

at Hosios Loukas and other monuments, and particular attention is focussed here on the work at Mystras, covering the churches one by one. Also important during this period was the restoration of the church of St Demetrios at Thessaloniki, which was substantially destroyed in the fire of 1917. Photographs before the fire are included, and then of the reconstruction work between 1924 and 1939 by Aristotelis Zachos. The documentation is thorough and also recorded are the discussions about the controversial masonry materials used in the reconstruction (it is no longer a brick building). The epilogue to this section draws attention to some of the principles of conservation of Byzantium, such as the use of new materials like concrete to strengthen buildings but also the practice of removing later but historical elements (like belltowers). In all, this book is an essential tool for the study of many Greek monuments, though not all - Athos and the islands are less covered, with Nea Moni on Chios receiving only a mention. It is nevertheless a major and engrossing achievement.

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Anna Frangoudaki and Caglar Keyder (eds), *Ways to Modernity in Greece and Turkey. Encounters with Europe, 1850-1950*. (Library of European Studies 1). pp. 271, 7 tables, 6 graphs, 10[+14] figures, index. London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020. ISBN 978135017396-5, paperback \$ 44.95.

This book is the second volume in the series “Social and Historical Studies on Greece and Turkey,” which aims to provide a platform for dialogue between Greek and Turkish social scientists and historians on “issues of major theoretical importance” that concern the international academic community, by conveying and commenting on experiences from both sides of the Aegean. The first volume explored institutional aspects in the course of nation formation and the emergence of civil society. The second volume delves more into the experiential aspects of this process from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. Specifically, this volume focuses on the experience of modernity, the reaction to an unqualified Europeanization perspective, and the convergence through a nationalism-forged “tradition.”

In the Introduction, the editors emphasize the differences and similarities through which the two societies approached the modernization narrative. They argue that, unlike the Muslim population, the Greek subjects of the Empire developed a dynamic exploitation of the new economic conditions and moved towards the establishment of a modern constitutional state without significant ethnic issues, at a time when the declining Ottoman state was implementing minor reforms, and any modernization efforts undermined its integrity. However, they note certain key points of convergence between the two sides that served as bulwarks of reaction against European modernity, such as their state traditions, distrust of liberalism, and prioritization of political choices over social reforms. These factors allowed nationalism to infuse modernity with a vague reference to tradition, maintaining a peculiar relationship of approach and withdrawal between East and West (for this topic, E. Skopetea’s book “*Η Δύση της Ανατολής* [The West in the East],” 1992, Athens: Gnosi, remains relevant).

The articles are grouped into four sections. The first section explores how modernizing principles are expressed in legislation. Tassopoulos takes the Constitution of 1864 as an example to comment on the course of constitutionalism in Greece. As is well known, the Constitution of 1864 was one of the most democratic constitutions in Europe at the time and should perhaps be seen as an attempt to reconnect with the rationale behind the progressive but short-lived revolutionary constitutions, whose development was halted during the governance of Kapodistrias and King Otto, while its continuation can be traced to the Constitution of 1875, which introduced the principle of proclaimed confidence (for a general discussion on Greek constitutions, see: M. Mousmouti (ed.) 2012, *The Greek Constitutions and Their History 1797-1875*, Athens: Centre for European Constitutional Law). During the same period, however, the rise of nationalism and the fostering of the Great Idea created a serious counterbalance that favored the monarchy as a symbol of national unity, but the author argues that parliamentary institutions were not completely overthrown, so we cannot speak of a case of “transformation” but rather of a simple “conversion.”

Toprak traces the evolution of legislation and jurisprudence in the late Ottoman Empire, beginning with the Tanzimat reforms (1839-1876), which were initiated in response to the need for modernization of the collapsing state and to address new challenges arising from both international and domestic circumstances. Drawing inspiration from French legal concepts, Ottoman reformers adopted

the model of an interactive secular state, gradually abandoning Islamic Sharia law and the polycentric local legal system, believing that this would enhance economic prosperity and contribute to the renewal of the Empire's social and political structures. At the same time, the *Porte* saw it as an opportunity to discourage centrifugal forces and strengthen central control. While both articles successfully convey the reformers' rationale, one hardly realizes the extent of the conflicts that took place behind the scenes, as well as the reactions during the implementation of the reforms in societies that were still bound by tradition.

