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*The Representations of Athens as Antiquity and Modernity:  
1834 to the Present*

By  
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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

At the  
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In the  
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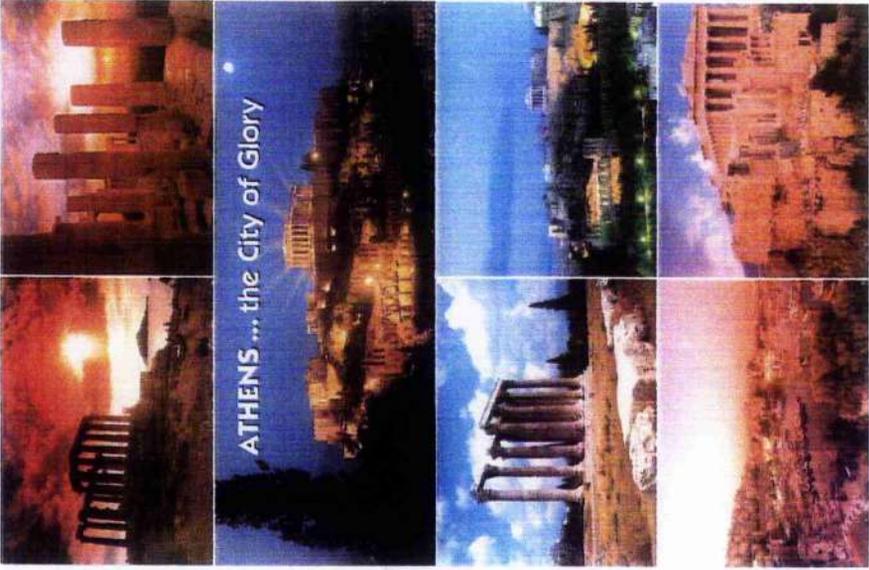
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ATHENS ... the City of Glory

## *Abstract*

Athens, it is generally assumed, is the cradle of Western civilization – it is the mother of democracy, of the beautiful in the arts and of reason. But this Athens is the classical polis. Since the city's foundation as the capital of modern Greece in 1834, the representation of the Periclean polis as a perfect antiquity was transformed into a representation of the new, post-1834 Athens as an eternal antiquity and the ancestor of a modern Western civilization. In seeking to provide the theoretical framework for the study of a city that has largely been excluded from the existing literature on metropolitan modernity, this thesis discusses the changing representations of post-1834 Athens as antiquity and modernity. Moreover, in engaging with the contradictory definitions of modernity, this thesis exposes the unstable character of the experience of a modern Athens and introduces the dimensions that ultimately highlight post-1834 Athens as the capital of a modernity that disguises itself as antiquity. Finally, in revealing the unstable character of Athenian antiquity itself from the nineteenth century and beyond, this thesis introduces the hidden element in the dialectic, in the modern, between the new and the old. *Modern Antiquity*, therefore, is the socially constructed image of the past that enables modernity to believe that it has surpassed a glorious antiquity.

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\*Courtesy of the National and Historic Museum.

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I. A fourth-century Athenian in Syntagma metro station (2004)

*Introduction: Modern Athens or the City Rejected.*

"No city in the world can be compared with the eternal spiritual glory of Athens."<sup>1</sup>

"Even in the shattered stones around the Acropolis, one can find evidence of the precision and genius that made this place the cornerstone of Western Civilization."<sup>2</sup>

"It is with the deep emotion born by the consciousness of the heavy inheritance constituted by the long history of this town which, rising from the twilight of beautiful myths, continues uninterrupted until today, for a period of about 5,000 years."<sup>3</sup>

I

Is Athens a modern capital? A review of the literature on the modern metropolis suggests that it is not. Indeed, the theories of the modern city<sup>4</sup> largely exclude the post-1834 Athens that interests us here. In theory, the modern city, usually Paris or London in the nineteenth century, is capitalist, industrialized and technologically advanced. The absence of nineteenth-century Athens from the literature, therefore, may be partly attributed to the fact it did not concentrate these characteristics. With the exception of Eleni Bastéa's<sup>5</sup> exploration of the first plans for nineteenth-century Athens, and a number of architectural works on the architecture of modern Athens, most of which were published in Greece, the theoretical or descriptive discussion of the metropolis largely excludes Athens. Indeed, Guy Burgel's<sup>6</sup> 1976 study of the development of the Greek capital from 1834 to-day remains the single sociological work on Athens. Nevertheless, although Burgel's analysis of the city's modernization enables us to shift the emphasis to its hitherto unexplored modernity, Bastéa's attempt to discuss a modern Athens presents a rather problematic view of Athenian modernity.

For Bastéa, "considered within the concept of other nineteenth-century capitals, the drafting of a new plan for Athens right after the liberation symbolized the country's rebirth and westernization."<sup>7</sup> For Bastéa, the creation of modern Athens emphasizes how its

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<sup>1</sup> D.A. Gerondas "Ai 'Pnevmatikai Athenai'." [The 'Spiritual Athens'] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 38, Christmas 1967, p.43.

<sup>2</sup> J.A. Evans "Return to Greece." *Queen's Quarterly*, No.108, Spring 2001, p.109.

<sup>3</sup> D.N. Rizos in Feuilleton: *Celebration of the Anniversary of the Proclamation of the City of Athens as the Capital of Greece*. Athens: Municipal Council of Athens, 1971, no page numbers.

<sup>4</sup> See for example M.P. Smith *The City and Classical Theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980, M. Savage and A. Warde *Urban Sociology. Capitalism and Modernity*. London: MacMillan, 1993, and P. Kasinitz ed., *Metropolis – Centre and Symbol of Our Times*. London: MacMillan, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> See E. Bastéa *The Creation of Modern Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> See G. Burgel *Athens – I Anaptiksi Mias Mesogeiakis Protevousas*. [Athens – The Development of a Mediterranean Capital] P. Rulmon tr., Athens: Exandas, 1976.

<sup>7</sup> E. Bastéa op. cit., 2000, p.82.

establishment as the capital meant Greece's westernization. Although the independence of Greece in 1827 opened up unlimited possibilities for the emergence of new social formations, such as the state, the nation and the development of capitalist relations, the interrelation between Greece and its capital will lead us to an analysis of the modernization of the former and not to the exploration of the modernity of the latter. Our modern Athens is more than a mere national capital. This is because from the eighteenth century onwards, Athens is persistently represented as the old that the new must compete with.

## II

It would be misleading to argue that the contest between modernity and antiquity that we will explore here was originally focused upon Athens. In validating the observation concerning the fragmentary character of modernity, the past was initially identified with a more inclusive portrayal of Greece. But this representation of Greece as a perfect antiquity was often limited to Athens and, in turn, to its Acropolis. In an attempt to hide the ideological character of the "twin concepts of Hellas and Europe,"<sup>8</sup> the founders of nineteenth- and twentieth-century modern Athens and the propagators of the idea of a new, albeit ancient city, used the Parthenon as a vehicle for the idea that the Greek capital was the mother of the twins. Hence, modern Athens can partly account for the dialectic between national cultures and European, later translated as Western, civilization. Nevertheless, whereas the nation was more or less a reality in the nineteenth century,<sup>9</sup> Europe is still attempting to define its cultural heritage.<sup>10</sup> Yet, however incomplete its definition, Europe's bond to Greece, and specifically Athens, was maintained from the beginning.

In his *History and Truth*,<sup>11</sup> Paul Ricoeur suggests that the relationship between the nation and civilization is founded upon a fundamental contradiction.<sup>12</sup> Whereas it has to uphold culture "in order to nurture national revendication,"<sup>13</sup> for example, if the nation wishes to 'participate' in civilization, it also has to "abandon a whole cultural past."<sup>14</sup> For Ricoeur, if the nation wants to become part of a greater civilization thereby escaping the singularity of its present, it has to relinquish not merely a part of, but rather a 'whole cultural past'. Yet, Ricoeur argues that this prerequisite is not the death of the nation. In seeking to identify the "conditions [under which] the cultural creativity of the nation [can]

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<sup>8</sup> M. Herzfeld *Ours Once More – Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*. New York: Pella, 1986, p.5.

<sup>9</sup> For the social construction of the nation state see, for example, B. Anderson *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso, 1991, E. Gellner *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983, and E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger eds., *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

<sup>10</sup> This follows from the new admissions to the EU and the controversy concerning a European Turkey.

<sup>11</sup> See P. Ricoeur *History and Truth*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965.

<sup>12</sup> See *ibid.*, esp., pp.271-284.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.277.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

continue,"<sup>15</sup> he argues that the "problem is not simply to repeat the past, but rather to take root in it in order to ceaselessly invent."<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, this solution is no less complicated than the repetition of the past. In both cases, the contradiction stems from the character of their end result. If the nation is forced to abandon the past in order to participate in civilization, then where is it supposed to later 'take root in' again in order to revive its cultural energies? If Ricoeur's hypothesis is correct, it is not the past itself but something else that the nation has to turn to in its efforts to reclaim an individual culture. These conflicts hide at the heart of a nation whose capital represented the antiquity of European civilization.

Conscious of how the dilemmas related to the conflict between the nation and civilization affected the cultural development of the former, Michael Herzfeld argues that the contradictory character of modern Greece partly derives from the fact that, "no other country was ever afforded with such a generative role in relation to the rest of Europe, and it is this above all which makes the Greek experience the reverse of virtually every other European country."<sup>17</sup> At a time when other countries sought to create and then to defend their national cultures as distinctive parts of a more general civilization, modern Greece represented the source of both the idea of the nation state and that of Europe as a whole. After Winckelmann defined Greek art as superior to the Roman one, the imaginary of Athens as the mother of an aesthetically obsessed civilization was dependent upon the antiquities that best expressed the 'authentic past' that could overshadow the geographical and cultural limitations of Europe. Furthermore, in order for the relationship between Greece and Europe to be legitimized, these antiquities were to represent the continuation from an undying past to an eternal present. One of the greatest difficulties within modern Greece, therefore, is that although some of its antiquities often served as 'symbolic capital' and 'cultural resource',<sup>18</sup> thereby becoming, as Ricoeur would argue, the ground in which a national culture took root, "in sharing [classical antiquities] with the rest of the world,"<sup>19</sup> Greece itself may have become 'impoverished'.<sup>20</sup> Greece 'shared' part of its past in a twofold manner. First, through the transportation of a great number of its, mostly classical, antiquities abroad. Second, through the widespread idea that the classical polis was the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.281.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.282.

<sup>17</sup> M. Herzfeld op. cit., 1986, p.11.

<sup>18</sup> For the application of Bourdieu and Giddens' respective concepts in this context see Y. Hamilakis and E. Yalouri "Antiquities as Symbolic Capital in Modern Greek Society." *ANTIQUITY*. Vol.70, No.267, March 1997, pp.117-119.

<sup>19</sup> D. Lowenthal "Classical Antiquities as National and Global Heritage." *ANTIQUITY*. No.62, 1988, p.726.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

ancestor of the modern, both in Greece and beyond.<sup>21</sup> But above all, Greece lost the privilege of claiming the exclusive ownership of Athens. After 1834 and the foundation of Athens as the new capital of Greece, it was this new city that was afforded with a 'generative role' in relation to the 'world'. What was at stake then, was the construction of a genealogy between the city that possessed the *original* Parthenon and Western civilization. David Lowenthal says of the one monument:

The Parthenon is precious not only to Greeks in general and to Athenians in particular, but to much of the world. The diffusion of classical culture has made the monuments of classical antiquity the patrimony of the whole world as well as of its own homeland.<sup>22</sup>

Two reverse strategies maintained the idea concerning classical antiquities as the ancestry of modern European civilization. On the one hand, the past is gradually defined in an exclusive manner from Greece to Athens to the Acropolis and, finally, to the Parthenon. On the other hand, this fragment of Athenian antiquity became the patrimony of modern Athens, then of Greece, of Europe, of the Western world, and, finally, of the whole world. Hence, modern Athens had to bear the burden of also being the mother of both antiquity and modernity. In its representation as the antiquity of modernity, therefore, modern Athens transcends both national and temporal boundaries. Indeed, whilst Christine Boyer assumes that modern Athens took only its name from the past<sup>23</sup> the definition of modern Athens required antiquity.

### III

In contrast to the existing literature, we will explore the idea that Athens is the most 'modern' of all capitals, including the celebrated Paris and London of the nineteenth century. In her attempt to locate the characteristics of the modern metropolis in the various 'urban epistemologies', Deborah Parsons<sup>24</sup> suggests that,

Modernity is generally accepted to refer both to the processes and structures of modernization (the rise of consumer capitalism), and to the mode of experience that these bring about (a fragmentation and

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<sup>21</sup> This twofold manner of 'sharing' is also characteristic of the debate concerning the Parthenon sculptures in the British Museum. See, for example, Y. Hamilakis "Stories from Exile: Fragments from the Cultural Biography of the Parthenon (or 'Elgin') Marbles." *World Archaeology*. Vol.31, No.2, The Cultural Biography of Objects. October 1999, pp.303-320.

<sup>22</sup> D. Lowenthal op. cit., 1988, pp.732-733.

<sup>23</sup> See C. Boyer *The City of Collective Memory*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996.

<sup>24</sup> See D.L. Parsons "Paris is not Rome or Madrid." *Critical Quarterly*. Vol.44, No.2, Spring 2002, pp.17-29.

disintegration of conventional understandings of space, time, subjectivity and social relations).<sup>25</sup>

If it is true that modernity is, by definition, interdependent with modernization, nineteenth and early twentieth-century Athens was not a modern city and cannot be explored in terms of a modernity that, according to Marshal Berman, is characterized by "perpetual disintegration and renewal."<sup>26</sup> But Parsons introduces another dimension of the modern metropolis that distances it from modernization and highlights "its role as a cosmopolitan centre of intellectual and artistic networks and current of thought."<sup>27</sup> There is a general consensus that in its character as an experience with different and often contradictory dimensions, modernity resists a universally accepted definition.<sup>28</sup> Yet, in its capacity as the centre of thought concerning the very idea of the modern, post-1834 Athens emerges as the capital of another modernity that is different and yet related to that of Paris or London. In addressing the questions concerning the birth of the new that is the product of modernization, modernity is also bound to also address the questions concerning the fate of the old in the modern. Regardless of how it chooses to treat it, the new always needs the old and the present always needs the past. What we will explore here, therefore, is how problematic or convenient it was for the new Athens of the nineteenth-century and beyond to claim a European culture as originally its own. Modern Athens constitutes a unique case in the context of metropolitan modernity because it exposes the other, the hidden side of the dialectic, in the modern, between the old and the new.

From the eighteenth century onwards, Athens appears as the old with which the new must compete against in order to prove its own worth. Both advocates and critics of modernity, from Friedrich Schiller in the eighteenth and Walter Benjamin in the twentieth century ultimately speak of Athens as the antiquity that their modernity was confronting. Whether it is identified with the positive experience of the birth of the new and the death of the old as is the case with Charles Baudelaire and Herman Bahr or whether its is defined in terms of what Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Weber saw as the emptiness and disenchantment that is the result of the annihilation of what was meaningful in the old, the modern continuously confronts Athens as *the* past. But despite their ambivalence or often open disapproval of the idea of the modern as the radically new and better, all the commentators with whom we will engage here, from Schiller to Karl Marx and Benjamin

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.19.

<sup>26</sup> M. Berman *All that is Solid Melts into Air*. London: Verso, 1983, p.15.

<sup>27</sup> D.L. Parsons op. cit., 2002, p.20

<sup>28</sup> For the problems with the definition of modernity see D. Frisby "Analysing Modernity," in M. Hvattum and H. Christiansen eds., *Tracing Modernity*. London: Routledge, 1004, pp.3-22 and A. Benjamin ed., *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin*. London: Routledge, 1989.

and from Nietzsche to Georg Simmel and Weber, this Athens is always the classical polis. It is here that Athens transcends time and seduces even the most fervent critics of modernity. Chapter one introduces the first dimension of a specifically Athenian modernity. Whereas the 'modern' usually implies the dialectic between the new and the old as well as a break with the past, Athenian modernity reveals the inherently unstable character of this dialectic. In modern Athens the dialectic between the new and the old involved four hidden categories: the ancient, the modern, the old, and a new image of the old.

Chapter two explores the transformation of the representation of a hitherto unmatched antiquity into that of the authentic origin of the new. With the disappointment concerning the present increasing from the eighteenth century onwards, the advocates of the modern, and especially those who desired to conceal the functional character of capitalist modernity, gradually manipulated the socio-historical memories of Athens and highlighted its antiquity as the site where it all began. Athens, therefore, was to become the site from where only the present could have emerged as it did. It is here that memory and history are mutated in the representation of modern Athens as the origin of European civilization. It is also here that this representation reveals its aesthetic character that takes modern Athens away from the question of the nation and capitalism. The second distinct dimension of modern Athens is that its 'collective memory' was, more often than not, a collection of myths. In the dialectic between remembering and forgetting, modern Athens was forced to forget what it needed to remember in order to know and to appreciate its history.

Chapter three introduces nineteenth-century Athens as the cradle of a civilization that the Germans desired to represent. In believing that they were enlightened and that they would become the civilizers of the world, the Prussian and Bavarian founders of Athens used it as the experimentation ground for their conceptions of Germany. This suggests the Bavarians' and the Prussians' interest in Athens as a kind of anticipation for their own delayed formation. Modern Athens was the site where the Germans saw themselves as a nation, one that would lead Europe to glory. Moreover, in being aware of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century representations of the classical polis as a perfect antiquity, the mostly foreign founders of the new capital maintained that post-1834 Athens was itself the classical polis. Hence, they built modern Athens as their ancestor. This bond between the classical and the modern city was facilitated by the inauguration of the Acropolis as an official monument for Europe. In the 1830s and 1840s, it seemed that the Acropolis was all that mattered in the new Athens. Chapter three, therefore, discusses how the ancient was the most significant category in the foundation of modern Athens.

Chapter four continues with an exploration of the history of Athens through its Acropolis and introduces the old that was sacrificed in the search for the ancient. Here we remember the twenty-two centuries that were erased in order for the founders of the capital to establish their relation with the ancients. However closer to what may really have happened, this history was deemed inconvenient, unwanted and unnecessary. It was deemed unworthy of the city's classical glory and it was, therefore, destroyed. This is the story of a city that was forced to forget its history and to memorize the myths that founded the classical polis and the capital of the 1830s and 1840s. Chapter four, therefore, discusses the Roman, Frankish, Byzantine and Ottoman past of Athens and introduces a new image of the old as the most important category in the foundation of antiquity as the origin of new Athens.

Chapter five discusses the significance of the Acropolis in the drawing of the first plans for Athens. With a continuous destruction of the city's medieval and Ottoman past occurring on the one hand and with the suggestion that there should be a physical connection between the Acropolis and the new palace being re-affirmed on the other, the first plans for a new Athens maintained the representation of the nineteenth-century capital as the polis. Nevertheless, these nineteenth-century proposals gradually disguised the representation of the new city as a perfect instance of modernity's ability to surpass antiquity. Whereas they appeared to emphasize the undying antiquity of Athens, these first plans secretly imposed the power of the new – and this was especially true of the palace – to use this antiquity at will. The nineteenth-century proposals for the capital reveal the shift from antiquity to modernity.

Chapter six examines the twentieth-century unregulated urban-planning development of Athens, the continuous problem of the lack of a master plan for the whole city and the urbanization of the 1950s and 1960s. Whereas the Acropolis remained central in any plan for the reformation of Athens, the modern city gradually expanded away from what is now defined as the archaeological sector. Amidst a number of unrealized proposals for the harmonious co-existence of the ancient and the new Athens in the modern capital, the Athenians of the twentieth century took the courage that their parents lacked and admitted that, although it will always be the city of the Acropolis, Athens is a new city. But this courage did not mean that the new was ever accepted as equal to the ancient – modernist architecture remained merely an experiment in Athens. The spatial separation of antiquity and modernity in twentieth-century Athens did not solve the dialectic between the new and the old. But on the other hand, this dialectic was never meant to be solved in Athens. Chapter six traces how the old is largely destroyed, how the ancient is replaced with a new image of the old, and how the modern disguises itself as the ancient.

By the late 1900s the capital of the nineteenth century was merely the centre of a wider Athens. In the second half of the twentieth century, this 'old' capital was largely demolished and gave its place to the new city of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Chapter seven engages with the questions addressed in the previous chapters and discusses the similarities and differences between the nineteenth and the twentieth-century Athens. With Athenians contesting the beauty of old, nineteenth-century Athens and with the majority of foreigners insisting on the primacy of the classical polis, our journey to Athens ends with the modern monuments and streetscapes of Athens today. Here we confront a modernity that, from 1834 onwards both loved and despised itself. In drawing from the contested views concerning the capital of the 1800s and 1900s, chapter seven reveals the simultaneous success and failure of modern Athens to become better than its celebrated antiquity. Whereas the post-1834 Acropolis hides a new image of the ancient, the Athenian Trilogy – the Library, University, and Academy of Athens – celebrates a modernity that represents itself as antiquity.

In choosing not to pretend that we have found the definitive answer to the question of modernity, we introduce a city that is unique in exposing how a new image of the old is never either lost, or dead for ever. We will define this new image of the past *modern antiquity*. Modern antiquity is the other, the veiled modernity. In contrast to other capitals, such as Paris or London, modern Athens reveals the 'eternal' and the 'immutable' character of an otherwise 'fleeting' and 'transitory' experience. Modern antiquity is Athenian modernity. In introducing new categories in the dialectic, of the modern, between the new and the old, Athens is the 'absent other' of metropolitan modernity. But this is not a negative other. With its modernity being represented as antiquity and with its antiquity being represented as modernity, Athens ultimately exposes the unstable character of the categories involved in the dialectic between the past and the present. In the beginning, modern Athens was dominated by modern antiquity. Then it was dominated by a modernity that, albeit disguised as antiquity, was proud of its present. When Athens caught up with other European capitals after World War II, thereby becoming a member of the family of capitalist metropolises, the new was not enough and the ancient was once more perceived as the perfect. This is a unique experience that transcends traditional definitions of metropolitan modernity in terms of the dialectic between the new and the old and emerges as the experience of the modern *as* the eternally ancient. Athenians can testify to this fact: since the 2004 Olympics, they see their dead ancestors in the centre of Athens. [Fig. I]

## Chapter 1: Athens or Metropolitan Modernity Excavated

*"The new is always old, and the old is always new."*<sup>29</sup>

*"The category under which the archaic merges with modernity seems to me far less the 'Golden Age' than 'catastrophe'. I once noted that the recent past always presents itself as if it had been annihilated by catastrophes. I would say now: but it therefore presents itself as primal history."*<sup>30</sup>

*"There is nothing that is exclusively and entirely 'the future' just as there is nothing that is irredeemably 'lost'. In the future there is the past. Antiquity may disappear from before our eyes, but not from our blood."*<sup>31</sup>

### I

The modern carries within it a paradoxical loss whose extravagant character lies in the fact that instead of meaning the mere accidental loss of something precious – and by implication old – it seems, rather, to require the conscious abandonment and destruction of the old for the glorification of the new. By radically distinguishing the two, the 'modern' implies that the festive reception of the birth of the new, its celebration as the triumphantly glorious appears to require the death of the old. Modernity, in this case, can be explored in relation to our experience of the old as being dead-for-ever. Only then will the new be experienced as *really new*. Nevertheless, we should accept the possibility that, if indeed the modern implicates the new, then it will also entail that innovative spirit that all epochs claim as their own creation. As Walter Benjamin argues:

There has never been an epoch that did not feel itself to be "modern" in the sense of eccentric, and did not believe itself to stand directly before an abyss. The desperately clear consciousness of being in the middle of a crisis is something chronic in humanity. Every age unavoidably sees to itself a new age. The "modern", however, is as varied in its meaning as the different aspects of one and the same kaleidoscope.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> A. Blanqui cited in W. Benjamin *The Arcades Project*, R. Tiedeman ed. H. Eiland and K. McLaughlin trs. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, p.362-376,2.

<sup>30</sup> T.W. Adorno cited W. Benjamin *Selected Writings*. Vol.3, H. Eiland and M.W. Jennings eds., E. Jephcott, H. Eiland and others trs., Cambridge: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002(b), p.55.

<sup>31</sup> J. Roth *The White Cities*. M. Hoffman tr., London: Granta, 2004, p.118.

<sup>32</sup> W. Benjamin in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.546-S1a,4.

Hence, there is not just one, therefore, but various and different expressions of the 'modern' and it is only one instance that we will explore. This is the modern that literally necessitated the creation of a new Athens in the nineteenth century. Regardless of how it chooses to treat the past, the new must always account for it. Directly or indirectly, from the eighteenth century onwards, advocates and critics of modernity alike, begin to contrast the 'modern' with classical Athens. Indeed, despite the foundation of a new Athens in the nineteenth century, the theories of the modern contrasted it with the past that the Periclean polis was supposed to be. Whereas the question of the modern initially implied the creation of a new art that would break its bonds with traditional forms of artistic expression, the commentary on the new soon escaped the question of art and involved a general aesthetic approach to modern life. Soon after that, the 'new' touched upon the questions concerning a beautiful, albeit potentially meaningless, modern culture.

## II

In his essay 'The painter of modern life', Charles Baudelaire attempts an analysis of the modernity of his own new, urban world. Indeed, he begins by maintaining that "without losing any of its ghostly attraction, the past will recover the light and moment of life and will become the present,"<sup>33</sup> thereby also raising suspicions as to the, possibly ghostly, presence of the past in the present. At the same time, Baudelaire remains unconvinced as to the actual death of the old. Yet, his concept of modernity is one that remains problematic. Depicted as "the ephemeral, the fleeting, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable,"<sup>34</sup> modernity, for Baudelaire, points to the transitory as the unprecedented, to modernity as the 'phantasmagoria'<sup>35</sup> of the new. Modernity, for the poet, mirrors the desire and the task of the modern artist – with Monsieur Guys as the exemplary prototype – to once and for all break the chains of and restrictions in traditional, and specifically in neoclassical, forms of artistic expression such as is realized by David, and, at the same time, to create *new* forms of representation. This, for Baudelaire, means something more than the mere capturing of the eternal in the ephemeral. Rather, in reversing the process, he asks artists to distil the new in the eternal. For Baudelaire, the search for the immutable in the contingent aims at capturing the eternal but only if, by virtue of contrast, it will lead to the assessment of the new. Indeed, he dives into eternity in search for that which is 'really new'.<sup>36</sup> But in identifying modernity with

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<sup>33</sup> C. Baudelaire *The Painter of Modern Life*. New York: NLB, 1986, p.2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>35</sup> See W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 2002.

<sup>36</sup> For further discussion on Baudelaire and the implications of his approach to the 'new' see D. Frisby *Fragments of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 1988 and D. Frisby *Fragments of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 1985.

the new, Baudelaire sometimes fails to actually challenge the 'newness of the new'.<sup>37</sup> In asking, for example, that, "the real pioneers next year give us the exquisite pleasure of being allowed to celebrate the advent of the truly new,"<sup>38</sup> in calling the artists to ornament the day with the 'truly new' – filtering in all cases the eternal from the fleeting – Baudelaire cannot explain why and how the new was from the very beginning 'already doomed'.<sup>39</sup> Baudelaire's concept of modernity cannot help us understand why "the discovery of the new is satanic, an eternal recurrence of damnation,"<sup>40</sup> why the 'new' will grow old, and perhaps, die. Indeed, if something is problematic, for Baudelaire, it can only be the old; it is for this that he calls for the death of the old.

The willingness to accept and rejoice in the death of the old is not particular to Baudelaire. Less well known in the context of urban modernity than Baudelaire, but himself also interested in a new art – especially that of the Viennese Secession – Hermann Bahr<sup>41</sup> writes in 1890:

Perhaps exhausted mankind has come to its end and these are its last spasms. Perhaps we are standing at the threshold, at the dawn of a new mankind, and these are only the advantages of spring. We are either rising into a divine state; or plunging into darkness and annihilation – but remaining stationary is impossible.<sup>42</sup>

In refusing to surrender the modern to its future death, Bahr shares Baudelaire's faith about the modern as the carrier of the 'truly new'. He, too, acknowledges the requirement of the death of the old as a precondition for the new to unfold its unlimited possibilities. He suggests, for example, that, "the past was grand, often delightful. We shall honor it with solemn funerary orations. But when the king is buried, long live the new king."<sup>43</sup> Yet, what distinguishes Baudelaire from Bahr is that whereas the former cannot but associate the death of the old with the creative and expressive act of the artist, the latter understands it as a more personal and rather destructive challenge, which, quite often, reflects an inner struggle. Hence, he maintains that:

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<sup>37</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> C. Baudelaire cited in *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>39</sup> D. Frisby in *ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>40</sup> T.W. Adorno *Minima Moralia*. E. F. N. Jephcott Tr. London: NLB, 1974, p. 236.

<sup>41</sup> For Hermann Bahr and the Vienna Secession see G. Fliedl *Klimt*. London: Taschen, 2003.

<sup>42</sup> H. Bahr "The Modern," in F. Dal Co *Figures of Architecture and Thought*. New York: Rizzoli, 1990, p. 288.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.289.

This is the crucial, overriding anxiety: that we should remove the detritus of the past from our souls and restlessly whip our spirit into the action with ruthless lashes, until all traces of the past have been vanished. We must become empty, empty of all teachings, of all beliefs, of all knowledge of our forebears – totally empty. Only then can we find ourselves.<sup>44</sup>

In his search for the modern, Bahr understands the death of the old as a process that can and will be painful but, which will also produce free space for the modern to express itself. Nevertheless, Bahr realizes that there is a potential danger in the modern becoming 'totally empty'. In unleashing – with emptiness – a myriad of possibilities, the modern is not something to be known, but something to be hoped for. Without losing his faith in the modern, therefore, Bahr does not hesitate to challenge it. He concludes that:

Perhaps we are deceiving ourselves. Perhaps it is a mere illusion that time has renewed itself. Perhaps this is merely the last spasm, the general groaning, the last convulsion before numbness turns into nothingness.

At least this would be a merciful deception, making death easier.<sup>45</sup>

Faithful to and hopeful about the modern, Bahr declares the death of the old. But he hesitates to do the same for the modern. In the end, however, he accepts the possibility that, however undying, the modern is related to the past. For Bahr, modernity's uniqueness also entails its greatest fear. This is because,

One thing distinguishes modernity from all that is past and gives it its particular character: knowledge of the eternal becoming and disappearance of all things in ceaseless flight and insight into the connectedness of all things, into the dependency of each thing upon every other in the unending chain of what exists.<sup>46</sup>

Modernity may claim the death of the old, but it cannot easily deny its relation to the past. In so far as the modern is related to art as an independent human activity, the new may attempt to challenge and even to reject the old. But when art is perceived as an element of social life, one that shapes and changes people's perceptions about what is new and what is

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. p.290.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. p.291.

<sup>46</sup> H. Bahr cited in D. Frisby op. cit., 1988, p.11.

old in their social environment, then the distinctions between the new and the old become blurred. The ultimate problem of the modern is that it cannot be defined separately from the old.

### III

Rainer Maria Rilke identifies every pregnancy with twins: Life and Death. Whenever a woman gives birth to a child, so Rilke tells, she also gives birth to the child's unmistakable death.<sup>47</sup> By virtue of this twin pregnancy, the 'new' may have always been 'doomed' because, the moment it was born, it was already old and hence, it was born to die. Is this possibility, or even its recognition, what is distinctive in our modernity? Theodor Adorno maintains that, "the cult of the new, and thus the idea of modernity is a rebellion against the fact that there is no longer anything new."<sup>48</sup> In this context, and in contrast to Baudelaire who anticipates the birth of the 'truly new', Friedrich Nietzsche suggests that it is "not that a man sees something new as the first to do so, but that he sees something old, familiar, seen but overlooked by everyone, as though it were new, is what distinguishes true originality."<sup>49</sup> Unimpressed with this 'cult of the new', Nietzsche introduces, not mere eternity, but rather, eternal repetition. Whereas Baudelaire – though with some reservations – does not hesitate to celebrate and to make it the task of the modern artist to portray the 'new' in modernity,<sup>50</sup> and whilst Bahr – however cautiously – invites the death of the old for the triumphant emergence of the new, Nietzsche identifies various characteristics of modernity, such as historicism, for example, amongst which a 'permanent presence of decadence'<sup>51</sup> is dominant. 'Nothingness' and 'meaninglessness' may be some of the characteristics of the nihilistic side of modernity.<sup>52</sup> But there is also another, more positive possibility in Nietzsche's 'eternal recurrence' in which the individual can attempt to find the – perhaps only seemingly – lost meaning.<sup>53</sup> What is essential for Nietzsche here, is that, if we choose to depict the Hades of modernity as a perilous site, we should approach it, not as a permanent, but rather as a temporary state. Hence he writes that,

*Times of Darkness.* – 'Times of darkness' is the expression in Norway for those times when the sun remains below the horizon the whole day long: at these times the temperature falls slowly but continuously. – This

<sup>47</sup> R. M. Rilke *Oi Semeioseis tou Malte Laurids Brigge*. [Notes of Malte Laurids Brigge]. D. Bcskos tr., Athens: Ermeias, 1984.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p.235. By the 'cult of the new', Adorno refers to the work of Baudelaire and E.A Poe.

<sup>49</sup> F. Nietzsche *Human, All Too Human*. R.J Hollingdale tr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.261.

<sup>50</sup> For the other similarities between Baudelaire and Nietzsche in this context see D. Frisby op. cit., 1988.

<sup>51</sup> See *ibid*

<sup>52</sup> See D. Frisby in *ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

is a nice simile for all thinkers for whom the sun of humanity's future has for a time disappeared.<sup>54</sup>

'Eternal recurrence', therefore, appears to represent the mirror wherein modernity can understand itself whilst simultaneously, and this time through the 'eternal return of the same' nothingness, being capable of destroying itself. But if the doctrine incorporates the danger of modernity obliterating itself, then what is the proper place, in this context, of the past? Nietzsche's critique of modernity suggests the repetition of a recurring tradition.<sup>55</sup> Close to Nietzsche in this context, Karl Löwith writes:

The existence that has lost its stability and its direction, and the world that has lost its coherence and its significance come together in the will of 'the eternal recurrence of the same' as the attempt to repeat – on the peak of modernity – in a symbol the life which the Greeks lived within the living cosmos of the visible world.<sup>56</sup>

The eternally recurrent past becomes all the more old; it begins to become ancient. Yet, in drawing from Löwith, what worries, but nonetheless fascinates Benjamin, is that if eternal recurrence implies the eternal repetition of an ancient tradition – specifically the Greek one in this case – then such reiteration cannot but echo, with modernity, some of the problematic aspects of this tradition: myth and narratives of 'eternal damnation' – the underworld. Specifically with reference to Pausanias, for example, he argues that:

One knew of places in ancient Greece where the way led down into the underworld. Our waking existence likewise, is a land at which, at certain hidden points, leads down into the underworld – a land full of inconspicuous places from which dreams arise. All day long, suspecting nothing, we pass them by, but no sooner has sleep come than we are eagerly groping our way back to lose ourselves in the corridors.<sup>57</sup>

Sleep, for Benjamin, may be the result of exhaustion due to the experience of 'nothingness'. At the same time, it might also be the outcome of the 'intoxication' with the 'phantasmagoria of the new' in modernity. In this case, whilst the past is haunting the

<sup>54</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.358.

<sup>55</sup> For further analysis of Nietzsche and Baudelaire in this context, see W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002., convolutes D and J.

<sup>56</sup> K. Löwith cited in *ibid.*, p.116-D8a,4.

<sup>57</sup> W. Benjamin in *ibid.*, p.84-C1a,2.

modern, the 'dreaming collective', intoxicated with the miraculously new, falls all the more deeply into sleep.

With reference to Benjamin's work, Graeme Gilloch, explains that, "the idea that the past does not have a final irrevocable character but is instead open, subject to transformation in the present, is fundamental to Benjamin's concepts of history and redemption."<sup>58</sup> Hence, whereas it is maintained that "the work of the past is unfinished [and] continues in the present,"<sup>59</sup> history for Benjamin is not a harmoniously continuous and uninterrupted process. Rather, for Benjamin, "history is the endless stream of the nothing new; it is fundamentally at a standstill, not engaged in some cyclical motion."<sup>60</sup> This is what, according to Gilloch, distinguishes Nietzsche from Benjamin. Whilst the former emphasizes 'eternal recurrence', what is significant for the latter "is not that things recur, but that they do not change."<sup>61</sup> What is important, therefore, for Benjamin, is not that things are and remain the same, but rather, that they do not become something else. The freezing of the possibility of change can explain why in Benjamin's explorations of modernity, "the world is in danger of being upside down, not in a permanent and once-and-for-all revolution, but continuously at every new moment of modernity."<sup>62</sup> Here, the 'new' becomes synonymous to an unchanged present and it threatens to break its promise for innovation and change. This can be part of the reason why, for Benjamin, "the dreaming collective knows no history,"<sup>63</sup> – it knows no history past and believes in no historic future. The modern, therefore, accounts for the past in order to negate it.

Establishing that it is difficult, albeit not impossible to *understand* it, Cornelius Castoriadis suggests that the term 'modern' "makes sense only on the absurd assumption that the self-proclaimed modern period will last forever, that the future will only be a prolonged present."<sup>64</sup> Indicating that this absurdity is part of the reality of the modern, Castoriadis' principal concern is with the modern's arrogance to pretend some 'end of history', which in turn, would constitute any meaningful appreciation of the present impossible. If all we have is but an empty present – as in Nietzsche's 'nihilistic moment' – the devastating effect of the 'modern' is that, in suspecting that it can no longer make history, we are unwilling to invest any of our social energies to it. This is, for Castoriadis, one of the dangers of embracing the 'modern' – and even more so, the 'postmodern'.

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<sup>58</sup> G. Gilloch *Myth & Metropolis*. Cambridge: Polity, 1997, p.195.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.71.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p.106.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> D. Frisby "Walter Benjamin and Detection." *German Politics and Society*. Issue 32, Summer 1997, p. 93.

<sup>63</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.546-52,1

<sup>64</sup> C. Castoriadis in D.A. Curtis ed. and tr., *World In Fragments*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997, p. 34.

Modernity, therefore, appears to transform our understanding of history, especially of the past.

If time has truly stopped in a motionless now, the 'new' may often be the old. As one of the first to suggest that modernity is related to the transformation of our experience of time, Georg Simmel observes that:

In reality itself, things do not last for any length of time; through the restlessness with which they offer themselves at any moment to the application of a law, every form becomes immediately dissolved in the very moment when it emerges; it lives as it were, only by being destroyed; every consolidation of form to lasting objects – no matter how short they last – is an incomplete interpretation that is unable to follow the motion of reality at its own pace. The unity of the whole of being is completely comprehended in the unity of what simply persists and what does not persist.<sup>65</sup>

Can we actually measure how long it takes for the 'new' to grow old? The modern, for Simmel, may itself follow the contradictions and conflicts inherent in life. Duration, for Simmel, can be measured only in terms of destruction; the 'very moment' the new emerges it is doomed to grow old. Nevertheless, Simmel points not merely to the conflict, in the modern, between the old and the new, but also, to the probable tension between the eternal and the momentary. Hence, "this world of modernity, which Simmel so brilliantly describes is a world that is temporally located in the present."<sup>66</sup> What is important here is that, in capturing part of our experience of modernity, Simmel reintroduces all three – past, present and future – in a way that they all contain their own secrets about time, and yet, at the same time, those secrets are hidden in the present. Hence, Frisby maintains that, "for Simmel, there is a sense of urgency present in his cultural analysis and diagnosis that highlights the tensions between a break with the past to which we cannot return, a present that is in a state of crisis and a future that offers uncertain possibilities."<sup>67</sup> For Simmel, the relation between the past, the present and the future lies neither in some miraculous historical continuity nor in some malicious discontinuity, but rather, in tensions which are presently expressed as a crisis that is inherent in modernity.

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<sup>65</sup> G. Simmel *The Philosophy of Money*. T. Bottomore and D. Frisby trs. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, p.510.

<sup>66</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1988, p.105.

<sup>67</sup> D. Frisby in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., *Simmel On Culture*. London: SAGE, 1997, p.7.

## IV

It is not accidental that Simmel provides his only concrete definition of modernity in an essay on August Rodin.<sup>68</sup> If Monsieur Guys is for Baudelaire, 'the painter of modern life', Rodin, for Simmel, is the sculptor of modernity.<sup>69</sup> Since Simmel actually chooses to discuss modernity in terms of aesthetics, his definition of modernity should not be separated from its original context. Furthermore, Simmel introduces a concept of modernity, which, instead of just pointing to the outside world of the modern, also seeks to identify its inner impressions and expressions. He argues, therefore, that:

The essence of modernity as such is *psychologism*, the experiencing and interpretation of the world in terms of the *reactions of our inner life*, and indeed as an inner world, the *dissolution of fixed contents* in the fluid element of the soul, from which all that is substantive is filtered and whose *forms are merely forms of motion*.<sup>70</sup>

Here, Simmel points not merely to a crisis, but also, to a breakdown of experience, which may further imply a difficulty in experiencing permanency. As Frisby explains, for Simmel, "modernity is identified with the dissolution of our contact with the external world through concrete practice."<sup>71</sup> What is at stake here is the probable collapse of the inner experience and appreciation of the 'external world'; every moment of modernity, that is to say every instant of the present, threatens to deform the content of them both. Hence, Simmel guides us into modernity as an experience containing "instead of concrete reality, images of reality; instead of cognition, emotions; instead of an "objective" world of intellectualism, an inner world of neurasthenia."<sup>72</sup> Is it possible that modernity also expresses the 'underworld' within? If indeed the inner face of 'hell' is 'neurasthenia', then understanding modernity requires that we explore Simmel's cultural analysis wherein, according to Frisby,<sup>73</sup> Simmel locates its crisis.

Indeed, if we follow Simmel, understanding modernity requires that we also explore his analysis of culture. Nevertheless, what appears essential, in this context, is that we also examine Simmel's own interpretation of 'eternal recurrence'. Acknowledging the

<sup>68</sup> Simmel's essay on Rodin is, unfortunately, not translated in English. All references concerning the essay can be found in D. Frisby op. cit., 1988 and D. Frisby "Georg Simmel and the Study of Modernity" in M. Kaern, B.S. Philips and R.S. Cohen eds. *Georg Simmel and Contemporary Sociology*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990, pp.35-55.

<sup>69</sup> For Rodin in this context see also D.L. Silverman *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle Paris*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, esp. pp.229-269.

<sup>70</sup> G. Simmel cited by D. Frisby in M. Kaern, B.S. Philips and R.S. Cohen eds, op. cit., 1990, p.54.

<sup>71</sup> D. Frisby in *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* p.60.

<sup>73</sup> D. Frisby in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., op. cit., 1997.

variety of possible interpretations, Simmel clearly explains that his analysis of the doctrine is based on the selection of those passages that he thought were important. In discussing 'eternal return', therefore, he emphasizes Nietzsche's claim that "the eternal return of everything is the closest approach of the world of becoming to the world of being."<sup>74</sup> Intimately linked to his own definition of modernity, Simmel's understanding of the doctrine corresponds to culture, only this time – unlike Benjamin who approached it in terms of a 'phantasmagoric tradition' in the service of the bourgeoisie – as a tool for individual emancipation. What is important for Simmel, above all, is that we appreciate that "the importance of the idea of recurrence is rather questionable on the level of reality."<sup>75</sup> The hidden implication is that Simmel does not reject the idea of reality or the role of recurrence for this reality. Rather, instead of pointing to the reality of the external world, he wants to explore the inner reality of the being who aims at becoming. He argues, for example, that:

Through the thought of recurrence Nietzsche has brought together into a strange union two fundamental and opposed themes of the soul: the need for finite, for concrete limits, for definitive forms in everything given, and the need to lose oneself in the limitless.<sup>76</sup>

In the idea of return, then, 'becoming' is both an aim and a process. Hence, whereas Benjamin is concerned with things not changing, Simmel's reading of the doctrine betrays a concern with the self not becoming what is possible for it to. As such, 'eternal recurrence' emerges as the link between being and becoming, which refers not to change for its own sake but rather, to the potential of the being to participate in the process of constructing, from within, a culture that he/she can feel as his/her own. This, argues Simmel, is the work of every philosophy.<sup>77</sup> What, then, is the place of such a concept in modernity? If indeed the doctrine of 'eternal recurrence' carries such an emancipatory potential, how does modernity transform this 'being and becoming' into 'being and nothingness'? The answer may, perhaps, be found in culture.

For Simmel, the 'tragedy'<sup>78</sup> and 'crisis'<sup>79</sup> of modern culture is characterized by "the

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<sup>74</sup> F. Nietzsche cited in G. Simmel *Schopenhauer and Nietzsche*. H. Loiskandl, D. Weinstein and M. Weinstein trs. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986, p.176.

<sup>75</sup> G. Simmel in *ibid.* p.175.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> See *ibid.* pp.176-7.

<sup>78</sup> See G. Simmel "The Concept and Tragedy of Culture," in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., *op. cit.*, 1997, pp.55-75.

<sup>79</sup> See G. Simmel "The Conflict of Modern Culture," in *ibid.*, pp.75-101.

widening gulf between the culture of things and personal culture.”<sup>80</sup> Modernity is here depicted as the embodiment of a dramatic reversal; whilst it is established that in order for culture to meet the ‘being and becoming’ of ‘eternal recurrence’ thereby being part of the self, the two elements must develop equally and simultaneously, modernity further objectifies the objective element, thereby rendering it independent from the subjective. The more culture-as-a-synthesis appears impossible, the more the subjective is forced to collapse under the weight of the objective meaning of things. Yet, Simmel maintains that this may have a twofold meaning:

On the one hand, life is made infinitely easy for the personality in that stimulations, interests, uses of time and consciousness are offered to it from all sides. They carry the person as if in a stream, and one needs hardly to swim for oneself. On the other hand, however, life is composed more and more of these impersonal contents and offerings which tend to displace the genuine personal colorations and incompatibilities. This results in the individual’s summoning the utmost in uniqueness and particularization, in order to preserve his most personal core.<sup>81</sup>

This ‘stream’ of modernity may, for Simmel, also take on the face of a nineteenth-century education that transformed the eighteenth century’s ‘pedagogic ideal’ concerning individual advancement into an ‘objective body of knowledge’.<sup>82</sup> Whereas eighteenth-century pedagogics carried the promise of the enlightenment and the doctrine corresponded to an internalization whose constant emphasis was placed on the making of the inner world, thereby providing fertile ground for the ‘becoming’ of ‘real culture’, the nineteenth century attempted to apply the doctrine to the reality of the external cosmos – which with modernity is also the objective reality of things – thereby seeking to see the enlightenment process covering the entirety of the ‘outside world’. The crisis in culture, therefore, may illustrate the growing chasm between the dreams of two successive centuries. But it may also portray how the dreams of the one became the nightmares of, and in, the other.

## V

In seeking to explain why the enlightenment is ‘totalitarian’, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno’s critique of modernity entails the premise that, “the distance between subject and object, a presupposition of abstraction, is grounded in the distance from the

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. p.101.

<sup>81</sup> G. Simmel in *ibid.* p.184.

<sup>82</sup> See G. Simmel *op. cit.*, 1978, p.449. In this context see also G. Simmel “Tendencies in German Life and Thought since 1870,” in D. Frisby ed., *Georg Simmel – Critical Assessments*. Vol.1, London: Routledge, 1994, pp.5-27.

thing itself which the masters achieved through the mastered.”<sup>83</sup> The ‘mastered’, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, are trapped – with the enlightenment – in a false bourgeois individualism; as the ‘manipulated collective’, they do not realize that, above all, “the blindfold over Justitia’s eyes does not only mean that there should be no assault upon justice, but that justice does not originate in freedom.”<sup>84</sup> Hence, in the nineteenth century, modernity becomes the apotheosis of an eighteenth-century empty promise where culture is merely a shell, the disguise of the illusions of the enlightenment. In other words, the potential for a meaningful culture is threatened by the culture of things, not only because it suppresses the individual, but also because it pretends that the latter is free. Yet, whereas a now dominant culture of things can be seen as serving the interests of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie, it can simultaneously serve as an instrument for the legitimation of the state’s claim to a democracy that descends from the polis.

