it reproduced are Hobhouse, 1854, Proust, Samuel S. Green, Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, and Leo de Colange in 1886, by which time it was over forty years out-of-date.

Figure 21.12, taken on the spot at a date not earlier than the latter part of 1853, making it one of the earliest photographs of the Parthenon but also one of the most long-lived in its obsoletizing effects.



Figure 21.12. The Parthenon. Photograph by James Robertson, undated but 1853 or 1854.<sup>55</sup>

The photograph, made by a technology of light on chemicals without direct human intervention, records features that have since been removed, notably the brick vault that covered a water storage cistern, thought to be of Byzantine date, that had played a decisive role during the sieges of the Acropolis in 1821/22 and 1826/27.<sup>56</sup> And it raises another question. In building the walls of fragments, Pittakis claimed

55 Private collection. Another copy, described as ‘albumenised salt print from wet-collodion glass-plate negative’ is reproduced in Robertson, James, *Photographs, ‘Athens and Grecian Antiquities 1853–1855’, From the Photographic Archive of the Benaki Museum* (Athens: Museum of Cycladic Art, 1998), opposite 66, from the copy in the Benaki Museum. In his journal for 15 December 1853, Felton notes that ‘A young Englishman, named Robertson, was here for a few days’ that appears to give us a date, Felton, 321. Felton also notes that Robertson went to Athens in the autumn of 1853, in a footnote on page 44 of the American edition of Carlisle’s *Diary in Turkish and Greek Waters*. However, taking account of the time needed for the photograph to have been taken, the plate sent to London, copied by a wood engraver, and impressions made in time to be incorporated into Hobhouse’s *Travels*, that is annotated with printed remarks and dated 1854, it must have been taken some time earlier. A watercolour by Stilling, made in 1853, reproduced in Bendtsen, Fig. 37, is so nearly identical that it may have been copied from the same photograph.

56 Discussed in Chapter 8.

not only to be halting the pilfering but undertaking an anastelosis. As he wrote soon after: 'after exiting the Propylaia one arrives at the Parthenon by a road bordered by two walls four English feet high, that took the visitor on a detour to the east end, although with a gap from which to visit the Erechtheion'.<sup>57</sup> What appear to be a few large, and therefore ancient, shaped marble blocks can be seen in the wall. The wall was also noticed by the French architect Antoine-Marie Chenavard who visited in September 1843.<sup>58</sup> If, as is possible, Pittakis had identified the remains of an ancient wall, we may have an indication here of how, in ancient times, the many formal processions were funnelled past the Parthenon to the open space beyond where ceremonies occurred and where both the Erechtheion and the east end of the Parthenon could be viewed by the processioners.<sup>59</sup>

## Understanding the Parthenon's Engineering

The marble used in in the early nineteenth-century restoration and conservation programmes was mostly newly cut from the quarries of Mount Pentelikon that were brought back into use for the first time since the end of antiquity. However, around 1897, when war broke out between Greece and the Ottoman Empire, and the supply of new marble from the quarries was interrupted, Penrose suggested to the Greek authorities that the programme could instead use the many pieces of marble then still lying on the ground.<sup>60</sup> On the face of it, the suggestion that modern masons should sink their chisels into the very marble that had been selected by the ancient quarrymen and carved by the ancient craftsmen, and that was still as crisp as it had been when first cut, was

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57 'Après les propylées on arrive au Parthénon par un chemin bordé de deux murs hauts de 4 pieds anglais. Ce chemin faisait un détour et venait aboutir à l'est du Parthénon. Du côté du Nord le mur avait une porte à grille qui donnait passage près de Portique des Caryatides. De cette manière la forteresse était divisée en deux. Une partie de la muraille du Nord existe encore maintenant. On y voit des petits trous où étaient pendu des ornemens.' Pittakis, pp. 257–58.

58 'Un mur de séparation, dont on voit encore les traces, les divisait entre eux' Chenavard, A.M., Architecte, Rey, E., Peintre, Professeurs à L'Ecole des Beaux Arts de Lyon, *Voyage en Grèce et dans le Levant* (Lyon: Boitel, 1849), 23.

59 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

60 The letter in French dated 7 October 1897 is reproduced in facsimile in Mallouchou-Tufano (1988), 96.

an abnegation of all that Penrose had stood for.<sup>61</sup> It was by the careful measurement of the pieces found on the ground or in excavations, as well as of those still on the buildings, that he and John Pennethorne, another architect working independently, had established that the many deviations from the orthogonal on the buildings were not the result of imperfect workmanship or of dislocations caused by earthquakes and explosions, as had been the understanding hitherto. The divergences, it was now established, had been deliberately introduced by those who designed the ancient buildings in order to seduce the eye/brain of viewers into believing that what they saw was more 'realistic' than it actually was.<sup>62</sup> The ancient designers and builders were, in this respect, acting in accordance with what, within a mistaken theory of extramission, was based on a more sophisticated understanding of the neuropsychology of perception and cognition than had been available to even the most knowledgeable of then modern architects. Indeed it was now appreciated by some that it was because the western architects who had built in the neo-Hellenic style in Britain, the United States, Germany, and other western countries had made the lines orthogonal that the resulting buildings, for all their grandeur, had never matched the effects on the viewer of the Athenian buildings that they had used as models.<sup>63</sup>

Two vignettes, inserted in Penrose's book, reproduced as Figures 21.13 and 21.14, show the efforts that he and his assistant went to in order to drop their plumb lines to make exact measurements of the deviations from the orthogonal. In the case of the column of the temple

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61 'finely chiselled fragments which lie about on every side.' Wickenden, J. Frederic, *Seven Days in Attica in the Summer of 1852* (London: Harrison, 1857), 27. 'Here and there it seems as though the chisel of the sculptor had been but just removed from the triglyph or metope; the fragments that strew the ground are fresh as when new ...' Christmas, Rev. H., M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A. Author of 'The Cradle of the Twin Giants, Science and History,' etc. *The shores and islands of the Mediterranean, including a visit to the seven churches of Asia*, in three volumes (London: Bentley, 1851), ii, 257.

62 To be discussed with evidence from the ancient authors in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. It was seldom understood in the nineteenth century that many ancient viewers, who through their membership of commissions knew what was intended, were not passive receivers of an illusion or a deception.

63 For example, Anderson, Rev. John, *Wanderings in the land of Israel and through the wilderness of Sinai, in 1850 and 1851* (Glasgow: Collins, [n.d.], c.1852), 20, probably reporting conversations among architects. '[T]he ignorance of which principle [entasis] has destroyed the effect of many a Doric building, otherwise correct.' Another comment by [Author of ] *Photograms*, 127.

dedicated to Olympian Zeus, at seventeen metres high one of the biggest temples constructed in the ancient world, a naval gunner fired a bolt with a line attached that enabled a rope-ladder to be hauled up. Since, at that height, even the lightest breeze swayed the plumb lines, Penrose concluded that, in order to achieve the needed exactitude, the ancient builders must have used the even more difficult technology of water levels.<sup>64</sup>

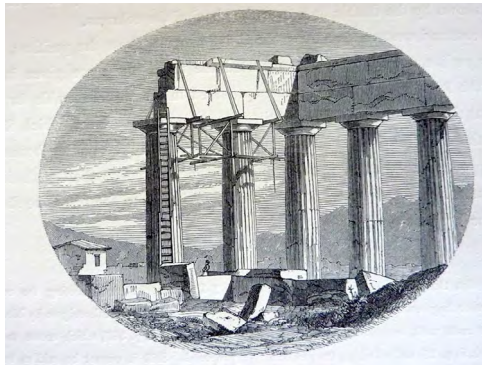


Figure 21.13. Measuring the deviations from the orthogonal of the Parthenon columns. Engraved vignette in Penrose's book.<sup>65</sup>

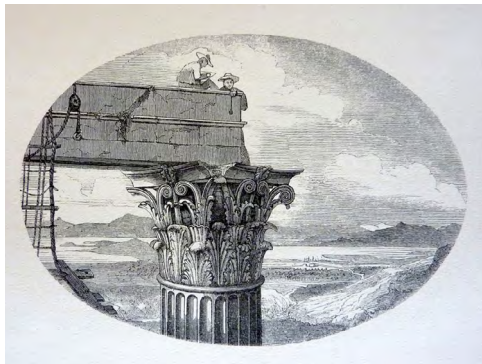


Figure 21.14. Penrose and his assistant with plumb lines on the Temple to Olympian Zeus. Engraved vignette in Penrose's book.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Penrose, 33. No ancient water level, as far as I know, has survived.

<sup>65</sup> Penrose, Vignette to chap. II, section II, On the Elevation or Orthographical Proportions of the Parthenon, 12.

<sup>66</sup> Vignette to chap. XII, on the Temple of Jupiter Olympius at Athens, 17. There was, of course, no actual viewing station for the composer of this image, that also has

It gradually emerged that there was scarcely a straight line anywhere on the Parthenon, nor indeed on any large Hellenic public building.<sup>67</sup> Nor were the deviations from the orthogonal trivial. In 1749, Lord Charlemont, with the help of an assistant and measuring instruments, had thought that the measured difference of two inches from the 'true' was an excusable and trivial error.<sup>68</sup> In Athens every fragment of a carved column or cornice, indeed every piece of a marble block with an ancient surface, it was gradually realized, was not only unique, but assignable to the place that it had occupied when the buildings were first erected. In Pennethorne's words of 1844, when the measuring had just begun: 'The architectural remains of the Acropolis of Athens, when steadily contemplated and investigated, are equal to many thousands of written records; and out of them may still be collected the elements, and all the mathematical principles and calculations which guided Greek architecture.'<sup>69</sup> The French architect Lucien Magne, who organized an international conference on the Parthenon in Paris in 1895, was able to declare, overturning centuries of received wisdom, that the evidence of the stones was more reliable than the words of Vitruvius, the author of the only work specifically devoted to architecture to have survived from antiquity.<sup>70</sup>

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the incidental effect of bringing out yet again the extent and clarity of the mutual sightlines that were made possible by the micro-climate.

- 67 Noted by Reinach in 1887, ii, 43, as a discovery by Burnouf. The observation, it was said by others, as part of an international rivalry to claim the credit, had first been made by Cockerell. Nugent, i, 17. 'Thus it was left to Mr. Cockerell, and to the Germans who have followed him in the inquiry, within the last few years to discover that in the Parthenon and Temple of Theseus there is not one straight line.' The numerous refinements in the design of the Parthenon, including notes on when they were discovered, are discussed by Haselberger, Lothar, 'Bending the Truth: Curvature and Other Refinements of the Parthenon', in Neils, *The Parthenon: From Antiquity to the Present*, 101–57. The claim that the frieze tilted inwards towards the top, in addition to having been more deeply carved at the bottom, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
- 68 [Charlemont] *The Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey 1749*, edited by W.B. Stanford and E.J. Finopoulos (London: Tregraph for Leventis Foundation, 1984), 132. The assistant, named as Murphy, may have been a personal servant brought from Ireland.
- 69 Pennethorne, *Elements*, 15.
- 70 Observed by Magne as early as 1894, noting as a possible exception the temple to Apollo at Didyma, in *Études*, 65. Magne, *Études*, 1. The implications for building an

Over several weeks during August 1853, Athens was struck by a series of earthquakes in which the recently built marble buildings of the town were damaged, and one of the columns of the temple to Olympian Zeus fell, but the ancient ruins on the Acropolis were apparently undamaged. It was then that the bastion, hurriedly erected by Odysseus Androutsos in 1822 to protect the tunnel that gave access to the fresh water spring, partially collapsed, only to be finally removed after another earthquake in 1894.<sup>71</sup> The episode tended to confirm the guess that the ancient monuments must have frequently withstood other, perhaps even more severe, shocks during its long history.<sup>72</sup> The Parthenon, it was now impossible to dispute, had been damaged less by geotectonic than by geopolitical shifts, of which the damage done by the bombardments of 1687 by the late-crusader army led by the Venetian Morosini, and the removals by Elgin's agents, were the most severe for over a thousand years.<sup>73</sup> The old cliché that the damage had been caused by 'Time and the Turks' was again shown to have been ahistorical.

The discoveries also revealed that those responsible for the construction had solved another of the local problems of the site: the fact that the Acropolis stood on a geological fault line. Studying the columns of the Parthenon as they lay on the ground revealed the ways in which the buildings had been so effectively proofed against earthquakes that a large section of the building had been able to survive the explosion of 1687. Vital to the survivability were the plugs, 'empolia and poloi' inserted between the column drums that enabled the energy of the upward shock of an earthquake to be absorbed.<sup>74</sup> Made of olive wood,

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understanding of how the ancient viewers of the classical era saw the Parthenon are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

71 As discussed in Chapter with an illustration of the plaque at Figure 10.6.

72 Noted by Wyse, Thomas, *Impressions of Greece; with an introduction by his niece, Miss Wyse; and letters from Greece to friends at home by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1871), 64.

73 The mutilations by the Christians after their takeover of the eastern Roman Empire of the stories in stone presented on the Parthenon were seldom mentioned. They are relevant to attempts to understand the central slab of the east frieze as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, as well as exemplifying how mutilation of images is a rhetoric of display and performance.

74 A modern discussion by Karakitsou, Elena and Konteas, Zannis, 'Empolia and poloi from the Acropolis monuments', in *The Acropolis Restoration News*, no 13, December 2013. An early photograph of a broken wooden plug in a column drum from the

and others perhaps also of cedar, set in lead, an example is shown diagrammatically in Figure 21.15.

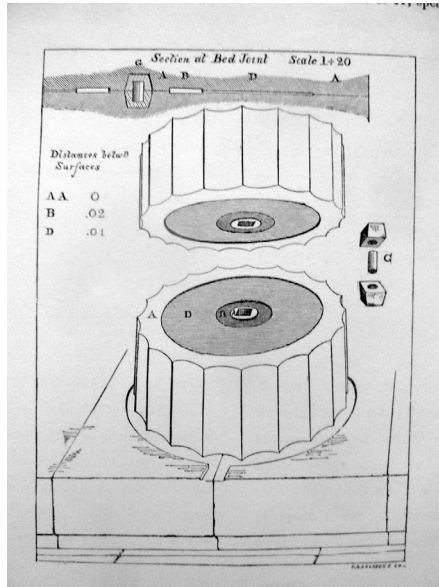


Figure 21.15. 'On the ARMONIA or Joining of the Stone in Greek Architecture'.  
Engraving of a drawing by Penrose.<sup>75</sup>

What most astonished those who first examined the plugs was that, so finely cut was the marble, and so hermetically sealed were the joints, that even after two thousand two hundred years, the wood inside was only a little more dry and brittle than it had been in its natural state.<sup>76</sup>

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Erechtheion is reproduced by Mallacho-Tufano, 39. The fact that the method of building the columns of the Parthenon, and of the other ancient buildings, helped them to withstand both horizontal and vertical movements had already been noticed by Sebastiano Ittar, one of Elgin's architects, when he examined fallen columns in 1802, although his finding was not then made available in published form. For example 'sbranche di ferro impiombate che legano le assie orizzontalmente.' And 'piastre di ferro [sic] che afermano [sic] le azioni verticalmente.' Quotations from notes by Ittar due to be published in her forthcoming work kindly supplied by Luciana Gallo. A possible reference to earthquake proofing in the *Iphigenia among the Taurians* of Euripides is noted in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

<sup>75</sup> Penrose, 22.

<sup>76</sup> For example, Mott, 193. Pittakis, the curator, was reluctantly prevailed upon to allow Mott to remove a specimen although he was well aware of its value as a source of knowledge.



Nor did the care given to the sealing serve only to give viewers the illusion that the columns of the Parthenon were cut from single pieces of marble. Preventing even a few drops of water from entering the cavity prevented the wood from sprouting and expanding, as the Athenians of the classical era knew.<sup>77</sup> Achieving such precision required the marble not only to be carved to a high specification but polished smooth with emery imported from Naxos and, with the resulting dust, endangering the sight of marble workers.<sup>78</sup>

What was not noticed by the nineteenth-century architects and archaeologists was that in the *Erechtheus* by Euripides, of which large fragments survive, the plug was used as a political metaphor. As the character of Praxithea, the queen, declares: ‘a person who moves from one city to another is like a peg badly fitted into a piece of wood, a citizen in name but not in action’.<sup>79</sup> In this xenophobic remark, although the play is set in mythic times, we hear a contemporary comment on classical-era politics—perhaps connected to the influx of foreigners who were employed in the public works programmes. In 450 BCE, Pericles had persuaded the Athenians to pass a law that restricted citizenship to men who were born to parents who were Athenian on both sides, a measure which, according to near contemporaries, did much to advance

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77 The proclivity, or as Theophrastus said, using the word ‘nature’ in its sense of fitted for a purpose, of pieces of apparently dead wood of certain long-lived trees, notably the olive, to sprout when exposed to moisture was noted by in his treatise *On the Causes of Plants*, 4.3. That it was reasonable in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE for the Athenians of the classical period to believe that they could design and construct buildings that could, with minimal maintenance, last ‘for ever’ is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

78 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

79 Euripides, *Selected Fragmentary Plays* edited by C. Collard, M.J. Cropp and K.H. Lee (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1995), i, 158, fragment 360, lines 12–13. Quoted by Connelly, *Parthenon Enigma*, 289. This passage, that was used by Lycurgus 1.00, to make a rhetorical point, was known before the other passages first published by the late Colin Austin in 1948, that came from a roll of papyrus used as waste to encase an Egyptian mummy in the Louvre. That the word for peg, ‘harmos’, was cognate with the many uses of the word ‘harmonia’ would not have escaped the ancient hearer, whether of the play or of Lycurgus’s reuse of it in a forensic context. Whether the xenophobic sentiment was answered by another character or by the Chorus, as was normal in the tragic drama as a dialogic form, is not known. Praxithea also justifies her decision to allow her daughter to be put to death as a human sacrifice, by appealing to the notion of ‘charis’, a word that implied mutual obligation, as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

his political career, but that is also hard to reconcile with the rhetoric of welcome put into his mouth by Thucydides in the Funeral Oration.<sup>80</sup> In a passage in the *Ion* by Euripides, we overhear characters glorying in the technical terms employed in the use of specialized tools.<sup>81</sup> At a time when many Athenian citizens were involved in the building industry not only as workmen but as members of the commissions that set the designs, supervised the construction, and audited the results, it should be no surprise that the public discourse employed metaphors from the building industry as well as others drawn from the natural environment, agriculture, animal husbandry, transport, and war.<sup>82</sup>

When in 1895, following another earthquake, it was discovered that, on that occasion, the Parthenon itself had shifted, the Greek Government set up an international commission of three experienced architects, all with previous knowledge of the building, to examine the fabric, one each from the three western European countries who were most up to date, had most experience, and who were also most sympathetic.<sup>83</sup> And

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80 The passage, in Aristot. Const. Ath. 26, was translated by Kenyon who first published it from the recently discovered papyrus as: '... in the year of Antidotus, owing to the large number of the citizens an enactment was passed on the proposal of Pericles confining citizenship to persons of citizen birth on both sides.' As Sara M. Wijma has pointed out, this translation of the Greek 'καὶ τρίτῳ μετὰ τοῦτον ἐπὶ Αντιδότου διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν Περικλέους εἰπόντος ἔγνωσαν μὴ μετέχειν τῆς πόλεως, ὅς ἂν μὴ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἄστοιῖν ἦ γεγονώς' may be an anachronistic modern privileging of the political over other valid ways in which the population could share and participate in the life of the city. *Embracing the immigrant: the participation of metics in Athenian polis religion (5th-4th century BC)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, c.2014), 6 and elsewhere. And in recovering a historical understanding classical Athens we may do better to see the operation of the society as a matter of dynamic participation alongside documentable legal status. The fact that certain men who had previously participated in the political institutions were disenfranchised is however a theme in the *Ion* of Euripides. And as I will suggest in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, it may be relevant to answering the old puzzle of what is the episode presented as the central event on the east frieze of the Parthenon.

81 Noted by [Euripides *Ion*] Martin, Gunther, ed., *Euripides, Ion, Edition and Commentary* (Leiden: de Gruyter, 2018), 431 'the messengers uses 'several terms that have a technical ring to them' referring to the *Ion*, especially pp. 1126–36.

82 My suggestion for how we can construct the main features of the discursive environment as a way of contextualizing public policy deliberations leading to decisions on current questions, such as why the civic institutions of classical Athens decided to build the Parthenon is discussed and an example offered as an experiment in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

83 They were Lucien Magne, Francis Penrose and Josef Durm. Their work is described by Magne, Lucien, Professeur à l'École des Beaux-Arts, Architecte du

there is other evidence that the neo-Hellenizing of Athens was regarded as an imported rather than an indigenous project. In 1883, half a century after independence, Panagiotos G. Kastromenos complained that his fellow countrymen were indifferent to the monuments of Athens 'which our noble ancestors have bequeathed to us.' In attempting to offset 'our darkness and ignorance' by publishing the first guide to be written in the Greek language, he attributed the neglect to the fact that 'we Greeks find ourselves admiring more the European travellers who admire these extraordinary works of Architecture and Sculpture than the works themselves for their own sake'.<sup>84</sup>

To their dismay, the three experts discovered that the porch at the west end of the Parthenon, which was now the largest and most precious part of the building to remain largely intact and was saved by an imperial firman in 1805 from having its sculptural blocks cut out by Elgin's agents, was in imminent danger of collapse. It turned out, as the architects examined and measured the cracks in the stonework, that the removal of most of the heavy sculptural pieces from the pediment by Elgin's agents had redistributed the weight and that the change was putting intolerable strain on the architraves. The ancient architects and civil engineers, it was again confirmed, had not only used their knowledge of civil engineering to build a visual masterpiece but had devised an elaborate complex of interacting weights that had enabled the building to survive innumerable earthquakes as well as man-made disasters until 1895, but was unlikely to be able to survive the next.

Josef Durm, the German member of the Commission, made drawings illustrating how Elgin's removals had disturbed the stability of the building. In one of his drawings, reproduced as Figure 21.16, the movements that had occurred in the recent earthquake were shown in red, and widening cracks in the ancient blocks in pink.

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Gouvernement, *Le Parthénon — Études faites au cours de deux missions en Grèce (1894–1895)* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1895), 10, and in a later account in Magne, Lucien, *La Conservation du Parthénon, Conférence Faite le 31 Mars 1905 à la Sorbonne* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1905).

84 Kastromenos, *Prologue* dated 1 October, Athens. Pitttakís's book had been written in French.

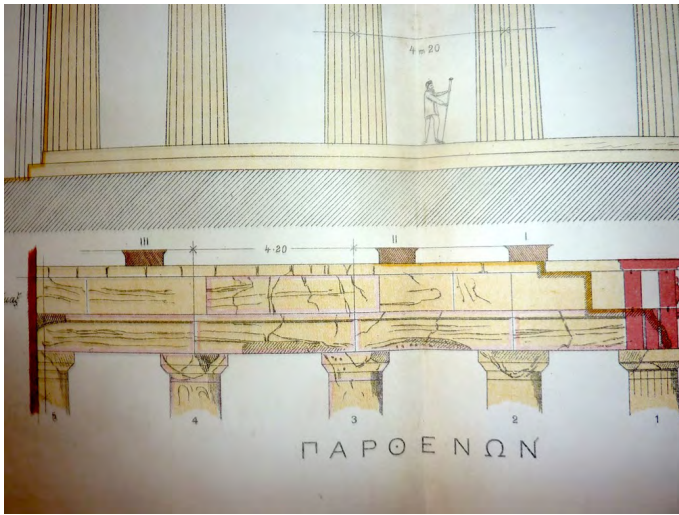


Figure 21.16. Part of an architectural drawing by Josef Durm, 1885. Hand-coloured lithograph.<sup>85</sup>

Carpenters experienced in calculating the weight distribution of mediaeval gothic buildings, who were hurriedly brought from France, erected emergency scaffolding that prevented a collapse—but it had been a near-run thing. If Elgin had ‘saved’ the ‘Marbles’ as was the British official rhetoric, the removals had come within a whisker of causing the collapse of the last substantial part of the Parthenon itself.<sup>86</sup> Those who had ‘saved’ the Parthenon, it now emerged, were the ancient designers and builders who had caused it to be over-engineered.<sup>87</sup>

The practice of breaking off pieces may have reached a peak in the years immediately before the Revolution. Joseph Woods, an architect who was in Athens in 1818, as part of the continuing research and publication of *The Antiquities of Athens* by Stuart and Revett begun in

85 Durm, Josef, *Ἡ κατάσταση τοῦ Παρθενώσ καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀρχαίων μνημείων τῶν Ἀθηνῶν*. In *Ἑλληνικὴ Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐταιρεία. Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς* (Athens: Ἐφημερίς Ἀρχαιολογικὴ... Περίοδος τρίτη) 1895), plate 2. Private collection. The image retains indications that is copied from a larger folding image in a printed book.

86 The observation by Cockerell and others that the Parthenon had been over-engineered was noted in Chapter 5. How Elgin’s agents were stopped from taking more from the west porch by a firman arranged by the French ambassador Brune is discussed in Appendix A.

87 The reasons can only be understood by recovering the discursive as well as the other environments of classical Athens, that I attempt to recover in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

the 1750s, noted that, even although there were many carved pieces of the Parthenon lying on the ground that they 'might almost fit on it', many visitors preferred to do their own mutilating, apparently so that they could claim the authenticity of having obtained the pieces with their own hands.<sup>88</sup> In 1830, while the Acropolis was still in Ottoman hands and removing antiquities was strictly forbidden, Benjamin Disraeli, who was amongst the first to confirm that the monuments had not been substantially damaged during the Revolution, surreptitiously took away a piece of the Parthenon.<sup>89</sup> And, after the Ottoman forces left, the piecemeal destruction resumed. In July 1833, when the protection duties were handed over to Bavarian troops, C.B. Young, a junior British naval officer, paid a visit under the guidance of Pittakis and Gropius. In writing home to his sister, he reported that the Bavarian soldiers had been breaking off pieces of the Parthenon. Until a few days before his visit, he wrote, the metope at the north-west corner, marble that had, astonishingly, survived since antiquity almost complete, despite having been carved in such high relief as to be almost sculpture in the round, had been vandalized by the soldiers. The knee of the left hind leg of the centaur that they had broken off did, however, make its way to Munich where, at the time of writing, it still remains.<sup>90</sup>

It was around the end of the Ottoman occupation that an American naval chaplain, the Rev. Enoch Wines, noted: 'every one who visits the Acropolis knocks off a piece for a specimen. Some of our officers

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88 Woods, ii, 253. Some of the damage done after Elgin's removals is documented by Payne, Emma M., '3D imaging of the Parthenon sculptures: an assessment of the archaeological value of nineteenth-century plaster casts' in *Antiquity* vol 93, issue 372, December 2019, pp. 1625–42.

89 [Disraeli], *The Letters of Benjamin Disraeli*, edited by John Matthews *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982–2014), i, 410. Disraeli presented the piece to William Beckford with the suggestion that it should be made into a paperweight. What happened to it is unknown.

90 '[I]t must have been very perfect till a day or two before we saw it where some of the Bavarian/Barbarian guard had broken the horses legs and knocked off other parts of the figure.' Young, manuscript letter, British Museum. The damage to the metope is discussed by Korka, *Fragments*, pp. 41–44, with photographs. Young's testimony is at variance with the story that this fragment and a fragment of the frieze had been obtained by Dodwell and presented to King Ludwig, as discussed by Brommer, *Der Parthenonfries*, pp. 6–7. Whether Young's near contemporary, but not eye-witness, account is to be preferred is hard to judge, even if it was derived from Gropius or Pittakis, but we can note that any account that pushed back the time of the damage to pre-Revolutionary times when pilfering was more common, rather than having to accept the responsibility of his own soldiers, was less embarrassing to the philhellenic king of Bavaria and to his nephew the king of Greece.

followed the general practice in this respect'.<sup>91</sup> Wines also reported that one of the Ottoman soldiers was inquiring 'if we had no such stones in America'.<sup>92</sup> The soldier's sardonic comment was preserved by Wiles as an example of oriental naivety, but the question was a good one.<sup>93</sup> Despite all precautions, half a century after the Acropolis was first put under guard as a national monument, it was still normal, obligatory almost, for those foreigners who had the means and the opportunity, to carry off pieces of the marble, what one visiting artist called 'the tasteless rapacity of dilettanti travellers, the mutilators of fingers and toes, of ears and noses'.<sup>94</sup> In 1875, a man only identified as 'an American' was said to have 'filled his pockets with fragments and broken off pieces with a hammer' until the consul intervened.<sup>95</sup> In 1881, the medical doctor, Sir Alexander Ogston, noted: 'I did, like the true British tourist, pick up a marble of the [Parthenon] pavement at my feet to convey home as a souvenir of the unutterable'.<sup>96</sup> If an American conduct book of 1865 is typical, young men from the United States who visited Greece as part of tours of 'Bible lands' were advised to carry a small hammer, and 'clip off

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91 Wines, E.C., *Two years and a half in the navy; or, Journal of a cruise in the Mediterranean and Levant, on board of the U.S. frigate Constitution, in the years 1829, 1830, and 1833* (London: Bentley, 1833), ii, 301.

92 *Ibid.*

93 For Reschid's letter to the sultan about the idolatry of the westerners, see the quotation in Chapter 7 and full version in Appendix C.

94 Linton, William, Corresponding Member of the Archaeological Society of Athens, Author of "Ancient and Modern Colours' &c., *Scenery of Greece and its Islands, Illustrated by Fifty Views, Sketched from Nature, Executed on steel, and described en route, with map of the Country* (London: published privately by the artist, 1856), 5. The Parthenon ... 'guarded from those worshippers of antiquity who, if not thus prevented, would soon carry off every fragment of this glorious remnant of the past.' Bush, Eliza C., *My pilgrimage to eastern shrines* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1867), 16.

95 Young, James Foster, Brasenose College, Oxford, *Five Weeks in Greece* (London: Sampson Low, 1876), 37.

96 Ogston Journal, 73, Aberdeen University Library. Paul Eudel, who visited in 1872, made no secret of having taken pieces of Pentelic marble from the Acropolis that he intended to have cut into the shape of a pyramid. Eudel, Paul, *Constantinople, Smyrne et Athènes. Journal de voyage. Illustrations de Frédéric Régamey et A. Giralton* (Paris: Dentu, 1885), 375. Eudel lists the great variety of antiquities that were then openly on sale in the market in Athens, although without apparently realizing that some were fakes or facsimiles. As another example: 'We climb to the top of the western pediment for the wide sweep of view ... As we descend we peer about for a bit of marble as a memento of our visit; but Lord Elgin has left little for the kleptomaniac to carry away.' Warner, Charles Dudley, author of [a list of titles] *In the Levant* (London: Samson Low 5th edition, [n.d.], after 1876), 365.

a piece of every building and monument you come to [...] as a relic and memento of our visit'.<sup>97</sup>

In 1878 a Greek workman employed in the excavations sold to the Frenchman Joseph Reinach a piece of marble that pictured a woman's hand holding a branch thought to be of myrtle or laurel, but perhaps of olive, described as from 'some statue by a pupil of Pheidias'. Reinach bought it, he says, for fear that it would be bought by some Englishman with deeper pockets, reciprocating Elgin's claim to be 'saving' the Marbles from the French, but it has since disappeared.<sup>98</sup> Three other pieces are said to have been built into the Christian altar in the Cathedral of the Pines, a war memorial in New Hampshire in the United States, although how and when they made their way there is not reported.<sup>99</sup> When, around 1906, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, one of the founders of the Russian symbolist school, and by some regarded as the successor to Tolstoy, visited the Acropolis for the first and only time, he said that he expected to feel a sense of indifference. However, in an updating of the 'came to scoff, stayed to worship' cliché, he described the effects of seeing the Parthenon: 'my soul was filled with the joy of that great deliverance from Life, which Beauty alone can give'. At last, he wrote, he had found something 'to make life worth living'.<sup>100</sup> However, the great seer, unable to restrain his urge to possess, took away 'two small fragments of the actual structure of the Parthenon' that he placed on his desk in St Petersburg, where, as he wrote, he gazed at them like 'a pilgrim gazing upon some holy relic brought back from a distant land'.<sup>101</sup> But, without a worshipper, a holy relic is just another stone. Without someone to remember, a souvenir prompts no memories. Without someone to believe in its power, no fetish can work its magic. The pieces of the Parthenon taken by Merezhkovsky, like almost all those taken by others, are now lost.

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97 Eddy, Daniel C., D.D., *Walter's Tour in the East: Walter in Athens* (New York: Sheldon, 1865), 133. But when 'Walter' succeeds in deceiving the watchful guards on the Acropolis and breaks off a piece of the Parthenon, he is made to feel ashamed. Eddy, pp. 95–98. The tours are discussed in Chapter 22.

98 Reinach, Joseph, *Voyage en Orient* (Paris: Charpentier, 1879), ii, 37.

99 Cathedral of the Pines website.

100 [Merezhkovsky, Dmitry Sergeyevich], *The Acropolis: from the Russian by G.A. M[ounsey]* (London: privately printed, c.1909), 35.

101 Merezhkovsky, 35.

## Nineteenth-Century Excavations: Creating ‘the true Athens’

As for the excavations and the clearances, on 8 January 1889, *The Times* of London, then the newspaper of record for much of the world, printed a letter received from Athens. Signed by Charles Waldstein, later Sir Charles Walston, and sent on behalf of the Greek Government and of the foreign archaeological schools in Athens, the letter reported that on 31 December 1888 the archaeological researches on the Acropolis of Athens had been completed. The excavations, Waldstein reported, summarizing what had been done since 1834, had been ‘carried down to the primitive rock, thus exhausting the possibility of future finds on this site and obviating a future disturbance of the surface’.<sup>102</sup> In accordance with the confidence of the age, the Acropolis that had been brought into being after half a century of clearance, anastelosis, excavation, and the removal to museums of the pieces of statues, inscriptions and other artefacts that had been found, was intended to be permanent.

With few exceptions, the result was welcomed by those who were regarded as opinion-setters in Greece and elsewhere. Georg Brandes, a writer from Denmark with a wide international reputation, probably spoke for the educated mainstream when he wrote: ‘my inmost spirit sings at last’. No longer, he said, would seekers after the essence of Hellenism have to overload their imaginations by looking at modern buildings in the classical style, such as the Madeleine in Paris. No longer need they feel frustrated at the attempts to transfer the cityscape of ancient Athens to modern cities such as Copenhagen or Edinburgh. No longer need they struggle to imagine classical Athens in the polluted, foggy, sooty, and damp air of the British Museum in London. Now, he wrote, we have ‘the true Athens, the only, eternal, true Athens!’<sup>103</sup> The modern Acropolis had not only narrowed the gap between the present day and classical antiquity, but between what could be seen and what hitherto could only be imagined.

The most powerful effect, some visitors remarked, was when ‘the monuments present themselves as much alone as possible’.<sup>104</sup> Looking

102 *The Times*, Tuesday 8 January, 1889, issue 32590, page 10, column D.

103 Brandes, Georg, *Hellas, Travels in Greece, authorised translation by Jacob Wittmer Hartmann* (New York: Adelphi, 1926), 172–73. ‘The Madeleine of Paris is no more a Greek temple than a tragedy of Racine is a tragedy of Sophocles.’ De Vere, *Picturesque Sketches*, i, 87.

104 Milnes, 125.



back from a time when such viewing is almost impossible, we can see that they were commending, and reinforcing, a trope of nineteenth-century western romanticism, the solitary viewer struck with awe in the presence of a great work of art. On his visit in 1832, when the Acropolis was still in the control of the Ottoman army, the French romantic poet Alphonse de Lamartine spent hours reclining in the shade of the Propylaia, silently contemplating the Parthenon.<sup>105</sup> Even as a ruin it was, he declared, turning to an ancient metaphor, 'the most perfect poem written in stone on the face of the earth'.<sup>106</sup> In 1869, when the clearance work was almost completed, the British historian Sir Charles Trevelyan, was struck by 'the *perfect authenticity* of the ancient monuments', italicizing the word favoured by western romanticism as the opposite of the artificiality that romanticism associated with insincerity.<sup>107</sup>

Although the emphasis of the nineteenth-century programmes was on the buildings, some of the photographs taken during the clearances preserved traces not only of the ancient topography but of the ancient cityscape and of the ways of seeing that it rhetorically encouraged. The photograph reproduced as Figure 21.17, taken around 1910 when the Acropolis vegetation had been scrubbed out, helps us to imagine how the main features of the ancient Acropolis appeared to those looking up from the town on the north side.



Figure 21.17. The ancient encircling path, 'Peripatos', on the north side of the Acropolis under the caves. Photograph c.1910.<sup>108</sup>

105 Lamartine, i, 81.

106 Lamartine, i, 81.

107 Trevelyan, Sir Charles, *From Pesh to Brindisi being notes of a tour in the autumn of 1869* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas. London: Hamilton Adams, [n.d.], c.1870), 20.

108 Reisinger, Ernst, ed., *Griechenland, Landschaften und Bauten, Schilderungen Deutscher Reisender* (Leipzig: Im Insel Verlag, 1916), 4.

The image also brings out the visibility from the town of the caves, where, in classical times, the rites of what the Athenians knew were among the earliest cults, some involving pre-Olympian 'chthonic' earth deities, were still practised. It brings out how their self-fashioning narrative of origin and progress, which is found in many ancient authors over hundreds of years, was apparently validated by the evidence of the land itself.<sup>109</sup>

The road round the Acropolis slopes, part of which can be seen in the photograph, was not an informal track beaten through the vegetation by generations of trespassing feet. Cut into the rock, it was a designed and engineered feature of the Acropolis that, we can be confident, must have been officially approved and its financing agreed by the city's authorities at some moment in the ancient past. Visually, as was noted by the professional orator Aelius Aristides in one of his panegyrics, the Peripatos that encircled the acropolis of a Hellenic city was like a jewelled necklace: it unified as well as adorned.<sup>110</sup> The acropolis of Smyrna, a colony of Athens that followed many Athenian customs, was, according to Aristides, laid out like an embroidered gown, a reminder that the non-slave women of ancient Athens were included in the metaphors of the imagined community of the ancient city as they in gendered roles were celebrated in the real city.<sup>111</sup>

An inscription, thought to be of the 4th century BCE, carved on a fallen boulder at the north-east corner of the Acropolis, which notes the exact length, confirms the formal status of the Peripatos as part of the sanctuary.<sup>112</sup> It is shown, as the road has recently been restored, in Figure 21.18.

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109 The emergence from brutish narrative is described in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. My suggestion of how that narrative, when regarded as part of the discursive environment alongside the physical, can be used to understand the mentalities of classical Athens, including the decision to build the classical era Parthenon, is also explored in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, and its findings applied to offering a new answer a specific puzzle.

110 *Monody* 3. Aristides writing in the second century CE imagines a viewer looking down from above, but the metaphor works well looking up from ground level as well.

111 Aristides, P. Aelius, *The Complete Works*, translated into English by Charles A. Behr (Leiden: Brill, 1986), p. 3.

112 Quoted in the Greek, and with an English translation in, for example, *Acropolis Conservation*, 31.

That the inscription is carved in an irregular style on a rough boulder that has fallen from the Acropolis at some time in the remote past, rather than displayed in neatly-carved letters on an upright marble stele, as would have been normal on the summit, suggests that the Athenian civic authorities of the later classical period wished to preserve the wild, natural, ancient, ('chthonic') characteristics of this part of the Acropolis. Already, not long after the completion of the four highly regular classical buildings, we are led to think that those with responsibility for the Acropolis already had a concept of the 'natural' in its modern western sense as well as of built heritage, not only in deciding to preserve the slopes from any modern changes, but in presenting them as physical and visual reminders of a deep past, punctuated by unexpected events, from which the ancient city of the ancient Athenians had resiliently emerged and could be expected to emerge again.<sup>113</sup>



Figure 21.18. Ancient boundary inscription on the peripatos.<sup>114</sup> Author's photographs, 3 October 2013.

By 'future finds', Waldstein and the other signatories meant man-made objects, 'things', rather than 'findings' in the modern sense as an increase in knowledge and understanding. This derived from the

<sup>113</sup> The ancient Athenian progress from brutishness narrative is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

<sup>114</sup> Author's photographs, 3 October 2013.

explicit decision made by the Greek Government immediately after the Ottoman troops left to search for ‘masterpieces of ancient art’ and to prevent them from being sent abroad.<sup>115</sup> The memory of Elgin, with its lesson of ‘never again’, was already fixed in the national neo-Hellenic memory. As one visitor wrote in 1834, it was only the external *forms* of the Parthenon sculptures that lay in the British Museum: their *essence* had been annihilated when they were removed from the building and from the outdoor environment, with its changing lights and shadows, for which they had been designed and, he might have added, where they had been used in the civic life of classical Athens and for hundreds of years later.<sup>116</sup>

As it happened, just as the excavations on the summit were nearing their end, one of the most spectacular discoveries ever made was announced to an astonished world.<sup>117</sup> Buried near the wall on the north side, where the column drums of the pre-Parthenon had been inserted, which had been under construction before the Acropolis was sacked by the Persian army in 479/480, were numerous broken statues, both free-standing and displayed as parts of the buildings, which the Persian army had knocked down. The inscriptions found on some bases followed a convention that is also found on many images made in later periods. They begin with the name of the dedicator followed by the name of the deity to whom the image is dedicated, and some also included the name of the maker who manufactured the work as he had been commissioned

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115 Decree of 3/15 April 1833 quoted by Amalia Pappa in Tsarouchas, 19.

116 Suckow, Friedrich von, *The Shadow of Lord Byron, or, The voice of Akropolis to the British Nation* (Stralsund: C. Loeffler, 1835), 12. Von Suckow, who says his pamphlet was written in Nauplia in 1834, may have been a member of the Bavarian mission. The role of the light in the experience of the historic ancient viewer and user is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

117 The archaeological excavations were recorded at the time by, among others, Cavvadias, Beulé, Diehl, Charles, *Excursions in Greece to Recently Explored Sites of Classical Interest* (London and New York: Grevel, 1893) Translated from the German; and in archaeological journals year by year. A list of the excavations in Athens from 1828 until the end of the century in Papageorgiou-Venetas, 269 and in Iakovidis, Spyros E., *The Mycenaean Acropolis of Athens* (Athens: Archaeological Society of Athens 2006, translated from the Greek edition, 1962), 25. Some of the drawings made during the later Acropolis excavations are reproduced in Bundgaard, J.A., *The Excavation of the Athenian Acropolis 1882–1890, The Original Drawings edited from the papers of Georg Kawerau* (Copenhagen: 1974). A fuller chronology for the years 1832–1836 in Ross, Ludwig, *Archäologische Aufsätze. Erste Sammlung* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1855), pp. 1–11.

to do, as last in the implied scale of importance.<sup>118</sup> Some of the names were also recorded in the works of ancient authors, making it possible to identify styles, dates when they are likely to have first been displayed, and their ancient reputations.

One dedicated statue had been used to repair the wall.<sup>119</sup> And fourteen had been buried, at a depth of 3 to 4.5 metres, in three strata separated by stones, each stratum containing ‘common stones, statues, heads, feet, inscriptions, potsherds, pieces of coal, and earth’, with the result, which we can take as intended, that the ground level of what was to be the classical Acropolis was raised and made more flat.<sup>120</sup> The moment of discovery was caught in a contemporary photograph, taken and, to an extent staged, soon after the event, as shown as Figure 21.19.



Figure 21.19. The place where on 5 and 6 April 1886, the fourteen dedicated ‘archaic’ statues were found. Photograph made soon afterwards by Rhomaidēs Brothers.<sup>121</sup>

118 Discussed by Keesling.

119 The kore (Acropolis Museum, number AkrM 671) is noted by Discussed by Stewart, Andrew, ‘The Persian and Carthaginian Invasions of 480 B.C.E. and the Beginning of the Classical Style: Part 1, The Stratigraphy, Chronology, and Significance of the Acropolis Deposits’, in *American Journal of Archaeology*, 112 (2008) pp., 377–412, at 382.

120 Cavvadias, pp. 6–10.

121 Cavvadias/Kavvadias, Panagiotes, *Fouilles de l’Acropole/texte descriptif de P. Cavvadias* (Athens: Karl Wilberg, 1886). Plate 1, slightly trimmed. The same photograph reproduced in Cavvadias and Kawerau, 26.

A contemporary engraving copied from a photograph, even more staged, reproduced as Figure 21.20, purports to catch the moment when some of the pieces emerged from the earth.



Figure 21.20. 'The Marathonian Theseus.' Dedicated statues destroyed by the Persian army in 480 BCE. Photograph c.1875.<sup>122</sup>

The image, evidently staged, offers a 'eureka moment', a misleading rhetoric characterising how scientific knowledge progresses. To others it may have recalled western pictures of dead Christians awakening from their graves on the Day of Judgment blinking in the sunlight, playing on the metaphors of regeneration that had been prevalent during, and before, the Greek Revolution. Several appeared to be smiling, although to some of those who had been brought up to admire the statues of the classical period as perfect, they seemed comical.<sup>123</sup>

Many showed evidence of having been deliberately broken with mallets and axes. There were also traces of the fire with which the Persian army had attempted to destroy everything combustible on the Acropolis that they left behind, providing further proof of the general reliability

122 I give the title given by Mahaffy, *Rambles* (1887 edition), opp. 56, based on a wrong interpretation. The photograph has frequently been reproduced including in *Athens, 1839–1900, A Photographic Record*, 296. A diagram and photograph of the findspot is in Cavvadias and Kawerau, 23–26.

123 The word used by Mahaffy, *Rambles* (1876 edition), 61.

of the ancient historians. Although, as the first scholars to study them could see, the discovery could add greatly to an understanding of ancient myth, costume, and dedicatory practices, as well as the history of how the ancient Greeks had adapted models from other countries to the east and south, they were nevertheless classed as ‘works of art’.<sup>124</sup> Some female figures are presented as wearing bracelets, one coloured blue, but only one in the form of a snake, as shown in Figure 21.21.



Figure 21.21. ‘Kore 670, with a snake bracelet.’ Acropolis Museum. Photograph made not long after the discovery.<sup>125</sup>

That snake bracelet was a marker of a special status that, we can be confident, ancient Athenian viewers were able to recognize. As the

124 For example ‘Avant tout, elles sont des oeuvres d’art’ Lechat, Henri, *Au Musée de l’Acropole d’Athènes : études sur la sculpture en Attique avant la ruine de l’Acropole lors de l’invasion de Xerxès* (Lyon: A. Rey, imprimeur-éditeur; Paris: Librairie A. Fontemoing, 1903) 4.

125 Lechat, Henri, Ancien Membre de l’École d’Athènes, Chargé de cours à l’Université de Lyon, *Au Musée de l’Acropole d’Athènes : études sur la sculpture en Attique avant la ruine de l’Acropole lors de l’invasion de Xerxès* (Lyon: A. Rey, imprimeur-éditeur; Paris: Librairie A. Fontemoing, 1903), opposite 150.

character of Hermes reminds the audience in the scene-setting Prologue to Euripides's play, the *Ion*, recalling how the infant Ion was saved by the goddess Athena who assigned two serpents to guard him: 'and that is why the Athenians have the custom of rearing their children adorned with serpents of beaten gold'.<sup>126</sup> Later in the play, the character of Kreousa, in complaining that her privileged status is a burden, refers to 'golden chains' carried on her wrist, passed down in families that allegedly physically carried poison from the Gorgon's snakes, and which were displayed by the families who claimed autochthony.<sup>127</sup> In classical times, the cult statue of Athena Parthenos, which stood inside the Parthenon and was only seen on special occasions, was shown wearing a snake bracelet on both forearms.<sup>128</sup> A fourth-century vase painting of the daughters of Kekrops shows both wearing elaborate two-and-a-half-twist snake bracelets picked out in white to signify gold.<sup>129</sup> Since the

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126 Eur *Ion* 25. A character in Lucian's satirical dialogue about sexual love, who unfavourably compares women with boys, sneers at the perfumed, painted, and high-spending women who wear snakes on their wrists and arms ('I wish they were real snakes instead of gold') *Erotes* 41. Other ancient authors who mention the golden snakes, including Menander, Hesychios, and Pollux, some of which may have derived their information from the *Ion*, are noted by Lechat, who does not mention the reference in the *Ion*.

127 Eur *Ion* 1007, 1009.

128 As can be seen, most obviously on the Varvakeion statuette in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens, NM129, of which there are many reproductions in two dimensions, including photographs taken from different angles in Davison, iii, 2–5.

129 Illustrated by Taplin, Oliver, *Pots & plays: interactions between tragedy and Greek vase-painting of the fourth century B.C.* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2007), an open access publication, where it can be seen at page 221. Taplin suggests that the picture: 'May well be related to a tragedy about the daughters of Kekrops', but even if it is not related to a play, it shows that the marker of autochthony was recognizable far from Athens over a long period, and, in the hands of the owner/user, it could cross from one story-telling medium to another. Described as 'Apulian calyx-krater (fragmentary) ca. 380s Close to the Black Fury Painter H: 36.6cm Malibu, J Paul Getty Museum 77. AE 93.' A two-and two half twist snake bracelet is prominent in an engraving of an elaborately dressed woman apparently putting make-up on her face while looking at a mirror in Baxter, Thomas. *An Illustration of the Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman Costume; in forty outlines, with descriptions, selected, drawn, & engraved, by Thomas Baxter* (London: printed for William Miller, 1810), unnumbered, no source given. Two white ground kylixes, one in Oxford, the other in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, both unprovenanced and acquired in recent times, picture young women wearing snake bracelets is reproduced in Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess*, 113. An image of a female figure, wearing an elaborate costume and headdress, alongside what appears to be a swan, is pictured on a white-ground lekythos, whose manufacture is dated on stylistic grounds to c.490. In the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, from a collection purchased in



snake bracelet identified certain women and girls, mythic as well as real or, in the case of the grave goods on which they are pictured, recently deceased members of the families of the autochthonous nobility, their presence on visual presentations, including those on the Parthenon, are relevant to understanding how they were interpreted by those who encountered them in ancient times.<sup>130</sup>

The excavation reports offer no evidence that the classical era authorities regarded the broken images as deserving of special treatment because they had been dedicated to deities.<sup>131</sup> Since the clearing of the summit did not occur until a generation after the Persian occupation, they must have been lying around in their broken state for all to see.<sup>132</sup> Although it would have been inexpensive to reassemble or repair many of them, by, for example, finding or replacing the bases from which they had been broken off, there is no indication that this was done except perhaps in a few special cases.<sup>133</sup> Even when they had scarcely been damaged, as in the case of the young man carrying a sacrificial calf, they appear to have been cast aside.<sup>134</sup> In the Athens of the post-480 BCE clear-up, as the city looked back in time to the era before the Persian wars, this mixture of reuse and casual disposal suggests that these pieces were regarded as broken stones, orphan memorials for whose repair or upkeep no public or private funding was available. For those dedications whose stone had not been inscribed with words or whose painted words had been washed away, the knowledge of who

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1901, reproduced in [Kaltsas and Shapiro] *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens* edited by Kaltsas, Nikolaos and Shapiro, Alan (New York: Onassis Foundation, and Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Culture and National Archaeological Museum, 2008), no 36. The signification of such large, high-flying, water birds is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

130 Notably in answering the old question of what is pictured the central scene on the east frieze as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

131 The Judaeo-Christian discourse of 'idolatry' and its responsibility for the destruction and the display of the mutilation of images, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. It had the incidental effect of enabling the huge marble block that pictured the central scene to be preserved and in part 'saved' albeit so that it could picture itself as having been officially and its rhetorical tendency altered, the key scene presented on the Parthenon frieze to be reimagined back into its pre-mutilated state.

132 As reimagined in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

133 As shown in Figure 21.20. A possible exception, the 'Seated Athena' is discussed and shown in Chapter 21.

134 Some of the drawings made during the excavations are reproduced in Bundgaard.

had offered them was already lost, and the commemorative rituals of families may have ceased to occur.

As for the decision-makers of the classical city, this selection of objects that would remind the classical age of the Acropolis from before the Persian war, and celebrate the resilience and continuity of the city, was not considered worthy of preservation. Lost to sight for over two thousand years, they have, however, enabled all generations since their rediscovery to imagine the pre-classical Acropolis in a more informed way than had previously ever been possible, even in high classical times, and to appreciate the stylistic changes made during the classical-era rebuilding.

Reports of the discoveries were quickly carried round the world, as in Figure 21.22, an image from a contemporary newspaper article.



Figure 21.22. King George of the Hellenes inspects the archaic dedications as they are excavated on the Acropolis. Woodcut perhaps based on photographs, c.1882.<sup>135</sup>

The two-storey house seen in the background, then used as a temporary museum, had been the residence of the Ottoman commandant (*disdar*) of the Acropolis. It commanded a view over the town and the country to the north.<sup>136</sup> The house was taken over by the insurgents during the Greek Revolution from 1822 to 1827, returned to an Ottoman *disdar*

<sup>135</sup> Woodcut, accompanying an article on the recent finds cut from the Danish newspaper *Illustreret Tidende*, no. 29, date unknown c.1882. Private collection.

<sup>136</sup> Black, 164.

between 1827 and 1833, and used by the commander of the Bavarian army for two years before the Acropolis was demilitarised.

Given the military need for those occupying the Acropolis to be able to see threats from the north, it is a safe speculation that there was a lookout on this spot in ancient times, perhaps from the earliest days of settlement. The British architect Francis Penrose, unusual for his time in taking an interest in the uses to which the site was put, speculated that, since the surface of the bared rock at the east end was still rough and had never been artificially flattened or shaped as a foundation for permanent structures, it may have been on this part of the Acropolis, well back from the entrance, that the ancient town had been situated.<sup>137</sup>

During the five millennia when human beings had lived and worked on the Acropolis, they had brought in food, water, wood, marble, bricks, metal, and innumerable man-made objects, including pottery. They had planted crops and trees that had shed leaves, seeds, and nutrients. They had grazed, farmed, slaughtered, roasted, cooked, and eaten domesticated animals and fowls, and engaged in many civic and private activities, including large-scale ceremonial events that involved scattering food and wine as offerings to gods, and sometimes burial of the dead, all of which contributed to the gradual raising of the level of the soil.

During the nineteenth-century excavations it had become increasingly appreciated that the remains of the past are in layers, the deeper the older, and that with careful observation and recording, it would be possible to reconstruct a chronological sequence. It was increasingly understood that ancient inscriptions could be dated by the forms of lettering and what were regarded as works of art, including vases, might be dateable in accordance with their style. In this way the Acropolis had made its contribution to the what was regarded as the 'professionalization' of archaeology as a disciplined investigative practice. The excavators had, however, only latterly kept adequate records. No-one seems even to have made a map of the Acropolis town, although many antiquarians knew from experience elsewhere that street plans often follow previous patterns and may contain information about the distant past.<sup>138</sup> The large map made by a French military engineer in

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137 Penrose, 3.

138 A few indications of the Acropolis town streets c.1799 can be discerned in the map 'Athens, Antient and Modern, Reduced from a survey presented to the Editor

1826 during the Revolution but before the first clearances seems in some respects to have been intended to mislead.<sup>139</sup>

How deep the surface soil had been in ancient times on those areas of the Acropolis where it had been allowed to remain is not known, although it can be estimated, but those who dug were not much interested in the human life of the town. Large numbers of small artefacts, including pieces of broken ancient painted pottery, were found but not sorted.<sup>140</sup> Many that soon afterwards would have helped to reconstruct a chronology were thrown away. Nor was there concern that stripping the surface down to the bare rock would deaden the ecosystem, some features of which, notably the flocking birds who shared the food offered to the gods and the storks to be seen around the buildings, had been a prominent part of the Acropolis viewing experience in ancient times.<sup>141</sup> Missing from the experience too, now that the summit had been denatured, were the soaring birds taking advantage of the rising air currents, and the birdcatchers who preyed on them, sights that had sharpened the humour for ancient Athenian audiences of the *Birds* of Aristophanes.<sup>142</sup>

Nor, during the clearances, was any attention paid to types of evidence that modern archaeology has come to value as much as artifacts, such as human, animal and fish bones, sea shells, and plant seeds, evidence of diet and ecology. They could scarcely have guessed that a future generation would be able to extract DNA from bone fragments, from which kinship patterns, demographic data, and population movements could be recovered, a field of study whose future we can only imagine. They were not to know that the shells of snails who had inhabited the Acropolis since the earliest times might give reliable evidence of past climate change and of its effects. It was in response to a growing

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by John Spencer Smythe Esqr. FRS FSA &c &c &c Published 1st May 1815, by J. Mawman, 39 Ludgate Street, London', in Tweddell Remains, opposite 275.

139 Discussed in Chapter 7.

140 The immense number of small artefacts discovered in the excavations is discussed by Wagner, Claudia. *Dedication Practices on the Athenian Acropolis*. D.Phil thesis University of Oxford, 1997. <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:6f2e2c02-7bc0-43c0-843c-cc76217c1485> Many were still unsorted and unavailable at the time she did her research.

141 Garston, i, 123.

142 William Turner, in Athens in 1812, remarked on a birdcatcher 'by the walls near the Erechtheum.' Turner, i, 326. The ancient understanding that birds had developed their own cultures, part of general world view, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

appreciation that every excavation destroys even as it discovers that Article 4 of the Athens Charter of 1931 declared that: ‘Excavated sites which are not subject to immediate restoration should be reburied for protection’.

The discovery of the archaic dedications changed the world’s understanding of ancient Hellas. Even when they were shown in monochrome photographs in an indoor room with poor light, as shown in Figure 21.23, no longer could it there be any doubt that they had been painted in bright colours.



Figure 21.23. ‘Room of the Archaic Draped Statues, Acropolis Museum, Athens, Greece.’ Photograph.<sup>143</sup>

No longer could it be disputed that there were similarities with the portrayals of the monumentalized body made in other ancient cultures in the region, notably that of Pharaonic Egypt, even if the Greeks had quickly diverged and developed their own unique tradition. It was now beyond dispute that the tradition of western sculptural monumentalizing, with its white marble and vacant eyes, which had been derived from much later classical statues found in Italy, had been based on a misunderstanding

<sup>143</sup> Published in 1903 by H.C. White Co., not further identified. Private collection from a modern scan.

of the practice of the ancient Greeks. Almost everything postulated by Winckelmann ought to have been abandoned as no longer consistent with the evidence, although it was not.

The modernist movement of the late nineteenth century had among its impulses a wish to resist the then dominance of the classical, with its hierarchies, its apparent irrelevance to modern life, and its tendency to exclude those who lacked a knowledge of Greek and were wanting in 'taste'. The newly discovered archaic dedications also provided a rallying point for a constituency of viewers rebelling against what they regarded as the oppressive power of the classical, by which they meant an excessive, exclusionary, and eurocentric admiration for the classical period. To Michael Ventris, for example, who was among the first to show that one of the Minoan scripts, Linear B, was written in the Greek language, the classical was the 'enemy'. As he wrote: 'The columned building, antiquarian or monumental, insults its surroundings by its timeless irrelevance'.<sup>144</sup> But perhaps, as others suggested, the archaic period of ancient Greece should be reimagined not as an apprenticeship stage in a progress towards the perfection of the classical, but as a springtime, an awakening, a spontaneity from which the overly refined, technically perfect classical was a decline, even a decadence. As more sites came to be excavated, and more archaic dedications were discovered elsewhere, it was increasingly appreciated that classical archaeology could confidently expect a continuing supply of new data, and therefore of new knowledge and new insights. In its potential, classical archaeology seemed set to take the crown from classical philology, where for centuries the corpus of surviving texts appeared to be fixed, until by the end of the century, with the finding of papyrus texts in Egypt, that assumption too had to be revised. In 1891, for example, the publication of Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, ['Ath. Pol.'] a previously lost work recovered from a papyrus roll found in 1879 in a rubbish dump at Oxyrhynchus, transformed modern knowledge of classical Athens and the way in which it was governed. The recurrent fear, that, as the artist William Linton had written in 1842 at the start of the Acropolis clearances, 'the secret is out', and that, apart from details only of interest to specialist archaeologists ('the little contentions about

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<sup>144</sup> Quoted by Wilson Jones, xiii.

Pausanias and his giro') there was nothing much left to discover, was again spectacularly invalidated.<sup>145</sup>

With Schliemann's excavations at Troy and then at Mycenae and other sites, which occurred around the same time as the transformation of the Athenian acropolis, the modern world realized that ancient Hellas, and the world described in the Homeric poems, was far more ancient than had hitherto been thought. And, with the excavation shortly afterwards of the remains of the Minoan civilization in Crete, it could no longer be doubted that the modern world now knew more about the past than the historians of classical Athens, such as Thucydides, who had been fully aware that, even for their quite recent history, they had little reliable evidence.<sup>146</sup>

According to a visitor who witnessed the early excavations in 1840 soon after they started, 'the accumulated mass on the surface [was] in some places from eight to ten feet in depth and rarely less than six.' And what was found was 'a mixture of soil, stones, bricks, fragments of earthenware, cement, and sculptured marble, among which are interspersed human bones, and shot and shells of enormous size'.<sup>147</sup> It was at that time that the diggers uncovered an area at the north-east corner that, in ancient times, had been used as a workshop, an 'ergasterion', where much of the on-site work on the buildings had been completed.<sup>148</sup> The workshops are mentioned in the building inscriptions of the Parthenon.<sup>149</sup> And they appear to have been regularly inspected as part of procedures to ensure that contractors complied with the terms of their contracts and for accounting for the moneys and materials entrusted to their care.

The fullest contemporary description of what was found was given by William Mure who visited in the spring of 1838:

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145 Linton, Preface. In defending his decision to go ahead with his own book, he invoked a need to present to each succeeding generation the timeless values that the monument embodied, 'which no evolutions of fashion can shake, and no scholastic controversies obscure', an example of static aesthetic universalism discussed in Chapter 9. For the agenda-setting role of Pausanias see Chapter 4.

146 The implications for attempting to understand why the classical Parthenon was built in the form that it took are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

147 Garston, i, 128.

148 The site of the Ergasterion was the subject of two watercolours by Skene made on 28 and 31 May 1838, Skene I and II.

149 Hurwit *Acropolis in the Age of Pericles*, 147.

There have also been discovered, similarly buried, numerous large blocks of marble, wrought and unwrought, among which are some colossal drums of columns, originally intended for the peristyle of the new temple, but thrown aside from some defect in the material or execution. A large portion of the rubbish in which they are imbedded consists of marble chippings, the same doubtless that once strewed the workshops of Ictinus and Pheidias. From the midst of it have also been culled many of the minor class of relics, which, by their very homeliness, realize more effectually to the imagination the epoch from whence they have been preserved, and thus speak more directly and powerfully to the sympathies, than gigantic ruins or high-wrought works of finished art. Such are the fragments of the tools handled by the workmen, or even perhaps by the great masters themselves, to whom these precious models of the perfection of art are indebted for their existence; the lead pencils employed in sketching the design, the chisel and mallet in its execution; the wooden dovetails that connected the drums of the columns, and other contiguous blocks of the masonry of the Hecatompedon; pieces of charred wood still fresh from the flames of the Persian conflagration; besides small bronze images, and other co-eval fragments of the inferior departments of art.<sup>150</sup>

The discovery of the ancient tools might have provided the perfect moment to begin to understand how the Parthenon had been made, the ‘angeiography’ that Spon had advocated as one of his suggested new sciences.<sup>151</sup> It would also have allowed the modern world to appreciate more fully the metaphors from the building industry and its instruments that pervade the writings of classical Athens, including the most influential philosophical works of Plato.<sup>152</sup> As discussed above, the discoveries on the site in the nineteenth century had shown that the ancient commissioners, designers, and builders of the Parthenon had understood the neuroscience of cognition more fully than the most modern architects of the time, by including many refinements that deceived the eye of the human viewer into believing that the building was regular and orthogonal.<sup>153</sup> They also revealed that, as civil engineers, those responsible for the construction of the Parthenon had solved another of the local problems of the site, the fact that the Acropolis stood

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150 Mure, ii, 78. Other accounts include ‘a curious collection of bronzes, terra-cotta vases, and other things which were found in the ruins of the ancient Parthenon.’ Grosvenor ii, 148, a list that is itself confined to ‘works of art.’

151 As discussed in Chapter 7.

152 Discussed in Chapter 24.

153 Discussed in Chapter 24.



on a geological fault line and over the centuries had experienced many earthquakes. The workshop ('ergasterion) where work on the Parthenon was carried out, if it was like others in Greece for which there is more information, was a substantial structure of brick and stone with doors in constant use.<sup>154</sup> The workshop used by Pheidias and his teams when the chryselephantine cult state was being manufactured at Elis for Olympia, was still standing in the time of Pausanias.<sup>155</sup> It seems likely that, in order to reduce theft, as well as to protect the workers and make it possible for them, and for their supervisory foremen, to see in detail what they were doing, sheltered from the fierce sun, such buildings were roofed. If so, the workers would have been exposed to the risks of diseases of the lungs such as silicosis, an illness of the lungs that comes from breathing in stone dust, which would have been especially dangerous for those who filed the surfaces of marble to the extremely detailed specifications demanded. If the industrial illness was explicitly recognized, as could have happened at a time when the massive building programmes were taking place all over of classical Greece, with workers moving from site to site, there is nothing in the record unless in the remark attributed to Hippocrates: 'Phthisis most commonly occurs between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five years'.<sup>156</sup>

The implicit hierarchy in Mure's comment determined what happened. Any objects classified as 'art' were picked out, preserved, and catalogued.<sup>157</sup> Other objects consisted, according to visitors who saw them, of workers' tools, including chisels, mallets, a lead plumb line, a lead pencil, an ancient vase in which the remains of red paint were still to be seen.<sup>158</sup> The 'instruments of the workers of Pheidias' were

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154 Burford, Alison, *The Greek Temple Builders at Epidauros, A social and economic study of building in the Asklepien sanctuary, during the fourth and early third centuries B.C.* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1969), 59.

155 Paus. 5.15.1.

156 Hp. Aph. 5.9

157 The tools are not noted as amongst the objects that were held in the Old Acropolis Museum when they were first catalogued. [Acropolis Museum] *Catalogue of the Acropolis Museum* [by Guy Dickins and Stanley Casson] (Cambridge: CUP, 1912, 1921).