The authors of the second section deal with the reception of the modernist phenomenon in the fields of education and book production, economic transactions, and architecture.

Exertzoglou highlights the invocation of a vague "tradition" as a bulwark against the encounter of the Ottoman East with European modernism, an idea promoted by nationalist discourse, while simultaneously recognizing the validity of Western models and adopting "fundamental polarities of the western discourse of modernity" (West-East, civilization-barbarity, etc.). This ambivalence in the face of increasing European dominance and the changing social and cultural landscape is best traced in the field of education, where European organizational models are reproduced, but the content is called upon to serve national goals and the formation of urban class identity.

Eldem demonstrates how one can glean information about social attitudes and behaviors by examining simple, everyday practices that usually go unnoticed. He uses as a case study the signatures and seals of Greeks in Istanbul who conducted transactions with the Ottoman Bank. In a transitional period when society was oscillating between allegiance to the Ottoman culture and Westernization, maintaining traditional forms and modernity, the choice of a Turkish seal, a Greek or French signature signified, beyond the level of literacy, the individual's identity, and as such, it was not an "innocently spontaneous" choice.

Petropoulou examines the circulation of Western—mainly French—novels among Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians translated into *Karamanlidika* script (Turkish written in Greek characters). She argues that this trend is associated with modernity, as from the mid-19th century, the books chosen for translation had secular content and depicted the changing social life in European cities, while modern methods of book production and dissemination

were introduced. In the hinterland of the East, the printed book appeared during a transitional period moving towards literacy, revealing two paradoxes: the younger generations took the lead, but the dissemination of Western culture still largely occurred orally.

Bozdoğan reevaluates the so-called "Ottoman Revivalism" in the architecture of the early Republican period (1910s and 1920s), which became a kind of national style for Turkey. Despite the negative views of modern Turkish architecture towards this style, which attempted to combine classical Ottoman architecture with European principles and technologies, the author considers it a noteworthy effort that operated "on par with its turn-of-the century Western counterparts." She argues that the dominance of European modernism from the 1930s abruptly interrupted this smooth transition and led to a long period of distancing from the Ottoman past and the gradual "Turkification" (read: full Westernization) of architecture.

In the third section, the focus shifts to migrants and the family as agents of experiencing modernity overshadowed by nationalism.

Laliotou centers her study on the Greek immigrant in America in the 1950s. She approaches the immigrants' experiences through the book by Greek-American historian Th. Saloutos, tracing how the experiences of migration intertwined with perceptions of nation, nationality, and culture. The narratives of the immigrants mainly record success stories, a positive image of the host country, and the effects of American culture on the immigrants' culture and temperament. Although the topic is extremely interesting, I believe that a study of the first migration to America in the early 20th century, whose impacts on both the sending and receiving countries were equally significant, would have been a better fit for the present volume (see for example: C.C. Moskos 1989, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success*, London: Transaction Publishers; I.K. Chasiotis 1993, *Επισκόπηση της ιστορίας της νεοελληνικής Διασποράς* [Overview of the history of Modern Greek diaspora], Thessaloniki: Vaniias).

Psarra examines feminist discourse and practice in Greece at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. She finds that Greek feminists adapted their ideas to the nationalist discourse of the time, as they were initially forced to differentiate themselves from the manifestations of feminism in the perceived advanced but "degenerate West," on the one hand, and from the "undeveloped" and culturally threatening

East, which held post-revolutionary Greek society captive, on the other. At the same time, Greek feminists such as Callirhoe Parren closely followed developments in international women's networks, expressing a clear preference for the American model, and only towards the end of the period does a shift towards Balkan cooperation become apparent, which appears unable to further avoid the initial feminist orientalism (for the involvement of feminists in national war rhetoric, see also: E. Avdela & A. Psarra 2005, Engendering 'Greekness': Women's Emancipation and Irredentist Politics in Nineteenth-Century Greece, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 20(1), 67–79).