The dream of enlightened individuals under a, presumably ‘cultured state’ becomes a parody of the ‘being and becoming’ and is a betrayal of a culture that promised something new. Modernity’s ‘being and nothingness’, its ‘disenchantment of the world’, to follow Max Weber, takes on the faces not just of economics, but rather of state politics – of power politics<sup>85</sup> and emptiness of meanings.<sup>86</sup> It is this possibility that forced Friedrich Schiller, already in the eighteenth century, to assert that “and so gradually individual concrete life is extinguished, in order that the *abstract life of the whole* may prolong its sorry existence.”<sup>87</sup> It is not merely the concrete life of a striving-for-profit class that is the question of modern culture, but rather the ‘abstract life’ of a whole that replaces the experience of a concrete time. The distrust to modernity, and what it brings along, results in a disappointment with everyday life in the present. Just as it loses its contact with culture, the individual is also in danger of losing his or her own sense of self, thereby becoming a mere expression of an objective image. It is in this danger that modernity as the ‘disenchantment of the world’ requires a solution.

Yet, the solution, in modernity, corresponds to a pretence to a radically new that establishes its triumph in all spheres of social life. At the same time, whatever the solution, it must, of necessity, be itself of an objective character, that is to say it must reflect some objective whole. In this context, François Choay maintains that, “the nineteenth century is

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<sup>83</sup> M. Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno *Dialectic of The Enlightenment*. J. Cumming tr., New York: Continuum, 1996, p.13.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* p.17.

<sup>85</sup> See M. Weber “Politics as a Vocation,” in H.H. Gerth and C.W. Mills eds. *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. London: Routledge, 1997, pp.77-128.

<sup>86</sup> See M. Weber “Science as a Vocation,” in *ibid.*, pp.129-156.

<sup>87</sup> Friedrich Schiller *On The Aesthetic Education Of Man*. Reginald Snell tr., New York: Frederick Ungar, 1964, p.41 my emphasis.

the first to be concerned with the conservation of *the past as a whole*.”<sup>88</sup> This ‘past as a whole’ that modern Athens would represent in the nineteenth century was seen as the solution to the potential ‘disenchantment’ of the modern world. Hence, modern, nineteenth-century Athens would represent the *re-enchantment* of the world. But it was only a century later that we could finally consider how, in modernity, “the task to be accomplished is not the conservation of the past, but the redemption of the hopes of the past. Today, however, the past is presented as the destruction of the past.”<sup>89</sup> Whereas modernity first appears as that sphere wherein the new destroys the old, we are now forced to explore how, at the same time, it comes to initiate the past’s negation of the past.

The question remains unanswered: is looking backwards an attempt to re-enchant the world? Simmel observes that:

The pessimism concerning the present day [...] becomes an optimism concerning the past, and the myth of paradise, the dream of a golden age [and] the belief in the good old days are nothing other than the rosy illumination of a past that has been spared the shadows of the present, an unconscious judgement of an unsatisfying present.<sup>90</sup>

Hence, reflecting on the present, and on its introduction of something ‘new’ is still connected to the past. At the same time, the older this past is, the more the dream of paradise appears at hand. Hence, Christine Boyer suggests that, “modern western history was established as an act of repression and separation: repressing archaic spectacles and mythical appearances and separating the time frame of the present from that of the past.”<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, this separation also meant that, gradually, “antiquity became an escape: into adventure, into the exotic other, into the marvellous. It offered the compensation of ‘once-upon-a-time’ to mollify the flat and repetitive present.”<sup>92</sup> Modernity, therefore, creates a contested territory where culture becomes the battleground between the past and the present. At the same time, because the ‘new’ may always carry the ‘old’ within itself, the fight between the two may be a phenomenon that accompanies the emergence of the new. Karl Marx argued, for example, that:

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<sup>88</sup> F. Choay *The Modern City: Planning in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*. M. Hugo and G.R. Collins trs. London: Studio Vista, p.27, my emphasis.

<sup>89</sup> M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno op. cit., 1996, p.xiv.

<sup>90</sup> G. Simmel cited in D. Frisby *Cityscapes of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 2001, p.114.

<sup>91</sup> C. Boyer op. cit., 1996, p.21.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p.159.

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted by the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.<sup>93</sup>

In affirming Marx's observation that antiquity returns precisely when the 'new' emerges as the radical other, Benjamin writes that, "modernity has its antiquity like a nightmare that came to it in its sleep."<sup>94</sup> Only if we accept that the past is a uniform whole – with antiquity as its beginning – can we believe that human history and the 'whole' of social life are part of a uniform existence and civilization.

The case remains that the past, indeed the Athenian past, was employed so as to form the ideal of a uniform history, of which the present is a part. Hugo von Hofmannsthal writes, for example, that, "what drives us into contemplation of the past is the similarity between what has been and our life, which are somehow one being. Through grasping this identity, we can transport ourselves into even the purest of regions – into death."<sup>95</sup> If modernity requires the death of the old, we should now explore why and how it also invites the past. In other words, we should examine how the past and the present exist as 'one being'. The relationship between the past and the present in the modern is not as clear as initially assumed. Whereas Marx and Benjamin argue that modernity hides antiquity, Hofmannsthal suggests that they are the same thing. On the one hand, Schiller and Nietzsche agree that the past has died for ever, arguing that, "the Age that acknowledged sweet phantasy's sway can never return – it has fled away,"<sup>96</sup> and on the other, they invite a contest between the past and the present, predicting that the latter may lose even though the former may not really win.

If we accept a definition of modernity that suggests that the present is decaying and that this decay manifests itself in culture, then no comparison or contrast is possible, unless we also accept that antiquity facilitated the 'becoming' of culture. At the same time, we must also acknowledge the fact that, however fruitful, antiquity cannot always serve as a model for modernity. On the one hand, Simmel argues that:

For the modern spirit of life, antiquity frequently possesses this self-sufficiently perfect enclosed nature, which resists absorption into the

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<sup>93</sup> K. Marx "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," in R.C. Tucker ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972, p.437.

<sup>94</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.362-382,4.

<sup>95</sup> Hugo von Hofmannsthal cited in *ibid.* pp.546-7-52,2.

<sup>96</sup> F. Schiller in E.A Bowring ed., *The Poems of Schiller*. London: John Parker & Son, MDCCCLI, p.116.

pulsations and restlessness of the tempo of our development. And today, this may be what moves some to seek precisely for our culture as a different fundamental factor.<sup>97</sup>

On the other hand, however, he explains that, "antiquity was much closer than were later periods to the stage of indifference in which the contents of the world were conceived as such, without being apportioned between subject and object."<sup>98</sup> In both cases, there is a conflict between antiquity and modernity and yet, whilst in the former antiquity is perceived as not always adequate to satisfy the needs of the present, in the latter case it becomes an unsurpassed model. Close to Simmel in this context, Benjamin asserts that "nothing distinguishes the ancient from the modern man so much as the former's absorption in a cosmic experience scarcely known to later periods."<sup>99</sup> The 'ecstatic trance'<sup>100</sup> may correspond to individual experience as part of the external cosmos, a link that, for Benjamin, is now lost. If indeed this is what distinguishes the ancient from the modern person, then, in order to examine the relation of the past to the present, and thereby understanding the actual relation between modernity and antiquity, we need to explore the 'traces' of the past in the present.<sup>101</sup> Only then can we, perhaps, account for antiquity *in* modernity thereby discussing modernity *as* antiquity. Much of the literature on modernity discusses or at least implies the paradoxical dialectic between the old and the new, the past and the present, modernity and antiquity thereby accounting for a unique experience. It is in the same sources that we can now seek to detect this antiquity whose 'traces' are in question.

## VI

Already in the eighteenth century Schiller suggests that "if we pay any attention to the character of the age we must be astonished at the contrast we shall find between the present form of humanity and the bygone one, in particular the Greek."<sup>102</sup> This contrast, argues Schiller, is not merely between the 'ancients' and the 'moderns', but rather it is embodied in a conflict between the moderns and the Hellenes. He maintains, for example, that:

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<sup>97</sup> G. Simmel in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., op. cit., 1997, p.65.

<sup>98</sup> G. Simmel op. cit., 1978, p.64.

<sup>99</sup> W. Benjamin *One-Way Street and Other Essays*. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter trs., London: NLB, 1979, p. 103.

<sup>100</sup> Benjamin is here speaking of both ancient Hebrew and Hellenic antiquity. See *ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> See D. Frisby "Walter Benjamin and Detection." *German Politics and Society*. Issue 32, Summer 1997, pp.89-106.

<sup>102</sup> F. Schiller op. cit., 1964, p.37.

The Greeks put us to shame not only by their simplicity, which is alien to our age: they are at the same time our rivals, often indeed our models, in those very excellences with which we are wont to console ourselves for the unnaturalness of our manners. Combining fullness of form with fullness of content, at once philosophic and creative, at the same time tender and energetic, we see them uniting the youthfulness of fantasy with the manliness of reason in a splendid humanity.<sup>103</sup>

If a culture was ever a synthesis of its subjective and objective elements and if this synthesis ever facilitated the becoming of a 'splendid humanity', then, for Schiller, this was true only in Greek antiquity. In this context, Nietzsche, too, contrasted his time with Greek antiquity:

*The Greeks as Interpreters.* – When we speak of the Greeks we involuntarily speak of today and yesterday: their familiar history is a polished mirror that always radiates something that is not in the mirror itself. We employ our freedom to speak of them so as to be allowed to remain silent about others – so that the latter may now say something into the thoughtful reader's ear. Thus the Greeks make it easier for modern man to communicate much that is delicate and hard to communicate.<sup>104</sup>

Nietzsche defined Greek antiquity as a past that is gone, one that should remain in and as the past. Since the bond between the present and the past rests on a construction and may, therefore, be fallacious, the reasons for such an employment of the past aim at culture itself as a useful tool for the propaganda of the modern. Culture, therefore, serves as an excuse for the modern to retreat from the 'emptiness' and 'nothingness' of the present whilst, paradoxically, ignoring the past. With the dominance of 'enlightened' reason and the expansion of objective culture, nineteenth-century state-oriented Europe becomes increasingly rationalistic, politicized and capitalist. As the blood in its heart – symbolically and geographically as we shall see – becomes colder, its body, itself perceived as a whole, begins to freeze and to paralyze and there is an attempt – neither the first nor the last – to recapture a spirit and an emotion that will presumably transfuse new blood to the veins of the modern state.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., pp.37-8.

<sup>104</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.264.

In making an effort to embellish its 'iron cage',<sup>105</sup> nineteenth-century European modernity constructs an image of the past -- the Greek one in particular -- that is tailored to satisfy the needs and interests of the present. Hence, Roland and Françoise Etienne maintain that, "in searching for ancient Greece, Europe was searching to find its own soul."<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, this search for 'ancient Greece' as the 'soul' of Europe was not merely a collective enterprise, but also, an individual process. Following Goethe's advice that, "everyone should be Greek in his own way! But everyone should be Greek,"<sup>107</sup> 'Europe' and a number of influential individuals initiated a quest for the collection and assembly of the fragments of Greek antiquity into a uniform whole -- European history. In its practical implications, Goethe's recommendation meant, more often than not, that everyone should create and be what he thought or suited him to understand as 'Greek'. Paradoxically this was soon to affect the Greeks themselves. Hence, the construction of a *modern antiquity* began, as Nietzsche predicted that it would, to represent something that was not hitherto reflected in the mirror. As for the modern Greeks, themselves attempting to found a modern state, they started collecting and selecting various fragments of the past of their land. The construction of modern antiquity was, in Europe as well as in Greece, a process of collection, selection, and assembly of the 'traces' of the past. Those fragments, however, had already undergone this process of selection in various other stages like the documentation, in antiquity, of what was deemed important, the selection of what, in the Byzantine years, was perceived as compatible with Christianity and, during the Ottoman occupation, the assembly of what the clergy or the Ottoman rulers neglected to destroy. This delicate nineteenth-century exercise of constructing such a representation of antiquity that would fit modernity also necessitated the search for that to which Europe could claim its origins, that which, as the ancestor of the modern state and of its capital would emerge as the most glorious and admirable -- the city state. It is for this reason that the modern fixed its eyes upon Athens and on its Sacred Rock.

## VII

Boyer maintains that, "the memory of classical Athens was rooted in a sentimental desire to return to the origin of Western knowledge, to reappropriate the rightful patrimony of Northern Europe, and to reform the present based on the highest and purest accomplishments of the past."<sup>108</sup> By implicating knowledge, the search for classical Athens

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<sup>105</sup> See M. Weber *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Talcott Parsons tr. London: Routledge, 2000.

<sup>106</sup> R. and F. Etienne *The Search for Ancient Greece*. A. Zielonka tr. London: Thames & Hudson, 1992, back cover.

<sup>107</sup> J.W. von Goethe cited in S.L. Marchand *Down From Olympus*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, p.16.

<sup>108</sup> C. Boyer op. cit., 1996, p.170.

– and Greece – becomes a quest for an understanding of the past, which, through knowledge, will ease the torments of the present. Yet, at the same time, and following the establishment of Europe's new states – including Greece – and the construction of culture based on an antiquity that is now itself a whole, the modern assumes that it is a child of this culture and the direct descendant of this antiquity's centre – the fifty-year city state of Periclean Athens. The conflict, in modernity, between the past and the present, the old and the new, assumes the character of a contested dialogue between European modernity as a whole and Greek antiquity as a whole, yet with specific emphasis on classical Athens as the most impressive, timeless and meaningful fragment of this modern antiquity. Once more, the battleground for this debate is culture. Simmel observes, for example, that:

In many quarters today there is a feeling that we are deficient in culture by comparison with the Athens of Pericles, or with Italy in the fifteen and sixteen centuries, or indeed with less outstanding eras. But we are not lacking in any particular elements of culture. No increase in knowledge, literature, political achievements and works of art, means of communication or social manner can make good our deficiency. The possession of all these things does not make a man cultured, any more than it makes him happy. Culture appears to me rather to lie in the relationship of the subjective spiritual energies concentrated and unified in the self to the realm of objective, historical or abstract values.<sup>109</sup>

As with the present and the past in general, the difference between European modernity and Athenian antiquity lies in the former's separation of subjective from objective culture. Moreover, Simmel points to the contrast between the West and Athens. But this contrast, too, was introduced already in the eighteenth century. For instance, in embracing and contrasting the specifically Athenian character of individualism with the modern one Schiller wonders: "What individual modern will emerge to contend in single combat with the individual Athenian for the price of humanity?"<sup>110</sup> The combat is perhaps already lost because the modern individual is already excluded from culture. But it can also be a challenge, the new task of the modern hero. Nevertheless, Benjamin maintains that it may be difficult for the modern to accept the challenge in the twentieth century. He argues, that this is because,

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<sup>109</sup> G. Simmel cited in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., *op. cit.*, 1997, p.102.

<sup>110</sup> F. Schiller *op. cit.*, 1964, p.38.

An Athenian custom forbade the picking up of crumbs at the table, since they belonged to the heroes. If society has so degenerated through necessity and greed that it can now receive the gifts of nature only rapaciously, that it snatches the fruit unripe from the trees in order to sell it most profitably, and is compelled to empty each dish in its determination to have enough, the earth will be impoverished and the land yield bad harvests.<sup>111</sup>

It is difficult for the modern to return to a meaningful culture and to the past with which the present is really related, not only because the individual is crushed by the objective, but also because people have lost contact with a nature that is now torn apart. The 'ecstatic trance', therefore, is deemed more difficult to achieve, because, instead of being a nature compatible with the human self, the external cosmos is merely a world of things.<sup>112</sup> At the same time, whatever is left of nature is threatened by the modern's avaricious impulses. So how did the moderns return to the past?

The relationship of European modernity to Athens is multidimensional and it touches upon almost every level of modern social, cultural, political, and economic life, since,

Those brief fifty years [of Periclean Athens] became the period of "classic" culture, the five decades identified, time and time again, in varying historical contexts, as the pinnacle of human accomplishment, the epitome of achievement to which all should strive. As a result, Periclean Athens is intricately interwoven with the fabric of Western culture on almost every imaginable level.<sup>113</sup>

However difficult or even impossible, the task at hand for nineteenth-century modernity was to translate the construction of modern antiquity into an experience based on the 'lessons of the past' – and on every possible level. As the fragmentation continued, the collection of the fragments of the past became increasingly selective; neither mere Greek antiquity, nor just Athens, but rather Periclean, classical Athens was to be the origin of Western 'culture' and 'civilization'. Not surprisingly, the West forgot or even ignored the fact that in Greek, 'culture' and 'civilization' is the same word; that the one cannot be

<sup>111</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 1979, p.60.

<sup>112</sup> For further detail on Benjamin's concept of nature see S. Buck-Morss *The Dialectics Of Seeing*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995.

<sup>113</sup> R.F. Rhodes *Architecture and Meaning on the Athenian Acropolis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp.185-6.

separated from the other and that, even more importantly the word for both has its root in the polis.<sup>114</sup> If searching for Athens meant that Europe was looking for its heart, then surely the strongest pulse was beating in Periclean Athens. The 'nothingness' of modernity was filled with the 'everythingness' of the representation of Athenian antiquity. Hence, the old which was lost was found, and death was now challenged by an eternal present. This new representation of Athens is often compared and contrasted with Europe's modern capitals. This analogy too, has been established since the Enlightenment. Voltaire, for example, praises London not merely as the perfectly modern city, but also – and perhaps not so paradoxically any more – as the true challenger of Athens:

Rival of Athens, London blest indeed  
That with thy tyrants had the wit to change  
The prejudices civil factions breed.  
Men speak their thoughts and worth can win its place  
In London, who has talent, he is great.<sup>115</sup>

If a modern city, in this case London, desires to claim its successful modernity, then it should demonstrate how it has surpassed the glory of Athens. In the nineteenth century, European metropolises gradually nurtured a modernity that concealed their anxiety with the pretence that they had become better than Athens. Simmel writes, for example, that:

The tremendous agitation and excitement, the unique colourfulness of Athenian life, can perhaps be understood in terms of the fact that a people of incomparably individualized personalities struggled against the constant inner and outer pressure of the de-individualizing small towns. This produced a tense atmosphere in which the weaker individuals were suppressed and those of stronger natures were incited to prove themselves in the most passionate manner. This is precisely why it was that there blossomed in Athens what must be called, without defining it exactly, "the general human character" in the intellectual development of our species.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> The modern Greek 'Politismos' is the same as the ancient. The only modern alternative for 'culture' is the Latin 'cultura'.

<sup>115</sup> Voltaire cited in C.E. Schorske *Thinking with History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, p.38.

<sup>116</sup> G. Simmel in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., *op. cit.*, 1997, p.181.

Athens appears as facilitating the possibility of becoming – indeed, however, not for everyone living in the city. As Alan Blum maintains,

The city of Athens remains a primordial example of the attempt to fuse concerns for perpetuity with the extension of worldly influence by a civilization that saw in its city all of the contradictions of its modern moment: freedom and enslavement, philosophy and despotism, creativity and commerce, community and self-interest.<sup>117</sup>

In acknowledging the fifty-year period of Athens' 'golden century' as itself a 'new' and modern time in the city's long history, Blum points to the particularly inherently contradictory character of any city. But, whilst these contradictions appear decisive in the moulding of the particular character of Athens, there must have existed something in the city, that enabled it to ease tensions. For Simmel, this was again related to culture:

An increase in the cultural level – particularly if it coincides with an enlargement of the group – will favour a discrepancy between both [the 'objective cultural possibilities' and the 'subjective cultural reality']. The unique situation of golden Athens was due to the fact that it was able to avoid this except perhaps with reference to philosophy at its peak.<sup>118</sup>

Here, Athens embodies the harmony which the 'spiritless' modern world sought and still, perhaps, seeks. Modernity, indeed, has its antiquity hidden deep in the underworld. But often enough, because in reality it fears origins,<sup>119</sup> it invites and moulds a conception of antiquity that is not threatening. This is the secret dialectic between the 'old' and the 'new' that only Athens can expose. If it is true that the construction of a European past as a whole anticipated and facilitated the establishment of state power – though many saw it as a quest for knowledge and human advancement – then the emphasis on Periclean Athens may explain the construction of the assumption that the modern city is also a descendant of the city-state. Furthermore, it can explain the foundation of the new European capitals as the seats of state power. A most amazing and somewhat neglected circumstance is that, at the time European capitals embellished their modernity with the jewels of Athenian antiquity, nineteenth-century Athens itself emerged as a new capital, not just as a descendant of, but rather as Periclean Athens itself. This 'new' Athens engaged in a

<sup>117</sup> A. Blum *The Imaginative Structure of the City*. London: McGill's-Queens University Press, 2003, p. 82.

<sup>118</sup> G. Simmel op. cit. 1978, p.453.

<sup>119</sup> D. Frisby suggests that, for Benjamin, the 'new' fears origins. See D. Frisby op. cit., 1997.

continuous dialogue with the rest of Europe's new capitals. The problem, however, was that whilst these other capitals were hiding its antiquity in their modernity, it was hiding their modernity in its antiquity. This was because Athens became the mother of cities, the origin of metropolitan modernity. But nobody understood whether this Athens was the new capital of the nineteenth century or the ancient polis. For the greatest part of the nineteenth century, the modern – albeit ancient – capital of Greece became the origin of a Western civilization that was best epitomized in the modern metropolis.

### VIII

Although in a manner different than Paris or London, nineteenth-century Athens remains a capital of modernity and not of antiquity. A closer exploration of the planning and building of the new city will later betray a shift from modern antiquity to a modernity that persistently reclaims the city. We should not be misguided by the obvious overemphasis on the monuments. Despite its antiquity, or rather because of its modern antiquity, Athens epitomizes the very modernity that it was supposed to conceal. And this was a modernity that transcended the borders of Greece. In becoming the laboratory wherein different Europeans mixed the ingredients for their new civilization, modern Athens was forced to represent the democracy, justice, equality, freedom, human emancipation, autonomy, and the mastery of reason over myth that the Enlightenment had promised over a century before the rebuilding of the city. Long before other European capitals claimed their modernity, Athens was praised for its modern antiquity. Yet, the more ancient the new city appeared to be, the more it became the favourite capital of modernity. In its capacity to distort the experience of both the old and the new, Athens as a capital for Europe can account for the “symbolic significance of cities and their representation of other phenomena,”<sup>120</sup> and itself emerge as the one metropolis whose antiquity became its modernity. The city that we explore here is the mother of modern capitals. But our Athens is *not* the classical polis.

Modernity, especially in its metropolitan expression, lacks a concrete definition and is open to various approaches. However useful a tool for an understanding of the dialectic between the old and the new that concerns us here, modern antiquity is not always as powerful in accounting for the complexities of Athenian modernity below the Acropolis. A different analysis, for example, might discuss how modern Athens, too, concentrated the characteristics of a specifically capitalist metropolis, such as the relationship between the city, the state, and the bourgeoisie,<sup>121</sup> or those between Weber's ‘rationally organized

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<sup>120</sup> D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 2001, p.177.

<sup>121</sup> See, for example, D. Harvey *Consciousness and the Urban Experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986 and D. Harvey *Consciousness and the Urban Experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985.

state'<sup>122</sup> and the modern city's economic and 'political-administrative' elements.<sup>123</sup> But any such approach would ultimately have to exclude the imaginaries and representations of the city that interest us here. Moreover, despite the undeniable role of the Greek bourgeoisie in the building of the capital,<sup>124</sup> the development of capitalism in modern Greece was often related to a more general Western imperialism and, in many instances, it followed a pace that was slower than in other Western European countries.<sup>125</sup> A direct relation of modern Athens with the economic and political dimensions of capitalism, therefore, would lead us to a periodization that could undermine our definition of modernity in terms of the experience of the new.<sup>126</sup> In the case of Athenian modernity as the experience of a new image of the old in the present, our analysis must "presuppose an account of the transitions to modern society, but without itself being reduced to a theory of modernization."<sup>127</sup> Such reduction would do more harm than good to any attempt to understand Athenian modernity. After all, whilst the city's paradoxical modernity was, as we will try to explain, 'successful', its modernization is a problem still to be tackled.<sup>128</sup>

Notwithstanding its character as a built form with a material character, when the "disquieting distinction between the city as object of government and the city as a frame of mind"<sup>129</sup> appears as a matter-of-fact division, modern Athens will usually derive its character from the latter. Of course, any city can be "two-headed, both material and ideal,"<sup>130</sup> and it often uses one of its two heads in order to hide the other. Nevertheless, Athens showed mostly its other face and could be best described as a primarily 'imaginative object'.<sup>131</sup> From the city as a 'work of art',<sup>132</sup> 'home',<sup>133</sup> 'playground',<sup>134</sup>

<sup>122</sup> M. Cacciari *Architecture and Nihilism: On the Philosophy of Modern Architecture*. S. Sartatelli tr., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993, p.31.

<sup>123</sup> See M. Weber *The City*. D. Martindale and G. Neuwirth eds., and trs., New York: The Free Press, 1958, p.66. For the contrast between ancient and modern cities see also M. Weber "Urbanization and Social Structure in the Ancient World," in W.G Runciman ed. *Weber-Selections in Translation*. E. Matthews tr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp.290-314.

<sup>124</sup> See G. Burgel op. cit., 1976, esp. pp.291-362.

<sup>125</sup> See N. Mouzelis *Modern Greece-Facets of Underdevelopment*. London: MacMillan, 1978.

<sup>126</sup> The problems with the periodization of modernity are further explained in D. Frisby op. cit., 2001.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>128</sup> What is very interesting in this context is that, the first time 'Greece' officially admitted, and was even 'proud' of its modern character, was with the 2004 Athens Olympics, which is to say two centuries after Athens became a modern capital.

<sup>129</sup> J. Donald *Imagining the Modern City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, p.73.

<sup>130</sup> A. Blum op. cit., 2003, p.294.

<sup>131</sup> For the city as an 'imaginative object' see *ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.69-75, and D.J Olsen *The City as a Work of Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p.91.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p.213.

'document',<sup>135</sup> 'monument',<sup>136</sup> and 'spectacle',<sup>137</sup> and from the city as 'virtue',<sup>138</sup> 'vice',<sup>139</sup> or 'beyond good and evil',<sup>140</sup> the theory of the modern city has accorded it a variety of different meanings. Whatever the metaphor, the modern metropolis is represented as being more than a mere built structure.

More than other cities in history, the modern metropolis imagined that it was the perfect descendant of the celebrated cities of antiquity. Reinforced by the "belief that history gave each period a unifying essence [which] strengthened the efforts of the nineteenth century to make its cities worthy reflections of the spirit of their own time,"<sup>141</sup> the modern that was peculiar to that century demanded the city to bear testimony to the victory of the present over the past. The foundation of Athens as a capital coincided with a time when London, Paris, and Vienna amongst others, "attempted to become monuments,"<sup>142</sup> and paid homage to the eternal present of modernity. Unlike its contemporaries, Athens became a modern metropolis *because of* the monument that was used as evidence of the eternal antiquity of the present. Does this mean that nineteenth-century Athens failed the spirit of its time? If the modern means the unquestionable death of the old, then yes, it excludes the city whose modernity was founded on its antiquity. On the other hand, if modernity hides its antiquity and anticipates the introduction of a modern antiquity as a strategy for the subjugation of the latter to the demands of the former, then Athens served its modernity more devotedly than any other new city. In concentrating elements of the different metaphors applied to the modern city, Athens ultimately emerges as the perfect example of the metropolis as the 'showplace of modernity'.<sup>143</sup> More specifically, Athens defied the will of its fathers and became the 'showplace' of a modernity that its antiquity was supposed to disguise.

One of the key questions in terms of metropolitan modernity is how, in claiming some unprecedented magnificence, the cities of the nineteenth century concealed the fact that, "the cultures of the past provided the decent drapery to clothe the nakedness of

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p.251. This metaphor is further discussed in the last chapter.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p.9.

<sup>137</sup> See C. Boyer op. cit., 1996.

<sup>138</sup> This metaphor relates to the representation of the city as the perfect expression of civilization and was largely advocated by Voltaire, Adam Smith, and J.G Fichte. See C.E Schorske "The Idea of the City in European Thought: Voltaire to Spengler," in O. Handlin and J. Burchard eds., *The Historian and the City*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press of Harvard University Press, 1963, pp.95-114, and C.E Schorske op. cit., 1998. The city and its relation to civilization was a main theme in Park's urban sociology. See, for example, R. Park and E. Burgess *The City*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968.

<sup>139</sup> This image of the city derives from the work of M. Gorky, L. Tolstoy, and W. Blake. See C.E. Schorske op. cit., 1998, and C.E Schorske in O. Handlin and J. Burchard eds., op. cit., 1963, pp.95-114.

<sup>140</sup> This last metaphor refers to the work of Nietzsche, Baudelaire, Rilke, and Benjamin. See *ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> D.J. Olsen op. cit., 1986, p.300.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>143</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1990, p.36.

modern utility.”<sup>144</sup> The monumental character of Europe’s nineteenth-century capitals was at once an architectonic invention and the aesthetic alternative to a time whose spirit was anything but spiritual. A combination of the built form together with its potential power to hide an idea, provided a historicist solution that was heavily influenced by a Parthenon-inspired neoclassicism. Although this question belongs to a later part of our analysis of Athens’ new monuments,<sup>145</sup> an example of how Athens was part of the cultures of the past that provided the necessary mask for the modern is at hand with the Scottish capital’s claim to be the ‘Athens of the North’.<sup>146</sup> Ironically, the failure of Edinburgh’s Calton Hill to resemble the Acropolis seems to be the pride of those who first founded a ‘nation’ on the grounds of a radical break with Europe as a whole. For instance, Ann Shearer argues that,

What the Athens of the North never achieved [...], the Athens of the South proudly accomplished by the end of the [nineteenth] century, and the Parthenon of Nashville, Tennessee remains the only full-scale replica in the world.<sup>147</sup>

If the Athens of the South is that city in the US which makes its greatest accomplishment that of owning the ‘best’ replica of the Parthenon, and if the culture of classical Athens was used as an attempt to conceal ‘modern utility’ in Europe and beyond, then what does this mean for modern Athens with its own Parthenon?

## IX

The interest in and study of the past in order to maintain its relation to the present are not unique in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>148</sup> What was new in these two centuries was the ‘historicist revolution’ that transformed everything into history.<sup>149</sup> Hence, as the historian J.G.A Pocock explains, in being obsessed with the construction of relationships between the past and the present historicism is, by definition, interested in the character of the former. This becomes more evident with the representation of new Athens as the true past of metropolitan modernity. The character of the Athenian past was, in fact, never without manipulation. Either it would be idealized by the ancients themselves, who

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<sup>144</sup> C.E. Schorske op. cit., 1998, p.4.

<sup>145</sup> See last chapter on Athenian and other neoclassical monuments.

<sup>146</sup> For Edinburgh in this context, see J. Lowrey “From Caesarea to Athens – Greek Revival Edinburgh and the Question of Scottish Identity Within the Unionist State.” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*. Vol.60, No.2, June 2001, pp.136-157.

<sup>147</sup> A. Shearer *ATHENE, Image and Energy*. London: Penguin, 1998, p.193.

<sup>148</sup> See J.G.A. Pocock “The Origins of the Study of the Past.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Vol.4, No.2, January 1962, pp.209-246.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.210.

adored their polis, as was the case with Thucydides' oration at Pericles' funeral,<sup>150</sup> or it would be later redefined by those who assumed that the past was perfect. With our emphasis placed on the latter, however, modern Athens becomes an eloquent example of the "inherent debatability of the past",<sup>151</sup> that may also account for the disputable character of the past.<sup>152</sup> The paradoxical representation of modern Athens as antiquity aimed at concealing how its past was manipulated in order to represent a *true* antiquity that was, more often than not, related to the Acropolis.

The Acropolis is still not completely restored. The Parthenon is roofless. Half of its fragments are in the Acropolis Museum and the rest in London. Individual fragments are located in a number of collections around the world. And, of course, Edinburgh has a replica whose significance is challenged by that pride of the American South. Yet, despite everything, the dream of a once upon a time Acropolis still reigns in the present. The search for an old that could prove that the present would never end was soon transformed into a quest for the discovery of the origin through the authentic. On the ninth of April 1902, the Greek government announced its decision to "partly restore the western façade of the [Erechtheion] to its *original* form."<sup>153</sup> More than a century later and with reference to the Parthenon, archaeologist Irini Bourdakou-Karyka writes: "we hope that the contemporary restoration works will elevate the *original* grandeur of the sorely tried monument."<sup>154</sup> The Acropolis facilitated the representation of the new city as the origin of European metropolitan modernity. In the journey to Athens that we undertake, Athenians and foreigners alike often guide us to a city that avoids its present. The more time will pass, for example, the more eloquent the travellers to Athens will become, thereby providing us with an abundance of examples of a portrayal of the city as past. George W. Cullum, for instance, President of the American Geographical Society of New York, defined the Parthenon as the "highest conception of architectural genius and the most magnificent structure which has ever stood upon the face of the earth."<sup>155</sup> As for Athens, that "delicious landscape and panorama of history,"<sup>156</sup> the awestruck Cullum argues that,

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<sup>150</sup> See, for example, N. Loraux *The invention of Athens: the Funeral Oration in the Classical City*. A. Sheridan tr., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.

<sup>151</sup> See A. Appadurai "The Past as a Scarce Resource," *MAN*, New Series, Vol.16, No.2, June 1981, p.218.

<sup>152</sup> In this context, Appadurai maintains that debates concerning the past are culturally organized and usually belong to the 'aspect of politics'. See *Ibid.*, p.202.

<sup>153</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.69, 9 April 1902, "Apothesis peri Anasteloscous tou Erechtheiou." [Decision Concerning the Restoration of the Erechtheion] Article 7(ξ), p.206.

<sup>154</sup> I. Bourdakou-Karyka *Arhata Athena – Poli Demokratias kai Politismou*. [Ancient Athens – City of Democracy and Civilization] Athens: Epikoinonies, 2004, p.35.

<sup>155</sup> G.W. Cullum "The Acropolis of Athens," *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol.14, 1882, p.7.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12.

But, though the power of empire has vanished, the glorious memories of Greece will survive forever; for here were laid the fast foundations of civil society [...]; here the writing of history began its career and reached its highest perfection [...]; here ethical culture taught the true relations of man to his fellow and to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe [...]; and here Art was the handmaid of Religion, fashioning the plastic ideal and rearing the first temple for its worship.<sup>157</sup>

Although Cullum acknowledged Egypt's influence upon ancient Greece,<sup>158</sup> he insisted that the latter perfected the knowledge of the former,<sup>159</sup> and that it was in Athens that the modern would find its origins. However convinced that he was on his "winding way to classical Athens,"<sup>160</sup> the American geographer visited the city in 1882 and, therefore, provides a perfect paradigm for the modern representation of the new city as the antiquity and the origin of a 'civil society' that has transcended the borders of all Athens, Greece, and Europe. Uncritically assuming that 'the Fathers of History were Greeks',<sup>161</sup> and an advocate of the conclusion that all things Greek must be historical, Cullum's search for origins points to a specific need. In contrast to the positive desire to find the old that is hidden by the new,<sup>162</sup> those who represented modern Athens as antiquity started by looking for the origin from whence the modern could derive its own identity. In this respect, whilst the modern's hatred or fear for the old may persist, when it comes to the origin, it is faced with a characteristic 'deception of love'<sup>163</sup> wherein,

We shatter the mirror, impose ourself upon someone we admire, and then enjoy our ego's new image, even though we may call it by that other person's name -- and this whole proceeding is supposed *not* to be self-deception, *not* egoism! A strange delusion!<sup>164</sup>

The modern may, in general, proclaim its disdain for all things old, thereby being proud of its supposedly unprecedented newness, but when it came to Athens as its origin, it

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p.2.

<sup>158</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p.1.

<sup>161</sup> For the problems with this assumption in the context of the ancient Greeks' different definitions of history see M.I Finley "Myth, Memory, and History." *History and Theory*, Vol.4, No.3, 1965, pp.281-302.

<sup>162</sup> This was, for instance, Benjamin's primary aim in the *Arcades Project*. See D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 1997, pp.89-106, and D. Frisby "Walter Benjamin's Prehistory of Modernity as Anticipation of Postmodernity? Some Methodological Reflections," in G. Fischer ed., *With the Sharpened Axe of Reason*. Oxford: Berg, 1996, pp.15-32.

<sup>163</sup> F. Nietzsche *op. cit.*, 1991, p.224.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

appeared to deny its egoism, advocated some love for true antiquity and for its monuments and indeed desired to create its new image in terms of that distant past that was now brought into the present. If 'beauty is really in the eyes of the beholder', Athens provides an interesting instance of modernity's stubborn love for the 'origin'. Although few denied that the city did not look like the classical polis they had imagined, most were content with the 'still standing' Parthenon. The search for and the love of the origin point both to the modern's attempt to derive its newness from the past as well as to another, more hidden need. Nietzsche writes:

*'In the beginning'*. – To glorify the origin – that is the metaphysical aftershot that breaks out when we meditate on history and makes us believe that what stands at the beginning of all things is also what is most valuable and essential.<sup>165</sup>

Whilst the, mostly Bavarian and Prussian founders of modern Athens imagined the classical polis as the origin of their present, the city they confronted in the early 1830s was not what they expected it to be. This was because Pericles' polis had not frozen in time but was testimony to the passage of the twenty-two centuries that separated the nineteenth century from classical Athens. In contrast to other capitals that became monuments to its self-affirmation, the 'self-disgust' of the modern<sup>166</sup> was the primary motive behind the building of nineteenth-century Athens as the origin of the new. This need of the modern to define itself in terms of a necessarily glorious origin was the reason behind the unavoidable redefinition of the entire city beyond the Acropolis. Athens is not a capital that adores its modernity in a direct way as, for example, Paris. The new capital is the 'showplace' of another modernity whose 'spirit' first "offers resistance to itself, bears up against itself."<sup>167</sup>

## X

The construction of the modern capital of Greece was coterminous with the construction of a modern ancient Athens. But the new city first had to lose itself amidst the abundance of the past. Athens is the 'showplace' of a neurotic modernity that sought to ease its panic through beauty. On the other hand, however, in forcing Athens to be what it was reborn to become – that is the 'most valuable' origin – the modern reaffirmed its self-confidence thereby reinstating its status as a worthy, perhaps even the only possible,

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p.302.

<sup>166</sup> Nietzsche maintains that, in contrast to the ancients who were content with themselves, this is 'what leads the moderns to art'. See *ibid.*, p.251.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., p.251.

descendant of a 'glorious past'.<sup>168</sup> This was the motive behind the need for a glorious ancestry. Athens, therefore, is the 'showplace of modernity' because it was the mirror that distorted both the old and the new. It was meant to re-enchant both by means of a socially constructed association that transformed hitherto tensions between the old and the new. Can we still, despite all logic, explore modern Athens as antiquity or are we now supposed to accept that modernity has finally reached a critical nature that has enabled it to set itself free from the past?<sup>169</sup>

Even though the answer to the latter is probably in the negative because the modern cannot exist without, juxtaposition, at least, with the old, the former question is rather more difficult to answer. This is because the critics and advocates of modernity often share the same fascination with classical antiquity. The degree and nature of their admiration is, of course, varied, but it is nonetheless a problem. The most obvious conclusion would be that we are all, more or less, victims of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century imaginary of Greece. But, in reality, the antiquity that we explore here refers neither to the "secret agreement between past generations and the present one,"<sup>170</sup> nor to classical Athens itself. The ultimate problem with the modern Athens that interests us here is how its past, too, was "speculatively distorted so that later history [was] made the goal of earlier history."<sup>171</sup> Whilst this 'later history' was, in its greatest part, related to a greater European context, our emphasis rests with Athens and the fact that, despite the less known story of the new capital, its Acropolis is still widely considered as the "most significant locus of western civilization,"<sup>172</sup> thereby perpetuating the idea that Athens holds the key to the past. But if this is true, by means of the intricate dialectic between the old and the new, then it also holds the key to the present. There are specific reasons why, from the Enlightenment onwards, the modern rarely challenged Athenian antiquity openly. These reasons were usually related to how the past became history and to how history became the promise for a re-enchanting and 'eternal present'. The more Europe remembered classical Athens and made it its history, the more it forgot the centuries that were not classical Athens.

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<sup>168</sup> Although maybe a detail, but 'glorious' is the word mostly used in the context of Athenian classical antiquity.

<sup>169</sup> For the latter assumption and for the argument that since modernity can now approach the past in a more critical way than before, Hellenism must be dismissed as a complete fabrication of an uncritical modern see D. Ferris *Silent Urns – Romanticism, Hellenism, Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

<sup>170</sup> W. Benjamin *Selected Writings*. Vol.4, H. Eiland and M.W. Jennings eds., E. Jephcott and others trs., Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003, p.390.

<sup>171</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels *The German Ideology*. Part I, C.J. Arthur ed., London: Lawrence&Wishart, 1970, p.57.

<sup>172</sup> A. Loukaki "Whose Genius Loci?: Contrasting Interpretations of the 'Sacred Rock' of the Athenian Acropolis." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. Vol.87, No.2, June 1997, p.306.

## Chapter 2: Athens or Metropolitan Modernity Celebrated

*"Appearances deceive us and they do so systematically, especially where they are supported by an ordered world view, an ideology or a philosophy."*<sup>173</sup>

*"The journey into the past is a journey into the distance as well."*<sup>174</sup>

*"History is like Janus: it has two faces. Whether it looks to the past or to the present, it sees the same thing."*<sup>175</sup>

### I

The construction of modern antiquity sought to satisfy the need to conceal the 'nothingness' of modernity. Away from modernity as nothingness but close to Weber's critique of a disenchanted world, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels had already maintained that, in modernity, "all fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned."<sup>176</sup> In so doing, they produced an image of capitalist modernity as characterized by the destruction of solidity and certainty. At the same time, Marx and Engels also emphasized the conflict between the old and the new, though pointing out that there is, in modern capitalism, no solid ground for either one to be truly expressed. As such, "this revolutionary new destruction of the past (thereby destroying historical specificity) is accompanied by a second dimension in modernity, the ever-new destruction of the present (all newly formed social relations become obsolete before they can ossify)."<sup>177</sup> Modernity, therefore, is once more defined as a negative repetition or rather as a premature aging whereby the 'new' – the commodity – is indeed 'antiquated' at the very moment of its birth. In other words, modernity is once more depicted as a process of unexpected and sudden losses, as a perpetual death, which pretends to annihilate the possibility of social change.

However true it may be that, in fact, "everything in life is but repeated,"<sup>178</sup> modernity subjects repetition to distortion and deterioration. Kostas Palamas maintains that "if everything returns, nothing returns the same and indistinguishable; in the same and the

<sup>173</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1997, p.92.

<sup>174</sup> P. Szondi "Walter Benjamin's 'City Portraits'," in G. Smith ed., *On Walter Benjamin*, Cambridge: The M.I.T Press, 1991, p.20.

<sup>175</sup> Maxime Du Camp cited in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.543-S1,1.

<sup>176</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels *The Communist Manifesto*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p.6.

<sup>177</sup> D. Frisby in Mari Hvattum and Christian Hermansen eds., op. cit., 2004, p.8.

<sup>178</sup> F. Schiller in H. Merivale op. cit., p.326.

interchangeable lies frost and death.”<sup>179</sup> What Palamas suggests here is that even though “life hides in everything that is changing,”<sup>180</sup> the return of the old, in modernity, may point to a cosmos whereby the old returns to ‘haunt’ not merely the new as such, but rather its own *new image*. Moreover, since the modern has conjured the ‘death of the old’, what is repeated here is not a living past, but the shadows of a past that the present consciously chose to revive. This will be modern Athens “as the nightmare of historical consciousness.”<sup>181</sup> Yet, if there were some relation between modern antiquity and historical consciousness, would modern antiquity refer to pre- or post-history? Is modern antiquity related only to the history of the past or to that of the present as well? Nietzsche maintains that:

Our age gives the impression of being an interim state; the old ways of thinking, the old cultures are still partly with us, the new not yet secure and habitual and thus lacking in decisiveness and consistency. It looks as though everything is becoming chaotic, the old becoming lost to us, the new proving useless and growing even feebler.<sup>182</sup>

The tensions in modernity between the old and the new continue to restrain the possibilities for becoming and modernity appears to be perceived as an experience where ‘all that is solid melts into air’. In turn, modern antiquity begins to emerge as alien to both the past and the present. Modern antiquity betrays the past but it is also often unfaithful to the present as well. It forgets the past and it forgets that the present will become past. The modern of the nineteenth century forgot Athens and forced it to forget itself. History became myth and myth became the history of an Athens that was the historical origin of modern Europe.

## II

Even though modernity expresses itself as an experience of a negative fragmentation of life and of time, with the manipulation of the construction of modern antiquity, the nineteenth century generates the paradoxical concept of the grand narrative of European History. Retreating into the past but with the armature of the modern, the quest for the legitimation of state power and of the interests of the emerging bourgeoisie also meant and presupposed the establishment of uninterrupted and glorious history. Does modern antiquity also facilitate the birth of an equally historically oriented and historically

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<sup>179</sup> K. Palamas *Apanda*. Vol.6, Athens: Bires, p.353.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 2002, p.916.

<sup>182</sup> F. Nietzsche *op. cit.*, 1991, pp.117-118.

conscious cosmos? We read, for example, that, "only by means of the power to utilize the past for life and to reshape past events into history once more – does the human being become a human being; but in an excess of history the human being ceases once again."<sup>183</sup> How does this 'excess of history' that threatens to annihilate the becoming emerges though? In embracing Nietzsche's discussion of history in the service of becoming, Simmel observes that, "every step of our lives rests upon consciousness of the past. Without some measure of this awareness, life would be utterly inconceivable."<sup>184</sup> In other words, historical consciousness points to an experience of the past as part of the present in so far as they are both identified in the present moment. Although what may be at stake here is the nineteenth-century portrayal of time as precisely a fraction of European history, our historical consciousness may also be distorted by the character of a historical understanding, which, in modernity, is also defined in terms of a particular image of the past: Periclean Athens. As far as Simmel is concerned, the question of historical consciousness may be by definition problematical: "it is *as if* experience had broken down through the self-contained conceptual exclusiveness of the present and incorporates within the concept of the present a dimension of continuous time."<sup>185</sup> However much life relates to an experience that includes and embraces the past, the present, and the future – indeed, nevertheless, by refusing them as separate and distinguishable concepts – modernity transforms history into an attempt to construct an experience of a *total* and *continuous* time. But it also promotes the predominance of an understanding of this time as the glorification of a present that celebrates the new and negates the past. Consequently, this will suggest that modern antiquity serves the new and not the ancient Athens whose glory was envied by the modern. Once again, this problem points to the question of history as a science.

Hitherto a history that people could only read about and imagine, new Athens reifies and transforms classical Athens into a tangible and objective reality. Deeply interested in the problem of historical time himself, Benjamin explains that "for every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably."<sup>186</sup> Hence, it is not only historical continuity that is problematical, but also the nature and meaning of this continuity when confronting the world of the modern where continuity is automatically translated as 'progress'. The irony

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<sup>183</sup> F. Nietzsche "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," in F. Nietzsche *Unfashionable Observations*. R.T. Gray tr., Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995, p.91

<sup>184</sup> G. Simmel "On the Nature of Historical Understanding," in G. Oakes ed., *Georg Simmel – Essays on Interpretation in Social Science*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980, p.97.

<sup>185</sup> G. Simmel "The Constitutive Concepts of History," in *ibid.*, p.176.

<sup>186</sup> W. Benjamin *Illuminations*. H. Arendt ed., Harry Zohn tr., New York: Schocken Books, 1969, p.255. In this context, see also W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 1979.

of the modern here is that although it appears to lack the glories of the past, it still believes that it is better. To stay with Benjamin, however, his concept of history remains one in which the past and the present are not separate entities of the same continuum, but rather engaged in a dialectical relationship wherein the past is hidden in the present. In suggesting that the task at hand is for a “telescoping of the past through the present,”<sup>187</sup> Benjamin further emphasizes how the past may be hidden in the present moment, how the present itself cannot continue without some understanding of the past as part of its history.