158 For example, 'fragments of sculpture, skulls, instruments used by sculptors to draw lines (one of which was presented to me) and a multiplicity of other things.' [Egerton, Catherine, Lady Ellesmere] *Journal of a Tour in the Holy land in May and June 1840* (London: privately printed, 1841), 127.

still being shown to privileged visitors in 1860.<sup>159</sup> If, as seems likely, these objects were put in store, they cannot now be found.<sup>160</sup> Some of the objects that privileged tourists were allowed to take away and that are now lost, would, if they were indeed what was thought at the time, be uniquely valuable evidence of how ancient workmen were equipped for their tasks.<sup>161</sup>

Scholarly work to recover the techniques by which ancient builders achieved their effects has relied on the tool marks left on the monuments without seeing the tools themselves.<sup>162</sup> This loss stands in the way of developing an understanding of how and why the classical Athenians, including Euripides and Plato turned to the tools used in the building industry as ways of helping to explain complex ideas.<sup>163</sup>

Among the other losses was a piece of pinkish ivory, said to have been found in the floor of the Parthenon at some time before the end of 1840. It was thought to be the thumb of the cult statue of Athena made by Pheidias that had stood inside the east chamber of the building and was only visible on occasions, such as festivals, when the gates were opened. The piece was presented to Alexandre Buchon when he was in Athens between December 1840 and April 1841 and apparently taken

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159 Scitivaux, Roger de, *Voyage en Orient ... Précédé d'une notice biographique par M. le comte de Ludre. Orné de ... lithographies d'après les dessins de l'auteur par J. Laurens* (Paris: Morel, 1873), 180.

160 Information kindly supplied by Professor Panderimalis, director of the Acropolis Museum, in 2013.

161 For example, 'Minney [the lady-in-waiting] succeeded in obtaining a lead pencil, or rather plummet, a great many of which, with colours &c in a wooden box, had just been dug up in what had evidently been formerly the habitation of an artist. From various data they were supposed to have lain there about two thousand years.' Damer, the Hon. Mrs G.L. Dawson, *Diary of a Tour in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and the Holy Land* (London: Colburn, 1841), i, 27. Almost no artefacts made of wood have survived from ancient Athens.

162 For example, Palagia, Olga, ed., *Greek sculpture: function, materials, and techniques in the archaic and classical periods* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006). A project, 'The Art of Making' run by King's College, London includes a data base of tool marks found on ancient artworks and examples of modern tools that are thought to be unchanged in essentials since ancient times, but at the time of writing does not include information on the actual tools used in ancient times of which many examples have been found at other sites and often displayed in museums, as, for example, at the time of writing, in Corinth. <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/classics/research/proj/art.aspx>

163 Notably the 'paradigms' of Plato. Discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

to France.<sup>164</sup> The British architect William Burges included a sketch in his multi-volume commonplace book of architectural details, now in the possession of the Royal Institute of British Architects, of which a copy is shown as Figure 21.24.



Figure 21.24. 'This piece of ivory was found in the cavity in the floor of the Parthenon, it is supposed to have been one of the fingers of the Chryselephantine Minerva.'<sup>165</sup>

Whether the piece really came from the chryselephantine statue made by Pheidias or from some later object, cannot, of course, be ascertained,

164 'M. Heydenstan lui remit en présent le doigt d'une statue colossale fort beau, trouvé au Parthénon et regardé comme "le pouce de la grande statue de Minerve"'. Buchon, Alexandre, *Voyage dans l'Eubée, les îles Ioniennes et les Cyclades en 1841 publié pour la première fois avec une notice biographique et bibliographique, par Jean Longnon; préface de Maurice Barrès, de l'Académie Française* (Paris: Paul, 1911), xli, a reference only recently noted. Heydenstan has not been identified, but since his name is linked with that of Villeroy, the French architect where he studied the curvature of the Parthenon, and was in Athens at the same time as Buchon, he may have been an assistant. A remark in the diary of Dawson Damer for 15 October 1839 shows that the piece had been discovered by then. 'Dr Bendimer, our physician, came up to me on his return with his eyes sparkling with such delight that I thought he had at least discovered the little finger of the golden Minerva.' Damer, i, 43. It may therefore have come to light when the mosque within the Parthenon was being dismantled. I should like to thank Esther Eidinow, Susan Deacy, and Kenneth Lapatin for their help and suggestions.

165 Burges, 'Metal work album', BURG 68, p. 58. Courtesy of RIBA Sackler Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The inscription in pencil has not yet been deciphered.

although the fact that Athena's big finger is mentioned in the *Knights* of Aristophanes, may have caused it to be broken off.<sup>166</sup> It has been plausibly suggested that the audience of the play were offered a joke about (divine) female masturbation!<sup>167</sup>

Archaeological excavations elsewhere in Athens many years later brought to light a workshop used by marble workers, with tools, unfinished works, and puzzling lead strips that were put into storage and forgotten. Recently re-excavated from the storerooms as part of the welcome swing away from the romantic discourses of creativity, it emerged that they were formerly thought from their shape to have been used as 'pencils' to make preliminary sketches on stone, although lead is too soft to be used for that purpose. Recent studies suggest that the lead had many uses, including the making of repairs to broken stonework.<sup>168</sup>

Nor was the disdain for objects that were not 'art' confined to the excavations in Athens. In the twentieth century, Sir Flinders Petrie, an Egyptologist, transformed the whole practice and knowledge-creating potential of archaeology by treating excavated objects as documents. What, to some, were still just debris to be thrown away, such as pieces of broken earthenware, could, he realized, when collected systematically, yield information about chronology and place of manufacture. The Greek iron tools of c.600 BCE found by Petrie at the Greek city of Naucratis in Egypt were sent to the British Museum. But, 'on my enquiring to see them some years later,' Petrie wrote, I was told that Mr Newton said they were ugly things and he did not want them so they were thrown away.<sup>169</sup> Newton was the British Museum manager who earlier in his career had been responsible for bringing Hellenic antiquities, notably the sculptures from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassos, from Ottoman territories, with the help of imperial firmans obtained by Stratford Canning.<sup>170</sup>

166 ὡς μέγαν ἄρ' εἶχεσ ᾧ πότνια τὸν δάκτυλον. Aristoph. Kn. 1170.

167 Anderson, Carl A., 'Athena's Big Finger: An Unnoticed Sexual Joke in Aristophanes' *Knights*', *Classical Philology*, 103, (2), April 2008, 175–81.

168 Discussed by Tsakirgis, Barbara, 'Tools from the House of Mikion and Menon' in Miles, Margaret M., *Autopsy in Athens: recent archaeological research on Athens and Attica* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2015), 9–17.

169 Casson, *Technique*, vii, quoting Petrie, *Seventy Years*, 56.

170 As discussed in Chapter 18. His attempts to give viewers to the British Museum as full an understanding of the Parthenon as was possible off-site, that were largely nullified by the imposition of a rhetoric of romanticism that were discussed in Chapter 9.

Besides the commandant's house that was used to preserve and display many of the artefacts found in the Ergasterion, the large chamber of the Propylaia, which in ancient times had been the Pinacothèque or the picture gallery, was again put to use as an exhibition space. We are given a glimpse of how it appeared in 1859 in Figure 21.25.



Figure 21.25. The Pinacothèque in 1859. Wood engraving of a drawing by Ernest Breton.<sup>171</sup>

The gallery, which contained, as one visitor noted, ‘all the broken heads, fractured legs, mutilated arms ranged upon benches’, followed the conventions of the galleries of antiquities that European noblemen and high-ranking ecclesiastics had installed in their palaces and houses.<sup>172</sup> Unlike many of the objects in those galleries, they were however left in their fragmentary state, as had recently become the custom in the west. Ernest Breton, the artist, has included himself, or a typical solitary

<sup>171</sup> Breton, *Athènes*, 46. Reproduced also by Kokkou, 167. Earlier in the century it seems to have been fenced off as noted by Temple, 78. The main contents in 1851 of the temporary museums, Pinacotheca, Nike temple, and Theseion, but not of the disdar's house or the caves are noted by Flaubert, Gustave, *Voyage en Orient (1849–1851): Égypte, Liban-Palestine, Rhodes, Asie Mineure, Constantinople, Grèce, Italie; édition présentée et établie par Claudine Gothot-Mersch; annotation et cartes de Stéphanie Dord-Crouslé* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), 424.

<sup>172</sup> Quotation from Baird, 35.

artist/viewer in western dress, in the picture, implicitly commending the practice of seeing through sketching.

But the gallery was soon full, as were the mosque that was pulled down in the late 1830s as part of the re-Hellenizing of the site and the commandant's house that was permitted to survive until late in the century.<sup>173</sup> At times the caves on the slopes were pressed into service as store-houses. Some antiquities were cemented to walls to prevent them from being stolen and others were piled in the open air. Figure 21.26, for example, shows sculptural fragments from the Nike Temple that were not included in the anastelosis.



Figure 21.26. Pieces from the Nike Temple. Photograph made in 1869 by William Stillman.<sup>174</sup>

These sculptured images, unlike those broken by the Persians in 480, seem to show signs of having been deliberately decapitated or mutilated.<sup>175</sup>

The building that had required most digging out from the adaptations of the long past was the Propylaea, which was enveloped in a mass of masonry. And, as Charles-Ernest Beulé, who undertook the work with

<sup>173</sup> For the mosque used as a repository of the 'relics brought to light day by day' see Mure, ii, 77.

<sup>174</sup> Private collection.

<sup>175</sup> Discussed in Chapter 24.

funds from France, reported, the violence of his archaeology was like war, or rather, like siege warfare. When the blocks, bonded by centuries of pressure as tightly as if they were still in a quarry, proved impossible to shift manually with iron crowbars, he dislodged the masonry with 500 'doses' of explosives obtained from a French warship.<sup>176</sup> His methods brought protests from the Greek Government, and curator Pittakis had a lucky escape when a flying fragment made a hole in his hat. If this was conservation, what was destruction?

But Beulé was able to convince his hosts that he was no Elgin, and that he was merely removing the remains of barbarous ages. An indication of the sheer amount of material that was removed from near the Acropolis entrance is given in a lithograph that was published in 1854 to illustrate Beulé's discovery of the ancient, but post-classical, entrance gate.



Figure 21.27. The entrance to the Acropolis before 1853, showing the Beulé gate. Lithograph.<sup>177</sup>

176 Beulé, E., *Journal de mes Fouilles* (Paris: Claye, 1872), i, 58. Extracted from *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1872.

177 From the plates appended to Beulé *L'Acropole*, 1853 and again in the later edition of 1862.

## The Frankish Tower: An Inconvenient History

The last building to be removed from the Acropolis summit was the huge ‘Frankish’, or, as it was then often miscalled, ‘Venetian’ Tower, which had been part of the look-out, the defences, and the living quarters of the Acropolis residents for hundreds of years. Figure 21.28, a detail from a larger photograph, shows how it had been integrated into the Propylaia.

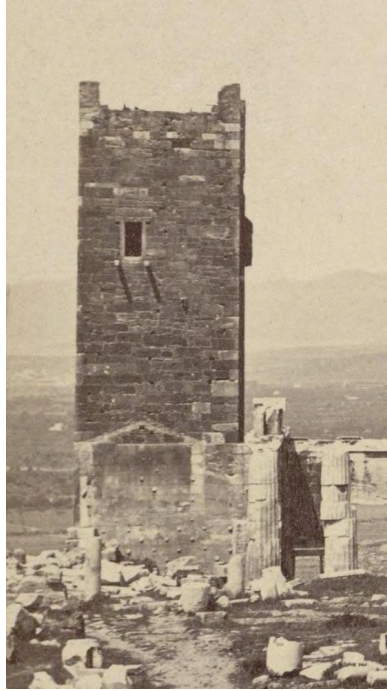


Figure 21.28. The Frankish Tower in 1872. Detail from a photograph by William Stillman. Wikimedia.<sup>178</sup>

From the top of the tower it was possible at night to signal by lantern to most parts of the town of Athens, as was done in 1825 during the Revolution, and it was then heightened.<sup>179</sup> By the middle of the century it

<sup>178</sup> The photograph of which it is a detail can be seen at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akropolis\\_Athen\\_1872.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akropolis_Athen_1872.jpg)

Others by Stillman can be seen at: <https://graphicarts.princeton.edu/2015/09/24/william-stillmans-athens-in-carbon-prints/>

<sup>179</sup> Noted by Emerson, ii, 124. According to the manuscript journal of Major Bacon, 161, the tower was repaired and heightened when the Greeks were in control, some time before the siege of 1826–1827.



was sometimes called Odysseus's tower, after the warlord who had been held prisoner there and was assassinated. Although of all the fighters in the conflict Odysseus Androutsos, a local warlord, was amongst the least national and philhellenic, he too had been later heroized as a new Leonidas.<sup>180</sup> The tower had played its part in the history of the Greek Revolution.

However, as the archaeologists looked up, their eyes fastened on the pieces of white marble that peeped out from some layers. Were they ancient inscriptions? What ancient words might be hidden there waiting to be disinterred and read for the benefit of knowledge? Pittakis, an avid epigraphist, was amongst those had long advocated the dismantling of the Tower. And there were arguments related to the viewing experience and the Hellenic continuity narrative. This 'barbarous sentinel', as one visitor called it, not only had nothing in common with the rest of the newly cleansed scene, but it dwarfed the Parthenon, so that visitors who wanted to experience 'authenticity', had to stand with the Tower at their backs.<sup>181</sup> Like the scaffolds of the anastelosis programmes, the Tower intruded an alien element into the dreamscape of classical Hellas that visitors hoped to experience.

J.D. Mahaffy, a prolific author and professor of Greek literature in Dublin, was ridiculed for suggesting that the Tower might have been put up during the few months of 1687/88 when Morosini's army was in occupation. Nor had Mahaffy looked at the engravings relating to Morosini's invasion that had already been collected and reprinted, which showed that the Tower already existed at the time of that invasion.<sup>182</sup> How could it be, some wondered, that a professor who claimed to study the past through its material remains was so ignorant of the enormous scale of resources of men and materials that would have been needed to build such a huge tower in a few weeks in an age reliant on human and animal power? Whichever government it was who had incurred the cost of building the Tower evidently intended that their occupation of the Acropolis would be permanent and that the Tower would display and perform that intention.

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180 By the Greek poet Spyros Bouyouclis, noted by Dimaras, C.Th., *Histoire de la littérature néo-hellénique des origines à nos jours* (Athens: Institut français d'Athènes, 1965), 269.

181 Tuckerman, 66.

182 For example by Laborde and Omont.

By making comparisons with similar towers elsewhere, the date of construction was narrowed to a broad range either side of 1400, when the Acropolis was under the control of a succession of western princes who had taken it over in 1205 as part of the spoils of the Fourth Crusade. To some Frenchmen it had therefore become a source of pride, a monument to the glorious Frankish Crusaders who had once built a 'New France' in Greece, and contributing a piece to the nineteenth-century cultural construction of the imagined French nation that was occurring simultaneously with the imaginative construction of Hellas.<sup>183</sup> The Frankish Tower had been used as living quarters, and in times of crisis it had given lookouts on the Acropolis more height, and leaders a little more time to decide whether to stay or leave, to fight or to flee.<sup>184</sup> However, in the new nation's official eyes, the Tower was also a relic of foreign occupation, as alien to the image that modern Hellas wanted to project to itself and others as the eighteenth-century mosque standing in the middle of the ruined Parthenon.

But was the fact that the Tower was not Hellenic a sufficient reason for it to be dismantled?<sup>185</sup> Was everything built on the Acropolis between ancient and modern Hellas to be regarded as a temporary intrusion? Among those who contributed to the debate in the local Athenian press was L. Kaphtantzoglou, who described the Tower as Turkish, and compared it to the droppings of birds of prey.<sup>186</sup> It was a neat metaphor for the monument cleansing that he and many others advocated, with perhaps a memory of the days of the storks and their filthy nests.<sup>187</sup> Were the advocates of removal, the 'purists', even being true to classical Athens? As one opponent reminded his opponents, the Athenians of the classical era had themselves used the Acropolis to display the claimed continuity of their history, as 'an index of their own progress', as the column drums of the old Parthenon set in the walls attested.<sup>188</sup> The

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183 Notably Buchon, v.

184 For the dismantling of the Tower as part of the re-Hellenizing of the Acropolis see Chapter 7.—no a different ne check

185 Discussed, with plentiful references to contemporaneous and later discussions, by Hamilakis, *Nation*, pp. 88–93.

186 Hamilakis, *Nation*, 93.

187 'storks nests with their old and young, their filth and habitation finishing the melancholy shade, which the rust of time and the abominable ignorance of the Turks have cast over them.' Craven, 258.

188 Baird, 36.

Tower had also become part of the iconized Acropolis, recognizable in images of Athens invented and circulated round the world, as in the example in Figure 21.29.<sup>189</sup>



Figure 21.29. 'A lady of Athens' with the Acropolis and Frankish Tower in the background. Coloured lithograph, unidentified, English, c.1860.<sup>190</sup>

When Heinrich Schliemann offered to provide most of the funds, and in 1874 it was decided that the Tower must fall, the arguments did not stop. To Edward Freeman, professor of modern history at Oxford University, the Greek authorities, and their supporters, such as Mahaffy, who claimed to be conserving and restoring, were in fact adding their names to in a long roll-call of barbarians and destroyers that included Sulla the Roman, Attila the Hun, Morosini the late Crusader, and Elgin the antiquities collector. Comparing the Acropolis of Athens with that of Mycenae, Freeman remarked that: 'in the life of cities nothing preserves like early overthrow, nothing destroys like continuous life'.<sup>191</sup>

189 For example: 'Notwithstanding its heterogeneous appearance, it would be much missed; its effect at a little distance is excellent, and its removal would leave a blank which there is nothing to fill up.' Warburton, 204.

190 Unidentified. Found in a commonplace book, author's collection.

191 Freeman, *Travels*, 120 and on the title page.

Schliemann, ever the businessman, had secured the right to be the first to publish any inscriptions found, an assertion of intellectual property that was still permitted although it is unlikely that he would have been allowed to export the actual marble.<sup>192</sup> Freeman, momentarily forgetting his professional claim to be an observer of all pasts, admitted to being delighted when no inscriptions were found: 'By a righteous Nemesis, when the destroyers had finished their work of havoc, they found nothing to reward them.'<sup>193</sup> Mahaffy, in a display of sour grapes and huffy stereotyping, declared that if no inscriptions were found, it must have been because the Greek workmen had stolen them.<sup>194</sup>

All sides regarded the Tower primarily as an intrusive piece of superseded military architecture. Few appreciated that it was a standard component of a crusader castle of the pre-and early gunpowder era, with a series of concentric defensive rings, bastions, a fortified residence and a domed hall.<sup>195</sup> But if any consideration was ever given to conserving it, since the Propylaia had already been re-Hellenized it was already too late. The only alternative to removing the Tower was to preserve a western mediaeval-era building as an island in the bare neo-Hellenic landscape then under construction, joining the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, the Propylaia, and the Athena Nike as a decontextualized building that needed much historical imagination on the part of the viewer if its ancient role was to be understood.

In the debates about the Frankish Tower we hear the pre-history of the Venice Charter, with its emphasis on preserving buildings as far as possible in the state they have come down to us.<sup>196</sup> But we are also given

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192 Setton, Kenneth M. *Athens in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum reprints, 1975), 281 from Schliemann's letters.

193 Freeman, *Travels*, 29. Pieces of marble identified as having come from the Propylaia have since been put back on the building, some as part of the current conservation programme. Noted by Constantinos Koutsadelis and Evi Petropoulou in 'The demolition of the mediaeval tower of the Propylaia: Re-approaching an old dispute' in *The Acropolis Restoration News*, no 14/15, November 2015, pp. 24–28.

194 Mahaffy, J.P., Author of 'Proolegomena to Ancient History'; 'Kant's Philosophy for English Readers'; 'Social Life in Greece'; Etc. *Rambles and Studies in Greece* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition extended, London: Macmillan, 1887), 84 footnote.

195 Discussed by Georgopoulou, Maria, 'The Landscape of Medieval Greece', in Tsougarakis and Lock, pp. 326–68. A reconstruction of the west end, as seen from the air, made by Tasos Tanoulas, that shows the Acropolis when it was functioning as a Frankish castle, with walls, courts, and towers, is reproduced by Holtzmann, 248.

196 To be discussed in Chapter 25.

a seat at a debate about the legitimate uses of the past. Could it be that, just as most generations feel some responsibility for the future, the past too might have claims to be remembered for how it had actually been, and not cherry-picked for new rhetorics to serve new purposes? Was the nineteenth century, for all its talk of the 'science' of antiquity, turning the Enlightenment aspiration to respect historical truth into the invention of a fictitious heritage?<sup>197</sup>

Meanwhile on the slopes, the Odeon of Herodes Attikos was restored as a working theatre. The larger Theatre of Dionysus, when excavated, caused disappointment when it turned out not to have been built in the classical era but some centuries later. It now seemed more likely that the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides had in their own day been performed to smaller audiences using temporary wooden structures.

The ancient stadium, from where the Acropolis was in full view, was rebuilt in time to host the first modern Olympic Games of 1896, not quite as an anastelosis in the modern sense, but using some ancient materials. Greece, having been oriental, was now accepted as a small European nation, participating with the others just as small cities had sent athletes to compete alongside those from larger cities in ancient times. Indeed, it seemed especially fitting that it was a Greek athlete who won the Marathon race at those Games. A glimpse of that pre-First-World-War world, before the changes introduced at the 1936 Berlin Games turned them more obviously into a competition between nations and races, can be obtained from a faded newspaper as shown in Figure 21.30.

At the same time, the American artist Corwin Knapp Linson, who was unusual for his time in seeing and recording living people, not just the monuments of Athens, left us a glimpse of the building work in progress at Figure 21.31.

Throughout the excavations, remodelling and rebuilding of the site that took place towards the end of the nineteenth century, little care was given to the visual effects of the dumping of the excavated earth from the summit. A number of photographs taken in the 1880s and earlier, reproduced in Figures 21.32, 21.33, and 21.34 record the streams of debris that were poured down all sides of the Acropolis.

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197 This was, of course, a charge that could be made against those who designed the classical acropolis and Parthenon as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



Figure 21.30. The first modern Olympic Games, Athens 1896. Coloured lithograph of the French winner of the cycling race in front of the Acropolis.<sup>198</sup>

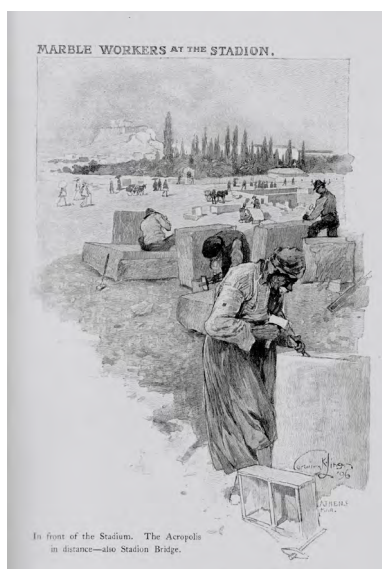


Figure 21.31. 'In front of the Stadion. The Acropolis in distance — also Station Bridge'. Lithograph of a drawing by Corwin Knapp Linson, 1896.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>198</sup> *Le Petit Journal* 26 April 1896, coloured supplement. Author's collection. The fact that the image still shows the Frankish tower, although it had been taken down twenty years before, shows that it had been compiled in Paris not in Athens.

<sup>199</sup> In Horton opposite 12.



Figure 21.32. The excavated earth poured over the slopes on the south side.  
Photograph c.1870 by Félix Bonfils.<sup>200</sup>

Bonfils, in picturing Hadrian's Gate, also recorded the heaps on the east slopes as can be seen in Figure 21.33.



Figure 21.33. Hadrian's Gate, c.1870, showing the debris on the east slope.  
Photograph by Bonfils.<sup>201</sup>

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200 Author's collection. Copied also available on wikimedia and in printed books, notably Lyons. Another photograph of the heaps on the south side in Centerwall frontispiece section.

201 Author's collection.

And, in an image taken from an unusual viewing station, on the north side, shown as Figure 21.34.



Figure 21.34. The Acropolis from the north-west. Unidentified photograph, made before the removal of the Frankish Tower.<sup>202</sup>

Figure 21.35 shows how the entrance looked after the Tower was taken down.



Figure 21.35. The Acropolis entrance with the heaped earth. Collotype of a photograph by Rhomiades c.1889, after the removal of the Frankish Tower.<sup>203</sup>

202 Private collection. The soil being poured over the north slope in 1843 can also be seen in the drawing by Dalgabio reproduced in Dalgabio, 42. The large amounts thrown over the south side are shown in the drawing made by Burnouf in 1847, reproduced as Burnouf, plate v.

203 Private collection. A monochrome reproduction in Malloucho-Tufano, 75.



The unusual colour was adopted by several photographers in the late nineteenth century, possibly as an attempt to reproduce something of the violet natural colours of the micro-climate of the Athens basin, which had been celebrated in ancient as in modern times and was, for the first time, being reproduced in colour for readers and viewers elsewhere.<sup>204</sup>

Towards the end of the century the earth from the Acropolis summit that had been thrown over the south side and the debris from the digging out of the ancient theatre were collected into a neat artificial hill, as can be seen in the photograph reproduced as Figure 21.36.



Figure 21.36. The artificial hill. Photograph thought to be by Constantides, c.1900.<sup>205</sup>

Not long afterwards, the artificial hill was landscaped over with trees, and today a modern hotel stands on the site. It was estimated at the time that 120,000 cubic metres had been removed from the summit and dispersed.<sup>206</sup> In the future it may be possible to re-excavate at least some of the hill, with eyes open for what the previous excavators did not, and could not see, possibly using non-invasive technologies. Meanwhile the fraying photograph can stand as a glimpse of a future not chosen.

The leaders of the present conservation programme, notably Manolis Korres, have suggested putting at least some of the earth back on the summit in order to restore some flat and green areas as in ancient times.

<sup>204</sup> To be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

<sup>205</sup> Author's collection. Reproduced in monochrome in Charley, opposite 18. The artificial hill can be seen in other photographs of the time and later.

<sup>206</sup> Burnouf, 15.

That would be retrospectively to honour one of the provisions of the Athens Charter of 1931, that excavated sites should be filled in, but the proposal has not at the time of writing been generally favoured. With the planting between 1900 to 1910 of three hundred thousand trees, mainly pines, on and around the hills near the Acropolis, the agenda of creating an Acropolis that was isolated and cordoned off from modern life was completed.<sup>207</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Acropolis had been largely cleared of all reminders of its history since ancient times. The Ottoman, Frankish, and Byzantine buildings and adaptations had gone. The town on the summit had been removed and the dumped earth landscaped. The Muslim cemetery had been cleared and paved over.<sup>208</sup> The caves on the slopes, some that had been in use as Christian chapels and churches for many centuries, had been desacralized. Only the Acropolis walls, with their numerous additions and reconstructions in different materials, offered the viewer some sense of the layering over the two millennia between modern and ancient Hellas. There were, however, for those who knew where to look, the remains of a far earlier wall that we now associate with the bronze age, but which the classical Athens called 'Cyclopean' after the mythic creatures described in the *Odyssey*.

Henri Belle, a diplomat at the French Embassy who lived in Athens for three years in the 1870s, complained bitterly at the dumping. Not only was there a danger that the sudden avalanches of earth, stone, and brick thrown over the sides would crush people walking below, but they damaged the ancient, although not classical-era Stoa of Eumelos that lay in their path. By concentrating their attention on the buildings on the Acropolis summit, the restorers had altered the shape of the Acropolis itself. The rock, Belle declared, recalling the fabulous rapes for which the Acropolis was famed, should have been allowed to remain 'intact and unviolated'.<sup>209</sup> Other doubts began to be expressed about

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207 Papageorgiou-Venetas, 66.

208 A photograph of unsorted fragments of Muslim tombs untidily heaped near the Propylaea on the Acropolis is reproduced by Hamilakis, Yannis, 'Indigenous Archaeologies in Ottoman Greece' in Bahrani, Zinab, Zeynep Çelik, Zeynep, and Eldem, Edhem, opposite 59, no date given. They may be from the Muslim cemetery on the low ground cleared and awaiting re-use as part of the monument cleansing, rather than evidence of a Muslim cemetery on the summit.

209 Belle, 24.

the losses that had resulted from a century of science. In detaching the ancient Acropolis from its many pasts, Louis Bertrand wrote in 1908, he could no longer imitate his hero Chateaubriand, who had gone to Greece in search of ‘images’, by which he meant acts of imagination, reveries, meditations, philosophical, and moral. The Acropolis, he complained, had become just another European-style white marble museum, outdoors but without colour, without movement, without joy, lifeless and sterile.<sup>210</sup> What Bertrand and the others forgot was that Chateaubriand had not chosen the circumstances within which he made his ‘images’ and that if he had had access to the Greece of a century later, his conclusions as well as his categories of seeing, might have been different. As a man of the Enlightenment, with its respect for evidence, he would have been able to take account of the many discoveries made since his time from the digging out of the Acropolis buildings. And we, a hundred years on from Bertrand, can see, discounting his nostalgia, in which respects he was right. It is not the ancient Acropolis that has come down to us nor one organically altered in response to specific local events, but one deliberately created with specific purposes in mind during the nineteenth century. The modern Acropolis, an artificial construction, not easily reversible, is still the result of a conjuncture of mainly nineteenth-century ways of seeing.

### A New Past and a New Future

During the nineteenth century, as many scholars have pointed out, the central unifier of Modern Hellas was Ancient Hellas.<sup>211</sup> In 1833, the year the Ottoman army left Athens, the Acropolis, it was decided, was to become a symbol of the new Greek nation state as a whole, not just of Athens and Attica as it had been in antiquity. As one early post-independence visitor noted, for the neo-Hellenes, the re-remembering of antiquity was a consolation for their present miseries, but also a kind

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210 Translated from the words used by Bertrand, Louis, *La Grèce du soleil et des paysages* (Paris: Charpentier, 1908) in his long Preface. Discussed and quoted from by Bache, Sophie, ‘Archaeological Travels in Greece and Asia Minor: On the Good Use of Ruins in Nineteenth Century France’ in Bahrani, Zeynep and Eldem, 157–79.

211 For example Henrik Mouritsen ‘Modern nations and ancient models: Italy and Greece compared’ in Beaton and Ricks, 43–49.

of bible that gave them a sense of the past and hope for the future.<sup>212</sup> Nor was the symbolic power of the monument to be solely for the citizens of the Greek state. It would serve to encourage a modern pan-Hellenism of all who regarded themselves as Greeks wherever they lived, from the Adriatic to Constantinople, from the Black Sea to Egypt, and later to expatriate communities around the world. As the visual embodiment of a grand unifying narrative that looked both back and forward in time, the Acropolis would create a new past, a new social memory, and therefore a new future. The Acropolis of the stones had always been there, but the Acropolis of the mind had to be invented or repatriated. And the lost Hellenic vitality could be reawakened by returning to the ancient ways, learning to read the ancient authors, reintroducing the ancient language, renaming the mountains, the rivers, the towns, and the streets, and purifying the Acropolis of Athens of the remains of foreign occupation.

As was noted by a French nobleman who visited in 1845, the glory of the heroes of the Revolution was put under the protection of the great men of the past.<sup>213</sup> And, to a large extent, this aim was met. In a book prepared by the experts who managed the recent Acropolis conservation programme, the point was put in the form of a question: 'Why is it that Greeks regard these monuments as being theirs, regardless of whether or not they visit them regularly or whether they really know them? Why do they regard them as their very own, their "home", the trademark of Greece through the ages and of the present day?'<sup>214</sup> The claim that a Hellenic identity can be traced back through the intervening centuries to the classical Acropolis and earlier is, however, no longer much favoured in Greece itself, being for example, largely absent from the official educational programmes for visiting Greek children.<sup>215</sup> The present-day emphasis on the Acropolis as a monument of universal significance, a heritage of the whole world of which Greece is the proud steward but

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212 Reynaud, Charles, *D'Athènes à Baalbec (1844)* (Paris: Furne, 1846), 16.

213 '... le **besoin** de placer sa gloire renaissante sous la protection de sa vieille gloire, de donner pour aïeux à ses héros d'aujourd'hui ses grands hommes d'autrefois, et de les appeler tous ensemble, les orateurs et les guerriers, les sculpteurs et les poètes, au secours de la patrie nouvelle. Montpensier, 184.

214 Blurto to *Dialogues on the Acropolis. Scholars and experts talk on the history, restoration and the Acropolis Museum* (Athens: Skai, 2010).

215 The official education programmes are described by Cornelia Hatziaslani in *Dialogues* pp. 426–43.

not the sole beneficiary, is quite recent however, being first promulgated by the Prince Royal of Greece to the assembled delegates to the First International Congress of Archaeology in 1905, a moment when the prestige of the Parthenon was near its zenith.<sup>216</sup>

As in most nineteenth-century nation states, whether newly or long established, Greek writers produced a series of long, often learned, and apparently authoritative, histories that, by inseparably mixing historical fact, mythic narrative, and self-congratulation gave a reassuring unified narrative to the imagined community of 'the nation' as a metaphysical essence continuing unchanged across time and situation. Hellas, that modern history ran, had been oppressed by a succession of foreign occupations, Ottoman, Frankish, Byzantine, and Roman, that had weakened, but had never extinguished, its essential spirit. Constantinos Paparrigopoulos, for example, in his six-volume history, first published between 1860 and 1877, wrote of the long period between modern and ancient Hellas:

The city of Athens still preserved its ancient traditions, its love of beauty and reverence for the masterpieces of art; its inhabitants, though neither learned nor cultured in the true sense of the word, could yet be distinguished by their character, their sensitiveness, and their manners [...] These descendants of the Athenians of the age of Pericles had indeed forgotten how to cultivate literature and the arts, but they had preserved the nobility of their race, and although they had lost its intellectual force, they retained its reverence for all that stirred the enthusiasm of their ancestors.<sup>217</sup>

As in countries elsewhere, until the mid-twentieth century the postulated essence of national continuity was often put in terms of

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216 [Athens. Proceedings of the First International Congress of Archaeology] *Comptes Rendus du Congrès International d'Archéologie: 1re Session, Athènes 1905, Sous la Présidence de S.A.R. Le Prince Royal des Hellènes, Président de la Société Archéologique* (Athens: Imprimerie Hestia, C. Meissner & N. Kargadouris, Βιβλιοθηκη Αρχαιολογικης Εταιρείας. no. 11, 1905), 90. The Prince reasserted the claim of the Greeks of his time to be 'the sons' of the Greeks of classical times. He also qualified his claim by limiting the heritage to the whole 'civilized' world, that we can understand as coded racism. Among the delegates were a few women, as well as the Ottoman Government's representative in Athens, and representatives of the patriarchates.

217 Quoted in translation by Sicilianos 20–21. For Paparrigopoulos and his writings, see Ioannis Koubourlis, 'European historiographical influences upon the young Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos' in Beaton and Ricks pp. 53–77.

race, 'blood', seen as a genetic, and sometimes as a continuation of racial character. Greece was also able to point to the Greek language where continuity back to the ancient language is evident, although like the buildings, the current demotic had become encrusted with many non-Hellenic elements, and at the time of independence, the many local dialects were only mutually comprehensible with difficulty.<sup>218</sup> The nationalist way of seeing, resting as it does upon notions of persisting, if not always inherent or uninterrupted, markers of internal identity, is obliged to accommodate apparent exceptions, either by explaining them away or by building some composite notion of identity that embraces the apparent contradictions, as when, for example in the 1960s, the Colonels promoted a 'Hellenic-Christian' heritage. As with national narratives being invented elsewhere, it was claimed that the conquest of Greece had never been complete and that resistance had never ceased, simultaneously the invention of a pedigree and a way of bridging gaps in the alleged continuity.<sup>219</sup>

In the nineteenth century, as contributions to the nation-building agenda, which was still thought of as a desirable, socially-progressive aim, many images were produced that linked the identity of the people of Athens to the Acropolis, as in Figure 21.37, from a series of pictures of local costumes, presented as folklore, each district associating the modern inhabitants with their local ruins.

The rhetoric of such images gave political weight to expansionist national policies aimed at annexing territories, some with populations of a complex religious and linguistic mix, which had remained under Ottoman suzerainty at the time of Greek independence, notably Thessaly to the north, Crete to the south, and many of the islands.

One of the clearest statements of looking at the Acropolis through the lens of national identity can be found in the speech of Melina Mercouri of 12 June 1986, when, as the Minister of Culture, speaking in English, she addressed the students of the Oxford Union in England on the future of the sculptures from the Parthenon held in the British Museum in London: 'You must understand what the Parthenon Marbles mean to us.

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218 The language question and its contribution to political debates about identity is discussed by Mackridge, Peter, *Language and National Identity in Greece, 1766–1976* (Oxford: OUP, 2009).

219 For example Blaquiére, *Greek Revolution* 6.



Figure 21.37. A woman of Athens. Coloured lithograph, nineteenth century, unidentified.



Figure 21.38. 'Grecian race-Hellenes, Pelasgi; 1. Shepherd of Arcadia, in holiday dress. 2. Peasant-environs of Athens, in holiday dress. 3. Woman of Trikeri in Thessaly. 4. Woman and child-Island of Hydra. 5. 6. Man and Woman-Island of Crete. Engraving.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>220</sup> "The Comprehensive Atlas & Geography of the world", Compiled and Engraved from the most Authentic sources, under the supervision of W.G. Blackie, Published by Blackie & Son, London. 1882.

They are our pride. They are our sacrifices. They are our noblest symbol of excellence. They are a tribute to the democratic philosophy. They are our aspirations and our name. They are the essence of Greekness.<sup>221</sup>

However, even in the nineteenth century there were indications of local resistance to this yoking of modern to ancient Hellas, of a feeling that the whole neo-Hellenic project was a fantasy of foreigners, and that those who had fought the Greek Revolution, mainly a war of religion, with most of the fighters illiterate in their own language, let alone in that of the fourth and fifth century BCE, needed a more contemporary ideology and one more closely related to their more recent historical experience. As the unnamed Greek literary figure quoted in Chapter 14 told the visiting political economist Nassau Senior in 1857: 'We do not consider the Parthenon as our national temple. The Parthenon belongs to an age and to a religion with which we have no sympathy [...] Our capital is Constantinople; our national temple is Santa Sophia'.<sup>222</sup> And there is evidence that the neo-Hellenizing of Athens was, for long afterwards, regarded as imported rather than indigenous, as the words of Kastromenos suggested.

In the late 1880s, there had begun another battle in the discursive wars, comparable to the arguments that led to the removal of the Frankish Tower, and this time the decision went the other way.<sup>223</sup> For the building of the new Athens, workers were drawn in from all parts of the country and beyond. For the digging out of the Propylaea in the 1840s, Beulé had employed 'Lacedaimonians' from the district of ancient Sparta, where a new neo-Hellenic town was founded. In Athens, by the 1860s workers from the Cyclades, some from the small island of Anaphi, had made a settlement on the north-east slope of the Acropolis consisting of low white-washed houses and two new churches in the Byzantine style in accordance with the long tradition of the island. The women dressed in traditional clothes and drew water

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221 Available on the website of the Melina Mercouri Foundation. For Mercouri's remark on the same occasion, 'There are no Elgin Marbles', see Appendix B.

222 Senior 358. The literary figure is only identified as 'Zeta.'

223 Discussed by Caftanzoglou, Roxane, 'The Sacred Rock and the Profane Settlement: Place, Memory and Identity under the Acropolis, in *Oral History* 28, no. 1 (2000): 43–51; and Bender, Barbara and Margot Winer, editors. *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place* (Oxford: Berg, 2001) 21–35.



from the Klepsydra.<sup>224</sup> The village is shown in this 2017 photograph at Figure 21.39.



Figure 21.39. Anafiotika village, a recent photograph. Eberhard Kern, 'Blick aus der Anafiotika zur Akropolis', 2 October 2017, Wikimedia Commons, public domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:-Anafiotika-jpg>

In Figure 21.40, the sympathetic Corwin Knapp Linson allows us a glimpse of how the settlement looked at the time when many Greek intellectuals were demanding that it should be removed.

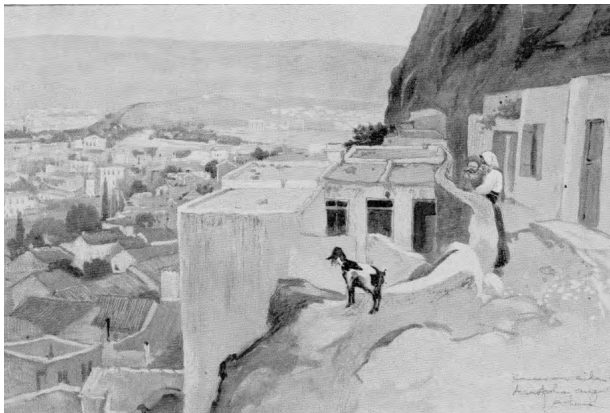


Figure 21.40. 'Houses on the side of the Acropolis.' Lithograph of a drawing by Corwin Knapp Linson, 1896.<sup>225</sup>

<sup>224</sup> In 1929–1930, when Broneer began to excavate on the north slope, the women of the Anaphiotika quarter still went regularly to the Klepsydra for their water. Parsons 3.

<sup>225</sup> In Horton opposite 52.

The arguments that led to the removal of the Tower were heard again, notably the prospect of priceless archaeological finds. But, as Caftanzoglou has pointed out, the debate went to the heart of the question: what was this imagined 'nation' of 'Hellas' if it excluded the citizens who were helping to build it? Was 'Hellas' a construct of metropolitans ashamed of people from the country districts? In the Anafiotika, living Greeks with their colourful gardens, their white houses, and their cheeky goats, shared a boundary fence with dead classical Hellenes who existed only in white marble. Although the summit was a limitable space, the Acropolis seen by most citizens was the whole rock from a distance. The contested ground was therefore the slopes. As Caftanzoglou noted, presenting the issue in anthropological terms as a political contest in the hierarchies of space, the Anafiotika was to some 'a disorderly and polluting irruption of social time in the midst of a space that was to be lifted out of its context and set aside as a well-guarded zone that would surround and isolate the Acropolis from the disturbing presence of contemporary Greek society'.<sup>226</sup>

Whether by coincidence or—as is more likely—as a result of other arriving and indigenous forces, it was around the same time that we see evidence of a new modernist movement in Greek society. Perhaps, some writers suggested, the single-minded concentration on the ancient had gone too far: the heritage of Hellas was a precious gift, yes, of course, but it was also becoming an impediment to thinking more clearly about the present.<sup>227</sup> *The Archaeologist* by Andreas Karkavitsas, the first novelist to write in demotic Greek, published in 1904, told the story of a man who in a manic search for antiquities finds a masterpiece, but when he installs it in his house it falls and kills him.<sup>228</sup> And, whatever foreign visitors may have said about the success of the whole project, progress in persuading the Greek people to link their identity to the Acropolis had been slow.

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226 Caftanzoglou, 'Sacred Rock ...' 46.

227 Discussed by Kitromilides, Paschalis M., 'From subservience to ambivalence, Greek attitudes towards the classics in the twentieth century', in Haagsma, Margriet, Boer, Pim den, and Moormann, Eric (eds), *The Impact of Classical Greece on European and National Identities* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 2003), 46–70.

228 Kitromilides in Haagsma et al. 50.

The present Acropolis, which we can applaud as a triumph of late-twentieth-century archaeology, science, and technology, we can acknowledge is, in essentials, also the continuing result of a nineteenth-century way of viewing. In their search for timelessness the authorities of that era had produced a monument caught in the transient assumptions of their own time. In their search for purity, they had been forced into compromise, neither preserving the monument as it had historically come down to them nor undertaking a full imaginative reconstruction of how it may have existed in ancient times. In their quest for romantic authenticity, they had produced a muddled artificiality, an unsuccessful experiment in 'experiential heritage'. In aiming for permanence, they had produced an episode in the history of conservation and its aims. However, since, from that time, the Acropolis has had no other role than to be looked at, to be the catalyst for meanings made from acts of seeing and cognition, the paradoxical net result has been to emancipate the viewer by requiring him or her to look, see, and view critically within a historical perspective that mentally offsets the long passage of time. The eye of the modern contemporary viewer, which confidently separates the new from the old in looking at the marble buildings, is obliged to do the same for the whole rock.



## 22. Still a Dark Heritage

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Nowadays, as visitors approach the entrance to the Acropolis from the north, they pass the bare, rocky hill known as the Areopagus, the 'Hill of Ares.' A bronze plaque records, in Greek, that it was here that, according to the biblical Acts of the Apostles, Paul of Tarsus, (St Paul), presented a set of ideas to two of the Athenian philosophical schools, the Epicureans and the Stoics; the passage from the Acts is transcribed. The plaque is shown at the bottom right of Figure 22.1.



Figure 22.1. The Areopagus and the plaque. Photograph by C. Messier, 1 February 2016, CC BY-SA, Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%CE%86%CF%81%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82\\_%CE%A0%CE%AC%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%82\\_6217.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%CE%86%CF%81%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82_%CE%A0%CE%AC%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%82_6217.jpg)

This small physical reminder of Paul's visit, which lasted for a few weeks at most at some time around the year 60 CE, overlays and subverts the associations of the hill during the centuries before and after classical Athens, a period of more than a thousand years.<sup>1</sup> According to Christian

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1 When the plaque was first fixed I have not discovered, but there is a nineteenth century reference that may be to a predecessor. 'On the hill of Areopagus an

traditions, it was Paul's speech at the Areopagus in which he condemned the beliefs and practices of the people of ancient Athens as 'superstitions', that helped to bring the civilization that built the Parthenon to an end. The text in the Acts that claimed to report some of the actual words spoken by Paul had, possibly soon after the speech was delivered, been remediated from the performed oral to the fixed, and potentially more durable, written. Even if, as is likely, Paul had prepared a draft in written form, the text was at some stage edited to accord with the conventions of the time.<sup>2</sup> When the leaders of the various local communities were unifying themselves into an organized church in the early centuries CE, their decision to include the Acts of the Apostles as well as some of the letters of Paul in the canonical Christian Bible, a process finalized by the third century, ensured that the account of Paul's visit to Athens was frequently repeated from that time down to the present day. In terms of potential effects, insofar as that can be measured by the number of acts of consumption, the reported speech of Paul of Tarsus has been, over the centuries, by orders of magnitude, the most frequently encountered of all the texts that have given advice to viewers on how to look at the classical Parthenon, a building that was in active use at the time of Paul's visit and had already stood for around half a millennium.

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iron plate marks the spot where, in A.D. 54, St. Paul delivered his address to the Athenians.' in Wilson, James T., *Our Cruise in the Mediterranean* (Baltimore: Lord Baltimore Press, 1899), 64.

- 2 A study of the forms of address that compared the variations in the phrase 'Men of Athens' and the version with the vocative adverb 'O men of Athens' reveals that the version with the vocative 'O men ...' was almost always used by Plato in the dialogues and there over a thousand examples in the Attic orators in the classical period. However, by Hellenistic times, the use of that version implied a deliberate archaizing, never found in Philo or Josephus, and in Lucian it is satirical, with elements of parody, implying pretentiousness. Paul, as his words were reported, by omitting the vocative 'O', reveals himself as a competent user of contemporary educated Greek. Dickey, Eleanor, *Greek Forms of Address from Herodotus to Lucian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 177. The norms of the day included the conventions of the Thucydidean speech and of the rhetorical discourse or exercise, in whose conventions both Paul and Luke, thought to be the compiler of the Acts, were likely, from what is reported of their actual lives and education, to have been well versed. These conventions are discussed, with two experiments, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. A fuller discussion of what Paul may have actually said, of how his words, allusions, gestures, and external appearance, might have been received by its audiences in Athens, will be included in the forthcoming second volume. The effects of a chain of translation from Greek to Latin to modern languages are summarized later in this chapter.

A photograph of the Areopagus hill as seen from the Acropolis summit is reproduced as Figure 22.2. As Plato had speculated, probably correctly, in some remote geological age the Acropolis and the Areopagus had been part of the same geological formation.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 22.2. The Areopagus as seen from the Acropolis. Photograph (2015).<sup>4</sup>

The Areopagus overlooks the plain seen to the viewer's right, where Theseus, one of the ancient city's mythic founding heroes, had defeated the invading Amazons, as well as the classical-era temple known until recently as the Theseion. The Areopagus, although never recorded as a site of a cult of Ares, the god of war, had, like the Acropolis, visually connected the people of ancient Athens with its historic and pre-historic past.<sup>5</sup> The date of the foundation of the court, which authors of classical Athens dated to a thousand calendar years or more before their own time, was almost coterminous with the founding of the city itself.<sup>6</sup>

In ancient Athens, the court was formally responsible for the enforcement of some laws and customs, especially in cases of assault

3 Plat. Criti. 111e–112a.

4 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Areopagus\\_hill\\_Saint\\_Paul\\_from\\_Acropolis\\_Athens.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Areopagus_hill_Saint_Paul_from_Acropolis_Athens.jpg)

5 I am grateful to Alex Millington for his advice on this point.

6 In modern calendar terms, as translated from the calculations of ancient authors, the trial occurred in 1531 BCE. Dates taken from Harding, Phillip, editor and translator, *The Story of Athens: The Fragments of the Local Chronicles of Attika* (London: Routledge, 2008).

and homicide, but it also had responsibility for deciding on which cults should be allowed to practise. It had the power to impose heavy summary punishments without right of appeal, and during the classical period, the court also had the unique privilege of being allowed to spend civic funds without having to explain in their accounts the purposes for which the expenditure had been incurred. Whether the court met at or near the hill or in a building or succession of buildings elsewhere is uncertain, nor is it clear to what extent we can accept the remark by Paul's near contemporary, Lucian, that the court met at night so as to minimize the risks of being swayed by displays of emotion—but the association of the court with the hill, even if nominal, was never lost. In ancient Athens, a society in which the men, and many women, mostly lived and worked outdoors, the smaller hill and its larger neighbour presented complementary statements of the approved social memory and the official public values of the classical-era city ('polis') of Athens, which were celebrated in words and song, notably in the final choruses of Aeschylus's tragedy, the *Eumenides*.<sup>7</sup>

In classical times, the Areopagus was one the 'famous hills of the Athenians', as a character in the play by Sophocles, *The Men of Camicus*, had called them, which fashioned the cityscape into a network of reciprocal views that together made a storyscape within whose discursive conventions ancient Athenians celebrated their ancestors, their city, and themselves.<sup>8</sup>

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7 Aesch. *Eum.* 1044, and other passages in other authors that constituted what I call the discursive environment to be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

8 Fragment 323. Lloyd-Jones edition, 181. The others included the Acropolis, the Pnyx, the Hill of the Muses, and the Hill of Colonus but perhaps not Lycabettos, that, being without water, was mainly useful as a military look out place, and to the puzzlement of western topographers is seldom mentioned in the corpus of the surviving ancient authors, although Theophrastus, Aristotle's successor as head of the philosophical school he founded, mentions that Pheinos of Athens observed solstices from Lycabettos. Theophrastus, 'On weather signs', 63. In a long scene-setting passage about imagined sightlines and their relationships with one another from various imagined viewing stations at the beginning of the Panathenaic oration of Aelius Aristides, he offers numerous metaphors and comparisons. The totality of Athens, Attica, and its near islands, including sea and sky, in a series of words beginning with P as 'like a festival procession.' ὥστε καὶ παραπλεῖν καὶ περιπλεῖν καὶ πεζεύειν καὶ ἔτι πελαγίους εἶναι διὰ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ὥσπερ ἐν πομπῇ κατ' ἐξουσίαν τὸ πρὸς ἡδονὴν αἰρουμένους. Ael. *Ar. Orat.* 13 96. My suggestions on how the classical Athenians integrated the actual cityscape into the fictive storyscape that they wished to present and commend to themselves and others are offered in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



Lucian, who also came from an Asian province of the Roman Empire, in his satire on the philosophical schools, has the character of 'Philosophy' say: 'let us go to the Areopagus, or rather to the Acropolis itself, so that we can see everything in the city at the same time'.<sup>9</sup> Both places appear to have been easily accessible in Lucian's day and offered opportunities for a *tour d'horizon* of the topography of the city and its institutions.

A visit to the Areopagus is now mostly regarded as an optional extra to a tour of the Acropolis. A modern marked path silently leads visitors to what they are expected to wish to do, namely to climb the sixteen ancient steps, one of the few visible man-made survivals from ancient times. Cut into the grey native rock, and polished smooth by modern feet, the steps are slippery when wet, and in recent times the authorities have discreetly provided a safer metal staircase with handrails, as can be glimpsed to the left of the picture already shown as Figure 22.1.

The Areopagus was among the few places in Athens for which the local oral and ecclesiastical tradition may have been continuous back to antiquity. The hill, and its association with Paul, is mentioned in the handful of locally-prepared accounts of Athens composed before the arrival of the classically educated western visitors that enable the main features of local Byzantine and post-Byzantine ways of looking at the ancient monuments to be recovered.<sup>10</sup> The early topographers, from their knowledge of the ancient texts as collected by Meursius, had quickly been able to confirm the identification.<sup>11</sup> However, a hundred years later, as one late-eighteenth-century visitor wrote, the people of Athens at that time regarded 'their' Areopagus, as they did the ancient ruins, without emotion.<sup>12</sup> For the local Orthodox population at the time of the Greek Revolution, the hill was a site of memory but not one of heritage.

9 Φιλοσοφία ἀπίωμεν εἰς Ἄρειον πάγον, μᾶλλον δὲ εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν αὐτὴν, ὡς ἂν ἐκ περιωπῆς ἅμα καταφανείη. 'The Fisherman, or Dead Come to Life', Luc. Pisc. 15. My translation avoiding the translation 'bird's eye view' that may imply an imagined viewing station looking down from the sky rather than the panoramic view obtained by turning the head while standing on the ground.

10 To be discussed in the forthcoming second volume that will also print, for the first time, a pre-encounter local account, not previously known.

11 As discussed in Chapter 7.

12 The inhabitants of Athens 'contemplant sans émotion les ruines de ses temples & de son aréopage.' Ferrières-Sauvebœuf, Cte de, *Mémoires historiques, politiques et géographiques des voyages du comte de Ferrières-Sauveboeuf* (Paris: Buisson, 1790), ii, 258.

Nor, until shortly after the end of the Greek Revolution, did visitors from the west see the hill primarily as a Christian site. The verses in praise of the Areopagus composed by Adolf Ellissen in 1837, among the first books printed in Greece after independence, do not mention Paul's visit.<sup>13</sup> The Rev. Robert Master, an English churchman who climbed the hill in 1819, accepted the story that Paul had spoken there but his interest was only that of a topographer.<sup>14</sup> The Rev. Robert Wilson, whose journal of a visit in the previous year teems with information about the other ancient sites, does not even mention the hill.<sup>15</sup> But then, quite suddenly from around 1840, a time that coincides with the introduction of commercial steamships and a broadening of the constituencies able to afford a visit to Athens, an increasing number of visitors from western countries not only visited 'Mars' Hill', as they called it from its Latinized form, but began to perform their own rituals there.<sup>16</sup>

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13 Ellissen, A. *Spaziergang durch das Alte Athen, Sonnette und Bilder aus dem 19. Jahrhundert*, edited by Alexander Sideras and Paraskevi Sidera-Lystra (Athens: Verlag der Griechenland Zeitung, 2010), 30. This is a reprint of Ellissen's *Athen*, published in 1838 at the time when a neo-Hellenic court called the Areopagus was being established.

14 Master, Rev. Robert, manuscript journal. British Library.

15 Wilson, manuscript journal, Aberdeen University Library.

16 I mention some of the printed works, now mostly forgotten and their ideas, that were once mainstream, lost from the history of Athens and its monuments, on which the account in this chapter is founded. They are listed alphabetically by author, all of which are noted with fuller information, usually with the long titles in which the authors identified themselves and claimed authority, in the Bibliography. Although the Areopagus debates was a phenomenon in which churchmen from many Christian communities of the Protestant tradition participated, only a few of the many books in languages other than English are mentioned here. Allen, Richard; Allen, William; Andrews; Aiton; Argyll, Duke of; Arundell; Ashworth; Ayling; Azaïs; Bartlett; Bartmess; Barton; Baynes; Beldam; Benjamin; Berry; Black, Anna Robinson; Black, Archibald; Black, Hoosier; Blanc; Bonar and McCheyne; Borrer; Burgon; Brooks; Brewer; Brewer and Barber; Brown; Browne, J. Ross; Buckley; Burnfield; Burr; Bush; Bute; Camus; Carra and others; Castanier; Centerwall; Charley; Charles; Christmas; Clark; Clark and Clark; Conybeare and Howson; Couronne; Cox and Cox; Crawford, A.; Crawford, L.S.: Cuthbertson; Davies; Dawson; de Gasparin; de Hass; Didon; Dorr, Benjamin; Dorr, David; Duncan; Dyrness; Earle; Eddy; Ellerbeck; Faber; Fawthrop; Felton; Field; Fish; Fout; Gadsby; Glasgow; Godbey; Goddard; Gore; Granger; Gray; Green, Lenamay; Green, Samuel G.; Greene, Rev. and Mrs. Oliver B. Grellet; Gringras; Gunsaulus; Haight; Hardy, E.J.; Harris, Helen B.; Hartley; Hartshorn and Klopsch; Hawes; Hill; [Hill] *Service*; Hoppin; Hott; Howe, Fisher; Howell; Howson; Honeyman; Horne and the Findens; Hughes, Hugh Price; Hunter, James; Jannaway; Johnson; Johnston; Jowett; Kendall; King, Jonas; Koeppen; Krayenbelt; Lee, J.S.; Lee, Joseph; Lobry; McColester; McGarvey; McLean; Madden; Mandat-Grancey; Marmier; Marvin;

‘[L]ike a cannon ball fired from the Areopagus against  
the Acropolis’: Paul and Classical Heritage

The eighteen-year-old Lenamay Green, daughter of a prominent churchman from the American south, was typical of many when, as she noted in the printed diary: ‘we climbed to the top, and one of our party read aloud the 17th chapter of Acts’.<sup>17</sup> Cornelius Felton, the president of Harvard University, on a day’s visit in 1853 read the passage in its entirety five times, on two occasions aloud.<sup>18</sup> We hear of ‘an elderly Methodist, too rheumatic to walk’, who was carried up the hill so that he could read the chapter on the spot.<sup>19</sup> We read of a British sea captain who visited the Areopagus where he read the chapter, but declined to visit the Acropolis. As he is reported to have said: ‘seeing anything else might distract his feelings from the impressions he had just received’.<sup>20</sup>

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Miller, D.L.; Miller, Mrs; Miller, Joseph William; Morton; Nichols, James; Nichols, William Ford; Ninck; Newton, Richard; Nugent; Oehler; Oliver; Olin; Paine; Patterson; Pègus; the author of *Photograms*; Pierson; Pitman; Portmans; Pressensé; Puntton; [Religious Tract Society] *The History of Greece: from the earliest times to A.D. 1833*; Renan; Robinson and Smith; Rodwell; the author of *Ruins of Sacred and Historic Lands*; Sayce; Schaff; Scheuerman; Schmidt; Scott; Serette; Smith, Agnes; Smith, F.G.; Smith, Lee S.; Smith, Samuel; Spencer; Stephens; Stine; Stoppani; Sumner; Talmage; Tischendorff; Turk and Vincent; Twain, Waddington; Waldenström; Warburton; Wenger; Whittle; Wilson, James T.; Wilson, W.R.; Wilson, S.S.; Winger; Yeardeley; York; Young, Cuthbert; Young, James Foster; and Zerbe. The indefatigable Stratford Canning, who had spent most of his life outside geographical England promoting an imagined ‘England’, in a little book, *Why am I a Christian?* written in defence of the English church, reveals some of the general anxiety of Victorian times about the slipping away of an identity that he had assumed was secure. Speaking for a large constituency, he blamed the spirit of inquiry that had invaded the talk of dinner tables and the columns of newspapers to the extent that the future of ecclesiastical authority and religious belief was now hanging in the balance as a result of ideas such as ‘Mr Darwin’s theory that men were originally monkeys.’

- 17 [Green, Lenamay], *A Girl’s Journey through Europe, Egypt, and the Holy Land* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South. 1889), 178. The date of the journey is not noted but since she was aged 18 it must have been 1887 or 1888.
- 18 Felton, Cornelius Conway, *Familiar Letters from Europe* (Boston MA: Ticknor and Fields, 1865), 219. His removal of a piece of the Parthenon was noted in Chapter 21.
- 19 Hughes, Hugh Price, Rev., MA, author of ‘Social Christianity’, ‘The philanthropy of God’, ‘Ethical Christianity,’ Etc., *The Morning Lands of History, A Visit to Greece, Palestine and Egypt* (London: Horace Marshall, 1901). Much of the book had been previously published in the *Methodist Times*.
- 20 Grosvenor, Lady, *A Narrative of a Yacht Voyage in the Mediterranean during the Years 1840–41* (London: Murray, 1842), ii, 157. The story was also told by Lady Londonderry [Londonderry, Lady] *A narrative of travels to Vienna, Constantinople, Athens, Naples, &c* (London: Colburn, 1842), 185. ‘Will you not visit some of the

Some wrongly assumed that Mars' Hill had been a place of pilgrimage for centuries.<sup>21</sup>

The visitors, in their accounts of their experiences, frequently turned to the language of violence and victory. 'Every sentence of that magnificent discourse' [Paul's], declared James Hunter, 'seems to us like a 'like a cannon ball fired from the Areopagus against the Acropolis', and its foundations 'did begin to totter' from 'the dynamite of God.'<sup>22</sup> According to James Nichols, Paul 'smashed their pet idols into smithereens.'<sup>23</sup> According to Rev. T.W. Aveling, a Doctor of Divinity from England, who visited in 1854: 'Winged words were his, fire-pointed and potent; words that shall be heard in all lands, and before which paganism, with its follies, atrocities, and wretchedness, shall ultimately and for ever fall.'<sup>24</sup> For almost a century, we hear variations, not only from casual visitors but from professional scholars. In the words of Constantin von Tischendorff, famous for having obtained one of the oldest manuscripts of the Greek New Testament from the isolated monastery in Sinai: 'Once that man stood there, like whom no other held, in the spirit of the Holy Ghost, the sword which conquers the world'.<sup>25</sup> Occasionally Paul's speech was called a thunderbolt, recalling one of the ways that ancient Zeus, 'the holder of the earth', had been presented in pre-Christian times as striking at individuals and cities who, for whatever reason, had offended him.<sup>26</sup>

Figure 22.3 shows the view of the Acropolis as it is now seen from the top of the Areopagus.

Harris assured her readers that 'the artistic liberties taken were of the very smallest'. In the picture, although not immediately visible on the foreground, she included a local young man to whom she had given a copy of the New Testament, who was 'busily engaged in reading it

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temples on the hill?' said the [British] minister [Ambassador]. 'Oh no, sir,' replied the captain, 'I came to see this place [the Areopagus], and have no desire to approach those profane buildings.'

21 For example: 'Steps are cut in the stone and they have been trodden by thousands of people, and for hundreds of years.' Stine, Rev. Milton H., *A Winter Jaunt Through Historic Lands* (Philadelphia: Lutheran publication society, 1890), 303.

22 Hunter, 23.

23 Nichols, *Bible Lands*, 197.

24 Aveling, 402.

25 Tischendorff, as translated, 287.

26 For example Baynes, 212.



Figure 22.3. The Acropolis from the top of the Areopagus (2010).<sup>27</sup>

Figure 22.4 shows the view as it appeared in the nineteenth century before the planting of the trees.

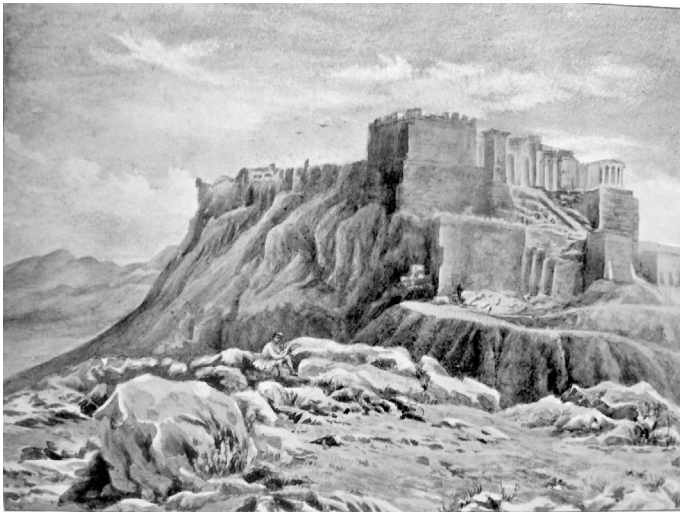


Figure 22.4. '1. Acropolis 2. Mars' Hill. Reputed scene of St. Paul's Preaching'. Lithograph of a drawing made on the spot in 1892 by Helen B. Harris.<sup>28</sup>

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27 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Acropolis\\_from\\_Areopagus.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Acropolis_from_Areopagus.jpg)

28 Harris no XXXVI opposite 75.

and so remained for long unconscious of our presence'.<sup>29</sup> Her visit was part of a tour made with her husband, J. Rendel Harris, an academic, who with her help had much success in bringing to the attention of the modern scholarly world the existence of ancient Christian texts, some in Syriac, that threw light on the processes of selection and canonization of the Christian bible in the early centuries CE. Agnes Smith, another scholar of Syriac, who, with her twin sister, recovered the text of the Syriac version of the Gospels in the monastery at Sinai, so enabling the early history of Christianity in the lands where it originated to be more fully recovered, wrote in what was already almost a ritualized pronouncement: 'His [Paul's] words fell upon scornful ears; yet their echo has caused the Parthenon to crumble'.<sup>30</sup>

Agnes and Margaret, with a friend referred to only as Violet, who, between them, knew twelve modern and ancient languages, were formidable scholars, especially latterly in Syriac. Unusually for women, the sisters were awarded DDs, among other honours, and, to judge from her printed works, Agnes never wavered from the Scottish Presbyterianism on which she had been brought up.<sup>31</sup>

To the constituency of western viewers who regarded the Acropolis as a dark heritage, the Parthenon was 'the very citadel of Grecian paganism'.<sup>32</sup> The ancient buildings were 'magnificent monuments to by-gone idolatry'.<sup>33</sup> A few visitors who knew the history of their religion and of the translation of its languages repeated the association of 'idolatry' with the worship of 'demons', picking up a theme in the attitudes to ancient visual images that had been strong in Orthodox Christianity back through the Ottoman and Byzantine centuries to the

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29 Harris, 76. Harris was amongst those who understood that Paul's speech as reported in the Acts conformed with the conventions of polite rhetoric, as discussed below and was inclined to see ancient Athens as having almost attained the 'purity' of Christianity, but, like others, she was undisturbed, in her book at least, by the evidence of ruination of Tyre and many other once prospering cities, that her Judaeo-Christian god had imposed the harshest of collective punishments on men, women and children, in fulfilment of the prophecies of Ezekiel.