Sirman shifts the research focus to the changes in family structure and the social role of women during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the nation-state of Turkey. She focuses on tracing modernist ideas embedded in novels and other printed materials. Sirman argues that there is a clear shift from the house society to an independent household unit, the nuclear family, in which kinship and politics have no place, but personal relationships of affection and love prevail. Thus, a new imaginary of the family began to emerge, positioned at the forefront of broader societal and political changes during this period.

One might expect an article on the impact of the feminist movement in Turkey. Instead, Yenal's study on Girls' Institutes in Turkey follows, which indeed played a very significant role in propagating a peculiar modernity introduced by the state itself, but this was limited to educating women as home makers and wives. By placing women at the center of a Westernized nation in this manner, it rather obscured the landscape instead of providing a solution that would help them significantly strengthen their position within the family and society. The vision of Turkey's political reformers ultimately implies a universal recognition of the superiority of European aesthetics, in the sense of a cultural revolution which, however, touched less on the way people thought and behaved, as evidenced, for instance, by the popularity of traditional dress in recent years (S. Kavas 2015, 'Wardrobe Modernity': Western Attire as a Tool of Modernization in Turkey, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 51(4), 515–539).

In the final section, two articles focus on the transformations of the urban fabric, as the leading groups move from a pluralistic to a nationalistic experience of modernity.

Kolluoğlu Kırılı examines the transformation of the urban fabric of Smyrna from the 19th to the 20th

century, a period during which urban modernity was experienced and realized in two different ways. This involves the transition from the cosmopolitan and densely built Ottoman Smyrna to the Turkish Izmir with its homogenized structure, large public park, and modernist buildings that revealed a "totalitarian and nationalist interpretation of modernity." The reconstruction was prompted by the 1922 fire that destroyed most of the city. One might expect a reference here to the similar and contemporary case of Thessaloniki, where a devastating fire also provided an opportunity for Greek politicians and European planners to change the urban identity of the city (E. Bugatti 2013, Urban Identities and Catastrophe: Izmir and Salonica at the End of the Ottoman Empire, *Geographical Review*, 103(4), 498–516).

Yerolympos turns to the Aegean islands, examining the transformation of the urban space in Syros, Lesbos, and Samos. These three islands, each with limited space, belonged to three different state entities during the 19th century. Nevertheless, they managed to integrate into the broader modernization trend, each with its specific geographical and historical peculiarities. Based on local initiatives, new urban spaces were designated, cities open to commercial activity and communications were developed, with secular functions and friendly towards new technology, while clear rules for the construction and use of urban land were established. However, the decline of commercial momentum in the post-war years led to decay, the establishment of centralized structures, and the creation of largely fossilized urban forms. There are many more examples from the island area, but the author's choice is successful.

This volume, with the breadth of topics it contains, expands the field of research and provides the scientific community with a series of exemplary approaches to build a clearer discourse free from the ethnocentric constraints of the past. It offers a platform for understanding the trajectories of national modernization in the two countries within their given historical and cultural contexts, simultaneously illuminating aspects of ethnogenesis in Southeastern Europe and the Near East. In this encounter between the modernization trend and nationalism, it appears that the state and the bourgeoisie respond to challenges by periodically readjusting the national narrative to absorb pressures. However, it is now clear that the protagonists of social and cultural changes are the local elites, while most of the population remains anchored to a vague notion of tradition, moving slowly with various modes of assimilation or reaction

to developments. The catalytic role of religion in this process is an issue that has been scarcely addressed. There are also very few references to the interaction of national populations and perceptions of the national Other (on the latter, see: D. Theodossopoulos 2006, Introduction: The 'Turks' in the Imagination of the 'Greeks,' *South European Society and Politics*, 11(1), 1–32), ultimately giving the impression less of comparative studies and more of an analytical presentation of parallel experiences in response to the modernization challenge. After all, the comparison of two dissimilar (for most of the period 1850–1950) state entities raises a number of complex issues, which the authors have already begun to address.

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