Similarly, Donald Olsen maintains that, “the nineteenth was the most historically minded of centuries, the one most aware of itself as participant in a *continuing drama*,”<sup>188</sup> thereby portraying the nineteenth century as a time that embraced a concept of a continuous – indeed dramatic or dramaturgical – history. But Olsen concludes that this manner of approaching history was not “a way of escaping from the present,”<sup>189</sup> and that, “the search for origins and the tracing backwards of causal development [...] seemed central to an understanding of the present.”<sup>190</sup> With modern antiquity, however, whereby the new still fears true origins history is re-defined only in terms of a specific and convenient fragment of time. The ‘tracing backwards’, in other words, points not to the past in general, but rather to a specific part of ‘what has been’. Hence, “since the different epochs of the past are not all touched in the same degree by the present day of the historian (and often the recent past is not touched at all; the present fails to ‘do it justice’), continuity in the presentation of history is unattainable.”<sup>191</sup> In distinguishing only one fragment of the past – Periclean Athens – from Athenian antiquity, the modern and distorted historical narrative negates the very idea of a continuous history itself. Whereas antiquity would point to what-has-been, modern antiquity relates to a specific part and image of this antiquity, which, from the nineteenth century and beyond, obscures what-has-been and highlights the *Past*. This representation of the present as the only possible descendant of an already constructed image of antiquity introduces the interplay between modern antiquity and historicism.

### III

In emphasizing that historicism should be understood as “one of the strongest narcotics of the nineteenth century and beyond,”<sup>192</sup> Frisby maintains that amongst the various possible critiques of historicism is the fact that, above all, it “places all elements of the past in a reified continuity and views the present as a linear continuum from the

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<sup>187</sup> W. Benjamin, op. cit., 2002, p.471-N7a,3.

<sup>188</sup> D. Olsen op. cit., 1986, p.9, my emphasis.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p.296.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit.2002, p.470-N7a,2.

<sup>192</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1996, p.21.

past.<sup>193</sup> Modernity employs historicism – associated in this case with modern antiquity – in order to engineer a vast and objectified outline of historical time, a kind of reservoir from which the present may, at any instance, draw references and paradigms, which will help it to legitimize and to justify its own circumstances. At the same time, historicism promotes a ‘reified continuity’ and the ideal of one, singular and universal past, whereby everything old is *necessarily* a part of this past. Benjamin argues, for example, that even though “no fact that is a cause is for that reason historical,”<sup>194</sup> historicism “contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history.”<sup>195</sup> Whereas the present moment and its new-born ‘modern’ have allegedly killed the old, the past becomes indispensable once more so that historicism may fabricate origins and historical connections that will, perhaps, enable the modern to escape the threat of its peril. Benjamin asks: “doesn’t a breath of air that pervaded earlier days caress us as well? In the various voices we hear, isn’t there an echo of now silent ones? [...] If so, then there is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one.”<sup>196</sup> Yet, for Benjamin, the relationship between the past and the present remains a dialectical one. In attacking the false connections promoted by historicism, he argues that, “in order for a part of the past to be touched by the present instant [...] there must be no continuity between them.”<sup>197</sup> Nevertheless, in stubbornly insisting on emphasizing the ‘epic element in history’,<sup>198</sup> historicism “presents an eternal image of the past,”<sup>199</sup> thereby also claiming to possess some power to present ‘things as they really are’.<sup>200</sup>

Since the character of continuity is severely manipulated by historicism, and since it results from an attempt to connect randomly assembled events on a ‘once upon a time’ basis, historicism is further exposed as employing a sophisticated process of abstraction, objectification, and reification of what has been left from that which has actually been. Having already pointed to the frequent abandonment of the recent past in favour of the older one are we to fear that the former is also in danger of being destroyed? In his attempt to “redeem a reality that has been lost”<sup>201</sup> by the corrosive forces of historicism, Benjamin explains that: “it is important for the materialist historian [...] to differentiate the construction of a historical state of affairs from what one customarily calls its ‘reconstruction’. The ‘reconstruction’ in empathy is one-dimensional. ‘Construction’

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 1969, p.263.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid. In this context see also W. Benjamin “On the Concept of History,” in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2003, pp.389-400.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p.390.

<sup>197</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.470-N7,7.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p.474-N9a,6.

<sup>199</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 1979, p.352.

<sup>200</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.463-N3,4.

<sup>201</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1985, p.189.

presupposes 'destruction'.<sup>202</sup> Yet, destruction here assumes a two-fold meaning. On the one hand, it may point to those instances of the past which were annihilated by the historicist construction of a modern antiquity as the direct and unmediated ancestor of the present. On the other hand, however, destruction may also point to Benjamin's own aim of shattering the historicist grand narrative in order to unearth the lost moments. Unlike the historicist narrative of an epic history, "articulating the past historically," for Benjamin, "does not mean recognizing it 'the way it really was'. [Rather], it means appropriating a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger."<sup>203</sup> Whilst historicism will declare modern antiquity – itself only a moment in reality – as the epitome of its fantastical epic, Benjamin's aim is to go in search of those moments which were sacrificed in the process of a bloody and barbaric drama. He further explains that:

Articulating the past historically means recognizing those elements of the past which come together in the constellation of a single moment. Historical knowledge is possible only within the historical moment. But knowledge *within* the historical moment is always knowledge of a moment.<sup>204</sup>

Historicism consciously ignores the limited, albeit significant, 'knowledge within the moment' and attempts to make an epic from the moment. Does historicism promote not merely an objectified but also an unhistorical representation of the past? Siegfried Kracauer suggests that historicism is, in fact, "concerned with the photography of time. The equivalent of its temporal photography would be a giant film depicting the temporally interconnected events from every vantage point."<sup>205</sup> Historicism renders facts historical in so far as they can satisfy the needs of the present and mainly in so far as it can conceal the possibility that there may exist no continuum from a past event to the present moment. Moreover, historicism reveals itself to be not unhistorical, but rather hyper-historical, thereby adding that 'reified continuity' and that hyper-historical experience to an already hypertrophic culture. Hence, historicism may be understood as a process that, in manipulating historical and social time, offers false historical explanations. At the same time, it might also be identified as an intention to mask or to defy real historical knowledge as well as a deeper understanding of social life.

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<sup>202</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.470-N7,6.

<sup>203</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2003, p.391.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., p.403.

<sup>205</sup> S. Kracauer *The Mass Ornament*. T.Y. Levin ed. and tr., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, p.50.

Since modern antiquity is itself a product of modernity and since the latter's consciousness of itself is, usually, derived from the images reflected by the distorting mirror of historicism, modern antiquity – itself a disfigured reflection – is crowned as the most glorious part of a gigantic past, thereby attempting to erase all the true traces of the past. Benjamin concludes that the historicist and “false aliveness of the past-made-present, the elimination of every echo of a ‘lament’ from history, marks history’s final subjection to the modern concept of science.”<sup>206</sup> In doing so, it presents historicism and history as surrendering the world not just to dream and sleep, but rather to coma. Modernity’s contradiction, in the nineteenth century and beyond, therefore, is that whereas Nietzsche’s ‘critic of modernity’ would betray an “explicit acknowledgement of the end of totalities,”<sup>207</sup> and whereas Marx and Engels would assert that ‘all that is solid melts into air’, historicism equips the modern world with two grand and often quite absolute and solid totalities: a continuous colossal History and a State which is to be understood as the undoubted product of this history. Does this mean that what “what was molten [has] become solid?”<sup>208</sup>

#### IV

Nietzsche writes, “we have abolished the real world: what world is left? The apparent world perhaps...But no! *With the real world we have also abolished the apparent world.*”<sup>209</sup> For Nietzsche, modernity means the destruction of totalities – not excluding reality – as well as of the experience of a real world, thereby initially implying that all there is left in the world is appearances, impressions and crude reflexes. Nevertheless, he continues by emphasizing the destruction of the apparent world itself in a manner that may point to it as itself the real world. In modernity, appearances are the only possible reality in which we can start looking for the truth. This is because whatever is left after the annihilation of reality may be veiled by appearances. Relating this to his critique of the equation of the new with progress, Nietzsche maintains that, “mankind does *not* represent a development of the better or the stronger or the higher in the way that is believed today. “Progress” is merely a modern idea, that is to say, a false idea.”<sup>210</sup> However much the world of modernity appears to move forward, such movement is, for Nietzsche, a pretence to becoming. With an emphasis on the dialectic between the past and the present in this context, Nietzsche asserts that “for the moment we still believe: the world is uglier than ever, but it *signifies* a more beautiful world than has ever been.”<sup>211</sup> Similarly, Benjamin

<sup>206</sup> W. Benjamin, op. cit., 2003, p.401.

<sup>207</sup> D. Frisby “Analysing Modernity.” Transcript, p.17.

<sup>208</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.117.

<sup>209</sup> F. Nietzsche *The Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*. R. J. Hollingdale tr. London: Penguin, 1990, p.49.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p.128.

<sup>211</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.100.

explains that, “overcoming the idea of ‘progress’ and overcoming the concept of ‘period of decline’ are two sides of the same thing.”<sup>212</sup> Here, the idea of ‘progress’ is problematic because it points to ‘phantasmagoria’. The modern claim to a beauty that appears to transcend meaning brings Weber’s critique of modernity close to Nietzsche.

In exposing the arrogance of the modern, Weber invokes Nietzsche and writes: “specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved.”<sup>213</sup> If modernity satisfies itself with appearances are we also to deduce that the modern’s use of the past is restricted to beauty alone? Simmel observes that, in fact, “this glorification of the past that the greater mass of people borrow from the idea of morality, in refined circles narrows down to an *aesthetic glorification of the past*.”<sup>214</sup> Hence, in complementing Simmel, Frisby suggests that, “in turn, the beauty and creativity of the past is contrasted with a perceived decline in artistic achievement in the present day.”<sup>215</sup> The dialectic between the old and the new, modernity and antiquity – indeed between modernity and classical antiquity – reinforces the significance of aesthetics. Weber’s diagnosis of a spiritless and ugly modernity increasingly points to Simmel’s exploration of a culture that is obsessed with beauty. Simmel argues, for example, that, “the most diverse features of modern art and culture seem to have in common a deep psychological trait. In abstract terms it may be defined as a tendency to increase the distance between man and his objects, which find its most distinct forms in the area of aesthetics.”<sup>216</sup> Such an exploration of aesthetics, therefore, may expose the dialectical relationships – such as the one between the past and the present – crafted during the pregnancy of the new in the modern. This may explain how modern Athens declared its birthright to classical Athens by means of an aesthetic association. If the modern city appears like the polis, it can also achieve the same or even a better culture. What is the place of reality in such circumstances?

If we follow Simmel, “the aesthetic realm [...] is one in which reality is presented *sub specie aeternitatis*, transcending the individual moment.”<sup>217</sup> Especially with Simmel, therefore, “we should take this aesthetic dimension seriously and *clearly distinguish it from a tendency towards the anesthetization of reality* since the two are not synonymous.”<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.460-N2,5.

<sup>213</sup> M. Weber *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. T. Parsons tr. London: Routledge, 2001, p.124.

<sup>214</sup> G. Simmel cited in D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, p.114, my emphasis.

<sup>215</sup> D. Frisby in *ibid*.

<sup>216</sup> G. Simmel *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*. K.P. Etkorn tr., New York: 1968, pp.79-80.

<sup>217</sup> D. Frisby in Introduction to G. Simmel *The Philosophy of Money*. T. Bottomore and D. Frisby trs., London: Routledge, 2004, p.xxvi.

<sup>218</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1985, p.53, my emphasis. In this context see also D. Frisby “The Aesthetics of Modern Life: Simmel’s Interpretation.” *Theory, Culture and Society*. Vol.8, No.3, August 1991, pp.73-93.

What may explain aestheticism in this context is not an aesthetization of reality and society as such, but rather, the possibility that the 'modern' and the 'new' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries result from an unprecedented emphasis on the Sublime that aims to disguise the empty eternity of the present. At the same time, *distance* itself may point to the secret dialectic between modernity and modern antiquity, where the latter may still emerge as an attempt to re-enchant the world, only this time by seeking to disguise the distance between modernity and antiquity.

In his analysis of the differences between the ideal and the experience of beauty, Schiller suggests that "beauty combines the two opposite conditions of perceiving and thinking, and yet there is no possible mean between the two of them. The one is made certain through experience, the other directly through reason."<sup>219</sup> Beauty, for Schiller, brings the two elements of being, reason and experience together and elevates itself into an expression of a perfect harmony of being: "through Beauty the sensuous man is led to form and to thought; through Beauty the spiritual man is brought back to matter and restored to the world of sense."<sup>220</sup> Beauty, in other words, combines the idea about with the praxis of making the world a beautiful becoming. What is the place of Schiller's definition of beauty in the context of the dialectic between antiquity and modernity that defined the character of new Athens in the nineteenth century and beyond? Schiller's ideal modern poet was Goethe.<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, that which makes Goethe the ideal modern poet, for Schiller, invokes antiquity once more. Schiller writes to his friend, for example, in 1796: "Now farewell, my dear, my honoured friend. How it moves me to think that what we seek and scarcely find in the far distance of a favoured antiquity, is to me present in you."<sup>222</sup> It was his passion for Greek antiquity that, for Schiller, made Goethe ideal artist; it was also that which distinguished him from his peers.

Whereas Goethe would, for Schiller, radiate antiquity, Weber suggests that, with reference to Goethe's *Faust* in particular, this antiquity might be a kind of a mask because "for him [the 'puritan' Goethe] the realization meant a renunciation, a departure from an age of full and beautiful humanity, which can no more be repeated in the course of our cultural development than can *the flower of Athenian culture of antiquity*."<sup>223</sup> Would this also imply that the ideological construction and justification of modern antiquity have their roots in a particular aesthetization of life? Whilst being 'close' to Greek antiquity, Goethe remains Schiller's ideal modern artist. Whereas the new that accompanied modern Athens

<sup>219</sup> F. Schiller op. cit., 1964, p.88.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87.

<sup>221</sup> See F. Schiller *Correspondence Between Schiller and Goethe from 1794-1805*. G.H. Calvert tr., London: Wiley and Putnam, 1845, especially Letter Nine on the characteristics of the artist as 'a child of his time' in *ibid.*, p.51.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p.152.

<sup>223</sup> M. Weber op. cit., 2002, p.123, my emphasis.

attempted to embellish its potential nothingness with the fruits of a promising modern antiquity, Schiller had already pointed to the possibility of such an idea of antiquity as in danger of proving itself empty. What happens if repetition suggests the attempt to return or to reproduce the beauty of the past?

More concerned with the “disintegration of the aura”<sup>224</sup> and with the “social factors responsible for the decline in auratic experience,”<sup>225</sup> Benjamin argues that whatever may have been incarnated in art is endangered by capitalism. What Benjamin was interested in was how the ‘aura’ of the original work of art is threatened by the emergence of technological innovations, such as film and photography that facilitate the mechanical reproduction of the original’s image.<sup>226</sup> Contrary to the harmless reproduction ‘made by hand’<sup>227</sup> the mechanical reproduction of the work of art is a danger to its aura because it annihilates the “here and now of the original [which] underlines the concept of its authenticity.”<sup>228</sup> Notwithstanding the importance of its massive character, this technological reproduction is, for Benjamin, further problematic, first because it is “more independent of the original”<sup>229</sup> than the copy made by hand, and second, because it “can place the copy in situations which the original cannot attain.”<sup>230</sup> Benjamin argues that, in the end, mechanical reproduction “enables the original to meet the recipient halfway.”<sup>231</sup> Yet the recipient is not really confronted with or experiencing the original. Benjamin argues that, as a ‘general formula’,

*The technology of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the sphere of tradition. By replicating the work of art many times over, it substitutes a mass existence for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to reach the recipient to his or her situation, it actualizes that which is reproduced.*<sup>232</sup>

In transcending the ‘here and now’ of the original, technological reproduction obscures ‘auratic experience’, distracts the recipient from the differences between the authentic

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<sup>224</sup> T.W. Adorno *The Jargon of Authenticity*. K. Tarnowski and F. Will trs., London: Routledge, 2003, p.6

<sup>225</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1988, p.258.

<sup>226</sup> Note, however, that, although we do not discuss it here, with film, Benjamin also celebrates non-auratic art. For a preliminary exploration of his critique the non-auratic experience that we emphasize see W. Benjamin “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in W. Benjamin op. cit., 1969, pp.217-271. For a later version of the essay see W. Benjamin “The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility,” in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2003, pp.251-283.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, p.253.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p 254.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, emphasis in the original.

work and the replica,<sup>233</sup> pretends a sameness between the two, and finally, alleges some authenticity in the copy. To relate this hypothesis to modernity, if the original is something old and the replica is, which it is by definition, a new image of this old, then this means that, in the context of art at least, technological reproduction aims at distorting the experience of both the past, the 'here and then' of the original, and the present, the 'halfway' or 'nowhere' that the replica hides. This final implication of a stolen time in a copy that claims authenticity becomes clearer if we turn to Adorno.

Like Nietzsche's suspicions of origin, Adorno is sceptical about any claim, in modernity, to authenticity.<sup>234</sup> For Adorno, the 'jargon of authenticity' is like a veil over the 'ever same' character of modernity,<sup>235</sup> an attempt to conceal disenchantment with some 'meaning',<sup>236</sup> indeed, it is a language wherein, in the end, "the newly created Plato is more Platonic than the authentic one."<sup>237</sup> After capitalism, there can be no meaning for Adorno; any claim to its discovery is doomed to the irrationally supplemented rationality of the bourgeoisie<sup>238</sup> that refuses to see the world for what it is.<sup>239</sup> If Benjamin's hypothesis concerning the decline of the aura is related to Weber's disenchanted world, authenticity for Adorno is an empty shell over a dying, albeit still delusional modernity. Above all, the problem with the jargon of authenticity is that, "the search for meaning as that which something is authentically, and as that which is hidden in it, pushes away, often unnoticed and therefore all the faster, the question as to the right of this something."<sup>240</sup> Not only does the new claim the authenticity of the old and not only does it pretend the same meaning. In its attempt to re-invest the world with meaning, the modern claim to authenticity establishes the right of the new to exist as a better reality than the old. In other words, the jargon of authenticity is dangerous, for Adorno, because, by virtue of the implication of some truth, it defies criticism and, therefore, the understanding of whatever other truth it may hide.<sup>241</sup> How can this alienation explain the dilemmas concerning the reconstruction

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<sup>233</sup> For the role of distraction in this context see *ibid.*, pp.268-269.

<sup>234</sup> Although he does not reference Nietzsche often in this context, Adorno is grateful that Nietzsche "did not live long enough to grow sick at his stomach over the jargon of authenticity. See T.W Adorno *op. cit.*, 2003, p.7. Contrary to his criticism of Heidegger's authenticity in *Being and Time*, Adorno justifies Benjamin's use of the concept mainly because he argues that whatever the aura in the original it is lost with capitalism. See *ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>235</sup> See *ibid.*, p.28.

<sup>236</sup> For Adorno's use of Weber, see *ibid.*, p.65.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, p.102.

<sup>238</sup> See *ibid.*, p.38. An alternative to this could lead to Adorno's own pessimistic scepticism concerning any meaning in modernity.

<sup>239</sup> This world, for Adorno, is 'dry' and 'boring', disenchanted in both activity and experience. This, however, does not lead him to complete pessimism. Understanding the world for what it really is, is related to a deeper understanding of the social factors that create it. One of the problems of the 'jargon', for instance, is that, in refusing to embrace the boredom of modernity it creates new dubious meanings and adventures. The counter example to the jargon is Kafka. See *ibid.*, pp.65-66.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, p.33.

<sup>241</sup> To provide a rather extreme example, Adorno argues that, this being the case, the jargon will even justify a torturer if he is a true torturer. See *ibid.*, p.102.

of the work of art on the spot or the turbulent affair between the classical culture that the Acropolis of Athens has come to portray and the modern one that the new capital disguised? The problems here lie in the fact that classical antiquity is often represented not merely as a work of art but rather as the embodiment of the whole Greek or Western civilization.<sup>242</sup> The representations of modern Athens as classical antiquity, therefore, suggest that the Acropolis is hyper-auratic.

## V

However straightforward the exploration of its history, the meanings attributed to the Acropolis present us with a plethora that we cannot pretend to either exhaust or to completely understand here. Having said that, even the hypothesis that the Acropolis was *the* cultural object of the antiquity of modernity cannot be clarified without an understanding of modern antiquity. This might be due to the confusing relation between the monument and the city as well as in the nineteenth century temporal de-contextualization of this relationship. Modern Athens was related to ideas and questions concerning the nation, Europe, culture, authenticity and the origin of the new. The fathers of the new capital started from one of the sites that the ancient Greeks perceived as holy,<sup>243</sup> and assumed that, because of this, the Acropolis had a special aura, one that it could offer to the world. In her analysis of the Acropolis as an essential locus of Western civilization, Argyro Loukaki discusses the differences between two landscapings of the Sacred Rock, the one conducted by the American School of Classical Studies and the other by the Greek architect Demetrios Pikiones.<sup>244</sup> At all events, Loukaki maintains that,

Contestations over the essential and authentic character of places mask vital issues of who, exactly, has the power and privilege to define standards of judgement for the understanding and transformation of a particular place such as the Sacred Rock of the Acropolis.<sup>245</sup>

Although the detailed landscaping of the Acropolis escapes our present focus, there are two things we should discuss. First, that the purification of the site and the surrounding area

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<sup>242</sup> See, for example, D.A. Gerondas "O Symbolismos tis Akropoleos." [The Symbolism of the Acropolis] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 19, September 1961, pp.44-45, and D.O. Katsaris "I Epi tis Akropoleos Ypertati Ekfrasi tou Ellenikou Politismon." [The Acropolis as the Supreme Expression of Greek Civilization] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 55, September 1973, pp.12-21.

<sup>243</sup> For the argument that the ancient Greeks built upon sites that they considered as sacred see V. Scully *The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962. For sites that are less known than the Acropolis see V. Scully "The Earth, the Temple, and the Gods: Greek Sacred Architecture. Addenda." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 23, No.2, May 1964, pp.89-99.

<sup>244</sup> See A. Loukaki op. cit., 1997, pp.306-329. According to Loukaki the former attracts more tourists and the latter appeals mostly to Greeks. See *ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, p.310.

was part of a greater project regarding the representation of the new capital as antiquity. Second, that, despite the question of who defined the character of the monument and the city, and in spite of the fact that the great majority of the fathers of modern Athens were non-Athenians, the various contestations in terms of the past *never* doubted the fragment of antiquity that the new city 'ought to' represent. Neither did they often doubt its authenticity or status as the origin of Western civilization. Thus, the fathers of nineteenth-century Athens won one of the greatest bets of their time. Although himself ambivalent as to the character of the past, the prominent early twentieth-century scholar Ion Dragoumis provides us with an illuminating observation:

If we feel our eyes too hurt from the view of so much ugliness, we have only to direct our steps outside the disfigured city, towards the Acropolis. There, at least – and although the artistic Philistinism has lately debauched even the feet of the Sacred Rock -- in the margin and above the opportune and the ephemeral, can one, again, for a moment, breath in the quintessential blast of the absolute.<sup>246</sup>

The Acropolis of Athens became neither merely the origin nor just the authentic past of modern Western civilization; it became the *perfect* alternative to Baudelaire's fleeting modernity. It became the absolute that offered some of its 'glory' to the void of the modern. It became eternal and with it so did the modernity that 'cherished' it. But there were different results in this process. On the one hand, antiquity becomes meaningful once more and on the other, it suppresses the city which, however ancient-looking, was perfectly *new*. In support of the former, we read that,

In this new approach to the world, one which placed the new on the foundation of a more complex understanding and interpretation of the old, the Parthenon emerged as an artistic, architectural and ideological model for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – often, indeed, a pre-eminent model. There can be no doubt that this was a new Parthenon, one which was no longer a place of worship, but a monument, a vehicle for the collective memory of our own civilization.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> I. Dragoumis *Aesthetika Keimena*. [Essays on Aesthetics] E. Fratzeskaki ed., Athens: Dodoni: 1992, p.21.

<sup>247</sup> P. Tournikiotis in P. Tournikiotis ed., *The Parthenon and its Impact in Modern Times*. Athens: Melissa, 1994, p.14.

The memories – or rather the dream about the memories – of classical Athens justified the choice of the city as the capital because it was the point of reference of Europe's collective memory. Yet, just as the ancients worshipped their polis and their own contribution to it in the Parthenon, the moderns, too, might have worshipped the spirit of their time in the monument. This led to a problem that modern Greek society is still struggling to solve. In having already maintained that the restoration of the Acropolis equalled, by definition, a 'refutation of history',<sup>248</sup> and having already argued that it is dangerous to reduce modern Athens to a mere ideological product,<sup>249</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas observes that,

Rarely has a society [...] regarded the problem of historical memory more contradictorily than the neo-Hellenic one. Archaeolatry, ancestor-mania, and an incessant narcissism in front of the mirror of history, all matters of speech. In practice: an instinctive hostility against any tradition [...], a contempt for any past, a superficial and unassimilated mimicry of contemporary international achievements.<sup>250</sup>

Insofar as this observation reflects a relatively common experience within neo-Hellenic society, Papageorgiou-Venetas is right to emphasize the contradiction between an antiquity-focused narcissism and the simultaneous contempt for the past. But this hostility towards the past is not instinctive but rather, socially constructed.

Modern Greeks were socialized into this contradiction. Like the history of its Acropolis, that of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Athens is, as we will see, one of destructions and demolitions of any post-classical past. This is modernity's legacy in Athens. From the elementary problems of the modern to modern antiquity, from the idea of the nation to that of a Western civilization, and from the search for an authentic, beautiful truth to the selection of the origin, our exploration of modern Athens as the 'showplace' of European metropolitan modernity rounds in circles and returns to the beginning. The parallel between the building of new Athens and love is not accidental. Like someone in love, those who reinforced the representation of Athens as antiquity only saw what they wanted to see in the city.

## VI

However much specifically a product of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the process of attempting to re-enchant the world with the Greek beautiful can be traced back to the Renaissance, when a new beginning was contrasted with the Middle

<sup>248</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Athens*. [Athens] Athens: Odysseas, 1996, pp.165-175.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

Agcs. Indeed, “at the turn of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, two pioneers in the rediscovery of Greece broke a silence that had lasted for centuries.”<sup>251</sup> In their search to see through and beyond the darkness, Christophoro Buondelmonti and Ciriaco de Pizzicolti [Cyriacus of Ancona] gave new meaning to the humanist ‘search for Greece’ in that “whilst humanism was almost exclusively concerned with the texts of ancient authors and with the search for manuscripts, [...], these two travellers were interested in actual places and in faithfully reproducing what they saw there.”<sup>252</sup> Yet, whereas Buondelmonti and Cyriacus of Ancona were the first to found the tradition of travelling to Greece as a pilgrimage to the ‘origins’ of Western civilization, travelling to the land was considered unsafe and was not a common practice until the liberation of Greece from the Ottoman occupation in the early nineteenth century. The ‘search for Greece’, therefore, remains greatly limited to the study of ancient Greek authors for five more centuries. In the context of modern antiquity, the spiritual and actual ‘fathers’ of new Athens were influenced first by studying those who examined ancient texts, and second by a few earlier individuals, including Pausanias who strolled through Greece in the second century AD. But it was the scholars who did not travel to Greece that introduced the construction of an imaginary for modern antiquity. In not having been in the country, these scholars imagined it as they pleased. Their love for ‘Greece’ together with their imagination underlined a passionate, albeit ‘tyrannical’,<sup>253</sup> affair. Is it possible that the exploration of the eighteenth-century ‘spiritual tyranny’ of Greece, over Germany in particular, may have motivated the nineteenth-century construction of modern antiquity as initially a non-Greek affair?

Even though the Comte de Caylus was himself working in Rome and researched antiquities with “emphasis on tools and materials,”<sup>254</sup> it is Johann Joachim Winckelmann who appears to have “invented the history of Greek art.”<sup>255</sup> Indeed, “at a time when Greco-Latin antiquity was perceived as a whole, [Winckelmann] intuited that there was a Greek civilization that had not been altered by the Roman tradition.”<sup>256</sup> Yet, however essential Winckelmann’s role in the ideological development of modern antiquity remains, the distinction between Greek and Latin art appears to be rather attributed to the Jesuit abbé Marc Antoin Laugier. Whilst Winckelmann’s *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Work of Art in Painting and Sculpture* was published in 1755,<sup>257</sup> Laugier’s *Essai sur*

<sup>251</sup> R. and F. Etienne op. cit., 1992, p.24.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.24-25.

<sup>253</sup> E.M. Butler *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935, p.6.

<sup>254</sup> R. and F. Etienne, op. cit., 1992, p.61.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>257</sup> See *ibid* and S.L. Marchand op. cit., 1996, p.7. In this context, Marchand also points to Winckelmann’s racist claims.

*L'Architecture* was published two years earlier, in 1753.<sup>258</sup> Laugier who, like Winckelmann, never visited Greece was the first to declare that "architecture owes all that is perfect to the Greeks."<sup>259</sup> But Laugier was not an architect; rather, he was an, 'amateur aesthetician',<sup>260</sup> and a 'philosopher',<sup>261</sup> whose work "was discussed and attacked, and digested and rejected all over Europe,"<sup>262</sup> indeed giving rise to a highly contested debate on the subject of Greek versus Roman Art. Still, it was Winckelmann's idea of the Romans imitating the Greeks that was to give rise to the most polemical reactions. With a clear emphasis on architecture, for example, Giovanni Battista Piranesi wrote in his *Of the Magnificence and Architecture of Rome*, in 1761, that the Romans were actually influenced by the Etruscans, whose civilization was older than the Greek.<sup>263</sup> At all events, it was in the eighteenth century that Greek art was distinguished from Roman, an enterprise that was primarily German.<sup>264</sup> At the same time, the voices of those eighteenth century German scholars were the ones that dominated new Athens in the nineteenth century and beyond, thereby pointing to a rather reciprocal 'tyranny' between Greece and Germany. Two things bring these heterogeneous scholars together. First, even though they never visited Greece, they were all fervent advocates of 'classical studies', and second, their ideas were influential in Greek and German state building throughout the nineteenth century. But why this emphasis on Greece? Marchand explains that, "above all, the Germans admired the Greeks because the Greeks admired the beautiful."<sup>265</sup> The admiration these scholars had for the Greek beautiful, however, was related to a particular revolutionary spirit, to

A generational revolt against religious repression, aristocratic airs, and social immobility; but it was especially a *cultural* revolt, launched by intellectuals whose primary interests lay in the free – but well funded – cultivation of the arts and sciences and the universalization of nonutilitarian, aristocratic education.<sup>266</sup>

Nevertheless, however politically mobile 'from left, to liberal, to right',<sup>267</sup> German Philhellenism was to be,

<sup>258</sup> See B. Bergdoll *European Architecture 1750-1890*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, p.92.

<sup>259</sup> M.A. Laugier cited in *ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> B. Bergdoll in *ibid.*

<sup>261</sup> J. Summerson *The Classical Language of Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2002, p.92.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>263</sup> B. Bergdoll *op. cit.*, 2002, pp. 20-22.

<sup>264</sup> In this context see also E. Ikonou "Diafotismos kai Klassike Paradosi." [Enlightenment and Classical Tradition] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 27, June 1988, pp.52-62.

<sup>265</sup> B. Bergdoll *op. cit.*, 2002, p.3.

<sup>266</sup> S.L. Marchand *op. cit.*, 1996., p.6

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*

The foremost 'political' aim of the first Graecophiles was the configuration of German cultural institutions, not the overthrow of the state, and we should not be surprised that having succeeded in the former endeavour, they were not particularly eager to participate in the latter.<sup>268</sup>

Whilst Winckelmann spent most of his working time in Rome, others – including Goethe and Schiller – stayed primarily in Germany and yet, played a very significant role in the propagation of an imaginary of 'classical' Athens that was to be the ideological foundation of modern antiquity in the nineteenth century. Tyrannized by those 'marvellous' ancient Greeks, therefore, Johan Christian Hölderlin, Heinrich Heine, F. A. Wolf, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Johann Friedrich Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and indeed, Goethe and Schiller among them, were the figures whose work inspired the imaginary around what-must-have-been in ancient Athens.<sup>269</sup> But, as was the case with Schiller, they were sometimes reflective enough to realize the danger in what they were creating. Over a century later, Benjamin, himself a victim of that classical frenzy, would argue that what this educational system based on such a cultural revolt actually produced was a kind of "knowledge with no outlet in praxis"<sup>270</sup> which ultimately seeks "only to *stimulate*, to *offer variety*, to *arise interest*, [a knowledge whereby] history was shaken up, to relieve the monotony."<sup>271</sup> However late the realization, Humboldt wrote to Goethe in 1804:

But after all, it was only an illusion for us to wish to become inhabitants of Rome or Athens ourselves. Antiquity should only appear to us from a great distance, separated from everything trivial, as completely past and gone.<sup>272</sup>

However good the intentions of those German classicists, and however lovingly and passionately they imagined ancient Greece, their ideas were to be misinterpreted and manipulated by that emptier nineteenth century. The governments, architects, and archaeologists of nineteenth-century new Athens were often members of a generation that was nurtured by those tyrannized classicists. And so the idea of Athens spread away from and back to the city. But the nineteenth-century dialectic between the new and the old introduced a specific historical cultivation that, both in theory and in practice, forced modern Athens to become the capital of modernity's favourite antiquity.

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> See *ibid* and E. M. Butler *op. cit.*, 1935.

<sup>270</sup> W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 1979, p.356.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>272</sup> W. Humboldt cited in E.M. Butler *op. cit.*, 1935, p. 135.

## VII

Whilst Benjamin's critique of historicism is directed towards a constructed image of the past that threatens to destroy knowledge of the old, the historicist insistence to 'preserve the past as a museum' – literally as well as metaphorically – also means that modernity is trapped in a past that is aesthetically overestimated. The present can never do justice to the past at all. Once again, the exploration of modernity as the hymn to the beautiful epigone of a glorious past underlines a particular relationship to history, and in turn, to the present. Nietzsche maintains that:

History pertains to the living person in three respects: it pertains to him as one who acts and strives, as one who preserves and venerates, and as one who suffers and is in need for liberation. These three relations correspond to three kinds of history: insofar as it is permissible to distinguish between a *monumental*, an *antiquarian*, and a *critical* kind of history.<sup>273</sup>

Even though these three kinds of history are stamped by different motives, the dialectic between the new and the old may, perhaps, point to the first two as elements of historicism as well as of constructing a modern antiquity. The last, the critical mode, advocates liberation from an oppressive past as well as from a suffocating present, a case which, as it will be explored in later parts, is surprisingly evident amongst Greek authors rebelling against the tyrannical antiquity which deprives their present of dignity. If the construction of modern antiquity is characterized by a conscious selection of parts of the past – Periclean Athens over against ancient or old Athens – then it must also be identified with a destructive process, wherein non-Periclean Athens is absent. If Europe descends from ancient Greece, it is not, as modern antiquity has it, the epigone of 'democracy' only; rather, it is the epigone of tyranny, of war, and of imperialism as well. Modern antiquity denies this truth and can be contextualized within Nietzsche's critique of modern historical sensibilities.

For Nietzsche, the antiquarian sensibility is characteristic of a process where, "small, limited, decaying, antiquated things obtain their own dignity and sanctity when the preserving and venerating soul of the antiquarian human being takes up residence in them and makes itself a comfortable nest."<sup>274</sup> Hence, the antiquarian mode points to modernity's search for and collection of origins in whatever is actually left from antiquity. Objectifying

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<sup>273</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1995, p.95.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., p.103.

every small item or idea and attempting to justify its present state of being, the antiquarian kind of history “always has an extremely limited field of vision; most things it does not perceive at all, and the few things it does see, it views too closely and in isolation.”<sup>275</sup> In other words, the antiquarian sensibility seeks to preserve a very small and objectified fragment of the past, thereby exposing the dependency of the worth and value of the new on a delicate myopic image of the past. In the context of Athenian, and Greek, modernity this was soon translated into the nineteenth-century archaeologists’ fascination with excavations.<sup>276</sup> Armed with such history and assisted by archaeology, modern antiquity objectified Periclean Athens and adopted ‘monumental’ history. With this approach towards the past, argues Nietzsche, “history pertains to the active and powerful human being, to the person who is involved in a great struggle and who *needs exemplars, and comforters, but is unable to find them among his contemporaries and in the present age.*”<sup>277</sup> It is monumental history that ultimately highlights modernity’s endeavour to construct a modern antiquity that will, hopefully, restore the dignity of the present. At the same time, the monumental sensibility as an element of modern antiquity points directly to those early German classicists who propagated the idea of an artistically superior classical Athens. In clearly referring to Schiller and Goethe as advocates of monumental history, Nietzsche writes:

Of what use to the contemporary human being, then, is the monumental view of the past, the preoccupation with the classical and rare accomplishments of earlier times? From it, he concludes that the greatness that once existed was at least *possible* at one time, and that it therefore will be possible once again; he goes his way with more courage, for the doubt that befalls him in his weaker moments – Is he not, in fact, striving for the impossible? – is now vanished.<sup>278</sup>

Whereas the eighteenth century retained some hope of the potentials of the new, the nineteenth century begins to expose the nakedness of both the present and the past. Nevertheless, the monumental element of modern antiquity legitimizes a reified image of ‘classical’ Athens as *the* past. However true, for Nietzsche, that some knowledge of the past may be essential,<sup>279</sup> historicism reifies it. Raising the question of an empty knowledge

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., pp.104-105.

<sup>276</sup> For archaeology in Greece in this context see S.L. Marchand op. cit., 1996.

<sup>277</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1995, p.96, my emphasis.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p.98.

<sup>279</sup> See *ibid.*, p.108.

once again, Nietzsche describes his contemporaries as mere 'walking encyclopaedias'<sup>280</sup> and attacks an 'excess', which, among other things, "undermines the instincts of the individual no less than that of the totality."<sup>281</sup> Such excess points to a state-controlled education that is added to the hypertrophic objective culture as well as to a particularly false individualism, translated into an 'ironic egoism'.<sup>282</sup> In this case, classical education becomes a pretence to human betterment. By the mid-nineteenth century, the word had spread: "we are not seeking Athens only in Athens. This inscription was written about her; *here [in Athens] is the heart; the spirit is everywhere.*"<sup>283</sup> But was this the heart and spirit of antiquity or that of modernity? That puzzling question comes to mind once again: "why must it be a Greek, why not an Englishman, a Turk? Isn't the past large enough for you to find something that doesn't make you so ridiculously arbitrary?"<sup>284</sup> Is it enough to say that it is because 'the Greeks admired the beautiful'? If that was a satisfactory answer for the eighteenth-century classicists, the 'empty' nineteenth century still hides its secrets.

The new of the nineteenth century employed a modern antiquity whose ideological justification had already been laid down a century earlier. From meaninglessness to constructing grand narratives upon History, and from 'disenchantment' to aesthetics, modern antiquity emerges as the way through which the new violently forced the old to be a fit ancestor. But this also meant that the past and specifically the classical Athens that the new city would soon represent, was created in order to accept responsibility for the present. In pretending that there is some legitimate and natural relation between the beauty of the fifth-century polis and the modern, modern antiquity connects hitherto conflicting elements: the old and the new.

## VIII

As the hidden element in the dialectic between the new and the old, modern antiquity is modernity's secret way of implementing the former whilst at the same time manipulating the latter. This means, that in order for modernity to connect the new with whichever old it perceives as appropriate, it first has to distinguish the present from the instances of the past that best describe its ancestry. In relation to the process of connection, Simmel maintains that,

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<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.110-111.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>283</sup> C. Wordsworth cited in Exhibition Catalogue: *I Anadyse kai I Anadeikse Kedron tou Ellenismou sta Keimena ton Periegeton - 15os-20os Aionas*. [The Emergence and Illustration of the Centres of Hellenism in Travellers' Accounts]. Athens: KOTINOS, 2005.

<sup>284</sup> F. Nietzsche *op. cit.*, 1995, p. 120.

We can only sense those things to be related which we have previously somehow isolated from one another; things must first be separated from one another in order to be together. Practically as well as logically, it would be meaningless to connect that which was not separated, and indeed that which remains separated in some sense.<sup>285</sup>

In highlighting the complexities within the dialectic between the old and the new, whereby the former is supposed to be dead-for-ever and the latter celebrates the birth of the 'truly new', modern antiquity has been explored as an attempt to re-enchant a world which appears to be threatened by a potential emptiness in the truly new. Nevertheless, the conflict between modernity and antiquity soon assumes the character of a conflict between modernity and, *specifically*, classical Athenian antiquity. At the same time, this dialectic took an aesthetic dimension, thereby representing a conflict between an 'empty' modern culture and the 'splendid' classical Athenian culture. If it is true that – in employing historicism and attempting to establish origins – modernity contents itself with a well-constructed image of the old, then modern antiquity illustrates how the old and the new were brought together in modernity. Whilst modernity appears alienated from a distant antiquity, modern antiquity intervenes and attempts to connect the present with the past. Simmel explains that the activity of making connections,

Reaches its zenith in the construction of a bridge. Here the human will to connect seems to be confronted not only by the passive resistance of spatial separation but also by the active resistance of a special configuration. By overcoming this obstacle, the bridge symbolizes the extension in our volitional sphere over space. Only for us are the banks of a river not just apart, but 'separated'; if we did not first connect them in our practical thoughts, in our needs and in our fantasy, then the concept of separation would have no meaning.<sup>286</sup>

Connection presupposes separation; otherwise the process would be pointless and the practical achievement meaningless. But as the zenith of connecting, the bridge may actually bring closer that which we only perceive as different and have, thus, separated in

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<sup>285</sup> G. Simmel in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., op. cit., 1997, p.171.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*

order, paradoxically, to connect.<sup>287</sup> Nevertheless, drawing on Simmel, Heidegger provides a rather antithetical definition of the bridge and argues that,

The bridge swings over the stream with 'ease and power'. It does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge.<sup>288</sup>

Whilst Simmel suggests that a bridge, practically or symbolically, physically or intellectually, connects the two opposing banks of a stream, Heidegger's concept of a bridge points to a contrasting process of actually distancing the two banks. Nevertheless, Simmel explains that, "in the immediate as well as the symbolic sense, in the physical as well as the symbolic sense, we are at any moment those who separate the connected or connect the separated,"<sup>289</sup> thereby further defining the bridge as a meaningful and conscious connecting process. Yet, despite the problems arising from Heidegger's definition of the bridge – as for example the nature of the power which enables the bridge to actually separate the never-before separated banks – a bridge may connect as well as separate. In being itself carefully built in order to satisfy the needs of the present, modern antiquity is a symbolic as well as a practical bridge between the present and a chosen past. In turn, this past is identified with a specifically modern image of the old. Nevertheless, this possibility may also betray the threat of aesthetics and of the danger of the void in modern aesthetics.

For Simmel, "the bridge becomes an aesthetic value in so far as it accomplishes the connection between what is separated not only in reality and in order to fulfil practical goals, but in making it directly visible."<sup>290</sup> In other words, the bridge is an aesthetic value in so far as it transcends – though without negating it – reality, and in so far as, in satisfying practical needs, it can be visible. Hence, modern antiquity-as-a-bridge between the old and the new may simultaneously be an attempt to practically transcend the dialectic between a classical Athenian culture that cannot be reproduced and the modern one which attempts to mask itself as the epigone of this bygone antiquity. Yet, in the context of the antiquarian and the monumental history put together by historicism to create the past, this bridge that connects the present moment with a vast and continuous past and from there on

<sup>287</sup> In this context, M. Cacciari explains that, with the bridge, Simmel has "found a definition of contradiction that makes it possible to overcome contradiction without abandoning life in the process." See M. Cacciari op. cit., 1993, p.86.

<sup>288</sup> M. Heidegger "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," in N. Leach ed., *Rethinking Architecture*. London: Routledge, 2003, p.104.

<sup>289</sup> G. Simmel in D. Frisby and Mike Featherstone eds., op. cit., 1997, p.171.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

with Periclean Athens may further separate the present from what-has-been. In choosing to highlight one instance of antiquity over others, modern antiquity destroys the latter and separates the present from antiquity. In other words, if 'classical' Athens corresponds to a fifty-year period of the city's 6000 years' existence, for example, modern antiquity connects the present with those fifty years whilst, at the same time, separates it from the remaining 5950 years. Indeed, modern antiquity is blind to antiquity.

## IX

Despite its strange love for antiquity, modernity remembered only a fragment of the past. But it reconstructed this past in order to forget about its own foretold death. Memory and forgetting, therefore, supplement the dialectic between the past and the present and ultimately highlight modernity's actual relation with itself. Despite its pretence to the opposite and to some love for the glorious antiquity, modernity in Athens meant an inherently egoistic and, indeed, narcissistic experience. Less known than her 'predatory' husband,<sup>291</sup> but his 'accomplice in crime', Lady Elgin provides us with a spectacular example of the kind of love we will deal with. Not in the least concerned with her ignorance when she referred to the Erechtheum – which, incidentally, she wanted to take in its entirety<sup>292</sup> – as the "Temple of the Cari-something",<sup>293</sup> Lady Elgin had assumed her husband's duties whilst he was in England and sent him detailed reports of her 'achievements' in Athens. Her letter of the twenty-fifth of May 1802 consisted of such an update but also included a more intimate comment.<sup>294</sup> In having counted the seven boxes she had already sent on board and one more that she was just about to pack after a series of negotiations with the captain, she wrote: "do you love me better for it Elgin?"<sup>295</sup> The love of which we speak here is not the one that lead so many philhellenes to their death during the Greek war of independence.<sup>296</sup> Neither it is the one that inspired Shelley to write of the 'marble immortality'<sup>297</sup> of the Acropolis or that 'divine work'<sup>298</sup> of a city. As with Lady Elgin, whose main concern when bringing about the dilapidation the Acropolis was if her spouse would love her more for it, the 'fathers' of modern Athens usually had vested interests. For them, the city was an unfaithful mistress who 'dared' speak of her infidelity. In order to forgive her, they had to forget that others conquered her before them. How

<sup>291</sup> For the 'predatory Elgin' see R. Stoneman ed., *A Literary Companion to Travel in Greece*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1984, p.131.

<sup>292</sup> See lady Elgin cited in *ibid.*, p.132.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>294</sup> For the letter dated 25 May 1802 see *ibid.*, pp.131-132.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, p.131.

<sup>296</sup> A general estimation is that almost 1200 Philhellenes fought in Greece of whom approximately 300 died. The majority, some 121, were Germans. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *Odonymika*. [On Street Names] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Centre, 1997, Vol.3, p.299.

<sup>297</sup> See Shelley's 'Ode to Liberty' cited in R. Stoneman ed., *op. cit.*, 1984, p.119.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

much of the remembering of Athens in the nineteenth century was really a forgetting? Memory is here paradoxical by definition; modern Athens became the image of the origin of Western civilization by means of a remembrance of a past – the classical polis – that none of the fathers of the capital had or could actually experience. As Maurice Halbwachs argues, “I carry a baggage of historical remembrances that I can increase through conversation and reading. But it remains a borrowed memory, not my own.”<sup>299</sup> If this is one truth about historical memory, how real is the memory of the city that was borrowed from the ‘whole world’?

In her exploration of ‘the art of memory’,<sup>300</sup> Frances Yates explains that the original ‘mnemotechnics’<sup>301</sup> – the techniques of remembering – were related to rhetoric,<sup>302</sup> which, in turn, was facilitated by the discovery of sight’s supremacy over the rest of the senses.<sup>303</sup> In the classical – Greek and Latin – rhetorical memory, therefore, “the first step was to imprint on the memory a series of *loci* or places. The commonest, though not the only, type of mnemonic place system used was the architectural type.”<sup>304</sup> According to Yates, the classical art of memory assisted the orator to discover a balance between the outside, architectural world, and the tradition the memory of which he ought to preserve; a relationship, argues Yates, that is now lost.<sup>305</sup> In assuming different forms and expressions with time, the art of memory was gradually related to man, God, the truth, and, finally, to philosophy and science.<sup>306</sup> Nevertheless, we should not assume that the modern art of memory is necessarily rational. In a strange way, the memory of classical Athens in the nineteenth century explored a mnemotechnic and its escorting rhetoric, both of which needed the help of architecture as a means to a particular representation. No other artefact, building, or monument has ever been accorded with such a collective representation as the Acropolis of Athens.

There is, for Durkheim, an essential difference between individual and ‘collective representations’<sup>307</sup> in that the latter imply an accumulation of the former, that results in a social fact whose power is, by definition, superior to either the individuals or to the collective that first formed it.<sup>308</sup> He argues, for instance, that

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<sup>299</sup> M. Halbwachs *The Collective Memory*. F.J. Ditter and V.Y. Ditter trs., London: Harper and Row, 1980, p.51.