30 Smith, *Glimpses*, 33.

31 Summarized from the two works by Agnes Smith and modern accounts of their lives.

32 Hott. 221.

33 Borrer, Dawson, *A journey from Naples to Jerusalem: by way of Athens, Egypt and the peninsula of Sinai, including a trip to the Valley of Fayoum, together with a translation of M. Linant de Bellefonds' 'Mémoire sur le lac Moeris'* (London: J. Madden, 1845), 34.

reported speech of Paul himself.<sup>34</sup> And those who, contrary to their inclinations, were impressed with the magnificence of the ancient ruins, felt a need to remind themselves and their readerships that it was 'all rank idolatry'.<sup>35</sup>

Even if, as the narrator in the received text of the Acts of the Apostles had himself reported,<sup>36</sup> Paul made little impression on his audience at the time, it was projected back that he 'not only shook to its foundations the worship of the goddess Athena, and all the other innumerable deities of the Greek mythology, and he was the means of their complete and final overthrow'; but that 'he with one stroke, by one strong sentence, dispelled the enchantment'.<sup>37</sup> Typical was the comment of Harriet Clark who declared that: '[the] speech [...] did more for mankind and for the perpetuation of the memory of Athens, than all the works of Pheidias and the conquests of Hadrian, and the orations of Demosthenes, which also made the city memorable.'<sup>38</sup> Or as Daniel Eddy, an American bishop, wrote:

Amazed, awe-struck, they gazed,  
Bowed down by stripes and suffering, prison-worn;  
'Twas Phidias' hand gave Pallas her expression;  
GREATER THAN PHIDIAS, Paul!<sup>39</sup>

Although from the top of the Areopagus the Propylaia and the Nike temple were within sight, the Parthenon was not, nor had it been either in Paul's day or in the classical period.<sup>40</sup> Even the west pediment, by far the most frequently seen part of the building, was not visible. J. Frederic Wickenden, an artist who explored the whole site in 1852, declared that 'from no part of it [the Areopagus] can the Parthenon be seen, nor yet

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34 Black, Archibald Pollok, M.A., F.R.S.A.E., *A hundred days in the East: A diary of a journey to Egypt, Palestine, Turkey in Europe, Greece, the isles of the Archipelago, and Italy* (London: Shaw, 1855), 517.

35 Author of *Photograms*, 126. As another example 'There was not, perhaps, in all the world, another spot where idolatry made such a display.' Marvin, 530.

36 This narrator is plausibly regarded by many modern scholars to be the same as the narrator and compiler of the biblical *Gospel according to Luke*.

37 Harris, Helen B., 68 and 73.

38 Clark and Clark, 570.

39 Verse 7 of a long poem in Eddy pp. 79–81, capitalization as printed perhaps to help with public recitation.

40 As shown in Figure 4.6.

the temple of Erechtheus.<sup>41</sup> Many visitors, however, were careless about the sightlines. Ellen Bosanquet, a long term resident of Athens, wife of a famous archaeologist, invited readers of her book to picture: ‘a little Jew standing on the Areopagus and waving aside with one gesture of his hand the Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and all the accumulated tradition of splendour on that overshadowing hill’.<sup>42</sup> Talmage, the American preacher who had been allowed to take away a piece of the Parthenon, declared unequivocally that the Parthenon was in sight, and even that people standing on its steps could have heard what Paul was saying.<sup>43</sup> The author of *From Mayfair to Marathon* assumed that when Paul declared that God ‘dwelleth not in temples made with hands’, he was referring specifically to the Parthenon, and Paul’s local Athenian audience may have thought so too, although at the time of his visit there was scarcely a city in the whole Romanized world that did not contain sacred buildings built in a classical style, and Athens, which already in Paul’s day had many large buildings, was soon to have another that was even bigger than the Parthenon.<sup>44</sup>

Could there be any place in the world, some wondered, from which a frontal attack on ancient Athenian civilization could have been more appropriately launched than from Mars’ Hill? In the histories of Greece published by the Religious Tract Society, the country’s long past was presented as having been ordained by Divine Providence, and since the religious practices of the ancient Greeks had been local, sensual, and superstitious, they had had to be swept away.<sup>45</sup> A huge readership of

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41 Wickenden, J. Frederic, *Seven Days in Attica in the Summer of 1852* (London: Harrison, 1857), 25.

42 Bosanquet, *Days in Attica*, 114. A similar remark about a Jew of short height ‘en face du Parthénon’ that derived from a non-biblical tradition that contrasted Paul’s alleged courage and vulnerability with those of the men he addressed, in Portmans, 335. Nor need we detect anti-semitism in the remark. In Paul’s day, insofar as Christianity existed, it was as a movement within Judaeism.

43 Talmage, 280 and 281, noting anachronistically that Paul was ‘a man without any ecclesiastical title, neither a D.D., nor even a reverend.’ As an example by an American bishop, who did not visit: ‘on whose Mars’ Hill, with the Parthenon before him. [Paul] preached Jesus and the Resurrection,’ [Hill] *Service*, 25.

44 [Murray, E. Clare Grenville] *From Mayfair to Marathon* (London: Bentley, 1853), 421; Eddy, 81; Gardner, William Amory, *In Greece with the Classics* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1908), 7. His attacks on Stratford Canning were discussed in Chapter 19. The temple to Olympian Zeus, one of the largest buildings ever constructed in antiquity was completed in the time of Hadrian.

45 [Religious Tract Society] *The History of Greece: from the earliest times to A.D. 1833. For schools and families* (London: RTS, [n.d.], 1848), 366. The stated aim of every book in



anglophone families and young people was told that the Greek Church throughout the thousand years of the Byzantine Empire had 'exhibited a revolting scene of bigotry, intolerance, childish superstition, and general debasement'.<sup>46</sup>

Bishop Wordsworth, as the Rev. Christopher had now become, wrote, in a magnificently-produced illustrated book intended for the education of the most privileged boys and young men of England, that the ancient ruins were 'an Apology in behalf for Christianity and a Refutation of Paganism'. A modern spectator of Athens', he went on, 'enjoys great advantages for a contemplation of this city, which were never known to its ancient inhabitants'.<sup>47</sup> Even those who were not especially religious, but who thought their own version was true and all others were not, found themselves more impressed by their encounter with the Areopagus steps than they had expected. The Earl of Carlisle, for example, who had held many of the high offices in the British state, who was introduced to prominent men and women in Constantinople, Athens, and elsewhere, and who was an ancient Greek scholar in his own right, offered a new and determinist version of the story. 'It could not have been without providential agency [that Paul was able] to annul the false sanctities of the place, to extinguish every altar, strip every shrine, dethrone every idol' in the presence of the Propylaea and the Parthenon, the most perfect buildings 'that the hands of man have ever reared'.<sup>48</sup> The works on Paul by the English biblical scholar Frederick Conybeare, who knew Armenian and who married a daughter of Max Müller, then a famous German scholar of eastern languages who had first identified the common origin of Indo-European (Aryan), were to

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the history series was 'carefully to exclude those details which are objectionable and to view all events as under the control of Divine Providence.' Advertisement leaf.

46 *Ibid.*, 344

47 Wordsworth, *Greece*, first edition of 1839, page 196, and repeated in the many subsequent editions right through to 1882, reprinted with updates when Athens was a pleasing and thriving European city that devoted much of its effort to preserving the ancient monuments, and to presenting them as part of the philhellenic continuity narrative of the imagined community of the nation. The extraordinarily long life in print and influence of Wordsworth's *Greece*, that owed much to the technological innovations of the late 1820s and 1830s was noted in Chapter 8. If, as is possible, given his social position, Wordsworth later knew about the secret bargain discussed in Chapters 17 to 20, neither he nor the revisers of his book mentioned it.

48 Carlisle, Earl of, *Diary in Turkish and Greek Waters*, 189 and 301, the quotations from his accounts of two visits brought together for the sake of brevity.

be much quoted by visitors to the Areopagus. The classical Parthenon, he wrote, had been saved during the first half millennium after it was built in order to provide a suitable visual backdrop to Paul's speech. Although battered, the building had been providentially saved for almost two millennia after Paul's visit so that it could be denounced again by himself and other successors to Paul in the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup> Carlisle and Conybeare, we can now see, were offering a Christian variant of the 'future-has-need-of-them' story to which Edgar Quinet and others had turned to explain the lack of damage done to the monuments in the Greek Revolution.

As for the pieces of the Parthenon held and still displayed in London, although most writers and lecturers in the nineteenth century presented them as 'works of art' in accordance with western romantic aesthetics, we find books intended for children that claim that they 'confirm the Truth of Scripture History.'<sup>50</sup> The Parthenon frieze, which at the time was commonly thought to show a ceremony involving the handing over of a piece of cloth, was said by some visitors to have been the inspiration of similar ceremonies among the Roman Catholics, which the children of English Christians were also taught to condemn as 'superstitious.'<sup>51</sup> To F.G. Jannaway, the only interest of the slabs of the Parthenon frieze in London was that they had been gazed at by Paul as examples of 'a city wholly given to idolatry', and that had 'caused his spirit to stir within

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49 'And it can hardly be deemed profane, if we trace to the same Divine Providence the preservation of the very imagery which surrounded the speaker—not only the sea, and the mountains, and the sky, which change not with the decay of nations—but even the very temples, which remain, after wars and revolutions, on their ancient pedestals in astonishing perfection. We are thus provided with a poetic and yet a truthful commentary on the words that were spoken once for all at Athens; and Art and Nature have been commissioned from above to enframe the portrait of that Apostle, who stands forever on the Areopagus as the teacher of the Gentiles.' Morris, 819, quoting Conybeare, *Life and Letters of St Paul*, 296. A similar point was made by others without the providentialism. For example; 'One can realize here, as nowhere else, the obstacles which lay in the way of the triumph of Christianity over the old faiths of the Pagan world.' Gray, 12. My suggestion that the temple was deliberately designed and over-engineered in the hope that it would be able to carry its visual rhetoric into the future 'for ever' is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

50 Preface initialed E.W.P. in *Pleasant Mornings at the British Museum* By the author of "Business and Pleasure," etc. (E.W.P.) (London: Religious Tract Society, [n.d.], [1856]).

51 *Ibid.* My discussion of what is presented on the frieze, including especially the central scene with the cloth, is in *The Classical Parthenon*.

him.<sup>52</sup> Many thousands of children of members of the English official church were told that to Paul, the monuments of Athens were ‘symbols, unutterably hateful, of a dark and evil power [...] a living all-pervading, all corrupting idolatry’.<sup>53</sup>

As with the admiring visitors to the Parthenon, so too with the anti-Parthenon visitors to the Areopagus, the viewer’s body was invoked as proof of the genuineness of the moment of rapture.<sup>54</sup> Defying western constructions of masculinity, grown men openly wept.<sup>55</sup> A French abbé, importing a practice from his Roman Catholic religion, kissed the ground.<sup>56</sup> An American churchman, who had memorized the passage from the Acts in order to re-perform Paul’s speech without having to hold a book, found that his ‘heart was too deeply stirred for utterance’.<sup>57</sup> Others claimed to be so deeply moved that they were no longer masters of their own opinions.<sup>58</sup> As with other cultures of display and performance, including the ancient, it is of course impossible to separate the genuine from the conventional, or know how far genuineness was internalized as well as demonstrated.

With scarcely an exception, the visitors wrote of the physicality of touching the sixteen steps with their own feet. Typical was the wish of James Hunter and his party ‘to tread that sacred soil, to place our foot in the steps of Paul.’<sup>59</sup> James Foster Young wrote of the exhilaration he

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52 Jannaway, F.G., *The British Museum with Bible in Hand, being An interesting and intelligent survey of all the exhibits on view at the British Museum which confirm the absolute accuracy of the Holy Scriptures* London: Maran-atha Press, [n.d.], c.1921), 17. Jannaway a leader of the Christadelphians, was an indefatigable campaigner for Zionist settlement of Palestine that he presented not only as prophesized in the biblical texts but as providentially favoured by the Christian god.

53 Green, Rev. Samuel. G., D.D., Editor, *Pictures from Bible lands: drawn with pen and pencil, The Illustrations by Edward Whymper and other artists; principally from photographs. New edition revised* (London: The Religious Tract Society, c.1891), 186. The illustration of the Parthenon is from a photograph made by James Robertson before 1855. The book was frequently given as a school prize. As other example: ‘evidences of gross spiritual darkness’ Leathes, Rev. Professor Stanley, M.A., King’s College, London, *The Cities Visited by St Paul* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1873), 71.

54 The rhetoric of rapture is discussed in Chapter 6.

55 For example Hott, James W., D.D., *Journeyings in The Old World* (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1884), 221, ‘I wept as a child.’

56 Berry, 52. The role of mutual display in festivals and processions as a form of community-building in classical Athens is discussed in Chapter 24.

57 McGarvey, 604.

58 For example, L., l’Abbé, *Voyage en Orient* (Limoges: Barbou, 1844), 36.

59 Hunter, James, 23.

felt at being able to stand 'on the same rough-hewn steps from which St. Paul addressed the men of Athens.<sup>60</sup> 'For once in my life, I have trodden in the footsteps of St. Paul', wrote Sarah Haight of New York.<sup>61</sup> 'I stood upon this rock, which the apostle's feet had pressed', wrote the American churchman Benjamin Dorr.<sup>62</sup> And, although we can be confident that most accounts of these experiences were composed later, in a hotel or a cruise-ship cabin, some claimed the immediacy of having written down their accounts on the spot. The Rev. D.L. Miller assured his readers that he was not only 'standing on the very ground', but that he was 'using a stone for a desk'.<sup>63</sup> In these ways, the visitors hoped to persuade their readers that nothing had been lost in the translation of their own real experience into words to be read by others. In accordance with the rhetorics of romanticism, they too wished to cut out the mediating middleman, even when they were inescapably forced to play that role themselves.

### The Areopagus as a New Place of Pilgrimage

To judge by the sheer numbers of visitors from overseas who are recorded as having taken part in ceremonies on the Areopagus, by the vast amount of printed writings and visual images that they produced and disseminated, by the special tours that they organized, and by the lectures and sermons that they delivered and listened to, those who looked at the Parthenon through hostile eyes were at least as numerous as the admirers. By the end the nineteenth century, the visitors to Athens from the west could be divided, in the words of Ellen Bosanquet, into 'those who follow the footsteps of Paul and those who follow the footsteps of Pausanias'.<sup>64</sup> Soon the foreign interest produced a local response: fruit and drinks for sale, a rank of horse-drawn taxi carriages

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60 Young, 29.

61 Haight, *Over the Ocean*, 113.

62 Dorr, Benjamin, 357. Other examples include: 'But more subdued and holier feelings [than those aroused by looking at the Acropolis] possessed my heart, when I planted my feet on the rocky summit of Mars' Hill, and heard the echo of that voice that once there proclaimed to the superstitious Athenians ...' in York, Sarah Emily, 263. He was on the hill 'made sacred by the feet of the apostle', in Rev. J.W. Garvey, a professor of sacred history from Kentucky, McGarvey, 607.

63 Miller, D.L., 165, 164.

64 Bosanquet, *Days in Attica*, 114.

for hire, guides, postcards, and boys standing by to help visitors to climb the slippery steps.

Some visitors who searched without success for the 'altar to the unknown god' mentioned in the Acts blamed the incompetence of the local guides, one of many examples of western visitors assuming that nothing much had happened between their own time and that of the ancients.<sup>65</sup> But, by the later nineteenth century, some local guides had picked out a ruin near Monasteraki to which the visitors were led.<sup>66</sup> The story that the Parthenon had been dedicated by the early Christians to the 'unknown god', whose historicity had been exploded since the time of Spon's dispute with Guillet, was however occasionally repeated.<sup>67</sup> And just as the early Christians had gradually Christianized the landscape, so too their modern successors did the same.<sup>68</sup> As was noted by the Rev. John Hartley in his vivid account of Greece immediately after the Revolution, his first sight of Parnassus, in ancient times the abode of the ancient Muses, left him cold, and he looked with indifference on their other haunts on Helicon and Cithaeron. But then he remembered that 'the eye of St Paul had once rested upon' Parnassus and that 'he could hold a species of distant communication with him by means of this classical mountain'.<sup>69</sup>

A proposal to build an American 'Mars' Hill College' on the hill itself proved impossible to realize, but several colleges of that name were established in the United States.<sup>70</sup> And those who reviled the Parthenon also followed the practice of those who loved it by taking home pieces of the stone. Talmage, for example, was permitted to cut a slab from the grey marble of the Areopagus so that it could be built into a memorial wall of his church in Brooklyn, New York.<sup>71</sup> John Gadsby carried a hammer to break off pieces to take away, and before long he

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65 For example Godbey searched for the altar on three visits to Athens. Godbey *Around the World*, 62.

66 Miller, D.L., 163.

67 For example by Léon Gingras, a priest of the Roman Catholic religion, from Canada. Gingras, Léon, *L'Orient: ou, Voyage en Égypte, en Arabie, en Terre-Sainte, en Turquie et en Grèce* (Quebec: Fréchette, 1847), 493.

68 As discussed in Chapter 6.

69 Hartley, pp. 4–5.

70 Larrabee, *Hellas Observed*, 195, 198–99.

71 Talmage, 279. The building in New York no longer exists although there are photographs.

had established a business selling biblical souvenirs, including olive leaves from Sinai and sand from 'that great and terrible wilderness', all advertised by Gadsby as available at modest prices, as being genuine, and sent without postal charge from his London address, besides pictures of the places themselves that were suitable for framing and hanging on the walls of churches, schoolrooms, and homes.<sup>72</sup> In Mark Twain's first book, he described how he and a few companions travelling with a party of Quakers, who conducted a learned debate on Mars' Hill, left the ship at night, stole large quantities of grapes from the fields, climbed into the Acropolis when it was closed after failing to break down the gate, bribed the guards when they were caught, and took away 'some holy rocks from Mars Hill'.<sup>73</sup> When the ship sailed, every pilgrim was given a pebble allegedly from Mars' Hill, but actually collected in advance from elsewhere before the ship reached Athens.

Other visitors wrote poems on the spot to be printed and distributed when they returned home.<sup>74</sup> Pliny Earle sent flowers that he had plucked on Mars' Hill to 'the literary ladies of America, Miss H.F. Gould, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. S.J. Hale, Mrs. Amelia Welby of Kentucky, and others, who acknowledged the graceful attention in pleasant notes and sometimes in poems.'<sup>75</sup>

The men and women of Mars' Hill were not a fringe group. On the contrary, they were representative of a section of the most highly educated and privileged classes of the western world. Of the anglophones, many held high ecclesiastical office, as bishops (and at least one became an archbishop), deans, archdeacons, prebendaries, and canons. The title pages of their books bristle with conferred honours and university degrees, such as D.D. ['Doctor of Divinity'] and LL.B ['Doctor of Civil Law'].<sup>76</sup> Although some might now be regarded as

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72 For example: 'Having, with the aid of a hammer, helped myself to a piece of the rock, which I still have by me.' Gadsby, *Wanderings*, 74. The advertisements, with prices, are printed in later impressions of *My Wanderings*.

73 Twain, *Innocents Abroad*, 352.

74 For example, Miller, Joseph William, *Mars Hill: and other poems* (Philadelphia: Collins, Printer, 1879).

75 [Earle] Sanborn, F.B., ed., *Memoirs of Pliny Earle, M.D.: with extracts from his diary and letters (1830-1892) and selections from his professional writings (1839-1891)* (Boston: Damrell & Upham, 1898), 128.

76 Rev. Dr. Talmage D.D., one of five brothers with D.Ds, noted that Paul was 'a man without any ecclesiastical title, neither a D.D., nor even a reverend.' *From the Pyramids to the Acropolis*, 280.

fundamentalist in their literalist reading of the seventeenth-century English translation of the Bible, in their time they were the mainstream with many regarded as the intellectual leaders.<sup>77</sup> And besides the books written by churchmen, we have personal accounts by a wide range of others, including a British duke, a British marquis with a particular interest in Byzantine ecclesiology who was one of the richest men in the world, and a British judge who was also a Member of Parliament. Some visitors were eminent in both theology and in science. Henry Stebbing, for example, was D.D. and F.R.S (Fellow of the Royal Society of London).<sup>78</sup> The American medical doctor John Howell introduced himself as the personal friend of former President Theodore Roosevelt, to whom he said he would report on his visit immediately on his return to New York.<sup>79</sup>

On the title pages of their books, many visitors defined themselves by their religious affiliation ('a Baptist Abroad').<sup>80</sup> Other Americans emphasized their skin colour ('*A Colored Man Round the World. By a Quadroon*') presented as the main constituent of their identity.<sup>81</sup> Some authors claimed a special authority from seeing the monuments 'through a woman's eyes'.<sup>82</sup> The visitors from North America, who

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77 Some of the debates are discussed in relation to other ancient sites apart from Athens by Gange, David and Ledger-Lomas, Michael, eds, *Cities of God: The Bible and Archaeology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), although the editors are inclined to exaggerate the extent to which the debates were conducted by British 'Protestants' and 'Evangelicals' rather than, as this chapter shows, by mainstream members and leaders of the whole spectrum of churches and educated opinion in the western tradition.

78 Stebbing, Henry, *The Christian in Palestine; or, Scenes of Sacred History, historical and descriptive. By Henry Stebbing, D.D. F.R.S. Illustrated from sketches taken on the spot, by W. H. Bartlett* (London, Paris and New York: Virtue, [n.d.], 1847). Although Stebbing writes confidently about the religious emotions that a visitor should feel, he relies on the accounts of others, and on the picture made by Bartlett, and he appears not to have himself visited the lands about which he writes.

79 Howell, 61.

80 Whittle.

81 For example Whittle, W. Andrew, Rev., *A Baptist abroad: or, Travels and adventures in Europe and all Bible lands* (New York: Hill, 1890).

82 For example: Clark, Rev. Francis E., D.D., President of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, and Clark, Mrs Harriet E., *Our Journey around the World, An illustrated record of a year's travel of forty thousand miles through India, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Turkey, Italy, France, Spain, etc. With Glimpses of Life in Far Off Lands As Seen Through a Woman's Eyes, Superbly Illustrated with ... upwards of two hundred choice engravings, mainly from instantaneous photographs taken from life ...* (Hartford: Worthington, sold only by subscription, 1895).

included many from the mid-western states, were mostly members of the Protestant churches that their families had, in the past, brought with them from the British Isles, from northern Germany, and from the Nordic countries.<sup>83</sup>

Some churchmen who could not have afforded the trip on their normal salaries were financed by their parishioners, or by a patron, often with the specific aim of bringing back news of their experiences. Some, partly as a result, devoted much effort to disseminating their accounts, as ways of discharging the bargain, but also of binding together their own communities and attracting new recruits. The visitors also exploited the new media of the age. Talmage's sermons, delivered orally to thousands in 'tabernacles', for example, as a technology of display and performance, reached even larger numbers when translated into technologies of inscription, words and pictures, through newspaper syndication. One of Gadsby's long works was reprinted from stereotype plates over several decades, with cumulative print runs of at least 26,000 copies, around fifty times more than those of most learned monographs about the ancient monuments.<sup>84</sup>

Some visitors drafted their books in the form of letters so that they could be read aloud from the pulpit week by week, enabling the stay-at-homes to participate by proxy, often at pre-set intervals.<sup>85</sup> Others prepared what were in effect visual virtual tours of sites associated with early Christianity, linking each place with a photograph. Around 1900, for example, the Bible Educational Society, an American mid-western group, obtained four hundred and forty-eight photographs, including some of the Areopagus, to be shown to pupils at the rate of fifty a month.<sup>86</sup> *Bible lands illustrated. A complete handbook of the antiquities and modern life of all the sacred countries, by the Rev. Henry C. Fish D.D.*, included 'six hundred engravings and maps, one thousand elucidated scripture texts, and two thousand indexed subjects'.<sup>87</sup> By these means, news of the ceremonies performed on Mars' Hill were taken to innumerable stay-

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83 A few books were published in the American mid-west in non-English languages, for example Dyrness, C.T., *Fra Bibelens Lande* (Chicago: Utgiverens Forlag, 1930).

84 Gadsby, *My Wanderings*, title page of a copy in the author's collection, dated 1894.

85 For example the English country parson the Rev. Samuel Smith who included 'from the pulpit' in his title.

86 For example, Turk and Vincent.

87 Fish, title page.



at-homes. The written accounts were often then summarized in books written by Christian scholars and theologians of the time, and their ideas carried back to Athens to influence the ways of seeing there in a self-reinforcing feedback circuit.<sup>88</sup>

Among the visitors from France and Italy, most were members of the Roman Catholic religion, and the title pages of their books also claim ecclesiastical authority for their authors, for example as RP ('reverend father'), abbé, don, and other ranks in the hierarchies of their priesthoods. Compared with the anglophones, they were latecomers. As late as 1839, for example, Jean-Baptiste Morot, on a Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem, described his visit to the Areopagus without mentioning the association with Paul.<sup>89</sup> The Roman Catholics too wrote primarily for their co-religionists at home and, like some of the others, what they wrote was sometimes so predictable that their books could have been written without leaving the library. Although living in reasonably open societies, they had willingly subordinated their critical faculties, at least in what made its way into print, to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. When, for example, in 1899 a party of five French abbés visited the sites of Athens, including the Areopagus, accompanied by five guides, and their account of their experiences, officially approved as 'edifying' by their episcopal superior, was published by the Roman Catholic bookshop at Lyon, modern readers could not have expected to find, nor did they receive, any thoughts at variance with the mainstream propositions of their religion as taught by the hierarchies at the time.<sup>90</sup> The abbés of Lyon evidently knew little, if anything, of Jacob Spon, proud fellow-citizen, nor of the *scientia* he had championed and for which he had suffered two centuries before. Some Roman Catholics hoped that members of the Orthodox Church could be persuaded to change their allegiance, but they were no more successful than the other Christian denominations.<sup>91</sup>

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88 Notably the works by Conybeare and Farrar.

89 'Il ne reste de l'Aréopage, sanctuaire de la justice, que deux escaliers parallèles situés sur une légère éminence.' Morot, Jean-Baptiste, *Journal De Voyage: Paris a Jérusalem, 1839 Et 1840* (Paris: J. Claye, second edition, 1873), 50.

90 Their visit is related by Castanier.

91 Noted by, for example, Mandat-Grancey, 55. Like many prominent Frenchmen at the end of the nineteenth century who visited and wrote about Greece, Edmond, Baron de Mandat-Grancey, sometimes known as 'the good', favoured the policies of the movement known as Action française, that wanted to reverse the achievements of the French Revolution in favour of a collection of proto-fascist authoritarian ideas.

But by the end of the century, the parties of Roman Catholic pilgrims, mostly churchmen, had caught up and now included the Areopagus among the Christian sights.<sup>92</sup>

Soon after Greek independence, a few western-type schools were established in Athens with American and British money that opened their doors to girls as well as boys. A huge effort was made, as one practitioner wrote, in 'educating them in Biblical knowledge, as well as in the usual useful branches of education.'<sup>93</sup> Visitors to Mars' Hill were, as a result, often accompanied by expatriate missionaries settled in Athens, co-religionists of their numerous religious denominations. The local Orthodox churchmen looked on but did not participate, and the hostility was mutual.<sup>94</sup> To the western missionaries, and to the women who accompanied them, Greece was only nominally a Christian country, its Orthodox church, like its Roman Catholic rival that had split off from it many centuries before, in the grip of 'idolatry'.<sup>95</sup> When challenged on the point, the Orthodox claimed that their practices could not be so regarded as 'idolatrous' because on the icons the human and divine figures depicted were two-dimensional and had 'flat faces' as one defender noted, a reference to the compromise of the Second Council of Nicaea of 787 CE.<sup>96</sup>

If Paul were to return to Athens, one missionary said, remembering the King James English language version of the Acts of the Apostles, he would find that 'the men of Athens' were still 'too superstitious'.<sup>97</sup> When

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92 Noted by Couronne, 258. At formal meetings of welcome by the leaders of their co-religionist, Greece was claimed as the site of the martyrdoms of St Andrew and of St Luke.

93 Allen, 62.

94 For example: 'Some of the English-speaking travelers and residents desired to hold a religious service upon Mars' Hill, which was done about 4 p.m. on Sunday. When the time came a small and select audience assembled, representing England, Scotland, five States of the Union, Canada, and seven religious denominations. Three Christian bodies were represented in the conduct of the services. Dr. Bancroft, a minister of the Congregational communion, read the Scriptures and offered prayer; the sermon was delivered by the writer; and the closing prayer was made by Mr. Mills, of the Society of Friends, President of Earlham College in Indiana. Not far away stood several priests of the Greek Church closely watching the proceedings.' Buckley, 521.

95 For example: 'Much of this [religious practice] seems to us formality and idolatry' Wenger, 128.

96 Noted by the author of *Photograms*, 86.

97 For example York, 264, Pitman, 52, 53.

leaders of the Greek church asked the missionaries to stop spreading foreign ideas that contradicted their own church's teachings, the expatriates reminded them that Paul too had been a foreigner, and, they might have added, had also been a apostate from the Jewish religion into which he had been born.<sup>98</sup> In their determination to save souls, some felt that they were losing a race against time. If the new apostles did not 'put on the sandals of alacrity', wrote an American spokesman for the missions, Satan and his demons would subvert the plans of Providence and poison the world with scepticism 'before we have got our Christian books and tracts ready'.<sup>99</sup> Because, for the most part, the authors were writing for their own constituencies, with little risk that their words would ever be read by those people about whom they wrote, we find frankness and probably sincerity. The Rev. Joel Hawes, for example, advising his congregation that missionaries were making no progress, described the Greeks as 'a vain, proud, superstitious, bigoted people; extremely jealous of the influence of foreigners, and very much under the control of a corrupt and ignorant priesthood'.<sup>100</sup>

In these texts, which mostly share a rhetoric that theism is a natural and universal human characteristic despite the fact that their own experience showed that this was not the case, we hear expressions of an imperializing attitude that came easily to the nineteenth-century west—not only an assumption that their own versions of religion were superior to those prevalent in the lands where that religion had first been invented and institutionalized, but that the others were false.<sup>101</sup> However, as was admitted by Jean Hippolyte, the Abbé de St Michon, who wrote a long report on his efforts in Athens and elsewhere, both the Roman and the Orthodox churches were confronted by a different and, in his view, even greater threat. Greece, he reported, with the coming of political independence, had experienced its own eighteenth century. As in Enlightenment Europe, the 'spirits of men were lulled by the illusions of philosophy'.<sup>102</sup> The people were no longer interested in the inter-ecclesiastical disputes of the past, but 'infidelity, which

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98 For example Pease, 644.

99 Pierson, 409.

100 Hawes, *Prosperous Journey*, 18.

101 For example 'branching ever into new lands and opening the way to new conquests.' Howson, 243.

102 Michon, 6,

distinctly denies the restoration of the world by Christianity has penetrated into all ranks of society. More to be dreaded than heresy [...] unbelief has gone so far, that it has called forth against it the zeal of the bishops and ministers of the separated communions [...] They have loudly declared that the tendency of unaided human reason is to shake off the yoke of faith, and have trembled like ourselves for that Gospel whose divine words they venerate'.<sup>103</sup> The missionaries were in favour of 'education', but only on their own counter-Enlightenment terms. As William Allen wrote in 1819 on his journey to a brief stay in Athens, before the Revolution, having seen the libraries at Odessa in the Crimea: 'we were particularly struck with the importance of a judicious selection of books. We deem the writings of Voltaire and the French philosophers, extremely dangerous in the hands of inexperienced youth, and even some of the classical authors contain sentiments, and excite ideas, calculated to favour the natural corruption of the human heart. With respect to the classics, we think that those editions only should be used, wherein care has been taken to leave out objectionable passages'.<sup>104</sup>

Whereas, to the admirers of the Parthenon, the success of the Greek Revolution marked the dawn of a new Hellenic nation with an ideology that jumped back across the Middle Ages to ancient times, to the arriving missionaries it was the opportunities to change the local religious practices that was most welcomed. As the Irish-American journalist and self-appointed modern crusader wrote of his visit to Athens in the early 1850s: 'The population is about seventeen thousand, principally degenerate Greeks'.<sup>105</sup> Like Paul, many wanted to bring about revolutionary change, an idea caught by an image from a book for children shown as Figure 22.5. As the final words declare: 'May the same doctrine which Paul preached among the ancient, be expounded to the modern Greeks and the religion of the Bible be exchanged for the heartless forms and unmeaning prayers taught them by an unenlightened priesthood'.

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103 Michon, 12. As another example, 'that tendency to unbelief or half-belief ... by which we are surrounded.' Howson, v.

104 Allen, ii, 94. Like his companion Stephen Grellet, he knew that the Areopagus was thought to be the site of Paul's speech, but he did not give it special attention.

105 Browne, J. Ross, 89.



Figure 22.5. An image of a new Christian dawn breaking over the Acropolis. Steel engraving.<sup>106</sup>

But although, partly as a result of the work of the foreign mission schools, the general literacy and educational levels in Greece soared, the western Christians had little success in ‘purifying’ the neo-Hellenes ‘from the follies, absurdities, and abominations of the Greek faith.’<sup>107</sup> A fact-finding mission sent to Athens in 1849 reported that the rapidly rising levels of education had not led to more Bible-based Christianity but to a withdrawal into purely nominal adherence to Orthodoxy ‘verging towards Infidelity’.<sup>108</sup> The ancient ruins that were now being promoted locally as symbols of nationhood and of educational and social improvement should, the mission recommended, adapting the ‘venerable monitors’ discourse of the philosophical viewers of the long

106 Frontispiece and title page of Taylor, Emily, *Historical prints, representing some of the most memorable events in the history of ancient and modern Greece, ... By the author of "Charlie's discoveries"* (London: Harvey and Darton, [n.d.], c.1840).

107 Stephens, 67.

108 Crawford, ii, 763.

eighteenth century, be regarded as warnings of what calamities were in store for the Greeks if they did not change their customs and beliefs.<sup>109</sup>

Well-financed, the missionaries of the western Christian churches, large and small, the 'knight-errants of Christianity' as another sympathizer called them in the language of the crusades, worked hard for many decades in many countries of the Ottoman and formerly Ottoman territories besides Greece. And when we read of the schools, the hospitals, and the orphanages that they established, of the slaves they redeemed, and of the illnesses and miseries that they and their families suffered, it is hard to withhold a measure of admiration for their single-mindedness. However, in terms of their main aims, they had little success, with almost no converts, whether from amongst the Orthodox Christians, the Muslims, the Jews, or from other communities.<sup>110</sup> The peoples they attempted to change remained, in their terms, 'unsaved'. It was a result so disappointingly different from the success in Africa and some other parts of the world, that as one report noted, with a hint of the sin of despair: 'The human heart is every where essentially the same; and never is it more violent in its hostility to the truth, than when that truth disturbs its repose behind the mass of superstition and folly, which constitutes the remains of the ancient Christian churches in the eastern world'.<sup>111</sup>

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109 'May not the ancient monuments found standing in the midst of such localities, justly be considered as splendid beacons, warning the present and all future generations of the awful calamities that inevitably follow the worship of any gods but the Triune God of salvation, revealed in the Holy Scriptures.' Crawford, ii, 767. For the philosophical viewer and 'venerable monitors' see Chapter 13.

110 Noted by, for example, Madden, ii, 234, from whose book the phrase is taken. Among those who sent money for the Rev. Hill's school was Lady Byron. 'Lady Byron has just sent us one hundred pounds toward enlarging our house with this view, and we have commenced the erection of three additional dormitories with the money.' Remark attributed to Hill by Stephens, 69. An exception was Joannes Lazarides, a convert, who carried on Hartley's work in the Peloponnese, and whose journal reports conversations with local clergy that draw attention to the biblical texts that prohibit all images.

111 *Twenty Fourth Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (Boston: September 1833), 12. For the disgust of Samuel Gridley Howe at the competing denominations of Christian missionaries, which contributed to his decision to become a Unitarian, see Trent, James W. Jr., "Vulgar Appearing Little Bodies": Samuel G. Howe and American Missionaries in Greece, 1827–1830. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Atlanta, April 2014.

The leaderships of the Roman Catholic Church in the west also sent missions aimed at bringing, or as they would say, bringing back, the Orthodox Church of Greece as an institution within its own ecclesiastical jurisdiction, seeing it and its Ottoman-era and Byzantine predecessor as 'schismatic' organizations that had seceded from the original 'true' church allegedly established in Rome by Peter and Paul. Fastening on the period of time between the collapse of the ancient world and modern times, they dreamed of re-establishing the dominance that their version of Christianity had exercised over Syria and Palestine, as well as in Greece and elsewhere, during the crusading centuries. But like the missionaries of Protestant versions of Christianity, they had little success.<sup>112</sup>

Before its appropriation by the western Christians in the 1840s, the Areopagus hill was seldom pictured, apart from a few imagined reconstructions of how the ancient court might have appeared. As with the Acropolis, so with the Areopagus, however; from the time the encounter began we can dig down through the expectation-setting and iconizing images, both as a layered archaeology and as a two-way interplay of ecphrasis and counter-ecphrasis. Most engravings, by focussing on the sixteen steps, reinforced the loop between recommended ways of seeing and actual on-the-spot experiences as they were reported. Going to Mars' Hill, or looking at an engraving of Mars' Hill would, the producers of these visual images hoped, confirm viewers in the professed beliefs of their community. Since, because of the visit of Paul, Athens was regarded as situated in a 'biblical land', the Areopagus earned a place in 'The Footsteps of Jesus'<sup>113</sup> and among the 'Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee [...] and His Apostles.'<sup>114</sup>

A fuller version of the same view, which adds features, such as goats and shepherds, that emphasized the picturesque contrast between the magnificent ancient buildings and what Greece had become, is shown as Figure 22.6.

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112 St Michon, Abbé de, [Jean Hippolyte] *Narrative of a Religious Journey in the East in 1850 and 1851* (London: Bentley, 1853).

113 For example, Godbey, Bartlett, Morton.

114 Vincent.



Figure 22.6. 'Mars-hill, at Athens.' Steel engraving, designed by W.H. Bartlett, engraved by J. Couson.<sup>115</sup>

And just as classicists looked at the Greeks of their time through the lens of the ancient authors, so too the western Christians were preconditioned by their reading of their bible. When the Rev. John Hartley, already mentioned as having seen the desolation in the post-Revolution Peloponnese, saw a Greek woman carrying a bundle of straw, he immediately thought of Ruth the Gleaner. When he saw shepherds counting their sheep into a pen, he remembered that Jeremiah had described the ancient Jews as doing the same.<sup>116</sup> When the visitors saw men gathering in cafés or eagerly conversing in the streets, they were reminded of the remark of the narrator of the Acts of the Apostles, that Athenians were always chasing after something new.<sup>117</sup> The narrator of the Acts, who was repeating a piece of Athenian self-fashioning, an

<sup>115</sup> From *Footsteps*, 1847.

<sup>116</sup> Hartley, 364. Numerous examples in Yeardley, J. and M., *Eastern Customs; Illustrative of Scripture Passages; with some observations on the Character, Manners, &c of the Greeks* (London: Harvey and Darton, 1842).

<sup>117</sup> As one of many examples 'The Athenians of St. Paul's day were inquisitive and newsy, they are so still, spending much time in the cafes, either to hear or to tell some new thing.' Goddard, 148. The narrator of the Acts, who was repeating a piece of Athenian self-fashioning, an openness to new ideas, that was already common at the time when Thucydides composed the funeral oration of Pericle may not have intended the remark as a sneer, but as an explanation of why the Athenian schools agreed to give him a platform.



openness to new ideas, that was already common in classical Athens when Thucydides composed the funeral oration that he put into the mouth of Pericles, may not have intended the remark as a sneer, but as an explanation of why the Athenian schools of philosophy agreed to give a platform to Paul, one of many wandering sophists who visited Athens at the time.

And the apparent continuity of modern Athens with the descriptions and metaphors of the world described in the biblical texts could itself be fitted into another overarching worldview, providing confirmation and reinforcement. As one visitor noted, picking up an orientalizing cliché that lumped together all non-European-derived societies, and assumed that it was mainly for western viewers that Providence had laid on miracles: 'Surely it was an unerring Providence which laid the scene of man's redemption in the unchanging East'.<sup>118</sup> The Rev. Joseph Lee hoped that it would remain unchanged till the end of time, another observation that did not fit with the ambition to convert but that provided an excuse for failure.<sup>119</sup>

Like the eighteenth-century searchers after a philosophy of history, the Mars' Hill visitors liked to put themselves into a dream-like state to help them throw off the constraints of time and place, inducing themselves into semi-consciousness in order to intensify the experience. They too hoped to make the past become the present, and perhaps to receive messages from outside their own minds and memories. 'I surrender myself to meditation', wrote Archibald Black, a senior Presbyterian churchman from Edinburgh in Scotland, adopting the archaic style that had also been favoured by those who half-shut their eyes in wonderment at the buildings on the Hellenic Acropolis, 'methinks I behold St Paul on this very platform'. Black claimed that he felt 'his devotion quickened into fervour, his faith rise higher, his prayer

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118 Fawthrop, 5. Other examples. 'Manners and customs are so stationary in the East, that you are transferred by magic to the age of the apostles, the prophets, and the patriarchs.' Schaff, 14. 'Immutability is the most striking characteristic of the East from the ancient strife of Cain and Abel, to the present struggle between the Crescent and the Cross, its people remain in their habits of thought and action less changed than the countries they inhabit ...' Warburton, opening sentence of the main text of the first edition.

119 'I was greatly impressed with the striking agreement between the sacred narrative and the present features of the scene ... and it ought to be allowed to remain so till time shall be no more.' Lee, Joseph, 6.

become more earnest, his soul and spirit, so to speak sublimated and spiritualised'. Black reports too that his reveries brought on a sense of revulsion: 'The temple-crowned rock, crowded with shrines and fanes dedicated to strange gods and goddesses, ornamented with all the adornments that wealth could purchase or genius achieve — the whole designed to gratify a voluptuous, yet a religious taste'.<sup>120</sup>

Mrs George Sumner, wife of a senior English churchman, remarked that: 'it was easy by day-dreaming to re-people the beautiful old ruins' almost as if she had remembered being at a magic lantern show and hearing the commentary. In her mind's eye she saw 'worshippers crowded into the Erechtheum and the Parthenon in their long robes, amidst all the brilliancy of a splendid though corrupt ritual'.<sup>121</sup> Since her erroneous assumption that ancient religious ceremonies were conducted inside the ancient buildings—just as she herself attended religious ceremonies inside her husband's church—slipped through the editorial processes as her expensive book was prepared for publication, we may guess that her misunderstanding may have been widespread, probably even shared by her husband who had advised her on her book.

Pliny Earle, when he returned home to the United States, transported himself into a semi-conscious state by contemplating an anemone he picked on the Areopagus. He imagined Paul preaching to the philosophers of the main schools assembled there to listen to him: Aristotle, Zeno, Plato, Socrates, and even Diogenes. In his vision the philosophers are awed, immediately convinced, admit they were wrong, change their teaching, and posthumously become Christians.<sup>122</sup> The image at Figure 22.7, a composite of photograph and drawing was made for communal showing with a magic lantern in a darkened room. It catches a moment—part actual seeing, part self-induced dreaming—that Archibald Black and other visitors, as well as the visitors by proxy, were invited to conjure up in their minds as a starting point for a stream

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<sup>120</sup> Black, Archibald, 516.

<sup>121</sup> Sumner, Mrs George, *Our Holiday in the East*, edited by the Rev. George Henry Sumner, Hon. Canon of Winchester, and Rector of Old Alresford, Hants. (London: Hurst and Blackett 1881), 326. Published in large octavo format with unusually large type and woodcut engravings, and priced at fifteen shillings, around the weekly income of a skilled manual worker, this book was only likely to have been available to a small readership from the upper middle classes, including family friends.

<sup>122</sup> Earle 'Lines to a flower brought from Mars' Hill, Athens' in *Marathon*, 104–07.

of mental events that were partly chosen, partly scripted, but also partly free-floating meditation. As with many images that show the viewers within the picture, the viewers of the image are offered a range of presented, responses, including admiration and assent, indifference, and one prominent participant presented as directly facing the viewer of the picture, partly as self-reflexivity, partly as an appeal.<sup>123</sup>



Figure 22.7. Paul visualized as standing on the steps of the Areopagus. Magic lantern glass slide, c.1900.<sup>124</sup>

What we see occurring on the Areopagus during the nineteenth century is the establishment of a religious cult imported into Athens at a specific time in the 1830s, which grew rapidly to an apogee around 1905, and then tailed off in the twentieth century, but that still has some adherents.<sup>125</sup> We see a process driven by spoken, ritually performed, written, copied, and printed words, by mutual display, by visual images reproduced, iconized, and their rhetoric reinforced by words and by tokens, both individual and collective, that carried some potential

<sup>123</sup> Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

<sup>124</sup> Private collection.

<sup>125</sup> By 1931, Brentano's substantial guidebook to Athens aimed at American and European tourists, described the Areopagus and its history, including the speech by Paul, but recommended: 'TIME to visit Areiopagus [sic] 5 minutes.' [Brentano's] *Athens, How to see it, including Greece and Crete* (New York and Paris: Brentano, 1931/32), 66.

for reawakening memory. All was supported by an economic and commercial infrastructure that soon developed from a niche to a mature international industry with its own aims and interests, including a wish to protect and enhance its investments, mental, physical, economic, and rhetorical. We see a repetition in modern times, using the then modern technologies of mass communication, of how in the early Christian centuries and almost certainly in antiquity too, sites were sacralized and endowed with stories that emphasized their difference from the stories of previous regimes, and how they were then used to help sacralize other sites far away in colonizing hops.

We have a historical example, richly documentable with contemporaneous evidence to a degree of detail seldom encountered in history, of how clusters of real communities, whose members knew one another by sight and personal acquaintance, were formed and then held together as geographically widely separated imagined communities. Within their memberships and practitioners, any question of whether sincerity could be separated from performance was not only impossible to answer but, for the most part, scarcely worth asking.

When we put all this writing and picturing together, we have a vast corpus of books, articles, and images created by men and women from many western countries, with different languages, and from different backgrounds, who were conscious that they would never visit Athens again, and who, in their first, and often their only, venture into authorship or picture-making, tried to record their experiences, thoughts, and meditations for others, including but not confined to co-religionists, family, and friends at home. We therefore know an astonishingly large amount about the attitudes of mind that were professed by an extraordinarily wide range of men, women, and young people who were temporarily thrown together, often for months on end, including scholars, archaeologists, businessmen, university professors and lecturers, students, tour guides, and young women who scarcely bothered to conceal that they hoped to find suitable husbands, as well as many churchmen and their family members. We also have full and detailed reports of the conversations that took place on board ship and at other places on the tours, a corpus of texts, both verbal and visual, in which the cultural producers were not separated from the consumers but which record what was co-produced, co-consumed, co-performed, and co-debated within a set of mental conventions that were broadly

shared. Now mostly forgotten, the men and women of Mars' Hill deserve to be accorded their place without condescension in the long history of looking at the Parthenon. Because of the sheer quantity, variety, and social reach of the primary records that they composed, we are also given a privileged seat at a debate where we can silently listen to the contemporary voices in one of the most far-reaching intellectual shifts of the nineteenth century.

## Christian Providentialism and the Ancient Monuments

When the Areopagus first became a place of western pilgrimage, ritual, and practice, most members of the constituency assumed that modern archaeology would confirm the historical reliability of the accounts given in their Bible, just as scholarly and archaeological work since the 1670s had tended to confirm the accounts of events given by the ancient Hellenic historians. To the testimony of their Bible, many visitors thought, would now be added the testimony of the spade.<sup>126</sup> The physical remains still visible on the ground, either recently or soon to be dug up, would be a 'Fifth Gospel'.<sup>127</sup> It was the same phrase that, in earlier centuries,

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126 For example, Burnfield, Rev. George, M.A., B.D., Ex-examiner in Oriental Languages and Literature in the University of Toronto, *Voices from the Orient; or, The Testimony of the Monuments, of the recent historical and topographical discoveries: and of the customs and traditions of the people in the Orient to the veracity of the sacred record* (Toronto: Blackett, 1884); Morris, Herbert W., D.D., Author of "Science and the Bible: or, The Work Days of God," 'Present conflict of Science with the Christian Religion,' etc., *Testimony of the ages; or, Confirmations of the Scriptures, from modern science and recent discoveries; ancient records and monuments; the ruins of cities and relics of tombs; The Greek and Latin Classics; Assyrian Inscriptions and Egyptian Hieroglyphics; Antique Sculptures, Coins, Gems and Medals; The Ordnance Survey of Sinai; The Late Exploration of Palestine; The Literal Fulfillment of Prophecies, as Attested by the Writings of Heathen Nations; etc., etc.: EVIDENCES Which the PLAIN READER can understand, which the SCHOLAR will appreciate, and which the SKEPTIC cannot refute* (Philadelphia: Bradley, 1883); 'De Hass, Frank S., D.D., *Buried cities recovered, or, Explorations in Bible lands, giving the results of recent researches in the Orient, and recovery of many places in sacred and profane history long considered lost. With appendix* (Philadelphia, Bradley, 5th edition 1884). 'Much has been brought to light in the past fifty years to confirm the Divine Word.' Lee, Joseph, 6. A modern discussion of the relationship between the historical veracity and credibility of the texts included in the Christian bibles and the findings of archaeology is offered by Whitlam, Keith, in 'The Archaeological study of the Bible' in *New Cambridge History of the Bible* vol 4, pp. 139–48.

127 Hartshorn and Klopsch, 14. Travelling to the places 'gives us, if not a Fifth Gospel, certainly a setting of the four we have, in newer and more clearly cut type.' Hardy, Rev. E.J., 15. That modern Palestine was itself a 'fifth gospel' was suggested by Schaff, 14.

had been applied to the writings attributed to Dionysios the Areopagite, long (wrongly) thought to have been the work of the Dionysios who is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles as one of Paul's first converts, and a set of texts that therefore carried near-biblical authority.<sup>128</sup>

The discovering of new information by archaeology was itself, many claimed, part of an unfolding Christian providentialism. Typical was the remark of Daniel Kauffman, an American Mennonite: 'That God has preserved many of these ancient landmarks (some of them hidden away for centuries) to serve as a living testimony to the truths of the Bible, is strikingly evident'.<sup>129</sup> Or, as was noted in his book by the English churchman, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, incidentally revealing that his method of inquiry assumed the answers: 'no opportunity has been lost of showing how these eastern lands illustrate and confirm the Bible'.<sup>130</sup> But not all were reassured. John Laird Patterson, visiting in 1849, was determined not to have his 'faith' undermined by 'philosophy'. But he admitted to being shaken by his first sight of Athens. He called his experience 'that mastery of our souls which sways them with a rod so strong and yet so gentle, that to escape it is at once beyond our power and beside our will'.<sup>131</sup> Conscious that his Christian predecessors had contributed to the destruction of ancient civilization, he wanted to be simultaneously sorry and glad: 'How I wish I could wish her greatness restored; but that is as impossible as it is to a Christian undesirable. Whatever attempts have been made in that direction, have been so plainly "philosophic"—that is in the French sense of anti-Christian,—that it seems manifest that we must look back of the times of pagan Greek intellectual sway as passed away (and happily so) for ever'.<sup>132</sup> Wide-ranging though the debate was, there were also gaps. By the time the it had assumed its main shape in the 1850s, the Muslim cemetery had been cleansed from the built memory, and, by many of those who established the cult on Mars' Hill, Muslims were presented not as enemies, but as potential candidates to be converted. To the western Christians, almost without exception,

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128 Discussed in Chapter 7.

129 Wenger, Introduction by Daniel Kauffman, v.

130 Hughes viii. 'Surely it was an unerring Providence which laid the scene of man's redemption in the unchanging East.' Fawthrop, 5.

131 Patterson, 349.

132 Patterson, 351.

the religion against which they posited themselves was that of the ancient Athenians whose monuments had not only been saved from destruction during the Revolution but were now growing in stature both physically and as objects of esteem.

And what if the long-prepared-for visit to the hill did not produce the expected rapturous renewal of belief in the historical validity of Christianity? As was admitted by the Rev. Frederick William Faber, a friend and neighbour of the English poet William Wordsworth: 'Here, as in some other very famous localities, faith and sight forego their usual offices. Sight brings doubt, and destroys faith with a very trouble on unbelief [...] I demand a sign. Those sixteen stone steps on Mars' Hill — has the sandal of the wonder-working Paul left no trace behind?'<sup>133</sup> Faber, who visited in 1841 and saw the effects of the religious cleansings of the Greek Revolution, acknowledged that he felt the onset of doubts. To him, his journey to and from Mars' Hill had been what he called a 'spiritual' exercise in interpreting what he saw as the workings of a providentialism that he believed was still unfolding and that he hoped to help along.<sup>134</sup> His book, much of which is in dialogue form, is one of the most thoughtful and learned contributions to the debates on Mars' Hill as it stood in the 1840s.

Near the hill itself can still be seen a complex of three caves, set into the rock, long known as 'The Prison of Socrates', that, like the Areopagus itself, became part of the photographic and postcard canon of famous sights in Athens that developed in the nineteenth century. It was here, so it was said, that Socrates had been imprisoned before he took the fatal hemlock, as recounted by Plato and Xenophon. At some time in the remoter past, the site had been stripped, but as nineteenth-century photographs, such as that at Figure 22.8, shows, the line of beam-holes implied instead that a substantial house of two or three stories had once stood here. The caves are cellars with a water cistern.

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133 Faber *Sights*, 409.

134 'to wander up and down the broad Continent, whose very countenance is seamed and furrowed by the lines of God's past Providences and the potent action of His already accomplished decrees, to take up here and there the links of some tremendous chain of mysterious arrangements, to gaze on the fair faces of old cities, whose character and fortunes have been distinct, peculiar, and each subserving, in this or that age, and in this or that manner, the cause of the Catholic Church of Christ.' Faber, *Sights*, 122.



Figure 22.8. 'The Prison of Socrates'. Photograph, middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>135</sup>

Of all the famous men of classical Athens, Socrates occupied a special place for western Christians, being regarded by many as a precursor to the early Christian martyrs in having gone willingly to his death.<sup>136</sup> The visitors could imagine Socrates's circle of close friends who, in the days before the sentence of death was carried out, waited for the prison doors to open and passed the day with him; and how he had been calm, almost unconcerned, and had urged them not to mourn;<sup>137</sup> and how he had apparently believed that he would meet good men in an afterlife.<sup>138</sup> Some imagined Paul himself looking at the prison and being reminded that he too, like Socrates, faced death for proposing the introduction of foreign deities and corrupting the young.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Unidentified. Private collection from Albiker.

<sup>136</sup> For example: Ashworth, 49. [Socrates] 'made to drink hemlock because 'he had dared to speak of the one true God, whom the Athenians absolutely refused to acknowledge, preferring either to remain in the darkness of ignorance, and the worship of their false deities' Demont, 23. Beldam, 316–17.

<sup>137</sup> As described in Plato's dialogue the *Phaedo* at Plat. *Phaedo* 59d. Plato was not himself present.

<sup>138</sup> Plat. *Phaedo* 63c.

<sup>139</sup> For example Baynes, 211, and Felton, *Familiar Letters*, 216: 'I thought] of Socrates, discoursing to—his weeping friends on the immortality of the soul, in the dungeon



At some point, the caves were given barred gates, making them appear more like prisons, but also changing the visitor experience. As the photograph reproduced as Figure 22.9 implies, the change enabled some to imagine themselves as locked inside, awaiting the hemlock cup.

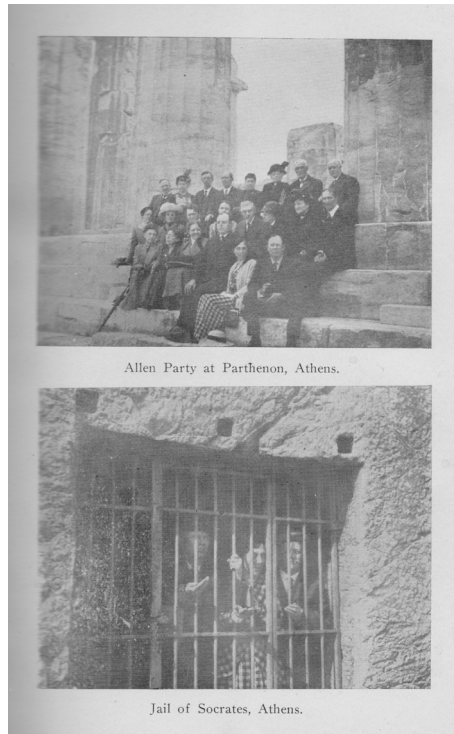


Figure 22.9. A party of American Christians visiting the Parthenon and 'The Jail of Socrates'. Photograph 1914.<sup>140</sup>

Constructing Socrates as a Christian *avant la lettre* appeared to offer a way through an old puzzle.<sup>141</sup> 'For surely the Spirit who spoke to Paul, spoke also, though less clearly to Socrates', wrote Agnes Smith in 1882.<sup>142</sup> According to Frederika Bremer, a Swedish writer, in a comment on the

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almost within a stone's throw, so near that I could see the mortises in the living rock where the beams of the wooden front were inserted.'

140 Oliver, George F., D.D., *A trip through Bible lands and Europe; a journalistic record of a tour made in the summer of 1914, just before the world-wide war* (Champaign: Loudon, 1915), 24. The 'Allen Party' was named after the tour leader, Dr. Ray Allen, of Rochester, New York.

141 Willis, *Pencilings*, ii, 143.

142 Smith, Agnes *Glimpses of Greek Life and Scenery*, 15.

Parthenon and the other ancient temples: 'Neither are they fitted for the dwelling of the Supreme God. Socrates saw this, and dug deep in order to find a better foundation'.<sup>143</sup> 'I stood in the dungeon of the man who came nearest to Christ's character in all the attributes of natural religion of any mere man who ever lived in the world', wrote John Aiton D.D., of his visit in 1851.<sup>144</sup> A visitor from Brazil conjured up a vision of Socrates as the 'Christ of paganism'.<sup>145</sup>

In the Mars' Hill debates, we can also see the continuation of old attempts to amalgamate the history of the ancient Jews with that of the ancient Greeks that had been attempted by Isaac Newton and by many other predecessors. It was repeated, notably by John Gadsby, that the ancient Greeks were the children of Japhet, who according to the Jewish biblical book of Genesis had divided amongst themselves the 'isles of the Gentiles'.<sup>146</sup> According to this account, the Phoenicians and Canaanites who escaped the cleansing by the ancient Jews when they seized the territory where they had lived, as was recorded in the Old Testament, had fled to Greece.<sup>147</sup> The continuities of identity that Gadsby and others postulated, and that they sometimes thought they could see, were mainly of genetic race, regarded as carrying some essence across the millennia through all the contingencies of history and opportunities for mixing genes that slave-based societies provided. And however cruel and unfair that ancient Jewish biblical history proclaimed itself to be in its own texts, its stories had somehow to be squeezed into a grand unifying narrative of a benevolent Providence.

Only a few of the visitors to Mars' Hill knew that the problem of the 'good pagans' had exercised their pre-modern predecessors, the schoolmen of the western European Middle Ages, who had attempted to discern a coherence in the texts and statements of belief of what constituted the indispensable essentials of Christianity that they had inherited from late antiquity.<sup>148</sup> Since, despite much searching, it had

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143 Bremer, *Greece and the Greeks*, i, 54.

144 Aiton, 464. 'the first dawning of pure truth.' Christmas, ii, 268.

145 Je m'approchai de cette ouverture avec une profonde vénération, et assise sur une pierre isolée, je me figurais voir le Christ du paganisme. Augusta, N. Floresta Brasileira, *Trois ans en Italie suivis d'un voyage en Grèce par une brésilienne* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1864), 163.

146 Gadsby, *My Wanderings*, 59, discussing *Genesis* x, 2–50.

147 Gadsby, *My Wanderings*, 61.

148 Discussed, using the language and the discourses of that time, by Marenbon, John, *Pagans and philosophers: the problem of paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* (Princeton:

proved impossible to find any evidence that the classical Athenians could have had any substantial knowledge of the texts or customs of the ancient Jews, and since in classical Athens the birth of Jesus of Nazareth lay centuries in the future, it seemed unfair for their god to have consigned Socrates and millions more, indeed the majority of human beings who had ever lived until that time, to the torments of eternal damnation under the same rules that applied to post-Revelation voluntary disbelievers, although some churchmen had not shrunk from that conclusion.

Nor did many, at any rate in their recorded words, associate Socrates with 'l'amour socratique' the ancient Hellenic practice of young men and boys of high status becoming sexual lovers of older male teachers, as Alcibiades had been educated by Socrates, such pederasty being part of the classical Athenian education ('paideia'), at any rate within some privileged circles.<sup>149</sup> Indeed it is likely that Paul's condemnation of homoerotic practices that he said were encouraged by looking at the visual presentations of gods and mortals to be seen in Athens and elsewhere may have featured in his speech on the Areopagus as it did in his writings. It was left to John Addington Symonds, who was learned in ancient Greek literature, to note during his visit in 1873 that same-sex relationships were regarded as normal, admirable even, in classical Athens, and that it had been Paul who had been responsible, among others, for the fierce homophobia that was to become a feature of Christianity through to his own day and later.<sup>150</sup>

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Princeton UP, 2015).

149 The phrase used by Fougeret de Monbron, *Le Cosmopolite, ou, le Citoyen du Monde* (London, or perhaps Paris: at the Author's expense, 1753), 25, when he came across the custom in the Ottoman Empire in his philosophical travels. Although Fougeret did not himself visit Athens, his book was known to some who did, notably Byron, who used a quotation from the book as the expectation setting epigraph on the title page of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, A Romaunt*, 1812. The custom of pederasty as part of the approved education of privileged boys coexisted in classical Athens with measures that carried severe penalties against casual exploitation and prostitution. For example: 'He [the law-giver] forbids the teacher to open the school-room, or the gymnastic trainer the wrestling school, before sunrise, and he commands them to close the doors before sunset; for he is exceeding suspicious of their being alone with a boy, or in the dark with him.' Aeschin. 1. 9, with a verbatim extract from the law at 1. 12.

150 In the chapter 'Athens' in Symonds, John Addington, *Sketches in Italy and Greece* (London: Smith, Elder, 1874) and much expanded in Symonds, John Addington, *A Problem In Greek Ethics: Being an Inquiry Into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion, Addressed Especially to Medical Psychologists And Jurists* (London: 1901).

Modern, even liberal though many were, some of the visitors to Mars' Hill clung to other ideas that had long since been rejected in the judicial systems of most of the western countries where they lived. Like the Ottoman sultans of the *millet* era, they were not discomfited by notions of collective guilt and collective punishment, nor of living people having to carry a hereditary responsibility for the actions of long-dead ancestors. But unlike Sultan Mahmoud II and his Grand Vizier Reschid, who in 1827 had used the monuments of Athens as a lever to help put such ideas into the past, the men and women of Mars' Hill seldom questioned the precepts and explanations of their sacred texts. Frederick William Faber, for example, in considering the question of the eternal damnation of 'good pagans', accepted Paul's explanation that his god had patiently 'winked', that is, had turned a blind eye for a while, until the god had been obliged to act against 'heathen' shapes and forms in order to defeat the devil.<sup>151</sup> Later in his life, after long study and reflection, Faber concluded that since 'the church cannot err', he had to 'acknowledge and adore' the Providence that through all the massacres and miseries that he had seen with his own eyes in Greece had preserved the Orthodox Church. He was later to join a procession of English churchmen who, in their attempts to find certainty, transferred their allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. In the writings of men such as Faber and Patterson, we not only glimpse the inner struggles of individuals, but see examples of the growth of a more general realization that the answers that 'faith' had provided were not only increasingly hard to accept intellectually but were becoming morally repugnant.

The idea was carried forward by Frank W. Gunsaulus, a prominent professional Christian pastor, author, lecturer, and civic leader and philanthropist in Chicago during the later nineteenth century, who did not visit Athens but relied on scholarly debates about which he was evidently well informed. In 1891, Gunsaulus published a long poem in which he attempted to redirect the fame of Pheidias as the supreme artist and prophet of romanticism onto a Christian agenda. In his imitation of a Greek play, composed in unrhymed verse, Gunsaulus presented Pheidias in prison awaiting execution being visited by Aspasia and

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<sup>151</sup> Faber, *Sights*, 493. The 'God winking' argument is discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*.

by Socrates.<sup>152</sup> Pheidias reveals that the charges against him, of having broken the conventions against showing current political leaders and of having embezzled money, were just a pretext.<sup>153</sup> The real reason why he was beset by enemies, he declares, is that had come to realize that the ancient gods did not deserve his respect:

Nay! Greece besotted by her rabble gods,  
Fond of the Bacchic dance, and fonder still  
Or Dionysiac orgies, shameless crimes ....

In this imagining, Pheidias, at the end of his life, partly as a result of having read the works of Anaxagoras, a speculative pre-Socratic philosopher referred to by Plato, renounces his early work. His experience as a sculptor has now convinced him that Zeus was the only divinity, and one whom readers of the poem would recognize as much the same being as the Judaeo-Christian god to whom they bowed before in their own time.

Oh, I have lived and wrought and wept and prayed  
In every chisel course, in every scratch  
Left by my file's burr through those lucent hours  
My Zeus Olympian found Him human form.  
I have compressed His thunder, felt His heart.  
There is One God.

By the end of the poem, Zeus had not only become good and caring and had abandoned his Hellenic ways, but had become 'flesh and blood' and was ready to welcome his adherents to an afterlife.