<sup>300</sup> See F.A. Yates *The Art of Memory*. London: Pimlico, 1999.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>303</sup> See *ibid.*, p.19.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20. Yates also maintains here that, in light of this complex relationship, ‘mnemotechnics’ cannot express these phenomena in their full ‘mystery’. See *ibid.*

<sup>306</sup> Yates’ exploration of this process starts with Aristotle and ends with Leibniz and rationalism.

<sup>307</sup> See E. Durkheim “Individual and Collective Representations,” in E. Durkheim *Sociology and Philosophy*. D.F. Pocock tr., London: Cohen & West, 1965, pp.1-34.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.25-29.

Collective representations are the product of a vast cooperative effort that extends not only through space but over time; their creation has involved a multitude of different minds associating, mingling, or combining their ideas and feelings – the accumulation of generations of experience and knowledge. A very special intellectuality, infinitely richer and more complex than that of the individual is concentrated in them.<sup>309</sup>

Evident of a 'special intellectuality', the memory awakened transcends the lived experience of those who first associated an object with a collective representation that is powerful enough to concentrate or even sanctify their combining 'ideas and feelings'. In accepting the possibility of resemblance as the "cause of association,"<sup>310</sup> Durkheim suggests that, in so far as a collective representation has become a 'social fact', it no longer depends simply upon individual participation. Itself internalized by means of the relation between an object's image and the memory that it can awaken through resemblance, a collective representation will recall the same memory over time. Hence, there is a reason why "for Durkheim, memory-images have greater resonance and authority when they are attached to social groups and realities."<sup>311</sup> According to Durkheim's definition, the power of a collective memory lies in the fact that, "because it is collective, [it] already presents guarantees of objectivity, for otherwise it could not be generalized and maintained with sufficient persistence."<sup>312</sup> As long as it is collective, then, by virtue of the sanctification of the image that retains the consistency of the collective representation, memory acquires an undisputed authority as well as a seemingly rightful claim to an objective truth. It is neither accidental nor coincidental that Durkheim included collective representations in his exploration of religion. Closely related to the functional role of religion in the coming into realization of society as a sacred – the most sacred for Durkheim – social fact, the perfect collective representation creates a substratum of objective truths which validate society's right to exist as it is and as it does. For Durkheim, the more the 'memory-image' remains associated with a collective representation, the more it will assume its place as a collective, sacred, and objective truth. This last implication of collective memories as the potential ingredients of history becomes clearer with Halbwachs.

In owing much to Durkheim's 'collective representations', Halbwachs<sup>313</sup> distinguishes 'several collective memories'<sup>314</sup> and although he, too, advocates the

<sup>309</sup> E. Durkheim *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. C. Cosman tr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p.18.

<sup>310</sup> E. Durkheim op. cit., 1965, p.18.

<sup>311</sup> B. Fowler "Collective Memories and Forgetting: Components for a Study of Obituaries." Manuscript, 2004, p.2.

<sup>312</sup> E. Durkheim op. cit., 2001, p.333.

<sup>313</sup> See M. Halbwachs op. cit., 1980.

superiority of collective memories over individual ones, he argues that, "the memory of a society extends as far as the memory of the groups composing it."<sup>315</sup> Nevertheless, historical memory provides a solution to the problem of disrupted memories and guarantees the agreement between generations. Halbwachs maintains that, "a remembrance is in very large measure a reconstruction of the past achieved with data borrowed from the present, a reconstruction prepared, furthermore, by reconstructions of earlier periods wherein past images had already been altered."<sup>316</sup> Memory, here, rests upon a unique relation between the past and the present; when it points to history, however, this relationship is based upon a deception wherein the present creates memories of an already recreated past. There hides, in other words, a danger in the transformation of a collective memory into history. Yet, Halbwachs maintains that, memory in general, is actually defined by an 'illusion' that only space can solidify:

That we remember only by transporting ourselves outside space is [...] incorrect. Indeed, quite the contrary, it is the spatial image alone that, by reason of its stability, gives us an illusion of not having changed through time and of retrieving the past in the present.<sup>317</sup>

The manifold reconstructions that constitute remembrance is concealed by space's potential to resist "growing old or losing any of its parts."<sup>318</sup> In a return to Durkheim, Halbwachs proposes that a contemporary memory presupposes the consistency of resemblances that only the illusion of spatial stability can ensure. It is this presumption that ultimately characterizes the mnemonic truth from whence the present 'retrieves' the past. The memory games that transformed Athens into the capital aimed at the illusion of spatial un-changeability. Modernity in Athens exploited the 'sweetness' of the past but also made it present.<sup>319</sup> Because of the Acropolis and its glorious past, Athens became the city of the collective memory of Europe.

Even though Boyer's argument that modern Greece is merely "an invention of the Eurocentric mind"<sup>320</sup> which assumes that the country barely existed before the nineteenth century reduces the country into an ideological product, she nonetheless offers an

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid., p.83.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., p.82.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., p.69.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., p.157.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> This observation runs opposite to Pessoa's definition of the past: "The beauty of ruins? That they are no longer useful. The sweetness of the past? Our memory of it, since to remember it is to make it present, and it isn't the present nor ever can be." See F. Pessoa *The Book of Disquiet*. London: Penguin, 2002, p. 278.

<sup>320</sup> C. Boyer op. cit., 1996, p.151.

interesting account of the 'city of collective memory'. With an emphasis on a visual modernity, she argues that, "addressed to the eye of vision and to the soul of memory, a city's streets, monuments and architectural forms often contain certain grand discourses on history."<sup>321</sup> But this history "has become equated with an overwhelming historicism, a blanket preservation or reconstruction of the styles of the past."<sup>322</sup> It is the built character of the city and its use of past styles that maintains the resemblance between the past and the present. The city's appearance hides a specific motive behind the search for the past styles that will best clothe the present. Boyer argues that, "the image of the past preserved internally within our collective memory [...] keeps alive our native myths, our quest for origins, and offers us assurance that we control our patrimony."<sup>323</sup> Nevertheless, neither 'our' patrimony<sup>324</sup> nor the degree of the modern's control over the past should be taken for granted. The modern never had all the past at its disposal. In remembering only fragments of the past, the modern did not create a secure collective memory. What it did create was an image of collective memory: new Athens. If the modern remembered anything at all, this was its dream of itself as the past. Hence,

The past is not a truth upon which to build, but a truth sought, a re-memorializing over which to struggle. The fragmentary, disputatious, self-reflexive nature of such a past makes a series of 'memories' – even imperfect, imprecise, and charged with personal questions – the appropriate means for rendering the 'history of the present'<sup>325</sup>

As soon as it is confronted with modernity, the past is disfigured. The modern aims at the construction of collective memory as the history of and for its present. Alongside its "potential to create spatial possibilities for memory sites [and] for collective memory,"<sup>326</sup> therefore, the metropolis can also create "spatial possibilities for forgetting, for the destruction of collectivities and their memories."<sup>327</sup> The metropolis as the 'showplace of modernity' can also expose the rather neglected city of *collective forgetting*.<sup>328</sup> The

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>322</sup> B. Fowler op. cit., 2004, p.9.

<sup>323</sup> C. Boyer op. cit., 1996, p.305.

<sup>324</sup> Interestingly enough, the 'we' and 'our' in Boyer assumes a clear Western character.

<sup>325</sup> M. Matsuda *The Memory of the Modern*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. p.15.

<sup>326</sup> D. Frisby "Culture, Modernity and Metropolitan Modernity," in *The Contemporary Study of Culture*. Herausgegeben von Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Verkehr, Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften, Wien: Turia und Kant, 1999, p.102.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid., p.103.

<sup>328</sup> For the overemphasis on memory at the expense of forgetting in the theories on the modern city see *ibid.*, p.113.

metropolis and its monuments may be sites of oblivion – not really monuments but tombs of a dead past and a soon-to-die present.

According to Richard Terdiman, “the nineteenth century became a present – perhaps the first present – whose self-conception was defined by a disciplined obsession with the past.”<sup>329</sup> But for Terdiman, the memory systems that recovered the past in the nineteenth century “functioned as a history which virtually excluded memory.”<sup>330</sup> If the metropolis is defined in terms of such a memory exclusive system, we can argue that modernity is amnesiac and that the metropolis is a monument to the oblivion of the fact that memory is lost. This hypothesis, reminiscent of George Orwell’s definition of the modern world in terms of a ‘systematized oblivion’,<sup>331</sup> points to the forgetful collective memory of Athenian modernity. ‘Memory’ in Athens signalled an indifference towards those elements of social reality that were associated with a past that was deemed as inconvenient for modernity. The difference between Athens and other capital cities is that in representing the origin of their collective memory, the new Athens was the site where the combination of the two arts of memory and of forgetting was perfected. The obvious association between Athens and collective memory must, therefore, be abandoned.

Parallel to an art of memory, one that can be defined as ‘*Ars oblivionalis*’<sup>332</sup> begins with forgetting in terms of ‘error’ or ‘accident’. An art of forgetting, argues Eco, presupposes a mental capacity that consciously erases unwanted memories. Yet, because memories come to people in unsuspected times and because the mere attempt to forget about something functions as a constant reminder of the fact,<sup>333</sup> the issue, for Umberto Eco, is not forgetting, but rather, ‘remembering badly’.<sup>334</sup> Hence, there is no possibility for an art of oblivion as such.<sup>335</sup> But “it is possible to forget on account not of defect but of excess [...]. There are no voluntary devices for forgetting, but there are devices for remembering badly.”<sup>336</sup> Erroneous impressions, therefore, tend to be remembered more often than their correct form.<sup>337</sup> The opposite of memory, for Eco, is a dysfunctional form of itself. Even though they are both close to Eco’s suggestion that forgetting is not the

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<sup>329</sup> R. Terdiman “Deconstructing Memory: On Representing the Past and Theorizing Culture in France Since the Revolution.” *Diacritics*, Vol.15, No.4, Winter 1985, p.14.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>331</sup> See B. Fowler *op. cit.*, 2004, p.8.

<sup>332</sup> See U. Eco “An *Ars Oblivionalis*? Forget it!” *PMLA*, Vol.103, No.3, May 1988, pp.254-261.

<sup>333</sup> This paradox is also explored in R. Terdiman “The Mnemonics of Musset’s Confession.” *Representations*, Vol.26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter Memory. Spring 1989, pp.26-48.

<sup>334</sup> U. Eco *op. cit.*, 1988, p.259.

<sup>335</sup> For the opposite argument in the context of erasing the memories of one’s past selves see K. Elkins “Middling Memories and Dreams of Oblivion: Configurations for a Non-Archival Memory in Baudelaire and Proust.” *Discourse*, Vol.24, No.3, Fall 2002, pp.47-66.

<sup>336</sup> U. Eco *op. cit.*, 1988, p.259.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*

opposite of memory, Tzvetan Todorov and Paul Ricoeur are, nonetheless, more concerned with the social implications of a 'bad memory'.

In his *Hope and Memory*,<sup>338</sup> Todorov defines twentieth-century history in terms of a "long march to oblivion,"<sup>339</sup> the purpose of which was to identify Hitler and Stalin and the concentration camps of Nazi Germany and the former USSR with pure evil thereby forgetting about the social factors that allowed for the emergence and maintenance of such historical figures and phenomena. Despite this, however, Todorov maintains that, far from being its opposite, memory is itself actually "a practical forgetting [...] that is indispensable to making sense of the past."<sup>340</sup> For Todorov, a constructive forgetting that is, nonetheless, accompanied by a considerable degree of remembering, saves us from repeating horrible events. Such a 'positive meaning'<sup>341</sup> of forgetting is also explored by Ricoeur, "insofar as having been prevails over being-no-longer in the meaning attached to the idea of the past. Having been makes forgetting the immemorial resource offered to the work of remembering."<sup>342</sup> Ricoeur supports a forgetting that is related to the understanding of and reconciliation with the death of the past.<sup>343</sup> This forgetting implies a transposable knowledge through understanding of the past and is not the enemy of memory or of history.<sup>344</sup> In contrast to such an affirmative definition of oblivion, however, Ricoeur discusses a 'dangerous' memory one that creates 'official history' and is characteristic of tyrannical governments.<sup>345</sup> In contrast to the unofficial memory of witnesses, official memory implies a forced forgetting and an abused memory that hide history's potential ideological undertones. The more the collective memory becomes official, the more history becomes manipulated.

Himself suspicious of the relation between memory and history, Nora argues that it is, by definition, characterized by a 'fundamental opposition'.<sup>346</sup> This, he argues, is a conflict which results from the fact that, in being 'perpetually suspicious'<sup>347</sup> of it, history's "true mission is to suppress and destroy"<sup>348</sup> memory. For Nora, therefore, the primary aim of this destructive process is the construction of a historical memory that pretends the natural character of the nation which undermines the breaking up of collective memory.

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<sup>338</sup> See T. Todorov *Hope and Memory*. D. Bellos tr., London: Atlantic Books, 2003.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, p.127.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.127-128.

<sup>341</sup> See P. Ricoeur *Memory, History, Forgetting*. K. Blamney and D. Pellauer trs., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004, p.443.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>343</sup> The death of the past is essential in this context. Ricoeur's analysis of a positive forgetting is centred on the question: "Does history know an old age that does not lead to death?" See *ibid.*, p.158.

<sup>344</sup> See *ibid.*, p.284.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, p.448.

<sup>346</sup> See P. Nora "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire." M. Roudebush tr., *Representations*, No.26, Special issue: Memory and Counter Memory, Spring 1989, pp.8-9.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*

Assisted, amongst others, by the establishment of 'imposed' – that is official – symbols<sup>349</sup> and by traditions that were designed in order to epitomize the nation's selected collective representations<sup>350</sup> history manipulates an interplay between memory and forgetting and ultimately searches for an identity for the present. Hence, with Nora, "we seek not our origins but a way of figuring out what we are from what we are no longer."<sup>351</sup> Yet, contrary to Nora's hypothesis and the French example, Athens teaches us how modernity tried to define itself in terms of the origin that was no longer.

## X

Athens has not known a positive forgetting, perhaps because the founders of the capital preferred the unrealistic image they had created through reading to the reality that the city was. Maybe they remembered the error and not the truth. But this was not the case. The rebuilding of an entire city meant a, possibly unsuccessful, destruction of its history. Forgetting says Nietzsche, makes the world appear moral<sup>352</sup> and the "advantage of a bad memory is that one can enjoy the same thing several times."<sup>353</sup> The creation of modern Athens aimed at erasing the history of the fall of Periclean democracy, and the 'barbarous' conquerors of the city and the Continent, thereby making Europe *appear* more moral. After all, some of its 'barbarian' 'guests' were Europeans. As far as the joy of a sporadic amnesia was concerned, the European – including the few Greeks – fathers of modern Athens discovered a manic joy in the belief that they could actually make history of their fantasies. That meant, that they tried to force the Athenians to forget more than twenty centuries of their history. True history was distorted into an identification of 'non-identical' things and created the perfect example for Nietzsche's 'monumental history' where, "the past itself is *damaged*: entire large parts of it are forgotten, scorned, and washed away as is by a grey, unremitting tide."<sup>354</sup> Characteristic of Athenian modernity, this destructive history took form in the buildings that proudly carried the title of monuments – first the Parthenon and then the Palace and the Athenian Trilogy that largely defined the plans and layout of the capital. Both the collective memory and the collective forgetting of European metropolitan modernity are encapsulated in modern Athenian monuments. But Europe never accepted a new Athens.

<sup>349</sup> See P. Nora in P. Nora et. al., *Realms of Memory Vol. III: Symbols*. L.D. Kritzam English ed., A. Goldhammer tr., New York, Columbia University Press, 1998, p.x.

<sup>350</sup> One such tradition is expressed by the cathedral which, according to Rodin, is for France what the Parthenon is for Greece. See P. Nora et. al. *Realms of Memory Vol. II: Traditions*. A. Goldhammer tr., New York, Columbia University Press, 1997, Chapter 2, pp.64-65.

<sup>351</sup> P. Nora in P. Nora et. al., *Realms of Memory Vol.I: Conflicts and Divisions*. A. Goldhammer tr., New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, p.13.

<sup>352</sup> See F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.49.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, p.188.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, p.100.

In forcing it to look like the ancient polis, the fathers of Athens and Europe alike pretended to forget that the capital was their contemporary. A significant part of the planning and building of Athens had to be devoted to the construction of the illusion that the city was the natural product of time. But as Aldo Rossi suggests, if a city desires to be "the *locus* of the collective memory"<sup>355</sup> of its citizens, then its built structures must faithfully narrate the city's history. Hence, "the architectural form of the city is exemplified in its various forms, each of which has its own individuality. They are like dates: first one and then the other; without them we could not understand the passage of time."<sup>356</sup> The monuments of Athens defied the natural passage of time and told the story that Europe preferred: an unmediated relationship from the fifth century BC to the nineteenth century. Rossi's Athens is the first among the cities of 'collective imagination': "Athens, Rome, Constantinople and Paris represent ideas of the city that extend beyond their physical form, beyond their permanence."<sup>357</sup> From all these cities, Athens surpasses even its greatest rival – Rome – and emerges as the one with the strongest collective importance. This, for Rossi, is due to its being the origin of all others:

Thus the memory of the city ultimately makes its way back to Greece [...]. Any Western city that we analyse has its origins in Greece; if Rome is responsible for supplying the general principles of urbanism and thus for the cities that were constructed according to rational schemes throughout the Roman world, it is Greece where the fundamentals of the constitution of the city lie, as well as of a type of urban beauty, of an architecture of the city; and this origin has become a constant of our experience of the city.<sup>358</sup>

Rossi suggests that whereas Rome provided the body, Athens offered the soul and the idea of the city. In turn, this soul also created the prototype for 'urban beauty' and itself ultimately became the canonical paradigm for the experience of the actualization of the idea of the city. Yet, Rossi's Athens is *not* the modern capital. He concludes, for instance, that, "whereas Rome in the course of its Republican and Imperial history reveals all of the contrasts and contradictions of the modern city, perhaps with a dramatic character that few modern cities know, Athens remains the purest experience of humanity, the embodiment of

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<sup>355</sup> A. Rossi *The Architecture and the City*. D. Ghirardo and J. Ockman trs., Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992, p.130.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, p.127.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, p.128.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, p.134.

conditions that can never recur.”<sup>359</sup> It is Rome, for Rossi, and not Athens that reveals modernity. For him, modern Athens does *not* exist. But, contrary to Rossi’s hypothesis, it is precisely the forgetting of the new Athens that ultimately constitutes it as the perfect ‘showplace of modernity’.

According to Halbwachs, the ‘only moment’ when people are “no longer capable of the art of memory,”<sup>360</sup> is when they dream.<sup>361</sup> Since sleeping dreams, argues Halbwachs distance us from others, “what we lack in the dream state for the art of remembering is the support of society.”<sup>362</sup> Yet, Athens exemplifies the opposite of this observation. What is hidden behind modernity’s interplay between remembering and forgetting is another dynamic between dream and myth. The search for Athens as the authentic origin of European metropolitan modernity – itself the supposed exemplar of Western civilization – put the continent into a waking dream. This was a dream concerning the revitalization of the city that was once upon a time protected and named by Athena. In reality, neither memory, nor forgetting is the companion of modern history. Rather, “Myth is history’s *alter ego*, accompanying it like a shadow whenever it goes: indeed, paradoxically, myth is the best measure of history’s own success.”<sup>363</sup> The creation of modern Athens describes a dreaming Europe and the return of myth. The planning and building of Athens may partly explain why Athens was never forgiven for being modern. On the other hand, they can account for the fact that, since the ingredients for a new Athens were modern, the city could not but become the absolute epitome of modernity. In introducing modern Athens, we begin with that with which Athens – whilst fearing it and adoring it eternally – is always synonymous: the Acropolis. With an emphasis on modern Athens itself as the ultimate bridge between the new and the old,<sup>364</sup> we abandon the urban narratives of particularly modern cities, such as Paris or London, and go in search of the polis whose classical period was to be modernity’s favourite antiquity. Hence, a visit to the city that built the Parthenon, once upon a time.

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<sup>359</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>360</sup> M. Halbwachs *op. cit.*, 1992, p.169.

<sup>361</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>363</sup> F.R. Ankersmit “The Sublime Dissociation of the Past: Or How to Be(come) What One Is No Longer.” *History and Theory*, Vol.40, No.3, October 2001, p.321.

<sup>364</sup> For the metropolis-as-bridge see F. Dal Co *op. cit.*, 1990, p.64.

### Chapter 3: *The Ruin or the Past Constructed*

"All these old things have a moral value."<sup>365</sup>

"On my [childhood] bedroom wall was a photograph of history's most celebrated *déjà vu*, etched on the retina of every civilized eye: the Acropolis."<sup>366</sup>

#### I

The modern antiquity whose ideological construction we have already explored took shape in a new, nineteenth-century Athens. After the liberation of Greece, the search for the re-enchantment of the world was focused on Athens and its Acropolis – or, rather, on the Acropolis and its Athens. Modern antiquity constructs a dubious genealogy – from the dead to the living – that is inherently hostile to both. Whereas those who live assemble memoirs of what has been and of what is dead, modern antiquity weaves a web of forgetting. In exposing the illusory character of the modern, therefore, the history of new Athens begins in 1834 amidst applause and exclamations – the lament would accompany the celebration as an echo whose sobbing could be heard from the Acropolis down to the city.<sup>367</sup> Athens became the capital because of its glorious ruins.

In his search for the definition of the historical circumstances that preceded the Louis Bonaparte *coup d'état* in 1851, Karl Marx<sup>368</sup> begins by suggesting that, "Hegel remarks [...] that all great, world-historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He has forgotten to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce."<sup>369</sup> Like Simmel and Benjamin, who have so far assisted us in discussing modern antiquity as a mask that distorts the dialectic between the history of the past and that of the present, Marx maintains that the second time history occurs, it returns as a 'farce'. But unlike Simmel and Benjamin who did not define their circumstances based on the past, Marx's "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" may explain how the past can be open in the present. Is the present, for Marx, bound to mimic the present? In other words, is the return of the past as 'farce' unavoidable and if not, when is it possible to occur? According to Marx:

<sup>365</sup> C. Baudelaire cited in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.203.

<sup>366</sup> W.W. Davenport *Athens*. Amsterdam: Time-Life Books, 1978, p.5.

<sup>367</sup> According to local Athenian legends, the Caryatides are still crying for the loss of their sister – abducted by Lord Elgin – and their lament is heard in the city. Even Ludwig I of Bavaria would write "for you, every sensitive heart cries... for you there is no return." See D.G. Kambouroglou *Ai Palatai Athenai*. Athens 1922, p.82 and Z. Papadoniou *Othon*. [Otto] Athens: Estia, pp.93-94.

<sup>368</sup> K. Marx op. cit., 1972, pp.436-525.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, p.436.

[Human beings] make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language.<sup>370</sup>

The past, for Marx, is an imaginary that is recalled by those in power, Louis Bonaparte in this case, in order to legitimate their authority. Nevertheless, in relating the birth of a new France with his own material interests,<sup>371</sup> Louis Bonaparte fell into two traps. First, he exploited and was largely assisted by the name and political techniques of his uncle, the self-proclaimed Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte I.<sup>372</sup> Second, like his uncle before him, he appropriated the Romans' methods for seizing power.<sup>373</sup> To return to Marx's original observation, unlike the usually tragic power struggles within the Roman Empire, such as Julius Caesar's death by Brutus' hand, Louis Bonaparte's seizure of power was a travesty of history. Indeed the choice of Brutus as the hero of the French lumpenproletariat whose interests were supposed to be protected by Louis Bonaparte, does not necessarily mean that the people were conscious of the fact that the Roman proletariat was not the same group as the impoverished, and numerically greater, French proletariat of the nineteenth century. Despite 'farce', the people, for Marx may have been 'unaware of the passage of time'. Even though they may have defined their 'new' in terms of some 'time-honoured' dead, the French, perhaps blinded by the 'radically new', could "no longer comprehend that ghosts from the day of Rome had watched over [the] cradle"<sup>374</sup> of their revolutions. At the same time, since people may not understand that they are haunted by the dead, they do not actually desire to ridicule these dead. Rather, as far as French revolutions, at least, are concerned,

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 1972, p.437.

<sup>371</sup> See *ibid.*, especially pp.493-525.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.* See for example Marx's analysis of the conservative fraction of the peasantry.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.* Note also that many of the political techniques, which Louis Napoleon adopted from the Romans, for instance an increased bureaucracy and the manipulation of different classes, were later also exploited by the Nazis.

<sup>374</sup> K. Marx *op. cit.*, 1972, p.437.

The awakening of the dead in those revolutions [...] served the purpose of glorifying the new struggles, not of parodying the old; of magnifying the given tasks in imagination, not of taking flight from their solutions in reality; of finding once more the spirit of revolution, not of making its ghost walk again.<sup>375</sup>

History becomes farce in a two-fold way. First, although unaware of the fact, the people exploit the dead. Second, in doing so, they might unconsciously ridicule the same past which they have appropriated in order to help them glorify their own struggle. Can we assume that the travesty of past history is unavoidable after all? Shortly before the end of his text, Marx suggests that "if ever an event has, well in advance of its coming, cast its shadow before, it was Bonaparte's *coup d'état*".<sup>376</sup> As long as people do not realize, as in the case with Bonaparte's *coup d'état*, that they are appropriating the old in a way that is not commensurate with their modern, history is bound to return as farce. The more new the modern of a generation pretends to be, the more it tends to hide its antiquity whilst exploiting the fragment of the past, which appears 'appropriate' at the time. Can Marx's analysis of Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'état* help us understand the dynamics of modern antiquity in modern Athens?

Almost two decades before the French attempted to build a new Republic, a group of people with a well-founded background on classical history and art dreamt of building an Athens that would remind them of what they had read in books. These people built Athens as the capital of a new Greece. Even though a large part of their plans for modern Athens remained a mere vision or was later destroyed by others, another, smaller and yet very important part of what they had dreamt as new Athens was fully realized. What we need to understand, however, is what their intentions were and if what happened in the end was what they had anticipated. Like the French trying to create the 'new' Republic in 1848, the story of Athenian monuments is a tale of 'good intentions', hopes, and the use of a 'heroic' past at the disposal of a 'glorious' present. But it is also a story of 'anticipated' and 'unanticipated consequences'.<sup>377</sup> What is particularly important in the context of modern antiquity, is that, having exploited the 'past' in order to venerate the 'new', the living forgot – or indeed pretended to forget – that their 'new' was not revolutionary. Is this a conscious history of the living founded on the 'heroism' of their dead? In exploring how far modern Athens was itself based on circumstances 'given' from the dead of the

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<sup>375</sup> Ibid., p.438.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., p.505.

<sup>377</sup> The concept should be understood in the context of Merton's analysis of 'unanticipated consequences'. See R.K. Merton *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York: The Free Press, 1968.

past, the first question to be asked is what part of the past modern antiquity remembered. In other words, how did the memory of classical Athens survive the passage of the twenty-two centuries that stand between Pericles and King Otto?

## II

Even though parts of Greece were liberated as early as 1827,<sup>378</sup> Athens – having enjoyed a brief period of freedom (1826-1827) during the Greeks' reclaiming of the city<sup>379</sup> – was not liberated until three years later, in 1830. Nevertheless, and expressing a rather general agreement on the subject, Ioannis Travlos suggests that the 'real' freedom of Athens was secured only in 31 March 1833, when the Ottoman garrison left from the Acropolis.<sup>380</sup> Is this to say that the capital was synonymous with the Acropolis? Having finally established Nafplion as the provisional capital of Greece, the search for a permanent capital proved to be a farce. Argos, Korinthos, Megara, Nafplion, and Syros were all nominated and indeed some, such as Aigina, Syros, and Nafplion had proven themselves able to accept the challenge; introduced as a seventh candidate, Athens would overshadow them all. Though it appears that Stamatiou Kleanthes and Edward Schaubert,<sup>381</sup> students of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and the architects of the first plans of Athens, were the first to suggest that Athens should become the capital, Konstandinos Bires<sup>382</sup> and Alexander Papageorgiou-Venetas<sup>383</sup> emphasize the fact that it was actually a third, far more powerful individual that should be introduced as the single most important influence on the choice of Athens as the seat of the government.<sup>384</sup> Indeed, in maintaining that the decision to move the capital from Nafplion to Athens was not taken in Greece, but rather in Munich, the historian Emanuel Turczynski<sup>385</sup> also explains that the royal Decree on the same subject was a mere formality.<sup>386</sup> Ludwig I of Bavaria was undoubtedly the most powerful agent

<sup>378</sup> R. Clogg *A Concise History of Greece*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.43.

<sup>379</sup> See I. Vlahoyiannis ed., *Athenaikou Arheion*. Vol.1. [Athenian Archive] Athens, 1901, especially the journals of P.M. Poulou and N. Karori.

<sup>380</sup> I. Travlos *I Poleodomike Ekseliksisi ton Athenon*. [The Urban-Planning Development of Athens] Athens: KAPON, 1993, p.235. For a Bavarian's description of the liberation of the Acropolis see C. Neezer *Anamneseis*. [Memoirs] Athens, 1963.

<sup>381</sup> K.H. Bires *Ta Protota Shedia ton Athenon*. [The First Plans of Athens] Athens: 1933, p.6.

<sup>382</sup> K.H. Bires *Athina – Apo ton 19o ston 20o Aiona*. [Athens – From the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century] Athens: Melissa, 1999.

<sup>383</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Athina – Ena Orama tou Neoklassikismou*. [Athens – A Vision of Neoclassicism] Athens: KAPON, 2001.

<sup>384</sup> For the choice of Athens as the capital see also K.H. Bires *Athenaikai Meletai*. [Athenian Studies] Vol.2, Athens, 1939, pp.18-20, D.A. Gerondas "I Athena Protevousa." [Athens as the Capital] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 81, June 1985, pp.19-27, K. Kairofyllas "Athenaika Semeiomata – Pos ai Athenai Eginan Protevousa." [Athenian Notes – How Athens Became the Capital] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 3, March-April 1956, pp.9-22, and J.D. Faubion *Modern Greek Lessons*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, esp. Part I, pp.21-98.

<sup>385</sup> E. Turczynski ["I Symbole tis Vavarias stin Apeleftherose ton Ellenon kai I Epanidryse tou Ellenikou Kratous." [The Contribution of Bavaria in the Liberation of the Greeks and in the Rebuilding of the Greek State] in *Athina-Monaho*. [Athens-Munich] Exhibition Catalogue, Athens: National Pinakoteque – Alexandros Soutzos Museum, National – Historic Museum and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, 2000, pp.39-51.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, p.45.

determining the resolution of the debate over the capital. On the one hand, it was Ludwig's admiration for 'classical antiquity' and his "emotional bond with the cultural heritage" of the city that ultimately decided for Athens.<sup>387</sup> Ludwig I, the 'new Pericles'<sup>388</sup> who was profoundly influenced by Winckelmann,<sup>389</sup> was so interested in antiquity that he once requested the transfer of 'one or even better two' Caryatides to Munich.<sup>390</sup> On the other hand, however, Papageorgiou-Venetas points to Ludwig's *personal interests* and to the fact that "behind the last foundation of a capital of classicism in Europe, hid cultural sensibilities and an ideologically overcharged archaioomania."<sup>391</sup> Hence, even though Leo von Klenze, Ludwig's favourite architect at the time, would fiercely declare to the Regency,<sup>392</sup> on the thirteenth of September 1834, that by virtue of its name only, "Athens would remain the capital of Greece, even if anyone declared another city as the capital,"<sup>393</sup> he was by that time certain that he was building Athens as the modern capital.

Kleanthes and Schaubert's 'initial plan' was submitted as early as May 1832 but it was only a second formulation of the plan, which was actually approved on the eleventh of July 1833,<sup>394</sup> following the royal decree concerning the re-building of Athens and the transfer of the government from Nafplion to Athens.<sup>395</sup> The plan was re-confirmed on the nineteenth of October 1833.<sup>396</sup> Even though the proposal to move the capital to Athens was appealing to the Regency from the outset, it was neither without competition nor without meeting considerable opposition. Johann Gottrieb Guttenshon, for example, architect to the court, wrote two letters to Otto, one on the fourteenth of April 1833 and the other on the twelfth of May of the same year, proposing that the capital move to Piraeus and not to Athens.<sup>397</sup> In discussing cities such as Florence, Marseilles, and Palermo, Guttenshon suggested that, since it was closer to the sea than Athens, Piraeus would be a less expensive, and a more strategically secure choice than Athens.<sup>398</sup> At the same time, he maintained that Otto should not overlook the fact that although many who were supporting

<sup>387</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.23.

<sup>388</sup> See R. Wünsche "Kalytera Politis tis Ellados para Diadohos tou 'Thronou' – O Vasilias Loudovikos o 'A' kai I Ellada." ['Better a Citizen of Greece than the Heir to the Throne' – King Ludwig I and Greece] in *Athena-Monaha*. op. cit., 2000, pp.155-159.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> Ludwig I cited in *ibid.*, 153. Note also that his request was to remove the statuettes as long as it did not cause any damage to the building. Yet, however 'sensitive', this also shows how ignorant he really was concerning the architecture of the Acropolis' monuments.

<sup>391</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas, op. cit., 2001, p.23. 'Archaioomania', the mania upon antiquity is contrasted in this context with 'Archaeolatry', the love for antiquity.

<sup>392</sup> The Regency consisted of Count Armanseperg, Georg Mauer, and General Heideck. Heideck had fought as a Philhellene. See C.M. Woodhouse *Modern Greece*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986, p.157.

<sup>393</sup> L. Klenze cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.196.

<sup>394</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>395</sup> *ibid.*, p.94.

<sup>396</sup> *ibid.*, p.45.

<sup>397</sup> For a full text of the letters see *ibid.*, pp.344-346 and pp.346-347 respectively.

<sup>398</sup> *ibid.*, p.344.

Athens as the capital were surely driven by an authentic and yet 'false weakness' for the city, those who were driven by speculative material interests were in a clear majority.<sup>399</sup> Moreover, in proposing the foundation of a "new independent monument which [would] honour the German sovereignty and which [would] be named after its royal founder: Othonopolis [!],"<sup>400</sup> Guttenshon divided those who favoured Athens in three 'colours'. First, those "whose true motive is a genuine love for the city,"<sup>401</sup> second, those "who pretend to prefer the city and concur in order to show good behaviour and to be liked,"<sup>402</sup> and finally, "the multitudinous and enterprising group of speculators."<sup>403</sup> Nevertheless, Guttenshon's letters to Otto did not in any way reflect any kind of 'disrespect' for Athens. On the contrary, he maintained that founding and re-building Athens as the capital, would, as in the case of that other 'old' city Rome, point to a constant contrast between the old and the new whereby the latter would always appear inferior.<sup>404</sup> Hence, even though Guttenshon rejected the 'deceptive spirit of [his] age' which some 'fanatical scholars' would misunderstand as either attempting to recreate or simply to 'stare amazingly upon' the monuments of antiquity, he insisted that, "the name and the *great memory of Athens* deserve, of course, every respect."<sup>405</sup> Yet, despite the possible validity of Guttenshon's arguments, on the twenty-second of December 1833, Otto decreed that Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan was to be implemented.<sup>406</sup> Soon after that, on the thirtieth of September 1834, the Regency renewed the decision to move the capital to Athens,<sup>407</sup> and re-approved Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan. Even though the plans for Athens belong to a later part of our exploration of Athenian modernity, it suffices to say, for now, that Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan actually included a Royal Palace. In other words, Otto's administration had approved the re-building of Athens as the capital *before* it finally renewed the decree for the transfer of the capital.

Whilst the plan of the two young architects<sup>408</sup> had already started to define the city, on the twenty-third of June 1834 it was suddenly suspended.<sup>409</sup> Shortly after that, and having succeeded in his diplomatic task,<sup>410</sup> Klenze arrived in Athens on the fourteenth of

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, p.346.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, p.347, my emphasis.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.348-350.

<sup>407</sup> Government Gazette, No.36, 10 October 1834 Royal Decree "Peri tis Metatheseos tis Kathedras stin Athena." [On the Transfer of the Capital to Athens] especially Article 1.

<sup>408</sup> In 1833 Kleanthes was 31 years old whilst Schaubert was 29. See Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.53-56.

<sup>409</sup> K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 34.

<sup>410</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas reveals that, prior to his visit to Athens, Klenze was sent by Ludwig, to Nafplion, in order to resolve hostilities among members of the Regency. See Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001.

August 1834 for what was to be a very productive month.<sup>411</sup> It is in Klenze's visit to Athens that Ludwig's interference as well as his motivation for choosing Athens as the capital raises reasonable suspicions. On the fourth of June 1834, only two months before Klenze went to Athens, Ludwig I wrote a letter to the Regency in order to stop the implementation of Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan, which he had himself approved earlier.<sup>412</sup> In rejecting the plan completely and in using the excuse that he had not previously understood its full meaning, Ludwig I explodes in a rather arrogant outburst:

It is not possible to remain indifferent to such a significant subject as the foundation of the new capital in the land of ancient Athens, especially since the interest of my Son and my Dynasty are indissolubly allied together with the universal interest for an artistic creation in the motherland of art and of everything that is beautiful.<sup>413</sup>

Ludwig assumes some responsibility for the rebuilding of Athens on the foundations of ancient Athens, indeed exclusively on the 'foundations' of Periclean Athens. On the other hand, such 'artistic creation', which appears to be some grand issue of 'universal interest', cannot and should not be separated from Ludwig's own interests. Nevertheless, such evidence, revealed much later, cannot overshadow the fact that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century some Greeks admired Ludwig's 'love' of Greece. A true romantic and enchanted by the 'romantic dynasty',<sup>414</sup> Zaharias Papadoniou writes of Ludwig I:

He was our [the Greeks'] passionate friend. It is true that he saw us through the ancients. But the people who love with the love of the art-lover or the fervent reader have fiery passions. And Ludwig's philhellenism was a very hot wind. This is the kind of friends Hellas needed then.<sup>415</sup>

Driven by an unmistakable disappointment with the present in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Papadoniou highlights Bavarian archaïomania and romanticism as the two factors to which Greeks 'owe' the fact that Athens was chosen as the capital,<sup>416</sup> and suggests that the Bavarians and Kleanthes, "understood the capital as presenting a

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<sup>411</sup> Ibid., p.148.

<sup>412</sup> For a full copy of Ludwig's letter to the Regency see *ibid.*, pp 350-351.

<sup>413</sup> *ibid.*, p.350.

<sup>414</sup> Z. Papadoniou *op. cit.*, *Othon*. For Papadoniou, the 'romantic dynasty' refers to Ludwig I, Otto and Ludwig II.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, p.155. Note that, in this context, Papadoniou discusses 'archaïomania' as positive.

perpetual vision of history, [as] a city which does not see and does not hear a commercial harbour, a city capable of being isolated in ancient art, in blissful mountains, in the sculptures erected by nature."<sup>417</sup> How far does Papadoniou's suggestion relate to modern antiquity as the gaze as well as the destructive force upon history? History for Papadoniou, who rejects the present, implies a strictly *aesthetic value-judgement*. Indeed, in exploring the treasures of the old Munich Picture-Gallery, he maintains that, "it is not enough for a nation to collect; it must also know how to *choose*. The Bavarians proved impeccable in both."<sup>418</sup> Was part of Klenze's mission to choose the 'beautiful' in Athens?

### III

Klenze left Athens – without ever going back – on the fifteenth of September 1834,<sup>419</sup> only four months before the official arrival of Otto and the government in Athens, on the first of December 1834.<sup>420</sup> Following the assassination of Ioannis Kappodistrias, the Governor of Greece, on the ninth of October 1831 while Nafplion was still the provisional capital,<sup>421</sup> the monarchy was not installed until a year later.<sup>422</sup> In electing Otto of Wittelsbach as the King of Greece in 1832<sup>423</sup> and having finally decided the plan of the capital in 1834, the single most important issue to be solved was the actual location of the Royal Palace. Although this matter would not be solved until much later, and even though the solution proposed reveals potential problems in the relationship between Ludwig I and Klenze,<sup>424</sup> the first proposal for the palace remains the most ambitious. Whilst Kleantes and Schaubert's plan located the palace in Othon Square – what is now Omonoia square in the centre of Athens – in 1834, their teacher, Karl Friedrich Schinkel designed a plan for a 'Royal Palace on the Acropolis',<sup>425</sup> [Fig. II]

This plan was strongly supported by Otto's brother Maximilian,<sup>426</sup> and by his cousin, the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm IV.<sup>427</sup> Schinkel's plan verifies the hypothesis that the choice of Athens as the capital was a transnational matter. Friedrich

<sup>417</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140, my emphasis.

<sup>419</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, p.148.

<sup>420</sup> K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.43.

<sup>421</sup> See R. Clogg *op. cit.*, 1999, p.44 and J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis *Greece – The Modern Sequel*. London: C. Hurst&Co, 2004, p.364.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>423</sup> Clogg emphasizes the fact that the Treaty of May 1832 was *not* signed by Greece. See R. Clogg *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 47.

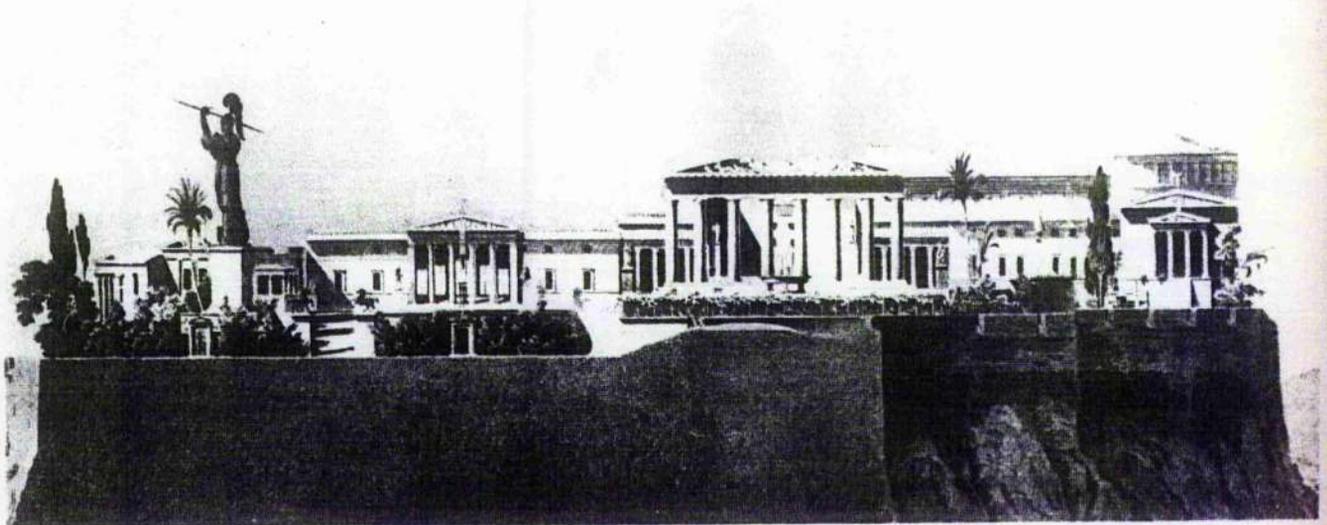
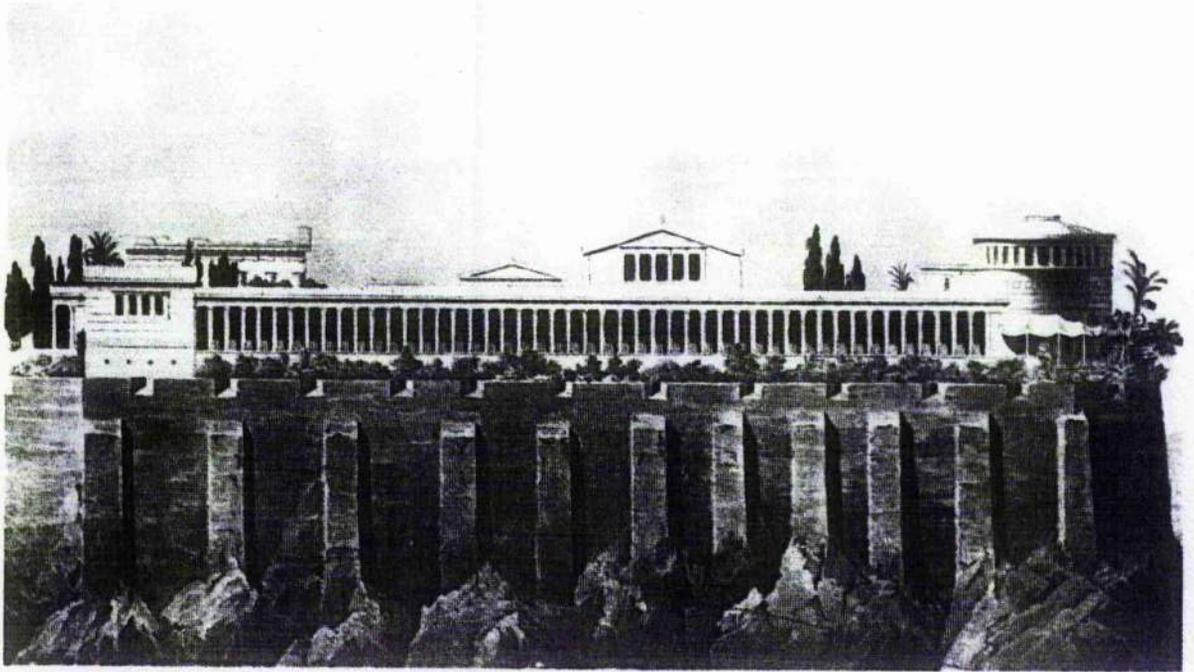
<sup>424</sup> Ludwig I finally rejected Klenze's proposal for the palace. See Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001.

<sup>425</sup> K.H. Bires *op. cit.* 1999, p.24, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.32-34, and M. Steffens *Schinkel*. London: Taschen, 2003, pp.78-81. R. Carter also supports the argument concerning the collaboration between Schinkel, Maximilian and Friedrich Wilhelm. See R. Carter "Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Project for a Royal Palace on the Acropolis." *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.38, No.1, March 1979, pp.34-46.

<sup>426</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, p.42. Papageorgiou-Venetas suggests that it was Maximilian who invited Schinkel to design the plan. See *ibid.*

<sup>427</sup> K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.24. In disagreement with Papageorgiou-Venetas, Steffens argues that Schinkel's plan satisfied an invitation by the Prussian Crown Prince. See M. Steffens *op. cit.*, 2003, p.79.

II. K.F. Schinkel's Proposal for the Palace on the Acropolis



Wilhelm IV was entertaining the idea of a new palace on the Acropolis as early as 1829.<sup>428</sup> Four years later, in 1833, the Prussian Crown Prince met Klenze and told him that he had already asked Schinkel to design the plan for Otto's residence on the Acropolis.<sup>429</sup> Finally, one year later, on the ninth of June 1834, Friedrich Wilhelm IV sent the plan to Maximilian.<sup>430</sup> Yet, despite the support of his powerful friends, Schinkel's plan faced two serious obstacles. First, building the palace on the Acropolis was a very expensive project. Although Otto liked the idea, he finally maintained that such a construction required both the artists and the means available to Pericles – but he had neither.<sup>431</sup> Second, Schinkel was confronted with Ludwig's persistent interference in the building of new Athens.<sup>432</sup> Indeed, Ludwig I declared that, "no new constructions are allowed on the Acropolis. The sacred monuments of antiquity cannot, in any way, be allowed to be interspersed with new buildings."<sup>433</sup> It was Ludwig I, therefore, who, perhaps with just cause, did not allow any new buildings on the Acropolis, thereby rejecting Schinkel's plan of a palace among the 'sacred monuments'.<sup>434</sup> Hence, even though some, like George Pouloupoulos suggest that it was the Athenians' protests that halted the plan,<sup>435</sup> and although the cost was undoubtedly excessive, it was Ludwig's self interested perception of antiquity that condemned the plan to a mere vision.<sup>436</sup> In the end, having given serious consideration to Schinkel's plan Otto, influenced by his father,<sup>437</sup> "rejected the brave dream with a sob."<sup>438</sup> To return to Schinkel, what remains interesting is the reason why he should conceive of such an idea. Schinkel, who never visited Athens, had had no serious interest in ancient Athenian – or ancient Greek in general – art until he met Wilhelm von Humboldt. From 1815 onwards, Humboldt was a steady influence on the young artist, thereby increasingly guiding him

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<sup>428</sup> Adrian von Butlar "Klenze Enandion Schinkel: Shedia gia to Palati ton Athenon." [Klenze versus Schinkel: Plans for the Palace of Athens] in *Athena-Monaho*. op. cit., 2000, p.161.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid. Note here that Schinkel was already the Prussian Crown Prince's favourite architect. See, for example I.B. Whyte "Charlottenhoff: The Prince, the Gardener, the Architect and the Writer." *Architectural History*, Vol.43, 2000, pp.1-23.

<sup>430</sup> A. Butler in *Athena-Monaho*. op. cit., p.161.

<sup>431</sup> M. Steffens op. cit., 2003, p.80.

<sup>432</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.24 and A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.42.

<sup>433</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.24.

<sup>434</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas also discusses A.F. von Quast's proposal for a city closer to the rock. For the similarities between Schinkel and von Quast's proposals see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, pp.32-34 and pp.113-146.

<sup>435</sup> See G. Pouloupoulos "Pos Sothike i Akropolis kai den Htistike ekei to Palati tou Othona." [How the Acropolis was Saved and Otto's Palace was not built on the Site] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 39, Easter 1968, pp.24-25.

<sup>436</sup> Discussing Ludwig's interests, Klenze, in his secret notes, writes that Ludwig I often refer to Greece as his 'Botany Bay' where he would send all those he could not use in Munich. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, pp.32-34 and pp.113-146.

<sup>437</sup> Note that since Otto was not of age at the time he could not make any serious decision by himself.

<sup>438</sup> L. Ross "Anamneseis kai Semeioseis apo tin Ellada." [Memories and Reports from Greece 1832-1833] A. Spiliou tr., Athens: Tolidi Bros, 1976, p.95.

towards 'neoclassicism'.<sup>439</sup> Had he not met Humboldt, Schinkel might have never designed such a plan of the new *in* the old. What did the new palace on the Acropolis mean, however? In contrast to Maximilian's vision of a gigantic statue of Christ in front of the palace that would symbolize Christianity's victory over Islam,<sup>440</sup> Schinkel had drawn a statue of Athena Polias.<sup>441</sup> For Rand Carter, this was the only instance of the project where "Schinkel allowed himself [a] single bit of megalomania."<sup>442</sup> Even though Klenze's own later plan included a statue of the goddess by the palace,<sup>443</sup> his and Schinkel's plans differed in important respects. To return to Schinkel's plan, however, Papageorgiou-Venetas suggests that however unfortunate in its conception, the plan is unique because it proposed a 'dialectical symbiosis' of the neoclassical architecture with the ancient one.<sup>444</sup> In contrast to the 'purism' that prevailed in the planning and building of the 'new' capital,<sup>445</sup> therefore, Schinkel's proposal for a 'dialectic symbiosis' of the new palace with the ancient monuments meant the incorporation of the present *within* the past.

When Schinkel submitted his proposal to Maximilian in 1834, he included a letter in which he explained both the outline and the symbolic significance of his plan.<sup>446</sup> In the letter, Schinkel offered a description of the three 'conditions' that guided his plan: first, "to design a structure in keeping with the extensive nature of the landscape,"<sup>447</sup> second, that "this design should be appropriate to the climate and to the Greek environment,"<sup>448</sup> and finally, "to choose a secure, defensive location for the structure."<sup>449</sup> In asserting from the third condition, Schinkel hurried to explain that the Acropolis was 'the most appropriate location' because of its 'capacity for defence' in case the Greeks decided – as they did later – to rebel against the King.<sup>450</sup> The Acropolis, he continued, "forms a beacon in world

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<sup>439</sup> M. Steffens op. cit., 2003, p.141. For more information on Schinkel's neoclassical turn see also M. Snodin ed., *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. In 1815, when he met Humboldt, Schinkel was only 34 years old, so by the time he designed a plan for Otto's palace on the Acropolis he was 53 and had fully developed his personal style – he died only seven years later. For the relation between Schinkel and Humboldt in the context of the *Altes Museum* as an integral part of the *Bildung* see S. Moyano "Quality vs. History: Schinkel's Altes Museum and Prussian Arts Policy." *The Art Bulletin*. Vol.72, No.4, December 1990, pp.585-608.

<sup>440</sup> A. Butlar in *Athens-Monahs*. op. cit., 2000, p.169.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>442</sup> R. Carter op. cit., 1979, p.37

<sup>443</sup> A. Butlar in *Athens-Monahs*. op. cit., 2000, p.169.

<sup>444</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas "Athena, Protevousa tis Ellados – Ena Orama tou Evropaikou Klassikismou." [Athens, Capital of Greece – A Vision of European Classicism] in Exhibition Catalogue: *Athenaios Klassikismos*. [Athenian Classicism] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Organization, 1996, p.35.

<sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>446</sup> See R. Carter op. cit., 1979, p.36. For a copy of the letter in German see *ibid.*, fn.11, pp.39-39. The English extracts that we provide here were translated by Prof. D. Frisby.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>449</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*

history,"<sup>451</sup> is "dear to our whole species,"<sup>452</sup> and, therefore, "deserves revitalization for the history of succeeding time."<sup>453</sup> Hence, in order for 'succeeding times' to reclaim the classical Acropolis, Schinkel maintained that "no part of the palace layout exceed the height of the ruins of the Parthenon that as long as they look down dominantly, and those parts which have the same height lie sufficiently distant from it."<sup>454</sup> What is the proposed relationship between the new and the old in Schinkel's plan? In excusing himself for 'daring' to suggest the 'colossal' statue of the goddess, Schinkel explained that he "wished to evoke once again, and in doing so to offer for everyone, the profound reverence attached to it to such a high degree in its sublime ancient times."<sup>455</sup> If the Periclean Acropolis had Phidias' Athena, then the modern Othonean palace had to have its own statue of the goddess. In doing so, Schinkel would promote the assumption that the original statue was perhaps never lost and that the antiquity that had created it had never died. It would, therefore, seem as if this antiquity was still alive with Otto as the ruler of the city. But we should not hurry to assume that Schinkel was proud of his modernity. Schinkel did not merely desire to build the palace on the Acropolis. What he was aiming at was the building of the palace itself *as* the Acropolis. He wrote to Maximilian, for example, that,

The whole palace, in appropriate proportions and its diverse architectural parts, interposed with a variety of accessible courtyards and laid out gardens, is more in keeping with respect to its artistic affiliation with the original ancient construction and the irregular forms of the ancient acropolis than if it emerged in modern pretentious contrast to it.<sup>456</sup>

Schinkel did not embrace a modern that pretended to have surpassed the ancient. His vision of the identification of the new with the old betrays an anxiety that only the beauty of the past could heal. Above all, his proposal was an example of "how a classical principle in architecture is not to mask a construction but rather to allow it to emerge as itself beautifully formed in its naked reality as the sole element of architecture."<sup>457</sup> In Schinkel's plan, the past and the present became one being and new Athens emerged as the ancient eternal polis. Close to his choice to build the palace on the Acropolis, where the Greeks

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<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid. With the exception of the statue of Athena, only a few elements of the structure, for example the rotunda that would house the Queen's apartments, would exceed the height of the Parthenon. Indeed, these were all to be distant from the monument. See R. Carter op. cit., 1979, pp.37-38.

<sup>455</sup> Schinkel in *ibid.*, fn.11, pp.39-39. Translated by D. Frisby.

<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Ibid.

could not easily attack their foreign ruler, Schinkel's preference for a statue of Athena over one of Christ, betrays an inclination towards a specific representation of modern Athens as antiquity. In what way was his perception of the past different from the dominant 'purist' approach?

#### IV

Klenze was aware of Schinkel's proposal for the palace and – despite its differing from his own plan – he greatly admired the Prussian architect.<sup>458</sup> Indeed, even though their approaches towards the Acropolis appeared incompatible, they both advocated the same emphasis of the importance of the definition of new Athens in terms of the dialectic between the city and the Sacred Rock. Whilst the former dreamt of a palace *on* or even *as* the Acropolis, the latter imagined – and partly built – a city based on the vital principle of a 'direct visual affiliation' with it.<sup>459</sup> In fact, Klenze's interest in Athens was largely limited to the Acropolis. Accompanied by his son Ippolytos,<sup>460</sup> Klenze arrived in Greece on the twenty-third of July 1834.<sup>461</sup> Two months earlier, his active interference led Georg Ludwig von Mauer, a legal adviser to Otto and member of the Regency, to implement a law, on the twentieth of May 1834 – one of the first of its kind in Europe – on the 'protection' and 'preservation' of antiquities.<sup>462</sup> In suggesting that, in Athens, "every step, every glance, close or afar, awakens the *greatest memories* from the most glorious epochs of the most famous city of the world,"<sup>463</sup> Mauer implemented a law wherein, amidst various categorizations of different monuments and antiquities, one subject stands out: to whom do these antiquities belong? Whilst Article 61 maintains that all antiquities in the land are the 'property of the people',<sup>464</sup> and though Articles 63 and 64 distinguish certain antiquities as the common property of private owners and the State,<sup>465</sup> Article 62 guarantees that:

All ruins or other ancient objects of any note, being in national territory or under it or in the bottom of the sea, in rivers or public streams, in lakes or swamps, are the *property of the State*.<sup>466</sup>

<sup>458</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001.

<sup>459</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.163.

<sup>460</sup> Note that Klenze's son was named after Ippolytos, son of Antiope and Theseus, the historic founder of Athens. For Attic myths and Ippolytos see P. Decharme, *Ellenike Mythologia*. [Greek Mythology] A. Fragias tr., Athens: Historical Books, vol. 2, pp.632-648 and p.638 respectively.

<sup>461</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.147.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid., pp.187-188.

<sup>463</sup> Mauer cited in *ibid.*, 2001, p.301, my emphasis. For Mauer's report published in Heidelberg on 1835-1836 see *ibid.*, pp.300-302.

<sup>464</sup> See "Nomos peri Epistemonikon kai Tehnologikon Syllogon, Peri Anakalypseos kai Diatereseos ton Arhaioteton kai tis Hreseos Auton." [Law on the Scientific and Technological Collections, On the Discovery and Preservation of Antiquities and of their Use] Government Gazette, No.22, 22 June 1834, Part III, Chapter I, Article 61.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid., Articles 63 and 64.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid., Article 62, my emphasis.

As far as the past was concerned, everything became the 'property of the State'. Yet, the law does not commence with property rights as such. For instance, Articles 56-60 define the State as the 'supreme supervisor' of all antiquities.<sup>467</sup> Hence, even though Otto and the government did not officially settle in Athens until the first of December 1834, Klenze and Mauer guaranteed that, like every other part of antiquity, the Acropolis was already their property seven months earlier. This meant that the modern in Athens was not created with the re-building of the city, but rather with the legal securing of control and property rights over its 'antiquities'. Mauer's Law is a delicately detailed text, which specifies and legitimizes various kinds of state interference in the context of antiquities. Articles 65-75, for example, necessitate the declaration, to the State, of privately owned ancient objects,<sup>468</sup> Articles 76-99 forbid any unauthorized export of antiquities,<sup>469</sup> and Articles 100-109 forbid any unauthorized excavation.<sup>470</sup> According to Mauer's Law, therefore, nobody could own, export, or search for antiquities without the prior knowledge and consent of the State. What was the definition of antiquity in the 1834 law? Articles 110-111 define antiquity in terms of all the buildings and objects belonging to the 'ancient' and the 'medieval' eras.<sup>471</sup> But before we explore the further meaning of the law, it is important to remember that it was never fully successful.<sup>472</sup> Rather, since the 'undisciplined' Greeks did everything in their power to undermine the authority of the State, such as forgetting to declare whatever antiquities they found in their gardens, the only thing left from the Klenze-inspired law was, according to Klaus Fittschen, 'the government's good intentions'.<sup>473</sup> What did these 'good intentions' imply?

Whilst it is true that the law was protecting medieval monuments, the text actually limits their definition to buildings and objects of the *Christian* period.<sup>474</sup> In other words, the government's 'good intentions' excluded Athenian – and Greek for that matter – Ottoman past. In practice, despite the 'benevolence' of Mauer's Law, the 'architects' of the new capital largely erased the traces of Frankish and Ottoman Athens. With the gradual demolition of traces of Athenian medieval history, the Bavarians and those who assisted them ultimately destroyed the 'property of the Greek people' as well as that which they, as the supreme authority, had promised to protect. In contrast to Fittschen's assumption that it was just the Greeks who did as they pleased, it was their government which first set the

<sup>467</sup> Ibid., Part II, Chapter Four, Articles 56-60.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid., Part III, Chapter Two, Articles 65-75.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid., Part III, Chapter Three, Articles 76-99.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid., Part III, Chapter Four, Articles 100-109.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid., Part III, Chapter Five, Articles 110-111.

<sup>472</sup> See K. Fittschen "Arhaiologikes Erevnes stin Ellada kata tin Diarkeia tis Vasileias tou Othona." [Archaeological Research in Greece during King Otto's Reign] in *Athena-Monaha*. op. cit., 2000, p.221.

<sup>473</sup> Ibid.

<sup>474</sup> *Government Gazette*. op. cit., No.22/1834, Part III, Chapter Five, Article 111.

example. At the same time, what was left from the law was more than mere 'good intentions'. Whereas the variety of Athenian monuments decreased, the power of the State over antiquities increased throughout the following centuries. Two successive administrations verified the main points of Mauer's Law. First, in July 1899, the government, implemented a law 'On Antiquities',<sup>475</sup> and second, in 1932, the government voted in favour of Law 5351 that only provided some articles that would complement the previous legislation.<sup>476</sup> Neither of the two laws challenged the authority of the State over antiquities. On the contrary, and attempting to deal with 'undisciplined' individuals, article 54 of law 5351/1932 maintains that the State has the right to impose a fine or even to imprison those who are found guilty of unauthorized possession of antiquities.<sup>477</sup> Nearly a century after Mauer and Klenze had given complete power over antiquities to the State, those who did not abide by the law could be imprisoned from between five days and six months.<sup>478</sup> In light of the additions to Mauer's Law, Klenze, who was the spiritual father of the first such legislation on antiquities, should be considered as an important figure in the representation of Athens as antiquity. Klenze motivated Mauer in legitimizing the power of the State over antiquity, but he also created a tradition wherein Athens was synonymous with classical antiquity. Nevertheless, the time that separates Klenze from the later implementation of the 1899 and 1932 legislation marked a period in which the definition of antiquity was manipulated in different ways.

In exploring Klenze's active role in the creation of 'modern' Athens, Papageorgiou-Venetas suggests that, for him, "the preservation of the ancient monuments on the Acropolis and their liberation from later accretions was [both] desirable and unavoidable."<sup>479</sup> Even though Klenze appeared to oscillate between what should be preserved and what should be destroyed on the Acropolis<sup>480</sup> and though he appeared to be interested in preserving 'all monuments',<sup>481</sup> Athens was ultimately dominated by an 'academic' and 'purist' attitude towards restoration,<sup>482</sup> for which both Mauer and Klenze might be held partly responsible. Mauer implemented a law that assigned primary importance to antiquities and allowed, not just the monarchy, but rather the State to treat

<sup>475</sup> Government Gazette, No.138, 25 August 1899, Vol.A, Law BXMs/24 July 1899 "Peri Arhaioteton" [On Antiquities].

<sup>476</sup> Government Gazette, No.93, 28 March 1932, Vol.A, Law 5351/28 March 1932 'Additions to Law BXMs/1899'

<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 54. The fine was 500-20,000 drachmas.

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.* Note that according to Greek legislation, the trading of antiquities is now considered a felony. See also K. Bostantzoglou-Tripou "Syghrona Athenaika Themata – [Nomothesia Peri Arhaioteton." [Contemporary Athenian Issues – The Legislation Concerning Antiquities] TA ATHENAIKA, Issue 21, Easter 1962, pp.53-54.

<sup>479</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, p.153.

<sup>480</sup> See Klenze's proposal, of 3 September 1834, to the Regency see *ibid.*, p189.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31

them as its property. Hence, his law opened up unlimited possibilities for all kinds of State interference with, and control over antiquities. Klenze, on the other hand, “secured the necessary credit for the initiation of the restoration works on the Acropolis [...], was personally responsible for the supervision of the restoration works during their initiation and [...] cared personally for their continuation.”<sup>483</sup> How important was the Acropolis in the actual building of a modern Athens? Papageorgiou-Venetas points to the fact that Klenze’s short visit to, and actions in, the capital were characterized by a speed, which “suggests the hypothesis that Klenze had made some basic decisions prior to his visit to Athens.”<sup>484</sup> On the twelfth of August 1834, the Regency sent a letter to Klenze, approving the restoration of the Acropolis and ‘*especially the Parthenon*’ as a top priority;<sup>485</sup> Klenze’s reply came only ten days later, on the twenty-second of August 1834.<sup>486</sup> At the same time, whilst the Regency assigned the restoration work to Klenze, on the twelfth of August 1834, Otto sent an order to the Ministry of War, commanding that – under Klenze’s supervision – the Ministry would undertake the protection of the antiquities on the Acropolis,<sup>487</sup> and announcing that, “we intend to *erect anew* these [‘marvellous’ monuments] from their ruins.”<sup>488</sup> How can anybody really ‘erect anew’ what is ruined? On the fifth of August 1834, Klenze had written to the Regency, concerning the restoration, this time, on the monuments,<sup>489</sup> and on the third of September 1834, he submitted a proposal for the re-formulation of Kleanthes and Schaubert’s plan of Athens in which he did not hesitate in identifying the city with the Acropolis.<sup>490</sup> He suggests, for example, that:

The conception of the plan must have as its rule the idea of historicity and poeticality, and to concur with the historic development of the ancient as well as of today’s glorious city of Athens. Athens numbers four great epochs and these must be visible in the city and in its future structure.

First comes the Acropolis on the rocky rise [...], immediately after that, in her southern and eastern slopes [...] comes the city of Theseus, somewhat lower, to the east, comes the city of Hadrian, and, finally, a new city which begins to be formed now, in our time, Othonopolis. What memories, what a wealth of glory, splendour and hopes is offered by the

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<sup>483</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid., p. 326.

<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid., p. 351.

<sup>488</sup> Otto cited in *ibid.*, my emphasis.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

<sup>490</sup> For Klenze’s proposal see *ibid.*, pp 196-199.

name of each of these parts of the city! And they are all contained in one name only, ATHENS!<sup>491</sup>

Klenze attempted to identify the Acropolis with Athens in the 'past' and, from there, with Otto's new Athens. At the same time, in avoiding history, he also imagined a genealogy – not from Pericles – but rather from Theseus to Otto. The monarch of new Athens appeared to Klenze as more important than the epoch that built the monument in which he was so interested.

At all events, and looking closer at the intensive correspondence concerning the Acropolis, on the fourteenth of August 1834, K.D. Shinas, Minister of Ecclesiastics and Education, sent a report to Otto suggesting the abolition of the fortress of the Acropolis,<sup>492</sup> and on the ninth of September 1834, Klenze sent another letter to the Regency concerning the preservation of monuments.<sup>493</sup> Klenze received a reply sooner than the Greek minister. On the eighteenth of September 1834, the Regency replied to Klenze<sup>494</sup> and he sent a new report detailing the restoration works 'necessary' on the Acropolis,<sup>495</sup> and reminding them of his request – officially submitted to Otto on the fifth of September 1834 – concerning the necessary staff for the restoration works.<sup>496</sup> Finally, on the third of September 1834, Klenze submitted his proposal on what should be preserved and what should be destroyed on the Acropolis.<sup>497</sup> With an already demonstrated indifference towards Athenian monuments, excluding the Acropolis, Klenze suggested that all accretions to the fifth-century Acropolis should be demolished, except for the Florentine tower by the Propylaea.<sup>498</sup> Following a series of reports and proposals, Klenze's stay in Athens triumphed in the face of two official decisions and one celebration. First, on the sixteenth of September 1834, the Regency approved and sent to Klenze a budget for a restoration of the Acropolis, as well as an attached letter from Otto to the Ministry of Ecclesiastics and Education, in which the archaeologist Ludwig Ross was appointed general director of the restoration works and Kleanthes and Schaubert were appointed technical directors.<sup>499</sup> Second, on the thirtieth of September 1834, the Regency sent another letter to Klenze

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<sup>491</sup> Ibid., p.196.

<sup>492</sup> Ibid., p.328. For the Franco-Venetians and later the Ottomans' conversion of the Acropolis into a fortress see Conference Notes: *Arhitektonike kai Poleodomia apo tin Arhaioteta eos Simera. I Periptose tis Athenus*. [Architecture and Urban Planning from Antiquity To-day. The Case of Athens] Athens: Arsenidis, 1996, pp.107-114.

<sup>493</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., p.325.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> For Klenze's report see ibid., pp.333-334.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid., p.333.

<sup>497</sup> See ibid., p.189.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid., p.155.

<sup>499</sup> For a copy of the letter see ibid., p.327.

informing him of the royal decree of the same date concerning the transfer of the government to Athens and the re-building of the city.<sup>500</sup> The letter included the answer to Shinas' earlier request: the Regency decided that the Acropolis was not a fortress any more and that it should never be used for that purpose ever again.<sup>501</sup> In turn, it was maintained that the fortifications around the Acropolis should be demolished and that all the ancient land should be gradually revealed.<sup>502</sup> Two months later, in November 1834, Ross was entrusted with what became known as the *cleansing of the Acropolis*.<sup>503</sup> Even though Ross worked very closely with Klenze, he nonetheless remained loyal to his friends Kleanthes and Schaubert – whose plan for Athens was rejected by Klenze – and ultimately argued that what Klenze considered as a unique experience, was merely a 'tolerable' celebration.<sup>504</sup> In fact, theirs was a disagreement over the definition of beauty: whereas Klenze favoured the 'picturesque',<sup>505</sup> Ross, profoundly influenced by Schiller since the age of ten,<sup>506</sup> expected Athens to reflect that nostalgic and romantic image of a glorious decadence. What was the subject of that 'tolerable' ceremony?

Accompanied by his brother, Maximilian,<sup>507</sup> Otto had first visited Athens in April 1833.<sup>508</sup> One year later, he went back to witness the initiation of the restoration works on the Acropolis as well as the simultaneous declaration of the Acropolis as an *official monument* and the property of the State. The ceremony was designed by Klenze and consisted largely of an address to the King<sup>509</sup> in which he announced in a delirium of enthusiasm that: "the traces of Barbarous epochs, ruins and amorphous rubble will disappear here, as everywhere in Greece, and the remnants of the glorious past will be resurrected with a new radiance as the strongest foundations of a splendid present and future."<sup>510</sup> Klenze reveals a determination to choose the 'appropriate' past and to dispense with what he perceived as the 'debris of history', thereby pointing to his vision of 'resurrecting' the past as the subject of preferred choice. Furthermore, in inaugurating the Acropolis as the 'strongest foundation' of the present as well as the future, he identified that specific fragment of the past as the foundation of any possible – present or future – modern. As far as Klenze was concerned, the ceremony marked his most profound experience in, and of, Athens:

<sup>500</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.330-332.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>503</sup> K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, pp.61-62.

<sup>504</sup> L. Ross *op. cit.*, 1976, p.99.

<sup>505</sup> For further problems on Klenze's understanding of the 'picturesque' see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001.

<sup>506</sup> Schiller's *Thieves* was the first play Ross saw and burst into tears. See L. Ross *op. cit.*, 1976, p.17.

<sup>507</sup> See R. Carter *op. cit.*, 1979, p.35.

<sup>508</sup> See L. Ross *op. cit.*, 1976, p.71.

<sup>509</sup> For Klenze's address to Otto see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.363-364.

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.*, p.364.

I must admit to you that as an artist, in my so happy and successful life, I have lived only two moments of true and supreme satisfaction and joy; the moment of the initiation of the effective preservation, or rather restoration of the most beautiful monument in the world and the moment of the casting of the foundation stone of the Walhalla where I was allowed the [noble] emulation of the creator of the Parthenon.<sup>511</sup>

Almost three decades earlier, in 1817, Klenze had written to Ludwig I with reference to the Walhalla and had opposed the historicist obsession with copies of 'old' styles.<sup>512</sup> But Ludwig had already decided that he wanted Klenze to design the façade of the Walhalla 'exactly' like that of the Parthenon.<sup>513</sup> Although Ludwig I always changed his mind about 'style',<sup>514</sup> Klenze submitted to the King's demands once again and finished the Walhalla in 1842.<sup>515</sup> In the end, the Walhalla resembled the Parthenon in more than just the façade. Like the Parthenon, it was built on the top of a hill from where it dominated the landscape. Yet, in his private notes, Klenze referred to the Walhalla as the 'necrogenous creation', which he was 'forced to built'.<sup>516</sup> Years earlier, Klenze's festive speech on the Acropolis, compared his casting the foundation stone for the Walhalla to the inauguration of the Acropolis as an official monument that was the property of the State. The ceremony on the Acropolis took place on the tenth of September 1834, only twenty-two days after Klenze's arrival to, and merely five days before his departure from Athens. Interestingly enough, it took place more than three whole months before Otto and the government were settled in the new capital, on the first of December 1834.<sup>517</sup> In other words, Athens first had an official monument and then housed the State. Modern Athens was symbolically as well as materially founded on a fragment of the old, on circumstances already chosen by some of its dead. But these circumstances were consciously chosen by those who had the power to define them as the only 'appropriate' ones. In this respect, Klenze's mission was undoubtedly successful. Yet, another paradox with Athenian modernity is that the dead Athenians that predefined the modern were sometimes the mask of the living of the nineteenth century. This is the lesson we learn from an ancient Athenian who adored his city.

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<sup>511</sup> Ibid., p.42 and p.364.

<sup>512</sup> See W. Nerdinger "'Mia Eikona Ellenismou Metafytevetai ston Diko mas Kosmo'. Ta Klismata tou Leo von Klenze gia tin Athena tou Potamou Isar." ['An Image of Pure Hellenism is Transplanted into Our World'? Leo von Klenze's Buildings for Athens of the River Isar] in *Athens-Monahs*. op. cit., 2000, p.258.

<sup>513</sup> Ludwig I diary entry 17 February 1816, cited in *ibid.*

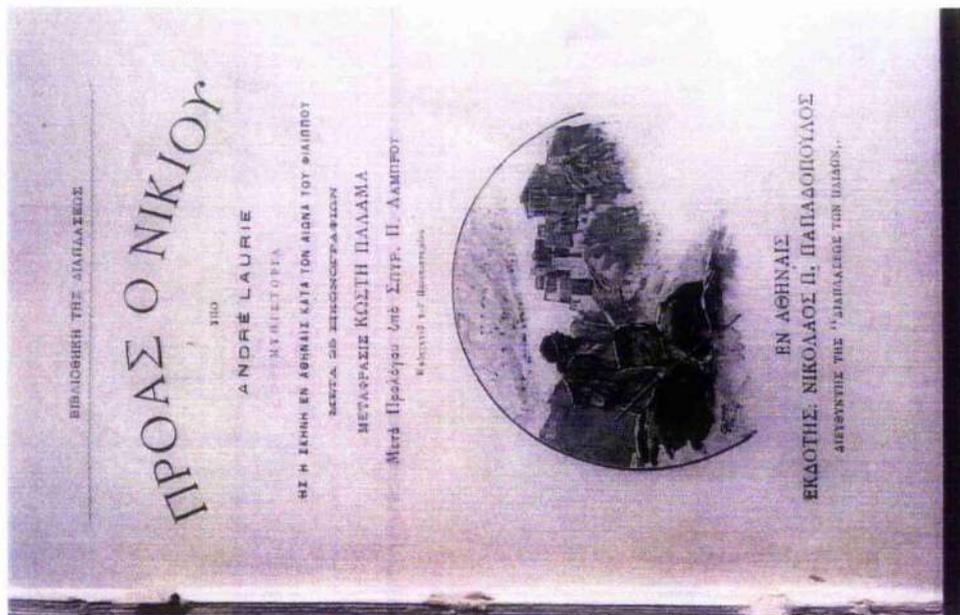
<sup>514</sup> The issue of 'style' will be further explored with the actual building of Athens.

<sup>515</sup> R. Kosbar *From Memory to Traces*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p.22.

<sup>516</sup> See W. Nerdinger's analysis of Klenze's notes in *Athens-Monahs*. op. cit., 2000, p.258.

<sup>517</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.43.

III. Frantpica in 'Proas on Nikiou' (1898)



In 338 BC, Philip of Macedonia defeated Athens at the battle of Chaironea, which put an end to Athenian political supremacy.<sup>518</sup> Thirty-eight years old at the time, Proas, an Athenian citizen, was captured and enslaved – years later, he told his story to his two young students, cousins of Alexander the Great.<sup>519</sup> Proas was born almost a century and half after the building of the Parthenon, on the village Attica.<sup>520</sup> Whilst his grandfather Ilarion was his first teacher, when he reached his tenth year, Proas was sent to Athens to receive the full education given to Athenian citizens,<sup>521</sup> an education – and a status – of which he would be proud all his life. He tells his students, for instance, that, “only being an Athenian and listening to Demosthenes is worth living.”<sup>522</sup> What did it mean to be an Athenian? Proas was anxious to see the monuments of his ‘immortal ancestors’,<sup>523</sup> but he was, above all, anticipating the moment when he would enter the Parthenon and feel that he, too, was a ‘privileged child’ of the goddess Athena.<sup>524</sup> As he and his grandfather were approaching the city, the old man said enthusiastically: “Look Proa! The Acropolis!”<sup>525</sup> Only ten years old, Proas saw “the marble temple glittering under the beams of the morning sun [whilst] its divine profile was outlined on the azure sky [and whilst] golden clouds looked as if they were caressing its top.”<sup>526</sup> Always remembering and treasuring the first time he saw the Parthenon, Proas concludes his story by declaring that:

The most minute stone of our [the Athenians’] most minute monument will, to the end of centuries, bear witness to the fact that we adored the beautiful, that we discovered its laws, that we formulated its rules.<sup>527</sup>

Proas, who so adored his ancestors and the beautiful, is an imaginary character and so are his experiences.<sup>528</sup> But whereas Proas is a fourth-century imaginary Athenian, his ‘father’ André Laurie lived in the nineteenth century, at the time when modern Athens was continuously founded on the past that his hero admired. [Fig. III] Could Proas and Laurie speak of the same Parthenon?<sup>529</sup> In turn, in considering Laurie’s own archaeolatry as well

<sup>518</sup> For the battle of Chaironea and the fall of Athens’ power see I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.44-74.

<sup>519</sup> A. Laurie *Proas o Nikiou*. [Proas Son of Nikias] K. Palamas tr., Athens: N.P. Papadopoulos, 1898.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.29-30.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.*, p.341.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*, p.346.

<sup>528</sup> To offer a rather happy end to this gloomy thought, Laurie concludes with the promise that, after the completion of his students’ education, Proas would be set free and, return to Athens.

<sup>529</sup> Unfortunately, I have not discovered if Laurie ever went to Athens.

as Ross' mission to *sanitize* the Acropolis, could it be that the nineteenth century admired a monument, which, at the same time, appeared as 'dirty'? If this is so, whilst Proas saw nothing unnecessary on the Acropolis, there must have been, in the course of time, something added that new Athens could not tolerate: the traces of the epochs after the Periclean fifty-year period. The Acropolis was indeed perceived as 'dirty' and it was Otto's administration that cleared this 'rubble' that was dismissed by Klenze in his celebratory speech on the Acropolis. It is an undoubted fact, therefore, that:

The Parthenon today is not [...] Pericles' Parthenon: its content (meaning by that not just its physical being) has been most severely adulterated. And yet there is a magical way in which it is deemed to be the same. In this case, suppression proves the power of the mechanism of antilogy. By severing the bonds with the specific place and time (that is, with the historical environment which surrounded the Parthenon all that time) we create a mesh of completely different relationships which are then deliberately ignored and leave free space for the elaboration of ideological undertaking.<sup>530</sup>

Here, Demetres Philippides suggests that, though the Parthenon today is not Pericles' monument, some 'magic' intervenes and renders them the same. But Philippides actually says that magic had nothing to do with the Parthenon. Rather, what confuses the choices of the living with those of the dead is modern antiquity. Is the present-day Parthenon, like Proas, the product of imagination?<sup>531</sup>

## VI

In exploring the history of the development of urban-planning in Athens before the nineteenth century, Travlos highlights eleven different periods wherein the life of the city and that of the Acropolis are, more often than not, intimately related.<sup>532</sup> In fact, the first and oldest Neolithic settlements found in Athens, dated around 4000 BC, are *on* the Acropolis.<sup>533</sup> Under the reign of King Kranaos, the people were first called Kranaoi whilst

<sup>530</sup> D. Philippides "The Parthenon as Appreciated by Greek Society," in P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, p.283. For a general description of the history of the Parthenon to-day, see also K. Vatikiotis ed., 7 IMBRES: "Parthenon," in E. Traiou gen. ed., Feuilleton: 7 IMBRES: *Athena*. Vol. K (11), in *Kathimerini*, 1997, pp.3-46.

<sup>531</sup> For the transformations of the Parthenon see A.H. Gerondas "O Parthenon Metavallei Opsin." [The Parthenon is Changing Images] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 10, June-July 1958, pp.14-16.

<sup>532</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993. See also *Arhitektonike...* op. cit., 1996, esp. pp.23-35, pp.35-58, and pp.59-85.

<sup>533</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.4-18.

in the preceding era, under King Kekrops, they were called Kekropidai.<sup>534</sup> Finally, when King Erechtheas, son of Gaia and first worshipper of Athena,<sup>535</sup> founded the worship of the goddess, the people were called Athenians and their city Athens.<sup>536</sup> Hence, whilst the Parthenon is usually assumed to have been built in order for the city to honour the virgin goddess,<sup>537</sup> it was the Erechtheum of the Acropolis, named after King Erechtheas and built in honour of Athena Polias,<sup>538</sup> that had, at the time, “the greatest religious influence and was the object of the deepest respect.”<sup>539</sup> If the Erechtheum was the most important building for the first Athenians then, when was the Parthenon built and why is it so important after all? Unlike the Erechtheum, the Parthenon was continuously re-built.<sup>540</sup> First, in 556 BC, the Athenians erected a ‘new temple’ for the goddess Athena.<sup>541</sup> Second, in 490 BC, when the Greeks defeated the Persians at Marathon, the Athenians built – in marble – the ‘Pre-Parthenon’,<sup>542</sup> which was partially destroyed ten years later during the second and successful Persian invasion in 480 BC.<sup>543</sup> The city was evacuated and the Persians were finally defeated in Plataiae in the spring of 479 BC.<sup>544</sup> Finally, during the rule of Pericles,<sup>545</sup> in 447 BC, the building of the ‘classical’ Parthenon commenced.<sup>546</sup> In considering the active role of the Athenians in the final victory of the Greeks over the Persians, therefore, Savas Kondaratos maintains that the Periclean Parthenon was in fact built in order to:

Emphasize the ancestor-myths of Attica, with which the Sacred Rock was inextricably bound up, to [pay homage to] the final victory over the barbarians, to which Athens had contributed so much, and to promote the

<sup>534</sup> Ibid., p.18. According to Greek mythology it was during Kekrops’ reign that Athena contested with Poseidon for Athens. See P. Decharme op. cit., Vol.2, pp.640-641.

<sup>535</sup> Ibid., vol.1, p.111.

<sup>536</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.18. Note that in Greek, the goddess is called Athena (accent on a) whilst Athens is called Athena (accent on e). Properly pronounced, it is obvious that Athens is named after the goddess.

<sup>537</sup> P. Decharme op. cit., vol. 1, p.108. In Greek, Virgin is Parthenos.

<sup>538</sup> Athena Polias refers to Athena as protector of the city. For the different personifications of Athena See ibid., pp.93-118.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid., p. 111. Decharme maintains that the Erechtheum housed the wooden statue of Athena and the olive tree which, offered by the goddess to the city, decided her as the victor over Poseidon. See ibid., pp.110-111.

<sup>540</sup> For the history of the different constructions prior to the Parthenon see I. Travlos op. cit., 1993 and P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, especially the chronological table constructed by M Korres, pp. 348-349.

<sup>541</sup> Ibid., p.348. See also I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.19-32.

<sup>542</sup> P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, p.24.

<sup>543</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.33-46.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid. For the Persian Wars see also C. Mossé *Athens – Istoría Mias Demokratias*, [Athens – History of a Democracy] D. Aggolidou tr., Athens: Educational Institute of the National Bank of Greece, 1983, pp.55-79.

<sup>545</sup> For Pericles’ rule see ibid., pp.55-79.

<sup>546</sup> P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, p.348. For the period from the destruction of the ‘Pre-Parthenon’ to the building of the Parthenon see also M.L. D’Ooge *The Acropolis of Athens*. London: MacMillan and Co, 1908, pp.64-108. For the innovative work of Pericles’ artists see H. Stierlin *Greece*. London: Taschen, 2001, pp.181-215, and A. Tzonis and P. Giannisi *Classical Greek Architecture – The Construction of the Modern*. Paris: Flammarion, 2004, especially Chapter V, pp.181-233.

contemporary grandeur of the city, at the height of its military, economic, and intellectual power.<sup>547</sup>

In contrast to romantic assumptions, the Parthenon was neither the religious nor the spiritual centre of fifth-century Athenian life. Rather it was, from the beginning, a testimony to the potential ambiguities of power, especially when it makes claims of a combination of military, economic and intellectual achievements. The Parthenon was built as a testimony to Athenian political, military, and intellectual supremacy over the rest of Greece. From the outset, it was the embryo of a modern antiquity that would, centuries later, identify the city with the monument. In establishing Athens' awareness of itself as the undisputed hegemonic power of fifth and fourth century BC Greece,<sup>548</sup> the Parthenon was both a testimony to Athens as a perfect and new polis in itself, and "a celebration of Athens as a cosmopolis."<sup>549</sup> Two interrelated facts may illustrate this hypothesis: first, that the Parthenon was built on the highest part of the Acropolis where – until the 1950s – it could be seen from almost anywhere in the city, and second, that its sculptures portrayed Athenian history and myth, the city's people and its Gods as one – indeed the people like Gods. In this context, Manolis Korres explains that:

As a monument to the city as a whole, the Parthenon was ornamented with an Ionic frieze whose theme was [...] an earthly, Athenian theme. It showed Athenians of various classes grouped so as to portray the organization of the Athenian State: in fact, the groups reflect the successive forms of that organization, with the earliest system on the north side of the temple and the more recent, the democratic system on the south.<sup>550</sup>

Could this also mean that the Parthenon was a symbol of human domination over the ancient Greek Gods as a personification of nature and thus over nature too? Robin F. Rhodes suggests that, "whereas the jealous Olympian Gods of Greece died with antiquity, Periclean Athens still thrives today."<sup>551</sup> Whilst the Olympians – jealous because Athenians like Ictinos, the architect of the Parthenon, portrayed themselves on the friezes of the building – have died with antiquity, Periclean Athens appears, to Rhodes, to be alive. But

<sup>547</sup> S. Kondaratos "The Parthenon as a Cultural Ideal," in P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, p.24.

<sup>548</sup> See C. Mossé op. cit., 1983, pp.61-64.

<sup>549</sup> R.F. Rhodes op. cit., 1995, p.2.

<sup>550</sup> M. Korres "The Architecture of the Parthenon," in P. Tournikiotis ed. op. cit., 1994, p.58.

<sup>551</sup> R.F. Rhodes op. cit., 1995, p.186.

the history of the Parthenon disproves this argument.<sup>552</sup> Modern antiquity guarantees that whilst appearing alive, Periclean Athens is, in fact, *kept alive* and uses the myths surrounding its ancient Gods as the foundations of the new in the nineteenth century and beyond. After all, the capital of new Greece was still named after the Olympian Athena. But the goddess no longer protected her city and its Acropolis.

## VII

The first destruction of the Acropolis occurred in 426 BC, during an earthquake that was the third or fourth worst to have hit Greece by that time.<sup>553</sup> The second documented destruction of the Parthenon, and thus the second reason to suspect that the Periclean Parthenon ceased to be what it was in the fifth century BC, occurred in 267 AD, when the Gothic tribe of Heruli destroyed Athens.<sup>554</sup> The third destruction of the monument was undoubtedly its conversion into a Byzantine Church, in the course of which the clergy 'adjusted' the Parthenon to the sobriety of the Christian dogma.<sup>555</sup> The fourth great damage of the Acropolis was the result of a thunder that hit, in 1648, the powder magazine by the Propylaea.<sup>556</sup> Nevertheless, it is another attack on the monument that most commentators emphasize. On the twenty-sixth of September 1687, during the first Turkish-Venetian war, Venetian forces under Morosini seized Athens and, knowing that the Turks stored powder on the fortress of the Acropolis, created an explosion that inflicted severe damage on the exterior of the Parthenon.<sup>557</sup> In other words, 426 BC, 267 AD, 1648 and 1687 had, by the nineteenth century, largely destroyed, that which was Periclean Parthenon. So how did the Parthenon survive to the nineteenth century?

Cyriac of Ancona, who visited Athens twice, in 1436 and 1444, sketched the earliest known drawing of the Parthenon, an image, however, that is not to be completely trusted.<sup>558</sup> Mary Beard, for example, suggests that though Cyriac's "drawing has been hailed as a brilliant archaeological attempt to unthink the later 'accretions' so as to reveal

<sup>552</sup> For the history of the Parthenon see M.L. D'Ooge op. cit., 1908. For the history and problems with the name of the monument see M. Beard *The Parthenon*. London: Profile Books, 2002, and for the history and symbolism in general of the Parthenon see P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994.

<sup>553</sup> M. Korres "The Parthenon from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century" in *ibid.*, 1994, p.138.

<sup>554</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.125. For the history of ancient and Roman Athens in this context see also A. Mastrapas *I Polis kai to Asty ton Athenon*. [The Polis and the City of Athens] Athens: Patakis, 2003.

<sup>555</sup> Though the author does not take, as we imply, a completely negative stance towards the Greek Church, for the alterations required for the conversion of the Parthenon to a Christian Church see C. Bouras "Restoration Work on the Parthenon and Changing Attitudes Towards the Conservation of Monuments – A Theoretical Contribution to Restoration Work Today" in P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, pp.310-339. For a more critical analysis of the Christians destruction of the Parthenon and other antiquities see G.K Pournaropoulos "Athena, I Iera Parakatatheke." [Athens, the Sacred Heritage] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 78, December 1981, pp.1-7.

<sup>556</sup> See *Athena-Monaho*. op. cit., 2001, p.12.

<sup>557</sup> D. Gerondas *I Istoría ton Athenaión*. [History of the Athenians] Athens: Palmos, 1969, pp.34-38. Gerondas maintains that more than 200 Turkish soldiers died that day. See *ibid.*, p.36. See also A.S Gerondas "I Anatinaksis tou Parthenonos ypo ton Veneton." [The Blowing Up of the Parthenon under the Venetians] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 95-96, September 1994, pp.14-23.

<sup>558</sup> M. Beard op. cit., 2002, p.65.

the classical structure beneath,<sup>559</sup> it nonetheless remains a “wilful refusal to acknowledge the appearance of the building in his own day or to see more in it than a relic of classical antiquity.”<sup>560</sup> Cyriac, therefore, drew the first image of the Parthenon, not as it was, but rather as he would have liked it to be. At the same time, and implying a modern antiquity as early as the fifteenth century, in choosing to imagine the Parthenon, Cyriac omitted that which ‘insulted’ his imaginary perception of the Acropolis. Even though Cyriac of Ancona visited Athens before the Turks seized the city in 1457, his drawing shares the same desire to manipulate history that is evident in the ‘cleansing’ of the Acropolis in the nineteenth century. But Athens had a life before Cyriac as well as before the nineteenth century.

Imitating the determined act of his predecessors to impose anti-pagan legal codes,<sup>561</sup> in 520 AD, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian closed the philosophical schools of Athens,<sup>562</sup> thereby marking the beginning of the Middle Ages in the city.<sup>563</sup> It is during Emperor Justinian’s reign, therefore, that Athens begins to be forgotten. Above all, the Byzantines’ detestation of classical antiquity transformed the city into an insignificant province of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>564</sup> The Acropolis follows the life of the city once more: around the sixth century AD, both the Parthenon and the Erechtheium were converted into Christian Churches.<sup>565</sup> The conversion of the Parthenon, now called “Our Lady of Athens,”<sup>566</sup> was one amongst many attempts of the Christian Church to erase the city’s ‘pagan’ past. During that time,

The uneducated converts, powerful bishops and fanatical monks were incapable of seeing in the Great Temple any values other than purely utilitarian ones (a large and solidly – built meeting hall), nor could they discern in the sculpture anything beyond the theme (the despised pagan myths).<sup>567</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> Ibid., p.67.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>561</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.135. In this context, D’Ooge maintains that on 435 AD, Theodosius passed an “imperial decree that all pagan shrines and temples should be closed or changed over into places of Christian worship.” M.L D’Ooge op. cit., 1908, p.307

<sup>562</sup> D. Sicilianos *Old and New Athens*. R. Liddell tr., London: Putnam, 1960, p.12. For a detailed analysis of the four philosophical schools of Athens see G. Konstantinides *Istoria ton Athenon*. [History of Athens] (1876), reprinted as the original, Athens: Municipality of Athens, 2000, pp.171-185.

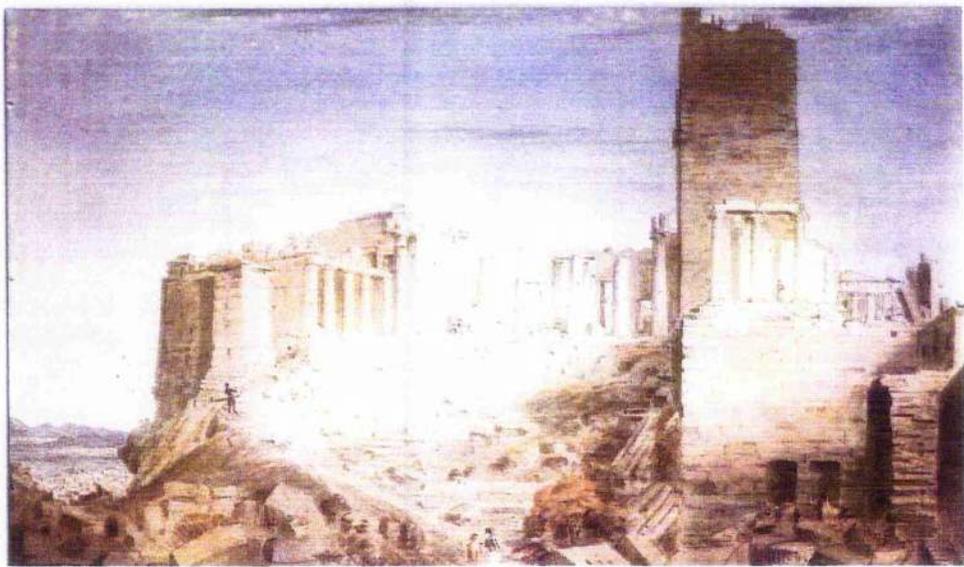
<sup>563</sup> F. Gregorovius *Mesaionike Istoria ton Athenon*. [Medieval History of Athens] Vol.1, A. Tsaras tr., Athens: Kritiki, 1990, p.13.

<sup>564</sup> Ibid., For the Byzantines’ hatred of classical Athens see D. Sicilianos op. cit., 1960 and I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.135-162.

<sup>565</sup> For the conversion of the Erechtheium into a Christian Church, see M.L D’Ooge op. cit., 1908, p.310. For the Parthenon see I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.149. D’Ooge does not offer any date but Travlos estimates that the Parthenon was converted sometime in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD.

<sup>566</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.310-339, and C. Bouras in P. Tournikiotis ed., op. cit., 1994, p.314.

<sup>567</sup> Ibid., p.315.



IV. J. Stene Watercolour, The Acropolis of Athens (1838)

Whatever the character of the Byzantines' attitude towards the Parthenon, the fact remains but is often forgotten that they had seized the city and had converted classical Athenian temples into their churches.