During the nineteenth century, a huge scholarly effort led by German philologists, notably Eduard Norden, had attempted to show that ideas of what would later be regarded as monotheism and divine providentialism had existed in the ancient world, in a semi-secret cult, referred to as Orphism.<sup>154</sup> And it is possible that Günsaulus knew of this

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152 Günsaulus, Frank W., *Phidias and other Poems* (Chicago: McClurg, 1891)

153 These attacks, as reported in ancient authors, are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

154 Norden, Eduard, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formgeschichte religiöser Rede* (Leipzig, Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1913). I am grateful to the late Professor Donald Russell, my tutor when I was an undergraduate, for drawing the existence of this book to my attention and for presenting me with his own copy as a token of our friendship.

body of work. In 2006 came a unique contribution to the understanding of Orphism with the publication of substantial fragments of a text of the fourth century BCE now known as the Derveni Papyrus, which had been found in a tomb in Macedonia in 1962 and had, most unusually, survived the damp of the soil as a result of having been scorched and carbonized.<sup>155</sup> Had the text's invocation of 'Zeus from whose mind all things are made', and its myths of origin ('aetologies'), which reached back to ages before Jesus of Nazareth, been known to those who debated on Mars' Hill, they would, we can be confident, have eagerly grasped it as a lifeline for their own theism. Other parts, such as its vivid sexual stories, would not have been so eagerly received.<sup>156</sup> The episode is a reminder of the fact that all of the classical Athenian papyrus records of the decision to build the Parthenon are lost, a systemic bias in the materials available to be brought to bear as evidence.<sup>157</sup>

For those visiting Athens and Mars' Hill by ship from the west, a visit to the excavated ruins of Pompeii was frequently part of the itinerary on either the inward or the outward leg. At Pompeii, many were sure that they saw the vengeance that their god had exacted on the people who had lived there in ancient times. It would seem, James Hunter suggested in 1927, in a book given as a prize to children at Sunday schools, that it was 'the will of God in overwhelming Pompeii to give to the world a second example of His judgement on an impure, rebellious town.'<sup>158</sup> The first warning had been Sodom and Gomorrah 'destroyed by God on account of their abominations'.<sup>159</sup> By 'rebellious', Hunter explained, since Pompeii was only a few hundred miles from Rome, by 79 CE, the year of the eruption, the Pompeians had had plenty of time to learn about and to adopt Christianity and therefore had only themselves to blame. When, in 1912, on his way to Athens and the other biblical lands, William Ford Nichols, the head of the Episcopalian church in California, soon to be the archbishop, saw the moulds of the bodies of

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155 Tsantsanoglou, K., with G.M. Parássoglou, and T. Kouremenos (editors), 2006. "The Derveni Papyrus" (Leo. S. Olschki Editore, Florence [series *Studi e testi per il "Corpus dei papiri filosofici greci e latini*, vol. 13]).

156 I paraphrase from the English translation provided by Tsantsanoglou, as part of the display of the document in the National Archaeological Museum, Thessaloniki.

157 The problem is discussed at greater length in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, with my suggested contributions to developing offsets in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

158 Hunter, 19.

159 *Ibid.*, 19.

the Pompeii victims ‘distorted and writhing in extremis’, he reported feeling ‘quickened thanks’ that the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, had not destroyed the whole of his city.<sup>160</sup> In a published account of what he had personally done during that disaster, in which three thousand people were killed and thousands more injured by falling buildings and fires, Nichols reveals himself as being mostly concerned for the fate of church buildings—he was puzzled to find that the Jewish synagogue remained standing—and he congratulated himself on remaining unshaken in his beliefs: ‘all the time with a calming subconsciousness of the good Providence of Almighty God as our “Refuge, though the earth be moved.”’<sup>161</sup>

Another high-ranking American churchman, visiting Pompeii in 1895, wrote: ‘...this ruined city which was overwhelmed by the wrath of God in a single night: its polluted streets and houses, which even now indicate depths of depravity that have seldom been witnessed in the history of the world, ruined and utterly destroyed as habitations for the living. Surely the moralist will be excused for drawing his lesson from the destruction of this comparatively modern Sodom and Gomorrah’.<sup>162</sup> Dr Buckley, a Methodist, did not believe that Pompeii was so unusual in the extent of its wickedness that it had been singled out for divine punishment. As he wrote: The voice of Him who never misinterpreted natural events may be heard saying: “I tell you, Nay.”<sup>163</sup> But Buckley had no difficulty with the doctrine of collective punishment as such. When he saw the Dead Sea, he declared that he believed ‘all that the Bible affirms concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah’.<sup>164</sup> To Wenger, another churchman, the destruction of Pompeii was ‘a strong outside proof of the authenticity of the Gospel of Christ’.<sup>165</sup> A generation earlier, William Rae Wilson, a Fellow of the (British) Society of Antiquaries, had remarked when at Pompeii: ‘how beneficial, too, even in its temporal effects, has been

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160 Nichols, 10.

161 <http://www.sfmuseum.net/1906.2/nichols.html>

162 Clark and Clark, 572. The story goes back at least to the second century Christian apologist Tertullian who mentions Pompeii along with Sodom and Gomorrah and other ruined places in *De Pallio* 2.4. In Pompeii itself a large graffito ‘sodoma gomora’, almost certainly a fake, a plant or a prank, was reportedly found scrawled 1.8 m above the floor on a wall in House IX.1.26, although it has since disappeared. (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* IV, 4976).

163 Buckley, 199.

164 *Ibid.*, 409.

165 Wenger, 119.

that Divine and Heaven-revealed Religion, to which, among its other blessings, we are indebted for the extirpation of enormities that make us shudder'.<sup>166</sup> Wilson had previously visited the site of Sodom and Gomorrah in Palestine, which he regarded as 'strikingly monumental of the tremendous wrath of God', the lifeless desert confirming the truth of the Bible story.<sup>167</sup>

Discussing the erotic objects in the Naples museum, the leader of a group from California remarked: 'Many of these are of such a character as to reveal to us the true character of the inhabitants; convincing us beyond all doubt that God has as purposely, righteously and justly destroyed the inhabitants of Pompeii as ever He did those of Sodom and Gomorrah'.<sup>168</sup> At Pompeii as in Athens, some could scarcely look at a piece of broken marble without conjuring up mental pictures of sexual orgies, as is caught by a photograph of a party from Seattle on their way to Mars' Hill and the other biblical lands reproduced as Figure 22.10.



Figure 22.10. Kate Bunting Scheuerman of Seattle, with a friend and their tour guide at Pompeii, 14 September 1908. Photograph.

They are, as they reported, hearing the 'thrilling story of sin and debauchery' and contemplating how God used the power of Vesuvius 'to wipe out the sin of Pompeii'.<sup>169</sup>

If the destruction of Pompeii was providentially ordained, the discovery of the site in the eighteenth century also had to be explained

<sup>166</sup> *Records*, 228.

<sup>167</sup> On a wall in House IX.1.26. (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* IV, 4976).

<sup>168</sup> Paine, 75.

<sup>169</sup> Scheuerman, 17 and 18.



as providential, as indeed was the logical conclusion offered by another high-ranking churchman: ‘God is now causing [the ruins] to be uncovered in order to publish to the world the cause of the city’s sudden destruction by revealing the wickedness of the private life of the Roman citizens before that awful November night more than eighteen centuries ago’.<sup>170</sup> Talmage too, in an article that was printed in numerous newspapers in the United States, suggested that Providence had arranged for the archaeological remains of Pompeii to be buried for seventeen hundred years before they were ‘fit to be uncovered’, unlike those of Sodom and Gomorrah that had been kept underground for thousands of years.<sup>171</sup> Providence, that some in the 1830s had thought was a romantic philhellene, had now become not only an Old Testament destroyer of whole communities but a Victorian-era orientalist.

It was another visitor to Mars’ Hill, the renowned geologist Sir William Dawson, C.M.G, LL.D., F.G.S, and Fellow of the Royal Society of London, who described the region of the eastern Mediterranean and its littoral that suffered most from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions as ‘the firebelt’. The Areopagus itself had been smashed by an earthquake, not just the archbishop’s palace, which had stood on the house of Dionysios the Areopagite, but the rock itself. As can be seen from the photographic image at Figure 23.11, before the planting of trees at the end of the century the destruction caused by the earthquake was exposed in all its starkness—even to the gulf into which the house of Paul’s convert, Dionysius the Areopagite, onto which the early Christian bishops had built their palace, had suddenly tumbled.<sup>172</sup> Surely it was

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170 Fout, 118.

171 A lecture given by the Rev. Dr Talmage of Brooklyn. ‘Pompeii and Its Lessons: ‘Thou hast made of a defended city a ruin’’ (Isaiah xxv, 2). ‘See in our walk today through uncovered Pompeii what sin will do for a city. ... But the greatest calamity of history came upon Pompeii not to improve its future condition, for it was completely obliterated and will never be rebuilt. It was so bad that it needed to be buried 1,700 years before even its ruins were fit to be uncovered. So Sodom and Gomorrah were filled with such turpitude that they were not only turned under, but have for thousands of years been kept under.’ *Democratic Northwest* (Napoleon, Ohio), 12 October 1893. Reprinted, perhaps by syndication, in many other newspapers, e.g. *The Middleburgh Post*, Pennsylvania, 12 October 1893, and *Highland Recorder*, 20 October 1893. Monterey, Virginia; *Essex County Herald*, Vermont, 20 October 1893, *Juniata Sentinel and Republican*, Pennsylvania, 25 October 1893; *The Abbeville Press and Banner*, 25 October 1893, South Carolina. I am grateful to Annika Bautz for finding and sharing these references.

172 A severe earthquake in 1694, whose effects were felt as far away as Sicily and Euboea, was thought to have had its epicentre at the Areopagus. [Philadelphus] *Ιστορία των Αθηνων επί Τουρκοκρατίας απο του 1400 μεχρι του 1800 υπο*

the ‘heathen’ Acropolis with its naked erotic ‘idols’ that ought to have been destroyed—not the most Christian site in Athens? It was a modern version of a question that had puzzled the ancient Hellenes, whose religions had regarded events such as earthquakes, lightning strikes, and destructive storms as messages from the gods but that showed no discernible consistency or fairness.<sup>173</sup>

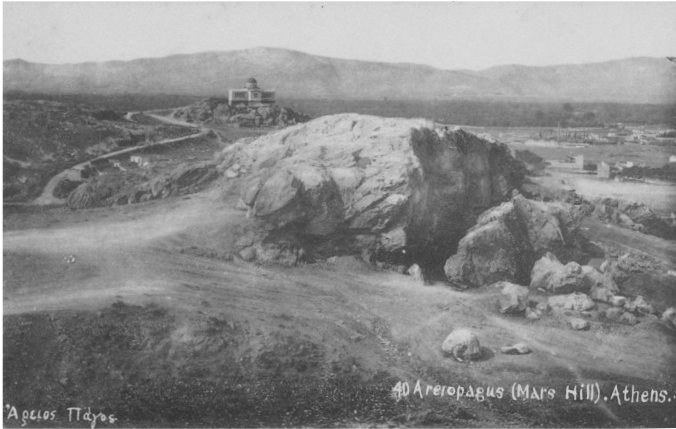


Figure 22.11. The Areopagus rock smashed by an earthquake. Postcard, with caption in English as well as in Greek, date uncertain, c.1900.<sup>174</sup>

Visible in this image, as it was to visitors during the debates if they had ever turned their backs to the Acropolis, is the Astronomical Observatory built on the nearby Hill of the Muses in 1842. It was a symbol that the newly established nation intended to participate in European modernity, including the scientific study of earthquakes. The visitors to Mars’ Hill, however, operating within a paradigm that defined itself as immune to falsifiability, felt forced to try to defend everything that they saw as reinforcement, however implausible. As a British missionary Rev. Samuel Sheridan Wilson suggested, in a version of an emerging idea that ‘heritage’ is more truthful than ‘history’, the fact that that the Areopagus hill was still there to be walked upon, despite having been struck and destroyed, ‘attests the facts of the apostolic record’.<sup>175</sup>

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Θ.Ν. Φιλadelphewos. (Athens: 1902), ii, 95. According to Philadelphewos, there were numerous earthquakes in Athens between 1650 and 1750.

173 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

174 Private collection.

175 Wilson, S.S.,197. The practice of invoking the built heritage in classical times is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

By including Athens amongst bible lands, viewers, and viewers of images, were encouraged to compare it not only with Rome (and Pompeii) to the west but with the ancient sites to the south and east. Here, too, was plentiful evidence of the divine wrath described in both the Old Testament and the New. To many, the ruination of Corinth, where Paul had lived for some years after his visit to Athens, and whose temples and statues had in ancient times been as magnificent as those of Athens, was another sign of 'a retributive Providence'.<sup>176</sup> Of the 'Seven Churches of Asia' where Christianity had begun, only Smyrna, now mainly Muslim, was prospering. The other six, such as Ephesus, once a huge city to whose Christian community Paul had written epistles, were now in ruins, populated if at all by peasants scratching an uncertain living. An example from *Landscape Illustrations of the Bible*, one of the most ambitious books of the age of steel engraving, with its references to the passages in the Bible in which it was mentioned, is given as Figure 22.12.



Figure 22.12. 'Ephesus/(Ruins of the Temple of Diana)/Eph. I. 1. Rev. II. 1. 7.'  
Steel engraving.<sup>177</sup>

176 Howe, Fisher, 27. [Corinth] 'its riches produced pride, ostentation, effeminacy, and all vices, the consequences of plenty. Lasciviousness was not only tolerated, but was in some sort consecrated there by the worship of Venus, and the public prostitution of numerous attendants devoted to her.' Ainslie, 1833 edition, printed advice to viewers of the landscape image.

177 Noted as (Drawn by J.D. Harding from a sketch by W. Page; engraved by E. Finden), in *Landscape Illustrations of the Bible* (London: Published by J. Murray, & Sold also by C. Tilt, 86 Fleet Street: London, 1834), ii, 42.

The virtual tour of 'bible lands' was designed to provide examples of 'those particularly mentioned in the prophecies, which in their present ruined and desolate condition exemplify, to the most minute particular, every thing that was foretold concerning them in the height of their prosperity. Egypt, Edom, Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, Jerusalem, and the Apocalyptic Churches, may especially be adduced in illustration of this remark; so that in these instances the fulfilment of prophecy is actually set before the eye, while the understanding is assisted and confirmed by the sight'.<sup>178</sup> Everywhere the visitors went they saw evidence of the working out of their god's prophecies, the wickedness of the ancients and the justice of his punishments. As the Rev. Thomas Milner wrote of Paul's visit to Ephesus, quoting Paul's speech on the Areopagus: 'If the apostle's "spirit" had been "stirred" within him when gazing upon the temples, groves, and statues of Athens, similar feelings of indignation and pity, we may conceive, would animate his mind, as he drew nigh to Ephesus, and beheld the beautiful architecture of Ionia employed to recommend superstitions and libertinism equally as dark and revolting'.<sup>179</sup> Nor did Christian divine punishment only occur in biblical times. To John Galt, who was in Athens shortly before the Revolution at the same time as Byron, the destruction of Athens by Alaric the Goth in the third century CE was a collective retribution on the philosophers of Athens for having failed to be convinced by Paul's speech.<sup>180</sup> It was an aspect of Christianity that was common to both its western and eastern churches. In July 1756, as a local chronicle had recorded, the tiny cathedral of Orthodox Athens ('the little metropolitan') had been struck by lightning, with the archbishop's brother among those killed. Two years earlier, almost to the day, there had been had riots against the voivode that had been punished by the Ottoman authorities with a

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178 Finden, *Landscape Illustrations of the Bible*, Introduction.

179 Milner, Rev. Thomas, *History of the seven churches of Asia; their rise, progress, and decline; with notices of the churches of Tralles, Magnesia, Colosse, Hierapolis, Lyons and Vienne; designed to show the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1833), 110. Milner depended on travel literature notably Chandler and the *Ionian Antiquities* published by the Dilettanti, but as the title of his book indicates that enabled him to add other ancient cities to the traditional seven of the New Testament Apocalypse. Discussed, with respect to British visitors and authors, with many illustrations, by Ledger-Lomas, Michael, 'Ephesus', in Gange, David and Ledger-Lomas, Michael, eds, *Cities of God: The Bible and Archaeology in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 254–284.

180 Galt *Travels*, 192.

heavy fine on the people of Athens, and it was easy to connect the two events.<sup>181</sup>

The notion of Providence helped to solve lesser historical puzzles. It could explain, for example, how Paul had come to be a citizen of Rome, and so escaped being scourged at various times on his travels, at a time when Tarsus as a city did not enjoy this privilege.<sup>182</sup> But Providence mostly operated at the level of communities rather than individuals. Antioch, one of the cities where a Christian church had first been established, had been struck six times in less than two hundred years, with the earthquake of 526 CE killing around a quarter of a million people, and the date for the retribution has evidently been chosen to coincide with the Christian Festival of the Ascension when the city was full of visitors.<sup>183</sup> Indeed anyone looking at a map of the eastern Mediterranean could see that Sir William Dawson's 'fire-belt' coincided with the lands where Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and several other religions had begun and from where they had expanded. As for the 'Holy Land', as was noted by George Waddington, one of the most travelled and most learned of the churchmen, already mentioned as having been in Athens in 1824 during the Revolution: 'It would appear to any one contemplating the present condition of Palestine, that it has been selected as a perpetual scene of the temporal retribution of Providence. In every feature of that desolate country, we read awful records of God's justice: like an afflicted and unrepentant sinner, it presents a sullen and scattered brow, expressing the eternal alliance between guilt and misery'.<sup>184</sup> To anyone attempting to reconcile on-the-ground topographical observations with Christian

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181 Philadelphus, ii, 277.

182 'We can only discern an instance of the Providence of God in permitting them [personal hereditary rights to citizenship acquired for services to the Roman imperium] to operate in the life of one who was chosen to be so marked an instrument of His Glory, so that, doubtless, in many ways his usefulness was increased and his safety guaranteed.' Leathes, Rev. Professor Stanley, M.A., King's College, London, *The Cities Visited by St Paul* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1873), 31.

183 Leathes, 41.

184 Waddington, George, *The Present Condition and Prospects of the Greek or Oriental Church, with some Letters written from the Convent of the Strophades* (London: Murray, 1829), 71. As the author of a three volume history of the Christian Church from the earliest times to the Reformation, Waddington, Rev. George, *A History of the Church from the Earliest Ages to the Reformation* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1833), he was amongst the first to use the phrase 'in the footsteps of Jesus' to describe his extensive travels.

providentialism, it would seem that the god of the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims hated all three of his largest religions, at any rate in the region of the world where they had originated. Indeed, Sir William Dawson, as a scientist of geology, did not shrink from that conclusion. Of all the Christian churches, he concluded, only the tiny Waldensians might save Italy from the divine vengeance.<sup>185</sup>

Only occasionally do we hear the voice of a resisting, as distinct from a puzzled or dubious, viewer. A.L. Koeppen, the professor of classics at Franklin and Marshall College in the United States, who had lived in Greece with one absence between 1832 and 1844, and who had seen and described the new ruins of Athens and the miseries of the people in the aftermath of the Revolution, was formally instructed by the Trustees of his college to present his lessons as showing 'the true meaning of history as the development of God in the world'. In response, Koeppen occasionally paused in the course of his lectures, to say 'the Board of Trustees wants religion in my lectures. Here is a good place to put in a little. Consider it put'.<sup>186</sup>

The debate about providentialism put the most learned at a disadvantage. They knew that, if they abandoned the Christian explanations of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions as collective punishments, they were also undermining the authority of their sacralized texts, both New and Old Testaments, in which providentialism, prophecy, and punishment were plainly set out.<sup>187</sup> As the century advanced, the visitors to the other hill, whose predecessors just two generations before had thought that their religion would find new intellectual allies in the modern sciences and in archaeology, found themselves increasingly having to rely on 'faith'. Faced with the slow but apparently relentless

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185 'The Waldensian Church of to-day is the true and uninterrupted successor of the Church of the Catacombs; and its evangelical congregations and schools, scattered over Italy and daily growing in numbers, constitute the true Italian Church, and, without detraction from other Christian missions, the best guarantee for the exemption of Italy from Divine judgment, and for its advance in true religion and Christian civilization.' Dawson, 44.

186 [Koeppen] *Professor Koeppen: the adventures of a Danish scholar in Athens and America* (Franklin and Marshall College Studies No. One) By H.M.J. Klein and Richard D. Altick (Lancaster, Pa: 1938), 26. Koeppen, who adhered to the Lutheran branch of Christianity had found himself in trouble earlier in his career when invited to lecture at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

187 For example, Exodus 19:18; Isaiah 2:19; Matthew 24: 7–8. Noted by Karamanolis, 180, in discussing the arguments deployed in early Christian apologetics.

advance of modern evidence-based knowledge, some retreated to a more general set of ideas that downplayed Christianity except as an example of a manifestation of a sense of 'the divine' that it was claimed was, in the language of the time, 'immanent in the consciousness of mankind'.<sup>188</sup> Some found support in the work of the German philologist and anthropologist Max Müller, whose work on non-Christian religious texts earned him authority. Few of the debaters of Mars' Hill, however, were attracted to such ideas. And if the argument was to move to the level of essentialist psychology, it was already obvious to many, as it had been to the contemporaries of the early Christians, that the notion that everyone is 'religious' was not only condescending but inconsistent with the observation.

John Addington Symonds, whose writings helped to promote the romantic sacralization of great art and literature, as an alternative to organized Christianity advocated a philosophy of man in nature that he suggested was already becoming mainstream ('we are all Pantheists now'), but that sounded more like a defence of ancient Hellenic thinking than a way through for Christianity.<sup>189</sup> The Duke of Argyll, a nobleman whose family ancestors may have wrestled with the literature of the philosophy of history from the eighteenth century, also thought he could 'reconcile modern science with religion and philosophy in poetic form'. How, he asked, could an educated man cope with 'the large amount of truth in the agnostic aspects of the world', among which he mentions the discoveries of Darwin, the collapse of the argument from design, and the 'newer criticism'?<sup>190</sup> Argyll thought he had answers but his preemptive cry that it was 'not to be admitted even for a moment that those relations are antagonistic' shows he was wavering. As his mention of the 'newer criticism' brings out, what was most threatening to educated Christians at the time of the Mars' hill debates was not archaeology, geology, comparative anthropology, psychology, Darwinism, Frazer's *Golden Bough*, nor the discoveries of Boucher de Perthes that human beings had existed for hundreds of thousands of years before the Flood or even the Creation on which their understanding of the deep past

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188 Quoted from Farrar's Preface to Shakspeare, ix.

189 Much of his much-reprinted book, *Sketches and Studies in Italy and Greece*, is devoted to the theme. Symonds noted that 'I have stood on the crest of Mars' Hill' among his experiences in Athens in May 1873. *Letters*, ii, 298.

190 Argyll, *Burdens* 112, and especially the discussions in the Notes.

continued to be founded. Nor was it any of the other branches of modern science and social science—but an intellectual discipline that itself owed much to the northern European tradition of biblical study, namely, the critical scrutiny of texts.<sup>191</sup>

Millions had died in the European wars of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, one of whose points at issue was the nature of the authority that Christian churches claimed for saying that their stories were true. In that struggle, the Protestant churches of the north had asserted the authority of ‘Scripture’ over the ‘tradition’ as curated by the priesthoods of the south. But what if the Bible itself had no particular authority? What if it was just a collection of texts written at different moments over a long period that had no unity or historical consistency? On whose say-so had the early leaders of Christianity decided what was true and sacred and what was not? Some moderns argued that the books of the Bible that ‘disgust the intelligent reader’ could be safely ignored, calling in aid the words of F.W. Farrar a senior English ecclesiastic: ‘Happily’, says Farrar, ‘these theological romances of Apocalyptic commentary have had their day. Like a thousand other phantoms of exegesis, they have vanished into the limbo of the obsolete. They may linger on for a time, like spectres not yet exorcised, but they are doomed to disappear forever in the broadening light of a sounder knowledge.’<sup>192</sup>

But if modern church leaders were now themselves discarding the parts of the New Testament, as well as much of the Old, that they found embarrassing, where would the unravelling stop? And who would decide? Much scholarly work had been devoted to establishing a text

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191 Although the great age of the earth as confirmed by geology was reported in the encyclopaedic book by Morris, that can be regarded as a handbook for preachers, defenders, and doubters, it made no reference to the discoveries of Boucher de Perthes, although by the time that work was compiled the discoveries had been extensively reported and confirmed by discoveries elsewhere. Whether the omission derived from lack of knowledge or from self-censorship adopted for rhetorical purposes cannot as yet be ascertained. However it is notable that this work, that purported to be comprehensive in its presentations of testimonies, also omitted to discuss Lucian’s *On the Syrian Goddess*, and Lucian’s direct reference to the putting to death of Jesus of Nazareth noted above. The visit of Boucher de Perthes to Athens is mentioned in Chapter 21.

192 Quoted by Du Hass, 377 from F.W. Farrar in Shakspeare, Charles, *St. Paul at Athens. Spiritual Christianity in relation to some aspects of modern thoughts. Nine sermons ... With a preface by ... Canon Farrar, etc* (Kegan Paul 1878).



and interpreting the lexical meaning of the words, 'the lower criticism'. But the most disturbing topic for the educated visitors to Mars' Hill was its successor, 'the higher criticism', a continuation of the approach pioneered and carried forward with great success in classical studies.<sup>193</sup> Unpicking the historicity of the Old Testament and exposing its internal contradictions had a long tradition that F.G. Jannaway attempted to reverse in his 1926 book *The British Museum with Bible in Hand, being An interesting and intelligent survey of all the exhibits on view at the British Museum which confirm the absolute accuracy of the Holy Scriptures*, of which the title itself betrays a sense of desperation.

From mid-century, those looking at the Acropolis from the Areopagus could not escape the influence of the French writer, Ernest Renan, and Renan himself spent several weeks in Athens in 1865. When in 1904, some years after Renan's death, the letters he had written about his visits to biblical lands from the 1840s to the 1860s were translated into English, the translator compared his influence to the conquests of Napoleon and Alexander, noting that, unlike theirs, the intellectual empire of Renan would go on expanding.<sup>194</sup> And it was true that, during a writing life of half a century that showed jagged development rather than consistency, nobody was better qualified than Renan to bring modern knowledge to the questions and answers being discussed on Mars' Hill.<sup>195</sup>

In exploring the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, Renan saw the monuments as texts, to be read critically and historically alongside the texts of inscriptions and other writings, as products of ancient societies and of their official religions. In Palestine, unlike in Phoenicia, Greece,

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193 Discussed notably by Sayce, Rev. A.H., *The "higher criticism" and the verdict of the monuments* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1894). For any reader who wishes to follow what was for its time a highly learned discussion, in which the British literalist readers of the biblical texts claimed victory over the German higher critics, we have an extraordinarily full account in the book by Sir William Charley, Charley, Sir William T., Knt., One of His Majesty's Counsel; D.C.L Oxon; formerly M.P. for Salford; author of "The New System of Practice and Pleading under the Judicature Acts"; "An Historical Vindication of the House of Lords; etc. etc. *The Holy City Athens and Egypt Founded on Personal Observation and the Researches of Modern Explorers* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1902). The final chapter leaves two of the participants, Miss Gordon and Stanton, who seem to have been real people, although with altered names, now engaged to be married, standing hand-in-hand, 'waving adieux with their disengaged hands.'

194 *Renan's letters from the Holy Land; the correspondence of Ernest Renan with M. Berthelot while gathering material in Italy and the Orient for "The life of Jesus"; translated by Lorenzo o'Rourke* (New York: Doubleday, 1904), Preface.

195 Discussed specifically by, for example Portmans, 338.

and most of the ancient Greco-Roman world, he noted that the ancient monuments were 'few and miserable'. The ancient Jewish leaders, as was made clear in the ancient Jewish writings collected in the Old Testament, had found it a constant struggle to prevent their people from adopting the plastic arts, with frequent examples of 'idolatry' suppressed with violence. To Renan, Palestine revealed 'the ancient theocratic spirit in all its brutal simplicity'.<sup>196</sup> And knowing from his experience as well as from his reading how easily traditions can be invented, he concluded that not a single biblical tomb in Palestine 'whose identity is established by tradition alone has any serious claim to authenticity'.<sup>197</sup>

Trained in a famous Roman Catholic seminary, Renan's prodigious knowledge of the philology of Semitic languages later led to his being selected to join an expedition to collect inscriptions from ancient Phoenicia.<sup>198</sup> Although, as a philologist, he knew that language itself predisposes its speakers to ways of thinking, and, like many others of his time, he saw an opposition between Aryan Indo-Germanic and Semitic, the differences he detected he attributed to ethno-cultural conditions, not to biological race.<sup>199</sup> But although in 1855 he concluded from his study of the languages that so many cultural and historical qualifications had to be factored in that the influence of 'blood' on character was mostly negated, many preferred to take the earlier alternative of essential racism.<sup>200</sup>

In 1863 Renan published his *Vie de Jésus* ('Life of Jesus') a retelling of the biblical narratives but with the theism removed. In its first five months, 60,000 copies were sold and, as recent studies on the numerous letters Renan received from members of the public have shown, the book transformed many lives.<sup>201</sup> There may have been many like Armand Heurtel who told Renan in a fan letter that he felt 'profoundly religious',

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196 Quoted in translation by Laurens, 221, from a letter to Hippolyte Taine dated 12 March 1861.

197 Quoted by Laurens, 227, from Renan, *Mission de Phénicie* (Paris: Imprimerie Imperiale, 1864), 600.

198 Discussed by Laurens, Henry, 'Ernest Renan's Expedition to Phoenicia' in Bahrani, Zeynep and Eldem, pp. 213–31.

199 Laurens, 217.

200 Laurens, 216.

201 The profound impact of Renan's *Vie de Jésus* especially in France is discussed by Priest, Robert D., *The Gospel according to Renan: reading, writing, and religion in nineteenth-century France* (Oxford: OUP, 2015).

but could not bring himself to adhere to any religion.<sup>202</sup> In the previous year Renan had been elected a member of the Collège de France, a high honour, but when in his inaugural lecture he referred to Jesus as ‘an incomparable man’, he was dismissed from his appointment, an example both of stable-door-bolting and of the limitations on free speech in the France of that time.<sup>203</sup>

In his autobiography, *Souvenirs*, first published in 1883, Renan told how, while on his tour of the biblical lands, he had come to write his *Life of Jesus*. In the tradition of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the previous century, who had followed the example of Augustine of Hippo, the *Souvenirs* put personal sincerity above generic convention, recounting, for example the lies that Renan had himself told during his education at the seminary in order to maintain external conformity with the expectations of his teachers and peer-groups. Renan illustrated yet again that no inner life can be known to anyone but the individual concerned, and that all attempts by outsiders to deduce mental states from external behaviour, including public statements of belief, however sincerely offered, cannot be trusted to offer more than, at best, a selection of actual lived experience turned into speech acts, as much a rhetoric and a social performance as the kissing of the ground. Gods, Renan declared, repeating a thought that had occurred to many in ancient Athens, were constructions of the human mind, personifications of a sense of the transcendental. The gods lived only as long as the men and women who invented and maintained them. Gods are a potentially useful symbolic system, Renan suggested, and he himself used religious language, notably ‘miracle,’ as a metaphor, but his account was hard to rebut. When Lord Bute, already mentioned as among the most sympathetic to Orthodox Christianity, commented in a review that Renan’s critique of the ancient biblical texts was ‘all philological and critical’, he was fair, but his comment that ‘a mind of deeper thoughtfulness would have been led by this to the contemplation of the Divine Khachmoth’ is unlikely to have provided doubters with much reassurance.<sup>204</sup>

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202 Quoted by Priest, *Gospel*, 190.

203 Laurens, 221.

204 Bute, *Essays*, 322 and 304. Bute also employed the polemicist’s device of attempting to undermine the main argument by chipping away at details, to the extent of writing to senior ecclesiastics and obtaining letters in defence of individuals who

Renan's *Souvenirs* presented itself as an account of his inner development, but whereas that genre, *apologia pro vita sua*, had traditionally told a story of a conversion to Christianity, Renan's journey was in the opposite direction.<sup>205</sup> On his biblical tour Renan had visited the place on the road to Damascus where Paul had suddenly seen the light. And although Renan had long been moving towards the view that the Christian religion was founded on error, his own damascene conversion took place in 1865 when he first looked at the Acropolis of Athens. As he wrote of that moment: 'The sight of the Acropolis was like a revelation of the Divine, such as that which I experienced when, gazing down upon the valley of the Jordan from the heights of Casyoun, I first felt the living reality of the Gospel. The whole world then appeared to me barbarian'.<sup>206</sup> As he wrote in a personal letter that picked up the same Pauline metaphor, it was then that the darkness fell away: 'Oh, what a blessing that this light from another world should have come to us! And when one thinks that all this has hung by a thread! That during all these centuries the caprice of a Turkish aga might have deprived us of it!'<sup>207</sup> That moment of release, imagined as a conversation with the

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had been mildly criticised in the *Souvenirs*. For example, pp. 299–301, 316. Bute's description of the 'Golden Cave' on the Acropolis slope was noted in Chapter 17.

205 That Renan's book was in the tradition of apologetics was noted by Bute in a review, 'M. Renan's *Souvenirs*', reprinted in *Essays*, 297.

206 Ce fut à Athènes, en 1865, que j'éprouvai pour la première fois un vif sentiment de retour en arrière, un effet comme celui d'une brise fraîche, pénétrante, venant de très loin. L'impression que me fit Athènes est de beaucoup la plus forte que j'aie jamais ressentie. Il y a un lieu où la perfection existe ; il n'y en a pas deux : c'est celui-là. Je n'avais jamais rien imaginé de pareil. C'était l'idéal cristallisé en marbre pentélique qui se montrait à moi. Jusque-là, j'avais cru que la perfection n'est pas de ce monde ; une seule révélation me paraissait se rapprocher de l'absolu. Depuis longtemps, je ne croyais plus au miracle, dans le sens propre du mot ; cependant la destinée unique du peuple juif, aboutissant à Jésus et au christianisme, m'apparaissait comme quelque chose de tout à fait à part. Or voici qu'à côté du miracle juif venait se placer pour moi le miracle grec, une chose qui n'a existé qu'une fois, qui ne s'était jamais vue, qui ne se reverra plus, mais dont l'effet durera éternellement, je veux dire un type de beauté éternelle, sans nulle tache locale ou nationale. Je savais bien, avant mon voyage, que la Grèce avait créé la science, l'art, la philosophie, la civilisation ; mais l'échelle me manquait. Quand je vis l'acropole, j'eus la révélation du divin, comme je l'avais eue la première fois que je sentis vivre l'évangile, en apercevant la vallée du Jourdain des hauteurs de Casyoun. Le monde entier alors me parut barbare.

207 [Renan *Letters*] *Renan's letters from the Holy Land; the correspondence of Ernest Renan with M. Berthelot while gathering material in Italy and the Orient for "The life of Jesus"*; tr. by Lorenzo o'Rourke (New York: Doubleday, 1904), 197.

goddess Athena, was captured in visual form when the *Prayer* began to be published as a separate book, as in the example at Figure 22.13.

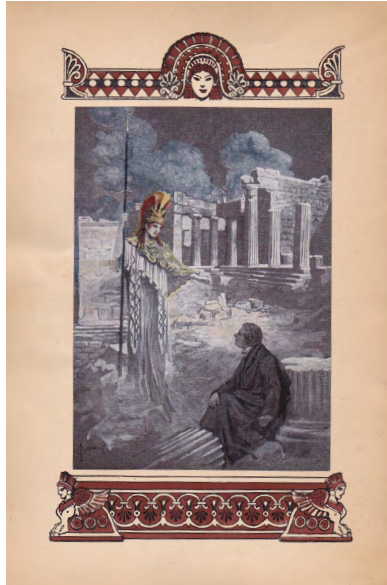


Figure 22.13. Ernest Renan, on the Acropolis in 1865, imagined as in conversation with the imagined Athena. Frontispiece by Serge de Solomko to an edition of *Prière sur l'Acropole*.<sup>208</sup>

Renan's critique was more than the patching up of a crumbling structure of belief, or the substitution of a new kind of transcendentalism, 'Beauty', for theism, although he did embrace and, to an extent, champion the claims to universalism of the western romantic aesthetic. Renan, in putting into the mouth of Thenoe, a character in the *Helen* of Euripides, the observation that priests have a personal financial interest in maintaining the public's assent, picked up for his own time one of the roles of Athenian tragedy as a forum where, because it took place in the enclosed world of myth, the normally unsayable could be said and debated.<sup>209</sup> Come and join us, Renan's books called out to the men and women on Mars' Hill. Stop tying yourself up in intellectual knots attempting to reconcile the irreconcilable. You too can feel what I felt

<sup>208</sup> Renan, Ernest, *Prière sur l'Acropole, Illustrations en couleur de Serge de Solomko* (Paris: A. Ferroud — F. Ferroud, successeur, librairie des amateurs, 1920).

<sup>209</sup> Discussed in Chapter 24.

in Athens in 1865, ‘a fresh and bracing breeze coming from afar’.<sup>210</sup> The shift from theism to atheism was not to be feared or fretted over, let alone regarded as a defeat or a retreat, but welcomed as an exhilarating liberation from the enslavement of the mind.

### The Debates on Mars’ Hill: Christianity in Flux

By 1900, after six decades of visitor growth, the Areopagus had become an unofficial outdoor church for parties of churchmen and church members, mainly from the anglophone world, who could afford the falling prices of foreign travel. Around five hundred sailed from America in a chartered German liner in 1900.<sup>211</sup> In 1904, eight hundred Americans in another German liner met with around five hundred arriving from London in their own ship. Although their predecessors had rejoiced in and boasted of the dirt, the fleas, and the bed bugs as evidence of their zeal, the new pilgrims travelled in luxury. The 1904 liner served six meals a day, and provided three German stewards for each passenger.<sup>212</sup> Since almost everyone was teetotal, the barman was bored by the lack of business.<sup>213</sup> Unlike those who sailed on board the ships that carried admirers of ancient Greece, nobody wanted to play deck sports.<sup>214</sup> ‘For once in a lifetime’, a participant in the 1904 British expedition remarked, ‘the plague of light literature disappeared’—within which category he included magazines and newspapers such as the *Illustrated London News*.<sup>215</sup> Instead, the members, of whose names and hometowns we have comprehensive lists, shared in an almost unbroken round of lectures, discussions, and group prayers, the texts of many of which are recorded in print. And the time at sea gave them opportunities to perform, to display, and to rehearse their public commitment to the counter-Parthenon ideology. We read, for example, of parties singing Cowper’s hymn ‘God moves in mysterious ways’ on board their tourist ship.

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210 Preface to *Prière*.

211 Described by Pout.

212 The meals are described by Scott, 28.

213 Scott, 29.

214 Johnson, 7.

215 Johnson, 8.

These deep blue seas in other days  
 heard hero lays and idol songs  
 but higher notes and loftier days  
 now sweep its waves from Christian tongues.<sup>216</sup>

What was probably the largest gathering of western Christians on Mars' Hill, which took place in 1904, is recorded by a photograph reproduced as Figure 22.14.



Figure 22.14. The Areopagus, 27 March 1904. A Christian service for over a thousand activists, mainly North American and British. Photograph.<sup>217</sup>

At this meeting, a large banner that had been hanging in the public state-room of the ship during the crossing, overshadowing all the sermons and debates, was unfurled on the Areopagus. It can be seen in Figure 22.15.

As the Rev. William Sampson Brooks, the leader of an African-American contingent, wrote: 'Never shall I forget the inspiration of that hour! Under the shadow of the Acropolis we sang America and the Christian Conquest banner, bearing the Cross the words "In this sign conquer," floated aloft in the azure sky'.<sup>219</sup> The banner, as the caption notes, celebrated the triumph of the Christian Church from the time when it had first become a unified organisation with political power. According to the Christian story, at the battle of the Milvian bridge at Rome, the

216 Ashworth, 5.

217 Cruise, 54. Also reproduced in Scott opposite 94. A similarly large crowd is shown in the photograph in Serette, 19.

219 Brooks, 73.



Figure 22.15. The banner raised on the Areopagus and at other sites, 1904. Photograph of the state-room of the ship bringing the North-American delegates.<sup>218</sup>

Christian god had sent the invading army a sign in the form of a cross in the sky, with the message, in Latin, 'by this sign you will conquer'. According to tradition, much repeated and frequently illustrated, the phrase was altered from a prediction to a command: 'Under this sign, go out and conquer'.

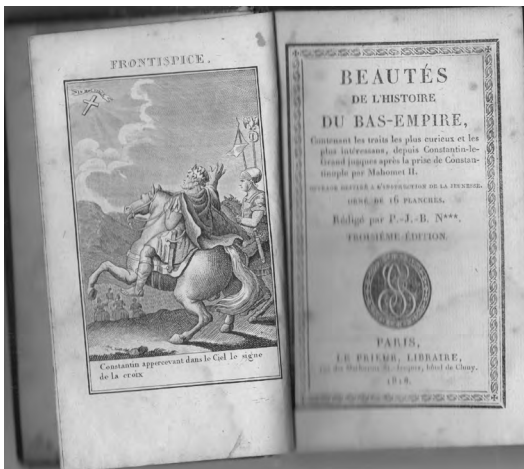


Figure 22.16. Title page and frontispiece of an educational book for French children, 1819. Copper engraving.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>218</sup> *Cruise*, opposite 25.

<sup>220</sup> Nougaret.



On the Areopagus in 1904, to those considering possible futures, an aspiration to convert the countries of the Near and Middle East to their western versions of Christianity, despite nearly a century of failure, may not have seemed beyond reach. Riding on the justificatory narratives of Christian expansionism and of imperialism, with its hierarchies of racial and national difference, and a strong sense of destinarianism, as well as on its superior military and economic power, the celebrants may have thought they were following an inexorably upward trajectory. But if, when the debate began, the new Areopagites had set out thinking that the new knowledge of archaeology and anthropology would halt and reverse the withdrawal of assent to the claims of Christianity that had begun in the west some centuries before, by the end of the century the weight of argument had changed.

In 1904, a date that can be regarded as an apogee, the organizers proclaimed that their Christianity was 'stronger today than ever before', and that it would soon 'triumph all round the world'.<sup>221</sup> But the culminating talk given by the Rev. Dr. John Potts, bishop of Toronto, identified the central question around which all the lesser questions now circled. As he declared: 'One says, "I want a gospel without miracle; I want a gospel without the supernatural". My brethren, you cannot have it'.<sup>222</sup> The same conclusion, namely that all the theological eggs were now clustered in one frail basket, had already been reached by some of the most learned and most honoured of the senior churchmen. The Rev. Professor Stanley Leathes, for example, whose appointment at King's College, London, required him to study such matters, and for which he was professionally well qualified, concluded that the whole edifice depended upon accepting that Jesus of Nazareth had literally become alive again after he had been judicially put to death. Opponents from the Epicureans and Stoics onward, Leathes wrote, had only arguments, but in Athens Paul had '*fact*' [so italicized]. 'Here' he wrote, adopting a Victorian discourse of the factual as speaking for itself, with its hint of bullying, 'was an historic fact [...] not to be questioned'.<sup>223</sup>

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221 Reported by Jennie Scott, 23.

222 Quoted by Scott, 51 and others.

223 Leathes, Rev. Professor Stanley, M.A., King's College, London, *The Cities Visited by St Paul* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1873), 74. The discourse of the unquestionable 'fact' was common at the time, deployed for example, by Robert Knox in his book on essential racial differences. See Chapter 15.

As a result of a unique conjuncture of circumstances, the records of the debates on Mars' Hill give us access to conversations among a wide range of people of the kind that were occurring all over Europe and North America and that, outside most circles, were only occasionally written down. Although those who participated were mostly from the professional and business classes of the time, they came from a wider band of the spectrum than is normally taken into account in the tidied-up *ex-post-facto* narratives in traditional histories of ideas. They are therefore a unique resource for building an understanding of the dynamics of the slow withdrawal of assent to Christianity in the nineteenth century in human terms, by providing an extraordinarily wide spectrum of contemporary sources, involving readers as well as authors, listeners as well as speakers, consumers as well as producers, and especially people who did not normally bother about such matters as well as those who spoke to them from privileged positions. And, we can see too that, although the Mars' Hill debate was extraordinarily wide-ranging, thorough, socially democratic, inclusive, and learned, almost everyone professed admiration for Paul, shared his abhorrence at certain customs and sexual practices, and accepted that his recorded words had a special authority. There were also silences, matters that it was then taboo to mention, but that demand to be discussed.

From the beginning, the visitors not only silently read the account of Paul's visit given in the Acts, but performed the opening words in the official English King James version as they were reported, apparently verbatim, by the narrator of that work. As the American travel writer John Lloyd Stephens, one of the first to record the new customs, wrote of his visit in 1835: 'We ascended this celebrated hill, and stood on the precise spot where St. Paul, pointing to the temples which rose from every section of the city and towered proudly on the Acropolis, made his celebrated address: "Ye men of Athens, I see that in all things ye are too superstitious."'224 The American preacher Talmage, who spent much time on and around the Areopagus hill, says that the Parthenon was in sight, and even that people standing on the steps of the Parthenon could have heard what Paul was saying. His misremembering, whether careless or intentional, was necessary to his agenda of presenting the

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224 Stephens, 75.

Acropolis and the Areopagus as 'in conversation', the one, in Talmage's terms, representing the past, the other the future.<sup>225</sup>

In the text of the Acts as we have it there is no suggestion that Paul's words caused any offence nor that he was put to any kind of inconvenience, let alone tried for his life, imprisoned, tortured, or forced to hide in a well as some later traditions say.<sup>226</sup> On the contrary, some members of the audience are reported to have disputed the argument and given feedback in the tradition of the dialogic practices of Plato's Academy and the other schools of which they were the successors. It seems to have been politely suggested that Paul might address them again. Nor was the Tarsus of which Paul was a citizen a small or remote provincial city whose people did not know about these intellectual traditions. On the contrary, Dio, in urging his fellow citizens of Prusa to be more ambitious, suggested in a speech delivered there around 100 CE that they should look to Smyrna, Ephesus, Tarsus, and Antioch for examples.<sup>227</sup> The geographer Strabo, who notes the enthusiasm for education displayed by Tarsus in his day, ranks the city above Athens and Alexandria, a 'new Athens' in that respect, but he adds that Tarsus did not attract foreign scholars to the extent of its two larger rivals.<sup>228</sup> Indeed it may have been at least partly because Paul was from Tarsus, a rising rival, rather than for the substance of what he was reported as saying in the synagogue and the Agora, that the invitation to address the two schools was made.

During the nineteenth century, as has already been noticed, many western Christian churchmen, and others who followed the tradition as it then stood, admired and repeated what they saw as Paul's aggressive and belligerent tone. The Franciscan Padre Paulo, a familiar figure in Athens for many years before the Greek Revolution, was known for repeating the insulting Latin words.<sup>229</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, however, there were scholars who thought it unlikely that Paul could

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225 Talmage, 334. For a comment on 'in conversation with' a phrase used in defence of pick-and-mix exhibitions of 'works of art', see Chapter 25.

226 The local traditions will be discussed, with references to the primary evidence, in the forthcoming volume.

227 Dio, *Fortieth Discourse*, 11.

228 Strabo 14.5.13.

229 'Paulus autem quum Athenis eos expectaret, incitabatur spiritus eius in ipso, videns idololatriae deditam civitatem' quoted by the traveller Marcellus, ii, 363.

have been so gross in his manners as the tradition implied and looked more carefully at the Greek text and especially at the key word that can be transliterated as 'deisidaimonesteroi'. It is a word that in its comparative form, used as an intensifier, as here, occurs in only one other place in the whole corpus of surviving ancient Greek writings. And that very rarity may be evidence that the word was actually used by Paul and was remembered as having been used, and that, as a result, it made its way across the transfer from the remembered oral to the fixed written. Even in its normal forms, the word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. According to scholars of ancient and of New Testament Greek who have collected numerous instances, the word, a compound of 'deisi-' meaning fear, and 'daimon', was used in ancient Hellas in both a commending and a condemning sense, to mean either 'reverencing god or the gods, pious, religious' or antagonistically, 'superstitious'.<sup>230</sup> An official inscription of Ephesus of c.39 BCE uses the noun 'deisidaimonia' to refer to a sacralized enclosure, evidently using the word in a positive Hellenic sense.<sup>231</sup> In 1881, and again in the twentieth century, as a result of these critiques of the philology, the official translation used by the Church of England was revised so as to avoid the element of insult.<sup>232</sup> The 'Revised Standard Version', for example, offers: 'So Paul, standing in the middle of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious."'

For invited speakers, such as Paul, a compliment to Athens and its reputation was expected. A bow in the direction of the public self-fashioning discourse of Athens as a god-fearing city would show that the speaker knew the conventions of the great Attic masters.<sup>233</sup> Polemo of

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230 Definitions from *The KJV New Testament Greek Lexicon*, and from Dawson, John, *A Greek -English Dictionary of the New Testament: Translated from the Greek-Latin Lexicon* (London: Rivington and others, 1831). The 1929 book by Peter John Koets, *Δεισιδαιμονία [deisidaimonia]: a contribution to the knowledge of the religious terminology in Greek* (Purmerend: J. Muusses, 1929) that collects instances and usages of the words and its cognates, remains indispensable. I am grateful to the late Professor Donald Russell for drawing it to my attention and for much other help.

231 Moulton, J.H., Milligan, G., *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (Peabody MA: Hendrikson, 1997), 1175.

232 Notably by the professor of Greek, J.P. Mahaffy, author of many books, whose views on the point were summarized in *Greek Pictures*, 82.

233 Discussed, with an experiment in reconstructing a polite speech, in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

Smyrna, who taught the son of the emperor Hadrian, was remembered as having caused surprise when he omitted this courtesy.<sup>234</sup> And we have the example of Aelius Aristides who begins his Panathenaic oration with the argument ('logos') and then momentarily interrupts himself to reassure his anxious audience that he will be coming to the gods in due course.<sup>235</sup>

Nobody whose voice is recorded in the vast body of records of the debates on and around Mars' Hill in the nineteenth century queried or debated the implications that Paul drew, such as his injunction to put gay people to death. Paul's conclusions and prescriptions were neither rejected nor accepted, just left undiscussed, or possibly by some silently condoned, within a general policy of selective ignoring and forgetting. It also now seems likely that the visitors were mistaken about the meaning of some of the words which Paul, as an educated man, is recorded as having used and of the rhetorical conventions within which they were deployed. They did not appreciate that, as Paul's speech moved from a spoken to a written text, in the course of editing it probably incorporated at least some elements of a Thucydidean speech or Thucydidean letter, that is, reporting what was thought appropriate for a historic figure to have said or written on the occasion, rather than transcribing a verbatim record.<sup>236</sup>

Another of the 'famous hills of Athens', as celebrated by Sophocles in the *Men of Camicus* was the Hill of Colonus. Until the rapid expansion of Athens into a large conurbation in the late nineteenth century, it stood in isolation and its reciprocating sightlines too were still the same as they had appeared to the peoples of classical Athens as they moved about outdoors, especially at festival times. It is pictured as Figure 22.17.

The hill was well known to everyone in classical Athens, and later to those in Greece and elsewhere who had even the rudiments of a classical education, as the place where, in his play, *Oedipus at Colonus*, Sophocles had set the scene in which Antigone, leading the blind Oedipus, is able to tell him that they are in the vicinity of Athens.<sup>237</sup> In a tantalising

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234 Noted by Winter, *Philo*, 150 from Philostratos, *Lives of the Sophists*, 535.

235 Aristides, Panathenaic, 11.

236 See *ibid.*

237 'Oedipus: Child of a blind old man, Antigone, to what region have we come, or to what city of men? Who will entertain the wandering Oedipus today with scanty gifts? Little do I crave, and obtain still less than that little, and with that I am content.

fragment from the lost *Oedipus* of Euripides, we may have a celebration of the clear atmosphere as a marker that even the blinded *Oedipus* is able to interpret as proof that he is in the vicinity of the Acropolis of Athens: ‘O citadel of the land of Cecrops, O outstretched divine ether’.<sup>238</sup>

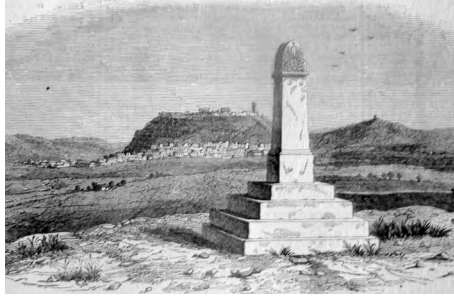


Figure 22.17. ‘Tombeau d’Ottfried Müller à Athènes’ [Tomb of Ottfried Müller at Athens]. From an engraving made before 1854.<sup>239</sup>

But from the 1850s it had another claim to fame. In 1840, the German scholar Karl Ottfried Müller died unexpectedly in Athens of what was called at the time a malarial fever, and that may have had a lingering effect on the aftermath of the Revolution. The book by the Marquis de Laborde, who also visited Greece after the Revolution, was dedicated to Müller’s memory, as a ‘model and victim of science’.<sup>240</sup> And it seems to have been Laborde who arranged for a fine neoclassical marble tomb to

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For patience is the lesson of suffering, and of the long years upon me, and lastly of a noble mind. My child, if you see any resting-place, either on profane ground or by groves of the gods, stop me and set me down, so that we may inquire where we are. We have come to learn as foreigners from the townsmen, and to bring to completion whatever we hear.

Antigone: Father, toil-worn Oedipus, the towers that ring the city, to judge by sight, are far off; and this place is sacred, to judge from its appearance: laurel, olive, and vine grow thick-set; and a feathered crowd of nightingales makes music within. So sit here on this unshaped stone; you have travelled a long way for an old man.’  
Jebb’s translation.

238 *Euripides, Selected Fragmentary Plays Volume II*, edited ... by C. Collard, M.J. Cropp and J. Gibert (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 2004), *Oedipus* fragment 554b, 122. ‘ὦ πολισμα Κεκροπίας χθονός, ὃ ταναός αἰθήρ ...’ I have slightly altered the editors’ translation to bring out that in many poetic Greek texts, the ‘ether’ is the pure air where the gods live.

239 Copied in an unidentified newspaper from the tinted version in Laborde, *Athènes*, two volume edition, frontispiece to volume 2, 1854, where the inscription gives the date of Müller’s death as 26 August 1840.

240 ‘modèle et victime de la science.’

be erected over Müller's remains on the hill of Colonus, where it can still be seen alongside that of a French archaeologist, Charles Lenormant, who was to die in Greece a generation later.

With his 1825 book, *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie* ('Prolegomena to a scientific mythology'), translated into English in 1840 as *Introduction to a Scientific System of Mythology*, Müller had carried the notion of a scientific and critical detachment to create a science ('*wissenschaft*') of the ancient world. As the titles indicate, Müller had hoped to discover 'laws' or, in modern terms, unifying theories, of ancient art and of mythology, attempting to understand the ancients within their own discursive terms. His theories and historical judgements were to be used in support of German racial theories in the twentieth century.<sup>241</sup>

Few of the western Christians who debated on Mars' Hill appear to have heard of Müller or his printed works, although most were known to scholars of ancient Greece and most were translated into English and other languages. An exception was Lord Nugent, who thought it was a vulgar error to think of the sophisticated ancient Athenians as worshipping gods, let alone 'idols'. The gods, he suggested, anticipating a view popularized by Freud, were personifications of attributes invented by poets and priests.<sup>242</sup> As in the ancient tragic drama, he might have said, and as the ancient myths had been in western Europe since the Renaissance, they were a set of useful shared stories in whose truthfulness it was not necessary to believe.<sup>243</sup>

In 1644, at a time when western European countries were stumbling towards a cessation of almost two centuries of inter-Christian religious wars and population cleansings, such as that of which Jacob Spon had been a victim, the English poet and politician John Milton turned to ancient Athens as an authority for one of his most influential writings:

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241 As noted in Chapter 23.

242 For example [Polytheism] 'in its origin was, and continued among the teachers of the Academy to be, a system of attributes. These attributes became personified, to aid the imaginative purposes of the poets, or the corrupt purposes of the priests who served at the several altars, or the ambitious purposes of the conquerors.' Nugent, i, 23. Nugent, incidentally was among those who asserted that the Parthenon was in sight from the Areopagus Hill. His picture of the Muslim cemetery that had been removed as part of the policy of monument cleansing was reproduced as Figure 16.2.

243 My suggestion that, at least some of the most educated classical Athenians, shared this view, and of how it impinged on the decisions to build the temple is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

*Areopagitica*, of which the title page of the first edition is reproduced as Figure 22.18.

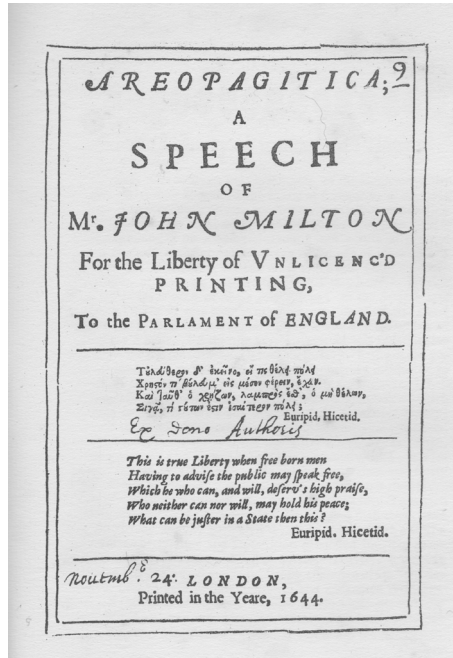


Figure 22.18. Title page of *Areopagitica*, 1644.<sup>244</sup>

One of the most influential later attempts to co-opt Milton's pamphlet as an ally, the dissenting opinion offered by the American jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes in 1917, in time of war, has been especially influential.<sup>245</sup> In advising that, in the United States, only an immediate danger could justify restrictions on freedom of speech, Holmes quoted John Stuart Mill, who had declared that 'the beliefs which we have most warrant for have no safeguard to rest on but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them wrong'. Holmes went on: 'In other words, the confidence

<sup>244</sup> From a photograph facsimile of an author's presentation copy in the British Library published in 1917. Another copy is reproduced, with full discussion, by Mark Rose in an open access article, 'The Public Sphere and the Emergence of Copyright: *Areopagitica*, the Stationers' Company, and the Statute of Anne' in *Property and Privilege: Essays on the History of Copyright*, edited by Ronan Deazley, Martin Kretschmer and Lionel Bently (Cambridge: Open Book, 2010). <http://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/26/privilege-and-property--essays-on-the-history-of-copyright>

<sup>245</sup> In the case of *Abrams v. United States*.



in the rightness of any particular position can only be found when it has been open to challenge and emerged on the other side. Milton understood this as well. In his *Areopagitica* he had written, “Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?”

In the tragedy by Euripides known as the *Suppliants*, from which the phrase on Milton’s title page is taken, the character of Theseus, speaking as the embodiment of the official values of the classical Athenian polis, encourages citizens to speak out if they have something ‘useful’ to say. It is not a celebration of free speech as such, and the word ‘liberty’ does not occur.<sup>246</sup> The long debate that took place among the nineteenth-century visitors to Mars’ Hill and their books was conducted more in accordance with the protocols of Holmes and Mill than with those of Milton or Theseus. It was an intellectual exchange, but also a festival in which the pressures to display and perform within a wider community without breaking ranks, at least in public, were at their most powerful. At the time it began, it was reasonable to think that science, including evidence-based history and the Christian religion, were mutually reinforcing, or at least were alternative ways of making sense of the world that were not inconsistent with one another. But, as one pillar after another was shaken and then tumbled, and the ecclesiastical leaderships attempted to build new structures from the debris of the old, no-one was able to

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246 Euripides *Suppliants* lines 439–40. Τίς θέλει πόλει χρηστόν τι βούλευμ’ ἐς μέσον φέρειν ἔχων; καὶ ταῦθ’ ὁ χρήζων λαμπρὸς ἐσθ’, ὁ μὴ θέλων σιγᾶ. The utilitarian sentiment is repeated shortly afterwards where in offering a response to the common saying that mortals are more good than bad, Theseus offers an opposing view that there is more that is useful than is bad: πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς; πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς: Eur. Supp.199, a more precise translation in my view than the usual ‘more good than bad.’ I am grateful to William Poole, editor of a modern edition of the *Areopagitica*, for pointing me to an article in which the mistranslation on the title page had been noticed earlier. Davies, David and Paul Dowling, ‘Shrewd books, with dangerous Frontispices: *Areopagitica*’s Motto’, in *Milton Quarterly* 20 (1986), pp. 33–37. In Milton’s day translation followed different conventions from those adopted later, and Milton’s contemporary readers able to read Greek could have checked his version if they chose. However, the suggestion by Davies and Dowling that Milton’s mistranslation was ‘playful’ may be overgenerous. The misunderstandings that, in my view, continue to occur when the cognate ‘chremata’ is translated as ‘money’ are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon: Recovering the Strangeness of the Ancient World*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. A discussion of the classical Athenian aim of making men ‘useful [χρηστός] to the city’, using cognates of the word employed by Euripides three times in this short passage are also discussed there.

offer a clear or consistent idea of what form Christianity might take in the twentieth century and beyond. Another aspect that gives the Mars' Hill debate much of its unique value is that it was conducted almost exclusively by people who defined themselves as Christians. What we see is not an encounter with ideological opponents, but an intellectual collapse from within. Even at its apparent zenith in 1904, most of the thousand delegates who stood on the hill probably knew that their only answer to the questions posed by modern knowledge was to demand more 'faith' and, by implication, less reliance on 'evidence'. In common with Galileo, who had been put on trial in 1633 in a courtroom adapted from an ancient temple to Minerva/Athena in Rome, for, among other charges, having claimed to have observed moons of Jupiter through his telescope, the choice they faced was no longer between one belief system and another but between social conformity and personal integrity, between keeping silent and speaking out. For, if Christianity abandoned the claims to historicity on which it had been founded, what was left? Could it continue as a useful symbolic system for the telling and retelling of stories, and as a paradigm within which current moral issues could be discussed, as the ancient Athenians had used the ancient myths in ancient tragedy?<sup>247</sup>

Or should the new century gracefully accept that, whatever benefits the Christian tradition may have brought in the past, and might continue to provide, the whole edifice on which they and their community had invested so much of their identity had been built on sand. Thanks to a unique conjuncture of factors, Mars' Hill has enabled an extraordinarily comprehensive account of an episode in the long story of de-Christianization, and of the complex, non-linear, long-drawn-out, and non-providential processes by which a major social and intellectual change occurred. The visitors to Mars' Hill could not easily have imagined that some of their successors would claim that their religion had never been primarily about historicity or statements of belief; that others would say that their Bible was just a collection of literary texts written in ancient times that are still worth reading; and that yet others would say that the claim that Jesus was the son of God and rose from the dead as a 'Saviour' were only metaphors. Indeed, if they had known that

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<sup>247</sup> To be discussed in Chapter 24.

some of these futures included a defence of the usefulness of religion in a post-religious society, the most learned of the Mars' Hill debaters would have dismissed and deplored them as inconsistent with the history of the invention, definition and institutionalization of Christianity, to the understanding of which many had conscientiously devoted their lives. What few, if any, of the participants noticed was that the generation of ancient Athenians who had commissioned the building of the classical Parthenon had themselves faced questions about the extent to which the stories about their gods were true, or, if untrue or contested, whether they were still worth maintaining as a useful symbolic system that lay outside the tumble of day-to-day politics broadly defined.<sup>248</sup>

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248 Discussed further in the companion volume *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>



## 23. Whose Parthenon?

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Attached to the Bastion on the summit of the Acropolis is the only physical memorial on the site to the modern history of Greece.<sup>1</sup> The small metal plaque, inscribed in Greek, shown being viewed in the photograph at Figure 23.1, commemorates an event that took place just a few days after an invading German army had ceremonially raised the swastika on the Acropolis. During the night of May 30/May 31 1941, Apostolos Santas and Manolis Glezos, students at the University of Athens, climbed up through the Mycenaean tunnel on the north side, took down the German flag, and escaped to safety by the same route (see Figure 23.1).<sup>2</sup>

Santas and Glezos said later that, having made clippings, they threw the flag into the pit where the sacred snake, Erichthonios, portrayed on images of Athena's shield as defender of the city, had lurked in mythic times. The story of the daring exploit, the symbolism of which the two men had researched in advance with the help of a classical encyclopedia, was soon being gleefully reported round the world by Germany's enemies.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 The last memorial erected on the Acropolis summit before then, as far as I can discover, was the inscription in Greek on a slab of marble that the French archaeologist Beulé was allowed to put up in the 1850s, claiming for France (in Greek 'Gallia') the honour of having discovered the so-called Beulé Gate. The slab has since been relocated to a place near the present entrance, where, at the time of writing, it can still be seen. The monument in the form of an obelisk on the south slope, that commemorates the French philhellene Fabvier and his companions who took part in the siege of the Acropolis of 1826/27, voluntarily entering the besieged fortress with much needed supplies one night, and who later agreed to surrender it to Reschid's army as described in Chapter 11, was erected as part of a centenary commemoration in 1926.
  - 2 The stories and later additions are summarized in an article by Nikos Raptis published on his blog 7 May 2011, available, at the time of writing, at: <http://www.zcommunications.org/the-flag-on-the-acropolis-by-nikos-raptis>
  - 3 Examples in Hadjipateras, C.N., and Fafalios, M.S., *Greece 1940–41, Eyewitnessed* (Athens: Efstathiades, 2001), pp. 278–79. The episode provided the title to a series



Figure 23.1. The Bastion, showing two visitors looking at the plaque.<sup>4</sup>

Even before the Santas and Glezos episode, at the first ceremonial raising of the German flag, the public performance of the changed status had not been straightforward. When a German officer ordered the Greek soldier on duty to lower the Greek flag, instead of saluting and handing over the flag, neatly folded, as was expected by the conventions of European war, the soldier wrapped himself in the flag and threw himself to his death over the Acropolis cliffs.<sup>5</sup> The name of the soldier, Konstantinos Koukidis, is recorded, and a memorial to him was erected at the spot

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of poems about the Greek resistance, including some that inserted the fighters into the Hellenic continuity story, with some unusual photographs, by Androulakis, B., *Le drapeau de L'acropole. Preface de Maurice Lacroix* (Paris: privately printed, 1946). An interview with the late Mr Glezos who died in 2020, with English subtitles, and footage of the military occupation was available on Youtube at the time of writing: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enCkU2WNPIQ>

Glezos's role in bringing to justice violent members of Golden Dawn, was noted by Daniel Trilling in *The Guardian* 'Golden Dawn: the rise and fall of Greece's neo-Nazis' 3 March 2020.