Following the Fourth Crusade and the Frankish conquest of Athens under Otto de la Roche in 1260,<sup>568</sup> Athens, as the Byzantines intended, was continuously forgotten.<sup>569</sup> Indeed, during the Frankish rule in Athens, the city was called 'Setiné',<sup>570</sup> and the Acropolis was known as the 'Castell Setines'.<sup>571</sup> Later, after the Frankish (1205-1311) and Catalan (1311-1387) occupations,<sup>572</sup> the Acciajuoli, a family of Florentine Bankers who had become Dukes of Athens in 1394,<sup>573</sup> renamed the Orthodox 'Our Lady of Athens' into 'Santa Maria di Athene',<sup>574</sup> and built a 25 metres tall tower by the Propylaea.<sup>575</sup> [Fig. IV] For some strange reason, the tower was the only addition to the monument that Klenze intended to preserve. Nevertheless, the tower, "a conspicuous object in all the views of the Acropolis taken after 1650,"<sup>576</sup> was – with a 'generous' commission by Schliemann – demolished in 1875.<sup>577</sup> In contrast to the other victims of the 'cleansing' of the Sacred Rock, the demolition of the tower was, as we will see later, a highly contested subject for the greatest part of the nineteenth century.<sup>578</sup>

The final major accretions to the Acropolis were the result of the Ottoman occupation in Athens which began on the fourth of June 1456.<sup>579</sup> Between 1458 and 1460, the Byzantine Church in the Parthenon was subsequently converted into a Muslim Mosque.<sup>580</sup> In turn, whereas the Propylaea were used as a residence for the Commander of the Turkish garrison as well as a gun emplacement,<sup>581</sup> the Temple of Athena Nike was used

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<sup>568</sup> For the Frankish conquest of Athens see I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.163-172 and F. Gregorovius *Mesaionike Istoría ton Athenon*. Vol.2, A. Tsaras tr., Athens: Kritiki, 1991.

<sup>569</sup> For the circumstances before the 1300s see K.M Setton "Athens in the Later Twelfth Century." *Speculum*. Vol.19, No.2, 1944, pp.179-207.

<sup>570</sup> See G. Konstandinides op. cit., 2000, p.367.

<sup>571</sup> See F. Gregorovius op. cit., 1990, p.104. Gregorovius also explains that, before that, Scandinavian seamen referred to the Acropolis as 'The Tower of Athens' (Athenesburg). See *ibid.*

<sup>572</sup> See *ibid.*, and F. Gregorovius op. cit., 1991.

<sup>573</sup> See F. Gregorovius *Mesaionike Istoría ton Athenon*. Vol.3, A. Tsaras tr., Athens: Kritiki, 1994, pp.241-470. The first Duke of Athens was Nerio Acciajuoli A'. See *ibid.*

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*, p.274.

<sup>575</sup> See *ibid.*, and I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.163-172.

<sup>576</sup> M.L. D'Ooge op. cit., 1908, p.315.

<sup>577</sup> D. Trail *Schliemann of Troy*. London: Penguin, 1995, p.130. Trail maintains that Schliemann actually gave the money for the demolition because he wanted the Greek government to support him in the trial against P. Déthier, Director of the Imperial Museum in Constantinople, for the 'Turkish government's half share of the 'Trojan finds'. See *ibid.*

<sup>578</sup> See following chapter.

<sup>579</sup> See I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.173-192 and D. Kambouroglou *Istoría ton Athinaion*. [History of the Athenians] 3 Vols., Athens: Palmos, 1969. For the three periods of Athens' Ottoman occupation see also *Arhitektonike kai Poleodomía...* op. cit., 1996, pp.129-133.

<sup>580</sup> Both Travlos and Kambouroglou argue that the conversion occurred in 1458. See I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, pp.173-192 and D. Kambouroglou op. cit., 1969, Vol.3, pp.172-176. F. Gregorovius suggests that it occurred in 1460. See F. Gregorovius op. cit., 1994, p.428. In this context see also N. Moutsopoulos *Byzantina kai Othomanika*. [Byzantine and Ottoman] Thessalonike: Nisides, 2005, pp.221-255.

<sup>581</sup> D. Kambouroglou op. cit., 1969, Vol.3, pp.176-177.

as a powder magazine,<sup>582</sup> and the Erechtheum housed the harem!<sup>583</sup> Why is this important in the context of Athenian modernity? These accretions and the series of foreign occupations are all part of a history that those who sanitized the Acropolis wanted to forget. The discussion of Athenian history before the 1821 revolution, therefore, may help us collect fragments of the past that are still only vaguely known. Indeed, what is rarely remembered is that, “in fact, by the time the new Turkish rulers converted the Parthenon into a mosque [...] it had been a Christian Church for just about as long it had ever been a pagan temple.”<sup>584</sup> So what we really need to ask is why do we still perceive the Acropolis as the quintessence of the ancient?

### VIII

Similarly to Cyriac of Ancona who chose to *exclude* the Christian Church from his drawings, the founders of modern Athens chose to *erase* all post-classical accretions from the Acropolis. But whereas the former excluded them from his drawings, the latter erased them from sight. At the same time, whilst Cyriac’s first visit to Athens on the first of April 1436, during the rule of Nerio Acciajuoli B’,<sup>585</sup> coincided with the time in which all pre-Ottoman accretions were largely intact,<sup>586</sup> the 1687 explosion was one of the main reasons why the nineteenth-century Acropolis lay in ruins. There was, however, another traveller, who offered a detailed description of the Acropolis before the explosion. Writing in 1675, four decades after Cyriac and twelve years before the explosion, André Georges de Guillet provides an illuminating analysis of the city’s past as well as an objective account of the buildings on the Acropolis hill.<sup>587</sup> Reminiscent of Proas’ story, however, de Guillet’s eloquent description of 1675 Athens was a mere literary montage of the author’s solid research on the subject – indeed, de Guillet never visited Athens.<sup>588</sup> The traveller who was not disgusted by the accretions, therefore, never saw them. Yet, the real Acropolis, the accretions to which de Guillet’s imaginary account described in a fascinating manner, was incompatible with the modern representations of antiquity in the nineteenth century. So,

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<sup>582</sup> Ibid., p.177.

<sup>583</sup> Ibid.

<sup>584</sup> M. Beard op. cit., 2002, pp.67-68.

<sup>585</sup> See F. Gregorovius op. cit., 1994, p.368.

<sup>586</sup> See, for example a description Athens and the Acropolis in C. Waldstein “Views of Athens in the Year 1687.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol.4, 1883, pp.86-89.

<sup>587</sup> See A.G. de Guillet “Arhaia kai Nea Athena.” [Ancient and New Athens] (extracts) in D. Kambouroglou *Mnemeia tis Istorias ton Athenon*. [Monuments of the History of Athens] Vol.2, Athens: Estia, 1890, pp.19-40, pp.82-96, pp. 144-152, pp.188-192, and 381-387. See also A. G. de Guillet “Nea Athena.” [New Athens] (extracts) in D. Kambouroglou *Mnemeia tis Istorias ton Athenon*. Vol.2. Issues A, Γ, and Δ, Athens, 1890, pp.19-40, pp.145-152, and pp.188-192 respectively.

<sup>588</sup> See G. Konstantinides op. cit., 2000, pp.385-386. According to Iole Viggopoulou, Guillet, a historiographer of the French Royal Academy of Painting based his description of Athens on his brother’s, La Guilletiere, journal from his journey there. Yet, in making matters even more complex, it is not known if his brother was a real or an imaginary character. See I. Viggopoulou in *I Anadykse...* op. cit., 2005, p.32.

what did the fathers of modern Athens actually see three centuries after de Guillet's fairytale?

Even though the Turks did not consciously risk as much damage to the Acropolis as the Byzantines – apart from the destructive habit of using it as a powder magazine of course – they took an active part in the last damages to the Acropolis before the purification of the site. One such damage was the removal of the Parthenon sculptures by Lord Elgin. Neither alone in claiming the sculptures,<sup>589</sup> nor alone in taking them, Elgin removed some significant parts of the antiquities on the Acropolis, an action that, despite all the debate over the present and future of the sculptures, is important in the context of Athenian modernity. Even though the initial intention was to remove the *entire* Acropolis to Britain,<sup>590</sup> and though what he got was undoubtedly more than what the Turks had allowed him to remove,<sup>591</sup> Elgin was greatly disappointed to discover that the great frieze of the Parthenon was destroyed nearly two centuries earlier, when Morosini attempted to remove it with the disastrous result of shattering it.<sup>592</sup> In 'exchange' for the sculptures, however, Elgin managed the most surprising – and insulting – 'compensation' by the new for the old thereby 'offering' to Athens its first city clock<sup>593</sup> – an object that despite all of Ludwig's crocodile tears over the 'lost daughter', the Bavarians chose *not* to demolish. But Elgin's clock, itself a symbol of capitalism,<sup>594</sup> disguised the fact that, in stealing something from eternity, Elgin gave Athens something that would measure moments of controlled and fixed time. In any case, unable to foresee but anticipating a terrible fate for the clock, the romantic Athenian poet Achilleas Parashos was urging his fellow Athenians to "Burn it Down!"<sup>595</sup> The clock was indeed burnt in a great fire that threatened the city on the eighth of August 1884.<sup>596</sup> Whatever the response to Elgin's actions and the fate of the sculptures, what is essential, is that he, too, contributed to the nineteenth-century's extreme distance from what was Periclean Parthenon. The last recorded act of destruction at the Acropolis

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<sup>589</sup> K. Simopoulos maintains, for example, that – apart from the French Ambassador Fauvel – George Hamilton Gordon, Lord Aberdeen (later prime-minister of Britain) also claimed some friezes. See K. Simopoulos *Ksenoi Taksideutes stin Ellada*. [Foreign Travellers to Greece] Vol.Γ1 and Γ2, Athens: 1975, fn.1, p.314.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, p.96. Simopoulos maintains that – as evident from the correspondence with his superiors – Elgin was acting on behalf and under the orders of the British government. *Ibid.*, Ftn.p.559. Another 'secret' around the marbles is that Elgin was assisted by the fanatically anti-antiquity Gregory III, Archbishop of Athens. See *ibid.*, Ftn.1, p.567.

<sup>591</sup> The Turks' permit to Elgin allowed to him to dig but not to take parts of the building. See D. Gerondas *op. cit.*, 1969, p.300.

<sup>592</sup> *Ibid.*, p.57. Gerondas also discusses the Turks' aversion of Lord Elgin's actions. See *ibid.*, p.312.

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.321-325. In this context Gerondas explains that whereas Elgin suggested that it was the Athenians who set up his clock, it was actually his 'spy', the Italian painter Giovanni Battista Alberti who set it up. See *ibid.*, p.321.

<sup>594</sup> For the relationship between time and capitalism see E.P. Thompson "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism." *Past&Present*, No.38, 1967, pp.56-97.

<sup>595</sup> A. Parashos *Apanda*. [The Complete Poems] Athens: 1904, pp.3-5.

<sup>596</sup> D. Gerondas *op. cit.*, 1969, p.321.

before the ‘restoration works’, in which the Turks participated actively, occurred in the period of the Greeks’ reclamation of the city in 1826-1827, when the Turks persistently bombed the Parthenon and other antiquities.<sup>597</sup>

In exploring the life of the Acropolis from around 4000BC to the nineteenth century and in discussing the overwhelming documentation of destructions and accretions to the site, it is impossible to accept that the nineteenth century confronted the Periclean Parthenon. On the contrary, the ‘architects’ of modern Athens were confronted with a ruin. By the end of the nineteenth century, the ‘traces of barbarous epochs’ were largely erased. The traces of the Byzantine Church, of the Frankish Tower, of the Mosque and of the minaret as well as of the fortifications around the Acropolis were, as Ernest Arthur Gardner was happy to witness in 1907, ‘entirely demolished’.<sup>598</sup> In contrast to Gardner who, attempting to justify Elgin’s plunder, accused the Greeks and their barbarian invaders of destroying the monument,<sup>599</sup> Lionel B. Budden was, in 1910, more worried about the reconstructions themselves.<sup>600</sup> For instance, whereas he praised the ‘extraordinary’ work that was done in the reconstruction of the Erechtheium,<sup>601</sup> Budden suggests that the restoration of the Temple of Athena Nike was ‘clumsy’.<sup>602</sup> Nevertheless, like Gardner, Budden was content because, by 1910, the authorities had demolished the Mosque and the minaret,<sup>603</sup> and the ‘rubbish from the Persian period’ had disappeared.<sup>604</sup> If it is true, therefore, that the ‘Sacred Rock’, was ‘cleansed’ after all, can we also suggest that the ‘cleansing’ itself was an act of destruction? What do we remember as the history of Athens and as its Acropolis? If it is true that the founders of modern Athens did not see Periclean Acropolis, then it is also almost certain that the Parthenon today is definitely not Pericles’ Parthenon. In fact,

All that the visitor can now see is what the archaeologists of the nineteenth century chose to leave behind: a handful of monuments with a

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<sup>597</sup> See Journal of N. Karori 29 June 1826 – 11 April 1827 in I. Vlahoyiannis ed., op. cit., 1901, pp.32-222, especially the entries of 21 July, pp.48-49, 22 July, pp.49-50, and 28 August, pp.82-83.

<sup>598</sup> E.A. Gardner *Ancient Athens*. New York: MacMillan, 1908, p.42. Note that in supporting Lord Elgin, Gardner ‘blames’ the Turks, the Franks, and the Greeks for ‘destroying’ the monument.

<sup>599</sup> Ibid.

<sup>600</sup> L.B. Budden “Recent Reconstruction Work on the Athenian Acropolis II – The Temple of Athena Nike and the Parthenon,” in *The Architectural Review*. Vol. XXVII, January-June 1910, p.342-348. For the restorations until the end of the nineteenth century see also P. Kasriotes *Mnemeia ton Athenon*. [Monuments of Athens] Athens, 1902. Kasriotes had served as curator of the Acropolis.

<sup>601</sup> L.B. Budden op. cit., 1910, p.344.

<sup>602</sup> Ibid. For the first restoration of the Temple of Athena Nike by Ross, Schaubert, and C. Hansen see K.11. Bires op. cit., 1939, p.6.

<sup>603</sup> See L.B. Budden op. cit., 1910, p.347.

<sup>604</sup> Ibid.

fifth-century classical pedigree, standing in splendid (or uncomfortable) isolation, stripped of as much of their later history as possible.<sup>605</sup>

It was nineteenth-century archaeology – with a strong background on classical education – that defined the Parthenon of today. And it was nineteenth-century architectural theory and the archaïomanic Ludwig I that established modern antiquity as the common relative *between* the dead Athenians of the fifth century BC and the nineteenth-century living ‘architects’ of Athens. This was the meaning of the restoration of the celebrated ruin that defined modern Athens. [Fig. V and Fig. VI]

## IX

With an emphasis on the Acropolis and convinced that that the Parthenon is the ‘monument of all monuments’,<sup>606</sup> Rhodes draws an image of the Parthenon as a ruin. Above all, he argues, ruins contain the secrets of a cosmic time and embody “the mystery of antiquity,”<sup>607</sup> whose ‘decayed splendour’ as embodied in ruins, “is a source of curiosity and inspiration because it forces us into a realm of timelessness.”<sup>608</sup> Ruins, therefore, come not merely from the past, but rather from an antiquity which people might experience regardless of distance. In possessing the power to enhance an individual’s sense of a ‘timeless’ cosmos, the ruins’ decadence is not, for Rhodes, synonymous with the buildings’ death. On the contrary, he maintains that:

In the presence of ruins everybody becomes an active participant in the reconstruction of history [...] Before us is a *living bridge* between the past and the present, a building whose character has changed dramatically, but whose vitality and significance have not been diminished by tarnished surface or abandoned function; rather, they have steadily evolved, from proud, unbowed youth to decayed splendour, touching each successive generation in a different way.<sup>609</sup>

Ruins are ‘living bridges’ between the past and the present; they allow for an experience of the passage of time, but also reclaim the individual’s right to an active role in a ‘reconstruction’ of history. At the same time, in rejecting ‘prior knowledge of the distant past’, ruins, for Rhodes, carry the potential for a destruction of hitherto historical narratives

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<sup>605</sup> M. Beard *op. cit.*, 2002, p.102.

<sup>606</sup> R.F. Rhodes *op. cit.*, 1995, p.1.

<sup>607</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>608</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

such as the dubious historicist continuity. Hence, ruins point to a challenging juxtaposition of history with myth:

Ruins give us the tangible reality of history, but are in reality nearly indistinguishable from myth in their effect upon us. In this, and in the ambiguous nature of the semimythological, semihistorical cultures they reflect, the kinship of myth and history are inescapable, of memory and inspiration. For us, experiencing antiquity from a distance, they are inseparable.<sup>610</sup>

However much a ruin may be a bridge between the past and the present, it also underlines a *distance* between them; in advocating a seemingly honest discontinuity between '*what has been*' and '*what still is*', ruins may empower the individual with an unrestricted appreciation of '*what has happened*'. Even though their history is often relative to individual appreciation of the old, ruins remain splendid instances of the past.<sup>611</sup> Yet, despite the fact that this analysis is directly related to the 'meaning' of the Acropolis, Rhodes speaks of it either in terms of the fifth century BC, or in terms of the late twentieth century. In other words, his ruin is the Parthenon without the remnants of the Byzantine Church and of the Mosque, it is the Propylaea without the Frankish tower, it is the Acropolis without the Turkish and Franco-Venetian walls and fortifications. Hence, his Acropolis is the post-1834 roofless ruin but a restored ruin nonetheless. Yet, the 'love' for the ruins of ancient buildings is often founded on a theoretical framework that unmask modern antiquity itself as a pretentious bridge between a constructed past and the present.

In his 1911 essay "The Ruin,"<sup>612</sup> Simmel observes that architecture "is the only art in which the greatest struggle between the will of the spirit and the necessity of nature issues into real peace, in which the soul in its upward striving and nature in its gravity are held in balance."<sup>613</sup> In contrast to architecture which, unites the will of the human spirit with nature's insistent gravity that attracts people to the Earth, the ruin, 'infused with nostalgia', separates them once more, thereby exemplifying a 'comic tragedy' wherein the ruin's "decay appears as nature's revenge for the spirit's having violated it by making a

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<sup>610</sup> Ibid., p.4

<sup>611</sup> Rhodes is referring directly to the Acropolis and the Parthenon. For a more general approach to ruins in relation to ancient Rome see C. Woodward *In Ruins*. London: Vintage; 2002.

<sup>612</sup> G. Simmel "The Ruin," in K.H. Wolff ed., *Georg Simmel 1858-1918*. Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1959, pp.259-266.

<sup>613</sup> Ibid., p.259.

form of its own image.”<sup>614</sup> Nevertheless, such separation embodied in the ruin is only an initial impression. Simmel explains, for instance, that:

The ruin of a building [...] means that where the work of art is dying, other forces and forms, those of nature, have grown; and that out of what of art still lives in the ruin and what of nature already lies in it, there has emerged a new whole, a characteristic unity.<sup>615</sup>

The ruin of a building has the power to separate human will from nature but it does so in order to re-unite them in a substantial way whereby the former surrenders to the forces of the latter. At the same time, in expressing a ‘characteristic unity’, the ruin illustrates how “nature has transformed the work of art into material for her own expression, as she previously served as material for art.”<sup>616</sup> As an object for contemplation and aesthetic appreciation of the relationship between nature and the will of the human spirit, however, the ruin also has a specific ‘character as past’. Indeed, for Simmel:

In the case of the ruin, the fact that life with its wealth once dwelled here constitutes an immediately perceived presence. The ruin *creates the present form of a past life*, not according to the contexts and remnants of that life, but according to its past as such.<sup>617</sup>

In other words, Simmel points to the ruin as resolving the conflict between the human spirit and nature, as well as containing the possibility of drawing an image of the past in the present. Here as in the case with the contest between the ancient and the modern, Simmel draws an image of the ruin ‘as past’ that echoes Nietzsche. Nietzsche writes, for instance:

*Ruins as ornamentation.* – Those who go on many intellectual journeys retain certain outlooks and habits belonging to earlier ages which then intrude into their modern thoughts and actions like a piece of inexplicably antiquity and grey stone-work: often to the embellishment of the whole region.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>614</sup> Ibid.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid., p.260.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid., p.262.

<sup>617</sup> Ibid., p.265, my emphasis.

<sup>618</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.192.

The ruin, therefore, also has the power of enforcing the past to 'intrude' in the present as well as retaining an impression of an 'inexplicable antiquity' and thereby successfully embodying an image of the 'old' haunting the present. Influenced perhaps by Nietzsche's analysis, Simmel defines a specific relationship between the ruin and the individual's perception of the past in the present:

*The past with its destinies and transformations has been gathered into this instant of an aesthetically perceptible present. Here, as in the case of the ruin, with its extreme intensification and fulfilment of the present form of the past, such profound and comprehensible energies of our soul are brought into play that there is no longer any sharp division between perception and thought. Here psychic wholeness is at work – seizing, in the same way that its object fuses the contrast of present and past into one united form, on the whole span of physical and spiritual vision in the unity of aesthetic enjoyment, which, after all, is always rooted in a deeper than merely aesthetic unity.*<sup>619</sup>

Pointing to his definition of modernity in the context of aesthetics once more, Simmel introduces the ruin in terms of an aesthetic appreciation but also in respect to contemplation beyond the senses. At the same time, that last accomplishment of the ruin is also related to the dialectic between what has been in the past with what is left, in the present, from the past. In this context, Frisby explains that:

Although the aesthetic attraction of the ruin lies in its resolution of tensions and its stimulation of appreciation – including nostalgia -- for the past, it is also bound up with modernity. The fortuitous and accidental nature of the disintegration of the built structure and the immediate presentness of 'its external image and internal effect' of the past link our interest in the ruin to features of modernity.<sup>620</sup>

In resolving but also 'preserving' the tensions between the past and the present, Simmel's analysis of the ruin as an 'intensification of the past' in the present may define the ruin itself as past in the eternal time of the present. If the ruin can teach us some things about modernity can it also explain why its role may be illuminating in the context of modern

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<sup>619</sup> G. Simmel in K.H. Wolff ed., op. cit., 1959, p.266, my emphasis.

<sup>620</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, p.119.

antiquity as well? It is here that Athens meets other nineteenth-century modern European capitals.

Frisby suggests that the ruin may be related to modernity in ways Simmel does not discuss. Though the ruin may be related to modernity in Benjamin's concept of the 'ruins of the bourgeoisie',<sup>621</sup> as well as to Benjamin's own search for the old in new Paris,<sup>622</sup> Frisby relates the ruin to modernity in a way that can account for the imposition of the 'modern' upon Athens. First, and that possibility was not accounted for by Simmel, the "proliferation of, albeit often temporary, ruins in the massive reconstruction of the modern metropolis."<sup>623</sup> Here, as in the case of Berlin and Paris in the nineteenth century, the rebuilding of the modern metropolis introduced the partial or at times even massive destruction of the old city. At the same time, the re-building of the modern metropolis often involved the building of a new Athens outside the geographical borders of Athens. During the building of nineteenth-century new Paris, for instance, the area around the Parisian streets St. Lazare, La Roche Foucault and La Tour des Dames as well as the St. Georges quarter were claiming the title of a Parisian 'New Athens'.<sup>624</sup> To return to the 'ruin's temporal dimension'<sup>625</sup> which is missing from Simmel's analysis, however, Baron Haussmann's 'new' Paris literally demolished the pre-existing city, thereby producing a dramatically ruinous state.<sup>626</sup> Hence, Frisby suggests that:

The destruction of the city with its temporary ruins was available for *all* to see. They did not require that aesthetic distance which is necessary for our appreciation of the ruin in Simmel's sense. Indeed, the speed of destruction and reconstruction robbed the observers of the ruins the time for reflection.<sup>627</sup>

The construction of a new Paris, therefore, imposed the complete destruction of the old in the boulevard zone, manifested, for example, in the transformation of the city's old crooked streets into Haussmann's impressive boulevards. On the other hand, however, such demolition and reconstruction was so rapid that it annihilated the necessary

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<sup>621</sup> See W. Benjamin "Paris Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 2002(b), pp.32-49.

<sup>622</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>623</sup> D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 2001, p.119.

<sup>624</sup> G. Tsiomis "I Athena os Evropaïke Protevousa" [Athens as a European Capital] in Exhibition Catalogue: *Athens - Mia Evropaïke Ypothese*. [Athens- A European Affair] Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Culture, 1985, p.85.

<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*, p.118.

<sup>626</sup> For the 'Haussmanization' of Paris see *ibid.*, W. Benjamin *op. cit.*, 2002, S. Rice *Parisian Views*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000, and D. Harvey *op. cit.*, 1985, especially chapter 3: "Paris, 1850-1870", pp.63-220.

<sup>627</sup> D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 2001, p.119.

psychological and temporal distance for the individual to understand the destruction that the ruin meant. Nevertheless, though Athens too suffered elimination of the past, it was very different from the one experienced in Paris.

Whilst the Parisian Prefect started with the street and transformed it into a monument, modernity in Athens started with the ruin, which was later constructed as a monument. At the same time, whilst Haussmann indiscriminately demolished the old, those responsible for the building of Athens after 1834 annihilated *specific* parts of the past. In this context, Bires maintains that, following Klenze's guarantee of Otto's ambition to erect the ruins 'anew', the 'cleansing' of the Acropolis which was undertaken by the archaeologists Ross and Kyriakos Pittakes<sup>628</sup> and the architects Schaubert and Christian Hansen,<sup>629</sup> occurred "without study and with no other differentiation [of antiquities] apart from a chronological one."<sup>630</sup> Whilst Haussmann intended to erase the past, he nonetheless employed Charles Marville, to take photographs of the pre-demolitions Paris.<sup>631</sup> Contrary to such practice of documenting what was being destroyed, those who 'purified' the Acropolis, and Athens, "disdained even to merely record the most interesting ones"<sup>632</sup> among the structures that were being demolished. Although it would be reasonable to assume that the Bavarian administration did not have at its disposal the same technology that Haussmann used, photography was not the only possible option. After all, a government that was so careful as to employ well-experienced architects, such as Klenze, could easily employ a painter or even one of its available architects to draw some quick sketches. This, of course, could be possible unless they were in a hurry or if they were indifferent to the meaning of the 'debris'. The 'fathers' of modern Athens were probably both. Hence, though Haussmann's destruction was indeed radical, he nevertheless chose to keep some memoir – the photographs – of the old thereby introducing a strange 'consideration' of the past. On the contrary, and pointing more clearly to modernity's *aversion to the 'old'*, modern antiquity in Athens was a process of nullifying the old whilst glorifying the ancient.

To return to the ruin's other relation to modernity, which may lead back to Simmel, Frisby also discusses the romantic movement's 'rediscovery' of the ruin in the landscape,<sup>633</sup> evident, for example, in the poetry of Lord Byron, who was undoubtedly "the

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<sup>628</sup> K. Pittakes was the first Greek curator of the Acropolis. See A.H Gerondas "Kyriakos Pittakes." *IA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 99, October 1995, pp.3-10.

<sup>629</sup> C. Hansen and his brother Theophil built a great part of the city's modern monuments including the Athenian Trilogy – the Academy, University, and Library of Athens. Theophil Hansen is also the architect of the Viennese Parliament, built very similarly to the Athenian Trilogy. Hansen and modern monuments will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

<sup>630</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.40.

<sup>631</sup> See S. Rice op. cit., 2000.

<sup>632</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.40.

<sup>633</sup> See D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, p.119.

most prominent Romantic traveller to Greece”.<sup>634</sup> In this context, an Italian traveller to Greece, the economist Saveria Scrofani, wrote, in 1799, that even though Sparta, Athens and Corinth were ‘gone for ever’, the ‘silence’ could still “allow [him] to be moved and to breath freely in this majestic theatre where so many glorious deeds were done.”<sup>635</sup> But whilst Romanticism depicted antiquity as ‘gone for ever’ and *distant*, the historicist and neo-classical nineteenth-century perceptions of ruins and antiquity of the classical Greek world pointed more to the appreciation of the *aesthetic* qualities of this world.<sup>636</sup> At the same time, contrary to Romanticism and Humanitarianism before it, modern antiquity limited the individual’s perception of the Greek world – of Sparta, Corinth and Athens – to Periclean Athens. In turn, this modern ancient perception of the Greek world was limited to an aesthetic appreciation of the newly constructed image of the Acropolis thereby offering the individual the sensation of being part of the past *in* the modern world. Is the ruin merely an aesthetic form then? Frisby suggests that, “Simmel’s instances of ruins are those of classical antiquity,”<sup>637</sup> and may, therefore, provide an interesting parallel to how the Acropolis was a ruin that was forcibly transformed into a ‘monument’. He maintains, for instance, that, “what strikes us is not [...] that human beings destroy the works of man – this is indeed achieved by nature – but that men *let it decay*.”<sup>638</sup> Hence, Simmel accounts, though not in detail, for the possibility of people destroying the works of others. Indeed, people, as parts of nature, can destroy a built structure in a direct, active way, but they can also destroy it indirectly, in the passive attitude of ‘letting it decay’. Though a more detailed analysis of Simmel’s ruin may suggest that such passive destruction is, for Simmel, welcome and positive, the classical ruins in Athens met their modern fate in diametrical opposition to anything that he imagined. Still, in light of the fact that Athenian ruins were not ‘allowed to decay’, Simmel’s analysis of the ruin can give us the first concrete definition of modern antiquity. Just as the ruin establishes a relationship between the past and an *aesthetically perceptible present*, the transformation of the Acropolis into a monument offered a tangible image of the past in the present. At the same time, and exposing itself as a socially constructed image of a *present form of the past*, modern antiquity is a mask that hides the distance between the ancient and the modern. [Fig. V and Fig. VI]

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<sup>634</sup> R. Eisner *Travellers to an Ancient Land*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1991, p.105.

<sup>635</sup> S. Scrofani cited in F.M. Tsigakou *The Rediscovery of Greece – Travellers of the Romantic Era*. London: Thames and Hudson LTD, 1981, p.9.

<sup>636</sup> F.M. Tsigakou in *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>637</sup> D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 2001, p.119.

<sup>638</sup> G. Simmel in K.H. Wolff ed., *op. cit.*, 1959, p.261.



v. The Parthenon c. 1890

Vl. J. Boissonas The Acropolis of Athens. c.1910.



## X

The choice of Athens as the capital of modern Greece meant – and still does – more than just mere location. In employing historicist modern antiquity, those who build new Athens approached history in a schematic and romantic manner wherein the modern capital was identified with Periclean Athens. In turn, combined with Mauer's Law on antiquities, the inauguration of the ruin as an official monument established Athens as the capital of antiquity before it was the capital of the State. Indeed, they both preceded the official settlement of the government in the city. Otto's desire to 'erect anew' the ruins meant that, in order to exploit and to impose this schematic history, a great part of the city's past had to be destroyed and, therefore, forgotten. Hence, the Acropolis had to *appear* as a monument once more. Since it was impossible to restore it into its Periclean glory, the only option left was to destroy the past between the fifth century BC and modern Athens. Just as Louis Bonaparte exploited, for Marx, the dead of the Roman Empire in order to celebrate French sovereignty and superiority, the 'architects' of the new capital chose the aesthetic revolution of the 'golden century', which changed ancient art twenty centuries before,<sup>639</sup> in order to glorify the birth of new Athens. To return to our initial questions, however, Athenian antiquity 'cast its shadow well in advance' before the city's modernity. In this respect it was not Athens itself, but rather its 'once upon a time' Acropolis that was the capital of a new Greece. This was something the founders of modern Athens had decided long before they even went to the city. Nevertheless, their intention was not to ridicule Athenian history. For them, Athens was always ancient Athens; all else was detritus. Yet, in appropriating classical Athens in the building of the modern capital, they, like Louis Bonaparte, made comic and not heroic history. They had not anticipated that. This is how modern antiquity transformed the ruin into a monument and made classical antiquity itself appear as a farce.

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<sup>639</sup> See A. Tzonis and P. Giannisi *op. cit.*, 2004.

#### **Chapter 4: The Monument or the Past Destroyed**

*"Athenians have their place in the history of the people who will mould the world of tomorrow."*<sup>640</sup>

*"Nowhere else in the world can one find a rock of splendour and historic importance equal to the Acropolis of Athens."*<sup>641</sup>

*"There is no salvation in marble."*<sup>642</sup>

### **I**

Is it preferable to remember or to forget the dead? With the exception of metaphysical claims that seek – though without success – to answer the question of death and to offer hopes for ‘life after death’, in reality, there is none. In turn, and in entertaining, at least, the idea that death means nothing, a possible conclusion is that death is not a part of life at all. On the contrary, it is that all-destructive other which rejects life in the most absolute manner. In insisting upon ‘coming to terms’ with death, the living often invent modes of remembrance. These strategies of treasuring some ‘dear memory’ also serve as some kind of a reassurance that death is not absolute. Modern antiquity’s relation to the ruin reveals its character as a strategy of ‘coming to terms’ with death; but it is also a stratagem of manipulating the dead as well as the living. Initially, modern antiquity pretends to create something new whilst, in fact, founding such creation on a constructed and limited image of the old. For example, in the creation of a new Athens in the nineteenth century, the modern capital of 1834 was founded on the ‘dear memory’ of the classical polis. Hence, modern antiquity desires to deal with death in a twofold way: by resurrecting and remembering some of the dead whilst burying and thus forgetting others. If it is true, therefore, that the dead are truly dead only when they are forgotten, then modern antiquity ensures the death of the ‘undesirable’ instances of the past. As the manoeuvring of reality that took place in the ‘cleansing’ of the Acropolis may divulge, not all of the city’s past lives were to be remembered. In assuming these two roles, however, modern antiquity did not deal with death at all. With a determination to remember only some resurrected dead, it refused reality and substituted death for life, thereby ignoring the latter and, at the same time, refusing to see the former for what it was.

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<sup>640</sup> C. Mossé op. cit., 1983, p.213.

<sup>641</sup> A. Philadelphus *Monuments of Athens*. Athens: Kritiki, 2001, p.19.

<sup>642</sup> R. Byron cited in R. Stoneman ed., op. cit., 1984, p.133.

VII.

J. Carrey

The Marquis Charles François  
D'Es de Nointel and the Acropolis.

ATVERS in 1674.



The nineteenth-century Acropolis was not – and will never be – Pericles' monument; in fact, it was not a monument at all. Herein lies the potential character of modern antiquity as farce: whereas the living usually choose to remember their dead, the memory they hold so dear is not of the dead as such – which would mean the corpse – but rather that of the living person whom they knew. Modern antiquity distorts this eccentric stratagem even more. First, it cannot *know* Periclean antiquity the way a living person would know a dead one with whom they might have shared a life. However acute the shock or the discontent of those who chose to 'cleanse' the Acropolis and later other parts of the city, the 'loss' they might have suffered when confronted with the ruin was not necessarily indicative of what Athenians may have felt. In fact, even those Athenians who would describe the state of the Acropolis in the early nineteenth century as painful might not be as 'devastated' as Klenze might have been. Whereas those who sanitized the Acropolis pretended that there did not exist a gap of twenty-two centuries between themselves and the Periclean Parthenon, some Athenians knew that, though the gap existed, it was neither empty space nor abstract time. Second, and in employing imaginary means to annihilate the gap – which they saw only as a void – and, therefore, to remember and resurrect a classical Athens that they had never confronted, the architects and archaeologists of the modern capital also had to *imagine* that the Acropolis was a monument. In narrating a story of life and death, the pre-1834 Acropolis was the repository of the traces of many past ages. At the same time, in having suffered natural disasters, social disasters and the passage of time, it was also considerably injured. Nevertheless, whilst the living choose to remember their dead as they once knew them, in appropriating the dead of another era, modern antiquity selected the 'glorious' among the dead and exploited them in a very concrete sense. It is in the dialectic between the ruin and the monument, therefore, that modern antiquity becomes the death mask of the past.

As long as the Acropolis remained a ruin, it continued to treasure the traces of many past times and told the story of a city with a long living history. Starting around 4000BC, Athens housed ancient Athenians and their Gods, art and war, philosophy and sophistry, foreign invaders and later two monotheistic dogmas – Christianity and Islam. [Fig. VII] Yet, by definition, modern antiquity refuses to acknowledge the history in, and the life of, the city. Rather, in its historicist vision, it saw Athens, as Benjamin argues for historicism in general, only for what its Acropolis meant, 'once upon a time'. Those who celebrated and undertook the purification of the Acropolis saw nothing of the meaningful contradiction that it was. This contradictory enterprise of 'erecting' the ruin 'anew' highlighted a twin process of *obliterating* some whilst *restoring* other antiquities. But these processes also meant the *destruction of antiquity* and the consequent *construction of*

*modern antiquity as antiquity on the dead body of antiquity.* In ‘cleansing’ the Acropolis of the ‘rubble’, modern antiquity legitimated the indiscriminate eradication of post-Periclean accretions to the site, thereby creating an even more ruinous state of affairs. Consequently, modern antiquity sought to unearth the traces of classical antiquity which were dispersed within the ‘wreckage’ – the result this time of the demolitions – and to further assemble, restore and preserve *classical antiquities as the quintessential image of the modern.* In other words, whilst Otto and the fathers of nineteenth-century Athens were determined to ‘erect anew’ the ruins, the quest was, in fact, to erect the new city in the image of its Periclean Acropolis.

## II

In exploring the dynamics behind the building of a new Athens there appears to be an insistent emphasis on the overall importance of classical antiquity and, in particular, of the Acropolis. The widespread mania for bringing the classical monument ‘back to life’ may reveal the potential embarrassment experienced by the ‘founders’ of modern Athens in the nineteenth century, due to the fact that the classical monuments were ruined; yet, they were to be injured even more. In any case, it was ruins that defined the city and which intensified the dialectic between the past and the present. The more the Acropolis was erected anew in the nineteenth century and beyond, the more the perception of antiquity as present dominated the imaginary of Athens as the polis. This becomes more evident in travellers’ descriptions of what they saw in the city.

Frederick Sylver North Douglas, for example, arrived in Greece in April 1811,<sup>643</sup> primarily in order to identify similarities between the ancient and the modern Greeks. Though he was not troubled, as he perhaps should have been, with the fact that his intention was to compare people he did not exactly know – the ancients – with the people he only met, he remains one of the few travellers of the period who were not ecstatically amazed with the Acropolis or antiquities for that matter. In constituting a rare case, his description of the city was the diametrical opposite to the one that sought to erect the city’s ruins ‘anew’. He wrote, for instance, that, “the situation of Athens is remarkably magnificent, and the beautiful effect of its ruins has perhaps been increased by the mellow tint, which enriched and softened the dazzling marble of Pendelicus.”<sup>644</sup> Douglas, who visited Athens twenty-three years before the Bavarian administration and was able to see the accretions to the Acropolis such as the Tower, was honest in his interest, uncommon at

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<sup>643</sup> See K. Simopoulos op. cit., 1975, Vol.F2, pp.157-168, and F.S.N. Douglas *An Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance Between the Ancient and Modern Greeks*. London: John Murray, 1813.

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, p.161. Note also that by referring to Pendelic marble – the white marble of Pendeli, one of Athens’ mountains – he may also refer to the Acropolis.

the time, in studying the Greek people. Yet, his three-week stay in Athens<sup>645</sup> limited his account to a record of the city's 'magnificence' in terms of the decaying 'dazzling' white marbles. Indeed, whereas he suggested that, "when the darkness of paganism yielded to the light of the Gospel, its purity appear still to have contracted some stain from the character of the nation by which it was embraced,"<sup>646</sup> he wrote nothing about the post-classical accretions, such as the Tower, on the Acropolis. Nevertheless, what remains interesting is the fact that he was admiring the ruinous state of Athens as well as its antiquities. Christopher Wordsworth, a nephew of the poet William Wordsworth and later bishop of Lincoln,<sup>647</sup> toured several places in Attica during the years 1832 and 1833,<sup>648</sup> and shared Douglas' appreciation of ruins. Having arrived in Athens on the thirteenth of October,<sup>649</sup> he explained that:

The town of Athens is now lying in ruins. The streets are almost deserted: nearly all the houses are without roofs. The churches are reduced to bare walls and heaps of stones and mortar [...] A few wooden houses, one or two of more solid structure, and the two lines of planked sheds which form the bazaar are all the inhabited dwellings that Athens can now boast.<sup>650</sup>

This decay – possibly identical to the situation witnessed by Otto himself during his first visit to Athens in April 1833 – was, for Wordsworth, a very exciting state. In continuing his description of the city, he wrote that:

In this state of *modern desolation*, the grandeur of the ancient buildings which still survive here is most striking: their preservation is more wonderful. There is now scarcely any building at Athens in so perfect a state as the temple of Theseus. The least ruined objects here, are some of the ruins themselves.<sup>651</sup>

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<sup>645</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 18-24.

<sup>646</sup> *Ibid.*, p.58.

<sup>647</sup> See R. Stoneman *Land of Lost Gods*. E. Aggelomati-Tsougaraki tr., Athens: Educational Foundation of the National Bank of Hellas, 1996, p.246.

<sup>648</sup> C. Wordsworth *Athens and Attica: Journal of a Residence There*. London: John Murray, 1833.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>650</sup> *Ibid.*, p.D2-51.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibid.* Note that the temple of Theseus to which Wordsworth refer is, in fact the temple of Hephaestus commonly known as Theseium, because the friezes of the temple portray the story of Theseus.

Though he begins to describe Athens as 'lying in ruins', Wordsworth argues that, strangely enough, this 'modern desolation' did not have the same impact on the ruins. The city disappointed him more than the ruins. For Wordsworth, Athens was not Athens anymore, but the Parthenon was still what he had imagined it to be: gloriously aged. Having declared his allure with ruins, however, Wordsworth did not hesitate to identify the city with classical antiquity. In proposing an interesting contrast between the two 'ancient' cities of Europe, Athens and Rome, for instance, he returned to the 'desolate state' of the former in order to declare that:

This being the actual state of the place, however melancholy may be the aspect of objects about us, it cannot but be felt that *this very desolation itself has its value*. It simplifies the picture. *It makes an abstraction of all other features, and leaves the spectator alone with Antiquity*. In this consists, particularly at the present period, the superiority of Athens over Rome, as a reflection of the ancient world. *At Athens the ancient world is everything*; at Rome it is only a part, and a very small one, of a very great and varied whole.<sup>652</sup>

Like the Bavarians' city, Wordsworth's Athens was almost always synonymous with classical antiquity. After all, during his visit to Athens, Wordsworth had befriended Ludwig Ross,<sup>653</sup> and it is, therefore, likely that the two men shared the same enthusiasm about the 'classical ideal'. But contrary to his friend's ambition to bring the Acropolis 'back to life', Wordsworth was amongst the last few, in the nineteenth century, to assign a specific value to decaying objects. This could be due to the fact that he was following in the footsteps of certain previous travellers.

William Martin Leake, whose topography of Athens guided Wordsworth's strolls in the city,<sup>654</sup> faithfully consulted Pausanias' guide to Greece and actually went in search of the antiquities recorded by the ancient author.<sup>655</sup> Contrary to Wordsworth's sporadic references to Pausanias, in its greatest part, Leake's topography<sup>656</sup> consists of an attempt to literally walk in Pausanias' footsteps, thereby searching for the city that the second century AD Greek recorded. In turn, such blind insistence upon antiquity and Leake's consequent indifference to the present, traps him in an appreciation of anything by virtue of its being

<sup>652</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52, my emphasis.

<sup>653</sup> See R. Stoneman *op. cit.*, 1996, p.357.

<sup>654</sup> See C. Wordsworth *op. cit.*, 1833, p.53.

<sup>655</sup> Pausanias travelled in Greece in the second century AD, during the Antonines' rule. For his account of Athens and Attica see J.G. Fraser ed., and tr., *Pausanias' Description of Greece*. Vol.1, London: MacMillan and Co., 1898.

<sup>656</sup> W.M. Leake *The Topography of Athens with Some Remarks on its Antiquities*. London: J. Rodwell, 1841.

old. Whereas he later ascended the Acropolis proclaiming that it is “particularly in architecture that we [Europeans] need the guidance of the Greeks,”<sup>657</sup> Leake maintained that the essence of Athens lies in its being ‘old’:

But above all the cities of Greece, Athens, although it has never ceased to be a large inhabited place, still affords the best prospect of discoveries interesting to the artist and antiquary. Here every fragment that is found bears testimony to the pre-eminent taste and skill of ancient people; every inscription throws light on history and philosophy. The buildings of the modern town may forbid researchers throughout a great part of the site, but all the southern and western parts of the Asty, the suburbs of the gardens and of Agrae; the longomural town and the entire Peiraic city, are open to the excavator.<sup>658</sup>

Leake, who left Athens on the sixteenth of September 1802 with the ‘Mentor’, the ship that carried Lord Elgin’s plunder,<sup>659</sup> was disappointed because he saw a new city built on the old one, which Pausanias had recorded. On the other hand, however, he was convinced that ‘every fragment’ of the old in Athens was also the ‘storehouse of history and philosophy’, a conviction which travellers were often only too eager to embrace. Unsurprisingly, in the abundance of the old in Athens, Leake’s admiration for antiquity reached its zenith in his description of the Parthenon: “in the Parthenon, there was nothing to direct the spectator’s contemplation [away] from the simplicity and majesty of mass and outline, which forms the first and most remarkable object of admiration in a Greek temple.”<sup>660</sup>

There are, therefore, two common phenomena concerning the Parthenon in the descriptions offered by Douglas, Wordsworth and Leake. First, a ‘simplicity’ that is, more often than not, the result of abstraction wherein the spectator can isolate the parts of the old in which he is interested, thereby also feeling that he is miraculously left alone with ‘Antiquity’. Second, regardless of the fact that he is living *in* the present, the power of the imagination to ‘transfer’ the spectator into a specific fragment of time. In surmising that he could discover Pausanias’ Athens after all the centuries between the ancient Greek traveller and himself, Leake is imagining an antiquity defined as ‘old’ as early as the second century AD. At the same time, though imagination plays a vital role in blindly following a route defined by earlier travellers, the spectators of antiquity choose a preferable history in an

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<sup>657</sup> Ibid., p.103.

<sup>658</sup> Ibid., p.102.

<sup>659</sup> See K. Simopoulos op. cit., 1975, Vol.12, p.318.

<sup>660</sup> W.M. Leake op. cit., 1841, p.308.

arbitrary – that is in a modern antiquarian – way that also allows them to feel part of antiquity.

### III

With the passage of time and embracing the fascination with ‘ruins’ admitted by earlier travellers, the admiration of the Parthenon is increasingly depicted as a profound personal experience. Whilst she would later distinguish herself as modern and, therefore, alien to the ancient Greeks, for example, Isadora Duncan wrote in her autobiography that as she and her family ascended the Sacred Rock in 1903, “it seemed to me that all the life I had known up to that time had fallen away from me as a motley garment; that I had never lived before; that I was born for the first time in that long breath and first gaze of pure beauty.”<sup>661</sup> Even though by the time she wrote this, Duncan had realized the exaggeration of her initial impression, she nonetheless chose to admit the experience. Despite the fact that Duncan’s first visit was given a picture of a life-changing experience whose hyperbole she later admitted, other visitors to the site would hold their initial glance at the Parthenon as sacred for the rest of their lives. Philip Johnson, the influential mid-twentieth-century American architect, for instance, literally divided his life into pre- and post-Parthenon:

I saw the Parthenon for the first time in 1928. I knew about its architecture and History, but the real presence of the rocks is entirely different than in books. If you have only seen pictures of the Parthenon, you do not have the slightest idea what it is about. Being on this specific hill, with all the marvellous hills around... There was a Philip Johnson pre-Parthenon and a Philip Johnson post-Parthenon, because this was my most fervent learning experience.<sup>662</sup>

What Duncan and Johnson share in common -- despite the exaggeration that the former confessed to later -- is a profound personal relation to the Parthenon, which, unexpectedly, could still surprise. As Sidney W. Hopper, who went to Greece sometime in the late 1930s, suggested, the most striking characteristic of the Parthenon is “the surprise of finding that [it] can still surprise and fill the mind with awe and wonder.”<sup>663</sup> Once more, Hopper’s description of such ‘awe’ and ‘wonder’ reminds us of Proas’ description of the temple whose ‘divine figure was outlined on the azure sky’: “the golden stones of the Parthenôn

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<sup>661</sup> I. Duncan cited in P. Green *The Parthenon*. New York: Newsweek, 1973, p.160. For a fragment of Duncan’s autobiography discussing Athens see *Ibid.*, pp.159-160.