4 Author's photograph, 2014.

5 The story was told in 1942 by David Walker, a British journalist who was in Athens at the time. [Walker, David] *The Greek Miracle by 'Athenian' Translated, with a foreword, by David Walker* (London: Chapman and, Hall, 1942), 15. The book includes quotations from, and summaries of numerous official statements, communiqués, and speeches made in Greece, Italy, Germany, and Britain both in the run-up to and during the course of the campaigns in Greece, suggesting that 'Athenian' had access to a bureau in Athens that collected these documents as they came out.

where he met his death.<sup>6</sup> Since nothing beyond the soldier's name has made its way into the written record, the historicity of the episode has been doubted, but as a myth it recalled the occasions in the Greek Revolution, notably at Missolonghi in 1826, when the Revolutionaries had chosen death rather than surrender, and later in that year in Athens too, when those besieged in the Acropolis had publicly announced their decision to follow the example of Missolonghi and immolate themselves among the ruins, as already recounted.<sup>7</sup>

The German military authorities reacted to the Santas and Glezos episode by condemning the perpetrators to death in their absence and introducing the death penalty for a list of offences, including removing or destroying the German flag.<sup>8</sup> I do not know whether they took disciplinary action against the German army officers who had allowed Germany to be held up to mockery. What is seldom remembered is that the destruction of the Acropolis by the armies of the Achaemenid Empire, ('the Persians') in 480 BCE, a pivotal moment in the history of ancient Greece and of the whole subsequent classical tradition, was also attributable, in part at least, to a lack of care. When in the spring of 1914, on the eve of the First World War, Agnes Ethel Conway, a nineteen-year-old archaeology student, wriggled up the same tunnel, she wrote that her respect for the ancient Athenians had 'suffered a rebuff'.<sup>9</sup> Since only one person at a time could creep through, she pointed out, just one of

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6 [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Konstantinos\\_Koukidis\\_monument.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Konstantinos_Koukidis_monument.jpg)

In visits to the Peripatos in recent years, I have not been able to find it. At the time of writing the Peripatos is closed

7 In Chapter 17.

8 Hadjipateras and Fafalios, 279, with a facsimile of a newspaper report in *The Mercury*, Hobart, dated 4 June 1941. The text of the German Proclamation of May 1941, and of the Italian that followed later soon after, are given in English translation by Slocombe, George, *Kultur in Greece* (London: Harrap, 1942), 12, 13. Slocombe, a well-known journalist, with much experience overseas, appears not to have been himself in Greece but to have compiled his account from reports reaching the Greek Government and from American journalists who continued to operate in Greece until the United States entered the War.

9 Conway, Agnes Ethel, Author of "The Children's Book of Art", *A Ride through the Balkans, On Classic Ground with a Camera With Introduction by Sir Martin Conway F.S.A., F.R.G.S* (London: Robert Scott, 1907), 31. According to the account by Herodotus, viii, 53, the Persian invaders, who were encamped on the Areopagus, did not come through the tunnel but climbed up the steep cliffs on a side of the Acropolis that the defenders assumed that nobody could scale, and had kept no watch on that side, but Conway's general point is not much weakened.

the old, sick, or wounded men who had been obliged to remain when the other inhabitants of Athens took refuge in Salamis could have saved it from capture.<sup>10</sup> She might have added that the able-bodied young women whose duty it was to guard the sacred objects preserved on the Acropolis, who had chosen to stay and who had also been put to death, might have done the same.

For decades after 1835, the year the Acropolis was demilitarized, a neat pile of marble cannon balls and metal shells beside the entrance gate reminded visitors that the Acropolis had been bitterly fought over in the Greek Revolution.<sup>11</sup> In recent times, however, these physical reminders of the Greek Revolution have now mostly gone. The memory of it has however already, for more than a century and a half, been displayed and performed in a twice-daily ceremony (apart from during times of war or other extremity) that renews the remembrance more effectively than any fixed memorial. Each morning, a contingent of the Greek army dressed in the national ceremonial uniform, ('evzones') marches through clapping and cheering crowds up to the Acropolis, across the summit paths, to the Bastion, and ceremonially hoists the national Greek flag. Each evening another contingent lowers it. By associating the costume of the country people ('palikars') who had borne the brunt of the Revolution with the ancient ruins, the Greek state has re-displayed, re-enacted, and re-performed the story of its foundation, to the delight

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10 I sidestep the risks of using modern words, such as priestess, to describe ancient office-holders as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>, including a brief summary of how we might understand and translate the ancient terms for the male and female staff who curated the buildings and the ceremonies, mostly taken from Connelly, Joan Breton, *Portrait of a Priestess, Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007). The extent to which ancient historians, including Herodotus, may have exaggerated the role of Athens to the extent of falsifying what actually occurred as part of building a self-serving mythic narrative, as alleged by Plutarch, is discussed in my *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

11 For example: 'There are marks on the columns of the Parthenon of the cannonade during the war of Greek independence, and there is a pile of shells and cannon balls near the Propylea.' Smith, G. Albert, *Correspondence of Palestine tourists: comprising a series of letters by George A. Smith, Lorenzo Snow, Paul A. Schettler, and Eliza R. Snow, of Utah, mostly written while traveling in Europe, Asia and Africa, in the years 1872 and 1873* (Salt Lake City, Utah Territory: printed at the Deseret [sic] News Steam Printing Establishment, 1875), 311. The marble balls intended for large calibre weapons were noticed earlier by Baird, Henry M., *Modern Greece: A Narrative of a Residence and Travels in that Country* (New York: Harper, 1856), 33. One of the few reminders still remaining at the time of writing was shown as Figure 10.1.



of innumerable visitors including those who know little of the history of the Revolution.<sup>12</sup>

By 1941, the tradition of presenting the neo-Hellenic nation through its army in its distinctive uniforms had been frequently renewed at moments of crisis.<sup>13</sup> Figure 23.2, for example, shows the Evzones readying themselves for one of the wars in the Balkans that occurred in the early twentieth century.



Figure 23.2. Evzones parading within sight of the Parthenon. Postcard, undated, early twentieth century.<sup>14</sup>

A postcard of c.1900 displayed the same theme in artistic form, as shown as Figure 23.3.

The Swiss makers of the image, one of the earliest printed in colour, imported at a time when the local postcard industry was still new and monochrome, evidently did not know that the Frankish Tower had been taken down a generation before. And, like many others makers of images, whether mistakenly or as part of a deliberate rhetoric, they implied that the Parthenon could be seen from ground level.

12 My discussion of the role of the site in ancient times is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

13 At the time of the Revolution and earlier, the costume had been more closely identified with the ethnic Albanians who were to be found, all over Greece where they had long been settled, although no-one knew when they had arrived or from where.

14 Private collection.



Figure 23.3. 'Acropole d'Athènes. Souvenir de la Grèce'. Chromolithographic postcard manufactured by Künzli Frères of Zürich, c.1900.<sup>15</sup>

By the time of the German invasion of 1941, the general aims of those who had created the nation state of Greece had been achieved. The symbolic power of the Parthenon and the other ancient monuments belonged to Greece and to the Greeks, both at home and in the diaspora abroad. Buildings that, when first designed and constructed, had asserted the distinctive identity of ancient Athens as a city state that compared itself with other city states with which it was frequently at war, had become a monument to a form of modern political organisation that had never been achieved, or even much desired, in the classical period when it was built or later.

But Greece did not have exclusive rights to the Parthenon. Both world wars took place at a time when the Greek and Latin classical authors were integral to the educational systems in Germany, Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, as well as within Greece itself and in countries far beyond. To the ruling classes in the western European countries that took part in the war in Greece from 1940 to 1945, politicians, diplomats, military officers, members of the professional and business classes, and increasing numbers from the educated working classes, ancient Greece was as much part of their history and of the stories that they told themselves as the more recent events in their own countries. Ancient Athens, both directly and through the buildings round the world that

<sup>15</sup> Private collection.

drew on the monumental architecture of classical Athens, had become incorporated into their heritage too.

## The German Army in Athens: A Display of Conquest

The invading German army that in the unusually cold and wet spring of 1941 had lumbered along the same eastern coastal route that the Persian army had followed in 480 BCE, heavily outnumbered an expeditionary force under British command that had been hurriedly put together and sent from Egypt in fulfilment of a promise to help in the defence of Greece. Another invading German army defeated the Greek army who had been successfully resisting an Italian invasion from Albania. Most of the Allied forces, including some Greek units, had, over the following months, been withdrawn in a series of staged retreats, and then been hurriedly evacuated to Crete. After a fierce battle in Crete against invading German paratroopers who suffered heavy casualties, the Allied troops were then evacuated by sea to Egypt, and Germany, with its Axis allies Italy and Bulgaria, was soon able to put the whole territory of Greece under military occupation.<sup>16</sup> One of the first actions of the Bulgarian Government in the spring of 1941 was to deploy a unit of the Bulgarian army to destroy the Greek inscriptions and monuments on the island of Samothrace that had been assigned to them as part of their occupation zone, and that they hoped they would later be able to claim had never been 'Greek'. This was a modern example of monument cleansing and of creating a new visual heritage on the ground, an ancient practice repeated by modern states in our own times.<sup>17</sup>

In 1941, a puppet government that consisted mainly of Greek generals, but included a medical doctor married to the niece of the German commander of the invasion forces, the newly promoted General Field Marshall Wilhelm List, had been formed before the German army even reached Athens.<sup>18</sup> A victory march consisting of troops, tanks, horses,

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16 The military campaign is discussed in a book that makes plentiful use of archival materials, Stockings, Craig, and Eleanor Hancock, *Swastika over the Acropolis: re-interpreting the Nazi Invasion of Greece in World War II* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

17 Kew T 209/15 page130 and *Works of Art in Greece, the Greek Islands, and the Dodecanese: Losses and Survivals in the War* (London: HMSO, 1946), 21. Monument cleansing, or heritage cleansing, is discussed among the consumption genres of the Parthenon discussed in my companion book *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

18 Mazower, Mark, *Inside Hitler's Greece, The Experience of Occupation, 1941-44* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993), 18.

and guns through the streets of Athens, at which the salute was taken by General List, was recorded in photographs intended for a German viewership. One that includes the Acropolis with the Parthenon is shown as Figure 23.4.



Figure 23.4. 'Victory parade of Generalfeldmarshall List, 4 May 1941.' Photograph.<sup>19</sup>

Another, at Figure 23.5, picks out the banner hung across the street with the single word 'Stadtkommandantur' and a pointer to the German headquarters with its prominent German flag, an image that left no doubt about who were now the rulers

Figure 23.6 shows the advance motorcycle units of the German army arriving in Athens on the morning of 27 April 1941, racing up to the Acropolis entrance past the hill of the Areopagus, to be followed by a charge across the summit. From the viewing station of the man holding the camera deducible from the images, we can be certain that they were staged and perhaps rehearsed, and were intended to convey a message to their viewers that the German army was modern, fast, and nimble.

<sup>19</sup> Bathe, Rolf and Erich Glodschey, *Der Kampf um den Balkan* (Berlin: Stalling, 1942), opposite 225.



Figure 23.5. 'The grand German parade through Athens, before General List'. Photograph.<sup>20</sup>



Figure 23.6. 'Hurrying to Athens' and 'With the Reich's war flag to the Acropolis.' German army photographs.<sup>21</sup>

20 Androulakis, B., *Le drapeau de L'acropole. Preface de Maurice Lacroix* (Paris: privately printed, 1946), 68.

21 Weinberger, Andreas *Das gelbe Edweltausch, Wege and Werden einer Gebirgsdivision* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP [Central Publishing of the National Socialist

After the initial setbacks, an unusually large German flag was mounted on a tall metal flagstaff so as to be visible from all directions from land, sea, and air. The propaganda units of the German army that accompanied the fighting troops then released numerous photographs and images to mark the moment when the Acropolis of Athens became German. An example is given at Figure 23.7.



Figure 23.7. The German army raising the German flag on the Acropolis (May 1941). German Army photograph.<sup>22</sup>

The piece of column with the Ionic capital on top, presented as a capriccio of pieces of ancient marble, appears to have been an addition to a previous staging photographed earlier.<sup>23</sup> The change, which makes the composition more Hellenic, encouraged viewers of the picture to move along the spectrum from seeing the photograph as a documentary record of a precisely dateable historical moment towards accepting a rhetorical presentation of a set of ideas that the viewer is

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German Workers Party], 1943), unnumbered, after 224. Another version in Hurtmanns, August, *Soldat in Südost, Ein Feldzugsbericht* (Düsseldorf: Völkischer Verlag GMBH, 1942), last page.

22 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv\\_Bild\\_101I-164-0389-23A,\\_Athen,\\_Hissen\\_der\\_Hakenkreuzflagge.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_101I-164-0389-23A,_Athen,_Hissen_der_Hakenkreuzflagge.jpg)

23 They are pieces from the Roman era temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus, of which many fragments remained on the summit, as discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

invited to admire, to internalize, to adopt, and to act upon.<sup>24</sup> There was, however, little ambiguity in the image shown at 23.8, which, like many presentations of the Parthenon, literary as well as visual, in ancient times as in modern, offered a view that was not available to any mortal, even if he or she had been able to fly.

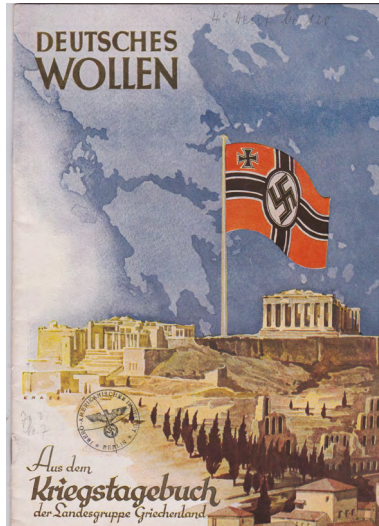


Figure 23.8. The German flag flying over the Acropolis, 1941. Cover of the monthly magazine, *Deutsches Wollen* for July 1941.<sup>25</sup>

*Deutsches Wollen* ('The German Will') had been established to promote the German cause both within Germany and abroad, especially in the United States, which had not yet entered the war and which included a large constituency who were, at this time, sympathetic to Germany. The July 1941 issue includes photographs of the German army on the move through the Balkans, with views of the lakes and mountains, local peoples welcoming the invaders, a few concrete pill boxes, prisoners of war, German warplanes flying over Athens, and life in Athens continuing as normal. Readers were given images of the admiration that members

24 A version without the added capriccio is reproduced in Hüniger Heinz [and] Strassl, Ernst Erich, *Kampf und Intrige um Griechenland* (Munich: Central Publishing Office of the NSDAP, 1942), opposite 113.

25 Private collection. Most copies of *Deutsches Wollen* were destroyed in post-war denazification programmes, when to be found possessing copies could be interpreted as implying that the owner had been a member of the party.

of the German army felt for ancient Hellas, with a photograph, for example, of a German soldier sitting on the Acropolis earnestly reading a book. The issue also contains forty advertisements spread over fifteen pages, inserted by German industrial and financial companies, asserting to readers and viewers that, at this moment of victory ('enemy-free Balkans'), the whole German nation was at one with the government, with the National Socialist party, and with the armed forces.

Although, after the flag incidents of 1941, the penalties for insulting and for resisting the German forces became ever more severe, with summary reprisals, the taking and frequent killing of hostages, collective punishments, and immolation of villages, the memory of the pre-war Bastion provided a focus for silent opposition. The Christmas and New Year card reproduced as Figure 23.9 had been prepared for Christmas 1940, when Greece was braced for invasion by the Italians. When the card was actually sent, in Christmas 1943, the German flag still flew over the Acropolis, but even an old card with an old picture could symbolize resistance, with a memory of a lost past, and a hope for a new future.



Figure 23.9. Christmas and New Year card of 1940, sent in 1943.<sup>26</sup>



It was Walther Wrede, the director of the German Archaeological Institute in Athens, a professional archaeologist who had published academic works on ancient Athenian and Mycenaean fortifications and on the portrayal of war in ancient images, who had arranged for an impromptu crowd to be in the streets of Athens in May 1941 to welcome the German soldiers with cigarettes and flowers. In 1938 Wrede, who was given a high rank in the National Socialist party that entitled him to wear a military-style uniform, had replaced the previous director Georg Karo, who, although he had been an ardent German nationalist during the First World War, was Jewish by religious affiliation and had been dismissed under the Nuremberg racial laws.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1920s and 1930s, Georg Karo had published a series of articles on the Acropolis conservation works, seeing himself as upholding international scholarly standards against local political pressures. He had also campaigned for a gradualist approach to the return of the Elgin Marbles from London, and thought he had negotiated an agreement for the return of pieces from the Erechtheion with the then director of the British Museum and Prime Minister McDonald, but that could not proceed when the British Museum trustees ('not a single piece could be taken from the museum') refused their consent.<sup>28</sup> Without a specific act of the British Parliament, the Museum trustees could not be legally overridden, and no British government, however sympathetic, has yet been willing to find time in the parliamentary calendar. It was now the task of Wrede, Karo's successor, working with the Army propaganda units, to bring the ancient as well as the modern Greeks into the war on the German side.

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27 Marchand, Suzanne L., *Down from Olympus, Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany 1750–1950* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996), 247. Wrede is pictured wearing his party uniform when showing Field Marshall Braunsweig and other high-ranking German army officers round the Acropolis, in *Deutsches Wollen*, 15. His titles of Dr and Landesstellenleiter were specifically noted in the caption to a photograph reproduced in Bathe, Rolf and Erich Glodschey, *Der Kampf um den Balkan* (Berlin: Stalling, 1942), opposite 224, an example both of the integration of intellectuals into the German state and how the state used such integration to promote its own legitimacy and claim that it was universally accepted within Germany and abroad.

28 Karo, Georg, 'The problem of the Elgin Marbles' in Mylonas, George E., *Studies presented to David Moore Robinson on his seventieth birthday* (Saint Louis: Washington University, 1951–1953). As the trustees declared: 'not a single piece could be taken from the museum' as noted at page 552.

After the military defeat of Germany in 1945, the flagrant triumphalism of the conquest of Greece would come to be regarded by Germans as well as by others as having been unnecessarily provocative, and therefore as politically and militarily unwise. What surer way to stir up resentment and opposition in an invaded and occupied country than by victory parades and by flaunting the German flag on Greece's most symbolic sites? In 1941, however, as the future was then being planned and, by some, expected, the images were not only acts of picturing that would hold specific moments fixed, but the laying down of the visual materials on which a new history of European civilization, the New Order, would be constructed, consolidated, celebrated, and mythologized in stories, images, monuments, and in future commemorative ceremonies. The static pictures were accompanied by motion pictures that were encountered by German viewers and listeners at regular fixed times in cinemas. To the confident German authorities of 1941, the story being built and promulgated by pictures and words, by displays and performances, was not one of conquest but of liberation from British imperialism and from international finance presented as under Jewish control.<sup>29</sup>

It was intended also to be a story of a homecoming, an actualization of what the German Minister of Education, Bernhard Rust, had declared in 1937, when receiving an honorary degree in Athens: 'Thus, the Hellenic world truly does live on in the creative work of the new Germany under the political and spiritual leadership of Adolf Hitler'.<sup>30</sup> The notion of a special relationship between the ancient Hellenes and modern Germans stretched back to the era of Goethe and Humboldt, when the apparently harmless concept of an 'elective affinity' (*Wahlverwandtschaften*) had been invented, championed, and theorized.<sup>31</sup> During the 1920s and 30s, in Germany and a few other northern countries, that affinity of choice was joined and reinforced by a claimed affinity of common origins and of shared 'blood.' In inventing a largely fictive mythic world of essential

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29 For example the war is described as a 'Freiheitskrieg' in the title of *Von Serbien*.

30 Quoted by Irmscher, Johannes, 'Academic Links Between Berlin University and Fascist Greece' in *Journal of Hellenic Diaspora* vol. 13 (1986), 79.

31 Discussed by Andurand, Anthony, *Le Mythe grec allemand. Histoire d'une affinité élective* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2013). The phrase comes from Goethe's novel of that name first published in 1809 that had employed what was then a metaphor from inorganic chemistry, as it was then understood, to explore personal and family relationships.

Germanism that offered a sense of a world being re-ordered, and, in a version of providentialism, of the imminent fulfillment of a noble destiny, the leaderships of the National Socialist project were, whether knowingly or by historical coincidence, following in the traditions of many communities, real and imagined, including those of the cities of classical Greece.

## Hellenism and Ideologies of Racial Purity

In 1929, four years before the 1933 elections that brought the National Socialist party to power, there had appeared a book by Dr. Hans Günther, a university professor, that gave renewed currency to the old claim that the ancient Hellenes had come from the north of Europe.<sup>32</sup> The work was part of a series on the 'races of the world', a subject that had for nearly a century appeared to many to offer a key to understanding notions of 'nation' and to answering some of the questions that had puzzled eighteenth-century philosophers of history.<sup>33</sup> Günther, whose professorial career soared when the NSDAP came to power, had drawn on earlier scholarly historical works, notably those of Karl Ottfried Müller, whose tomb on the Hill of Colonos was pictured as Figure 22.17. Among the conclusions that Müller had drawn was that the Peloponnesian war between the Spartans and the Athenians and their respective allies in the 5th century BCE, as recorded by Thucydides, had been fought by one side that was racially united against another that was arbitrarily formed. The Spartans had their geographical acropolis, a bare rock, their story ran, but had no need for walls, let alone for visual images, for their real acropolis was embedded deep in the minds of the people. The Athenian acropolis, Müller had suggested, had been an attempt to promote an artificial unity among a heterogeneous, socially divided, and politically unpredictable population who lacked the shared customs, kinship, and race that was enjoyed by the Spartans.<sup>34</sup>

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32 Günther, Dr. Hans F.K., *Rassengeschichte des hellenischen und des römischen Volkes ... mit einem Anhang: Hellenische und römische Köpfe nordischer Rasse; mit 83 Abbildungen im Text und 3 Karten und 64 Abbildungen auf Tafeln* (Munich: J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1929).

33 Discussed in Chapter 13.

34 [Müller, Karl O.] *The history and antiquities of the Doric race, by C.O. Müller ... Translated from the German by Henry Tufnell ... and George Cornwall Lewis* (London: Murray 1839), especially 73 and 216. That Müller may have been more right than those who have adopted other approaches emerges from the experiment in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

Günther, and the more recent predecessors on whose works he drew, may also have known the works of the Edinburgh anatomist, Robert Knox, who had made many of the same claims about essential racism from his study of the pieces from the Parthenon on display in London.<sup>35</sup> In citing the passages in ancient authors that supported his case, Günther's book, which was packed with photographs, provided translations into German—so extending its potential readership and viewership beyond the specialists in universities into the wider German public to whom it may have appeared new.<sup>36</sup>

As a demonstration of the so-called blood relationship, Günther included dozens of photographs of statues of ancient Greeks and Romans that, he claimed, showed Nordic characteristics. An example, in which he suggested that an unidentified portrait was that of Pheidias, long elevated by western romanticism to be the supreme artist of all time, is shown as Figure 23.10.

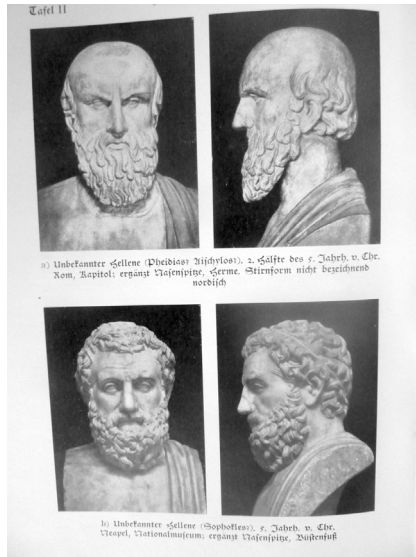


Figure 23.10. Ancient portraits of Pheidias and of Sophocles, allegedly showing Nordic characteristics. Photographs.<sup>37</sup>

35 Discussed in Chapter 15.

36 Summarized and discussed by Chapoutot, Johann, *Le nazisme et l'antiquité* (Paris: PUF, 2012), 70–83.

37 Günther, Tafel II.

Ancient Greek women too were presented as Nordic, as in Figure 23.11.

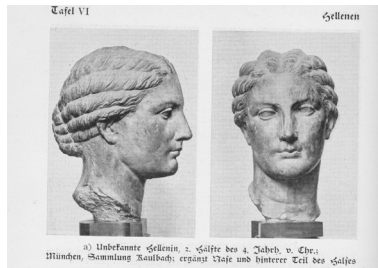


Figure 23.11. Ancient portraits allegedly showing Nordic characteristics. Photographs.<sup>38</sup>

Günther, like many others, assumed that ancient statues offered realistic presentations of ancient persons, and he ignored the fact that the noses of many statues had been mutilated and subsequently restored. It may, however, have been from the photographs in Günther's book that Oskar Graf, an artist favoured by the NSDAP, offered images of modern German women as objects of emulation and desire in the ancient tradition, here reproduced from postcards sold at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst ('House of German Art') in Munich, a gallery from which all modernist and abstract 'decadent' art was banished. An example is reproduced as Figure 23.12.



Figure 23.12. 'Aphrodite.' Postcards of a picture by Oskar Graf, sold at the Haus der Deutschen Kunst, 'House of German Art', in Munich, 1942.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Günther, Tafel VI.

<sup>39</sup> Private collection.

The imagined world compiled and promoted during the German Third Reich of 1933–1945 drew on many traditions, of which the alleged affinity with ancient Greece was only one, and, like the others, it was firmly in place long before the coming to political power of the NSDAP. Had not the ancient Hellenes, like the modern Germans, the story ran, come from northern Europe, from a land of mountains?<sup>40</sup> Were they not a race of fair-haired warriors who had subjected and reinvigorated the decadent inhabitants who had previously occupied the land of Greece?<sup>41</sup> Had not Athena herself been celebrated for her blue eyes? Was not the crooked cross on the Acropolis a sign that the true Hellenes, that is, the Aryans, by whom the swastika on the German flag had allegedly been invented, had returned home? As *Die Zeit* of Reichenberg reported on 12 April 1941, ‘the Germans have become the holders of the true Greco-Nordic spirit, German man has taken over the inheritance of his Nordic tribal brethren in Greece’.<sup>42</sup> Nor was this just a fable offered as populist propaganda to the rank and file. In Germany itself, in the wartime higher educational system, the history of Greece from its origins to the present, compiled by a team of eminent scholars, the title-pages of whose books are heavy with the academic distinctions of their authors, began with the Aryans.<sup>43</sup>

The notion was illustrated in a map in a schoolbook, prepared in 1940 by German scholars, to help in the education of the boys and girls who would soon be recruited into the German army. It is shown as Figure 23.13.

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- 40 That Greece was a land of mountains had been promoted in pre-war Germany by such works as Penck, Albrecht, Prof. Dr., *Griechische Landschaften* (Bielefeld and Leipzig: Velhagen and Blasing, second edition, 1939). The first edition had been in 1933, the year the NSAPD came to power.
- 41 The attempts to show that the ancient Greeks shared racial characteristics with modern white Europeans, drawing on a body of ancient writings on physiognomy, were described by Lapouge, Georges Vacher de, *Les Sélections Sociales; cours libre de science politique professé à l'Université de Montpellier* (Paris: Thorin, 1896), pp. 409–490. The interest in theories of essential racism that pervaded classical studies in the late nineteenth century resulted in the publication of a monument to scholarship, Foerster, Richard, editor, *Scriptores physiognomonici graeci et latini recensuit Richardus Foerster* (Leipzig, 2 volumes, 1893), but most of the authors had been available in print in western countries since the earliest days of print.
- 42 Quoted in translation by Casson, Stanley, *Greece against the Axis* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941), 198–99.
- 43 For example Chudoba, Prof. Dr. Karl F. editor (and nine other ‘Prof. Dr.’ from universities in Germany), *Griechenland. — Kriegsvorträge der Rhein-Friedr.-Wilh.-Universität Bonn* (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 1944).

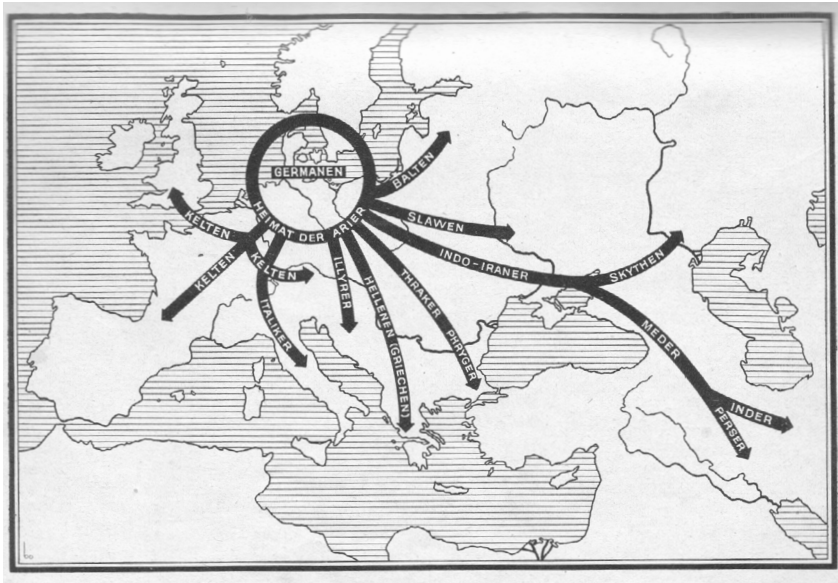


Figure 23.13. 'Landnahme der Nordleute' ('Taking of the land by the Northpeople').  
Illustration in schoolbook, 1940.<sup>44</sup>

The German army that invaded Greece in 1941 had expected to be welcomed. The military attaché in Athens had advised that Greece could be easily conquered, and militarily occupied with a small garrison.<sup>45</sup> And the attaché had reason to think that he was well-informed. As a professor of the University of Thessaloniki, Nikolaos Andriotis, had recently declared at a congress in Berlin, in the presence of the Greek Ambassador: 'We Greeks of today depend on Germany and shall always depend on her if we wish to remain Greek'.<sup>46</sup> And even after the conquest of 1941, there were prominent Greeks who were sympathetic to the proposed future that Germany appeared to offer, as one of the countries of Europe with fascist and semi-fascist governments, including Italy, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, to whom Germany

44 [Klagges and Nickel] *Volk und Führer. Deutsche Geschichte für Schulen, Klasse 2. Herausgegeben von Dietrich Klagges. Ausgabe für Mittelschulen im Verbindung mit Schlittat Dr. Gustave Märlich. Klasse 2: Arier und Germanen. Bearbeit von Dr. Ernst Nickel, Berlin* (Frankfurt: Moritz, 1940), opposite 28. The following page included an illustration of the Parthenon on the Acropolis, as it might have appeared, although only from a viewing station in the sky, in the classical period

45 Mazower, 19.

46 Quoted by Irmscher, 79.

offered a privileged place in the New Europe. And there are reports of such attitudes continuing even after the German invasion. The American journalist, Robert St John, for example, in a book published in 1942 in which he recounted his experiences in Greece, including the bombing of Patras in 1941, describes a conversation with a Greek engineer who lived there, who continued to profess great admiration for the German way of life, and who spoke about how wise Hitler had been 'in setting up an economic scheme that was not based on gold'.<sup>47</sup>

The government of General Metaxas, which had come to power in Greece in 1936, was in some respects more like the fascist and semi-fascist dictatorships of Europe than the liberal democracies of France and Britain. Metaxas had established a Greek youth movement, introduced the fascist salute in the Greek army, and promoted the benefits of a healthy outdoor life with camping, eating, drinking, and singing. He styled himself the 'first peasant' and the 'first worker' and, following the example of the German 'Third' Reich, presented the Greece of his day as the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation', the first being ancient Hellas, the second Byzantium, and the third the modern nation state, omitting the seven-hundred-year gap between the second and the third.<sup>48</sup> As part of his contempt for modern democracy, with its claimed pedigree in classical Athens, Metaxas banned Greek schools from teaching the funeral oration of Pericles.<sup>49</sup> Because the *Antigone* of Sophocles celebrated acts of defiance of authority, only expurgated versions could be performed.<sup>50</sup>

It had been mainly German advisers, soldiers, architects, engineers, and businessmen from Bavaria and elsewhere in Germany who had helped transform the newly independent Greek state in the years after 1833. German archaeologists had been leaders in the excavation, conservation, and display of the remains of ancient Hellas, not only on the Athenian Acropolis but also in Olympia where the Olympic Games had taken place in ancient times. German classical scholars were among the most highly respected in the world, professionals in the systematic scientific study of antiquity, *altertumswissenschaft*, at a time when the best

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47 St John, Robert, *From the Land of Silent People* (London: Harrap, 1942), 193.

48 Discussed by Zacharia, Katerina, 'Postcards from Metaxas' Greece: the uses of Classical antiquity in tourism photography' in Tziouvas 194. See also Hollingworth, Clare, *There's a German just behind me* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1942), 130.

49 Hollingworth, Clare, *There's a German just behind me* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1942), 130.

50 Noted by Gomme, A.W., Lecturer in Ancient Greek History, University of Glasgow, *Greece* (Oxford: OUP, 1945), 73. Hollingworth, 130.



known of the British, such as Gilbert Murray, seemed like sentimental, middlebrow gentlemen-amateurs by comparison.<sup>51</sup>

In 1938, shortly before the start of the European war, a group of German and Greek scholars, with the backing of the German government published a beautiful volume, *Unsterbliches Hellas* ['Immortal Hellas'] that gives a glimpse of the future that Germany appeared to offer Greece. In numerous photographs printed in dreamy sepia, Greece is presented as a country with clean-line modern architecture, universities, hospitals, theatres, sports facilities, cinemas, and museums. It is a land of electricity, of steel bridges, and tractors, but also of poets and musicians, and of soldiers with a proud military tradition back to Alexander and Pericles. The men march in youth groups and the peasant women wear national dress at folk festivals that spring up whenever a photographer is near. And, as the example at Figure 23.14 shows, in the hierarchy of the New Europe, the Greeks of 1938, like the Germans of that time, had been invited to see themselves as living incarnations of the ancient Greeks as they had been portrayed in ancient statues.

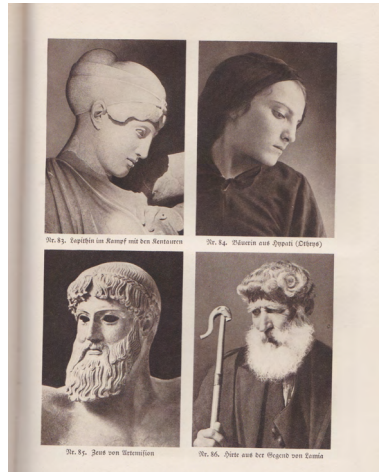


Figure 23.14. 'Unsterbliches ('immortal') Hellas'. Photographs.<sup>52</sup>

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- 51 Illustrated by, for example, [Wilamowitz-Moellendorff] *The Prussian and the poet: the letters of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff to Gilbert Murray (1894–1930)* [edited by] Anton Bierl, William M. Calder III, and Robert L. Fowler (Hildesheim: Weidmann, 1991).
- 52 [Kriekoukis-Bömer] *Unsterbliches Hellas. Herausgegeben von Major Dr. Charilaos Kriekoukis, Pressechef der Königlich Griechischen Gesandtschaft zu Berlin und Prof. Dr. Karl Bömer Reichsamtleiter im Aussentpolitischen Amt der NSDAP Mit Geleitworten von A. Riz-Rangabé, Königlich Griechischer Gesandter zu Berlin, und Alfred Rosenberg,*

After the German conquest in May 1941, the Acropolis was fortified, with batteries of anti-aircraft artillery installed both on the summit and on the open ground beside the temple to Olympian Zeus. A photograph that was intended for a readership and viewership in the United States, and was sent to newspapers there by the recently invented wire technology, is reproduced as Figure 23.15. Included in the image is the telegram that includes advice on the political angle ('on guard') that the German authorities, or possibly the correspondent himself, suggested that the newspaper should adopt.



Figure 23.15. The Acropolis fortified by the German army. Photograph taken before 4 June 1941, the date of the censorship approval, with the accompanying telegram.<sup>53</sup>

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*Chef des Aussenpolitischen Amtes der NSDAP* (Berlin, Zeitgeschichte-Verlag Wilhelm Andermann, 1938), opposite 136. The images were also printed in Greek magazines of the time, as reproduced by Zacharia, 'Postcards', 202.

53 Private collection. The image arrived in the United States on 13 June 1941. The photograph was reproduced in Lange, Major i. Genst von, *Gegen Bomber, Bunker, Panzer* (Berlin: Verlag Scherl for OKW [Army High Command], [n.d.], 1942), after 240, along with others showing the fortification of the Acropolis and of the area of the temple to Olympian Zeus. Reproduced also in *Deutsches Wollen* 13. Another photograph of an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the Acropolis in *Kampf und Intrige in*

In 1941 there was no formal international law for protecting monuments in time of war, although arrangements were made that had saved Paris, Rome, and other cities from aerial bombing. By militarizing the Acropolis of Athens, the Germany army had made it a legitimate military target, in effect inviting the British and their allies to bomb it from the air. The Acropolis and the Parthenon were worth more to the German state and its cause if they were to be destroyed or damaged by British aircraft than the lives of a handful of replaceable German soldiers.

But if the Germans were daring the British to bomb the Parthenon, they had no qualms about destroying the place where many of its finest pieces were held. At the time when British and Allied forces were hurriedly withdrawing from Greece, London came under sustained aerial attack by the German Air Force. On the night of 10/11 May 1941, the British Museum, which then included the national library, was struck by dozens of incendiary bombs that caused 150,000 books to burn. The Duveen gallery, which was intended to house the now artificially-whitened pieces of the Parthenon, the construction of which had been begun before the war but was not yet complete, was badly damaged, as were two of the other galleries in which Greek antiquities were normally exhibited. But almost all the contents of the British Museum had been taken to deep cellars and to an unused part of the London Underground in 1938 and 1939, and were protected with sandbags. To the British Museum authorities, as to the British Government, who had connived at the concealing of the damage done by the Museum's workmen at the instigation of Duveen, the bombing of the Duveen gallery, which provided an excuse for withholding the pieces of the Parthenon from public view, was something of a relief.<sup>54</sup>

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*Griechenland*, opposite 129. It is not clear whether a Greek flag was flown alongside the German for the occasion, or whether it is an Italian flag.

54 In addition to the documents and photographs about the episode published in St Clair, William, 'The Elgin Marbles: Questions of Stewardship and Accountability' in *International Journal of Cultural Property* 8 (2) 1999, I was able to take account of what I was told by the late Dr Harold Plenderleith, the last of those who had direct personal involvement in the Duveen scandals whom I visited as part of my researches. He told stories of what he regarded as the less-than-heroic scurrying about of the then director, Sir John Fordsyke, during the bombing raids. He also confirmed that his own part in the cover-up included applying brown wax to the raw white sub-surfaces of the marble that had been exposed by the scraping away of many areas of the surfaces, actions that had made him complicit in a pretence that he told me that he subsequently regretted. The late Martin Robertson, a member of

## 'Men like ourselves': Competing Claims to Ancient Heritage

On 28 June 1941, the victorious German army arranged a 'Marathon Sport-Fest' at Marathon, the place on the coast of Attica where, in 490 BCE, the Athenians, without help from other Hellenes apart from a contingent from the small city of Plataea, had repulsed a Persian invasion. The mound where the heroes of Marathon were thought to have been buried in a communal grave can still be seen, and arrowheads and other artifacts were found when the site was excavated.<sup>55</sup> Among the celebrations and speeches, the German army re-enacted the battle, wearing ancient costumes, as photographed in Figure 23.16.

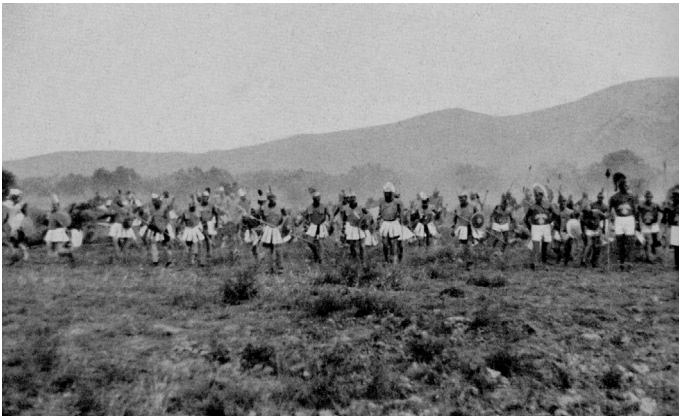


Figure 23.16. 'The Battle of Marathon' 28 June 1941. Photograph.<sup>56</sup>

To the victorious German soldiers, it was they who were the gallant Athenians defending western civilization. Some of the German regiments, notably the mountain troops who had taken part in the invasion, only accepted men who looked conspicuously German. By contrast it was the British, and soon the Russians, with their multi-ethnic armies who were to be cast in the role of the Persians, modern oriental hordes against whom western civilization had again to be defended. In an official publication, the German army noted that the prisoners-of-war

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the Museum staff at the time, also told me what he knew, as did others who had been informed, sometimes in confidence, by others who were in the know.

55 Examples are on show in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

56 Weinberger unnumbered, following 224.

of the 'mixed empire' from the Greek campaign consisted of only 2,000 'island English', 1,500 Australians and New Zealanders (that included Maoris), 1,000 men from Cyprus, 1,500 Jews and Arabs from Palestine, plus 'half-blood' sailors and Serbs.<sup>57</sup> The photograph reproduced as Figure 23.17 attempted to make the point visually.



Figure 23.17. British Army prisoners of war captured in Greece. German Army photograph.<sup>58</sup>

Among those who were captured were many telephone engineers hurriedly recruited in Palestine from both the Arab and Jewish populations, who laid many miles of telephone wire right to the front line, much of which had to be abandoned.

The German forces were proud of their highly mobile radio units, as shown by the photograph reproduced as Figure 23.18, taken by a soldier who was a member of one of these units, who preserved it in the album that members of the German forces were encouraged to prepare for their families for Christmas 1941. The album shows the troops as if they were on holiday, with beaches, swimming, visits to the Acropolis, welcoming peasants, shoe-shine boys, and only incidental pictures of the war, the damage it had done, and its consequences for the Greek people who by that time, as a result of seizures of food by the occupying armies, were on the verge of starvation.

57 [German High Command] *Das Zweite Kriegsjahr. Mit dem siegreichen deutschen Heer an der Kanalfront, durch Rumänien, Bulgarien, Serbien, Griechenland und Nordafrika, Herausgegeben von der Berichterstaffel des O.K.H.* (Berlin: Wilhelm Limpert Verlag, 1943), opposite 178.

58 [German High Command] *Das Zweite Kriegsjahr*, 175.



Figure 23.18. A German mobile wireless unit in Greece, 1941. Photograph<sup>59</sup>

What the Germans did not know, nor did most others until long after the war, was that while the telephone lines kept communications secure, the British were intercepting German army communications. On occasions the British-led forces, notably the New Zealanders, were ordered to make a last stand, like the Spartans at Thermopylae, only to be ordered to retreat to a prepared fall-back position at the last minute.<sup>60</sup>

Also captured were troops of the British Indian army as shown as Figure 23.19.

Although a few Indian soldiers accepted German offers to change sides, the British Indian army was to become the biggest wartime voluntary force in history, with nearly two million men joining and fighting under British and Indian officers. Even when Germany seemed to be winning in 1941 and 1942, they knew that, if Germany and Japan had won the war, they would be ranked near the bottom of the racial hierarchies of their enemies, and in 1944 in Greece the desolation that they had caused was evident to all.

59 Inserted in *Kriegsweihnacht 1941* 4./G.K.N.A.449. *Funkkompanie Einsatz Griechenland u. Serbien*, Private Collection.

60 Among the many acts of resistance for which the German military authorities imposed a summary death penalty was sabotage of communications, including cutting telegraph wires. Noted by Slocombe, 18. It is unlikely that the men who risked their lives knew that, by forcing the German forces to use wireless, they were facilitating interception by the Allies.



Figure 23.19. Indian army prisoners captured in Greece, 'cannon fodder made to bleed for England'. Photograph.<sup>61</sup>

Shimon Hacohen, an officer in the British army, in peacetime a port engineer in Palestine, made numerous sketches, not all flattering, of his fellow officers who were captured in Greece who were, like himself, held in a prisoner-of-war camp. An example is at Figure 23.20.



Figure 23.20. 'The westerner and the oriental.' British officer prisoners of war, 1942. Photograph of a sketch made on the spot on 7 March 1942.<sup>62</sup>

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- 61 Hüniger and Strassl, after 272. A photograph of other prisoners opposite noted that the British army 'even had Jews.'
- 62 Hacohen, Shimon, (Palestine Port Operating Royal Engineers) *A Symphony of Captivity*, 96 *Sketches* (Haifa: privately printed, 1947), 38. Hacohen had hoped

In the British army, as in Britain and the British dominions, colonies and other territories overseas, although there was much informal racialism, 'nation' was much the same as 'nationality', a matter of certificates and passports, a status that could be acquired and chosen, not an immutable identity that could never be resigned.

In the British press, Greece was presented with little exaggeration as the only country outside the British Commonwealth that had resisted Italian and German aggression. It was compared with little Plataea, the only city in Hellas that had fought alongside the Athenians at Marathon. The other countries in the Balkans who had permitted the German armies to pass through, or who accepted their invitation to join the New Europe had 'Medized', the term used by the ancient historians for the cities that made an accommodation with the Persian invaders in the invasion of 480 BCE.<sup>63</sup> Nor was this appropriation of the battle of Marathon a piece of propaganda exploited for current purposes. In the cultural struggle that was occurring alongside the clashes of armed forces, the men of Marathon had not only achieved immortal fame but had saved 'Europe'. According to Edward Freeman, the professor of history at Oxford University in Victorian times who had lamented the loss of the Frankish Tower, 'the men who fought at Marathon fought as the champions of every later generation of European man.'<sup>64</sup> And it was a small step for others to claim that both the immediate result of the battle and its alleged long-run effects were the result of a Christian providentialism. As Fisher Howe, one of those who set the agenda on Mars' Hill, wrote at almost the same time, in a book replete with endorsements by high-ranking ecclesiastics: 'The heroic Greeks quite unconsciously fought for Europe and distant ages [...] The hand of a higher Wisdom, and greater might than man's, controlled the issue. History and its recorded events, great and small, to human vision, are imperfectly understood when God's

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that his sketches could be sent to Britain through the Swiss authorities who had access to the Prisoner-of-War camps, but although they were deliberately kept free of any overt political message, permission was refused by the German authorities. The drawings that showed officers in handcuffs were confiscated 'as apt to bring a necessary German measure into contempt and could furthermore be used for propaganda purposes in England.' From the document photographed in Hacofen 48.

63 A theme of Mackenzie, Compton, *Wind of Freedom, The History of the Invasion of Greece by the Axis Powers, 1940-41* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1943).

64 Freeman, 54.



providential agency is lost sight of in that review'.<sup>65</sup> To many Victorians, their Christian god was not only orientalist in his assumptions and in his policies, but had been intervening in historical events for at least half a millennium before the birth of Jesus.

The British poet, Robert Graves, famous for exposing the realities of the First World War, and the gap between what was happening and how it was presented, caught the tone of the British official presentation of the series of defeats, retreats, and evacuations that the British forces suffered in the early years of the war. In 'The Persian Version', he imagined how the Persian army might have announced the defeat at Marathon, of which I quote the first and last couplets.

Truth-loving Persians do not dwell upon  
The trivial skirmish fought near Marathon. [...]  
Despite a strong defence and adverse weather  
All arms combined magnificently together.<sup>66</sup>

Although the British did not use the language of an 'elective affinity', they too claimed something similar. To Professor Mahaffy, for example, whose numerous popular and scholarly books dominated perceptions of ancient Greece in the anglophone world for many decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: 'The Greek classics are writings of men of like culture with ourselves, who argue with the same logic, who reflect with kindred feelings [...] In a word they are thoroughly modern, more modern than the epochs quite proximate to our own'.<sup>67</sup>

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65 Fisher Howe, 63.

66 It first appeared in *Poems 1938–1945* (1945). Part of the joke is that, although Persia was a vast empire, the sources for understanding it other than through the lens of the Greek narrative and metanarrative sources, consist only of a few archaeological remains, some clay tablets, and a few papyri, sources that, even although they are sparse, scattered, and indirect, are also replete with top-down self-celebration. What can be said about the Persian army and organization at the time of the battle, with reports of recent scholarly debates, although only those conducted in the English language, is summarized by Fink, Dennis L., *The Battle of Marathon in Scholarship. Research, Theories and Controversies Since 1850* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2014), pp. 14–29.

67 Mahaffy, J.P., Author of 'Prolegomena to Ancient History'; 'Kant's Philosophy for English Readers'; 'Social Life in Greece'; Etc. *Rambles and Studies in Greece* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition extended, London: Macmillan, 1887), 1. The phenomenon has been extensively explored by, for example, Jenkyns, Richard, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Oxford: OUP, 1980); Turner, F.M., *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (New York and London: Yale UP, 1981); Stray, Christopher, *Classics Transformed*.

And in the nineteenth century, as part of the spirit of Periclean Athens of which they claimed to be the heirs, they also began to claim the ancient Athenians as champions of democracy.

On 18 April 1941, when the German army was approaching Athens, the Greek Prime Minister, Alexander Korizis, who had taken over the leadership in January after the unexpected death of General Metaxas, shot himself.<sup>68</sup> In negotiations with the British he had requested the transfer to Greece of Cyprus, then a British colony, as a base from which the King of Greece could lead a continuing resistance. It was around this time too that the British Foreign Office drew up plans to offer to return the Marbles to Greece after the war, as part of a reassertion of old ties, and the offer appears to have been made. However, after the German invasion had been successful, the fact that the offer had been made was publicly denied.<sup>69</sup> By 1940 the sculptural pieces had become a part of the commonly-taught and officially-projected British national identity as a free, intellectual, and artistic people who had inherited the heritage of classical Athens. And, to judge from soldiers' accounts, the British army's troops, including those from the British dominions geographically far away who regarded themselves as kith and kin, had no difficulty in seeing the Acropolis as symbolic of the democracy for which they were fighting.<sup>70</sup> A seriously wounded British officer, who had considered taking his own life, records how he was encouraged by his first sight of the Acropolis to begin to think that life might still be worth living.<sup>71</sup>

And if the Germans could make the ancient Athenians work for them in the arena of international public opinion, the British had to

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*Schools, Universities and Society in England 1830–1960*, (Oxford: OUP, 1988) and the many others who have written about the portrayal of ancient Greece persons and themes in Victorian era 'art.' The clash between Freeman and Mahaffy over the monument cleansing of the Frankish Tower from the Acropolis in 1874 was discussed in Chapter 21.

68 Hadjipateras and Fafalios, 231.

69 Discussed in St Clair, *Lord Elgin* (1999), 334. The exchanges in Parliament are noted by Hitchens and others.

70 For example Helm, A. S., *Fights & Furloughs in the Middle East. A story of soldiering and travel in Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Crete, Transjordan, Syria, Irak and Iran, by a Kiwi of the 2nd N.Z.E.F.* (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, [n.d.], [1944]).

71 Howell, Wing Commander Edward, O.B.E., D.F.C., *Escape to Live* (London: Longman, 1947), 60. 'My eyes filled with tears at the beauty of the scene ... I had not shed a tear through months of drawn-out pain and moments of sharp agony; but this was too much. I lay on the bed and wept.'

think of ways of doing the same. On 23 April 1942, a few months after the United States had entered the war, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador in Washington, put a proposal to the British Foreign Secretary in a private letter. The episode has not hitherto been noted in histories of the Parthenon.

Halifax, who in 1939 had favoured the British making an accommodation with Germany rather than going to war, noted that imaginative ideas were needed to help raise enthusiasm for the war in the United States. More was needed, all agreed, than the already overworked 'returned hero and all that' clichés of war propaganda.<sup>72</sup> Halifax sent on a copy of a letter from 'a very intelligent American writer and publicist, rejoicing in the good Anglo-Saxon name of David L. Cohn' with whom he had recently talked.<sup>73</sup> The proposal was for the some of the Marbles to be secretly sent on board a British warship to the United States, where they would be put on public exhibition. The money raised would go to help the people of Greece, but the aim was wider. As Cohn wrote: the 'Marbles typify and are in themselves a glorious expression of western civilization at its highest peak, that civilization which western man inherited which is now being threatened with destruction, which we and our allies are struggling to preserve.' As part of the proposed plan, once they were safely transported, the British Prime Minister would publicly announce the intention to return them to Greece at the end of the war, where they would be put back on the Parthenon, as a symbol of the restoration of civilization.

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72 The phrase is from Evelyn Waugh's novel, based on his personal experience in the Crete campaign. Waugh, Evelyn, *Sword of Honour; with an introduction and notes Angus Calder* (London: Penguin, 1999), 448. At page 360 the novel notes the pestering by various government department to find ways 'to boost civilian morale and Anglo-American friendship.'

73 I have not been able to establish who was the David L. Cohn mentioned in the letter. One possible candidate is the David L. Cohn, author of 'I've Kept My Name A forthright rebuttal to 'I Changed My Name', an anonymous article published in the February 1948 edition of *Atlantic* (available to read free online). The author claims that the family actively chose the name Cohn: 'Our idea was to find a name soothing to the greatest possible number of preconceptions and prejudices we were likely to meet. Our choice, we had agreed, was not to be pure Anglo-Saxon (although that's such a marketable strain) because we are both dark, resembling our father rather than our mother, a blue-eyed blonde. No telling what shade our children might decide to assume. So, clasping hands in enthusiasm over our own shrewdness, we steered clear of a number of British pitfalls.' The coincidence is so neat that it is almost as if he is quoting Halifax's letter.

What is striking about the episode is that someone with the authority of Halifax, who had been within a few Cabinet votes of becoming Prime Minister, should consider that the Marbles carried so much symbolic power that Britain would be willing to consider diverting warships to transport them, to say nothing of incurring the risk of the Marbles being lost if the ships were sunk. As T. North Whitehead, the Foreign Office official, wrote on the file, using a classical allusion of Nero fiddling while Rome burned that he knew his readers in the Office would pick up: ‘when we are feeling reverses and possible defeat, have we no greater sense of urgency than to use our ships to create a mild surprise. Shades of Nero!’<sup>74</sup> In his polite reply, the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, made no direct reference to the risks, but only noted that any plan to lend the Marbles abroad would raise a storm of protest among the Greeks and their British supporters.<sup>75</sup>

The Athenians of the classical period played their part in the Second World War, as they had in the Revolution. When, however, the German Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, spoke of ‘the Greeks’, he meant not the Athenians but the Spartans, as was pointed out by his colleague Albert Speer.<sup>76</sup> Walther Darré, for some years the minister of agriculture in the NSDAP-led government, who used his position to publish many works in praise of the allegedly racially pure class of German small farmers under the slogan ‘blood and soil’, claimed Lycurgus, the mythic founder of the Spartan constitution, among his predecessors.<sup>77</sup> Nor, as with other aspects of Hitler’s policies, was his admiration a secret. In a speech of 1929, he had spoken of his respect for the 6,000 Spartans who been able

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74 Kew FO 371/33195. Thomas North Whitehead, son of the philosopher, had emigrated to the United States where he pioneered the study of human relations in industry at Harvard University. During the Second World War he returned to Britain, serving in the Foreign Office as adviser on American affairs.

75 Eden to Halifax, 23 April 1942, Kew FO 371/33195.

76 Quoted by Lösemann, Volker, ‘Sparta in the Third Reich’, 449, in [Birgalias, Buraselis and Cartledge] *Diethnes Institutou Archaiais Hellēnikēs Historias “Sōsīpolis”*, *Hē symvolē tēs archaias Spartēs stēn politikē skepsē kai praktikē epimeleia* (Parallel title: *The contribution of ancient Sparta to political thought and practice Nikos Birgalias, Kōstas Bourazelēs, and Paul Cartledge, editors* (Athens: Alexandria, 2007), pp. 449–63.

77 Noted by Bramwell, Anna, *Blood and Soil: Richard Walther Darré and Hitler’s Green Party* (Bourne End, Bucks: Kensal Press, 1985), 62. He may have known the remark of Thucydides in making his comparison between Athens and Sparta, and how his posterity was at risk of being misled if both societies left only ruins, that it was the Spartans who were so organised that defeated Athens in the Peloponnesian War, to be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

to make 340,000 enslaved helots work for them. And the Spartan polis, described by Hitler as ‘the purest racial state in history’, was to be the political model for German control over the peoples of eastern Europe. As the Commander of the nationwide, newly established Adolf Hitler Schools, Kurt Petter, wrote in his introduction to the main textbook compiled by German scholars in 1940 before the outbreak of war and later updated, it was Sparta that was the model for the Great National Socialist Reich that the chosen boys would help their leader (Führer) to create.<sup>78</sup> Early in his political career Hitler had made clear that his policies included the putting to death of sick, weak, and deformed children, as had been practised in classical Sparta and also in Athens.<sup>79</sup> Using the example of Sparta and Leonidas at Thermopylae, he had called for an unconditional duty for Germans to sacrifice themselves in battle, and even, as he was to attempt in 1945, a ‘strategy of magnificent defeat’.<sup>80</sup>

For over a century in Germany before the Second World War, the Royal Prussian Cadet-Schools, which trained boys from the age of ten to become army officers, and the *Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten* (‘Napolas’), which aimed to educate the future leaders of Germany, included a vision of Sparta, or rather of ‘Sparta’, in their curriculum. Pupils were taught that the Spartans were a racially pure Germanic people.<sup>81</sup> A book for teenage boys, *Spartanerjungen* (‘Spartan youth’) originally published around 1910 on the eve of the First World War and set in the late nineteenth century, which purported to be letters from a cadet to his mother, described the regime of discipline, physical hardships, harsh punishments, ritual humiliation, and secret courts, all allegedly based on Spartan ideals, including the claim that the cadets hoped for war and hoped to die in battle like the previous family members whose names were displayed on war memorials. The story

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78 [Vacano, Dr O.W. von, and others] *Sparta. Der Lebenskampf einer nordischen Herrenschrift* (Berlin and nation-wide: Arbeitsheft der Adolf-Hitler-Schulen, 1940) unnumbered 5. The second edition, dated 1942 but including material from 1943, published as *Bücherei der Adolf-Hitler-Schulen*, included at page 120, a transcript ‘Stalingrad – Thermopyla’ an appeal by the Reichsmarschal of the Army [Göring not named] to the army surrounded at Stalingrad to imitate Leonidas and die fighting,

79 The point is relevant to the question of what is displayed on the Parthenon frieze to be discussed in Chapter 24.

80 Lösemann, 450.

81 Discussed by Roche, Helen, *Sparta’s German Children: The Ideal of Ancient Sparta in the Royal Prussian Cadet-Corps, 1818–1920, and in the Nationalist-Socialist Elite Schools (the Napolas), 1933–1945* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2013).

praises the Spartan virtues of committing crimes provided you are not found out and, especially, of never sneaking on comrades, a bonding mechanism much practiced by criminal gangs now extended to a vast corps of military officers.

The cover of an edition reprinted before the Second World War is reproduced as Figure 23.21.

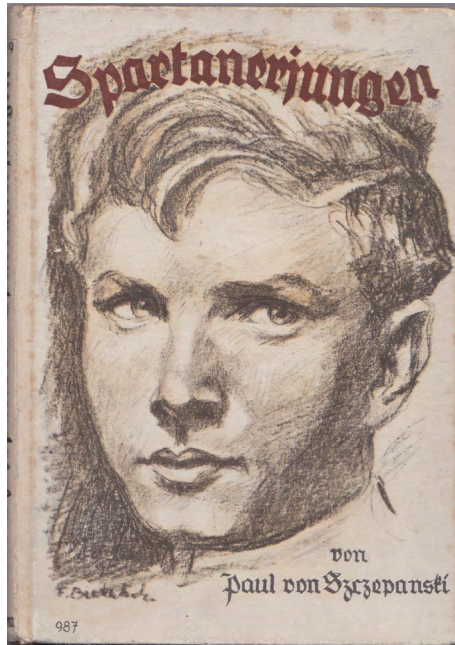


Figure 23.21. A German cadet as a young Spartans. Cover of Szczepanski, Paul von, *Spartanerjungen. Eine Kadettengeschichte in Briefen* (Leipzig: Wigand, [n.d.], 12th edition c.1930).<sup>82</sup>

In some respects, the ethos recommended was not much different from that of British schools where boys destined for leadership were taught 'muscular Christianity'.<sup>83</sup> In Britain, however, although there were claims that the classical Athenians were 'men like ourselves', no serious author claimed a 'blood' relationship with either the Athenians or the Spartans.

<sup>82</sup> Private Collection.

<sup>83</sup> It was published in an English translation made by a classical scholar and educationalist as Szczepanski, Paul Von, *The Prussian Cadet: Letters from a Cadet to his Mother* (London: Routledge, [n.d.], c.1910) along with Wildenbruch, Ernst von, *A Story of a Cadet Life*.

As a valley set in a mountainous region, as shown for example in Figure 23.22, taken from a German textbook on Sparta of the time, the site of ancient Sparta was presented as especially suitable for the ancient Spartans, who were said to have arrived from the far north—implying a geographical ‘natural’ and geo-determinist affinity between the two peoples, alongside the cultural ‘elective’ affinity of the eighteenth-century ideas about the effects of environment on character that had themselves drawn on ancient ideas.<sup>84</sup>



Figure 23.22. Sparta, 1930s. Photograph.<sup>85</sup>

The theory of the Aryans had been promoted throughout western Europe and North America during the nineteenth century. What had started as an empirically well-attested discovery about the common linguistic characteristics of certain language groups had been amalgamated with older speculations about why the ancient Hellenes had achieved so much. In France, however, in Germany, and elsewhere, the ‘Aryans’, about whom almost nothing was known or indeed knowable, provided a fantasyland within whose fluid boundaries could be invented mythic histories, lost paradises, and future utopias outside the constraints of evidence. To Count Gobineau, for example, one of the fathers of modern racial theory, the Aryans had practised an ideal society such as he imagined pre-Revolutionary France to have been, where the best men,

<sup>84</sup> Vacano, 17: ‘den nordischen Menschen.’

<sup>85</sup> Vacano, frontispiece.

by which he meant aristocrats and churchmen, provided leadership and where the uneducated masses ('les *imbéciles*, les *drôles* et les *brutes*' so italicized) were content with their lot, obediently did what they were told, and played no part in public policy. According to Gobineau, the invention of democracy in classical Athens, with its official fiction that citizens were equal, had proved to be a fatal error for the ancient city, and the modern version as adopted in Europe after the French Revolution, where citizens did not even live in proximity with one another, with its inbuilt 'bio-social determinism' spelled doom for western civilization.<sup>86</sup>

Nor was the account that the western theorists propounded unfair to ancient Hellas. Unusually for a woman, the wife of a French count, Valerie de Gasparin, who became a famous author, decided to read what Plato had actually written about the death of Socrates.<sup>87</sup> Although she remained sympathetic to his theism, as she went on to read what Plato had written on how an ancient city ought to be governed, she was horrified at what she called his tyrannical war on individuality, including his proposals for giving the state the responsibility for bringing up children, regulating family size, and, she might have added, his advocacy of infanticide as part of a policy of eugenics.<sup>88</sup> Were the prescriptions of the Christian god as set out in the Christian Bible, which the western missionaries were pressing on peoples round the world any more admirable, she wondered? Were they not much the same as the ancient Jewish laws and customs set out in the biblical book of Leviticus?<sup>89</sup> But de Gasparin's views attracted few adherents. According to a visitor to Athens in 1872, where her book was discussed among the foreign community among whom proto-fascist ideas were becoming more common, her views were 'absolutely insupportable'.<sup>90</sup>

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86 Discussed by Assimacopoulou, Fotini, *Gobineau et la Grèce*. Studien zur Geschichte Südosteuropas Bd. 15 (Frankfurt [and elsewhere]: Peter Lang, 1999). It is possible that Gobineau picked up his language of 'brutes' from ancient authors where it was fitted into another long run narrative back to ages for which there was little or no evidence at their time as will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

87 'Une femme, lire Platon!' [de Gasparin, Valérie] *Journal d'un voyage au Levant. Par l'auteur du Mariage au point de vue Chrétien* (Paris: Marc Ducloux et Ce., 1848), 86.

88 de Gasparin, pp. 86–105. Infanticide and exposure in classical Athens are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

89 de Gasparin, 100. And she might have added the advice of Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans*.

90 Eudel, 358. The remark, that was attributed to the archaeologist Burnouf, he says was shared. Eudel does not say whether they objected to a woman daring to enter



And there were many educated men and women in Europe and the United States, including many from within the governing elites, who accepted this broad analysis, internalized it, and adapted it to their local situation. According to Stewart Houston Chamberlain, a member of a prominent British family, whose 1899 work, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (*The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*) became one of the foundational texts for twentieth-century American and German racism, there were only two races with any claim to 'purity', the Germans and the Jews, and they were perpetually at war.<sup>91</sup> Already by the time of the outbreak of the First World War, the 'Aryans' had become a box of two compartments into which everything good or bad that had happened in the history of world could be fitted. The Aryans, we may judge, were useful too for articulating anxieties and insecurities, including revulsion against modern industrial and especially commercial society with its puzzling flows of financial capital and its international networks. The ancient Greeks and Romans, and a selected list of western Europeans were in put in the Aryan compartment: the rest in the other. Jesus of Nazareth presented a particular problem, especially at a time when, on the whole, the Christian churches were on the authoritarian political right. Chamberlain's answer was that Jesus had been Aryan. And, lying somewhere in the gap between historic times about which knowledge was steadily increasing, and the Aryans about whom nothing could be known, lay the ancient Hellenic Dorians and Ionians, the two main categories into which the Hellenes had divided themselves, each with its own myths and personified named founders. Among the conclusions of Karl Otfried Müller, whose ideas made their way into the mainstream across the Europeanised world, the 'slow and deliberate conviction' of the Spartan Dorians could be contrasted with the 'determined rashness' of the Ionian Athenians. The Dorians 'wished to preserve their ancient dignity and power', as well as their customs and religious feelings. The Ionians, Müller had noted, picking up the sneer that had been thrown at the Athenians by

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a mainly male sphere, or what is more likely, that her remarks undermined some of the views prevalent among both the Hellenists and the counter-Hellenists on Mars' Hill.

91 Quoted by Simon Goldhill in Gange and Ledger-Lomas, 103.

the narrator of the biblical Acts of the Apostles, were 'commonly in pursuit of something new'.<sup>92</sup>

During the German occupation of Greece, O-W von Vacano, an archaeologist and high ranking officer in the Hitler Youth, who in 1940 had published a book called *Sparta Der Lebenskampf einer nordischen Herrenschicht* ('Sparta, the Struggle for Existence of a Nordic Master Race'), carried out excavations at Sparta, the finds from which were sent to Germany.<sup>93</sup> According to a post-war assessment, the aim was to prove the 'kinship' of ancient Dorians with modern Germans.<sup>94</sup> A few pieces of broken pottery would give an apparently scientific proof to ideas that, by their very nature, could never either be validated or falsified from techniques and resources then foreseeable. Here too we are given a glimpse of an intended future, the laying down of tangible materiality from the earth for an intended new history. If Germany had won the war, the authors of museum labels, we can be confident, would have made the mute potsherds tell that story.

In the Second World War, although there had been shots fired at the Acropolis, the monuments were never in serious danger of being damaged in the fighting, whether from the Greek insurgency forces, from British bombing, or by the occupying Germans. Nor was there ever an occasion when military commanders were faced with the choice between saving the lives of their soldiers or destroying the ancient monuments, such as occurred frequently elsewhere in the war.

As it happened, the 4th Indian Division, which included British and other Allied units, that had been rushed to Greece from Italy in November 1944, had taken part in the most famous case of that dilemma in the war. Knowing that his troops were to be ordered to assault Monte Cassino, with its famous monastery, the British commander had decreed that it should be destroyed, despite its having been declared a war-free zone by the Germans and becoming a refuge for non-combatants, on the grounds—later disputed—that it was being used as an observation post from which to direct artillery. However, in the event, the rubble provided cover for the defenders, and in the assault the Indian division

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92 Müller, *Doric Race*, especially 73 and 216. The sneer and its context are discussed in Chapter 21.

93 Lösemann, Volker, 'Sparta in the Third Reich' in Birgalias, Buraselis and Cartledge 455.

94 Kew T209/129.

sustained nearly fifty per cent casualties before they were beaten back. Monte Cassino, far from offering a sharp choice between preserving a material monument of European civilization and prosecuting a war aimed at saving civilization itself, had shown that the dilemma had been misunderstood.

A photograph of some members of the 4th Indian Division visiting the Acropolis after they had helped to secure Athens from the 'December days' insurgency of 1944/45 is reproduced as Figure 23.23.

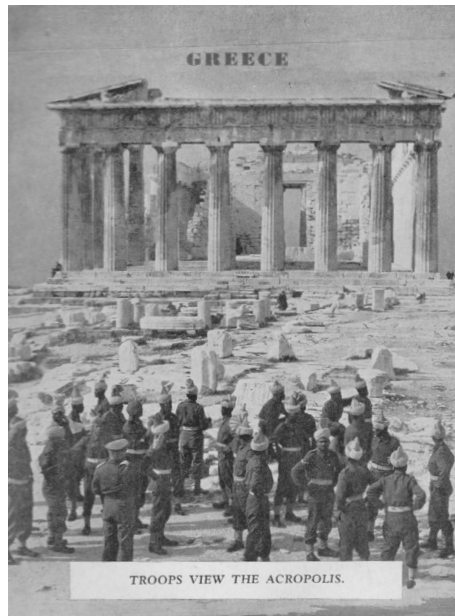


Figure 23.23. Troops of the 4th division of the British Indian army looking at the Parthenon, 1944 or 1945. Photograph.<sup>95</sup>

How far the Indian soldiers may have thought that they were fighting for the values of classical Athens, as 'men like ourselves,' cannot easily be judged. The language of Aryans was 'Indo-Germanic', and some scholars had promoted the idea that the Aryans had come from India to northern Europe before moving to Greece.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup> From *Red Eagles, the story of the 4th Indian Division, Tunisia, Italy, Greece* (Bombay: printed and published by G.S. Borker for the War Department, Government of India, c.1945), last page.

<sup>96</sup> Maps showing the alleged ancient migrations of the Aryans in Chapoutot, Johann, *Le nazisme et l'antiquité* (Paris: PUF, 2012), 593.

These histories reflect the changing meanings and identities that have been symbolised by the Parthenon throughout its existence. It has been a monument to the endurance of classical Hellas and a manifestation of its fragility, a beacon of democracy and a tool of fascist empire-building. The weighty presence of the stones themselves has been appropriated by a shifting set of narratives to meet political, ideological, and cultural needs ranging far beyond Greece itself.

## 24. The Parthenon in our Time<sup>1</sup>

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For most first-time visitors, any momentary sightings of the Parthenon or the Acropolis from the air or from the town are preliminary to a visit to the summit.<sup>2</sup> The single entrance gate, on the west side, is situated a short way from an open space where coaches, taxis, and cars drop off and pick up tourists, and where tickets, snacks, drinks, postcards, guidebooks, souvenirs and modern replicas are sold and washroom facilities provided. That frontier zone between contemporary Greece and ancient Hellas in normal times is workaday, untidy, busy, often noisy, and forever changing. With its colourful splatter of images of numerous contemporary icons, with languages and traditions mixing and remixing without unity or permanence, it is a typical postmodern tourist facility, such as is found in many cities where the London-style red buses present images of the local sights. Figure 24.1 offers two glimpses from recent years.

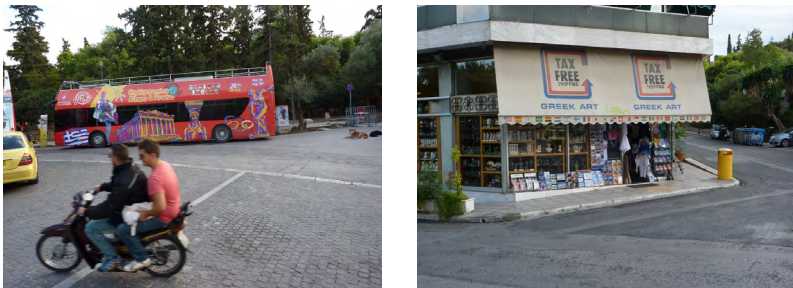


Figure 24.1. Two views of the frontier zone. Photographs by the author.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Parts of this chapter were published in St Clair, William, 'Looking at the Acropolis of Athens from Modern Times to Antiquity' in Sandis, Constantine, ed., *Cultural heritage ethics: between theory and practice* (Cambridge: Open Book, 2014), pp. 57–102.
- 2 In describing the recent changes, I do not wish to imply that wrong choices were made or that better options were available among competing considerations. As elsewhere I attempt to recover the viewerly experience.
- 3 Author's photographs.

The numerous ancient artefacts found in excavations on the Acropolis and its environs in the nineteenth century and later suggest that small objects, such as terracotta statuettes that, in modern terms, lie between 'art' and 'non-art', were available near the Acropolis in ancient times, and to judge from their highly generic dedicatory inscriptions, they may have been manufactured in bulk and been made available to visitors near the site, perhaps to be taken away as souvenirs, or more probably, as part of communal events.

Many visitors look up at the Acropolis and photograph it from the frontier zone but, in visual images made by professionals, this area is normally excluded or elided. Instead, many offer a scene taken from viewing stations where the frontier zone can be excluded from the field of view of the camera, although never from that of the eye. A typical example, commonly encountered, is reproduced as Figure 24.2.



Figure 24.2. The Acropolis, from the west. Photograph reproduced on an entrance ticket 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Although, at most times during daylight, tourists are normally to be seen entering and leaving the Acropolis in both directions, the main modern

4 The photograph from which the image is derived, with many others, was available at the time of writing at: <http://www.stoa.org/athens/sites/acrogeneral/source/p07033.html>

tradition is to omit people. During the early decades of photography, the technology was thought by itself to guarantee the truthfulness of the image ('the camera cannot lie'), but what has been more often offered by professional photographers in recent times is a staged presentation that lies between a factual documentary record of a clicked moment, and a vision of ancient Athens, also emptied of living people, that viewers are expected to wish to form in their minds. Such images prefigure and wordlessly invite visitors to adopt a way of seeing that moves in both directions along a spectrum from contemporary realism to timeless iconicity. They help to reinforce the expectations that have already been formed by many visitors long before they arrive.

When the Acropolis was a military fortress, that is, until 18 March 1835, when responsibility was passed by the Greek state to the newly established civilian National Archaeological Service, it was only from the west that a viewer, whether friendly or hostile, could gain some appreciation or what lay inside. The view encountered today, which gives prominence to the west front of the Parthenon, has however only been available when the walls on this side were low, as they are now, when they mainly serve as balustrades for those looking out. For at least half a millennium before the mid-1830s only the west pediment of the Parthenon could be seen, as one viewer noted, 'peering above' the walls.<sup>5</sup> The present view meets the needs of today, but we cannot assume that in ancient times more than the topmost part of the Parthenon, that is, the west pediment, was within sight. Indeed the building seems to have been designed so as to be encountered and seen in that way.<sup>6</sup> Since Greek temples, although each is unique, are architecturally generic, even a glimpse was enough to inform viewers that the building was extraordinarily large, with implications for what the size implied about its probable contents that, as ancient viewers knew, included many of the city's most valued possessions, not only physical treasures such as thieves might covet, but records on perishable materials.<sup>7</sup>

Beyond the modern entrance gate, notices ask visitors to respect the monuments and not to touch the marble. Eating, making loud noises, and the playing of music are forbidden, as likely to disturb the experience

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5 Giffard, Edward, *A Short Visit to the Ionian Islands, Athens, and the Morea* (London: Murray, 1837), 138.

6 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

7 Discussed further in *ibid.*

of those viewers who are assumed to prefer an atmosphere of silence in which to abstract themselves from their immediate here and now. The 'sacred rock' has some of the characteristics of a modern sacralized space, although none of the buildings, caves, or shrines are now used for religious purposes.<sup>8</sup> The reverential silence offers a different experience from what was normal in antiquity when, especially at festival times, the Acropolis was a place where all the senses, hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, and tasting, were actively engaged, and the participants, often specially costumed and moving in processions, performed and displayed to one another as well as to others who might see or hear them from a distance.<sup>9</sup>

To their left, as present-day visitors climb the boards and ramps that protect the ancient marble from their eroding feet, stands a colossal marble pedestal, and it is evident that the (now lost) statue or statues that formerly stood on its top dominated the view of the ancient entrance encountered by all who looked at the Acropolis from the west. It is shown in Figure 24.3.



Figure 24.3. Tourists passing the pedestal of the Monument of Agrippa as they go through the Propylaea.<sup>10</sup>

8 The phrase appears to be an early nineteenth-century coinage, although consistent with how the Acropolis was regarded in ancient times. It is used routinely by de Moüy, Cte Charles de, *Ambassadeur de France à Rome, Lettres Athéniennes* (Paris: Plon, 1887) who lived in Athens for six years in the 1880s, and occasionally by others back to the time of the Greek Revolution.

9 Discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

10 Author's photograph, 8 October 2014.



Marcus Agrippa, the Roman military commander in whose honour a colossal bronze portrait statue was placed on the pedestal in 27 BCE, as was discovered from an ancient inscription found in the eighteenth century, was one of a succession of notables in whose honour portrait statues were placed on this prime site, including Antony and Cleopatra whose forces Agrippa had defeated at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. The first occupant was a king of Pergamon, a Hellenic city in present-day Turkey, who had won the chariot race in the Panathenaic games of 178 BCE, a reminder that, in an ancient Greek city, more than half a millennium after the building of the classical Parthenon, success in competitive sports, whose association with success in war was never absent, could be turned into political prestige. The episode reminds us too that in antiquity the stories offered by the built environment ('heritage') were liable to be changed, with each change looking backward as well as forward in time, and with the promoters of each change expecting, or at least hoping, to give an impression of permanence.<sup>11</sup> Although the pedestal of Agrippa dates from centuries after the classical age, and was unusual in having escaped the nineteenth-century clearances, in its present untenanted state it detracts little from the apparent monumental unity of the Acropolis entrance.<sup>12</sup>

A photograph, shown as Figure 24.4, taken when the clearances were not yet started, shows how the monument was more damaged than classical-era buildings erected centuries earlier. Small fissures that had been opened by natural causes, especial the wind, had gradually widened, not only damaging the appearance, but shortening the life expectancy of the building. This was a phenomenon known to the classical-era designers and builders and helps to explain why the Parthenon had apparently been engineered to such a high degree of precision.<sup>13</sup>

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11 Discussed further in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

12 The clearances were described in Chapter 21.

13 The phenomenon of winds enlarging small apertures, like a river cutting its way through narrows, is noted, with a reference to an ancient author in my attempt to reconstruct the discursive environment in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



Figure 24.4. The monument of Agrippa. Sepia photograph, perhaps by Constantinos.<sup>14</sup>

On their right, visitors see the small, externally now almost complete, building dedicated to Athena Nike ('Athena as Victory'), in modern times sometimes called the 'Victory without Wings' in an implied contrast with personifications such as the 'Winged Victory of Samothrace' now on display in the Louvre.<sup>15</sup> One of the four buildings of the classical era on the Acropolis summit that still stand, the Nike temple too is visible from a distance as well as from close up. It is shown in Figure 24.5, as it looked after the recent conservation, before the new marble had weathered to begin to match the old.



Figure 24.5. Athena Nike temple (2011), after conservation. Photograph by Rafael da Silva.<sup>16</sup>

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- 14 Loosely inserted in an album of nineteenth century photographs of Greece, none dated. Private collection
- 15 As explained by, for example, Frazer in his edition of Pausanias, iv, 257, the temple is not dedicated to a personification of victory but to 'Athena as victorious', and Athena is always presented as without wings.
- 16 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ATENAS\\_-\\_TEMPLO\\_DE\\_ATHENA\\_NIKE\\_-\\_ACR%C3%93POLE.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ATENAS_-_TEMPLO_DE_ATHENA_NIKE_-_ACR%C3%93POLE.JPG)

As discussed earlier it was the first classical-era building to be rebuilt after independence.<sup>17</sup> With its combination of ancient and newly-cut marble, and its sculptural components that told ancient stories presented in facsimile, the building is now, apart from the absence of polychromy and painted metal, as near in form to the classical structure as is possible. Hitherto, the final step of restoring the colour has been resisted as a step too far.

The Acropolis Conservation and Restoration Programme that began in 1975 has, from the beginning, been carried out in conformity with the principles of the Venice Charter, the UNESCO convention on best practice in conservation that was adopted in 1964, among whose provisions is a requirement that viewers should be able easily to distinguish any new additions and that changes should be reversible. The Venice Charter and its more limited predecessor, the Athens Charter of 1931, were the first formal steps in the development of an intergenerational code of ethics in the care of ancient monuments.<sup>18</sup> Their adoption owed much to later dissatisfaction with what had been done to the Acropolis in the nineteenth century. There was also a determination not to repeat the mistakes made, with exceptions, as old buildings that had previously given a distinctive local identity which had been destroyed during the Second World War all over Europe were crudely rebuilt or replaced.

As visitors reach the clear ground on the Acropolis summit plateau, they realise that they have passed through an imposing ceremonial entrance, the Propylaea ('Before Gates'). Although the Propylaea of the classical-era Acropolis, unusually for such a building, had five entrances, one wide enough for vehicles, enabling ancient visitors to arrive and depart in large numbers simultaneously, today's visitors are funneled through the central way as seen in Figure 24.6. They may glance at the large detached empty chamber to their right as they descend—the stance from which the photograph was taken—a building that in classical Athens served as a picture gallery of the history of the city, part of the showcased and officially recommended memory, and one of the wonders of the classical Acropolis.

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17 In Chapter 21.

18 Some of the issues are discussed in Sandis. A collection of primary documents that relates the history of the issues back to Ruskin is provided, for example, by Price, Talley, and Vaccaro.



Figure 24.6. Tourists passing through the Propylaia.<sup>19</sup>

The dislocation of the column drum, which is due to be corrected as part of the current conservation programme, is a reminder that Athens stands in an earthquake zone and that the ancient buildings of the Acropolis have withstood being shaken many times. The fact that the ancient columns had been able to survive earthquakes is vividly shown in Figure 24.7, one of the first images made by the then recently invented technology of light on a chemical plate.



Figure 24.7. 'Les Propylées à Athènes, 1839' Engraving from a daguerreotype.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Author's photograph, 8 October 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Made by Lerebours, copied photographically by Dusseq and Company from the copy engraved by Riffaut. Included in Lerebours, Noël-Marie-Paynal, *Excursions daguerriennes: Vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe* (Paris: Dusacq & Co.,

This picture shows how the site appeared after the initial clearances, which had involved digging out the ancient building from its rebuilding by the successors to the Frankish crusaders in the European Middle Ages. It also shows how the huge lintel that had so impressed Cockerell had survived to that time, although, like the huge block of the Parthenon, it later had to be rescued as an emergency when it was beginning to crack.<sup>21</sup>

Until the rapid urban expansion of Athens in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, those descending through the Propylaia had a framed view across the plain with its olive plantations, to the island of Salamis in its natural harbour. An example from the early twentieth century that uses bibliographic signs, including archaizing sepia, to help the viewer imagine himself or herself back into classical Athens, is reproduced as Figure 24.8.



Figure 24.8. The outward view to the sea from the Propylaia c.1910. Cover of a book of photographs taken earlier by Frédéric Boissonas, 1921.<sup>22</sup>

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1841), in which the images were kept loose so that they could be passed round as separate pictures among groups of friends and discussed as a drawing room practice for those obliged to stay at home.

- 21 Discussed in Chapter 6 with an illustration at Figure 6.5. My discussion of why the ancient Athenians decided, in modern terms, to over-engineer the Parthenon and other public buildings is in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.
- 22 [Boissonas and Deonna] *L'Image de la Grèce, Athènes Ancienne, Photographies de Fred. Boissonas, Introduction de W. Deonna* (Geneva: Éditions d'Art F. Boissonas, 1921).

Some inscriptions lightly carved on the columns of the ancient buildings during the Byzantine era can still be seen, but only if visitors know where to look. An example from the Propylaea is shown as Figure 24.9.



Figure 24.9. Christian-era inscriptions carved on a column of the Propylaea.<sup>23</sup>

In recent times, with the loss to air pollution of the topmost layer of the marble, many of the inscriptions are no longer readable. Fortunately, most from the Byzantine period and some from the Frankish period, which lasted from 1204 until the Acropolis was handed over to the sultan's army in 1459, were copied and published in the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> First noticed in the 1850s, at a time when many of the monuments were

<sup>23</sup> Author's photograph, 3 October 2013.

<sup>24</sup> For an edition, with line drawings that show the sheer miscellaneity of what was recorded, as well as the variety of scripts, see [Orlandos, *Inscriptions*] Orlandos, Anastasios K., *Ta charagmata tou Parthenōnos: ētoi epigraphai charachtheisai epi tōn kionōn tou Parthenōnos kata tous palaiochristianikous kai vyzantinous chronous* (Athens: Akadēmia Athēnōn. Kentron Ereunēs tou Mesaionikou kai Neou Hellēnismou, 1973). A summary account with photographs of some of the inscriptions on the Parthenon is given by Kaldellis, Anthony, *The Christian Parthenon, Classicism and Pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens* (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), 76 and 77. Noted also by Korres in Tournikiotis, 147. Some are illustrated, along with other fragments, in [Kourouniōtēs and Sōtēriou] *Mesaionika mnēmeia Attikēs, Parts 1 and 2* by K. Kourouniōtēs and G.A. Sōtēriou; part 2 in addition by A. Xyngopoulos; part 3 by A.K. Orlandos (Athens: [n.d.], 1927–1933). Some surviving on the Erechtheion are noted and illustrated by Lesk, Alexandra L., *A Diachronic Examination of the Erechtheion and its Reception* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cincinnati, 2004), <http://www.erchtheion.org/images/pdfdocumentation/lesk%20phd%20vol%20i%20text.pdf>.

covered with modern graffiti, two hundred and thirty inscriptions were found on the columns of the Parthenon, eighty on the Propylaia, and a few more on the Erechtheion. They include epitaphs of named local ecclesiastical office holders, prayers, and graffiti by visitors. Examples from woodcut reproductions of drawings made when the inscriptions were first identified are given in Figure 24.10.

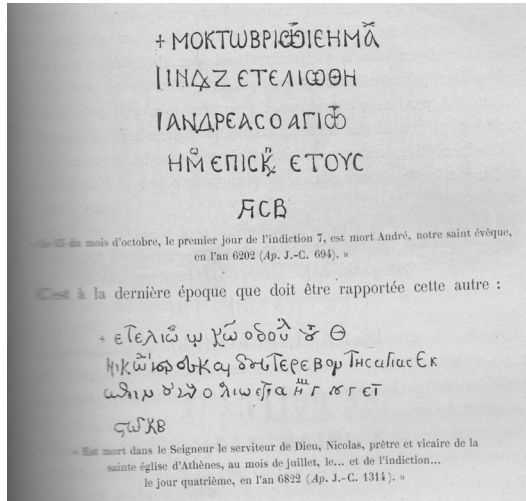


Figure 24.10. Examples of Byzantine-era inscriptions on the columns of the Parthenon. Wood engravings.<sup>25</sup>

Just as at the end of antiquity the Christians who took control of the eastern Roman Empire had put a stop to the practice of setting up three-dimensional statues, acting under a Christian discourse of forbidding 'idolatry', they had also, the archaeological record confirms, banned free-standing inscriptions ('stelai'), yet another way in which the new rulers distanced themselves from the practices of the Hellenic-Roman world that they had superseded.<sup>26</sup> Since the inscriptions on the columns are carved on what had by that time been architecturally adapted and re-sacralized as Christian churches, we can be confident that most had required the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities then in control of the Acropolis. Although not long ago described as 'vast ledgers',

<sup>25</sup> Breton, 137.

<sup>26</sup> Discussed by Smith, R.R.R., & Bryan Ward-Perkins, *The Last Statues of Antiquity* (Oxford: OUP, 2016) drawing on an online database.

the inscriptions are mostly in the changing non-monumental scripts used in manuscripts and could never have been easily consulted or read.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, although they are not graffiti, it is hard to understand how they may have been used in their time, or indeed why the words may have been inscribed. Apart from some of the lists of ecclesiastical office-holders, they lack any obvious organizing principle. It is hard to regard them as presenting a coherent social memory for members of the organizations then in control of the Acropolis, let alone for visitors.

If there was also a papyrus and vellum-based system, as there had been in the ancient world—which seems likely—all the records have been lost. And, as for any later ecclesiastical records on paper, with few exceptions, everything combustible was destroyed during the Greek Revolution. What we can say about the inscriptions of the Christian era is that, compared with what went before, the practice was low-tech, the patterns haphazard, the content basic, and the numbers tiny. It was a drastic change from the days when the Hellenic Acropolis was a forest of free-standing marble and bronze statues, and of myriad inscriptions, almost all of which were clearly carved and easily readable by those who were literate in Greek and which, in some cases, continued undisturbed for centuries after they were first put up.

It was in the waters visible and framed as in Figure 24.8, which were seen by everyone exiting the Acropolis, that classical Athens and her allies had won a decisive victory over the invading Achaemenid (Persians and their allies including some from Hellenic cities) in 480 BCE. Although most Athenians had direct experience of the bay of Salamis and of its islands, it was only from the high ground of the famous hills that they could gain a totalizing view, and it was only when returning back through the Propylaea that they were obliged by the architecture to hold their gaze steady. Since, as was discovered when the building was examined and measured in the nineteenth century, a change had been made to the orientation of the building during the course of its construction, the recent suggestion by Samantha Martin McAuliffe and John Papadopoulos that it may have been repositioned in the post-Salamis classical age with that exact outward sightline in mind is highly plausible.<sup>28</sup>

27 The phrase used by Kaldellis, *Christian Parthenon*, 75.

28 Samantha Martin McAuliffe and John K. Papadopoulos, 'Framing victory: Salamis, the Athenian Acropolis, and the Agora', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*



And if Salamis was a reminder of the victory over the invaders, it was also a reminder of where the non-combatant population had successfully sought refuge. During most periods in its history, Athens had been vulnerable to sea pirates landing on the coast and bands of marauders arriving from landward. Salamis, so close to the shore as to be almost a peninsula, is hard to blockade by sea. On numerous occasions during its long history when Athens was threatened, some people had sought refuge in the Acropolis but, as in the Greek Revolution, the majority had gone to Salamis in hopes of being able to sit out the crisis.<sup>29</sup> Lookouts on the tops of the Acropolis buildings could see invaders before they reached the town from any direction, but could also see the islands in the bay and the mountains on the inland side to which the people had historically been able to flee.<sup>30</sup> Thucydides in the fifth century BCE had speculated that it was because the Acropolis lay a few miles inland that it had originally been chosen for human colonization at some remote time.<sup>31</sup> And, if it was important for the defenders to be able to look outwards from a high point inside, it was also helpful if the fortress could give an appearance of invulnerability to those looking at it from outside.

The Propylaia, when seen from a distance from outside, is still easily imaginable as forbidding, not only in all the centuries before gunpowder, but even with the weapon technology of the early nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> And that it had achieved this purpose is confirmed by remarks made by the ancient authors. For example, the 1st century BCE Roman writer and politician Cicero, who had studied the art of rhetoric in Athens, in

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71 (2012), 332–61. That the irregularities that were introduced in the course of the construction of the Propylaia were aimed at improving the sightlines for those looking up from outside had been suggested by Elderkin, George Wicker, *Problems in Periclean Buildings* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University. Princeton Monographs in Art and Archaeology. no. 2. 1912).

29 For example in the Greek Revolution; during the invasion of 1687/88: in 490 BCE; and probably on other occasions.

30 In 480 BCE.

31 The main passage in which Thucydides discusses what he knew about the pre-history of Hellas, including Athens, is at the commencement of his history, in Book i, 2–12. How he presented what he had put together from the sources available to him as a progressive narrative of economic and social development, as did others, and how some of the components of that narrative made their way on to the stories presented on the Parthenon, is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

32 My discussion of the considerations likely to have been present in those who commissioned the building, or rather rebuilding, in the fifth century is in *ibid.*

making the general point that excellent public art had not always united Athens politically, mentions its glories in the following order: theatre, gymnasia, portico, famous Propylaia, Acropolis, the works of Pheidias, and the Piraeus.<sup>33</sup>

When, over a century later in the year 101 CE, in a rare recorded example in the ancient world of local resistance to the destruction of what today is called the built heritage in the name of economic development, Dio of Prusa made light of the protests of his fellow citizens to a proposed clearance scheme by declaring that it was not as if he was proposing to tamper 'with the Propylaia of Athens or the Parthenon'.<sup>34</sup> In a rhetorical exercise by the same author, the itinerant philosopher and teacher ('sophist') Diogenes of Sinope is said to have declared that, in his wide experience, well-made Hellenic cities were more effective in appearance than the much larger imperial Asiatic capitals of Babylon or Ecbatana, citing among his examples 'the Athenian acropolis and the Propylaia'.<sup>35</sup> Visible from ground level within a wide arc to the west, the Propylaia was more often seen in ancient times than the Parthenon, and it appears to have been valued at least as highly. Indeed, they seem to have been built almost simultaneously as a pair, a fact that suggests that they were designed to serve complementary purposes.<sup>36</sup>

Figure 24.11 shows the view of the Parthenon that opens up to the visitor arriving on the summit. The modern path both protects the ancient surface underneath and silently guides visitors to the main recommended viewing station.

The paths accord with a provision of the Venice Charter that aims to limit the extent to which any one generation can deliberately or inadvertently foreclose options that a future generation might prefer, as happened with the nineteenth-century interventions discussed in Chapter 21. If a future generation were to decide to make changes to

33 Cicero, *De Re Publica* 3.32.44, quoted by Davison, ii, 1018.

34 Dio, *Fortieth*, 8. He mentions among other then untouchable sites the temple of Hera of the people of Samos, the temple of Didyma of the Milesians, or the temple of Artemis at Ephesos.

35 As recorded in the rhetorical exercise by Dio of Prusa, *Sixth Discourse*, 5. I purposely avoid 'more beautiful', the usual translation of *καλλίονας*, because of that word's association with the western romantic aesthetic. The Greek word seems normally to have contained a notion of 'beautiful for a purpose.'

36 As will be discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>



Figure 24.11. The Parthenon from the north-west.<sup>37</sup>

the visitor experience at the summit in order to make it more truthful to ancient times, for example, by restoring the grass and other greenery or by altering the recommended viewing station, the paths could be repositioned without damage to the ancient fabric.<sup>38</sup>

The image catches a moment in the changing appearance of the Parthenon as it is currently being conserved and restored. Although not discernible as such from the ground, the sculptures that visitors see on the buildings are facsimile replicas of the ancient originals that have in recent years been taken to atmospherically-controlled environments indoors in the Acropolis Museum where they can be viewed close up. As any visitor can, however, at once appreciate, the sculptural components of the ancient buildings are as integral to their architectural design as the walls and the columns. The actual Parthenon that changes as the conservation programme proceeds coexists with an image of a timeless Parthenon, shown without scaffolding or people, that appears on the entrance tickets, as shown in Figure 24.12.

<sup>37</sup> Author's photograph, 8 October 2014.

<sup>38</sup> The Venice Charter and its predecessor the Athens Declaration, attempts to formulate a notion of inter-generational responsibility are discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



Figure 24.12. The Parthenon from the north-west. Entrance ticket to the Acropolis, issued 6 October 2013.<sup>39</sup>

This view of the Parthenon from the north-west is reproduced on the posters, postcards, and covers of guidebooks to be seen in the windows and on the racks of the shops and kiosks that surround the Acropolis. It is the most commonly encountered image throughout Greece and abroad. For more than a century and a half it has set an agenda for the main modern ways of looking at the Acropolis, for ways of symbolically presenting ancient Hellas in visual form, and for the recommended viewing station.<sup>40</sup> Nor, although there are grumbles that the conservation works are taking too long, do present-day viewers appear to have difficulty in eliding the scaffolds from their minds as easily as they elide the other, apparently temporary, but in reality permanent, modern fixtures on the Acropolis, such as the lamps for electric floodlighting. A periphery of iconicity has implicitly recommended the viewing experience long before visitors reach the entrance gate. And just as, when visitors look at the restored buildings, they cognitively operate simultaneously in more than one temporality by distinguishing the ancient marble from the new, they also operate at more than one level of interpretation, seeing the actual stones, imaginatively replacing at least some of what has been lost since ancient times, and often drawing wider meanings from the experience. Since no attempt has been made to restore the colour and metal that helped the ancient viewer to see and

<sup>39</sup> Private collection.

<sup>40</sup> The main viewing stations in ancient times, and for which the Parthenon was probably designed, were at the far end of the Parthenon as discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>

understand the stories displayed, the images risk implying to modern viewers that ancient viewers saw bare white marble.<sup>41</sup> In ancient times too, we can be confident that visitors to the classical Acropolis brought horizons of expectations, and ways of seeing and making meaning, that those who were responsible for the design and construction of the site in classical times built into their plans and designs.<sup>42</sup>

We can be confident that the modern recommended viewing station of the Parthenon was not privileged in classical Athens, if, as is doubtful, it was available at all. The side of the building on which modern viewers are encouraged to fasten their gaze was then the back, and it included a small door into a strong room.<sup>43</sup> The main action in ancient times took place at the other end of the building where a larger gate, probably also normally closed, could be opened to reveal in a dark chamber the cult statue of Athena, made to appear as if it was entirely constructed of gold and ivory.

Beyond the Parthenon, arriving visitors see the fourth classical-era building on the Acropolis, commonly called the Erechtheion although it is a composite of three buildings, as shown in Figure 24.13. It too stands in isolation with roped-off walkways that enable visitors to see its complex three-part structure from angles all round.



Figure 24.13. The Erechtheion conserved.<sup>44</sup>

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41 The ancient experience is discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*.

42 Discussed further in *ibid.*

43 Discussed further in *ibid.*

44 Author's photograph, October 2013.

Although there are still areas of the summit where visitors can wander at will, they are now mostly obliged to keep to the roped walkways. By such discreet measures, the cavities and cuttings on the rock floor that record the shape and size of ancient buildings, and of the plinths of statues and other dedications that formerly stood there, are protected for the future, including the possibility that they may help to answer questions not yet thought of with technologies not yet invented.<sup>45</sup> On the summit, today occasionally a darting lizard can be glimpsed, but although the noise of jackdaws is incessant, few birds visit. Nor apart from a few of the cypresses and the olive tree is there much vegetation. The Acropolis summit today probably supports less flora and fauna than at any time since the first settlers cleared the plateau at some time in the neolithic past.

At some places, fragments of other buildings that formerly stood on the Acropolis have been collected on the area of the summit where the main action occurred in ancient times. An example is shown in Figure 24.14.



Figure 24.14. Fragments of the round Temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus.<sup>46</sup>

45 For the archaeological importance of the cavities and cuttings in the bare rock, see, for example, Keesling, Catherine M., *The Votive Statues of the Athenian Acropolis* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), 3.

46 Author's photograph, 26 June 2014. The monument is discussed by Schmalz, Geoffrey C.R., 'Athens, Augustus, and the Settlement of 21 B.C.', *Greek, Roman and*

Located just east of the Parthenon, the small circular temple of which these pieces were formerly part is thought to have been constructed around the year 20 BCE, soon after the Roman military commander Octavian renamed himself 'Augustus,' (in Greek, 'Sebastos') Caesar and became the first emperor of Rome, although he himself studiously avoided that title. For centuries after that time the little building reminded visitors that, despite the continuation of many of the ancient political and cultural practices, the Acropolis was no longer primarily an Athenian or even a Hellenic site, but had become part of the imperium of Rome. When first dedicated, the building had also marked the then recent triumph of the forces of Octavian over those of Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium in 31 BCE when, as part of the spoils of victory, Octavian and Marcus Agrippa had won what turned out to be the opportunity to make a more enduring change in the visitor's viewing experience at both ends of the Acropolis.

The temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus was the last public building to be erected on the Acropolis summit in ancient times. Pausanias does not mention it and its name is only known from an inscription discovered in modern times. The heaped stones therefore remind us that, although the world of Greco-Roman antiquity continued in Athens for roughly half a millennium after the building of the classical-era Parthenon, at the time when the little round temple to Rome and Augustus was first planned, commissioned and built, the classical buildings were already a 'heritage' that those who controlled the Acropolis could choose either to destroy and replace, or, as happened on this occasion, to save, maintain, adapt, and appropriate to their own rhetorical purposes.<sup>47</sup> And with the appropriations, as with the buildings appropriated, consumers could choose to ignore or resist the rhetoric that they offered, both as viewers themselves and as authors or speakers who made recommendations to others.

Since enough remains to enable a rebuilding ('anastelosis'), some of the leaders of the Acropolis Conservation and Restoration

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*Byzantine Studies*, 37, 4 (1996). For a discussion of why it was built, see *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>. Examples of modern reputation cleansing are noted there.

47 An image appears on a Roman coin of the 3rd century.

programme have proposed that the temple should be reassembled. It would be a way of giving visitors a fuller sense of the long history of the Acropolis in ancient times, modifying the visual concentration on the classical period brought about by the nineteenth-century clearances. Although, in one sense, to do that could be regarded as a form of decolonizing of the Athenian past from the hegemony of the classical period, which some might regard as diversifying, it would, in this case, be to recolonize it with a colonizing building.<sup>48</sup> The question of what to do with the heaps of stones therefore brings to the fore wider questions about which pasts deserve to be rebuilt and on what grounds. The mere fact of sufficient stones having survived not only remits decisions about what ought to be done now and in the future to the contingencies of past events, including the unexpected survival of the monuments during the Greek Revolution, but reinforces a bias in favour of conquerors and appropriators. Although much can be, and is, done by modern labelling, the visual past cannot easily be updated to match modern understandings; instead it instantiates political decisions from moments in the past that were often contested at the time they were taken, even in the case of the classical-era Parthenon. At the time of writing, a decision about the future of the temple to Rome and Augustus has been indefinitely postponed.<sup>49</sup>

A capital from one of the columns of this building was brought to London by agents of Lord Elgin in the early nineteenth century, in accordance with his aim of providing examples of ancient design for the artists and architects of his time to use as models in their own work, although there is no record of this piece ever having been used for that purpose. A 'necking drum' was itself appropriated from the Erechtheion nearby by those who made it in ancient times and it is, at the time of writing, in a basement gallery of the British Museum which is often closed, seldom visited, and exclusively given over to 'architectural' fragments, reinforcing the modern western distinction anachronistically imposed on the ancients by Winckelmann and others, that puts the design of inanimate objects above the use to which objects were put when they were first made, and treats 'architecture' as of less value than 'sculpture'.

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48 An experiment in recovering ways of seeing prevalent in the Roman period is offered in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

49 *Acropolis Restored*, 8.





Figure 24.15. Capital from the temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus.<sup>50</sup>

This picture reminds us that Elgin's agents, as part of his aim of providing actual exemplars for the use of modern artists and architects, removed substantial pieces, architectural as well as sculptural, from all four of the classical-era buildings that were then still standing on the summit, as well as from the other ancient buildings on the Acropolis slopes and in the town.<sup>51</sup> The extent to which the architectural exemplars were used, for example by those who designed buildings in the second wave of neoclassical building in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century, after the publication of the second edition of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* in 1830, has not been investigated, but I know of no example of this piece ever having been used for this purpose, and for around a century any serious architect commissioned to build in the Athenian style has preferred to look at the buildings as they exist in Athens.

Pausanias does not mention the statue of Agrippa at the Acropolis entrance. As early as the eighteenth century it was being suggested that Pausanias's neglect of Roman monuments was evidence of a passive-aggressive resentment at the fact that the cities of ancient Hellas had lost their independence.<sup>52</sup> That, however, may be to assume that writers in the Greek language at that time thought of themselves as Hellenes or Greeks rather than as Romans, and may therefore risk an anachronistic imposition of modern notions of 'nation'. What we can say with greater confidence is that Pausanias knew that the potential readers of his book,

50 Photograph, 21 April 2014 by Luciana Gallo for the author.

51 See 'Note on the phrase Elgin Marbles' in Appendix A.

52 For example, Chandler, *Travels in Greece*, 43. The recovery and the unique value of the work by Pausanias were discussed in Chapter 8.

including those who might use it as a guide when visiting the site, were more interested in the monuments of classical Athens than in those that were then contemporary or modern.<sup>53</sup> Like present-day viewers, they selected what was salient to them and elided what was not. Although there are other remains of buildings and sanctuaries, both pre-and post-classical, that are well explained on modern labels, the exceptions detract little from the sense that the Acropolis summit today is an open-air museum that contains four magnificent examples of the architecture of classical Athens: Propylaea, Athena Nike, Parthenon, and Erechtheion, all built of white marble, standing on a rough bare plateau at odd angles and with no apparent unity or logic. None of the buildings can now normally be entered, as was probably also the norm in ancient times.<sup>54</sup>

There are a few cypress trees that may have marked the sites of cemeteries.<sup>55</sup> More often pointed out is an olive tree, as shown in Figure 24.16, growing in its own well-watered enclosure.



Figure 24.16. The olive tree by the Erechtheion, the Parthenon behind.<sup>56</sup>

The present tree is said to have been planted in 1952 from a sprig from a tree that had died during the German and Italian military occupation

53 My attempt to recover some of the admiration of classical Athens during the circumstances of the so-called ‘Second Sophistic’ is in the companion volume.

54 Plans to install a floor inside the Erechtheion, to enable it to be entered, were reported in October 2014 in *Archaeology News Network* 9 October 2014 quoting the Athens newspaper *To Vima*.

55 For the burials on the Acropolis summit see Chapter 8. Since all the trees on the summit appear to have been destroyed for their wood during the two sieges of the Acropolis of the Greek Revolution, 1821/22 and 1826/27, the present trees may not date back to before the mid-nineteenth century.

56 Author’s photograph October 2013.

of 1941–1944, although I have been unable to find confirmation of this.<sup>57</sup> In ancient times, as visitors then already knew or soon learned from their guides or guide-books, the olive tree gave living expression to a famous episode in Athenian history. It was said that on the day after the destruction of the Acropolis by the Persian armies in 480 BCE, the olive tree that the invaders had cut down sprouted a new branch four feet long, a graphic reminder to Athenians of the resilience of their city during its greatest test, when it was beset by both external enemies and their internal supporters.<sup>58</sup> Already in pre-classical times, the tree took Athenian viewers back to their mythic pre-history, when, according to one of the city's founding legends, Athena and Poseidon had contested for the territory of Attica. Poseidon, the god of the sea, who was the loser, had struck the rock with his trident, and a spring of salt water had sprung up. Athena, who caused an olive tree to grow even on the sparse soil of the Acropolis, had established the foundations for the expansion of the Athenian economy and of the social and intellectual development with which it was associated.<sup>59</sup> The oil from harvested olives was a crop of extraordinary value, a nourishing food, but useful for many other purposes, including for lamps for lighting and for cleaning the body. The pulp of the olives from which the oil had all been pressed was made into cakes that, when dried in the sun, made an excellent bio-fuel.<sup>60</sup> Olive oil is easily stored, easily transported, and, although there are differences of quality, as a commodity it is exchanged as a form of easily negotiable currency and may have been so used.<sup>61</sup>

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57 The olive tree is to be seen in photographs and postcards of the time of the occupation, and in Wigram, W.A., *Hellenic Travel, A Guide* (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), opposite 29, a book that was published soon after the end of the Second World War and that appears to use photographs that had been made at that time. I have been unable to find the date when the first modern olive tree was planted. Since no tree appears in the photographs by Boissonnas or those made earlier, my guess is that it was part of the anastelosis of the early twentieth century.

58 Herodotus viii, 55 and noted also by Pausanias 1. 27. 1, and by other ancient authors. The story of the olive was known, from his reading, to the Renaissance architect Alberti who, in book vi, mentions the columns, obelisks, and trees left by great men in order to be venerated by posterity 'as for instance the olive transplanted by Neptune and Minerva which flourished for many ages in the citadel of Athens.' Quoted by Loukaki, Argyro, *Living Ruins, Value Conflicts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 1.

59 Discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

60 Noted by, for example Laurent, i, 161.

61 With the rapid growth of underwater archaeology in recent decades and the discovery all over the eastern Mediterranean of wrecks loaded with amphorae,

The place where Poseidon had struck the rock with his trident, a mark that was shown to visitors in ancient times, has not been identified for certain. However, in 1847, the French architect Jacques-Martin Tétaz, who was searching under the pavement of the Erechtheion, noticed three holes with a channel that had apparently been used in ancient times by the temple staff to ensure that visitors, including Pausanias, could be sure of seeing running water, at some times at least.<sup>62</sup> The ancient stories were not only anchored to the ancient ground, but they were performed as in a staged re-enactment.

## The Acropolis Museum: Understanding at the Monument Today

The Acropolis Museum, formerly known as the New Acropolis Museum, whose roof can be seen by those looking down from the Acropolis summit, was opened in 2009 after years of consideration of the options. Since then, a visit to the Museum has been for many an intrinsic part of their experience of looking at the Parthenon and the Acropolis, especially for those visiting for the first time.<sup>63</sup> Constructed mainly of glass and with large, faintly-tinted windows, the Museum constantly draws the eye of the viewer to the Acropolis rock towering nearby on the southern side from where part of the Parthenon is visible behind the defensive walls. With the Acropolis itself always in sight, from outside as well as inside the Museum, as in Figure 24.17, visitors are constantly reminded of where the exhibits have come from.

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some with residues still detectable, I am surprised at the extent to which oil and wine growing localities appear to have incurred the expense and risk of exporting and importing commodities. If the commodities were used as a form of international currency, at least as stable as a store of value as coinage, and more easy to enforce that letters of credit, that could be exchanged at every main port, the question would be answered. The understanding by the authors of the classical period that 'money' is a useful convention, a 'nomisma', is discussed in the companion volume.

- 62 Penrose, F.C., *An Investigation of the Principles of Athenian Architecture, or the results of a survey conducted chiefly with reference to the optical refinements exhibited in the construction of the ancient buildings at Athens* (London: Macmillan & The Society of Dilettanti, 1851), 4.
- 63 For the architectural design, see *The New Acropolis Museum Edited by Bernard Tschumi Architects, contributions by Dimitrios Pandermalis, Yannis Aesopos, Berbard Tschumi, and Joel Rutten* (New York: Skira Rizioli, 2009).



Figure 24.17. The Acropolis as seen from the terrace of the Acropolis Museum.<sup>64</sup>

Since the Acropolis Museum can be visited online, with excellent virtual walkthroughs, it need not be described or pictured here.<sup>65</sup> The displays on three floors are broadly arranged like archaeological layers. Arriving visitors moving up the escalators are helped to imagine themselves passing in time through the ancient centuries. Modern information technology is used to present alternatives, not of the 'some say this: some say that' convention that encourages myth-making and cultural relativism, but moving screens that display how the objects may have appeared in ancient times before they were damaged, including alternatives where there is room for difference of understanding within the modern scientific and scholarly traditions. A screen that helps viewers to imagine the colour that has been lost from most of the dedications that formerly stood on the summit is shown at Figure 24.18.

Besides looking outward and upward, visitors to the Museum can also look down through a glass floor into the excavated site on which the building stands. That excavation yielded 40,000 archaeological objects dating from the earliest human settlements to the end of antiquity. Some are of great informational value for understanding the history of the city in late antiquity, notably evidence that cultural practices not usually

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<sup>64</sup> Author's photograph, 3 October 2013.

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en>



Figure 24.18. Tourists using the digital screens on the Archaic floor of the Acropolis Museum.<sup>66</sup>

associated with ancient Hellas, such as cults of the Egyptian Osiris, were already established at that time. The recurrent fear in classical Athens, which eventually turned out to be well founded, that the unique Hellenic culture of the city was at risk of being undermined by the arrival of non-Hellenic cults from neighbouring countries, was commonly voiced in classical times, and was itself probably one of the considerations that caused the Athenians of the fifth century to build the Parthenon and the rest of the Acropolis in the form that they chose.<sup>67</sup>

The Acropolis Museum, without downplaying the achievements of the great men, and a few women, of the classical period, reminds visitors of the many others who participated in the making of the famous buildings, including workers in marble, paint, and metal, some of whom were skilled, and unskilled migrants as well as local citizens and slaves. The internal political struggles of the classical era in Athens are made vivid by displays of the actual inscribed shards, ‘ostraka’, used in ancient ostracisms with names of famous ancient Athenian leaders, including Themistocles, the victor of Salamis, scratched on them by their voters.<sup>68</sup>

66 Author’s Photograph June 2014.

67 As discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

68 For the discovery of ostraka inscribed with the name of Themistocles and Kimon, apparently prepared for handing out by opponents and thrown down a well unused, after the election, see Broneer, *Hesperia*, vii (1938), 231, now available as open access. For the difficulties of fitting Themistocles who ‘died a satrap’, into the liberation story see the companion volume.

The Museum also helps the visitor to reanimate the men, women, and children whose lives were spent in and around the Acropolis, by showing, for example, household objects, plain and painted pottery, and grave goods. In all these ways the Acropolis Museum reminds visitors that the Athens of ancient Hellas was more than the classical period, and that ancient life was more than participating in ceremonies near the Parthenon and other grand marble buildings, important though these were in establishing and reconfirming their identity.

The openness of the Acropolis Museum to daylight also enables visitors immediately to appreciate that most of the larger objects exhibited, whether free-standing, such as material images dedicated to deities (statues), or the sculptured stories in stone that were parts of the buildings such as those on the Parthenon, were intended and designed to be seen in the open air, usually by visitors who were on the move. Viewers today can appreciate the unique translucent qualities of the local marble from the quarries of Mount Pentelikon that is visible on the horizon. The visitor's experience of looking is different in the morning and the evening, the spring and the autumn, in clear or in dull weather. The Acropolis Museum is therefore different from most long-established museums in northern Europe and North America that are often imposing, sometimes forbidding, buildings in which objects are displayed in enclosed spaces, often with spotlights installed by the managers. The success of the Museum is a tribute to the confidence and modesty, as well as to the knowledge and skill, of those responsible. In particular, they did not adopt the easy solution of building a museum in the neo-Hellenic style in marble. They have given priority to the needs of the Acropolis as a monument and to the needs of those who wish to understand it. They have produced a museum that does not upstage its contents. Despite the best efforts of its managers, however, the Acropolis Museum has not been able fully to escape from the power of nineteenth-century romanticism and its conceptual hierarchies, particularly in the case of the Caryatids removed from the Erechtheion that, inside the Museum, stand like detached works of art.<sup>69</sup>

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69 Discussed by Beresford, J.M., 'The Caryatids in the New Acropolis Museum: Out of Sight, Out of Light, Out of Mind', *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 3, <http://doi.org/10.5334/jcms.130>

Some modern scholars, reviving a point of view expressed by some nineteenth-and twentieth-century Greek intellectuals, had hoped that the Acropolis Museum might display the whole history of the site, seeing its exclusive concentration on the ancient heritage as a burdensome imported colonization by a western philhellenic myth that Greece as a country had submitted to, adopted, and internalized during the decades before and after independence, but that it ought now try to modify, or at least to dethrone.<sup>70</sup> At the time of writing, one idea being discussed is to use the Old Acropolis Museum to display items from the history of the Acropolis after the end of antiquity.

The current Conservation and Restoration Programme has in recent times reinstated other ways of looking at the Acropolis that have until recently been unavailable. The ancient path that circles the Acropolis on its slopes, which for many decades was cordoned off with fences and barbed wire, has been reopened. Visitors, it was intended, could visit more sites, both natural and man-made, look at more vistas, and experience more ancient ways of seeing, both with their own eyes and with the help of the imagination, than have been possible for half a century or more, a much needed re-enfranchisement. Sadly, however, at the time of writing, partly because of the increased risks posed by the now changeable weather and the associated risks of rock falls, the Peripatos has again had to be closed for an indefinite period.

The old photograph of the Acropolis from the town on the north side, reproduced in Chapter 21 as Figure 21.17, shows a row of unfluted column drums built conspicuously into the defensive summit walls. These still arrest the eye, demanding an explanation.<sup>71</sup> They are remains of the 'old Parthenon' sometimes called the 'pre-Parthenon' destroyed by the Persian invaders in 480 BCE when it was still under construction. The citizens of classical Athens and their families, the non-citizen residents from other cities ('metics'), and those slaves who were permitted to go outdoors, were reminded of the foreign invasion whose army was accompanied by members of a prominent Athenian family who had once ruled Athens as tyrants, which had once destroyed the material city, but

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70 For example Hamilakis, Yannis, 'Decolonizing Greek Archaeology: Indigenous archaeologies, modernist archaeology and the post-colonial critique', in Damaskos and Plantzos, 281.

71 As will be explored in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.



not the perennially renewable and therefore indestructible imagined city.<sup>72</sup> It was the remains of the Old Parthenon that most classical-era Athenians saw in their daily lives, not its now more famous classical replacement, which lies outside the sightlines of the ancient town from this side. Whether the remains were deliberately preserved by the men of the classical era as a visual reminder of the disaster and how it was overcome, cannot be judged with certainty from the ancient evidence. Indeed, the fact that modern generations, heirs of centuries of traditions of preserving ruins, find that explanation attractive, exemplifies the risks of applying rhetorics of 'men [and women] like ourselves' and of the recent academic practice of 'reception' studies that, whatever other usefulness they may possess, can stand in the way of building an understanding of the strangeness of the ancient past.

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72 That the drums had been deliberately placed in the walls so as to be a visual reminder to the town below, suggested by Ludwig Ross in the 1830s and by Leake and others earlier, is discussed by Manolis Korres in *Dialogues*, 144. My own attempt to recover the strangeness, making use of other insights by Korres is in my *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>



## 25. Heritage

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Can the long history of the ways that the Parthenon has been put to use over thousands of years improve our understanding of built heritage as such? Can we discern patterns that are common to different epochs, including our own, that might serve as explanatory models or frameworks? And, if so, could they help to improve our understanding not only of eras and episodes in the past and their long aftermaths, but to help to inform current choices facing policy-makers and to equip those who are the consumers of the rhetoric of heritage with the tools needed to critique it?

In recent times, many monuments previously regarded as sites of collective memory have become objects of contestation, with demands, for example, in some countries to remove statues of colonial-era soldiers and governors, slave owners, and political and religious leaders whose recorded opinions on such matters as gender, race, sexual mores, and human rights, are out of line with those of vocal modern constituencies—a category that would exclude many individuals mentioned in this book, not only Reschid and Elgin in modern times, but Paul and Pericles in ancient times, and the theocrats who were in charge in between. For me the most depressing feature of these episodes has been to see those who have most responsibility for maintaining values in the public arena lining up to kick the ball into their own goal. ‘You cannot rewrite history’, has been the cry. What the speakers meant is that you cannot change the past, a very different idea. Of course, when we re-examine what the past has left us, we can, and we should rewrite history and, I would say, we should also make it available to be read.

We also see proposals to build new memorials to those who were previously marginalized or victimized and who are mostly absent from the built social memory. Old buildings are renamed and museum labels rewritten in an untidy process of changing the stories that the mute

stones are deemed to be telling. Memorials to individuals are condemned even if what they are found to have said or done was praiseworthy, unremarkable, or incidental to their contribution in their own times. We see the raising of new memorials to those previously omitted, forgotten, marginalized, or victimized. Conservation and cleansing increasingly appear to be opposite ends of a long spectrum in an ongoing political debate about the public display of memory and therefore of identity.

In the case of the Parthenon, even with the extraordinary advantages of being set in a geographical cognitive frame, and the fact that all substantial changes have been the result of the explicit intentions on the part of those who were in political control of the site, there is no unifying grand narrative.<sup>1</sup> The history can be arranged in accordance with the official uses to which the building has been put (ancient Athenian temple, Christian church, first Byzantine Orthodox and then Roman Catholic, Suni Muslim mosque, Greek national heritage site, and so on) on the analogy of a biography of an individual person. Nor do broad calendar chronologies of production (Mycenaean, archaic, classical Hellenic, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, Modern Greece) adequately cope with fact that the things that were actually seen, even in ancient eras, were the productions of different times. Furthermore, all tidy, object-centred chronological narratives risk underestimating the contribution made by consumers to the cognitive transaction, whether in the past or now. No monument, I suggest, and perhaps especially the classical Parthenon, can be understood without giving due weight not only to the pull of then officially-imagined pasts and aspired-to futures, but also to how the aims of the producers for their consumers can only be understood within the then-prevailing theories of cognition and explanatory paradigms, some of which, including the many varieties of providentialism, few modern persons are able to accept.

The long history cautions against the circularities of romanticism, and of the notion that 'art' can reveal the minds of the societies that brought objects into being (so-called 'emanationism'), rather than of those individuals and institutions that were able to commission, finance, and cause the objects to be built and their rhetoric to be commended.<sup>2</sup> The

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- 1 The extraordinary advantages of the site, including the historical particularity that the potential effects on the viewer were never absent, were discussed in Chapter 1.
  - 2 Joan Breton Connelly has, for example, described the Parthenon frieze as 'the largest and most detailed revelation of Athenian consciousness we have.' Connelly, *Enigma*, xix.

succession of physical Parthenons, including the classical-era building and its predecessors and successors, have all been part of the political economy of their time in which various considerations were brought together. The discursive environment, too, within which meanings were recommended and perhaps accepted and acted upon, has always itself been part of a political economy which, even in an age of social media, gives disproportionate advantages to some voices compared with others. We also see that in the long past there never seems to have been a time when the officially presented meaning was not contested, and that for a modern writer to imply that there were such times, not only risks being unfair but surrenders to the fallacy that actual reactions of live human beings to a cultural object can be deduced from a study of the rhetorical tendency of the object itself.

Regime changes too are now often marked by removing memorials, as when in the case of the late Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the staged performance of the act of knocking down a statue of the former leader was pictured on the news, a symbolic destruction of the past presented as a prelude to a new and better future. Revolutionary insurgencies frequently target buildings for their symbolic rather than their direct military value, as for example in the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and individuals and transient political groups try to harm their perceived opponents by desecrating their valued buildings and the graves of their dead, actions seen as surrogates for, and sometimes threatening preliminaries to, the cleansing of people. An urge to destroy can show the symbolic power of a monument as much as an urge to save and preserve it.

History warns us of the risks and circularities of emanationism, a practice that attempts to deduce the mentalities prevalent in societies by a study of their most valued, often sacralized artefacts, without giving sufficient consideration to the governing political and economic structures, including theocratic monopoly, and the power to award contracts and supply finance, without which monuments could not have come into existence in the form that they did. Those who practice emanationism may think that they are recovering the mentalities of a society, but are often, even for a democratic society such as classical Athens, mainly recovering a production history of the methods employed by leaderships to influence the minds of the people over

whom they exercised power. Emanationism too therefore is always at risk of giving the producers what they wanted, namely to influence the minds and actions of contemporaries and of later generations in ways that suit their own rhetorical and political agenda.

So, what remedies can be suggested? Some modern governments of nation states, a category that often presents itself as 'natural' 'permanent' and 'ancient', frequently practice monument cleansing, as the newly independent Greek state did in the nineteenth century, even if not so blatantly, attempting to change perceptions of the future by changing the visual landscape and the continuities with various pasts that this had previously implied, a form of memory cleansing. We also see many examples of the invention of an imaginary past or civic imaginary, however unhistorical, being promoted as a good thing in itself, for example by UNESCO, as a contribution to nation-building, which is still often regarded as a desirable activity despite the geographical and observable fact that there is scarcely a city, town, or village, from Ireland to the Urals that does not boast a war memorial, and that many in Europe have several from the twentieth century alone—let alone in the rest of the world, where memories were less often turned into materiality, even rhetorical materiality, and were allowed to fade into oblivion. Just as the champions of the active conservation of monuments sometimes deploy discourses that claim timeless value and universal applicability ('common heritage of mankind'), so too those who destroy usually call on other allegedly timeless, universal, and often theistic, discourses ('carrying out God's will') to justify their actions. It is now almost routine to describe the destruction of ancient monuments as a 'war crime', equating the destruction of things with the killing of people; by contrast, others argue that by leaving certain monuments intact one is in effect collaborating with those who had the power to build them in the first place, enabling them to prolong their rhetoric into our own time.<sup>3</sup> Today, when the visual is at least as influential as words in constituting and changing mentalities, such trends can be expected to continue and to intensify. Rather than regarding the built heritage as a sideshow in conflicts, perhaps the time has now come when it should be re-categorized as among the causes and the weapons?

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3 A recent example is Meskell, Lynn, *A Future in Ruins, UNESCO, World Heritage, and the Dream of Peace* (New York: Oxford UP, 2018), xviii, 'war crimes against cultural property.'

The Parthenon, by providing a well-documented historical example of monument cleansing as well as of monument conservation, in the service of many of the most common forms of imagined community and of their universalizing and normalizing justificatory discourses, has a strong claim to be regarded as heritage in a more general sense: namely, as a store of retrievable experience that, by its very variety and its strangeness from modern assumptions, can help to inform understanding and choice today. The fact that so many people took an interest in the building and recorded their experiences is, I would say, itself a heritage. However, what is also striking is the extent to which traditional historiography has found it difficult to cope with the complexities without ignoring or severely downplaying what, in my view, constitutes the central question, namely, how to integrate the material world of the Parthenon stones with the contested immaterial worlds of ideas, memories, ideologies, imagined pasts and aspired-to futures that brought about the changes. Even in the few centuries covered by the account, a fraction of the thousands of years during which the Acropolis was a heritage as well as active site, we encounter examples of contestation across the whole spectrum from admiration, through indifference, to hatred. And we also see huge changes, both physical and in the attribution of value.

Although there is probably a developing unanimity about the nature of the problem, none of the main intellectual approaches for addressing it seem to me to be adequate. The history of the Parthenon can be told as a parade of the changing physicality, or as a set of parades of imputed meanings that then took on lives of their own with an astonishing capacity for adaptation, survival and revival that resulted in patterns and trajectories that cannot easily be fitted into the linearity of traditional historiography. But it can also be told as a story of the coining and re-use of sets of rhetorical tropes that became available to be deployed and that took on lives of their own. If, as I suggest, we regard the Parthenon as a uniquely full and well-documented store of experience, it is also a treasure-house of the rhetoric within whose conventions actual experiences of looking at the building, whether to admire, despise, or treat with indifference have been turned into words and deployed. As this generation increasingly understands that there is no determinist plan or pattern, and the future lies in the hands of

successive generations looking forward as well as backwards with as much honesty and sincerity as can be mustered within the knowledge available at the time, the opportunity that the Parthenon offers to engage critically with its unrivalled collection of rhetorics, as a means of engaging with rhetoric itself, may turn out to be a heritage as precious, or as the classical Athenians might have said, as useful as the marble.



# Appendix A

## The Firman Obtained by Lord Elgin in 1801 and Related Documents

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*The diplomatic and political circumstances in which Lord Elgin, as British Ambassador in Constantinople, in 1801 arranged for a 'firman', or more precisely a 'vizieral letter', to be sent by the Ottoman Government to its two most senior officials in Athens have long been known. It was this document that, when taken to Athens, was said to give legal authority to his agents when they obtained the acquiescence of the local Ottoman officials in their project to remove antiquities, including pieces of the Parthenon and of the other buildings on the Acropolis of Athens. Since the Acropolis was legally a military fortress under the direct control of the Sultan in Constantinople, only a specific request direct from the Grand Vizier, or his deputy, could give authority to the Disdar, the low-ranking military commander of the fortress.*

*Since there continues to be interest in the precise scope of that document, and some of the words are uncertain, I offer a new transcription and a more correct translation into English than were provided in the version that I published in 1998, as well as a reproduction of the document itself.<sup>1</sup> I also add summaries of*

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1 In St Clair, William, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles* (Oxford: OUP, 1998). I am grateful to Luciana Gallo for her transcription and translation. The circumstances in which the document came to be in the British Museum were described by Dr Dorothy King in her blog 'William St Clair and the Firman' dated 3 June 2008 <https://phdiva.blogspot.com/2008/06/william-st-clair-and-firman.html> That there was also a version in Ottoman Turkish is confirmed by a remark of John Galt who saw the actual document: 'I saw the firman on which Lord Elgin commenced the dilapidation of the Temples, and as I did not understand Turkish, the person who read it to me said it was only to remove a stone': Galt, John, *The Autobiography of John Galt* (London: Cochrane and McCrone, 1833), i, 160. The provenance of the Italian-language version, and its status as having been issued by the Ottoman Government, was discussed by St Clair, William,

*other relevant documents not hitherto taken into account in the histories of the Parthenon.*

## 1. The Firman of 1801

‘Traduzione d’una lettera di S.E.<sup>a</sup> il Kaimecam Pascià, diretta al Giudice, ed Anche al voivoda d’Atene.

Dop’ il saluto, vi si fà sapere qualm.<sup>te</sup> il nostro amico sincero S.E. Lord Elgin, Ambasc.<sup>e</sup> della corte d’Inghilterra presso la porta della felicità, avendo esposto esser notorio che la maggior parte delle Corti franche, ansiosa di legger ed investigar i libri, le pitture, ed altre scienze delli filosofi Greci, e particolarmente i Ministri, filosofi, primati, ed altri individui d’Inghilterra essendo portati alle pitture rimaste dalli tempi delli d.<sup>i</sup> Greci, le quali si trovano nelle spiagge dell’Arcipelago, ed in altri climi, abbiamo di temp’ in tempo mandati degli uomini e fatto esplorare l’antiche fabbriche, e pitture, e che di questo modo li abili dilettanti della Corte d’Inghilterra essendo desiderosi di vedere l’antiche fabbriche e le curiose pitture della Città d’Athene, e della vechia muraglia rimasta dalli Greci, e ch’esistono nella part’interiore del d.<sup>o</sup> luogo, egli abbia commesso ed ordinato a cinque Pittori Inglesi, già esistenti nella d.<sup>a</sup> Città, che abbian a vedere, contemplar, ed anche a disegnare le pitture [*last two words inserted*] rimaste “ab antiquo”, ed avendo questa volta espressamente suplicato acciò sia scritto ed ordinato che ai d.<sup>i</sup> pittori, mentre saran’ occupati col’ entrar e sortire dalla porta del Castello della d.<sup>a</sup> Città, che è il

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in ‘Imperial Appropriations of the Parthenon’ in *Imperialism, Art and Restitution*, ed. Merryman, John Henry (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), pp. 77–80. A discussion of the nature of the document, using the English translation published in 1816, has recently been provided by a scholar of the Ottoman Empire: Eldem, Edhem, ‘From Blissful Indifference to Anguished Concern: Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities, 1799–1869’, in Bahrani, Zinab; Çelik, Zeynep; and Eldem, Edhem, *Scramble for the Past, A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2011), pp. 281–329. The Latin phrase ‘ab antiquo’ appears to have been used by the dragoman interpreters at the Ottoman court as a general term for long established rights. The use of the phrase in a vizieral letter of ultimatum in 1715 is noted in Chapter 2. That Elgin and his staff understood that they had contrived to exceed the terms of the firman is given further confirmation by a phrase in a long letter from Philip Hunt to Mrs William Hamilton Nisbet, dated 1805: ‘I conceived that an extension might be given to the words of the ferman; which the Vaivode did not oppose.’ Printed from the manuscript by Nagel, Susan, *The mistress of the Elgin marbles: a biography of Mary Nisbet, Countess of Elgin* (Chichester: Wiley, 2004), 263.

luogo d'osservazione, col formare delle scalinate attorno l'antico tempio dégl'Idoli, coll'estrarre sulla calcina /osia sul gesso/ gl'istessi ornamenti, e figure visibili, col misurare gli avvanzi d'altre fabbriche diroccate, e coll'intraprendere di scavare secondo il bisogno, le fondamenta per trovar i matton'inscritti, che fossero restati dentro le ghiaja, non sia recata molestia, nè apportato impedim.<sup>o</sup> dalla parte del Castelano, nè di verun'Altro, e che non si s'ingerisca nelle loro scalinate, ed instrumenti, che vi avranno formati; e quando volessero portar via qualche pezzi di pietra con vecchie iscrizioni, e figure, non sia fatta lor'opposizione, vi s'è scritta e spedita col NN. la presente lettera, afin che dopo compreso il soggetto della med.<sup>a</sup> essendo chiaro l'impegno dell'Excelso Impero dotato d'esimie qualità, acciò vengano favorite simil istanze, conforme richiedono l'amicizia, sincerità, Alleanza, e benevolenza ab antiquo esistenti, e colla vicendevol accettazione d'ambe le parti, manifestam.<sup>e</sup> crescenti frà la Sub.<sup>e</sup> sempre durevole Corte Ottomana, e frà quella d'Inghilterra, e già chè non vi è alcun male che le Sud.<sup>e</sup> pitture e fabbriche siano vedute, contemplate, e dissegnate, e dop'essere state accompite le convenevoli accoglienze d'ospitalità verso li suriferiti pittori, in considerazione anche dell'amichevol istanza sù questo particolar avvenuta, dal prefato Amb.<sup>re</sup>, e per esser'incombente che non si faccia opposizione al caminare, vedere e contemplare delli medemi le pittur, è fabbriche che vorranno dissegnare, nè alle loro scalinate, ed instrumenti, all'arrivo della presente lettera usiate Attenzione perchè conformem.<sup>e</sup> all'istanza del d.<sup>o</sup> Amb.<sup>re</sup>, mentre li soprad.<sup>i</sup> cinque pittori esistenti in codesta parte, sarann'occupati coll'entrare e sortire dalla porta del Castello d'Athene, che è il luogo d'osservazione; col formare delle scalinate attorn il tempio antico degl'Idoli; col estrarre sulla calcina /osia sul Gesso/ gl'istessi ornamenti, e figure visibili; col misurare i rimasugli d'altre fabbriche diroccate; e coll'intraprendere di scavare second'il bisogno le fondamenta per trovare i mattoni inscritti che fossero restati dentro la ghiaja, non vengano molestati nè dal Castellano, nè da altri, e neppure da voi sovraccennati, non vi s'ingerisca nelle loro scalinate, ed instrumenti e non si faccia opposizione al portar via qualche pezzi di pietra con iscrizioni, e figure, e nella surifferita maniera operate, e vi comportiate.