<sup>662</sup> P. Johnson cited in *Eikones*. 13 March 2005, p.79.

<sup>663</sup> S.W. Hopper *Greek Earth*. London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1939, p.64. Hopper is using Greek phonetics.

gleam with a glistering reflection, yet clean-cut against the azure sky.”<sup>664</sup> Hopper’s depiction of the Parthenon does not end here. Rather, he continues with more hyperbole and argues that, “it might be thought that the Acropolis had been built for the Parthenôn,”<sup>665</sup> that the Parthenon “stands in dignity and majesty, a supreme example of fitness and rightness,”<sup>666</sup> and finally, even that “there is nothing disappointing or disillusioning in the Parthenôn.”<sup>667</sup> In reference to the history of the Acropolis, however, this ‘fitness’ of the Parthenon that Hopper described as actually ‘standing’, is rather problematic. When Hopper visited Athens, he was certainly right to observe, for instance, that, “the Propylaea are so clean and pure that they appear to shine with the brightness of the atmosphere.”<sup>668</sup> But he was wrong to assume that “the stately blocks of the Acropolis are among the few ancient relics that need no imagination to verify or beautify them.”<sup>669</sup> Indeed, Duncan, Johnson and Hopper visited Athens a century after Otto had promised to erect the ruins of the Acropolis ‘anew’.

The century that stands between them and Otto also mark the period in which Klenze’s ambitious vision of an official monument had restored the ruin into a monumental form and modern antiquity had already imposed its imagery on history and reality. Nevertheless, this disregard for reality, remains more interesting in the context of nineteenth-century travellers, if only because they willingly underestimated the meaning of the ‘cleansing’ which had, in its greatest part, occurred in their lifetime. For instance, Ernst Renan, a late nineteenth-century expert on classical Greece, who went to Athens in 1865 with his wife,<sup>670</sup> did not hesitate to describe his impression of the Acropolis in terms of a revelation of the ‘divine’.<sup>671</sup> How can there ever be a relation, however, between some unknown and possibly non-existent ‘divine’ and the concrete social construction of the past?

Although travellers to Athens usually had and still, perhaps, have a specific view of what is important, divine or profane, there was one ‘traveller’ who despised ruins. This exception was the man ordered with the ‘cleansing’ of the Acropolis. Ross’ description of 1832 Athens is astonishing in all respects: “This is not [Athens]. This is a uniquely horrible

<sup>664</sup> Ibid., p.39.

<sup>665</sup> Ibid., p.44.

<sup>666</sup> Ibid., p.64.

<sup>667</sup> Ibid.

<sup>668</sup> Ibid., pp.61-62.

<sup>669</sup> Ibid., p.39.

<sup>670</sup> I. Boutouropoulou “I Athena kai o Renan.” [Athens and Renan] in Feuilleton: *Athens – To Prosopo mias Polis*. [Athens – The Face of the City] Athens: Soroptimistic Society of Greece, 2000, pp.91-102. Renan has also written a poem called ‘Prayer on the Acropolis’. See *ibid.*

<sup>671</sup> See D.S Balanos “Ernst Renan.” *TA ATHENAÏKA*, Issue 17, Christmas 1960, p.45. Renan’s love for the Acropolis was so great that he was speaking of it when he was dying. See *ibid.*, p.46. For Renan’s visit to Athens see also A. Argyriou “The Parthenon in the Consciousness of Modern Greek Poets and Thinkers,” in P. Tournikiotis ed., *op. cit.*, 1994, p.344.

accumulation of ruins, an amorphous, uniform grey-green mass of ash and dust.<sup>672</sup> In presuming that what he saw in Athens was not ‘really’ Athens, Ross arrogantly proposed that he was, in the first place, in a position to know what the city was. At the same time, he also supposed that what he imagined *as Athens* ought to transform that ‘horrible accumulation of ruins’ into what ‘should be’ Athens. In succeeding to fulfil both of Ross’ assumptions, those who undertook the rebuilding of Athens as they thought it ‘should be’, also betrayed modernity’s fear of what is left from the past. In other words, whilst confronting a ruined Athens and an injured Acropolis, what Ross actually said was not merely that what he saw was not, for him, Athens, but rather that what was Athens at the time was not the ‘acceptable’ foundation of new Athens. Hence, Ross did not care that the Acropolis was ruined as such, but rather that it was ‘contaminated’. As would be expected, however, Ross was expressing a more general attitude towards the past.

In 1834, the Bavarian administration invited Karl Gustav Fiedler to draw up a mineralogical map of Greece.<sup>673</sup> Even though his work was not related to the Acropolis, Fiedler too was convinced that the government was right to order the “wise archaeologist Ross to cleanse [the Acropolis] from the debris.”<sup>674</sup> A year later, F.X von Predl, the Bavarian officer who assumed his duties as commander of the Acropolis’ garrison on the fifteenth of June 1833,<sup>675</sup> could not bear to describe what he saw. Rather, during his first visit to the Acropolis on the fourth of April 1833,<sup>676</sup> Predl felt so offended by the site that he turned his sight to the sea, thereby ‘erasing’ that ‘painful’ impression of ‘dereliction’ and ‘destruction’.<sup>677</sup> In order for those involved in the – material or ideological – rebuilding of Athens as the capital to be able to construct the new on the foundations of the old, they first had to *found the chosen ‘old’*. The sanitization, restoration and preservation of selected parts of the old that were violently imposed on Athens point to the dialectic between the past and the present, which, in nineteenth-century Athens, soon wore, as we will see, the guise of the dialectic between the ruin and the monument.

#### IV

Most travellers to Greece, including Schliemann, who sponsored the demolition of the Frankish tower in the Propylaea, were, in fact, following the exact routes prescribed by Pausanias. These were routes, or rather shortcuts, to a past that the second-century AD

<sup>672</sup> L. Ross op. cit., 1976, p.163.

<sup>673</sup> K.G. Fiedler “I Athena to 1834-1837.” [Athens in 1834-1837] G. Deyiannis tr., TA ATHENAIKA, Issue 18, Easter 1961, pp.41-47.

<sup>674</sup> Ibid., p.46.

<sup>675</sup> F.X von Predl “Anamneseis apo tin Ellada to 1833, 1834 kai 1835.” [Memories from Greece in 1833, 1834 and 1835], Part III., G. Deyiannis tr., TA ATHENAIKA, Issues 31-32, Easter 1964, pp.33-41.

<sup>676</sup> F.X von Predl “Anamneseis apo tin Ellada to 1833, 1834 kai 1835.” Part I., G. Deyiannis tr., TA ATHENAIKA, Issue 29, Christmas 1964, p.43.

<sup>677</sup> F.X von Predl “Anamneseis apo tin Ellada to 1833, 1834 kai 1835”, Part II., G. Deyiannis tr., TA ATHENAIKA, Issue 30, Easter 1965, p.37.

author had defined as antiquity. As J.G Fraser, the nineteenth-century English translator and editor of Pausanias' work suggests: "again and again, [Pausanias] notices shunken or ruined cities, deserted villages, roofless temples, shrines without images and pedestals without statues, faint vestiges of places that once had a name and played a part in history."<sup>678</sup> In his search for the city's history, Pausanias observed the ruins that were reservoirs of the past. Even though he would, at times, observe the people he met, his "real interest [...] lay neither in the country nor in the people of his own age, but in those monuments of the past, which, though too often injured by time or defaced by violence, he still found in profusion over Greece."<sup>679</sup> Whilst Pausanias went in search of a past, which he might decipher in the ruins, he was not actually interested in discovering his ancestral Greece as such. Rather, in recognizing, as Fraser observes, classical Athens "as the representative of all that was best in Greek life,"<sup>680</sup> Pausanias, mostly "chose to chronicle the masterpieces of the great age of art."<sup>681</sup> Though Pausanias' description of the Acropolis is very interestingly marked by a methodical discussion of the myths surrounding the Rock, such as the birth of Athena and the long lost golden-ivory statue of the goddess, his admiration of Athenians is most evident in his sketch of the Agora:

In the market-place of Athens, amongst other objects which are not universally known, there is an altar to Mercy, to whom, though he is of all gods the most helpful in human life and in the vicissitudes of fortune, the Athenians are the only Greeks who pay honour. Humanity is not the only characteristic of the Athenians: they are also more pious than other people, for they have altars of Modesty, of Rumour, and of Impulse. Clearly people who are more pious than their neighbours have a proportionate share of luck.<sup>682</sup>

Admiring Pausanias' choice to emphasize Athens and the virtue of its people, Fraser offers a very interesting explanation for such a decision. First, he argues that Pausanias was motivated by an understandable 'patriotism' and, therefore, "sympathised with the ancient glories of his country and deeply mourned its decline."<sup>683</sup> Second, because of this 'patriotism', Pausanias, for Fraser, actually chose to record what was 'best' in Athens,

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<sup>678</sup> J.G. Fraser ed., op. cit., 1898, p.xiv.

<sup>679</sup> Ibid., p.xxxiii.

<sup>680</sup> Ibid., p.xxxiv.

<sup>681</sup> Ibid.

<sup>682</sup> Pausanias in ibid., p.23. See also J.G. Fraser ed. and tr., *Pausanias' Description of Greece*. Vol.2, London: MacMillan and Co., 1898, note 17.1, pp.143-144. The altar to Mercy mentioned by Pausanias is the altar of Pity [no 37] in Gardner's map 'Route of Pausanias shown by numbers'. See E.A. Gardner op. cit., 1908.

<sup>683</sup> J.G. Fraser in J.G. Fraser op. cit., 1898, Vol.1, p.xxiv.

“rather than the feeble productions of decadence.”<sup>684</sup> Yet, this double justification of Pausanias’ desire to choose the past introduces an interesting difference between him and Fraser who applauded such choice as the result of ‘good taste’.<sup>685</sup>

Even though it may be reasonable to suggest that Pausanias detested the Macedonians for conquering Athens and the Romans for having by his time occupied Greece, he nonetheless consciously chose to highlight, but not to isolate, a fragment of the past. In providing us with an example of the construction of antiquity in antiquity, Pausanias also produced a guide that is in equal parts modern and ancient. Indeed, his guide is modern for his time but it is ancient for the centuries after his own – including both the present and the nineteenth century. What was it that Pausanias wanted to do, however, and why was he so interested in antiquity? Whilst he recognized Periclean Athens as the supreme era of the past, Pausanias is consistently very reluctant to express an open and uncritical disappointment with his present. In this context, Prokesh von Osten, the Austrian ambassador in Athens from 1834 to 1849 explained that, despite all the monuments whose description is missing from Pausanias’ guide, we should not forget that he was primarily addressing his contemporaries and not later generations.<sup>686</sup> In this respect, we can assume that, in surmising that the new Roman Athens was hiding the Periclean polis, Pausanias attempted to unearth and to remind his contemporaries of a history that was in danger of being forgotten because of the events of later periods. In contrast, Fraser’s determination to applaud Pausanias for having ‘good taste’ and thus recording the ‘best’ of the past betrays a nineteenth-century discontent with the present that is alien to Pausanias’ work, as well as a modern tendency to the aesthetization of reality.

From the beginning of his introduction to Pausanias’ First Book on Attica Fraser explains that, in search of the past, the ancient traveller strolled among ruined cities and accepted them as a valuable reservoir of the traces of the old. But he also congratulates Pausanias for neglecting those ‘feeble productions of decadence’. Whilst he accepted that ruined cities taught the lessons of the past, Fraser rejected the possibility that these ‘feeble productions’ might also contain some lessons about the city. In other words, Fraser assumed that ancient ruins might be more important than later objects, which, for the nineteenth century, were also old. Furthermore, Fraser chooses to forget the fact that after Sulla had sacked and ruined Athens in 86BC,<sup>687</sup> the Romans had rebuilt parts of the city. Whilst Pausanias actually looked for the traces of classical antiquity in Roman Athens and

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<sup>684</sup> Ibid.

<sup>685</sup> Ibid.

<sup>686</sup> P. von Osten “Denkwürdigkeiten und Erinnerung aus dem Orient.” Part I.G. Doyiannis tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 33, Easter 1966, pp.33-45. See also Part II. *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 34, September 1966, pp.18-20 and Part III. *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 40, September 1968, pp.17-22.

<sup>687</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.92.

thought that his present was threatening the past, Fraser rejected important instances of Pausanias' century. Indeed, Fraser rejected Roman Athens as a time of 'decadence'; the decadent, for Fraser, pointed to the new Roman buildings and not to the classical ruins. In turn, whereas both Wordsworth and Leake would refer to 'Minerva' – that is the Roman equivalent for Athena – Fraser's 1898 translation of Pausanias, more than half a century after the two travellers visited Athens, refers to the goddess by her Greek name.

The distinction between Greek and Roman art attributed to Winckelmann as well as the consequent shift to the use of Greek instead of Roman names when narrating ancient Greek mythology in the deciphering of the architectural symbolism of ancient ruins, is intimately related to Athens' fate in the nineteenth century. Whether this 'destiny' was good, as it was for Pausanias by virtue of Athenian piety, was defined in terms of a broader ideological framework concerning the dialectic between the city's ruins and its new buildings. Whilst this dialectic was evident in Pausanias' search for the secrets of ruins in a rebuilt Athens, it was nonetheless more obvious and utterly distorted in the Bavarians' hatred for 'dereliction' and 'rubble'.

## V

Despite the pretentious attempts of Mauer's 1834 Law to protect all antiquities, the old in Athens was not treated as a uniform category of homogeneous elements. In light of the first settlements in the city dated circa 4000 BC, Athens contains an abundance of the old, thereby also possessing layers upon layers of different parts of the past.<sup>688</sup> Following 1834, however, the city was forced into identification with the fifth-century polis, thereby implementing the official destruction of a great part of this past. Besides the few natural disasters that have hit the Acropolis, such as the 426BC and 1894 earthquakes, as far as the Parthenon is concerned, people "alone [are] responsible for the current state of this ancient masterpiece and [have] wrought more damage to it than all the forces of nature together."<sup>689</sup> Indeed, apart from all later destructions – including the 'cleansing' process itself – Korres suggests that the initial decay of the Parthenon can be dated already in 304-303 BC<sup>690</sup> and that, "the worse insult to the spirit of the classical temple was committed in 61AD when a monumental inscription some 25 metres long was placed on the east architrave in honour of Nero."<sup>691</sup> Nevertheless, though he maintains that the most serious destruction to the Parthenon to-date is the 1687 explosion, Korres also substantiates the argument that not

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<sup>688</sup> The assumption that Athens still possesses many layers of its past was verified during the excavations that accompanied the initial works for the Athens Metro in 1992-1997. The archaeologists have now identified traces of six millennia in the city. See N.C. Stampolidis and L. Parlama eds., *Athens: The City Beneath the City*. J. Leatham, C. Macdonald and C. Theohari trs., Athens: Ministry of Culture, N.P. Goulandris Foundation – Museum of Cycladic Art, KAPON, 2000.

<sup>689</sup> M. Korres in P. Tournikiotis ed., *op. cit.*, 1994, p.138.

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>691</sup> *Ibid.*, p.140.

only did the Acropolis usually follow the history of Athens from its birth, but that it has suffered the ‘innovation’ of practically all invaders of the city after the fifth century BC. The establishment of Athens as the capital, however, was stamped by a radically different ‘innovation’. Though all previous foreign rulers of the city would add something new to the old in the Acropolis, the ‘architects’ of modern Athens, were the first to *subtract the ‘newer’ of the past in search of the ancient*. In choosing, albeit without documentation, to destroy all post-classical accretions in order to unearth ancient Athens, the modern ‘fathers’ of the capital demolished many old artefacts and buildings that had covered the pre- and fifth-century polis.<sup>692</sup>

The restoration works on the Acropolis<sup>693</sup> started in the temple of Athena Nike in 1835;<sup>694</sup> interestingly enough, this process, completed in 1846,<sup>695</sup> was the first restoration of a monument in Europe.<sup>696</sup> By 1842-1843, under Pittakes’ supervision, the last remaining traces of the bombed Mosque were cleansed.<sup>697</sup> Following the work on the temple of Athena Nike, the restoration of the Erechtheum was continuous from 1837 to 1840<sup>698</sup> and the greatest part of the building was fully recovered by 1845-1846.<sup>699</sup> In turn, although the tower was not demolished until more than two decades later, the restoration of the Propylaea was fully successful in 1850;<sup>700</sup> six years earlier, in 1844, the walls of the Parthenon were being recovered.<sup>701</sup> Less than twenty years after the Bavarians’ arrival in the city, therefore, the ruins were almost fully cleansed and indeed ‘erected anew’.<sup>702</sup> Yet, the destruction of the old in search of the ancient as the foundation of the new also signalled an intense series of excavations that have not stopped since.<sup>703</sup> In descending the Acropolis for the first time, the Architectural Department of the Ministry of the Interior defined five archaeological areas around the ‘Sacred Rock’: first, the area around the Theseium; second the monument of Lysicrates; third the area of the Roman Agora; fourth

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<sup>692</sup> Note here that the fifth-century polis itself had covered past centuries. The Parthenon, for instance, was built on the pre-Parthenon.

<sup>693</sup> For a record of the restoration works see F. Malouhou-Tuffano *I Anastelosi ton Arhaion Mnemeion stin Neoteri Ellada*. [The Restoration of Ancient Monuments in Newer Greece. 1834-1939] Athens: The Archaeological Society at Athens, number 176, and KAPON, 1998.

<sup>694</sup> F. Malouhou-Tuffano “The Antiquities of Athens During the 1896 Olympic Games,” in A. Solomou-Prokopiou and I. Voyiatzi eds., *Athens in the End of the Nineteenth Century*. Athens: Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, 2004, p.177.

<sup>695</sup> *Ibid.*, p.178.

<sup>696</sup> *Ibid.*, p.177.

<sup>697</sup> For the period 1836-1863 wherein K. Pittakes was curator of the Acropolis monuments see F. Malouhou-Tuffano op. cit., 1998, pp.27-41.

<sup>698</sup> F. Malouhou-Tuffano in A. Solomou-Prokopiou and I. Voyiatzi eds., op. cit., 2004, pp.177-178.

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>700</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>701</sup> *Ibid.*, p.178.

<sup>702</sup> For the subsequent restorations supervised by P. Efstratiadis in 1864-1884, and P. Kavvadias in 1885-1905 as well as until World War II, see F. Malouhou-Tuffano, op. cit., 1998, pp.65-243.

<sup>703</sup> See, for example, J.M. Camp *The Archaeology of Greece*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001, and I. Travlos “Athens after the Liberation: Planning the New City and Exploring the Old.” *Hesperia*. Vol.50, No.4, “Greek Towns and Cities: A Symposium.” October-December 1981, pp.391-407.

the Stoa of Attalus; and fifth the Stoa of the Giants in the ancient Greek Agora.<sup>704</sup> These five archaeological sites, approved on the third of November 1836 by Ross, were actually defined by Christian Hansen.<sup>705</sup> Whilst the Greek Archaeological Society completed the greatest part of the excavations upon the summit and the slopes of the Acropolis in 1889,<sup>706</sup> the city presented a more difficult case. Nevertheless, following a series of demolitions, by 1896, the excavations had revealed the greatest part of the ancient cemetery of Cerameicus.<sup>707</sup> In turn, assisted by the fire that put an end to the life of Elgin's clock, the Greek Archaeological Society radically 'sanitized' the area of Hadrian's Library;<sup>708</sup> among the victims of this 'cleansing' of the city was the Byzantine church of Megali Panayia dedicated to the Virgin Mary.<sup>709</sup> At the same time, from the time of the great fire until five years later, in 1890, under the supervision of curator Panayiotis Kavvadias and Georg Kawerau, the Greek Archaeological Society continued the removal of the last remaining post-classical accretions from the Acropolis.<sup>710</sup> Following the success of his work, Kavvadias victoriously announced that:

Thus Hellas renders to the civilized world the Acropolis, as a *noble monument* of Greek genius, cleansed of *every barbaric addition*, as a venerable and unique treasure-house of the sublime creations of ancient art.<sup>711</sup>

For the second time since its 1834 Klenze celebration, Kavvadias was proud to offer to the world a *monument* free of the traces of 'barbarism', the great irony of which was that the Bavarian administration, whose dream was summarized in Kavvadias' words, did not have the 'pleasure' of seeing the Acropolis *fully* 'erected'.

Otto's reign lasted until 1862, when, following a number of rebellions initially demanding a constitution that was finally granted in 1844,<sup>712</sup> the Bavarian administration was forced to leave. Since neither the option of a Greek king nor the possibility for an

<sup>704</sup> F. Malouhou-Tuffano in A. Solomou-Prokopiou and J. Voyiatzi eds., op. cit., 2004, p.183. For an analysis of the restorations and excavations in Athens from 1834 to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, see also A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Athens – The Ancient Heritage and the Historic Cityscape in a Modern Metropolis*. Athens: The Archaeological Society at Athens, number 140, 1994, pp.269-313.

<sup>705</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.62.

<sup>706</sup> M.L. D'Ooge op. cit., 1908, p.v. For excavations until the early twentieth century see also E.A. Gardner op. cit., 1907. Note also that Gardner is justifying Elgin's theft of the marbles.

<sup>707</sup> F. Malouhou-Tuffano in A. Solomou-Prokopiou and J. Voyiatzi eds., op. cit., 2004, p.189.

<sup>708</sup> Ibid., pp.175-177.

<sup>709</sup> Ibid.

<sup>710</sup> Ibid., pp.178-180. For Kavvadias and G. Kawerau's work see also I. Mylonas Shear "The Western Approach to the Athenian Akropolis." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol.119, 1999, pp.86-127.

<sup>711</sup> P. Kavvadias cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1994, p.218, my emphasis. Note also that, in this context, Papageorgiou-Venetas maintains that, 'barbaric' meant both 'un-Greek' and 'uncivilized'. See *ibid.*, note 116, p.219.

<sup>712</sup> J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, p.50.

abolition of the monarchy was considered by the ‘great powers’<sup>713</sup> as a viable scenario, it was finally Prince Christian William Ferdinand Adolphus George of the Danish Sonderberg-Glücksberg dynasty who, in 1863, ascended the throne as King George I of the Hellenes.<sup>714</sup> In other words, whilst it is true that the restorations of, and excavations for Athenian antiquity are still continuous – though today with an admittedly broader historical framework – it was the Bavarians’ three decades that founded, for the present as well as for the future, Athens with a polished image of the past. Yet, not everybody applauded the choices of those who cleared the city from the ‘rubble’.

The French nineteenth-century archaeologist Raoul Rochette, for instance, wrote, in October 1834, that those who sought to make Athens the capital were actually destroying the very city they were looking for: “they are not going to discover ancient Athens; on the contrary, they are going to demolish or to bury deep what is left of it.”<sup>715</sup> Nevertheless, though mainly interested in ancient Athens and not the city built above it over time, Rochette introduced objections that were closer to some Athenians’ own perception of the city. Despite the active participation of Greeks in the rebuilding of the city after liberation, and in spite of the massive excavations undertaken by the Greek Archaeological Society – especially after 1862 – none of the first architects involved in the cleansing of the Acropolis and the city was an Athenian. Generally speaking, Greeks may have partly supported the demolition of mainly Ottoman buildings that reminded them of four centuries of subjugation, buildings that were not always seen as aesthetically valuable as Greek antiquities. In 1877, two years after Schliemann had sponsored the demolition of the Tower by the Propylaea, the historian E. Freeman accused the archaeologist of ‘licentious barbarity’.<sup>716</sup> In contrast, some Greeks did not always agree with Freeman’s perception of historical truth. For example, Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, one of the greatest nineteenth-century architects of Athens, replied to Freeman and suggested that Athens and Greece in general, did not need such ‘obvious, botched pieces of work’ whose sole purpose was to arouse a ‘historical sentiment’ and the consequent ‘contemplation of past barbarity’.<sup>717</sup> In this context, Panayiotis Kastriotis, curator of the Acropolis’ monuments in the early twentieth century, also congratulated Schliemann for the ‘noble’ act.<sup>718</sup> In Kaftantzoglou and Kastriotis’ views, therefore, the process of destroying parts of the past in the capital

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<sup>713</sup> The ‘Great Powers’ refer to Britain, France, and Russia.

<sup>714</sup> R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, p.59. King George I was assassinated in 1913.

<sup>715</sup> R. Rochette cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.44. Strangely enough, this is what Schliemann did with Troy.

<sup>716</sup> E. Freeman cited in D. Kambouroglou *Istoria ton Athenaiou*. [History of the Athenians] Vol.1, Athens: Palmos, 1969, pp.226-228.

<sup>717</sup> L. Kaftantzoglou cited in *ibid.*, pp.228-230. Kaftantzoglou’s significant role in the planning and building of new Athens will be further explored later.

<sup>718</sup> P. Kastriotis *Mnemeia ton Athenon*. [Monuments of Athens] Athens, 1902, p.31.

suggested that what was destroyed was not a Greek or an Athenian past after all. Is not a city's life its history too then? Even though some argued that not all the past was 'glorious' and that the Parthenon remained the supreme artistic creation of Greek 'genius', both this glory and the Parthenon's artistic value were ultimately chosen and defined by non-Athenians.<sup>719</sup> Indeed, there is a problem concerning who it was that defined modern Athens in the nineteenth century. Though such a conclusion is part of a later stage, it is nonetheless important to highlight the fact that there was an interesting contrast between Athenians' and non-Athenians' views of the city.

The most significant voice of late nineteenth-century Athens, in this context, is undoubtedly that of the prominent historian Demetrios Kambouroglou.<sup>720</sup> Even though Kambouroglou supported a healthy ambivalence as to the past, and though, as an Athenian, he naturally loved the injured, restored and manipulated Parthenon, thereby distinguishing classical art as aesthetically superior to Ottoman-built structures such as mosques, he, nonetheless firmly advocated the *respect* towards all the eras of the city's history.<sup>721</sup> Indeed, Kambouroglou suggested that, "something that may not be important for art, may nonetheless be very significant for the history of art."<sup>722</sup> Whilst a mosque may not have the same artistic 'power' as the Acropolis, for instance, as far as the life of the city is concerned, it has the same historical value. In turn, and condemning the greatest part of the demolitions, when it comes to the purpose of the restoration of the ancient ruins Kambouroglou remained sceptical: "When these ruins are restored, there will not be a Parthenon any more."<sup>723</sup>

Even though he distinguished the Venetians as the worse of all of the city's invaders – mostly because of the 1687 explosion – Kambouroglou believed that the ruins of the Franco-Venetian occupation, just as the remnants of the Ottoman four-centuries' rule, whatever 'disgraceful accretions'<sup>724</sup> they might be, should not have been demolished because they were testimonies to the city's life.<sup>725</sup> Despite his support of the demolition of the Tower, therefore, Kambouroglou insisted that art and history are two different aspects of one's experience of the city<sup>726</sup> and concluded – rather sarcastically – that, since the Acropolis was, by 1889, a 'corpse', it was rightfully surrendered 'into the hands of

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<sup>719</sup> Bires maintains that, in fact, the great majority of Athenians in the 1830s and 1840s were mostly interested in bargaining the value of their land. See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999.

<sup>720</sup> For the life and work of D. Kambouroglou see D. Gerondas *Demetrios Kambouroglou*, Athens: D.N. Karavias, 1991. Kambouroglou's work remains the foundation of every research on Athens and is cited more than any other author's work.

<sup>721</sup> D. Kambouroglou *op. cit.*, 1922.

<sup>722</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>723</sup> *Ibid.*, p.79.

<sup>724</sup> *Ibid.*, p.179.

<sup>725</sup> Note that Kambouroglou also maintains that there was a debate over the actual identity of the tower by the Propylaea. See *ibid.*, p.396.

<sup>726</sup> D. Kambouroglou *op. cit.*, 1969, p.235.

science'.<sup>727</sup> In other words, Kambouroglou argued that those fanatical demolitions, cleansings, excavations and restorations deprived Athenians of their own true past.

Like Kambouroglou, the German nineteenth-century medieval historian Ferdinandus Gregorovius was sceptical and ambivalent in his analysis of the loss of historical memory that occurred in Athens with the demolitions and excavations.<sup>728</sup> Whilst, he initially maintained that the Frankish Tower, "the last obvious feature of Medieval Athens"<sup>729</sup> fell "victim of the purism of [nineteenth-century] Athenians,"<sup>730</sup> he usually referred to it as the 'crude colossal tower'.<sup>731</sup> In turn, even though Gregorovius argued that the Acropolis is the only case wherein the demolition of medieval accretions can be 'forgiven', he concluded that, undoubtedly, "such practice is obviously related to a loss of historical memory."<sup>732</sup> Hence, there is a significant difference between what the archaeologist Ross endeavoured to define as "we Athenians"<sup>733</sup> and what some historians perceived as Athenian. This difference was literally concentrated on the 'fate' of the city's ruins as well as of the city itself as a ruin.

## VI

Konstandinos Bires, an authority on Athenian architecture and urban planning, maintains that despite travellers' destructive habit of removing antiquities from their environment as souvenirs,<sup>734</sup> the official action of foreigners towards Athenian history was far worse.<sup>735</sup> Once the restoration of ruins was guaranteed, this practice began to affect the city. Bires explains, for example, that, apart from architects Lysandros Kaftantzoglou and Demetrios Zezos,<sup>736</sup> the Bavarians and those who assisted them in the rebuilding of the city demonstrated a total disrespect towards Athens' medieval past,<sup>737</sup> a strategy that reached its zenith in 1843 with the demolition of seventy-two abandoned or partially destroyed Byzantine churches in order to find materials for the building of the Cathedral.<sup>738</sup> Whilst

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<sup>727</sup> *Ibid.*, p.236. The question concerning the respect of both the old and the ancient became more urgent after the post 1950s demolitions that we will discuss later. For a critique of the sacrifice of the old for the new in both the nineteenth and the twentieth century see, for example, D.A. Gerondas "Stous Athenaikous Aiones." [In the Athenian Centuries] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 15, Easter 1960, pp.53-57.

<sup>728</sup> See F. Gregorovius, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, 1994.

<sup>729</sup> *Ibid.*, p.338.

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>731</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>732</sup> *Ibid.*, p.339.

<sup>733</sup> L. Ross *op. cit.*, 1976.

<sup>734</sup> In this context, Bires discusses how during his visits to Athens around 1800, Turner, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, used to break the noses of statues and took them with him as souvenirs! See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.16.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>736</sup> D. Zezos was a Greek architect who built many houses and public buildings in the new city.

<sup>737</sup> Not everybody agrees with Bires on this point. As we will see with the rebuilding of Athens, the appreciation of the different plans, as well as of their consequences for antiquity are greatly varied from one scholar to the other.

<sup>738</sup> *Ibid.*, p.91. The destruction of Christian churches will be further discussed with the plans of Athens. Note also that the Greek 'Metropolis' (mother of cities) refers to 'Big City' as well as to 'Cathedral'.

the city's history was gradually destroyed and reconstructed like the city itself, the memory of the present was steadily repressed. John Murray, for instance, writes in the sixth edition of his guide to 1896 Greece,<sup>739</sup> that, "the medieval and Turkish relics have been entirely cleared away [...] in order that the rock [the Acropolis] may preserve no remains except those of classical times."<sup>740</sup> At the same time, whilst by end of the nineteenth century the Acropolis was almost totally sanitized, Murray observed that, excavations in Athens and Greece had soon become a serious international industry: the Greek Archaeological Society, the American, British, German, and French Schools were all involved in the destruction of the old in search of the 'ancient'.<sup>741</sup> Although the excavations continue up to the present in both Athens and Greece in general,<sup>742</sup> by the end of the nineteenth century, when the new city was founded on the chosen image of the past, there were few in the surface for the following centuries to discover.<sup>743</sup> Indeed, even Murray who was fully aware of what had occurred in Athens prior to his visit, did not resist pausing with awe in front of this manipulated image of the past. In contrast to Fraser's concept of those 'feeble productions of decadence', Murray, himself a 'student' of Pausanias, suggested that, "Athens was never more splendid than in the time of the Antonines when it was visited by Pausanias."<sup>744</sup> What is interesting, however, is that Murray described the thoroughly new image of antiquity as if it were genuine and 'authentic'. He argued, for instance, that, "no other spot in the world can rival the Athenian Acropolis in its unique combination of *natural grandeur*, of artistic beauty and of *sublime historical associations*."<sup>745</sup> Indeed, continuously ignoring the significant role of the cleansing and restoration in the manipulation of those 'historical associations', Murray concludes that:

The **PARTHENON** has been justly called the finest edifice on the finest site in the world, hollowed by the noblest recollections that can stimulate the human heart.<sup>746</sup>

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<sup>739</sup> J. Murray *Handbook for Travellers in Greece*. London: John Murray, 1896. Note also that 1896 was the year of the first modern Olympics in Athens. See A. Solomou-Prokopiou and I. Voyiatzi eds., op. cit., 2004, and Feuilleton: *7 IMERES: I Athena kata tin Diarkeia ton Proton Olympiakon Agonon*. [Athens During the First Olympic Games] *Kathimerini*, Sunday, 22 August 2004.

<sup>740</sup> J. Murray op. cit., 1896, p.vi.

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid.*, p.ix. For the involvement of different archaeological schools see also E.A. Gardner "Archaeology in Greece, 1889-1890." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol.11, 1890, pp.210-217.

<sup>742</sup> For the problems created with the excavations and especially the State's obligations to the people whose houses were demolished see, for example, D.A. Gerondas "To Thema ton Apallotrioseon." [The Issue of the Expropriations] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 8, October 1957, pp.13-16.

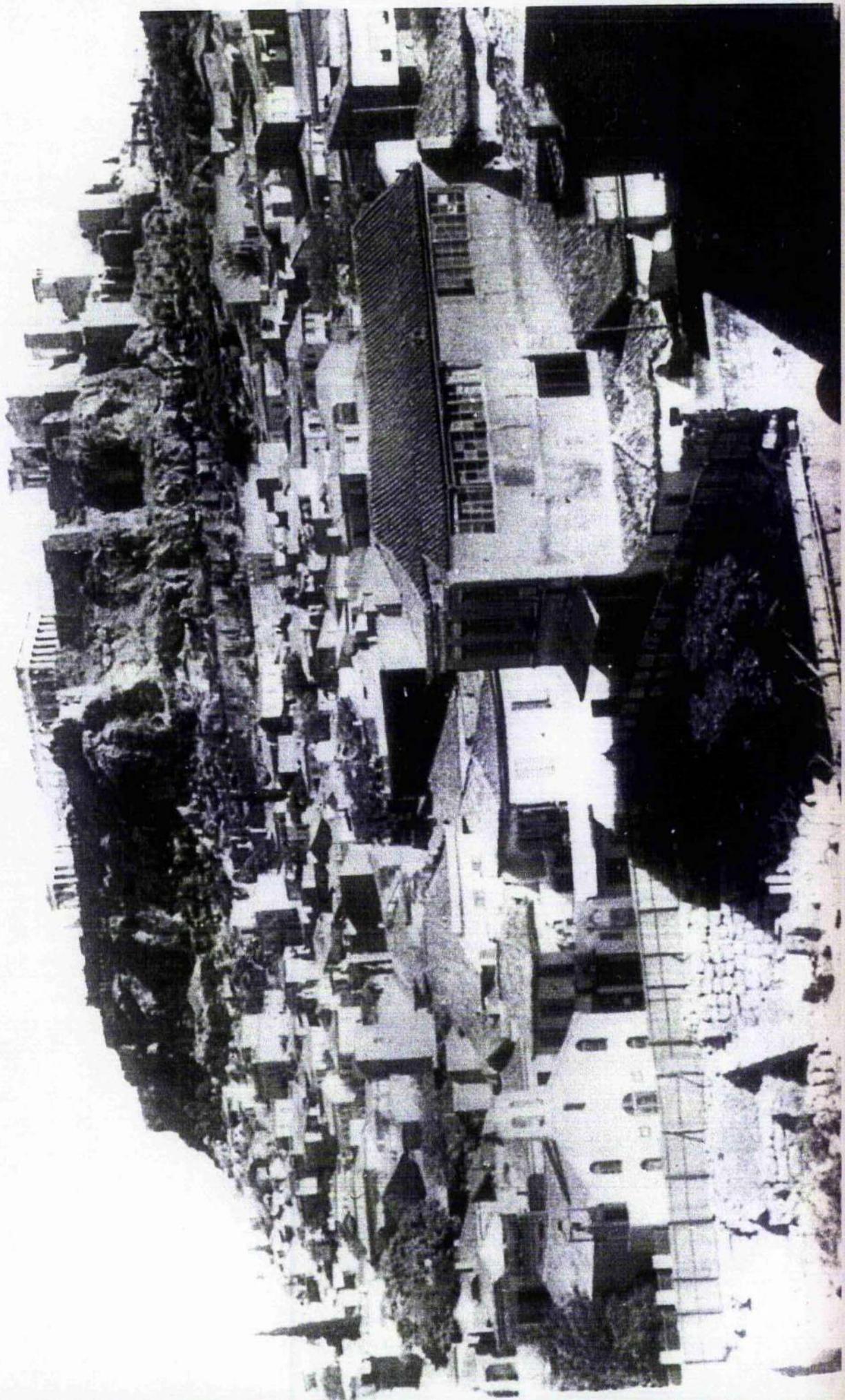
<sup>743</sup> I was discussing with Dr. Demosthenes Giraud, the supervisor of the Acropolis' restoration today, and he told me that some traces of post-classical accretions are still obvious. They include Roman inscriptions, stone-blocks from the fortifications and many other smaller Byzantine, Frankish, and Ottoman relics. Dr. Giraud does not intend to remove them.

<sup>744</sup> J. Murray op. cit., 1896, p.246.

<sup>745</sup> *Ibid.*, p.291, my emphasis.

<sup>746</sup> *Ibid.*, p.311.

VIII. The now demolished old Aken's wharf and the Harbours.



Initially, Murray provides a comprehensive analysis of a part of Athenian history from the first settlements to his day.<sup>747</sup> In later parts of the guide, however, despite his conviction that the city was never as ‘splendid’ as in the second century AD, he is persuaded that the nineteenth-century Acropolis was the ‘finest site in the world’. In contrast, Athenians were not so ready to embrace such an uncritical perception of their city. The first official Greek Guide to *New Athens*<sup>748</sup> was commissioned by the Athens City Council and was published during Otto’s reign, in 1860. Though the Guide was intended as a description of the city, a great part of its contents is dedicated to monuments, which is to say to the restored ruins.<sup>749</sup> Nevertheless, its author, Papadopoulos-Vrettos also makes a reference to Elgin’s city clock, which is very interesting in light of the fact that the clock was not even reliable.<sup>750</sup> On the contrary, the guide advised its readers to synchronize their watches according to a red flag that was raised in yet another modern monument, Theophil von Hansen’s Observatory, every day five minutes before noon and was taken down at noon.<sup>751</sup>

The fact that Elgin’s clock was not reliable raises a logical suspicion concerning Athenian modernity. In his “Metropolis and Mental Life,”<sup>752</sup> Simmel suggests that, “the technique of metropolitan life is unimaginable without the most punctual integration of all activities and mutual relations into a stable and impersonal schedule,”<sup>753</sup> which is often provided by city clocks. Although Simmel’s modern metropolis is not Athens or a big city in general but, specifically, Berlin,<sup>754</sup> the intimacy, within the metropolis, between ‘chaos’ and ‘calculability’<sup>755</sup> point to a tempting hypothesis concerning Athens as a modern metropolis. If it is true, therefore, that a city clock can be emblematic of capitalist metropolitan modernity, then the dysfunctional city clock of modern Athens introduced part of the chaotic future of Athenian modernity.

To return to the monuments, however, though Elgin’s clock was useless after all, the Guide proposed that, instead of the hitherto free admission, there should be a five lepta<sup>756</sup> entrance fee to the Acropolis.<sup>757</sup> In using the example of Paris’ museums, which

<sup>747</sup> Murray discusses King Kekrops and Theseus. See *ibid.*, p.245.

<sup>748</sup> M.A. Papadopoulos-Vrettos *Nea Athena*. [New Athens] Athens: Municipality of Athens (1860), reprinted as the original in 2001. I have not discovered an older Greek and official guide but, considering the date, it might be safe to argue that this is the oldest official guide to Athens.

<sup>749</sup> One-fourth of the guide discusses the monuments.

<sup>750</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-53. Papadopoulos-Vrettos also cites Lord Byron’s aphoristic verses: “Quod non ferecunt Gothi, Hoc ferecunt Scoti” [“what the Goths did not do, the Scots did”] See *ibid.*

<sup>751</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>752</sup> See G. Simmel “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., *op. cit.*, 1997, pp.174-185.

<sup>753</sup> *Ibid.*, p.177.

<sup>754</sup> See D. Frisby *op. cit.*, 2001, p.16.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>756</sup> 100 lepta were one drachma, the Greek currency before the Euro.

<sup>757</sup> M. Papadopoulos-Vrettos *op. cit.*, 2001, p.24.

required an entrance fee,<sup>758</sup> Papadopoulos-Vrettos writes of his disagreement with Pittakes, who would “wake up many times during the night in order to check if anybody was abducting his Acropolis.”<sup>759</sup> In turn, the Guide informed its readers about the Christian and Ottoman accretions, only traces of which were still evident by this time,<sup>760</sup> but also offered a very interesting, albeit ambivalent, description of the Tower:

It constitutes a good impression...it enhances the picturesque view of the Acropolis...but from a close proximity, it abruptly disturbs the harmonious beauty of those [ancient] ruins.<sup>761</sup>

The reason for such ambivalence may be traced back to the dialectic between the past and the present, which may be inherent in the city itself but is further magnified, and distorted by modern antiquity. The insistence upon classical Athens as the foundation of post-1834 Athens meant a speculation as to the exact age of the old. Dating Athenian history from the first settlements, Kambouroglou maintains that there always coexists, in Athens, the new with the old, but that there also exists the ancient that very often complicates the relationship between the past and the present, indeed, even between the past and modernization.<sup>762</sup> Although the old may not be, for Kambouroglou, as aesthetically ‘glorious’ as the ancient, it nonetheless remains the bridge that unites as well as separates them. Here, as in Simmel’s bridge as well as in his ruin, the old unites the present with the past but it also maintains the *distance* between them.

## VII

Always combined with the *demolition of a later old*, the restorations of the ancient ruins in Athens, in the search for the ‘original’ ancient polis, meant a radical modernity within, and modernization of, antiquity that disfigured any experience of time, past or present. To return to the deceptiveness of the new, therefore, Adorno maintains that, “anyone who thinks that art can be reproduced in its original form through an act of will is trapped in hopeless romanticism. Modernizing the past does it much violence and little good.”<sup>763</sup> The fate of Athenian ruins, sealed in 1834, is perhaps the most eloquent example of a violent construction of a conditioned social reality that ultimately aims at limiting the country to its capital and, in turn, into antiquity, manifested in such exaggerations as, for instance, “Paris is not France, nor London England; but Athens is Greece: not all Greece,

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<sup>758</sup> Ibid., p.25.

<sup>759</sup> Ibid., p.26.

<sup>760</sup> Ibid., p.34.

<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

<sup>762</sup> D. Kambouroglou op. cit., 1922, p.7.

<sup>763</sup> T.W. Adorno *Prisms*. S. and S. Weber trs., New York: Neville Spearman, 1967, p.176.

but *true* and *genuine* Greece.”<sup>764</sup> But what is defined as ‘genuine’ in Athens is almost always a destroyed and reconstructed image of a ruin, which, paradoxically, is never allowed to decay. Three different but closely related events point to the significance of the Acropolis in the context of modern antiquity. First, that, politics aside, it was the decisive factor in the choice of the capital of modern Greece. Second, that it defined the actual planning and building of the city. Finally, and this takes us back to Simmel, that the Sacred Rock was destroyed in some respects and preserved in another. Indeed, once it was cleansed and offered to the ‘civilized world’, the Acropolis would never again be perceived as a ruin. Rather, transformed into a monument, it became the ‘*eternal ruin frozen in time*’. In other words, it becomes the aesthetically perceived bridge between the building of the Parthenon and any given present, as well as any given future. That which is considered as ‘genuine’ in Athens, is gradually also referred to as ‘natural’ and ‘authentic’. A 1962 Greek tourist guide to Greece,<sup>765</sup> for example, suggests that, “on the Acropolis and among the glorious ruins of antiquity, there was an entire Turkish settlement that instantly started to disappear in order for the ancient monuments to breathe.”<sup>766</sup> Whilst according to the Guide, the post-classical accretions to the Acropolis had, ‘magically’ disappeared, the ancient ruins were free to ‘breathe’. An interpretation of how the Acropolis started to ‘breathe’ exposes the complex and dynamic strategies of modern antiquity as well as the uniqueness and significance of modern Athens.

Prior to any foundation of the new Athens on the chosen old, modern antiquity constructs and finds the ancient itself. The ‘cleansing’ of the Acropolis erased centuries of history and ‘brought alive’ a specific stratum of history which, after the restorations, appeared as authentic; all else appeared as non-Athenian and ‘inauthentic’. [Fig. VIII] Though by 1834 the Parthenon was considerably damaged, the Sacred Rock was a ruin with significant traces of all of the city’s long and rich, albeit painful at times, life. The demolitions of post-classical accretions as well as the excavations – in both the Acropolis and the city – for the search of the ancient beneath the old, suggest a complex process of destruction of both a certain new and of a specific old particular to the nineteenth century. The demolitions, therefore, imply the destruction and *subtraction* of the ‘new’ of the past between the building of the Parthenon and 1834. The excavations, on the other hand, reveal a fanatical search of the ‘authentic’ thereby highlighting the highly selective character of modern antiquity during Bavarian rule. Whilst the excavations would be systematically documented and organized, however, the demolitions were marked by an

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<sup>764</sup> S.W. Hopper *op. cit.*, 1939, p.77, my emphasis.

<sup>765</sup> *Touristikos Odegos tis Ellados*. [Tourist Guide to Greece] Athens: Organization of Tourist Publications, 1962.

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19.

unprecedented aversion to the old that was evident in the conscious choice of destroying without keeping any record of the destruction. The latter process aimed at a self-negation: the complete lack of documentation of what was being destroyed aimed at refusing the reality that the demolitions ever happened which, in turn, meant to establish that there existed nothing between the fifth century BC and new, nineteenth-century Athens.

No other capital in Europe, including Rome, can claim that its past was violated in such an astonishing manner. Following the destruction of a great part of the past, modern antiquity aimed at founding its chosen image of the old and the restorations of the classical ruins of the Acropolis meant exactly that. In order for Pericles' fifty-years period to be the legitimate and *only* ancestor of modern Athens, the Acropolis had to give the impression that nothing had ever happened in the meantime. Nevertheless, two very important facts obscure the absolute accomplishment of such an enterprise. First, the 1687 explosion guaranteed the complete destruction of the roof of the Parthenon. Second, and despite any judgement as to his 'action', Lord Elgin prevented the complete reconstruction of the Parthenon. Indeed, the mere scale of the Parthenon friezes and metopes in the British museum suggests that 'half the Parthenon' is in London.<sup>767</sup> In any case, however roofless and dilapidated the building, the reconstructions succeeded in establishing a thoroughly disguised modern image of the Parthenon as a *complete monument*, that is standing *intact* and *unaffected* by time. Again this manner of destruction and reconstruction of antiquity within antiquity is unique in the transformation of a ruin into a monument. On the twenty-eighth of August 1895, the Minister of Ecclesiastics D.G Petridis decided the continuation of the restoration works of the Parthenon.<sup>768</sup> Three years later, the *Government Gazette* featured the notes of the conference of the twenty-seventh of May 1898 concerning the requirements for the restoration of the Parthenon as well as a relevant report by N.M. Balanos dated 15 January 1877.<sup>769</sup> During the conference, Wilhelm Dörpfeld, E. Troump, E. Vlahopoulos and A. Theophilas, members of the committee for the works on the Acropolis, argued that they were aiming at the *preservation* and not the restoration of the Parthenon.<sup>770</sup> Yet, whereas in their fifth proposal they discussed the *temporary* demolition of non-classical elements,<sup>771</sup> in their nineteenth proposal they advocated the *removal* of the Byzantine elements of the main gate of the Parthenon.<sup>772</sup> This, they argued, would

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<sup>767</sup> Prof. Richard Snodgrass who is a member of the British Committee for the return of Elgin's plunder to Greece establishes that as far as the metopes and sculptures are concerned, the British Museum literally has half the Parthenon.