/ Sotto.<sup>to</sup> / Sejid Abdullah Kaimmecam'

[on verso]

‘Kaimacam’s Letter N°2, to the Governor of Athens.’

*Translation*

‘Translation of a letter from His Excellency the Kaimacam Pasha, to the Judge, and also to the Voivode of Athens.

After the greeting, this is to inform you that our sincere friend His Excellency Lord Elgin, Ambassador from the Court of England to the porte of happiness, having explained that it is well known that the greater part of the Frankish courts, being anxious to read and investigate the books, images<sup>2</sup> and other sciences of the Greek philosophers, and in particular the Ministers, philosophers, leading men, and other English persons being drawn to the images remaining from the time of the said Greeks, which are found on the shores of the Archipelago and in other climes, have from time to time sent men to explore the ancient buildings and images, and that the skilled dilettanti of the Court of England being desirous to see the ancient buildings and the curious images of the Town of Athens and of the old wall remaining from the Greeks [Acropolis] and what exists inside the said place, he has commissioned and ordered five English Painters, already present in the said Town, to observe, study and also draw the pictures [*last two words inserted*] surviving ‘ab antiquo’, and he has at this time expressly entreated that it may be written and ordered that the said painters while they are engaged in going in and out of the gate of the Castle of the said Town, which is the place of investigation, setting up ladders around the ancient temple of the Idols, moulding with mortar (that is, with plaster) the said ornaments and visible figures, measuring the remains of other ruined buildings, and undertaking when necessary to dig the foundations to find inscribed blocks that may have survived in the gravel, should not be bothered or prevented by the Governor of the Castle or any other person, and that no one should meddle with their ladders and instruments that they

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2 Ottoman Turkish at this time did not normally distinguish between two and three-dimensional depictions, in western terms ‘pictures’ and ‘statues’, both being forms of visual image forbidden by Islamic sharia law at that time, although permitted, in controlled circumstances, to other millets within the Empire, including Orthodox Christians. Figurative images in both two and three dimensions were employed in earlier centuries by Muslim rulers of parts of modern Spain, as displayed, for example in museums in and near Cordoba.

have placed there, and that no opposition be made when they wish to take away some pieces of stone with old inscriptions and figures, the present letter has been written and sent to you [name to be inserted]<sup>3</sup> so that once the subject of the same [letter] is understood, the commitment of the Excellent Empire endowed with eminent qualities to favour such requests is clear, in conformity with the friendship, sincerity, Alliance and good will established ab antiquo, and with the mutual acceptance by both sides, which is manifestly increasing on the part of the Sublime and everlasting Ottoman Court and of that of England, that there is no harm in the said pictures and buildings being observed, studied, and drawn, and after having fulfilled the courteous duties of hospitality towards the above-mentioned painters, in consideration also of the friendly request on this point by the said Ambassador, and because it is incumbent that no objection be made to the same [painters] to walk, observe and study the pictures and buildings that they may wish to draw, or to [the implementation and use of] their ladders and instruments, on receipt of the present letter you ensure that, in conformity with the request of the said Ambassador, while the above-mentioned five painters present in the said place are engaged in going in and out of the gate of the Castle of Athens, which is the place of investigation, setting up ladders around the ancient temple of the Idols, moulding with mortar (that is, with plaster) the said ornaments and visible figures, measuring the remains of other ruined buildings, and undertaking when necessary to dig the foundations to find inscribed blocks that may have survived in the gravel, will not be bothered by the Governor of the Castle or by anyone else, not even by you the above-mentioned, and that no one will meddle with their ladders and instruments and that no objection will be made to the removal of some pieces of stone with inscriptions, and figures, and in the aforesaid manner you should act, and conduct yourself.

(Signed) Sejid Abdullah Kaimmecam'

*The document was issued in the name of Seyyid Abdullah Pasha kaimakam, identified from Ottoman records as Ömer Paşade Elmac Abdullah Pasha, who held the office from 8 December 1799 until his death on 5 February 1802.*<sup>4</sup>

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3 'a common convention in formal documents of the time when the name of the beneficiary is not yet known and a place is left for it to be inserted.

4 Eldem, 284.

Traduzione d'una lettera di S. E. il Naimecan  
Persia, diretta al Giudice, ed anche al voivoda  
d'Atene.

Dopo 'il saluto, vi si fa sapere qual  
il nostro amico sincero S. E. Lord Elgin, Ambasciador  
della corte d'Inghilterra per la porta della  
felicità, avendo esposto e per notorio che la  
maggior parte delle corti franche, ansiosa di  
legger ed investigar i libri, le pitture, ed altre  
scienze delli filosofi Greci, e particolarmente  
i Ministri, filosofi, primati, ed altri  
individui d'Inghilterra essendo portati alle  
pitture rimaste delli tempi delli G. Greci, le  
quali si trovano nelle spiagge dell'Arcipelago,  
ed in altri climi, abbiamo di tempo in tempo  
mandati degli uomini e fatto esplorare l'  
antiche fabbriche, e pitture, e che di questo modo  
li abili edittanti della corte d'Inghilterra  
essendo desiderosi di vedere l'antiche fabbriche  
e le curiose pitture della città d'Atene, e  
della vecchia meraviglia rimasta delli Greci,  
e ch'è esistone nella part' interiore del d.  
luogo, egli abbia commesso ed ordinato a  
cinque Pittori Inglese, già esistenti nella d.  
città, che abbian a vedere, contemplar, ed  
anche a dipignere, <sup>le pitture</sup> rimaste ab antiqui, ed  
avendo questa volta esprettamente supplicato  
accio

acciò sia scritta ed ordinato che ad S.<sup>ti</sup> pittori,  
 mentre saran' occupati col' entrar e scolar  
 dalla porta del Castello della S.<sup>a</sup> Città, che è il  
 luogo d'opirazione, col formare delle scalinate  
 attorno l'antico tempio degl' Scolari, coll'entrare  
 sulla calcina (ovvia sul gesso) gl'idei  
 ornamenti, e figure visibili, col misurare gli  
 avanzi d'altre fabbriche diroccate, e coll'  
 intraprendere di scavare secondo il bisogno, le  
 fondamenta per trovar i matton' inscritti, che  
 sopra restatis dentro le ghiaja, non sia stata  
 molestia, ni apportato impedim.<sup>o</sup> dalla parte del  
 Castellano, ni di verun' altro, e che non si  
 s'ingrossa nelle loro scalinate, ed instrumenti,  
 che vi avranno formati; e quando volpesse  
 portar via qualche pezzi di pietra con vecchie  
 iscrizioni, e figure, non sia fatta lor'opirazi-  
 -one, vi s'è scritta e spedita col N. S. la presente  
 lettera, affin che dopo compreso il soggetto della  
 med.<sup>a</sup> spendo chiaro l'impiego dell' Eccelso Impero  
 dotato d'ovviate qualità, acciò vengano favorite  
 simil'istanze, conforme richiedono l'amicizia,  
 sincerità, alleanza, e benevolenza ad antighi  
 esistenti, e colla vicindevol'acertazione d'amba  
 le parti, manifestam.<sup>o</sup> crescenti fra la Sub.<sup>a</sup>  
 sempre durabile Corte Ottomana, e fra quella  
 d'Inghilterra, e già che non vi è alcun male  
 che le Sud.<sup>a</sup> pitture e fabbriche siano vedute,  
 contemplate

contemplate, e dipignate, e des' opere. Stale  
 accompagnate le convenevoli accoglienze d'ospita-  
 tà verso li suriferiti pittori, in considerazioni  
 anche dell' Amichevol istanza. Su questo  
 particolar avvenuta, dal prefato Amb.<sup>no</sup>, e per  
 esser' incombenza che non si faccia opposizione  
 al camminare, vedere e contemplare delli medesimi  
 le pitture, e fabbriche che vorranno dipignare, ni  
 alle loro scalinare, ed instrumenti, all' Amico  
 della presente lettera usiate attenzione perche  
 conforma. all' istanza del d. Amb.<sup>no</sup>, mentre li  
 Soprad.<sup>ti</sup> cinque pittori residenti in codesta parte,  
 saranno occupati coll' entrare e sortire dalla  
 porta del Castello d' Atene, che è il luogo d'  
 osservazione; col formare delle scalinare attorno  
 il tempio antico degl' Isole; col estrarre e nella  
 calcina [ovvero sul gesso] gl' istessi ornamenti,  
 e figure visibili; col misurare i rimasugli d'  
 altre fabbriche dirivate; e coll' antea prendere di  
 scavare second' il bisogno le fondamenta per  
 trovare i mattoni inscritti che fossero restati  
 dentro la chiesa, non vengano molestati ni  
 dal Castellano, ni da altri, e neppure da voi  
 Sovraccennati, non si s'ingenera nella loro  
 scalinare, ed instrumenti e non si faccia  
 opposizione al portar via qualche pezzo di pietra  
 con inscrizioni, e figure, e nella stessa maniera  
 operate, e vi comportate.

[Sotto.<sup>no</sup>] Sijid Abdullate  
 Raimmucam.



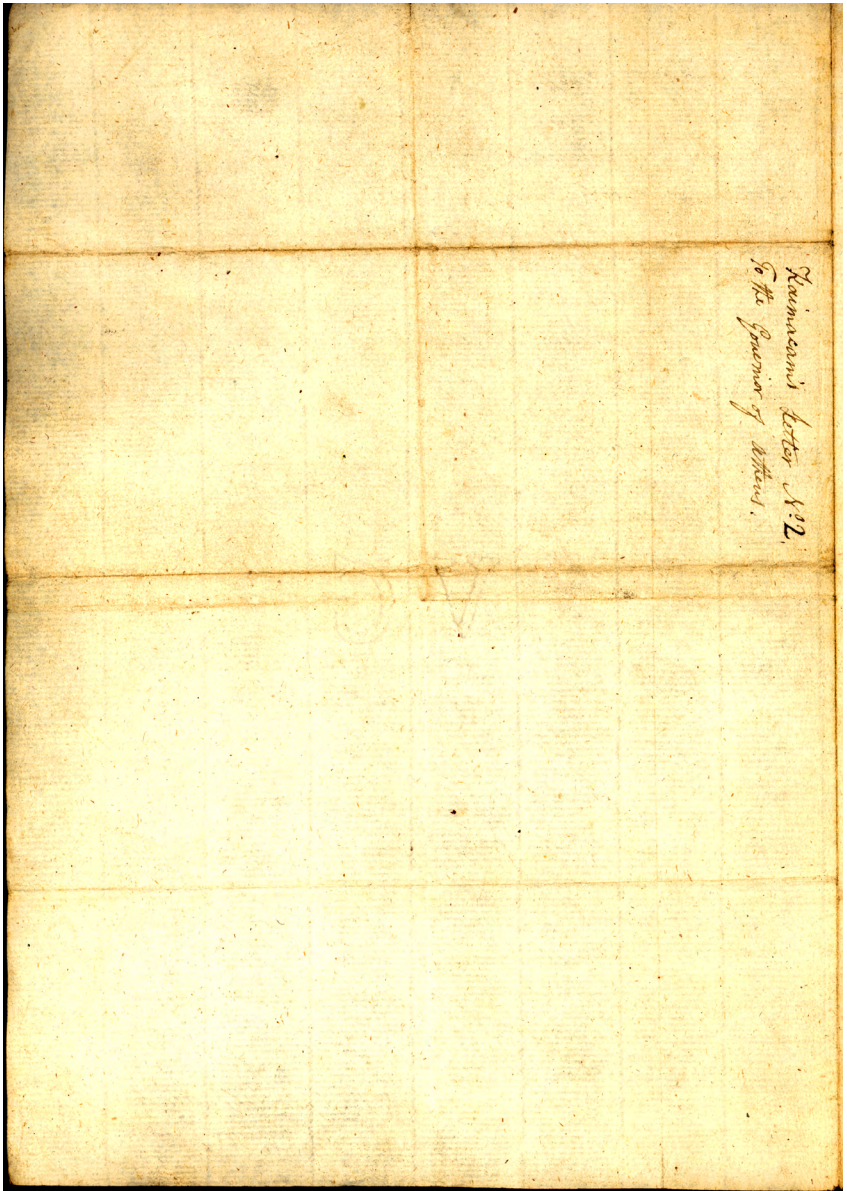


Figure 26.1. Scanned from the document.

## 2. The Firman of 1805, Instigated by Fauvel and Maréchal Brune, the French Ambassador, that Put a Stop to the Removal of Pieces of the Parthenon from the Building

As the end of his appointment as ambassador approached, Elgin feared that the French Government, whose influence at Constantinople was on the rise, would frustrate his plans before they were completed. In a letter dated from Smyrna on 9 August 1802, that may have been kept cryptic in case it was intercepted, Elgin wrote to Lusieri: 'It seems clear to me, according to many ideas I have collected here, and on the way, that the French have it in their minds to occupy themselves immensely with Greece both in the matter of the arts and in politics. I do not know if any public steps have yet been taken in this respect. But I have reason to believe that from the moment that the Ambassador and the Consuls go to their posts in these countries artists will be sent into Greece not without the hope of preventing the completion of my work, and of my collections, and not even without the hope of presenting the same subjects to the public before my works can appear.'<sup>5</sup>

At this stage Elgin's priorities were to ship as many of the pieces already in the storerooms in Athens as he could, to obtain as many more as circumstances permitted, and to be the first to publish an update to the work of Stuart and Revett and their successors. He especially wanted Lusieri to obtain 'a capital of the Temple of Minerva [Parthenon]' which Lusieri succeeded in doing, along with one from the Propylaia, but when it proved to be so big that 'the gates of the citadel are not wide enough to let it pass' it was sawn in two.<sup>6</sup> Being deemed to be 'architecture' not 'sculpture', and as a result, removed from the Elgin gallery in the later nineteenth century in accordance with the rhetorics of Western romanticism as discussed in Chapter 9, the capital was inadvertently saved from the whitening by being scraped with harsh tools instigated by Lord Duveen. It now sits forlorn in a corner of the slip gallery to the Duveen Gallery that was financed by an American family who had acquired a large collection of 'unprovenanced' antiquities. A request

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<sup>5</sup> Smith, *Lord Elgin*, 227.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

from the Greek authorities to allow it to be put back on the building as part of the current conservation programme was refused.

Elgin had intended to remove the whole of the Parthenon frieze, and more pieces were found on the ground. The longest section to have survived was, however, the west frieze that was situated still in place on the building within the western porch, by far the largest part of the Parthenon still standing and of which Elgin's agents had already made moulds. Lusieri obtained one slab, but to obtain the others more of the surviving building would have had to be thrown to the ground than had occurred hitherto. To destroy the remaining part of the Parthenon in order to be able remove part of it would have been the reduction to absurdity of what later became the 'saving' claim, as was clear at the time, but evidently Elgin and his agents had intended to go ahead with the help of further 'gifts.'<sup>7</sup>

A new historical point, that requires the history of the Parthenon to be revised, has recently been brought to light from the archives of Fauvel, the French antiquary and antiquities dealer, who arrived back in Athens in January 1803 and witnessed what was occurring. Although there was almost no consular work for him to do, no French merchant ship having visited Piraeus between 1803 and 1810, Fauvel had been appointed vice-consul in Athens. Lusieri, instead of obtaining a new firman that would allow the removals, as he had hoped, he was obliged to stop all work.<sup>8</sup> Two 'very rich Englishmen' had offered 50,000 piastres for the frieze, a figure Elgin's agents could not match.<sup>9</sup> 'Happily I was told of it,' Lusieri wrote, 'and I made them see that it was necessary to have firmans, but that in any case I would not let your Excellency be second to anyone.'<sup>10</sup> There is no other plausible candidate for one of these potential rival collectors than Lord Aberdeen, who as British Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister, was to play a role in the negotiations for the independence of Greece in the closing stages of the Revolution, as well as in other debates discussed in the book.<sup>11</sup>

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7 *Ibid.*, 234.

8 *Ibid.*, 257.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*

11 Notably the shift to a rhetoric of romanticism discussed in Chapter 9; the 'Silence' discussed in Chapter 19; and the 'Saving' narrative discussed in Chapter 20.

As Fauvel wrote in a letter of which an extract has recently been published from the French National Archives: [Translation] ‘Elgin would have taken everything if Marshal Brune [the French Ambassador in Constantinople, whom I told about the vandalism, had not obtained an order that stopped him. That one can still see any sculptures [on the building] is due to that ambassador.’<sup>12</sup>

Brune is said to have approved of a plan to seize the cases of antiquities that contained the portion of the Elgin collection that had not been shipped, and it appears to have been mainly logistical considerations, lack of credit and the difficulties of transporting by mule the cases that contained marble pieces of the Parthenon that prevented them from being moved far. One hundred and twenty vases were taken, but for reasons unknown, they never arrived in France.<sup>13</sup> Instead of Elgin having ‘saved’ the sculptured pieces of the Parthenon from the French, as was to be a main plank of the justification for Elgin’s removals at the time and down to the present day, it can now be said that it was the French who ‘saved’ the main part of the Parthenon from Elgin.<sup>14</sup> They therefore also saved the primary evidence needed to enable future generations to understand how the Parthenon, and the stories that it offered, were encountered and interpreted by viewers in classical Athens.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. The Proposal to Seize the Sequestered Antiquities

In 1807, when the Ottoman Empire was for a short time at war with Britain, a large part of the Elgin collection was still in Athens, mostly already packaged ready to be exported. In 1808, William Richard Hamilton, who had been Elgin’s private secretary and played a large part in the acquisition, wrote on Elgin’s behalf to Edward Daniel Clarke, the author of a book of travels in which Elgin’s actions were severely criticised, asking him for a favour. Since he was a professor at the

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12 ‘Elgin emportait tout si le maréchal Brune, a qui je fis connaître ce vandalisme, n’avait obtenu un ordre qui l’arrêta, Ce qui se voit encore de sculptures est dû à cet ambassadeur.’ Quoted by Zambon, Alessia, *Aux origines de l’archéologie en Grèce -Fauvel et sa méthode*, Preface by d’Alain Schnapp (Paris: INHA, 2014), 40, from BNF, ms, Fr.22877, 1, f.49r. My translation.

13 Zambon, 41.

14 As discussed in Chapter 20.

15 As discussed in *The Classical Parthenon*, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0279>.

University of Cambridge, Hamilton asked, could Clarke find a suitable young man or men, who would be willing to go to Athens, all expenses paid, to help arrange a ruse. Elgin's proposal was that he would arrange for a British naval vessel to be sent to the Piraeus as a show of force. The presence of the warship would give political cover to the Voivode to concede to a request to allow the collection to be shipped that would be put to him by the young man. The Voivode would also be offered 'considerable Sums of Money' an expense that would also be met by Elgin.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. Documents Relating to the Obtaining of a Firman that Allowed the Export of the Sequestered Antiquities

It is not known if the planning for the ruse suggested by Elgin was proceeded with. Hamilton had remarked that it was not 'at all impossible that in the course of the next summer a Reunion between this country and Turkey would at once do away with all the difficulties of the undertaking ...' As the following documents show, it proved to be unnecessary.

Foreign Office 29 July 1809 to Mr Adair

Sir, Lord Elgin having represented to me that there are now lying at Athens several very valuable Antiques which his Lordship collected in the Levant, & which he has hitherto been prevented by the war with the Porte from transporting to this Country, I am to desire that Your Excellency will use your utmost exertion to prevail upon the Ottoman Government to permit the Transportation of these Articles, and that you will take such Measures as may appear to you to be the most advisable to ensure their safe conveyance to England. I am &c signed Geo. Canning.<sup>17</sup>

Robert Adair, British Ambassador, to Secretary of State Wellesley, Pera, 22 February 1810, private

16 Summarized from Hamilton, William Richard, a letter to Edward Daniel Clarke, dated only '1808.' BL, Add. ms. 56486. An episode in the history not hitherto noticed.

17 Kew FO 78/64, 22.

My Lord, I have the honour of informing your lordship that I have at length succeeded in obtaining an order from the Caimakam to the Vaivode of Athens for the embarkation, without further obstruction, of the Antiquities collected by Lord Elgin, and now lying at Athens.<sup>18</sup>

## 5. The Ottoman Side of the Correspondence on the Release from Sequestration

*Documents relating to the Ottoman Government's consideration of the request have recently been found among the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, including a copy of the firman sent to the Voivode of Athens. They have been described and commented on by Edhem Eldem in a publicly available videocast.<sup>19</sup> It emerges that the Ottoman authorities accepted that Elgin was the owner of the antiquities, and treated the request as one of numerous property claims that had to be settled now that peace was restored. The text of the letter from the Ottoman Government to the Voivode requiring him to allow the export has also survived. It includes the sentence, as translated by Professor Eldem, 'as stones of this kind decorated with figures are not held in consideration among Muslims but are appreciated by the Frankish states there is no harm in granting permission for their transport and passage.'*

## 6. The Sale of the Elgin Collection to the British State in 1816

*A point not previously noted is that in 1816, shortly before the sale was completed, the British Government's Treasury accountant drew attention to the fact that Elgin still owed the Government money from his time as ambassador, amounting to £18,652 2s. 6d. On legal advice, and with the consent of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, an arrangement was made 'without actual Seizure and Sale of the marbles', whereby Elgin conveyed the Marbles in trust to the*

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18 Kew FO 78/68, 137. Frequently quoted, from other copies in the Elgin archives and elsewhere, for example by Smith A.H., 'Lord Elgin and His Collection', 279.

19 Discussed by Edhem Eldem at the conference 'The Topography of Ottoman Athens' held in Athens on 23–24 April 2015: 'The Ottoman discovery of Athens: 1780–1830.' Videocast at: <http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/index.php/News/newsDetails/videocast-the-topography-of-ottoman-athens.-archaeology-travel-symposium>

*tax authorities. It seems likely that the outstanding debt was netted from the £35,000 voted by Parliament for the purchase.<sup>20</sup>*

*Where the accountant, acting on the law and custom of the time, drew the line between the personal and the public in the expenditures incurred by Elgin is not recorded, but the personal side of the line evidently did not include costs of sea transport in naval vessels and other publicly provided benefits in kind that in modern terms would normally have to be paid or repaid. Although Elgin's collection was the biggest, the same benefits were enjoyed by other collectors of antiquities.*

## 7. Note on the Phrase 'Elgin Marbles'

On 12 June 1986, the late Melina Mercouri, then the Greek Minister of Culture, declared in a much-publicized speech: 'And the Parthenon Marbles they are. There are no such things as the Elgin Marbles. There is a Michael Angelo David. There is a Da Vinci Last Supper. There is a Praxiteles Hermes. There is a Turner Fishermen at Sea. There are no Elgin Marbles!'<sup>21</sup>

In defining her terms, Mercouri was picking up a point on the nature of language that was then becoming more fully appreciated, namely that the naming or renaming of an object is a speech act, and can therefore also be an appropriation, an annexation, and an attempt to normalize a new status. Since Mercouri's speech, the phrase 'Elgin Marbles' is seldom heard. However, the phrase 'The Sculptures of the Parthenon', which has replaced it in common usage, also tends to legitimate a particular way of seeing, namely, that the sculptural components of ancient buildings are of greater value than the architecture of which they once formed a part, prolonging an eighteenth and nineteenth century western romantic notion of autonomous 'works of art.' The rhetorical tendency of the current phrase would therefore be only partially offset if it were modified to, say, 'The Sculptures *from* the Parthenon.' Since both phrases tend to undervalue the geographical, display, and performative contexts within which the civic public buildings of ancient Athens, including the Parthenon, were commissioned, constructed, and then employed in the

<sup>20</sup> Kew TS 11/981, 5 July 1816.

<sup>21</sup> Available in full at the time of writing on the website of the Melina Mercouri Foundation, noted in Bibliography.

life of the classical city, their rhetorical tendency is therefore to concede more than they need to the rhetorics of the defenders of the present situation.

The phrases, 'Elgin Marbles' and 'The Sculptures of the Parthenon' do not refer to the same objects. Although from the nineteenth century the 'Elgin Marbles' was commonly used loosely in Britain and elsewhere to mean the sculptured pieces of the Parthenon, the collection of antiquities made by agents of Lord Elgin, and purchased for the British nation by funds voted by the British Parliament in 1816, included pieces of all four of the classical buildings on the Acropolis summit, Athena Nike, Propylaia, and Erechtheion as well as the Parthenon. The 'Elgin Marbles' included pieces of the temple to Rome and Augustus on the summit and of the Monument of Thrassylos on the south slope as well as pieces of the classical period Theseion/Hephaisteion in the lower town, most of which can only be seen at present on request, in a basement devoted to architectural fragments, an arrangement that, by itself, reinforces the hierarchical distinction.<sup>22</sup> The 'Elgin Marbles' also included many other moveable antiquities from the Acropolis and its environs, such as inscriptions, vases, jewellery, and grave goods, and antiquities from places other than Athens. Formally, the phrase does not include some sculptural pieces from the Parthenon that were purchased or gifted by others later and were incorporated into the public collection.

A further confusion has recently been introduced in a political intervention in defence of the *status quo* by Tiffany Jenkins. In *Keeping Their Marbles: How the Treasures of the Past Ended Up in Museums — And Why They Should Stay There*, (Oxford: OUP, 2016) Jenkins decided to use the term 'Elgin Marbles' to refer to the sculptural pieces of the Parthenon held in the British Museum and 'Parthenon Marbles' to refer to the pieces that remain in Athens. Although Jenkins may have thought her renaming was a matter of convenience, her suggestion, that has not been adopted by others, would revive the normalizing tendency of acts of re-naming against which Mercuri successfully protested.<sup>23</sup>

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22 For example the phrase was used in that limited sense to describe the casts displayed at the Crystal Palace in London from the 1850s. See Nichols, Kate, 'Marbles for the Masses: the Elgin Marbles at Crystal Palace Sydenham,' in Coltman, Vicky, (ed.), *Making Sense of Greek Art* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2012), pp. 179–202.

23 'I call the sculptures that Elgin acquired and sold and which are in the British Museum the Elgin Marbles, in order to distinguish them from the Parthenon Marbles



The Elgin collection was acquired and publicly justified to and by the British Parliament in accordance with a way of seeing that was specific to its own time, namely the provision of specimens to be used as models by modern architects and artists, the transferrable decontextualized aesthetic. That practical aim, whatever validity it may have had in Elgin's day, has long since been made rendered unnecessary by modern online and other media and the comparative ease of visiting the monument itself.

Looking back we can see that the justificatory and legitimating narratives employed by defenders of the *status quo*, have subsequently been changed at least twice, first to put the main weight on 'rescue and stewardship', and then on 'universal or encyclopaedic museum', the latter an unlawful attempt by a public trustee body to pursue a foreign policy of its own. We also see new justificatory and legitimating discourses being experimented with, market-tested we might say, including a consumerist mélange of Victorian romantic discourses that was used to justify subjecting a large piece of the Parthenon to the well-known risks of damage from the rapid changes of temperature, humidity, and air pressure inseparable from road and air transport.<sup>24</sup>

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in the Acropolis Museum in Athens, and because, upon acquisition by the British Museum, this was their given name. It is also normal nomenclature — Madonna Litta, Medici Venus, etc.' Jenkins, Tiffany, *Keeping Their Marbles: How the Treasures of the Past Ended Up in Museums — And Why They Should Stay There* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), 1 and 325.

24 Discussed in Chapter 9.



# Appendix B

## The Firman of 1821

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*Primary Documents relating to the vizieral letter of 1821 that gave orders for the preservation of the ancient monuments of Athens.*

### 1. Lord Strangford, British Ambassador to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry<sup>1</sup>

‘Constantinople, Saturday August 18<sup>th</sup> 1821.

My Lord, Having learned that the successes of the Turks in the Negropont, had enabled the Porte to detach a Body of Troops against Athens, I thought it right to make an effort to save from their fury, the sacred Monuments of Antiquity with which that illustrious City abounds.

I humbly hope that His Majesty will not disapprove of the manner in which I have presumed to employ His Majesty’s Name in the accompanying Note to the Reis Effendi — I wished that Literature and the Sciences should owe an additional obligation to His Majesty, and that He should have the Glory of protecting a City, endeared to them by so many recollections.

I have the honour to be with the highest respect, My Lord Your Lordship’s most obedient and most humble Servant. Strangford.’

‘L’Ambassadeur d’Angleterre apprenant que les troupes victorieuses de sa Majesté Impériale sont sur le point d’occuper Athènes, ose recommander à la bienveillance et à la protection du Gouvernement

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<sup>1</sup> Kew FO 78/100, 134.

Ottoman les fameux monumens d'antiquité et Chefs d'œuvres d'art qui ont depuis tant de siècles rendu cette ville l'objet de l'admiration universelle de l'Europe. Son Auguste Souverain qui se distingue par son goût et par son attachement aux sciences et à la Littérature, dont Athènes fut le berceau, verroit avec une satisfaction inexprimable cette preuve d'un sentiment analogue, de la part de son Ancien Ami et Allié, l'Empereur Ottoman; et comme l'Ambassadeur se persuade que la Sublime Porte n'a rien de plus à cœur que de faire tout ce qui puisse être agréable à Son Souverain qui de son côté, ne cesse de lui témoigner l'amitié la plus réelle il a l'honneur de prier Son Excellence le Reis Effendi de vouloir bien faire émaner des Firmans, adressés au Commandant des Troupes Ottomanes, et au Voivode d'Athènes, pour la conservation de cette Ville, et des beaux monumens de sa gloire antique.

L'Ambassadeur saisit cette occasion pour renouveler à Son Excellence l'assurance de sa plus haute considération.

signé / Strangford, Le Palais d'Angleterre, Ce 15. Août 1821.'

*Translation*

'The English Ambassador, having been informed that the victorious troops of His Imperial Majesty are on the point of occupying Athens, ventures to recommend to the benevolence and protection of the Ottoman Government the famous monuments of antiquity and Masterpieces of art that have for so many centuries made this town the object of Europe's universal admiration. His August Sovereign, who is noted for his taste and his fondness for sciences and Literature, of which Athens was the cradle, would see with indescribable pleasure this proof of a similar penchant from his Old Friend and Ally, the Ottoman Emperor; and as the Ambassador is convinced that the Sublime Porte cares for nothing more than for doing all that can please his Sovereign, who in return does not cease to express his most sincere friendship, he has the honour to ask His Excellency the Reis Effendi to arrange for the issue of Firmans, addressed to the Commander of the Ottoman Troops, and to the Voivode of Athens, for the preservation of the Town and the beautiful monuments of its ancient glory.

The Ambassador seizes this opportunity of renewing to His Excellency the assurances of his highest esteem.

Signed / Strangford, The English Palace, 15 August 1821.'

## 2. Lord Strangford, British Ambassador, to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry.<sup>2</sup>

'Constantinople, Saturday August 25<sup>th</sup> 1821.

My Lord, I have great satisfaction in communicating to Your Lordship the enclosed Translation of a Viziral Letter addressed to the Turkish Authorities at Athens, (in consequence of my Note to the Reis Effendi,) recommending to their protection, the various Monuments of Art and Antiquity, which are contained in that City.

Your Lordship will permit me to observe, that this proceeding is of a character quite unknown to the Ottoman Government: and I am perfectly assured that it would never have consented to a demand so foreign to its usages and opinions, had it not been for the sincere desire of doing something that might be agreeable to His Majesty.

On this ground, I will own that I should feel very happy if Your Lordship would authorize me to say to the Reis Effendi, that this mark of Attention and Respect had been acceptable to His Majesty.

I have the honour to be with the highest respect, My Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble Servant. Strangford.'

'Traduction d'une Lettre de S.A. le Grand Vizir au Gouverneur Général de la Morée, ainsi qu'au Commandant et au Juge d'Athènes.

L'Ambassadeur de la Cour d'Angleterre résidant près la Sublime Porte, ayant entendu que les Troupes Ottomanes (que la victoire suit partout) sont en marche pour aller purger la Ville d'Athènes des brigands qui s'y sont montrés en force, a présenté une note officielle dans laquelle il a exposé que ce seroit faire un plaisir à Sa Majesté le Roi de la Grande Bretagne que d'ordonner, en cette circonstance, qu'on ait à épargner et à conserver les restes d'Antiquités, et les monumens anciens qui existent dans la Ville et dans les environs d'Athènes, de cette Ville à laquelle l'Europe entière a, de tout tems, pris un si vif intérêt.

Comme la dite Majesté témoigne de l'Amitié envers la Sublime Porte, et que la parfaite et sincère affection qui existe entre les deux Cours augmente de jour en jour; et comme les antiquités et les monumens anciens d'Athènes ont toujours mérité l'attention générale de l'Europe,

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2 Kew FO 78/100, 164.

il appartient à la dignité de la Sublime Porte de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour laisser exister et pour conserver, dans leur état actuel, ces monumens antiques, dans la vue de faire quelque chose d'agréable à la dite Majesté.

Ainsi, vous aurez soin, d'après la sagacité qui vous caractérise, d'ordonner à tous ceux qu'il appartiendra d'épargner et de conserver les antiquités et les monumens dont il s'agit, faisant en sorte qu'il n'y ait pas des plaintes, à ce sujet, de la part de qui que ce soit.

C'est à cette fin que la présente Vous est adressée. — le 22. Août 1821. —'

*Translation*

'Translation of a letter from His Excellency the Grand Vizir to the Governor General of the Morea, and to the Commander and Judge of Athens.

The Ambassador of the English Court resident at the Sublime Porte having heard that the Ottoman Troops (who are victorious everywhere) are on their way to purge the Town of Athens of the bandits who have forcibly occupied it, presented an official note where he set out that it would be much appreciated by His Majesty the King of Great Britain that in this situation the order be given to spare and preserve the remains of Antiquities and the ancient monuments extant in the Town and in the surroundings of Athens, that Town in which the whole of Europe has in all ages taken such great interest.

As the aforementioned Sovereign displays Friendship towards the Sublime Porte, and as the perfect and sincere affection extant between the two Courts grows every day, and as the antiquities and the ancient monuments of Athens have always deserved the attention of Europe as a whole, it behoves the dignity of the Sublime Porte to take the measures necessary for these ancient monuments to survive and be preserved in their present state, in order to give pleasure to the said Sovereign.

Hence you will take care, in accordance with your characteristic wisdom, to order all relevant addressees to spare and preserve the relevant antiquities and monuments so that no-one at all can have any complaints.

It is for that purpose that this note is sent to You. — 22 August 1821. —'

### 3. Sir William Gell's Sardonic Comment

'The newspapers, not long ago, stated that the British ambassador at the Porte had procured an injunction to the Pasha of the Morea, commanding him to spare the temples of Athens, which, taking into consideration the means of the parties, would be like sending a mission to the Emperor of China, to beg him to abstain from the sack of Persepolis, Athens not belonging to that pashalic, and he having no means of getting there.<sup>3</sup>'

*Gell's sneer was out of place. As the document itself shows, the vizierial letter was addressed, among others, to the Pasha (in the French version 'gouverneur-général') of the Morea, who was in command of the Ottoman army charged with putting down the revolt in southern Greece.*

### 4. Confirmation from Ottoman Archives

Thanks to the researches of H. Şükrü İlicak, we now have a record from the Ottoman archives that the firman that Strangford had asked for was actually delivered and acted upon, with the Governor of the Morea reporting to the Ottoman Government in Constantinople on 17 November 1821 that his forces had recovered possession of Athens without causing any harm to the antiquities.<sup>4</sup>

### 5. Rev. Robert Walsh's Account, 1836

*The only other reference to a firman of 1821 that I have found is in a printed book of 1836, written by an attaché to the Embassy. It is now validated as a genuine, although incomplete, account. Walsh evidently knew nothing of the correspondence about the firman in 1826 discussed in Appendix D.*

'With respect to the remaining monuments of art in the city, it was generally supposed their doom was fixed, and that none of them would

3 Gell, William, Sir, *Narrative of a Journey In the Morea* (London, 1823), 165. I have not found the newspaper reference, but given the date of Gell's book, it must refer to the firman of 1821.

4 Noted by İlicak, H. Şükrü, 'Revolutionary Athens through Ottoman Eyes (1821–1828): New Evidence from the Ottoman State archives.' Page 2, Forthcoming at time of writing, copy kindly provided by the author, quoting a letter from the Governor of the Morea to the Sublime Porte, 17 November 1821. Ottoman State archives, BOA, and imperial decrees, HAT, 855/38228 –C.

escape the convulsion. Within the walls of the Parthenon the Turks had erected a mosque, and within the Temple of Theseus the Greeks a Christian church, in the precincts of which some travellers had been buried, particularly Mr. Tweddell, who died at Athens. There was every reason to apprehend that the violence and bigotry of the contending parties directed against the places of worship of their opponents would infallibly cause the destruction of the edifices in which they were respectively situated; but this was not the case. Lord Strangford, whose judgment and feeling in every thing that relates to the fine arts are well known, exerted his influence at the Porte on this critical occasion, and procured a firman, directed to the Turkish commanders, that they should permit no violence to be offered to these temples, but carefully preserve them from injury. It is to the credit of the Turks that they have strictly complied with these orders, and to the Greeks that they have followed their example: these venerable remains have been preserved, though the combatants have had alternate possession of them; and it is not too much to say, that as the arts have been indebted to one of our Ambassadors at Constantinople for the preservation of part of them at home [Lord Elgin], so they have to another for what remains of them abroad. The Turks did indeed enter the Greek church, but they only opened the graves of the buried travellers, particularly that of Tweddell, in search of some treasure, of which they had heard a rumour, and supposed it was buried there; but they left the rest of the church and temple untouched. The only ancient edifice, I believe, which sustained any injury, was the Lantern of Demosthenes [*Monument of Lysicrates*]. The Catholic chapel, built against it, took fire in the conflagration, and part of the external sculpture of this beautiful little edifice was destroyed.<sup>5</sup>

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5 Walsh, Rev. R., *A Residence in Constantinople during a period including the commencement, progress, and termination of the Greek and Turkish revolutions* (London, 1838), i, 144.



# Appendix C

## The Intercepted Letters of the Ottoman Military Commander ('Seraskier') Reşid Mehmed Pasha, Often Known as Kiutahi or Reschid

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*The status of some of the intercepted letters is uncertain. It is possible that the combatants may have deliberately allowed correspondence to be intercepted as a means of misleading their enemies, or that the translated versions passed by the Greeks to the European powers were mistranslated or altered.<sup>1</sup> But there is every reason to accept that the following are genuine even if edited.*

### I. Letter Sent to Stratford Canning, Unsigned but Almost Certainly Obtained from a Member of the Provisional Greek Government<sup>2</sup>

*Translation from the French*

'I hasten to send you the extract of a message from the Seraskier to the Porte, which has just been intercepted; it is dated the 7th of this [lunar] Month.

'The conquest of the citadel of Athens becomes something that is all the more important and at the same time the more difficult, because it is regarded by the Greeks as their only base in mainland Greece, and

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1 An example in 'Bulletin from Athens', dated 25 July 1823, no author given, but probably Gropius. Kew FO 78/116, 71.

2 Kew FO 78/145, 50.

because given the veneration that it inspires in all the unbelievers in Europe, on account of its celebrated name and of the antiquities that it contains, it has become the centre to which they think they must direct their assistance, themselves coming to fight with their Greek co-religionists and offering their impure blood as a sacrifice to the vile and mute idols that they value and worship in their deplorable ignorance. Thirty ships of Hydra surround the vicinity of Attica, and threaten raids on one place or another.

I have arranged things so that while I surround the Place very closely I have forces advantageously situated to move on threatened areas, and I hope to thwart the criminal schemes of the Giaours, but I cannot conceal the fact that all my time and all my means are taken up here and that I cannot undertake anything against any other place whatever. I therefore think it absolutely necessary that another capable and brave Vizier (and I venture to suggest as such Omer Pasha of Negropont) should be exclusively and solely responsible for the siege of this place: then, freer in my operations, I could go to the Isthmus and act against the Morea.'

The Seraskier here advises, through unnecessary and over-detailed repetitions, the necessity of the immediate accomplishment of this proposal, which he sees unachievable at a later time. If the seasoned troops of Rumelia [Area north of the Gulf of Corinth], which are still kept in the Peloponnese by dissensions and civil conflicts, finally leave the Isthmus, and hinder the communications of the besieging Army. He also notes that the conquest of the Peloponnese would become easy if Rumelia were entirely subjugated, and its belligerent inhabitants exterminated or dispersed. Returning then to the matter of the siege of the Citadel of Athens, he adds 'that the transportation of food becomes very difficult, because of the great distance of Larissa, whence he brings it, so that he can barely get food for five days at a time, that he had managed to get five or six destroyed mills repaired, but through their means he can get only half the necessary flour. That the Porte must at once send him large quantities of food and flour, since wheat is becoming useless. That he has managed to seize most of the strongholds in the town and that he has come so close to the citadel that Cannon are now useless and that he needs to use mines; but that the miners sent to him from Constantinople know nothing of their trade, and that he has had to write to Scodra to get good miners that he expects in 18 days, and that

he will then dig very deeply so as to go from one side to the other, and in a single stroke topple the whole Mountain with the citadel. (French: et qu'il a été obligé d'écrire à Scodra pour faire venir de bons mineurs qu'il attend en 18 jours, et qu'alors il fera creuser très profondément, de manière à passer d'oultre en oultre, et renverser d'un coup toute la Montagne avec la citadelle.)

This is where the report of the Turkish Generalissimo ends. I have tried to render faithfully the parts that seemed to me the most interesting because they can give a correct idea of the opinions and military talents of the writer. I say nothing of his exaggerations, of the thirty ships of Hydra, for example, and of the raids that threaten all the region of Attica.

Favier was preparing to go to the Piraeus and to try to seize that position, which is occupied by a few hundred enemies.'

*What appear to be other intercepted letters or heavily edited versions of the same intercepted correspondence were printed in two of the early histories of the Greek Revolution written by Philhellenes. They show wide differences from the version transcribed above and less significant differences from each other. Whether Thomas Gordon handled the actual documents is not recorded, but with his knowledge of both the Greek and the Turkish languages, he would have been well placed to understand them.*<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Samuel Howe's Version, Printed in 1828<sup>4</sup>

'The Citadel of Athens, as is known to you, was built of old on a high and inaccessible rock; not to be injured by a mine nor accessible to an assault ... It is most important because it is very old, and from it went out of yore many famous philosophers; it has works of art very old, which make the learned men of Europe wonder; and for this reason all the Europeans and the other nations of unbelievers regard the citadel

3 Gordon 'spoke both Greek and Turkish with ease, and could carry on a correspondence in the Turkish language.' Finlay, *History*, vi, 412.

4 Transcribed from Howe, Samuel, *An Historical Sketch of the Greek Revolution* (New York 1828), 343, note; quoted also by Allinson, Francis Greenleaf, and Allinson, Anne C.E., *Greek Lands and Letters* (London: Fisher Unwin, 1910), 75, although without citing any authority. A modern edition, *Samuel G. Howe, An Historical Sketch of the Greek Revolution*, by George Georgiades Arnakis, published by the Center for Neo-Hellenic Studies (Austin, TX: 1966), covers only the first four books until 1824 before being discontinued.

as their own house, and because they regard it as a place of pilgrimage and worship, all the Europeans and all the nations of unbelievers called Christians, labour to prevent its being taken from these apostate dogs. But we hope to beat them with the assistance of divine Providence, and the wonder-working prayers of our king, the Ruler of the surface of the world, &c &c.'

### 3. Thomas Gordon's Version, First Printed in 1832<sup>5</sup>

'Extracts from the correspondence of Reschid Pasha, intercepted by the Greeks in September 1826.

No. I.—Letter to the Grand Vizier.

The citadel of Athens (as is well known to your Excellency) was built in old times upon a high and steep rock, which defies equally mines and assaults; it is distant six hours journey from the borders of the Morea, and is near to the islands. As the said castle is so ancient, and contains many monuments, and many philosophers have gone forth from thence, it fills with admiration the learned men among the Franks; and all the nations of Infidels, called Nazarenes, venerate it as a holy place, and look upon it as their own property. Wherefore they have conspired, promising to assist each other, and to exert themselves to the uttermost, that it may never pass out of the hands of the unbelievers. Hitherto they are divided into two parties, here and on the confines, and fifty Hydriote vessels are for ever encircling the coast, [*in a footnote here Gordon noted 'A monstrous exaggeration! Kutali had seen only two Psarrian brigs, and a schooner'*] (twenty or thirty together,) with a design, as it seems, of doing some injury to the property of our tributary subjects, who have submitted to us. We are guarding the plain towards the sea, and your servant hath forgotten sleep, giving himself up entirely to the care of watching the apostate rebels. If the Greek infidels unite, and march against us, we trust in God to be able to confound their execrable devices, through the protection of Divine Providence, and the wonder-working prayers of our Emperor, who inherits the glory of the earth.

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5 Gordon, Thomas, *History of the Greek Revolution* (Edinburgh and London, 1832), ii, 353.

In our present circumstances, it is very necessary that one bold and skilful Vizier should be destined solely to the siege of Athens, and that to him the whole direction of it should be committed; because if even for a single day, the presence of such a Vizier were wanting, the state of the country round us would be turned upside down, and since your servant is burdened with many cares, it is proper that Omer Pasha of Negropont be immediately appointed to that charge. I swear to you by my faith, as a true slave of his Highness, that although from the hour I came before Athens, I have laboured with my whole soul, by day and by night, in wresting the houses and convents out of the power of the infidels, yet, after a thousand difficulties, I have only cleansed half the city from the evil odour of their domination. The miners sent me from Constantinople are worthless, and therefore, by the advice of intelligent persons, I have written to Scopia [*sic*] for ten diggers of saltpetre, who promise to come here in eighteen days; if they keep their word, and are really capable, the business may be brought to a conclusion. It is incredible what trouble we have had in procuring provisions, but as yet we have succeeded, by buying from the soldiers at any price the booty they on several occasions took from the unbelievers. I have set the mills at work round Athens, which grind daily 5000 okes of corn: this does not suffice, but what can we do? the camp is pinched with hunger, and our only hope rests on the supplies expected from Larissa.'

*The fact that Gordon's version prints 'Scopia' whereas the intercepted letter sent to Canning mentions 'Scodra' is likely to have been a misreading by the printer.<sup>6</sup> However, Scopia, modern Skopje, was also among the many sources of saltpetre, and therefore of miners, available to the Ottoman Empire at this time.*

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6 For an example of 'Scodra' used to mean the Pasha of Scodra, Finlay, *Journals and Letters*, i, 34.

#### 4. Thomas Gordon on the ‘trumpery’ Firman<sup>7</sup>

‘As the fruit of his negotiation during the year 1826 Mr Stratford Canning obtained a trumpery firman, forbidding Kutahi [Reschid] to injure the monuments of Athens; an injunction the Pasha could not obey unless he had silenced his artillery; it was granted, however, with that sort of animus, which sometimes prompts a nurse to soothe with cakes children who are crying for the moon.’

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7 Gordon, *History*, ii, 367. The remark by Jurien de La Gravière, le vice-amiral, *La station du Levant* (Paris: Plon, 1876), ii, 93, written much later, that appears to be mainly derived from Gordon’s *History* is noted here for completeness. ‘En apprenant qu’Athènes allait être assiégée, l’ambassadeur d’Angleterre s’était empressé d’intervenir en faveur des monuments dépouillés jadis par lord Elgin. Un firman du Grand Seigneur fut accordé à ses instances. Le lendemain du jour où ce firman lui avait été remis par le consul d’Autriche, M. Gropius, le séraskier lançait ses premières bombes et tirait ses premières salves sur la citadelle. De la colline du Musée, les projectiles atteignaient sans peine le Parthénon. Impuissants à déplacer les solides assises de marbre, ils en faisaient jaillir à chaque coup quelque éclat. Inutile sacrilège!’

# Appendix D

## The Firman of 1826 and Other Primary Documents Relating to the Preservation of the Ancient Monuments of Athens Issued by the Ottoman Government

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### 1. Stratford Canning to Foreign Secretary George Canning, His Cousin, in London, Constantinople, June 6<sup>th</sup> 1826<sup>1</sup>

'Sir, It has been credibly reported to me within the last few days that the Seraskier of Roumelia, Reschid Pasha, who was lately engaged in cooperating with Ibrahim Pasha for the reduction of Missolonghi, has orders to direct his march against Athens, as soon as the necessary measures for refreshing and recruiting his army are completed, and that it is his intention on arriving there to demolish the monuments of antiquity which still adorn the Ancient Capital of Attica, under a fixed persuasion that these enduring records of the former glory of that Country contribute in a great degree to render the present generation of Greeks discontented with the Turkish Government.

Having the Honour to represent a Sovereign distinguished for his munificent and enlightened protection of the fine arts, I feel myself more particularly called upon to make an effort for the prevention, if possible, of so barbarous a design. With this view I have addressed a Letter, of which the inclosed is a Copy, to His Excellency the Seraskier,

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1 Kew FO 78/142, 268.

accompanying it with a Copy of a letter written at Lord Strangford's request, soon after the Greek Insurrection broke out, by the Grand Vizir of the time, recommending the preservation of the antiquities at Athens to the Turkish Commanders.<sup>2</sup>

I apprise the Reis Efendi of this step; but in the present temper of the Turkish Government I do not expect to find any disposition in the Porte to repeat its former injunction in favour of an object, which has ever been viewed by Turks even of the higher class with contempt or at best with indifference.

I have the Honour to be with Truth and Respect, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant, Stratford Canning.'

## 2. Stratford Canning to Reschid, then Seraskier (Ottoman Army Commander-in-Chief in Greece), 4 June 1826<sup>3</sup>

'Your late communication with the Ionian Islands affords me a motive for presenting my compliments to Your Excellency and expressing at the same time my persuasion that whenever you have applied to the British Authorities on subjects relating to the military operation in Greece, you have found them disposed to consider your demands with all possible attention, and to act, so far as the difficulties of the times would allow, in strict conformity with the friendly relations subsisting between our respective Sovereigns.

I am informed that the success which has attended Your Excellency's arms in the reduction of Missolonghi will be followed at an early period by an attack upon Athens. Should this be the case, the occupation of that Ancient and celebrated City by the Troops under Your Excellency's command will be only a natural and perhaps an immediate result of Your Excellency's combinations.

It is known to every one that the Citadel and suburbs of Athens contain the ruins of several antique edifices, which though of small importance in the eye of Reason or of Religion, and wholly unconnected with affairs of State, have justly fixed the admiration of mankind, as

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2 The firman of 1821 transcribed and discussed in Appendix B.

3 Kew FO 352/15 B; and in FO 78/142.



works of consummate beauty and of perfect architectural skill. In the preservation of these buildings, which are so many memorials of the glory and magnanimity of the Turkish Sovereigns who spared them for the benefit of posterity, the Governments and Nations of Europe in friendship with the Sublime Porte, are known to take interest, regarding them as models in Architecture, whence many of the fairest monuments of the European Capitals have been derived.

In all armies of whatever Country or of whatever Religion, the common Soldiery is little capable of appreciating such objects; and in the operations of war but too frequently involve the sacrifice of whatever is most beautiful in nature or admirable in art. The conduct of an army is however dependent on the will of its Commander; and those Commanders who have established the highest and most enduring reputation for success in arms, have also been distinguished by their humanity, and by their endeavours to mitigate the horrors and destructive consequences of war.

When the Forces of the allied Monarchs took possession some few years ago of the Capital of France, they found in the centre of the City a column formed, in part, of the brass ordnance which had been taken from Austria in the preceding Campaigns, and designed to record the disasters of that Power. The Emperor of Austria acknowledged the merits of the monument and left it, uninjured, where it stood.

Your Excellency is not called upon to emulate this instance of magnanimity by sparing the monuments of Athens, as there is no feeling of National honour, which could suggest to you the idea of their destruction. My purpose in touching upon the subject is to obtain from Your Excellency a special and effective protection in favour of those magnificent remains, to the end that if Athens be attacked, all due precautions may be taken to secure them from violence and intentional injury.

Their preservation through the various events of the war will greatly redound to your Excellency's fame, and I am well convinced that no one will rejoice at it more than the Gracious Monarch whom I have the honour to serve as my Sovereign and Master.

I request Your Excellency to accept the assurances of my perfect consideration and esteem.'

### 3. Stratford Canning Reports his Success to the Foreign Secretary, 30 September 1826<sup>4</sup>

'In one of my preceding dispatches I transmitted a copy of a letter which I had addressed to the Seraskier of Roumelia, who is now engaged in besieging the Acropolis of Athens, for the purpose of prevailing on His Excellency to spare, and to protect, as far as the necessities of his Military operations would allow, the remains of Antiquity still existing in that Citadel and in its immediate vicinity.

I have now the honour to inclose a translation of the answer which I received only a few days ago from the Seraskier, who is perhaps not the less sincere in his promise to pay attention to my request for the project in which he is known by means of an intercepted letter to entertain (notwithstanding some difficulties in its execution) of mining the Acropolis and blowing up Ghoura and the Greek garrison together with the magnificent Temple founded on the same rock.

I have the honour to be with truth and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant Stratford Canning.'

### 4. Copy of Reschid's Letter of Reply to Canning, Received in Constantinople c.25 September 1826

'[After the ordinary Compliments]. I have received the friendly Letter sent by you requesting me to endeavour to preserve the remains of Antiquity, the objects of the admiration of the World, existing in the Castle of Athens, which might be destroyed in the attack which I am charged to make to wrest it from the hands of the Rebels.

I have fully understood the purport of your request and feel great satisfaction for this mark of friendship shewn by you.

It is known to you that for some years past the Greek Nation, insensible to the benefits of the mercy and compassion exhibited towards them by their Sovereign and the Sublime Porte, have been in open rebellion, and it would have been easy to destroy them. Nevertheless in spite of the enormity of their guilt, the Sublime Porte (the Benefactress of the World) has hitherto shewn every mark of mercy and kindness towards the Rayas [loyal non-Muslims].

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4 Kew FO 78/145, 101.

I have shut my eyes as far as possible to the guilt and excesses of the aforesaid Rebels, and far from destroying them with the sword of Power, I have endeavoured to gain their hearts by clemency — And marks of benevolence have again and again been shewn to them on my part to induce them to return to the state of Rayas of the Porte.

It is well known to me that the city of Athens is an ancient and celebrated place, containing admirable works of arts, and though I had previously taken measures to save them from destruction, having received Instructions to that effect, yet on the receipt of your friendly letter I repeated my orders that these monuments may be preserved from injury.

It is however known to you that in the present war carried on against obstinate and frantic Rebels, they may take refuge in some of the aforesaid Monuments and there fortify themselves; in which case I shall be under the necessity of employing violence against them, but even in this case I will endeavour to preserve the aforesaid Monuments.

The contents of this letter being made known to you, I hope that you will bear me in remembrance, and from time to time give me marks of your friendship. LS [signed with a seal] Mehemmed Resid.'

## 5. Reschid to Count Guilleminot, French Ambassador, 19 August 1826<sup>5</sup>

'We have received your letter of friendship that was sent concerning the request that, as the citadel of Athens is a very old and ancient place and contains many ancient and skilfully made monuments [*nice asar-ı kadime-i-musanna'a*], we should defend and protect it so that it is not destroyed as a result of warfare; and the contents of your request and petition having been understood and received, I have been pleased beyond limit by your observance of the application of the usages of friendship and of respect. For the sake of your friendship and in compliance with your friendly letter and request, special men have been assigned so that care

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5 A document in the Ottoman archives, translated into English, with some further phrases also given in modern Latin alphabet Turkish, by Eldem: Eldem, Edhem, 'From Blissful Indifference to Anguished Concern: Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities, 1799–1869' in Bahrani, Zinab; Çelik, Zeynep; and Eldem, Edhem, *Scramble for the Past, A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul 2011), 308; a photograph of the document is at 306.

and attention be given to prevent the ancient monuments from being destroyed in any way. Ungrateful for the many kindnesses and favors manifested by the Imperial Sultanate, the Greek nation [*millet*] which has brandished the flag of revolt and rebellion for so many years, has now declared war, and although it is a matter of little consequence that I should, as a result of my duties and thanks to imperial power, destroy and annihilate those who are besieged in Athens, as well as the others, the great compassion and kindness of the eternal Sublime State for the destitute being evident, despite all their misdeeds, they will still be offered a proposal of mercy and pardon and are being given a sign of permission to ask for mercy. Yet you see how the conflict goes, and as the Greeks lack intelligence and comprehension, by entrenching themselves in such an artistic and beautiful place [*o missill ü bir musanna ve güzel mahal*], in the end they will cause their own destruction together with those beautiful things [*güzel şeyler*]. But whatever happens, for the sake of your friendship, orders and warnings have been given to the relevant persons so that the ancient monuments be protected and safeguarded in every way, and this letter of permanent friendship has been written and sent to let you know this and to enquire about your well-being.'

## 6. Reschid to the Ottoman Government, 23 August 1826<sup>6</sup>

[*After describing his military operations and praising his troops*] 'In short as this citadel of Athens is greatly loved and respected both by the infidel Greeks and by the Franks, they have all forcibly pledged to sacrifice their lives for it, as Your servant has been able to verify through the observations and reports of the Muslim spies I have sent out to all places held by the rebels, as well as from the declarations and warnings of non-Muslims bound by the collar of subjection. One of the tactics that has been revealed is precisely this battle, which has taken place exactly in this way; and in the hope of implementing the stratagem they had devised in order to gain some more time, General Rini Armiral, one of the respected generals of the Frankish State [*the French Admiral de Riginy, in command of the French naval squadron*], came on board a special

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6 *ibid.*, 309. A photograph of the document is at 307.

Frankish man-of-war, and in a letter sent to your servant by their head ambassador at the Abode of Felicity by way of the said general, it was requested that as the citadel of Athens was a very old and ancient place, with many ancient monuments [*nice asar-ı kadime*] it should not be destroyed due to the war, and the said general also proposed verbally to give great amounts of money in order to take from the surroundings of the citadel the stones [*taşlar*] that were in the ancient monasteries. It was answered to the said general that thanks to His Majesty the ruler of the world there was no lack of money, and that no matter of this kind had ever been touched upon to this day, and a copy was made of the letter we have sent to the said ambassador [*in response*], and in order to submit to Your Highness the nature of their request, the said ambassador's letter was attached to it and sent and presented at the foot of my Lord and benefactor as an annex of my present petition.'

## 7. Notes on the Monuments of Athens by the Grand Vizier and by Sultan Mahmoud II<sup>7</sup>

*Reschid was reporting what he had done rather than seeking prior approval, but the summary prepared by the Grand Vizier, Benderli Mehmed Selim Sırrı Pasha, when the report was submitted to the Sultan, reveals how insulted the Ottoman leadership were, in word at least, by the importance that France and Britain were giving to the old stones, which were rapidly becoming a symbol round which the Greek revolutionaries and Western powers were uniting, and simultaneously laying the groundwork for the legitimacy of a future Greek state as a new Hellas.<sup>8</sup>*

## 8. Extract from the Summary by the Grand Vizier, Undated

'The 'head ambassador' [*Canning*] when [he] had previously informed the office of the Reis Efendi [*foreign minister*] through his dragoman that he would send one of his men for the stones in Athens [*a reference to the mission of Captain Hamilton, noted below*] knowing that on the other

<sup>7</sup> As discussed and translated by Eldem: *ibid.*, 309–11

<sup>8</sup> As concluded also by Eldem: *ibid.*, 310, 311.

hand Athens was a place that belonged to the well-protected domains of the Sublime State, and that a group of evildoers from among the non-Muslim subjects were entrenched in it and that officers had been appointed and sent in order to subject them to the punishments that they deserved, it was answered that it was completely inappropriate that the ambassador should have sent one of his men to prevent the ancient works of Athens being destroyed, and that even taking this into consideration was inappropriate; but due to the viciousness of his character, the said ambassador was insolent enough to send one of his men all the same.'

*Despite the Grand Vizier's apparent irritation at Canning's having gone under the heads of the central Ottoman Government and dealt directly with the field commander, Reschid's report was approved by the Sultan, including the words, as translated by Professor Eldem:*

'and may it be penned and written that the answer he has written to the ambassador of England is appropriate and has been approved.' As Professor Eldem explains, the Grand Vizier had misinterpreted a phrase about the 'head ambassador.'<sup>9</sup>

## 9. Report of James Emerson, Who Was in Athens in July 1825, in a Book Published Early in 1826<sup>10</sup>

'The Turks have declared their intention of destroying them totally, should they again gain possession of Athens; since they deem their presence serves to keep alive the spirit of the Greeks, whilst they excite a feeling of sympathy for their fate in the breasts of Europeans.'

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*310.

<sup>10</sup> Emerson, James, *et al.*, *A Picture of Greece in 1825* (London, 1826), i, 282. Some of the other reports that the Ottoman forces intended to destroy the monuments may derive from this book.

10. Stratford Canning tells Captain Hamilton,  
Commander of the British Naval Squadron, that He  
Has in Mind to Try to Buy What Remained of the  
Frieze of the Parthenon and of the Caryatids from the  
Greek Revolutionaries If They Choose to Destroy the  
Buildings as an Act of Immolation, 11 June 1826<sup>11</sup>

'Private & Confidential. Constantinople June 11th 1826

To purchase, if in danger, some of the ruins at Athens.

My dear Sir,

If what I hear of Gouras' surliness and of Reschid Pasha's barbarous intentions are true, the temples at Athens have a fair chance of being demolished before the summer is over. If the Pasha were bent on their destruction in spite of my appeal to his feelings, he might perhaps be inclined, in case of his getting possession of Athens, to turn a penny by the Ruins which he would not consent to efface in their present condition.

In this event the danger of being despised with the Goths and the Elgins of other times would not deter me from offering to become a purchaser of the Caryatides and of the reliefs which still remain on the Parthenon. I had thoughts of sending a person thither for the specific purpose of ascertaining the Pasha's intentions, & effecting the object in view if the temples were to be overthrown; but the difficulty of finding a person properly qualified for the purpose has restrained me; and I think it best to mention my wishes to you, and to leave it to your discretion, on ascertaining more particularly the state of things, to offer a negotiation with the Pasha. It is not impossible that you may be able to select a proper person at Smyrna or elsewhere who might not only be sent up with my letter to the Pasha, but who might also be entrusted with a communication to sound him as to his disposition to enter into an arrangement with me — on the supposition always that the temples are in imminent danger of being destroyed or greatly injured by him.

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<sup>11</sup> Kew FO 352/15A/3, fol. 407. I note with thanks that I was alerted to the existence of this letter by James Beresford.

You could, perhaps, also favour me with your opinion at some leisure moment as to the most advisable mode of getting away any objects of magnitude which I might eventually succeed in obtaining.

At the same time that I confide to you my views and wishes on this subject, I feel that I am writing in the dark, and at the risk of engaging your assistance in a communication which you cannot by any means assist me in executing. I must, however, take my chance, counting on your indulgence and zeal. With respect to the letter, I reckon, at all events, on your being able to go to Athens on the way to Hydra & Napoli di Romania. Yours sincerely [signed]'

*The letter confirms that Canning saw little wrong in removing antiquities that were lying on the ground, dug up, or were built into walls. It was he who later arranged the firmans for the removal of pieces from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus. But he jibbed at removals from the building — except in extremis. The same thought is in his 1832 letter to his wife below. Canning shows himself in part at least as a follower of the western romantic aesthetic that sees the pieces as autonomous 'works of art'. It is, in my view, only by coincidence that he applies what appears to have been the Ottoman discourse of the 1801 firman given to Elgin that allowed for the removal of detached pieces but not explicitly pieces that still were parts of the building.<sup>12</sup>*

## II. The Greek Forces Besieged in the Acropolis in 1826–1827 Threaten to Destroy the Ancient Monuments as Part of a Last Stand

### i. Makriyannis's Advice to Gouras During the Siege, Undated, But Well Before 12 October 1826<sup>13</sup>

*Translation from the French, perhaps translated from the Greek.*

'Proclamation of General Gouras and the Senators of Athens, 10 July 1826.

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>13</sup> *The Memoirs of General Makriyannis 1797–1864* (Oxford 1966), 110. Gouras was killed in the night of 12–13 October (Finlay, George, *A History of Greece from its Conquest by the Romans to the Present Time* (Oxford 1877), vi, 403).



Charged as we all are with the defence of the sacred city of Athens, it is our duty to address first our fervent prayers to the Almighty, that he see fit to crown our efforts, and to proclaim, in the presence of God, before Greece and before civilised Europe, the feelings with which we are penetrated and which animate us for the cause which we have embraced.

The recent example of valour and patriotism, Missolonghi, will be our model. Therefore as long as we have food and ammunition, as long as our strong arms can handle the cutting sword of vengeance, we will fight with the enthusiasm given by the three great protectors of Greece: religion, patriotism, and freedom.

But if God abandons his children, if our fellow-countrymen fail to help, if Europe is content with her role as spectator, then, and we call as witnesses the very men that we have called on for help, then death, as we make a sortie from the debris of the Propylaia, will bury us under the ruins of the Parthenon, of the temples of Neptune and of Erechtheus.

Signed by the patriot Gouras and the Senators of Athens. Athens, 10 July 1826.'

*For a report of Reschid threatening an Ottoman self-immolation if a nation-state were to be established see 'A letter from William Meyer, British Consul in Preveza, western Greece, 12 April 1828, addressed to the Secretary to the British High Commissioner, in the Ionian Islands protectorate, transcribed in Appendix E.*

## ii. The Commanders Receive a Desperate Plea from the Leaders of Those Besieged in the Acropolis, Undated

In this despatch (April 11/23) [1827], after reproaching the Greek commanders with want of good faith in not sooner coming to their rescue, the leaders of the garrison concluded: This is our last letter; we will wait five days longer, and we can hold out no more ... Our nature is like that of all men; we can suffer no more than others. We are neither angels nor workers of miracles to raise the dead or do impossible things. If any evil should happen we are not to blame, nor has God to condemn us in anything. This document was signed by seven 'patriots' and confirmed by Colonel Fabvier.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Lane-Poole, Stanley, *Sir Richard Church* (London, 1890), 51.

*The letter implies that the besieged only had enough supplies to hang on for another five days, although even for the number crowded on the Acropolis summit there was food, water, and weaponry for at least three months and probably much longer.*

iii. Address to the Greek Troops by Admiral Lord Cochrane, Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Navy, Before the Disastrous Attempt by Greek Forces to Relieve the Siege of the Acropolis, Translated from the Greek, Date Uncertain<sup>15</sup>

‘Greeks!

Your most dangerous enemy Discord has been overcome. What remains for you to do is easy. The youth of Greece runs from every side to arms. The fate of the Acropolis is no longer doubtful. The besiegers are in their turn besieged. The transport of provisions is interrupted; the passes are occupied; retreat is impossible. The freedom of the classic soil of Athens is thus at length secured. Once more the arts and sciences will flourish

Greeks! Having attained this end lay not aside your arms so long as the ferocious Turk occupies one foot of that sacred ground which was your Fathers. Let a noble emulation inspire the maritime Youth and the Heroes of the continent, let them hasten in crowds to man the national marine. If then you obtain not independence and all your rights, let us enchain the Hellespont and carry the war into the dominions of the enemy. Then will the misanthropic Sultan, the unjust cutthroat of his subjects, the insatiable murderer of your countrymen be assailed by his own people; [*sic?*]

The Musulman[‘s?] arms will be turned against him; the banner of the cross will once more wave from the walls of Saint Sophia. The Greek nation will have laws, the towns will rise again from their ruins and the glory of the time to come will rival that of times gone by. Think not, however, Oh Greeks, that your country will be free unless all of you run to Her assistance and defense.

from on board the Greek Ship the ‘Hellas’ [signed] Cochrane, Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the Greek naval Forces — ’

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15 Kew FO 78/153 201.

#### iv. The Order to Surrender

*After the defeat of the attempt to raise the siege, a 'mediation' was arranged by the French Admiral de Rigny. When it was clear that the situation of those in the Acropolis was hopeless, it was decided to accept the Seraskier's proposal. There were two letters, both of which mention saving the monuments as one of two justifications. The first, sent on 12 May 1827, is known from General Church's own English-language copy.*

#### v. General Richard Church, Commander-in-Chief of the Greek forces, 'to the general and officers commanding the Greek troops in the Acropolis of Athens', 12 May 1827<sup>16</sup>

'Through the intervention of the Commander of His Most Christian Majesty's frigate La Junon H.E. the Seraskier offers the enclosed capitulation which is guaranteed by the same French Commanding Officer. As there are numbers of helpless persons shut up in the Acropolis, and as the monuments of antient Greece are dear to the civilized world I wish their preservation from the destructive effects of war — I have therefore authorised your acceptance of the Capitulation proposed if it is such as you approve of — You will let me know immediately by your decision therefore, that vessels may be got ready to embark you — Your defence has been high and honourable. I have &&& RC'

*This letter, that puts the onus of deciding on the garrison, appears to have been rejected. The leaders let it be known that they would not surrender, unless they were specifically ordered to do so. This led to a second letter being sent on the same day.*

#### vi. General Church Orders a Capitulation<sup>17</sup>

*Translation from the French*

'Order of General Church to the Besieged. From the camp at Phaleron, 3 April/12 May 1827

<sup>16</sup> Church papers. BL Add. ms. 36551, fol. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Kew FO 78/155 138. Part of the letter is quoted by Jurien, ii, 134. Noted also by Jourdain ii, 355.

By the intervention of the Commander of His Most Catholic Majesty's ship, the Juno, the Seraskier has offered the attached capitulation under the guarantee of the said French Commander, seeing that weak people are shut up in the Acropolis.

Considering that the monuments of ancient Greece so dear to the civilised world are there too, and desiring that they should be saved from the destruction of War, I order you to agree to the surrender set out below, being sure that the Commander of the fleet has taken all the necessary measures for your security.

General-in-chief [signed] R. Church

To the Commander and all the chiefs of the Garrison of the Acropolis of Athens.'

12. Secret Letter from Stratford Canning to Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston, 9 August 1832, Marking the Start of a Radical Shift in British Policy from Unofficial Support for the Greeks to Active Support for the Ottoman Empire Against Egypt, Nominally a Province of the Empire, and Russia<sup>18</sup>

*Canning's letter was sent when Ottoman forces were still occupying the Acropolis and the territories of Attica and of Negropont [modern and ancient Chalcis and Euboea], including their naval base [Chalcis] and main line of communication with Constantinople.*

'Decypher. Therapia, 9th August 1832. Separate and Secret

My Lord, Direct proposals to form an Alliance between Great Britain and Turkey has recently been made to me, by the Reis Effendi, and, subsequently, by the Sultan Himself. The Turkish Government feeling the want of support from Christendom, and now that the Greek question is settled, place more confidence in Great Britain than in any other European Power. Their immediate object is the submission of the Pacha of Egypt, & they would be glad to procure the moral, and, still

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<sup>18</sup> Kew FO 78/211, 285.

more, the physical aid of England for that purpose. They offer to make arrangements for giving any reasonable advantage to England in return. I could not refuse to submit these proposals to His Majesty's Government; but I have declared, that I cannot answer for more than their general friendly disposition towards the Porte, as I am without instructions on the subject. I feel, at the same time, that the Turkish Empire is in a most dangerous predicament, and that those Powers whose interests are at all involved in its fate should lose no time in adopting towards it a steady systematic course of policy in one sense or the other.

The Russian negotiation is now coming on; it will doubtless meet with serious difficulties; and the mere chance of a favourable answer from London will in all probability keep the Porte for a time out of the arms of that [left blank].

As I hope to have an early opportunity of communicating verbally with your Lordship, I reserve till then a more complete explanation of this very important overture. I have etc. [signed] Stratford Canning'

### 13. Stratford Canning to his Wife: Personal Remarks on the Monuments and Lord Elgin, Dated from Athens 16 January 1832<sup>19</sup>

'The great temple of Minerva [*Parthenon*] on the summit of the citadel, is indeed a wonder; not so much for the ingenuity of its construction, as for the combination of massiveness and elegance, the beauty of the marble, and the exquisite finish of the reliefs. You are aware that the most beautiful of these are in London, and do not tell L.B. [*Louisa Bruce, niece of Lord Elgin*] on any account [so underlined] how nobly indignant I felt against her noble uncle [*Lord Elgin*] for having spoiled the temple of its finest ornaments. I had taken his part a few years before, on the ground of his having intended to forestall the French, then masters of Egypt and threatening Greece; but when I heard that one whole side

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19 Extract from a letter published in Lane-Poole, Stanley, *The Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe*, K.G. (London, 1888), i, 501. The later 'popular' edition omitted these remarks. As far as I can discover, the manuscript of the letter has not survived. Although printed, this letter has not hitherto been noticed in histories of the monument or of the marbles. An incomplete letter from Louisa Bruce in Kew FO 352/19B, part 7, mentions 'uncle Elgin'.

of the reliefs was, and still is, buried under the ruins, occasioned by an explosion of gunpowder many years ago, I could not help thinking that the Scottish Earl might have better employed his time and money in fishing these up, than in pulling down those reliefs that were still in their place.'

# Appendix E

## Primary Contemporary Documents Recording the Views of those Who Opposed the Greek Revolution

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*The selection helps to explain the existential nature of the crisis as it appeared to the main opponents of the Revolution, including the Ottoman leadership and the Orthodox Patriarchate, and how they communicated their concerns to others.*

### 1. Lord Strangford, British Ambassador, to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry, 25 May 1822<sup>1</sup>

*Sent soon after the outbreak of the Revolution and the putting to death of the Patriarch and of other ecclesiastics (said by the Ottoman authorities to have been discovered liaising with the revolutionaries), the outbreak of inter-community violence in many regions, and the judicial killings and enslavements in Chios and elsewhere.*

'... The unfortunate inhabitants have paid with their lives, the price of their ill-advised rebellion. The only persons who have been spared are the women and children, who have been sold as slaves. Hundreds of them were daily arriving at Smyrna, at the date of my last letters from that place, and some ship-loads of these unhappy victims reached this place during the last week.

All the hostages (with the exception of Five Catholics) who were confined in the Castle of Scio have been put to death. It appears that four

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<sup>1</sup> Kew FO 78/108, opposite 72 to opposite 75.

of these men were sent by the Turkish Commanders to their Countrymen with an offer of Pardon to such of them as should lay down their Arms. Instead of executing this Commission, they joined the Insurgents, and availing themselves of the local knowledge acquired during their residence in the Castle, were the leaders of the attack against it. The fury of the Garrison was not to be restrained, and the remainder of the Hostages were instantly hanged.

The Merchants of Smyrna sent an express to me and to the French ambassador, with a request that we would exert our efforts to save the five Catholic Prisoners who remained in the Castle, and whom the Pasha promised to respite for Twenty-Five days until orders could be received from Constantinople. We were so fortunate as to succeed in our application, and a Chiaus [*state messenger or emissary*] was dispatched with a firman on Sunday last, authorizing the Pasha to pardon the individuals in question.

I wish I could say that I had been equally successful with respect to the unfortunate Captives who have been sent here from Chios. I sent M. Chabert<sup>2</sup> with a friendly message to Gianib Effendi on the subject, begging him to consider the unfavourable effect which would be produced on the public mind in Europe by the severities which the Porte was exercising against innocent and helpless persons, who had taken no part in the rebellion, and who seemed to be rather entitled to the pity, than to be considered as objects of the Vengeance of the government.

Gianib Effendi received my application without any sign of impatience, but in reply, he made some observations which he appeared to think quite unanswerable and on which he dwelt with the utmost complacency. He said that the Captives taken at Chios, were condemned to slavery by the Mussulman Laws and Religion — which not only permitted, but enjoined such a disposal of the wives and children of their Enemies — that without having the plea of Law or Religion, the Christian Powers of Europe had for ages tolerated Slavery — not because their Messiah commanded it, but because it was a source of gain — that it was true, England had abolished it, but that it was only of late years that we had found out that it was wrong — and that half of Europe still differed from our opinion on the subject — that if those Powers had so

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2 Oriental Secretary at the British and French Embassies, perhaps the same man as dragoman Jaubert mentioned in Chapter 5.



long endured the constant practice of the Turkish Nation, and had not uttered a word in reprobation of it for nearly Four Hundred Years, it would indeed be singular if they were now to call in question the right of the Mussulman Government and Nation to do that which they had done from time immemorial, and which was, at present, more than ever justified by the cruel and atrocious conduct of the Greek Rebels, who, far from making Captives, spared neither women nor children. He added, that though he gave me full credit for the friendly spirit which had dictated my advice, he requested me to remember that the Porte was an independent Government — that she had a right to act as she pleased towards her own subjects, except where Treaties interfered, and that the Mussulman nation would pursue and maintain its own Laws and usages without caring for the opinions of other States, which had no right to meddle with them — that even Russia had never attempted to force Turkey to abolish Slavery — and that some time ago, when there was a long and vehement discussion between the Two Courts respecting some Circassian Slaves, the utmost to which Russia pretended was, that those Slaves should be free from the moment they landed in the Russian Territory — without seeking to impose upon Turkey the general principle that she was not entitled to make slaves of her own subjects whenever she chose to do so. “Slavery,” continued Gianib Effendi, “is a mode of punishment — and it might just as well be said that we had not the right to inflict the punishment of death, or that of the bastinado, upon offenders, as that the Powers of Europe are to find fault with us because we make Captives of the Families of those who are trying every means to destroy our Empire. Why do not the Christian Sovereigns interfere to prevent the Emperor of Russia from sending his subjects into Siberia? Because they know very well what answer they would receive! Thus there is one law of humanity for Turkey and another for Russia!”

The same arguments were employed by Gianib Effendi to the Prussian Dragoman.’

## 2. Institution of Slavery: The Fate of the Women and Boys Captured at the Fall of Missolonghi by the Ottoman and Egyptian forces in 1826

Extract from a despatch from the British Consul-General in Alexandria in Egypt, undated, sent with Stratford

Canning's letter of 30 September 1826.<sup>3</sup>

'The slaves brought here are not sent over by Ibrahim Pasha, nor in anyway is it a traffick in which our Pasha or his Son interferences — By the Turkish Law all Christian prisoners become slaves not of the Chief in command but of their actual captors. This is a distinction very necessary to be held in view — they are not prisoners of the State as in Europe, but Slaves of those into whose hands they fall. Every Soldier that takes a prisoner does with him or her as he pleases.

Thus the disposition of the Slaves here has depended upon the caprice of the Captors. Many have been sold before they have arrived here, and the greater part I suspect to persons who bring them over to Egypt on speculation.

The whole number that has been brought over during the war may amount to about three thousand, boys, women and children. Of these I should say nearly one half has been purchased and provided for by the Europeans, Levantine and Greek Christians, established in Egypt, the greatest facility having been also afforded to us by the local Government in their purchase. In some cases the Pasha has himself contributed money for their ransom. — This happened particularly in the case of a number brought over about three years back before the prohibitory regulations were well known by an Ionian Captain.<sup>4</sup> At my request the owner was compelled by the Pasha to sell them to us and as the sum he asked was greater than what we could conveniently raise at the time the

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3 Kew FO 78/145, 85.

4 That is, by a ship flying the flag of the British Protectorate of the Ionian Islands that was able to call on the resources of the British state, including the consuls and Navy. It is understandable that the British were afraid of the adverse publicity if it emerged that they were benefitting from the trade in enslaved Greeks. It is also understandable that after Independence, they did not wish to remember that some Greeks of the Ionian Islands had actively participated in the trade.

Pasha himself rather than force the man to lower his demand generously paid the difference.

Many have been liberated by the Turkish Grandees also out of a compassionate motive to render a service to their workmen or Gardeners, that are in general Greeks, who may have discovered or pretended to discover relations among the unfortunate prisoners; And in these cases the above mentioned Grandees have invariably paid to the owners their value.

The Albanese builders employed here have likewise liberated great numbers and married them. Our Ionian subjects in like manner as well as all classes of Europeans have been exceedingly generous in their contributions towards this laudable object. The persons thus liberated remain with their own consent as domestics in the several families and many have been sent back to their friends. Those that are sold to Christians are in general such as obstinately persevere in their native faith — Many noble examples have been given of even children offering their heads to be cut off rather than change their faith.

All those who consent to become Mahomedans remain as slaves with the Turks. The Bey here may have about twenty in his harem and the subGovernor, Belal Aga, two. Ibrahim Pasha has not to my knowledge sent over a slave. Some of the old women difficult to dispose of suffer great hardships. If not got rid of soon they are sent about to the different fairs for sale, and some I know have been found away as far as Angola and hence doubtless to the more distant provinces of Africa as also by the way of the Red Sea to Jidda.

It must be still remembered that this is not a particular feature of the present war. It is the same course precisely that has been pursued by Mahomedans in every war they have carried on since the time of Mahomet with Christians. People who submit become Rayahs,<sup>5</sup> those who resist become slaves. Nor let it be supposed that it has been in the power of the Pasha as yet to effect, in this respect, a change.

It has been only by a strict conformity with certain of those deeply rooted prejudices of his Subjects that he has been able to effect so much, were he to attempt any alteration with the respect to the right of property

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5 Protected non-Muslims who acknowledge the authority of the Sultan.

in Christian prisoners it would only produce I fear the massacre of those who are now saved.'

### 3. A Local Account

*Among primary sources recently discovered is a manuscript in the University of Marburg that contains an account by Mîr Yusuf el-Moravî, a native of Nauplia, survivor of an agreement involving the Acropolis of Nauplia, in whose negotiation he participated, which was followed by a massacre and expulsion. Composed not later than 1823, the account by Mîr Yusuf el-Moravî broadly matches the main features of Staehelin's Thucydidean reconstruction discussed in Chapter 10, notably in the claims that inter-community relations before the Revolution had been amicable. One feature in the account by Mîr Yusuf el-Moravî is the absence on either side of the language and rhetorics of nationalism.<sup>6</sup>*

### 4. Report of his Meeting with Reschid, Then the Ottoman Seraskier (Commander-in-Chief) in Mainland Greece, in a Letter from William Meyer, British Consul-General in Preveza, to the Secretary to the British High Commissioner in the Ionian Islands, 12 April 1828<sup>7</sup>

'Sir, In referring to my preceding letters to the 6th Inst, I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of His Excellency, His Majesty's Lord High Commissioner, that the Roumely Valesy and Seraskier, Reschid Mehmet Pacha, arrived here from Joannina and Arta at 6½ P.M. on the 10th Inst. His Highness was attended only by a small suite and accompanied by Veli Bey Yatzi. About an hour after his arrival, while the Vice Consul was on his way to the Serraglio, to deliver a complimentary

6 Discussed, with plentiful references to other modern work, by Laiou, Sophia, 'The Greek Revolution in the Morea According to the Description of an Ottoman Official', in Pizaniias, Petros, ed., *The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European Event* (Istanbul 2011), pp. 241–55.

7 Kew FO 78/168, 65. An extract from the report of the meeting, along with a letter from Reschid to Meyer of 29 April 1829 was printed by Gunning, 85 and 84.

message on my part on the occasion, he was met by an Officer of Rank sent by His Highness to request me to wait on him. I had the satisfaction to find His Highness in tolerably good health, but evidently labouring under considerable anxiety of mind. After the usual ceremonies of my reception, which were of the most friendly kind, His Highness in the presence of one [of] his Officers and of his Chief Secretary and Interpreter, Mr Michelaki Trikalinò, dwelt at some length on the antient friendship between Great Britain and the Ottoman Porte, and then remarked on the peculiar modifications which their friendly relations had undergone in consequence of the extraordinary course of events, and which had led to the Treaty of Intervention of the Allied Courts in respect to the affairs of Greece;<sup>8</sup> and while rendering full justice to the sincerity of their views, he strongly vindicated the course of Policy pursued by his own Government. His Highness then referred to the Dispatch, which he had received from His Excellency Count Guilleminot<sup>9</sup> on the 7th Inst and which was transmitted from hence to Arta under the circumstances reported in my letter to you of that date by the French Man of War Schooner 'L'Artesienne.' His Highness expressed in the most flattering terms the very great satisfaction, which he had derived from that most friendly and important communication, but added, 'His Excellency our friend the Ambassador of France, has imposed on me a task of the heaviest responsibility, and the peculiar circumstances of the case have obliged me to defer sending an answer until I had an opportunity of communicating with you in regard to those circumstances.' I replied by thanking His Highness for such a mark of his confidence, as he had expressed his intention of honoring me with, but added that I believed His Highness from his sentiments of personal regard, was induced to think I was invested with a Public Character and with Official Powers far greater than those which I had the honor to hold. His Highness observed that he considered circumstances as sometimes fully justifying the assumption of an extraordinary intervention; and he was pleased to think that what he should request of me would not in anywise exceed the limit of a proper discretion. His Highness then seemed anxious to enter upon the essential points of his subject: but again expatiated upon various preliminary arguments connected with the inalienable Rights

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8 The Treaty of London of 7 July 1827 made by the three powers.

9 The representative of France.

and with the Interest of the Empire, and recognized by Treaties with the Powers in Amity and Alliance with the Porte.

His Highness then entered into various arguments tending to shew the absolute impracticability of the Porte's acceding to the Treaty of Intervention, as it is now framed,<sup>10</sup> inasmuch as its acceptance would be tantamount to a dissolution of the Empire, looking to the principles of its Theocratical Constitution, and to the peculiar composition and situation of its Provinces in Europe at this time. But I understood His Highness to intimate, that an adjustment founded on several of its provisions might be effected, in a manner to satisfy the wishes of the Allied Powers, and the interests of the Parties concerned.

At this part of His Highness' discourse, the Local Authorities, the Turkish Clergy, the Cadi, the Officers of the Garrison were announced as having been in waiting a considerable time, and as the hour of the night (it being Ramazan) rendered their reception indispensable, they were admitted. These ceremonies occupied above an hour, when the Dinner Service was announced, and at His Highness particular request I took my seat at the Table, being the only person besides His Highness. On taking my leave at 11 P.M. and on arriving at the Consular Residence, my Guard informed me that His Highness' Chief Secretary abovementioned had desired him to inform me that, he wished to wait on me at the time of my return home, and that if it were at too late an hour, that he would call on me early the next morning. Having immediately sent to apprise him that I was ready to receive him, Mr Michelaki came and continued in conversation with me for nearly two hours. He informed me that he had been directed by His Highness to communicate with me on the important subjects which His Highness had opened to me in the early part of the evening and which, indeed, he added was the immediate motive of His Highness visit to Prevesa at this time, and that he would set out on his return to Joannina the next day. The Secretary repeated the great satisfaction, which His Highness the Seraskier had felt at the communication, which he had received from His Excellency Count Guilleminot from Corfu, that it was his most ardent wish to give the most convincing proof of the value he attached to it, as well by the prompt measures which he was desirous of taking on the occasion in respect to His Highness own Government, as with respect to His Excellency Count

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10 The Treaty of Constantinople of 1827, discussed in Chapter 18.

Guilleminot at Corfu. But a very serious impediment for the moment prevented his acting as he desired with regards to his communications with Count Guilleminot; namely the want of powers from his own Government to enter into a direct correspondence with His Excellency's Dispatch. Yet feeling thoroughly impressed with the motives of sincere friendship, which suggested those propositions and the paramount importance of losing no time in acting upon them, His Highness felt most truly anxious of devising some mode of proceeding on the occasion; and the mode which had occurred to him as particularly eligible and at the same time perfectly consonant to His Excellency Count Guilleminot's motives and feelings at this great conjuncture was if possible, to give His Excellency the meeting at some point of the coast near Corfu. His Highness considered that the paramount motives, which actuated Count Guilleminot in addressing his valuable communication to him would be of themselves sufficient to overrule any ordinary objection, which might present itself to His Excellency to defer their meeting. His Highness as I understood proposed that it should be a confidential meeting. He proposed Parga<sup>11</sup> as the point of rendezvous; and said that to that place, or any other point of the coast, which Count Guilleminot might fix, he would immediately repair, on receiving notice of His Excellency's determination to honor him with the meeting, which he so anxiously solicited. It appears that the Seraskier deems it indispensable to have a convenient opportunity of discussing certain points of the arrangement proposed by the Treaty, and he entertains a full persuasion of being able to promote, in an essential degree, the great object at issue by means of the confidential conference now proposed, and the result of which it would be his first duty to communicate immediately to his Government at Constantinople, and to press the acceptance of it with the entire weight of his influence: adding that if any point might still remain unadjusted with His Excellency, that he would himself proceed to Constantinople, to obtain the immediate decision of it, inasmuch as His Highness has a power reserved under his orders of repairing to the Capital in the event of any extraordinary emergency arising to render such a step necessary. His Highness uninterrupted personal and local experience in the affairs of these Provinces, which have been the seat of

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11 A town on the mainland, an enclave of the Ionian Islands protectorate that had been evacuated by the British in 1819 in order to make it easier for the defence of the islands to undertaken by naval forces.

his Government and Military Operations for the last Eight Years, must he conceives give to his opinion on the question a decisive weight: and in this manner he trusts the objects of the Allies Friendly Courts would be brought to a satisfactory termination.

From what I could perceive it appears that the Porte has determined on giving, of its own free act, a Charter of Rights and Privileges to the Greek Provinces, grounded on the Principles of the Treaty of Intervention: and that the Charter would be immediately promulgated by the Porte after the few points to be discussed in the confidential interview now proposed, had been agreed on by mutual consent.

It appears also, on the other hand that the voluntary accession of the Sultan to the Treaty as it now exists, is deemed to be morally impracticable. Such an act of accession in the judgement of the Sultan and of the Musulman Nation is held by them to be tantamount to a virtual abdication or surrender of the Sovereignty of the Sultan; that the Treaty in its present shape if [*word not read*] to be tantamount to proclaiming the Mussulman People conquered, and the Empire dismembered; that it can never, therefore, be accepted in its present shape; that they have themselves deliberately resolved to perish in the defence of their rights rather than accede to it: and that very deep laid plans have been regularly formed to act on this resolve, and which if a fatal necessity should require their being acted on, would inevitably involve in one indiscriminate carnage the population of these devoted Countries.

The Secretary and Interpreter indicated at the same time how fatally these plans were likely to operate against the populous portions of the Great Nation distributed over the Empire, unless some suitable plan of settlement for the revolted Provinces should be devised, with the view to avert such unspeakable calamities: and that the disposition of the Porte to concede the Charter of Rights above alluded to, might afford the means of averting them.

The arrival of the Greek Ambassador in Arta from Constantinople on the 5th Inst, on a pacific Mission into the Greek Provinces, as reported in my letter of the 6th Inst, is thought to be a preliminary step of the Porte towards the Promulgation of the Charter in question. And here it occurs to me to mention, that those Commissioners have been since joined in Arta by the two Archbishops of Jannina and of Larissa, and by



the Bishop of Agrapha, and on this part of the subject I beg leave to refer to the Inclosure N<sup>o</sup> 1 dated Arta 5th–6th April. The Secretary assured me that the Seraskier and Roumely Valesy felt confident, if he could meet His Excellency Count Guilleminot, in the confidential manner suggested, the general plan of the Pacification would be essentially promoted and secured.

After dwelling on these topics with great earnestness, the Secretary withdrew, requesting on the part of His Highness the favor of my cooperation in becoming the channel of communicating these views and proposals on His Highness' part to His Excellency Count Guilleminot: and he added that he trusted His Highness would have the satisfaction of obtaining my acquiescence in his earnest solicitations to that effect.

The following day (the 11th Inst) His Highness sent at 4 o'clock P.M. to request I would wait on him. Monsr Robert, the new Consular Agent of France, had been previously engaged with His Highness. I found myself soon after alone with His Highness and his Secretary. The Seraskier was still labouring under deep anxiety of mind. He then entreated me by the antient friendship, which had always subsisted between England and the Porte, to enter with him into a discussion of the Topics, which he would mention, and to assist him in his consultations on this occasion. Having begged leave to repeat to His Highness in reply to these fresh marks of his confidence, the observations which I had made to him on the preceding evening, as the limited powers with which I was vested, His Highness then directed his Secretary and Interpreter to state the particulars of the Dispatch of His Excellency Count Guilleminot, and after professing his fullest sense of the sincere friendship manifested by that most important communication, His Highness said that the only means then in his power of giving effect to the views of the Ambassador was that, His Highness should have the benefit of a personal confidential conference with His Excellency in a meeting at some point of the coast near Corfu, as had been before explained to me by his Secretary. The substance of His Highness' answer was then communicated to me, expressing his very sincere acknowledgments for the valuable communication, which had been made to him, and stating the cause which prevented His Highness from entering into a direct correspondence on the subject; and referring His Excellency for a further explanation on this point to the

communications, which Monsr Robert and Mr Meyer would send to Corfu by the same opportunity.

His Highness then entered into a detailed review of the Greek Revolt which from a popular conspiracy had, owing to the extraordinary succours extended to the Greek Insurgents in such an unprecedented manner by Foreign Nations, been productive of such fatal calamities, and had finally assumed a character threatening to involve the greatest Nations of the Earth, now at Peace, in catastrophes of the most extensive and awful description recorded in History. His Highness in repeating and confirming what His Secretary had stated to me on the preceding night, as I have already had the honor to detail, assured me in the most solemn manner, that the Sultan and the Mussulman Nation felt the most conscientious conviction of the absolute inadmissibility on their parts of the propositions of the Treaty as it now exists; that those propositions in several respects are directly repugnant to their conscience; subversive of their Religion and Laws; and incompatible with their honor; and that in the event of its being imposed on them by force, they had deliberately resolved on offering up the whole Nation as a sacrifice to such an overruling destiny; that they would begin by destroying their Women and their Children, and would then perish swords in hand against their foes, wheresoever it might be their lot to encounter them! I deem it proper to observe here that as far as my own observation extends, the deadly purposes of this desperate resolution have for some time past become the almost exclusive subject of the Mussulmans' thoughts. A sort of maniacal disorder appears to have commenced among them. To avert such calamities and horrors (as may perhaps, only be paralleled by those recorded of the Jewish Nation in their final struggle against the Roman Power) His Highness declared his determination and desire to exert now every effort in his power, in the hope of opening some suitable course to conciliate the objects of the Allied Courts: and His Highness certainly seemed to entertain a confident expectation of achieving this salutary work, if he could have the benefit of obtaining the confidential meeting he proposes with His Excellency Count Guilleminot.

It may be here remarked that His Highness received in Arta on the 8th Inst a Tartar with voluminous Dispatches from the Porte, who left Constantinople about the 25th March, as referred to in the Inclosure N° 2 dated Arta the 8th Inst and it seems likely from the tenour of

His Highness' language to me on certain points, that he has received some important instructions, for promoting an arrangement under certain modifications of the Treaty: and a part of these modifications is referred to in the Inclosure N<sup>o</sup> 1. The Seraskier also remarked how much the settlement might be facilitated by the friendly Courts sending a Declaration on their parts into the Greek Provinces, with a view to repress the high pretensions, which have been excited by the Treaty.

His Highness seemed finally to be convinced that the time was arrived for putting an end to the actual ruinous state of things by adopting a suitable and reasonable arrangement calculated to satisfy the wishes of all the Parties: and expresses his readiness to cooperate to the extent of his means towards that salutary end. His Highness seems certainly to anticipate a very favourable result, if he could obtain the meeting in question with His Excellency Count Guilleminot as he proposes to effect thro' these representations, which I have the honor to forward, in conjunction with Monsr Robert, by this opportunity. His Highness would himself make a rapid journey to Constantinople, in furtherance of the general object, with a view perhaps to remove those illusions, which may still deceive the views of the Porte as to its remaining resources in these Provinces, and which the Seraskier Pacha is aware are such as to render unavailing any further operations except those merely intended for immediate defence, in the event of any attack being directed against them.

This morning early the Secretary of His Highness delivered me the letter, which I have the honor to inclose herewith, addressed to His Excellency Count Guilleminot.

At 8 o'clock A.M. His Highness re embarked here on his return to Joannina, it being his intention to celebrate there the Festival of 'Bairam' on the 15th Inst: and I understand that a Tartar would be immediately dispatched to Constantinople on the subject of the most important communication received from His Excellency Count Guilleminot.

In rendering this account of my proceedings adopted with the Seraskier and Roumely Valesy, at His Highness' particular instance and desire, and in complying with his requests on the occasion, His Excellency the Lord High Commissioner will not consider, I trust, that I have deviated from the line of conduct, which it might have been the

wish of His Majesty's Government that I should have followed under similar extraordinary circumstances.

I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient and humble Servant  
[Signed] William Meyer, Consul General'

## 5. Letter from the Patriarch of Constantinople Urging the Insurgents to Return to Obedience to the Sultan

*From a letter of Lord Strangford to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry, 11 February 1822, sent at a time when the Ottoman state was gathering a large force to defeat the insurgency.<sup>12</sup>*

'... I venture to hope that Your Lordship will not disapprove of my having acceded to the patriarch's wishes, by availing myself of every opportunity which has hitherto occurred, for forwarding these letters to their several destinations. I persuade myself that Your Lordship will be of opinion that this measure is calculated to serve the cause of peace and humanity, and that at the moment when the Turkish government is collecting all its means to act decisively against the Morea, it would be a deed of kindness towards its deluded inhabitants, to give them this last chance of escaping the perils which menace them, by embracing the counsels and listening to the remonstrances of their spiritual chief. The patriarch informed M. Chabert (whom I sent to wait on him two or three days ago) that this measure had taken place with the consent of the Porte, but that the latter did not wish to appear in it, and was desirous that it should seem to originate exclusively with the head of the Greek Church ...'

### i. The Patriarch to Strangford

'Sir, After giving you our benediction and asking the state of your health, We have to inform you that, pursuant to our paternal and ecclesiastical duty, We have prepared circular letters for the Morea, and all the islands of the Archipelago, directed to such of the inhabitants of the said places as profess the Greek religion. We therein represent to them, on the

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<sup>12</sup> The two patriarchal documents transcribed here are in the tradition of pre-Revolution encyclicals of which an example from 1819 is referred to in Chapter 3.

part of God as well as on that of the Human race, that by their mad perseverance in Revolt, they are losing their rights and sacrificing their happiness; and we exhort them to repentance. We paternally advise and invite them to cast away without fear, the arms which are employed to their ruin, to re-enter into their former and ancient condition of subjects, and to accept the mercy and pardon His I. Majesty our August Sovereign, offers them.

It is important that our packets, containing those paternal exhortations which our Zeal suggested us to give them, and the assurances of the generosity and magnanimity of His Imp.<sup>1</sup> Majesty towards His subjects, should reach them safely. But the only means we can employ to that purpose, is to beg His Excellency the Ambassador of H.B. Majesty to be pleased to forward our letters to their destination; he having the means of doing it with safety.

We wish therefore to know whether His Excellency will have the goodness to comply with our request, and beg you will give us an answer for our satisfaction.

We remain &c., Constantinople 19/31 Jan.<sup>y</sup> 1822, signed Eugenius (L.S.) Patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>13'</sup>

ii. Translation of an Encyclical Letter Written by the Patriarch and Sent to 'the Inhabitants of the Morea and also to all the islands where the Greeks of our religion reside, whether of the first, second or third Class'

'We proclaim that to every one is known the divine Providence which governs all things and by which was instituted all royal Authority & supremacy, which form the source whence proceeds that happy arrangement and tranquillity in respect to all its people & subjects, and through which our Lord God has favoured us with that discernment and reason to distinguish good from evil, so advantageous and useful for the human race; so that whatever a King performs & executes, is settled and ordained by Divine Providence, the Hand of the Lord God is in the heart of a King, 'as the Prophet says/and every act, whether good or bad, of any of his creatures is in the presence of God Himself, whose station and functions in this world are represented in the person of a

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13 Kew FO 78/106, 144.

King — and therefore inasmuch as a subject, obedient to his Master, is worthy of praise, soon the contrary are the disobedient culpable in the sight of Divine Providence.

And we see and read in every History that those who have shewn themselves refractory towards their rulers, have not only been duly punished by the exercise of Royal Power and involved in general ruin, but have also been visited with divine chastisement — (for thus God says in the Gospel, I ordain sovereigns on earth, and every one must obey them, as if I myself were there) — In conformity also with the example of our Lord Jesus Christ given to us during his mortal life by his excellent conduct towards all the world, and those heavenly doctrines and evangelical precepts which he has bequeathed to us, no one is allowed to interfere in affairs of State and political Government; but he has ordered us to submit and to remain quiet under the dominion of Kings — And also according to the maxim that it is our absolute duty to surrender every homage and obedience to Royal Authority, as to every thing that is connected with the Lord our Saviour, every one ought to behave himself with that dutiful respect towards that high Dignity thus instituted by Divine Providence, & not to affect those honours and glories which are not so decreed by the Lord God; thus every one should acknowledge his King, thus appointed by God; he should love and protect all those who are obedient to his sway — and also punish, by every means, the perverse who would obstruct his rightful authority, as belonging to royal Prerogative—

This then to make you comprehend the Divine Providence, how well it combines both Spiritual and Temporal advantages, we will refer you to our ecclesiastical and political History in which our Saviour took on himself the form of Man — In past times, what troubles did not our religion suffer? What tragical events have we not endured (according to our ancient chronicles)? such as make every one shudder — . But after a dreadful tempest, behold a certain and delightful calm — and all those who were dispersed during the storm, reach a secure and pleasant harbour — In like manner has divine Providence commended and enjoined us to live under the protection and government of the Sublime Ottoman Porte — and by the Virtue of its Power passed away all those storms, & all those perils which threatened our Faith — and after so many ages we now find ourselves in a Port of Peace and Tranquillity — in

the midst of every enjoyment, where we are favoured with all our Magnificent Churches, with every convenience and comfort; allowed our Te Deum, our Schools and Colleges, various trades and every sort of Commerce; where our Character is respected, and our property and effects protected, and where honours and favours, such as no other Nation under its Government ever obtained, are bestowed on us.

In fine, you, inhabitants of the Morea and all the Inhabitants of the Islands of the Archipelago, subjects of the Sultan, ought to be more quiet and obedient, in a spirit of submission and due subjection, and evince every proof of humility, (as the divine Law directs,) both as Christians and men, under the authority of political administration and control. But Alas! Alas! by treading under foot, and destroying every law, both divine and human; by casting off all evangelical and apostolical duties, and exhibiting an ingratitude equal to that of the traitor Judas, you have presumed to take up arms in your heads and to raise the standard of rebellion — and even money; contrary to all the ordinances and injunctions of our Saviour, the celestial King; roused by a lust and ambition quite diabolical, you have launched into revolt and disobedience, such as the Devil inspired into the minds of our first Parents in Paradise — and in short, with the same insatiate fury and the same devilish desires — whilst the Church of God was at Peace & all was quiet — sorrow and grief have come on the human race — and particularly on you yourselves, thus labouring to attain misery on misery, present & future, and to clothe your innocent wives and children in garments of mourning and lamentation, because, *imprimis*, you have as your Enemy, Divine Providence, with all its heavenly powers and punishments to chasten those who are the organ of rebellion; and, secondly our most Puissant Monarch & Sovereign.

Secure, therefore, if you are true Christian, and if, indeed, you possess a drop of Christianity in you, secure, I say, the pity, the kind philanthropy and generosity of our most compassionate, just and humane Sovereign—

Although his Highness, from the first day that the accursed flame of rebellion burst forth, might have adopted every act of violence and done deeds of the utmost cruelty, but, whereas his usual habits are those of mercy and humanity, he has merely chastised, as he was bound to do, those who were the Heads of the revolution; and for those who remained tranquil and neutral in their character of rays, he has done

every thing to ensure safety and repose; and doubly merciful and gracious is he to those who implore forgiveness for the past he receives with all attention, promising them the certainty of their Lives in peace and security — the same as to us inhabitants of Constantinople and other parts, where we enjoy the same religion and fruits of obedience, favoured by his philanthropic protection, covered by the Shade of his Tree — and performing our devotions and Te Deum in all manner of Tranquillity just as before; and at the Festival of the Glorious Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which by divine assistance, and the humanity of our King and ruler, we were enabled to perform in all peace, every one was employed in his respective duty and office, according to his rank, and without any alarm or fear of alarm, thus maintaining on our part the sacred rights and royal ordinances and commands, as usual—

Such conduct and holy offices we expected to hear as having been pursued also by you — and that you had acknowledged the delusion into which you had been betrayed, and the danger in which you are now placed, aware that the noble and gracious mind of our benignant Master is the same as heretofore, and that you may attain very easily his mercy, protection & pardon, as soon as you shall have changed your conduct. But as a long time has elapsed, without us having seen or heard of, any step towards amendment, such as we had hoped, we have determined to testify our paternal solicitude, and influenced by our heartfelt grief and love to notify to you all our ecclesiastical and paternal advice and evangelical admonitions, so that we may not, thro' our silence, be guilty of any spiritual Sin, by disregarding your spiritual liberty and salvation.

Therefore, Brother-Christians, and my sons, of our Church, you who live in the Morea and the islands of the Archipelago, as well those who sail on the Sea, as those who dwell on land, and, in brief, you all who are thus in error and have embraced the accursed plague of rebellion, throw away those arms from your hands — listen to my fatherly voice which proceeds from my paternal Affection — return to yourselves — cast away from your thoughts the diabolical attempt of revolt — cast away, I repeat, those arms, the cause of your destruction — return to obedience and submission — ask forgiveness of the Lord God, our Saviour, in order to regain the love and protection of the Sultan, by such celestial intercession — Behold, this is the favourable moment and time to acquire it; behold the moment and time of Forgiveness! Change your



opinions — desire not the annihilation and destruction of your country, and the cruel slavery of your innocent wives and children — Feel for yourselves, your country, your children, your property; and what is more, think of your souls, and that Jesus Christ himself shed his own blood on the cross for our Salvation — Secure and confident as we are in the mercy and compassion of our beneficent Sovereign, and in the protection and kind intentions of our most illustrious Masters, for which we have not sufficient words to express our gratitude, and for which we are in duty bound to pray, day and night, to heaven for the continuance of His Highness's Health, and that his Empire may ever be powerful and invincible, in saecula saeculorum — and as we are also bound to sacrifice ourselves for the good of Christianity, and acting on such firm foundations & expectations, we pledge ourselves for you all & every one, individually, on our very souls, promising and assuring you all, that as soon as the spiritual evidence of your submission shall appear, at that moment, the happy results and proofs of humanity shall also come forth for your advantage and comfort, on the part of His Highness, our glorious Sovereign; because as he feels and knows how to punish the refractory, I can safely aver, he doubly recognizes the duties of Sympathy, tenderness and mercy, towards all those who confess their transgression and then beg for forgiveness—

For the love of our Lord God, then, make all the haste — send us petitions for pardon, signed, and accompanied also by two or three persons from every town — and, for the second time, we assure you, petitioners, collectively and individually, that not the least harm will happen to you — and should any ensue, let it all fall on our spiritual responsibility — We will be answerable to the divine tribunal for the least blood that shall be spilt after this exhortation sent to you all with our heads & signatures, so very confident and secure are we in the clemency His Highness cherishes towards his subjects — Thus anticipating the time we signify to you all, that we have performed our fatherly duty — Should the contrary happen, (which we hope not) and should you still tread under foot and despise our paternal counsels, giving no credit to the forgiveness of his Highness, nor to the laws divine and ecclesiastical, and you should remain firm and resolute in the course of revolt (sign, that you have neither fear of God, nor shame before man, nor any kind of feeling for your innocent wives and

children and country and property may the guilt and responsibility be on yourselves — Behold the hour, when the sword is at hand, at the very root of the tree! Royal wrath and the Angel of Death! Bad as you are, your end will be worse — you will call down celestial anger on your heads — and the Imperial Troops, by land and by sea, will be against you — you will carry fire and sword into your Country — and then will forgiveness be unattainable) Then will you all be made contemptible, and become a tale of ridicule to the world, thro' your own madness; in a temporal State dishonoured — and in a spiritual Sense, whelmed in an infinite and diabolical Abyss.

Therefore, for the love of Christ, act in conformity with our paternal Advice — then will you suffer no harm — nothing — not a drop of Blood will be shed—

This we announce to you all — & to this we affix our Signature.'

## 6. Patriarch's Encyclical Letter, c.June 1827, at Almost the Same Time as the Three Powers Were Concluding the Treaty of London Agreeing to Resort to Military Force.

Translated from a French version translated from the Greek.<sup>14</sup>

'To the Orthodox residents of the Peloponnese and the islands of the Archipelago, indigenious and foreigners, Priests and Laymen, young and old, to each and everyone of whatever condition they are, salvation, peace and mercy in our Lord! The Church of God loving mother of Orthodox Christians has never missed and still does not miss to work in various ways for the salvation of his children, especially when they go astray — it prays — It exhorts — It condemns; by all means within its reach it works for the public and private good, ensuring the safeguarding of the spiritual doctrines, and reproving the wickedness of some to free all from perdition.

It is common knowledge that the evil spirit had succeeded by its ruses and by its abominable suggestions in rousing the inhabitants of places that you occupy. The Church from the first moment hastened to

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14 Kew FO 352/17 B, part 6, 30.

issue circular letters, addressed to Rebels to urge all to keep back within the bounds of duty and of sincere submission, and comply with the precepts of religion. It relied on his spiritual strength and flattered itself that its hope would never be disappointed but that it will succeed in defeating the insurgency, work of the Devil, and bring back the Rebels within the bounds of duty and their primitive condition as Rayas, and presaged to them the misfortunes and calamities that the event has produced. — Finally in the Peloponnese, in the districts of Attica, Boeotia and in several other places of Rumelia, some Orthodox Greek Captains, some Primates and other Christians have finally abandoned the Diabolic path of rebellion, having long ago recognized, as a result of our blame and our exhortation contained in the said letters, the spiritual and temporal damage which resulted to them because of their perseverance in the revolt, and how the very name of revolt had rendered them abominable and hateful to the eyes of God and men alike.

They resumed their [true] selves and, repenting of their excess, they entered the life of obedience and subjection by trusting the mercy of His Highness Mehemmed Reschid Pasha, Governor of Rumelia, and in return they got forgiveness and mercy by recovering their status of Rayas due to which they now live in the most stable tranquillity and rest. This conduct has also satisfied us and has deserved the forgiveness and indulgence of the Church. And that is why we too by opening our spiritual arms embrace them to our bosom and give them our paternal blessing in the name of the Holy Spirit, imploring the Creator himself to forgive and to bless them.

Driven by their instances we have assured the Government of His Highness of the sincerity of their return and their submission and of their perseverance in the duty to their last breath. But alas! until when, inhabitants of the Peloponnese and the White [Aegean] Sea will you persist in your impious temerity and in your insane conduct, losing sight of the precepts of the Gospel the many benefits of which you have been filled by our common nurse the Sublime Porte you have trampled the commandments of religion and the Apostolic admonitions despising the doctrines of submission and obedience to temporal Powers, which are included in these words of the Apostle 'Be subject for the love of God to all kinds of rulers, as well to the King as to the Sovereign, as well to the Governors as to people sent on his part to punish those who do

wrong and to treat favourably those who do well — and elsewhere: that everyone should obey the Powers &c.’

You have surrendered yourself to your chimera and your cruelty has caused the ruin of your wives and your innocent children and that will be your total ruin; what you have been unable to accomplish so far, do you think you could achieve it in the future. It is only you who do not realise how your enterprise is foolish, and that it will lead at last result to dissolution, anarchy and disbelief that Satan strives to make win, and which will draw gratuitously on your heads the wrath of the Church, the curses of the world, and the just vengeance of the Sovereign for having, on one hand, despised the confidence due to the Ottoman Government and, on the other, trampled the divine precepts, the Sacred Law and the Canons. But as our Ecclesiastical duties impose on us an obligation to talk, and because your salvation is important to us, and to remind you the many benefits that you have got from the inexhaustible source of clemency of the Sublime Porte, we are writing these letters and we send them by our St Archpriest very honoured brother beloved in Jesus Christ, our collaborator in the work of salvation, to engage you in the name of the Holy Spirit — while recollecting the benefits that our nation has always enjoyed under the protective shadow of the Sublime Porte, tranquillity, honour, credit and freedom of worship that It has always given us — in showing him a sincere repentance for the past, in getting back to obedience and to your old status as Raya, and in abandoning the idle fancy that has led you both in the Peloponnese and in the Islands of the Archipelago where the Orthodox faith is professed, and in showing your propensity without suspicion and without any doubts, to enter into the saving path of obedience. Be sure that at the early symptoms of a true return and sincere and genuine repentance, that tender mother, the Sublime Porte, will embrace you and warm you up in his arms, and will draw extensively in the source of its mercy, rich in blessings and favours towards you, and will bury in eternal oblivion everything that the evil spirit led you to commit, in the same way as its natural compassion and philanthropic sympathy made it act towards the inhabitants of the District, whom we mentioned above, who dropped the infernal project of rebellion and who submitted themselves to the Sublime Porte, such as Greek Captains, Primates and other Christians, and got back in the circle of Rayalik, and in this way they are now living in ease and most

perfect tranquillity. For its part the common mother of the faithful, the Church of Jesus Christ, will withdraw the anathemas she threw against you and will grant you forgiveness if you listen to and implement the advice that She gives you and if you do not keep being deaf to the voice that calls you to Her. But if instead you continue to be ungrateful and insensitive to the goodness and the benefits of the Sublime Porte, if you reject our fatherly advice your iniquity will weigh on your neck and you will wail in your disaster when there will be no more means to expiate either spiritually or temporally. Raise your eyes to God then! try as there is still time to get, through genuine repentance, the clemency of the Sovereign and to make him favourable through prompt submission, and you will get the blessing of the Church and eternal happiness.

Farewell.'



# Appendix F

## Four Local Descriptions of Athens from the Long Millennium

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### 1. 'A Relation of the Antiquities of Athens'

*A manuscript from Venice translated into English shortly before 1671 from an unidentified language, probably Greek, now first published.*<sup>1</sup>

Imprimis Some two miles from the Citie at a place now called Pattissia was Platoes Schoole, & over against it at Sepolia was his Academie.

Somewhat higher eastward in a place now named Ampelookipi [*Ampelikopoi*] was the Schoole of Zeno

Towards the south on the other side, on the Hill Imitio [*Hymettos*], now called Trelodoumi [transcription uncertain] [*Trellóvouno*] a place much assoomed by ye Botomomis [*Botanists*] for the simples there growing, was the Schoole of [*a gap where a word has been omitted*] and a little beneath near the Amphitheatre was that of Aristofanes [*not identified*]

Within the City was the Schoole of Socrates, who was poyson'd by the Athenians meerly for the Envy they carryed towards his rare virtues. Now it hapning that a great Plague afflicted the City that same yeare, they deemed it a punishment on them, for their unworthy carriage towards Socrates, to expiate w[*hic*]h they erected to his memory, a very noble Sepulcher, all over covered, consisting of 8 Angles, wherein were placed the 8 windes cutt in human formes. w[*hich*] all remains intire. [*Tower of the Winds*]

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1 Transcribed from a manuscript in the British National Archives, Kew, SP 99/49, folio 84, 'letters from Venice, February 1671, received 18 March.'

In front of the Castle on a little Rising ground stands ye Areopagus where s[ain]t [*the word 'Paul' apparently omitted in error*] preached to convert St Dyonisius [*Dionysius the Areopagite*]. Here the Senators held the Council for all public matters. There yet remanes some Marbles [*word indecipherable*] with Triumphal Chariots and Lating Inscriptions relating to Julius Caesar [*Monument of Philopappos*]

Under the set Rising ground were the Schools of the ?Talambian [*not identified, perhaps an error of transcription*] Stoics, and over against them those of the Tragedians under Euripides & Pindar, and that of Sophocles.

Beneath the Castle were the Schooles of the Peripatetical Philosophers so called from their manner of walking, when they Taught, or disputed, There are divers parts of these Schools yet Standing but little or nothing of Aristotles, which stood next to it and was then called Licaum

As you enter the City on the west side, there remaynes Demosthenes Lantorn [*'or Lampe' inserted in margin*] intire, [*Choragic Monument of Lysicrates*] here it was he remayned Lockd up 6 months together, & would not be seen by the Peeple, for which he cutt of the one half of his Beard, and all was to show he might during that time overcome some difficulties in his Speech

At the entrance into the Citty on the North side, as the Citie now is, is a great lion of marble, in the forme of a lion Couchant or sleeping there were two others one in the Castle and one towards the Sea, both passant guardant now they used anciently to say; That as long as those two did watch, the first might rest secure

Neer the said place, stood anciently the Gran Piazza of the Citty and not far from it the Public magnificent Sepulchres, where they buried the famous & Eminent men. [*Cerameikos*] And there it was that ye earth opened as s Pauls prayers and swallowed up the Scribe [*a story at variance with the account in the Acts of the Apostles and also with local ecclesiastical tradition*]

A little higher stands Theseus temple. beautified wth. divers Columns of Marble and antique figures now dedicated to St George [*Theseion now generally known as the Hephaisteion, that until the Revolution, was the principal church in Athens*]

Some farther within the Citie is stood those stately Edifices of Polemarius & Themistocles [*Doric arch and Hadrian's Library*]. There are yet extant several noble antique pillars with Greek inscriptions. And



one Table of marble of Adrians time wherein are ingraven, the laws of the sd. Adrian for the politic government of the Citty, the weights and measures of Buying and Selling

In the other part of the Citty towards the South, stood that remarkable Pallace which was built upon 365 Marble Pillars and had been beatified and adorned by 12 several Kings but more especially by Theseus & Adriannus, [*Olympian Zeus*] as appears by a Greek inscription on the Portico upon one side [*The inscription on Hadrian's gate correctly transcribed in Greek characters perhaps in another hand*] And on the other side without [*This inscription also correctly transcribed in Greek characters*]

Not far from thence is the fountaine of the Nine Canals [*Enneakrouni but probably the Klepsydra*] where the Idolators went to wash themselves, before they intend to worshipp, into Junos' temple wh. was built all of marble somm. higher, and is still standing in good part [*Paved Court and chapel*]

Over against those remaines are two Pillars wh. sustain a portico, with inscriptions in latine, to the mem. of Ju. Caesar who had given to the Athenians certain Aqueducts which came to that place [*?Hadrian's aqueduct on Lycabettos*]

And a little higher stood the great famous Brazen statue of Pallas.

As you go into ye. ffort is Pan's Temple, & on the top of it, a Statue representing a Gorgon. A little of one side are two pillars one having a Neptune & the other a Pallas on it. [*The Cave and Thrasyllos Monument on the south slope. The suggestion that the two pillars were mountings for statues of Poseidon and Athena, even allowing for the rhetorical enargeia of reporting the whole description in the present tense, is plausible and not offered elsewhere as far as I can ascertain*]

Within the ffort stands the Noble Temple of the Goddess Pallas in a manner all intire, with many Pillars and Statues of that famous Architect & Sculptor ffidias, who lived before Aristotles time. [*Parthenon*]

Many say how within the Castle stood the Temple of the Unknown God called in Greek [*Greek characters correctly written in, perhaps by another hand*] mensiond by St Paul. Though others hold the said Temple stood in the midst of the Citty

Beneath the Castle stands the Archbishops Palace, and is the same where Dyonisius the Areopagite lived, and hard by ye set House or too is the well, where St Paul hid himself, when he escaped the furie of the

Athenians [*another local story at variance with the account in the Acts of the Apostles*]

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An Accompt of the little trade there

English cloths of Red, skie & Purple sell indifferent well & some few Gowns. [*A gap in the manuscript where a word or words omitted*] So dooth Pepper, Indico, Cloves, & Mace as also Lead and Tynn. But alass, in small quantities for ready mony the Countrie being miserable poore. Though sending a shipp with one half of these Comodities and a good sum of ready pieces of 8 one might load back dying weeds, woolls, Choos, Annis & Cummin seeds, fordovans [?], Silk, Ruggs, wax, Bulls & Buffaloes hydes

## 2. 'About Attica'

*Manuscript in the National Library, Paris, in Greek, thought to have been written down c 1671, long known, but now first translated into English.*<sup>2</sup>

'The castle [kastro] is the acropolis. The mosque is the temple [naos] of Athena Pallas. The golden cave is the cave of the Pan. The two columns. On one [column] was the statue of the Athena with the Gorgon's head, and on the other was the statue of the Zeus. Below which is a marble calendar [sundial]. A little further down was the Lykeion school of Aristotle. At the saint George of Alexandria in the Plaka is the marble lantern of Demosthenes. The great arch is the gate of the city. The columns of the Kalleroes were the theatre and scene of Aristophanes. At the two columns at the mountain were a curtain [kouti for kourti?] of Trajan the king with the Latin inscription. At the plain [teia] of Priam was the temple [naos] and school of Socrates has on each side the twelve winds and the seasons. At the saint George the tireless was the Keramikon and the temple of Theseus. At the marble lion was the great school of the Athenians and the monuments of the heroes. At the basilica was the school of the Cynics. At the Academy was the school of Plato.'

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2 Cod. Graec 1631. A BI 158. Translated from the version edited by Wachsmuth 142–44. Author's translation.

### 3. 'Theatres and Schools of Athens', Sometimes Known as 'Anonymous of 1460' First Published in the Nineteenth Century, Now First Translated into English<sup>3</sup>

1. We first note the Academy in the quarter of the Basilicas; secondly the Eleatic school in the quarter of Ampelokipoi; thirdly the school of Plato at the Paradeision (pleasure garden) [*Patissia*]; in fourth place, that of Diodorus, close to the latter.
2. In the inner city is the school of Socrates, where figures of men and winds are represented all around. To the west of this school are the palaces of Themistocles, and in their neighbourhood the sumptuous houses of the Polemarch. Close by stand the statues of Zeus. In front of them is a temple where the winners in pankration contests and at the Olympic Games received their funeral honours. It was there where orators usually went to read their funeral prayers.
3. To the north of this temple was the first town square, where the apostle Philip plunged the scribe in the water. There also were the rich houses of the Pandionides tribe. On the south side was a school of Cynic philosophers, and near it a school of tragic actors. Outside the Acropolis, just to the west, lived the ...; and near this place was the school of Sophocles; and to its south Ares Hill
4. (Areopagus) stood; it was there where Poseidon's son, Halirrhothios, was put to death by the god Ares.
5. To the east of the hill there were the palaces of Cleonides<sup>4</sup> and Miltiades, and close to them the school said of Aristotle still exists at present. Above this school stand two columns: on that located to the east was placed the statue of Athena, and on that to the west the statue of Poseidon. It is said that in the

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3 From Laborde's edition, now also available from Gallica at [http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k132954g/f46.image.r=laborde\\_athenes](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k132954g/f46.image.r=laborde_athenes)

4 The name in the manuscript is Κλεονιδου, *Cleonides*; but this name, which is without precedents, could have easily replaced *Cleomedes*, which is much used.

middle of the two there was a Gorgon head within an iron niche.<sup>5</sup> There is also a marble day clock (sundial).<sup>6</sup>

6. In front of this clock, to the south, there was a school said to be of Aristophanes, and, to the east, there is still the lantern of Demosthenes. Near the school there was also at that time the house of Thucydides, that of Solon, and the second square, the house of Alcmaeon, as well as a very large bath; and south of it, the main square of the city, and many temples, worthy of admiration, towards the south gate, on the jambs of which are represented nineteenth figures of men ... pursuing a ...<sup>7</sup> The royal bath was also there, where they tried to distress the great king<sup>8</sup> by making noise. In the same area was the house of Mnesarchus.
7. To the east of the house is a very large and beautiful arch; there are the names of Hadrian and Theseus. Within the walls one finds ...<sup>9</sup> which is very large. Here the royal residence stood, supported underneath by a great number of columns, and whose elegant construction was undertaken by order of the twelve kings who built the citadel.
8. To the south of this building is a house both royal and beautiful, where the duke sometimes went to indulge in the pleasure of the table. Here there is also the fountain Ennacrounos (with nine springs), formerly called the fountain Callirhoe. The duke, after having bathed there, ascended to the sanctuary

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5 The Greek text is ενδονκουβουκλειονσιδηρου.Κουβουκλειονandκουβουκλιονis used in Late Antiquity as an equivalent of *cubiculum*, *cubiculum* of which it reproduced the material form. However, what may be the meaning of *an iron room*? M. L. Ross in the German commentary which accompanies the publication of the Greek text of this topography (Wien, 1840) has translated this word as: in einem eisernen Kaefig, *in an iron cage*. Let us try to further clarify. The Latins called *cubiculum* also the void space intended for the insertion of a block in the masonry, in particular for the construction in reticulated work, as seen in Vitruvius (II, 8). I think then that the reference here is to such a void, a sort of an iron niche framed in one of the walls, undoubtedly a memory of that golden aegis, in the middle of which was a gilded Gorgon's head, and that was visible, according to Pausanias's report, in the southern wall of the citadel (I, 21, 4).

6 Μαρμαριτικον. This is a new example of this form to be noted.

7 There are two gaps here.

8 Τον μεγαν βασιλειον. I read βασιλεα.

9 There is a gap here.

said of Hera and there made his prayer. Today this sanctuary has been converted by the Orthodox Christians into a temple of the most holy Mother of God.

9. To the east of this temple is the theatre of Athens (amphitheatre), circular in shape, about a mile in circumference, with two entries. The northern entrance is enriched ... another ... . The southern entrance has the most ....<sup>10</sup> The theatre was adorned by a hundred circular marble steps from which the seated people watched the athlete and the wrestling.
10. Exiting this amphitheatre by the eastern gate, we find another square and two aqueducts that Julius Caesar built to please the Athenians, and by which he brought water from afar. There is still another aqueduct running towards the side of the northern gate, that Theseus built with care ...<sup>11</sup> And these monuments, as Abaris and Herodotus say, were carefully built by the twelve kings, after the establishment of the kingdom in the city of Athens. Kekrops, of double nature,<sup>12</sup> greatly embellished the growing town by adding various ornaments.<sup>13</sup> He raised the walls, paved the ground of different marbles, gilded the interior and exterior of the temples, and called this city Athens.<sup>14</sup>
11. Then entering the Acropolis, we find a small school, which was that of the musicians and that was founded by Pythagoras of Samos. Opposite is a very large palace, and below there is a great number of ...<sup>15</sup> and enriched with marble ceilings

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10 We had to mark several gaps in this section.

11 I think that there is a gap of at least a few words in this section, although it is not indicated. The author had to describe the citadel and its monuments, that he vaguely indicates by ταῦτα. He had already mentioned earlier the citadel that had been built by the twelve kings.

12 Διφυης (of δυο φυσεις εχων). We have explained this epithet in many different ways and it would be too long to report them here.

13 Εν ποικιλη δοξη, — Δοξα is used here with a very peculiar and unusual meaning; it seems synonymous with ωραιότης, *beauty, ornament*, which is to be found in the following paragraph: “Εν ποικιλη ωραιότητι.”

14 The original town was, in fact, built on the hill where the citadel was raised.

15 There is a gap here; it was probably followed by κιονες, as at paragraph 4: “Ιστανται δυο κιονες.”

and walls. To the north ...,<sup>16</sup> the chancellery<sup>17</sup> was built in marble and adorned with white columns. To the south of this building,<sup>18</sup> was the portico with diverse ornaments, gilded all around and on the exterior, and embellished with precious stones. It is from this portico that the *Stoic* philosophers, who gathered there to learn, derived their name. In front of the portico flourished the school of the Epicureans.

12. As for the temple of the Mother of God, that Apollos and Eulogius built for worshipping the *unknown God*, this is how it is: It is a very large and spacious temple,<sup>19</sup> very extended in length. Its walls are of white marble, and consist of tetragonal masonry; they are built without mortar and lime, united with iron and lead only. Outside the walls, the temple is enriched with very large columns that surround its cella all around. Between two of these columns, it encloses an oblique space, and towards the beautiful door there is its high altar, both to the south-west...,<sup>20</sup> contains the location of these columns, extending considerably in height. The capitals of the columns have been chisel sculpted in shape of palmette, they are redone, and above these capitals, the beams (the architrave) of white marble, which extend along the walls, in the connection to the walls have (undoubtedly below them) sculpted slabs, whose convexity presents in the upper part a sort of ceiling. There is also a very handsome wall supported by columns.<sup>21</sup>

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16 There is a gap here.

17 Καγγελαρια, *chancellery*. This word, together with κουβουκλειον, is a date for the age of the writing of this topography.

18 M.L. Ross proposes to read here *κατα νωτον*, *from behind*, im Rücken, instead of *κατα νοτον*, *to the south*. I believe that the position of the premises is not certain enough to allow such a change; in addition, I notice that the topographer repeats every moment, in its description *κατα ανατολας, κατα δυσιν, κατα αρκτον, κατα το νοτιον μερος*, to say *to the east, to the west, to the north, to the south*.

19 Δρομικωτατος. Δρομικος usually means *who excels at the race*, but it means here *place specific for the race*, and by extension, *spacious*; undoubtedly because of the oblong shape of the temple, which made it look like the stadium, *δρομος*. Besides we notice that in Late Antiquity the temples were called *δρομικα*, because of their oblong shape. Ducange (word *δρομικα*) quotes several examples.

20 There is a gap here.

21 The entire end of this paragraph, that we have tried to translate word by word, is obscure, and it is difficult to draw a clear and rational meaning from it.

#### 4. Two Letters from Synesius of Cyrene to his Brother, c.395<sup>22</sup>

'A great number of people, either private individuals or priests, by moulding dreams, which they call revelations, seem likely to do me harm when I am awake, if I do not happen with all speed to visit sacred Athens. Whenever, then, you happen to meet a skipper sailing for the Piraeus, write to me, as it is there I shall receive my letters. I shall gain not only this by my voyage to Athens — an escape from my present evils, but also a relief from doing reverence to the learning of those who come back from Athens. They differ in no wise from us ordinary mortals. They do not understand Aristotle or Plato better than we, and nevertheless they go about among us as demi-gods among mules, because they have seen the Academy, the Lyceum, and the Poecile where Zeno gave his lectures on philosophy. However, the Poecile no longer deserves its name, for the proconsul has taken away all the pictures, and has thus humiliated these men's pretensions to learning.'

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'I hope that I may profit as much as you desire from my residence at Athens. It seems to me that I have already grown more than a palm and a finger's length in wisdom, and I can give you at once a proof of the progress I have made. Well, it is from Anagyrus that I am writing to you; and I have visited Sphettus, Thria, Cephisia, and Phalerum. But may the accursed ship-captain perish who brought me here! Athens has no longer anything sublime except the country's famous names! Just as in the case of a victim burnt in the sacrificial fire, there remains nothing but the skin to help us to reconstruct a creature that was once alive — so ever since philosophy left these precincts, there is nothing for the tourist to admit except the Academy, the Lyceum, and by Zeus, the Decorated Porch which has given its name to the philosophy of Chrysippus. This is no longer Decorated, for the proconsul has taken away the panels on which Polygnotus of Thasos has displayed his skill. Today Egypt has received and cherishes the fruitful wisdom of Hypatia. Athens was aforesaid the dwelling-place of the wise: to-day the bee-keepers alone

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22 Letters 54 and 136 transcribed from Fitzgerald's edition.

bring it honour. Such is the case of that pair of sophists in Plutarch who draw the young people to the lecture room — not by the fame of their eloquence, but by the pots of honey from Hymettus.'



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1 Notably in Chapters 22 and 23.

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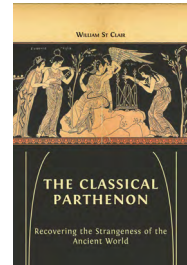
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# Who Saved the Parthenon?

## A New History of the Acropolis Before, During and After the Greek Revolution

WILLIAM ST CLAIR

EDITED BY DAVID ST CLAIR AND LUCY BARNES. WITH A PREFACE BY

RODERICK BEATON

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