<sup>768</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.77, 31 August 1895, Vol.I.

<sup>769</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.138, 25 August 1898, Vol.A, pp.407-412.

<sup>770</sup> See *ibid.*, p.408.

<sup>771</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>772</sup> See *ibid.*

facilitate the 'restoration of the original form' of the gate.<sup>773</sup> The original form of the 'ruin' was that of the Periclean monument. But whereas the 'original' Parthenon was a monument to the classical polis, the restored one would be a monument to modernity.

### VIII

The nineteenth-century search for classical Athens in the new capital introduced the transformation of the Athenian 'ruin' into a world monument. In its capacity to offer an aesthetically perceived image of the past as present, the Acropolis fascinated those who loved a bygone antiquity. As a monument on the other hand, the Sacred Rock became exemplary of modernity's power to use and to abuse the past. In his exploration of the 'great might of the past', Kristian Kristiansen<sup>774</sup> maintains that monuments are means to the 'integration of the past in the present',<sup>775</sup> that often hides the political and national purposes of the use of the past.<sup>776</sup> But despite their potential significance for nation-building, one to which Kristiansen attributes a specifically European character that reached its zenith in nineteenth-century Germany,<sup>777</sup> monuments function as elements of a particular approach towards the dialectic between the past and the present. For Kristiansen,

The preservation of the past is part of the 'domestication' and 'cultivation' of history which makes it accessible to the present. It is thereby also altered. Even if individual ancient monuments or individual objects are authentic, they come to be presented in a context which is alien and which alters their historical meaning. They become a message in the present, torn away from the past.<sup>778</sup>

In contrast to the ruin, the monument is an object that is 'torn away from the past' but which somehow retains the power to present the past and the present as one being. This, for Kurt Foster,<sup>779</sup> is the product of the deceptive character of the new "central to the idea of [which] is, of course, its relationship to history."<sup>780</sup> More specifically, "in the modern era, history lies before our eyes in the form of its monuments."<sup>781</sup> This, however, does not mean that modernity appreciates all monuments.

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<sup>773</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>774</sup> See K. Kristiansen "'The Strength of the Past and its Great Might'; An Essay on the Use of the Past." *Journal of European Archaeology*. Vol.1, 1992, pp.3-32.

<sup>775</sup> See *ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>776</sup> See *ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>777</sup> See *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>778</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>779</sup> See K.W. Foster "Monument/Memory and the Mortality of Architecture." *Oppositions*, No.25, Fall 1982, pp.2-19.

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>781</sup> *Ibid.*

For Alois Riegl,<sup>782</sup> monuments can be distinguished as either 'intentional' or 'unintentional'.<sup>783</sup> According to this distinction, the former sustain the memory of a person or an event<sup>784</sup> and the latter have the power to unite art with history. Riegl writes of this special relationship concentrated in the – 'unintentional' – monuments:

It is important to realize that every work of art is at once and without exception a historical monument because it represents a specific stage in the development of the visual arts. Conversely, every historical monument is also an art monument like a scrap of a paper with a brief and insignificant note contains a series of artistic elements.<sup>785</sup>

Monuments, for Riegl, are paradigmatic of the interrelation and interdependence between art and history. As such, any further distinction between artistic and historic monuments is "inappropriate because the latter at once contains the former."<sup>786</sup> In the context of Athenian modernity, however, Riegl's appropriate and 'inappropriate' distinctions are often confused. Whereas as an Athenian ruin, the pre-1834 Acropolis was an 'unintentional' monument that combined history with art, as a world monument, the post-1834 Acropolis became an intentional one that manipulated both art and history.<sup>787</sup> However unique in relation to its impact upon the entire new city, the transformation of the Acropolis is related to what Riegl identifies as a modern dialectic between a historical value that was first recognized in the Renaissance and the art values particular to the nineteenth century.<sup>788</sup> Until the nineteenth century, argues Riegl, "as long as it correspond[ed] to a supposedly objective but never satisfactorily defined aesthetic,"<sup>789</sup> a work of art retained its 'art value'.<sup>790</sup> But according to the 'modern view', definitions "vary from subject to subject and moment to moment."<sup>791</sup> Reminiscent of the questions concerning modernity as the breaking up of meaning because of the abundance of possible meanings that claim an equal validity independent of the truth, Riegl's analysis of the 'modern cult of monuments' points to his own critique of historicism as nineteenth-century modernity. In having

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<sup>782</sup> See A. Riegl "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origins." K.W. Foster and D. Ghirardo trs., *Oppositions*, No.25, Fall 1982, pp.20-51.

<sup>783</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>784</sup> See K.W. Foster op. cit., 1982, p.2

<sup>785</sup> A. Riegl op. cit., 1982, p.22.

<sup>786</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>787</sup> Note here that Riegl maintains that, despite the original distinction, "in contrast to intentional monuments, historical monuments are unintentional, but it is equally clear that all deliberate monuments may also be unintentional ones." See *ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>788</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>789</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>790</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid.*

established a variety of definitions of 'art value', the 'art historical research' of the nineteenth century maintained the 'inappropriate' distinction between art and history and transformed 'artistic and historical monuments' into historical ones.<sup>792</sup>

Art, therefore, assumes a value only in so far as this value is historical. Where it is not, it is reconstructed in order to pretend such value. Indeed, specifically with historical monuments, "it is not their original purpose and significance that turn these works into monuments, but rather our modern perception of them."<sup>793</sup> In turn, the transformation and redefinition of a work into a historical monument hides and depends upon a modern 'memory value'.<sup>794</sup> Indeed, whereas intentional monuments consist of "those works which recall a specific moment or complex of moments from the past,"<sup>795</sup> historical ones "include those [works] which still refer to a particular moment, but the choice of that moment is left to our subjective preference."<sup>796</sup> As such, historical monuments are also the opposite of the "category of monuments of age-value [which] embraces every artefact without regard to its original significance and purpose, as long as it reveals the passage of a considerable period of time."<sup>797</sup> Thus, historical monuments celebrate the modern's memory of a chosen past. The post-1834 Acropolis was forced to sacrifice its 'age-value' and to become a historical monument for Athens, Greece, Europe and the 'world'. Both as a ruin and as a monument, the Acropolis of Athens becomes exemplary of the modernity that the overemphasis with antiquity appears to deny. This oxymoron is the product of the dialectic between the ruin and the – historical – monument whose value is defined in historicist modernity.

Whilst the twentieth century adopted Romanticism and gave birth to a 'cult of age-value',<sup>798</sup> that rejected the "arbitrary interference by man in the way the monument has developed,"<sup>799</sup> thereby implying a rejuvenation of the fascination with ruins, it also perpetuated the nineteenth-century emphasis on 'historical value',<sup>800</sup> and, therefore, regenerated an interest in the monument's 'original status'.<sup>801</sup> According to this attitude, "the more faithfully a monument's original state is preserved, the greater its historical value: disfiguration and decay detract from it."<sup>802</sup> As in the case with the ruin, decay narrates the past and the object's natural death. In contrast, preservation narrates the monument's unnatural life. Specifically for the Parthenon, Riegl regrets the fact that it

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<sup>792</sup> Ibid.

<sup>793</sup> Ibid.

<sup>794</sup> Ibid.

<sup>795</sup> Ibid.

<sup>796</sup> Ibid.

<sup>797</sup> Ibid.

<sup>798</sup> For 'age-value' see also *ibid.*, pp.31-34.

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>800</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.34-38.

<sup>801</sup> See *ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid.*

“survives solely as a ruin.”<sup>803</sup> Yet, although Riegl generally advocates the removal of the “symptoms of decay which are the essence of age-value,”<sup>804</sup> for the “sake of its historical value,”<sup>805</sup> he insists that such practice must only be done to a copy or a mental reconstruction,<sup>806</sup> of the building. In the end, Riegl maintains that, even though ‘historical value’ is ‘conservative’ and ‘age value’ is ‘radical’, “there is not necessarily a conflict between them.”<sup>807</sup> This is because nature will ultimately prevail<sup>808</sup> and transform the monument into a ruin. What is really in conflict with ‘age value’ is a class of monuments protected by law,<sup>809</sup> and which are defined by ‘intentional commemorative value.’<sup>810</sup> Although all monuments possess a ‘commemorative value’<sup>811</sup> when this value is intentional it “simply makes a claim to immortality, to an eternal present and an unceasing state of becoming.”<sup>812</sup> Combined with ‘newness-value’,<sup>813</sup> which leads the ‘masses’ to assume that “only new and whole things [are] beautiful,”<sup>814</sup> and which Riegl dates back to the nineteenth-century ‘practice of preservation’ that aimed at the “complete amalgamation of newness-value with historical-value,”<sup>815</sup> Riegl’s ‘intentional commemorative value’ becomes the heart of the restored Parthenon.

Riegl believed that, with the emergence of a ‘relative art value’,<sup>816</sup> the twentieth century could redeem both the past and the present.<sup>817</sup> But in order to do so, it would need to differentiate between its negative and its positive expressions.<sup>818</sup> In its positive expression, ‘relative art value’ signals the “preservation of a monument in its present state.”<sup>819</sup> In its negative one, on the other hand, it suggests a preference over some monuments only,<sup>820</sup> and, therefore, prevents us from understanding that, above all, “art value consists of seeing something modern in the old.”<sup>821</sup> Hence, art value is defined by the passage of time. This is the first truth denied to modern Athens and to its Acropolis: in transforming the Acropolis into a protected official monument that represented the intentional and chosen past, the Bavarian administration and the fathers of modern Athens

<sup>803</sup> Ibid.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid.

<sup>806</sup> Ibid.

<sup>807</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>808</sup> Ibid.

<sup>809</sup> Ibid., p.38.

<sup>810</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>811</sup> See *ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>812</sup> Ibid., p.38.

<sup>813</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.42-44.

<sup>814</sup> Ibid., p.42.

<sup>815</sup> Ibid., p.44.

<sup>816</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.47-50.

<sup>817</sup> See *ibid.*, p.48.

<sup>818</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>819</sup> Ibid., p.49.

<sup>820</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>821</sup> Ibid.

hid the new behind the modern ancient image of the Sacred Rock. They denied the truth about the old but they also denied the reality of the newness of the modern. And so, to paraphrase Riegl, they made a claim to the immortality of their eternal present and to the unceasing state of becoming that modernity pretends to be. Hence, in the transformation of the ruin into a monument and from there to the preservation of the re-instated 'original state' of the monument, Athens becomes the perfect modern city. In contrast to Riegl's argument, the Parthenon is the proof that the hand of man is not more 'delicate' than that of nature.<sup>822</sup> Unless a physical disaster occurs, the Parthenon will never be perceived as a ruin again. Its restoration and preservation is guaranteed since 1834. But similarly to its destructive restoration, its preservation as a monument was not always without contestation.

## IX

Aris Konstandinides<sup>823</sup> maintains that, "only a Temple (House of God) and a grave are entitled to be monuments."<sup>824</sup> Until the nineteenth century, the Parthenon was neither a grave nor a temple. It became a monument when it became the temple where modernity worshipped itself. This was also due to the way in which the rebuilding of the Acropolis undermined the significant, in Athens and Greece, distinction between antiquities and monuments.<sup>825</sup> Drawing from Mauer's Law, a monument in Greece was, more often than not, identified primarily with antiquities. Whereas in reality, a monument should imply anything that constitutes the social, historical and architectural heritage that incorporates the past, when translated into an antiquity, it excludes the past.<sup>826</sup> In being transformed into the 'monument of monuments' the Parthenon introduces, in Athens, a unique dialectic between the old and the ancient.

In having already expressed his ambivalence towards the sanitization of the Acropolis, Kambouroglou, "the first [Greek] scholar to insist upon the importance of the 'old' as opposed to the 'antique' aspects of the Greek cultural heritage,"<sup>827</sup> defined an Athenian monument as "anything that can be saved and considered as a Source of Athenian History."<sup>828</sup> But Athenian monuments, for Kambouroglou, included, amongst others, B. Randolph's description of a 1687 Athens,<sup>829</sup> documents of the Church,<sup>830</sup> the

<sup>822</sup> For Riegl in this context see *ibid.*, p.35.

<sup>823</sup> See A. Konstandinides *Ta Palia Athenaika Spitia*. [Old Athenian Houses] Athens: Polytypo, 1983.

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27

<sup>825</sup> For the distinction between the two, see, for example, D. Zivas *Ta Mnemeia kai I Poli*. [Monuments and the City] Athens: E&L Lyroudias, 1991.

<sup>826</sup> See *ibid.*, p.104.

<sup>827</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Continuity and Change*. London: Pall Mall Press, 1971, p.42.

<sup>828</sup> D.G. Kambouroglou *Mnemeia tis Paleos ton Athenon*. [Monuments of the History of Athens] Vol.1, Athens, 1891, p.5.

<sup>829</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.241-243,

<sup>830</sup> See D.G. Kambouroglou *op. cit.*, 1890.

city's debts to the Patriarchate during the 1820s,<sup>831</sup> and the genealogy of native Athenian families.<sup>832</sup> Kambouroglou's Athenian monuments included the history that the restored 'antique' Acropolis denied. Moreover Kambouroglou established that, at least as far as Athens is concerned, the historical and the art-historical do not depend upon a specific art value. The Parthenon may be the crown of any old and new Athens, but Kambouroglou's classification of 'Historical Buildings' introduced all ancient, Byzantine, and Ottoman buildings,<sup>833</sup> thereby suggesting that the old is equally important with the ancient. Even though Kambouroglou's insight was not always appreciated until the mid-twentieth century when some Athenians witnessed the demolition of 'their' own old Athens,<sup>834</sup> the fathers of the nineteenth-century capital decided to preserve only the antiquity that their restored Acropolis exemplified. Once again, although preservation is not particular to the nineteenth century, Athenian modernity highlights a unique case.

According to Riegl, it was Pope Paul III and the bill issued on the twenty-eighth of November 1534 that took the first preservation measures in history.<sup>835</sup> In contrast, Papageorgiou-Venetas maintains that such measures were actually adopted almost a century earlier with the Papal decree of the eighteenth of April 1462.<sup>836</sup> At all events, both Riegl and Papageorgiou-Venetas argue that although the attempt to preserve the historical memory embodied, or attached, to monuments was first realized in the Italian Renaissance, the nineteenth century introduced different measures. In contrast to the Renaissance's approach towards preservation, the nineteenth century adopted a practice which, "systematically ignored the specific character of the townscape,"<sup>837</sup> and, instead, focused upon individual buildings.<sup>838</sup> Two states appear to play a leading role in the 'salvation' of the past in the nineteenth century: France and Germany. On the thirtieth of March 1887, the French government implemented a law "which established different categories of historic monuments based on both scientific and legal criteria,"<sup>839</sup> the law was supplemented on the thirteenth of December 1913 when new legislation required the classification and documentation, in a national inventory, of almost two thousand 'French monuments'.<sup>840</sup> Nevertheless, despite the success of both French laws, it is actually Germany that long defined the rules for the preservation of the 'memory' of the 'past',<sup>841</sup>

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<sup>831</sup> See D.G. Kambouroglou *Mnemeia tis Istorias ton Athenon*, Vol.3, Athens: Estia, 1892, pp.135-136.

<sup>832</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.247-262.

<sup>833</sup> See D.G. Kambouroglou *op. cit.*, 1922, p.11.

<sup>834</sup> We discuss this in great detail in the last chapter.

<sup>835</sup> See A. Riegl *op. cit.*, 1982, p.26.

<sup>836</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1971, p.38.

<sup>837</sup> *Ibid.*, p.84.

<sup>838</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>839</sup> See *ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>841</sup> See *ibid.*, p.39. See also R. Koshar *op. cit.*, 2000, p.52.

This is managed with Mauer's Law on antiquities and with Klenze's inauguration of the Acropolis as the eternal monument. It was the Germans who introduced the selective preservation of the past. But they first did this in modern Athens.<sup>842</sup>

## X

A monument in Greek, *mnemeion*, means memory site and is used in reference to ancient and modern monuments as well as to graves. In the Greek meaning of the word, therefore, although a ruin, the pre-1834 Acropolis was a site that retained a wealth of the past. In contrast, after 1834, it became a site where memory was manipulated and the past was violated and largely forgotten. The Acropolis can ultimately be explored as a monument whose meaning was ruined; indeed the story of the Acropolis ends with a modern and 'aesthetically perceived' image of the past in the present. What is important to explore further, therefore, is how the Acropolis defined the new in Athens, including both the plans for the city and its modern, nineteenth-century monuments. The loss of historical memory and the "ravaging of [post-classical] monuments can, in some respect, explain the chaotic impression"<sup>843</sup> of twentieth-century Athens. Does this mean that new Athens never succeeded in becoming, like the Acropolis, what it was imagined to become? Following the modernization of the past imposed on Athenian ruins, the history of modern Athens after its foundation as the capital in 1834 is exemplary of how the city itself was trapped into a game of believing the imaginaries that were created for it. At the same time, it also accounts for the role of the Acropolis and Athens as a monument in the building of Europe's new capitals in the nineteenth century, descendants of that socially constructed modern image of Athens. Indeed, what was unique in the Acropolis, the Parthenon, was to be the 'ideal form' of modern Athens as well as of some of Europe's most impressive new capitals. Yet, whilst the foundation, in 1974, of the Committee for the Preservation of the Acropolis<sup>844</sup> and the UNESCO 1977 international campaign for the 'Salvation and Protection of the Acropolis' monuments<sup>845</sup> guaranteed that the Acropolis would never again be allowed to decay, the memory-game that preceded the planning of Athens in the image of the Periclean Parthenon created a socio-historical havoc that is unique in the context of metropolitan modernity.

<sup>842</sup> For the later undoubtedly negative relationship between the 'classical' ideal that the Acropolis represents and fascism see A. Ioannidis "Klassike Arhaiologia kai Fasismos – I Peripeteia tou Klassikou Ideodous sti Nazistiki Germania." [Classic Antiquity and Fascism. The Adventures of the Classical Ideas in Nazi Germany] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 27, June 1988, pp.16-21.

<sup>843</sup> M. Papadopoulou "Arhaia kai Syghrone Athena. I Synandese ton Dyo Poleon." [The Meeting of the Ancient and the Modern City] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 48, September 1993, p.40. By 'ancient', Papadopoulou refers to the classical as well as to later periods. See *ibid.*, endnote 1, p.48.

<sup>844</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1994, p.xxii.

<sup>845</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxiii.

## Chapter 5: Modern Athens or the Past Reborn

*"A society cannot live with its historical memory as its only vindication and as an end in itself."*<sup>846</sup>

*"One can distinguish two images of the city: those that are consciously built and others that reveal themselves unintentionally."*<sup>847</sup>

*"Indication of violent changes. – If we dream of people we have long since forgotten or who have for long been dead, it is a sign that we have gone through a violent change within our self and that the ground upon which we live has been completely turned over: so that the dead rise up and our antiquity becomes our modernity."*<sup>848</sup>

### I

The architects who planned and defined the new Athens of the nineteenth century maintained the omnipotence of the Parthenon in the modern capital. Hence, they established a still largely undisputed bond between the modern metropolis that Athens was to become and the ancient polis – and culture – that the Acropolis represented. The planning and building of Athens in the nineteenth century is unique in two respects. First, the foundation of the capital was almost always dependent on the exploitation of a specific fragment of the past as 'present'. No plan for Athens – in the nineteenth or later centuries – could avoid engaging in the dialogue with the Acropolis. Second, although the creation of nineteenth-century Athens was not alien to the questions concerning the birth of the nation state, planning Athens as its capital was related to a greater European and, therefore to a transnational context. The choice of Otto – and later George – as the King of Greece, Ludwig's unmistakable interference, the fact that the overwhelming majority of the founders of the capital were foreigners, as well as its very selection as the capital, are all examples of how modern Athens was not simply a Greek matter. We might be able to argue that the foreign architects of modern Athens were building the capital of European – and especially German – antiquity. Nineteenth-century Athens was more than a mere national capital. Although it was that other 'eternal' city, Rome, which, as Weber has taught us, provided the raw material for the legislative and social organization of the modern, bureaucratic, capitalist world,<sup>849</sup> it was an exploitation and manipulation of

<sup>846</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1996, p.18.

<sup>847</sup> S. Kracauer cited in D. Frisby op. cit., 1988, p.265.

<sup>848</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.239.

<sup>849</sup> M. Weber *Economy and Society*. 3 Vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Athens' classical past that offered an aesthetically perceived 'spirit' and 'heart' to this world. The first plans for a new Athens were dedicated to this aim. In establishing an ostensible aesthetic bond between the chosen past and the present, the first plans for Athens maintained a largely undisputed representation of modern Athens as antiquity – indeed as the antiquity of European metropolitan modernity. In the nineteenth century, Athens was the city where modernity was waiting to meet with antiquity.

## II

In his "Sociology of Space",<sup>850</sup> Simmel observes that, along with its 'exclusivity',<sup>851</sup> "the third significance of space for social formations lies in its capacity of *fixing* their contents."<sup>852</sup> Space, for Simmel, can dictate the content as well as the meaning of different social formations and relationships. Although itself subject to possible social construction and manipulation, space 'retains a reality of its own',<sup>853</sup> under certain circumstances, it retains the power to define the form and content of 'sociation'. This power of 'fixing' the contextual structure of social formations, which Simmel attributes to space, becomes particularly true in the case of an immobile object:

A more special sociological significance of fixing in space can be designated in the symbolic expression 'pivot point'. The special immobility of an object of interest creates certain forms of relationships that group around it.<sup>854</sup>

Once an immobile object, itself with a 'reality of its own', is invested with a particular interest, it acquires the power to structure the form and to define the meaning of those social formations whose significance is determined and justified mainly as long as they remain peripheral to the object. The intensity, and perhaps the quality as well, of the relationship between the immobile object and its peripheral social formations are dependent on 'sensory proximity'. Yet, whilst Simmel defines 'sensory proximity' and 'distance' as the "fourth type of external circumstances, which translate themselves into the liveliness of social interactions,"<sup>855</sup> he soon explains how both 'sensory proximity' and 'distance' may be manipulated. He maintains, for instance, that, "the psychological effect of proximity can actually be replaced very closely by means of indirect communication

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<sup>850</sup> See G. Simmel "Sociology of Space," in D. Frisby and M. Featherstone eds., op. cit., 1997, pp.137-170.

<sup>851</sup> Ibid., p.139.

<sup>852</sup> Ibid., p.146.

<sup>853</sup> F.J. Lechner cited by D. Frisby in *ibid.*, Introduction, p.11.

<sup>854</sup> G. Simmel in *ibid.*, p.149.

<sup>855</sup> Ibid., p.151.

and even more by fantasy.”<sup>856</sup> In turn, this power of the imagination to ‘replace’, or perhaps, even to pretend the re-establishment of a lost psychological proximity is more evident when such an attempt is seeking to satisfy a ‘religious’ or a ‘romantic association’. In gratifying the latter, “the power of fantasy and the devotion of the feelings can overcome the conditions of time and space in a manner that quite often seems almost mystical.”<sup>857</sup> If fantasy can alter and re-define the social meaning of proximity and distance, thereby replacing them with something other than themselves, then we might argue that neither concept corresponds to a definite and static phenomenon. In order for fantasy to replace one with the other – distance with proximity – it first has to alter their content and character. Indeed, although Simmel emphasizes their psychological content, there hide, in his “Sociology of Space” four different, albeit interrelated, sub-elements that may constitute his notions of proximity and distance. Furthermore, defined as ‘temporal’, ‘spatial’, ‘sensory’, and ‘psychological’, distance and proximity may engage in a dialectic that draws appealing parallels with our exploration of Athenian modernity. Imagination plays a vital role in both cases.

First, in using imagination and determination, temporal distance may be disguised with the construction of an experience of psychological proximity. This is the sociological significance of the bridge. Modern antiquity-as-a-bridge between the ‘past’ and the present, therefore, replaced the temporal distance between the fifth century BC and the nineteenth century AD with the belief that classical Athens was the ancestor of modern Athens – and Europe. Second, since an immobile object may have a ‘reality of its own’ as well as the power to define its peripheral social formations, sensory and temporal distances are transformed into temporal and sensory proximity. This is the sociological significance of the ruin. In embracing the theoretical framework that disguised temporal distance as ‘history’, modern antiquity-as-a-ruin legitimized the clearance of the Acropolis and replaced temporal and sensory distances with an aesthetically perceived image of the ancient ‘as present’. Finally, ‘temporal’ and ‘spatial’ distances may be replaced with ‘psychological’ and ‘sensory’ proximity. This third possibility is achieved once the previous two can be identified in a single, dominant, immobile object, whose definition is summarized in the expression ‘pivot-point’. When modern antiquity-as-a-bridge is intertwined with modern antiquity-as-a-ruin, what we have is a plan for Athens – those of Kleanthes and Schaubert as well as others – which, in highlighting the Acropolis as *the* ‘pivot-point’, consequently empower it with the capacity to fix and define the social formations which are carefully structured closely around it. Whereas the ‘masking’ of the

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<sup>856</sup> Ibid., p.152.

<sup>857</sup> Ibid.

temporal distance between the ancient monument and the new city is increasingly assisted by the purification of both the Sacred Rock and the city itself, the 'psychological' distance is overcome with the opening of Athena's street, which offers a 'sensory' proximity between the ancient and the modern. Despite the fact that Kleantes and Schaubert's plan was never fully implemented, and in spite of the fact that the palace was not built where they suggested that it should have been built, their plan contained and planted the seeds for an intriguing rendezvous between antiquity and modernity.

As in his discussion of the importance of the 'pivot-point' in the context of space's power to determine social formations, Simmel suggests that the rendezvous is exemplary of the 'sociological significance of fixing in space':

The sociological significance of the rendezvous lies in the tension between the punctuality and fleeting quality of the relationship, on the one hand, and its temporal and spatial determinacy on the other. The rendezvous – and not merely its erotic illegitimate forms – is distinguished from the mundane form of existence by its trait of *uniqueness* and *acuteness*, springing from the particular occasion. Further, because it separates itself out like an island from the continuous course of life's contents, the rendezvous achieves a special hold on consciousness, precisely on the formal elements of its time and place.<sup>858</sup>

In highlighting the uniqueness and the 'adventurous' character of the rendezvous, Simmel also argues that the sociological significance of the rendezvous lies in its capacity to fix time and space. This is the 'when' and 'where' of the rendezvous. Moreover, in being itself an instance of sociation determined by the rules and restrictions of time and space, the rendezvous can command them only for a moment – the agreed 'when' and 'where'. Yet, this makes the rendezvous all the more interesting for Simmel. Like the adventure,<sup>859</sup> the rendezvous may be:

Only a segment of existence among others, but it belongs to those forms which, beyond the mere share they have in life and beyond the accidental nature of their individual contents, have the mysterious power to make us

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<sup>858</sup> Ibid., pp.148-149.

<sup>859</sup> See G. Simmel "The Adventure," in *ibid*, pp.221-232.

feel for a moment the whole sum of life as their fulfilment and their vehicle, existing only for their realization.<sup>860</sup>

Whereas both the adventure and the rendezvous are, for Simmel, 'forms of existence', they are, nonetheless, experienced as being different from the everyday life and are, therefore, remembered as unique or even superior instances of life. Yet, contrary to the adventure, which can be a solitary experience, the rendezvous presupposes the company of another whom we have either invited or attracted. Nevertheless, unlike the adventure, modern antiquity-as-a-rendezvous between the ancient and the modern was, once more, an illusion. This was because whereas Athenian modernity was often represented as antiquity, the past was also represented as the present. It is this contradiction that makes the rendezvous between the old and the new a fantasy.

### III

Is it true that modern Athens was often represented as antiquity? To give an example, strolling the Pnyx hill for five consecutive nights and conversing with the Athenian 'Pantheon' – Theseus, Kekrops, Themistocles, Plato, Aristotle, Pericles, Phidias, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides, Demosthenes and others including the Athenians of the Panathenaic procession – Spyridon Paganelis concludes that, "it is enchanting, divine, immortal, this bond between these two names: **Athens – Acropolis.**"<sup>861</sup> However fascinating an introduction to the Athenian 'pantheon', Paganelis' *Athenian Nights* was published in 1888 and is therefore an eloquent representation of – his – modernity as antiquity. Unlike Laurie, the author of *Proas Son of Nikias*, who wrote about ancient Athens, Paganelis makes the separation of the ancient from the modern city a real challenge. This is because he describes *modern* Athens but, nonetheless, chooses to populate it with the ancients, and in doing so imagining either himself as their contemporary or them as his contemporaries. In either case, albeit only for those five nights, the modern city becomes the home of the ancients. In having carefully heard the author's agonizing and detailed lesson in Athenian history, the ancients wave their city goodbye, entrust the moderns with *their* Athens and wish these descendants to be as glorious as they themselves once were.<sup>862</sup> This representation of modern Athens as antiquity, of which the *Athenian Nights* provide a paradigmatic instance, was one of the greatest accomplishments of those involved in the creation of the capital in the nineteenth century. Even though the first plans for Athens were often indicative of a religious dedication to the representation of new Athens as the classical polis, this new faith was,

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<sup>860</sup> Ibid., p.232.

<sup>861</sup> S. Paganelis *Athenaikai Nyktai*. [Athenian Nights] Athens, 1888, p.301.

<sup>862</sup> Ibid.

paradoxically, also worshiped by the very people who did not want Athens to become the capital. Nineteenth-century Athens was a city that was forced to resist, or to pretend to snub, the new. In practice, however, its representation as the Periclean polis excluded the pre- and the post-classical. But it was also manipulated in order to highlight a very specific new among the modern. This was the new image of the ancient. Regardless of the opinions concerning the location of the capital, this superior new usually emphasized the residence of the Bavarian King of Greece.

Although both Guttenshon and Rochette argued that Athens should not become the capital, the rationale behind their suggestions is hardly alien to the representation of the modern as past. In fact,

Guttenshon was mostly concerned for the future of the new town with the royal palace, whereas Rochette was saddened by the lost opportunity for general excavations, following the decision to build the new town in direct contact with the old site.<sup>863</sup>

Whereas Rochette argued, in 1833, that the entire city should be left open for excavations, thereby finding many supporters, such as Kaftantzoglou,<sup>864</sup> Guttenshon's objections to the transfer of the capital to Athens hid a rather more menacing character. Despite all his concerns for the 'speculative' material interests of the majority of those who wanted Athens to become the capital, Guttenshon was convinced that the ancient ruins would actually constitute the ideal setting for Otto's country home.<sup>865</sup>

In a letter to Otto, on the fourth of July 1833, Guttenshon tried to persuade the King that a royal country home, surrounded by the villas of Athens' wealthy population, would be a better neighbour to the ruins than a new city which would 'constantly threaten' them.<sup>866</sup> Guttenshon, therefore, advocated the transfer of the capital to Piraeus because he thought that classical antiquity ought to be the *exclusive property* of a specific minority – the King and the wealthy. For him, the chosen past should belong only to *some* of the moderns. As with Ross, who participated in the sanitization of the Acropolis with a manic enthusiasm, Guttenshon forgot that he was a foreigner and a guest in the city. At the same time, in being more indifferent towards the city's poorest majority, his proposal for the Sacred Rock as the décor of the new is reminiscent of the 'philistinism' of earlier visitors to the city. Nevertheless, in some respects, this perception of Athenian antiquities as mere

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<sup>863</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1994, p.26.

<sup>864</sup> See next chapter.

<sup>865</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, p.43.

<sup>866</sup> For Guttenshon's letter to Otto see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Eduardos Schaubert, 1804-1860*. [Eduard Schaubert, 1804-1860] T. Sieti tr., Athens: Odysseas, 1999, endnote 18, p.30.

aesthetic objects with which the rich would assuage their boredom was much more honest than the arguments surrounding the building of the capital.

However appalling his intentions, Guttenshon's argument is reminiscent of a shocking honesty that, although evident in earlier travellers' accounts, was almost totally disguised in the debate over the planning of nineteenth-century Athens. Reminiscent of Guttenshon's contempt towards the city's population, for instance, J.B.S Morrit, an eighteenth-century British traveller who left London in 1794 writes of Athens that:

It is very pleasant to walk the streets here. Over almost every door is an antique statue or basso-relievo, more or less good though all much broken, so that you are in a perfect gallery of marbles in these lands. Some we steal, some we buy, and our court is much adorned with them [...]. They will be as good playthings as the furniture and pictures for half an hour before dinner.<sup>867</sup>

Yet, whereas Morrit only 'collected' coins,<sup>868</sup> Guttenshon belonged to a group of people who actually created nineteenth-century Athens. At the same time, whilst Morrit took souvenirs for his court, Guttenshon wished to transform Athens itself into a court. Although they both share the same elitism, Guttenshon's sensitivity concerning the ruins remains highly questionable. At all events, Guttenshon and Rochette's arguments were ultimately ignored. Notwithstanding the will of Ludwig I, they both "ignored the fact that only a direct juxtaposition of the ancient relics with the new city would emphasize the historical continuity and would justify the choice of Athens as the capital."<sup>869</sup> Whatever its merits as an ancient site in itself, Piraeus lacked a monument that could rival the Acropolis of Athens, and was not a 'proper ancestor' for the modern. In addition, especially insofar as Guttenshon is concerned, the arguments against the foundation of Athens as the capital betrayed a blunt emphasis on aesthetics that, although the 'norm' in the eighteenth century, was nonetheless unacceptable in the creation of a city that would, in the nineteenth century, re-invest the world with a 'meaningful culture'. But the decision was already taken in Munich soon after the Greeks – assisted by Europe – rebelled against the Turks in 1821. Athens was the only and undisputed capital as well as the only undeniable ancestor. What should this ancestor look like and how would it become apparent that it was the rightful 'cradle' of European 'democracy' and 'civilization'? The architects of nineteenth-century Athens sketched an image of the city whose reality and validity was rarely contested by

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<sup>867</sup> J.B.S. Morrit cited in R. Eisner op. cit., 1991, p.85.

<sup>868</sup> Ibid.

<sup>869</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.27.

younger generations. They built a capital for their present, but a present that was supposed to last forever. The image they created for new Athens outlived them and in this respect they were successful.

#### IV

Enchanted as always by the 'romantic dynasty', Zaharias Papadoniou, an early twentieth-century author, wrote that, "if there is any land that is entitled to say halt to the momentum of life, this land is Athens."<sup>870</sup> Athens, for Papadoniou, ought to resist the new and especially the changes it might imply. Yet, he did not reject the new per se. Rather, he insisted that it may be welcome anywhere, *except* in Athens:

This city cannot but be built according to certain facts dictated by nature and by history. These facts are its hills and its monuments. These were made in order to be seen. Any architecture that will hide them may be completely adjusted to progress, and necessary for people, but, for the image of Athens, it is pitiful. And I forbid it.<sup>871</sup>

It is nature and history, for Papadoniou, which ought to define the *image* of the capital. Despite the 'necessity' for change, and in spite of the price to be 'paid' if the city did not adjust to 'progress', Papadoniou maintained that Athens must always provide a clear view of its hills and of its monuments. Writing in the early twentieth century, however, Papadoniou was referring to the city that was rebuilt a century before. Anticipating his rejection of the new in the context of a twentieth-century Athenian modernity, the founders of new Athens in the nineteenth century were devoted to a representation of Athens not merely as antiquity, but rather as the ever-ancient.

The ever-ancient and the distinctively classical were among the newest materials used in the planning of Athens nearly a century before Papadoniou declared the unsuitability of the new in the capital. A traveller's views concerning the image of modern Athens in the nineteenth century highlights the relationship between the always ancient, the classical and the quintessentially Greek. He wrote, for instance, that, "architects should not forget that they are working in classical Greece and should, therefore, embrace the kind of Greek architecture."<sup>872</sup> Published on the eighteenth of July 1833, the traveller's description of the city concludes with an illusion: the architects of 1833 Athens were not, as the author assumed, working in classical Greece. On the contrary, living in the

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<sup>870</sup> Z. Papadoniou *Shediasmata*. [Sketches] Athens: Estia, no date (early 20<sup>th</sup> century), p.135.

<sup>871</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>872</sup> The 'traveller' cited in O. Badema-Foudoulake *Kleanthes 1802-1862*. Vol.2, Athens: Municipality of Athens and Municipality of Velvendo, 2002, pp.128-129.

nineteenth century, the 'traveller' and the architects were more than twenty centuries younger than classical Athens and were, therefore, working in a post-classical city. At all events, and with affinities with what Papadoniou argued a century later, the mysterious 'traveller' insisted that he was living in classical Greece and that the capital ought to be built according to a 'Greek architecture'. But for the 'traveller', this architecture was always identical with classical architecture. Both his opinions and his identity reveal the traveller's account to be illuminating in the context of the representation of modern Athens as antiquity. Although the newspaper article was simply signed by 'The Traveller', there are grounds for accepting the hypothesis that the author was Ludwig Ross.<sup>873</sup> A close friend of the architects of the first plan for Athens, Stamatios Kleanthes and Eduard Schaubert, and Klenze's close associate in the sanitization of the Acropolis, the archaeologist Ross identified the modern city with the classical polis whose 'glory' he himself was appointed to reconstruct.

In not accepting that they were reconstructing both the ancient and the modern, the majority of the plans for the capital embraced Ross' suggestion that the image of the capital ought to resemble that of the Acropolis. Indeed, the "planning of new Athens not only had to satisfy, from the beginning, the demands of a 'contemporary' capital but it also had to appreciate the great radiance of the cultural heritage of the city."<sup>874</sup> Whilst the definition of this 'cultural heritage' was largely the result of the restoration of the purified Acropolis, in order to eradicate the mainly aesthetic differences between an 'uncontaminated' Acropolis and an Athens that was 'tainted' by the passage of time, history had to be manipulated even further. This was a conviction more or less shared by the majority of the capital's first active architects. The reinstatement of the classical glory in the modern capital may explain why despite the fact that the plans submitted to the Regency during the first years of building differed in their approach towards the relation between the new and the old, between the built and un-built areas but also in terms of the 'basic principles' of urban organization, they all, nonetheless, defined an extensive archaeological zone around the Acropolis.<sup>875</sup> Whereas some proposals, such as Schinkel's and Ferdinand von Quast's,<sup>876</sup> favoured a city built on the Sacred Rock, thereby proposing

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<sup>873</sup> For the 'Traveller's' description of Athens see *ibid.* For the hypothesis that the author of the article was Ross see O. Badema-Foudoulake in *ibid.*, fn.1, p.129.

<sup>874</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, p.25.

<sup>875</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27.

<sup>876</sup> Ferdinand von Quast submitted his plan in July 1834. He adopted the same approach with Schinkel for a city on the hill. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *ibid.*, p.35.

the building of the new on the old,<sup>877</sup> others, like the Kleantes-Schaubert plan, advocated a geometrically-based relationship between the old city in the South and the new city surrounding it from the North.<sup>878</sup> Yet in spite of their differences, all the first plans for Athens maintained an undisputed dialectic between the cleansed Acropolis and the modern capital as *the city of the Acropolis*.<sup>879</sup> It is not the Acropolis of Athens *per se* that interests us here, but rather the possibility of a representation of the capital as the Acropolis' Athens.

If the Sacred Rock was restored in order to justify its status as a European monument, we can also argue that Athens was chosen as the capital in order to legitimate its status as the *origin* of Western 'civilization'. Europe, and above all pre-unification Germany, had to rebuild Athens because *the ancestor should set a living example*. If Athens were left in 'ruins', it would bear testimony to the *mortality* of European modernity. In turn, if it were restored into its 'once upon a time' glory, it would provide evidence regarding the *eternal future* of modernity's present. In rebuilding Athens as the capital of an eternal history,<sup>880</sup> Europe attempted to disguise the possible death of the modern.

How was this dialectic between the Athenian past and present related to European modernity? The question takes us back to Europe's search for ancestors and to the cultural contest between the old and the new. In his analysis of the intimate connection between the building of the nation-state and Europe's great cities, Wolfgang Sonne explains that,

As the capital of Greece, Athens represents a special case ever since its liberation from Ottoman rule in the early nineteenth century. It provided a screen onto which the European powers projected their cultural desires and this was directly reflected in an ambitious capital city plan.<sup>881</sup>

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<sup>877</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas "I Idrysi tis Neas Athenas: Poleodomikes Protaseis kai Aesthetikes Antilepseis kata to 1830-1840 gia tin Anaptyksi tis Neas Polis - Emphasi stin Arhaia Arhitektonike Kleronomia kai sto Istoriko Topio." [The Foundation of New Athens: Town Planning Proposals and Aesthetic Conceptions during 1830-1840 on the Development of the New City - Emphasis on the Ancient Architectural Heritage and the Historic Landscape] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 32, September 1989, especially pp.69-77. See also I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, esp. Ch. XII, pp.235-258.

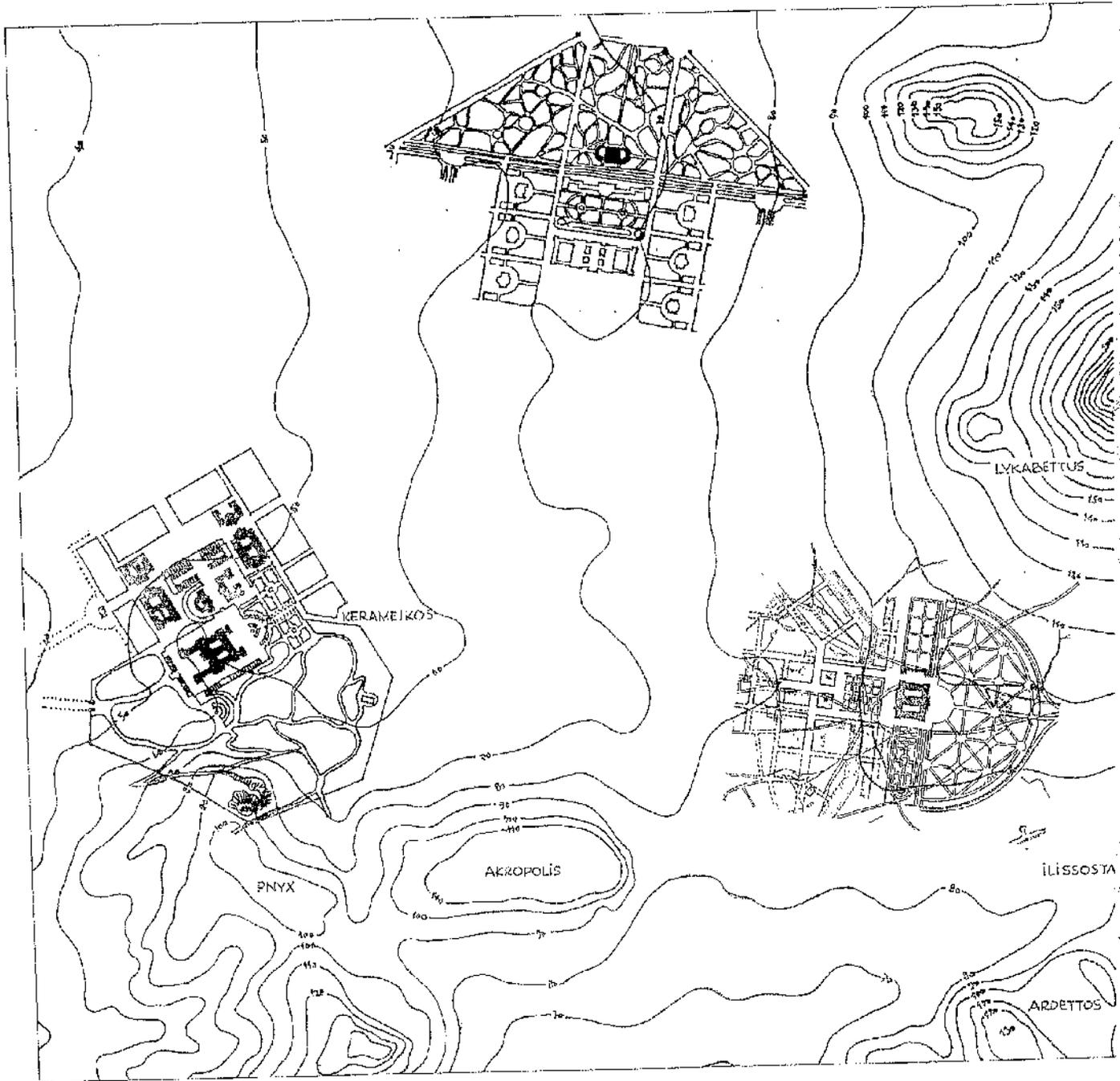
<sup>878</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.28.

<sup>879</sup> In this context see also M. Bires "I Idrysi tis Athenas - Shediasmos kai Poleodomike Ekselikse." [The Foundation of Athens - Urban Planning Development] in H. Bouras et. al., eds., *ATHENAI - Apo tin Klassike Epohe eos Simerai. (5os aionas pX-2000mX)*. [Athens - From the Classical Era To-day (5<sup>th</sup> century BC - 2000 AD)] Athens: KOTINOS, 2000, pp.370-397.

<sup>880</sup> See G. Tsiomis "Athena Evropaike Protevousa." [Athens, a European Capital] *Athena Evropaike Ypothese*, op. cit., 1985, p.19.

<sup>881</sup> W. Sonne *Representing the State - Planning in the Early Twentieth Century*. London: Prestel, 2004, p.145.

# IX. Three Proposals for the Palace



In the nineteenth century, Athens became the screen that would reflect modernity's claim for an eternal present. But this screen was not a *tabula rasa*. On the contrary, in being continuously inhabited since antiquity, the new capital had to be reconstructed in such a way that would also mirror modernity's claim to an eternal classical antiquity as present.

Not only did the architects of new Athens – including Kleanthes and Schaubert – attempt to re-build the classical polis after its demise, but in so doing, they believed that they were reproducing the quintessence of classical art. What they did not believe – or admit – was that this distinctive Greekness was largely the product of a European imaginary of Greece and particularly Athens as the ancestor of European 'civilization'. Hence, it was a collective illusion that rebuilt Athens, not just in the image of the Periclean polis, but rather as the classical polis itself. In this context, for instance, Vihna Hastaoglou-Martinidis argues that what distinguishes Greek nineteenth-century cities, such as Athens or Patras, from their European sisters is the "belief that this imported model, this product of neoclassical tradition, actually originated in Greece and was, therefore, a counterloan."<sup>882</sup> In other words, as we will see with the buildings of new Athens, neoclassicism was often represented not as a copy but rather as the continuation of the same architectural style that created the Acropolis. This style was believed to have been adopted by European capitals and to have returned to the glorious new Athens of the nineteenth century. Although Hastaoglou-Martinidis applies this argument to many cities, such as Patras, rebuilt in the nineteenth century, the case of the capital remains the most eloquent one. The first plans for Athens were largely defined, as Papadoniou suggested that they should be, by the Acropolis Hill. Yet, whereas the majority of those plans advocated a representation of the capital as antiquity *par excellence*, this belief threatened the modern city with an inability to realize its modern elements such as Elgin's sad clock or the organization of a new kind of governing. Hence, even though the exploration of the implications concerning neoclassicism will be discussed in the context of Athenian neoclassical monuments, what we need to discuss here is how a majority of the fathers of nineteenth-century Athens denied the city's newness.

In following the pattern of rejection of the new of the centuries between Pericles and Otto, that was established with the restoration of the Acropolis, the first plans for Athens went a step further and denied their own time. As with the 'traveller' Ross, the architects of the new city retained the illusion that they were living in classical Athens. In outlining the modern city, the first architects of the capital had persuaded themselves that they were rebuilding the classical polis that was a 'once upon a time' ATHENS. In the

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<sup>882</sup> V. Hastaoglou-Martinidis "City Form and National Identity: Urban Designs in Nineteenth-Century Greece." *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 13, 1995, p.104.

nineteenth century, the construction of a new that ought to resemble the ancient echoed a prayer with which the moderns tried to be something more than the mere descendants of the ancients. If they could rebuild the classical polis, the living would become the ancients – indeed, they would become the dead and achieve immortality. In this unconscious destruction of what we now understand as history, Greeks and Europeans alike imagined a capital city, the majority of whose plans were dedicated to the dead with whom the living wished to be associated. The great majority of the first plans for Athens maintained this association with the ancients. [Fig. IX]

## V

Even though different architects favour different plans over others, there is an overall ambivalence in Athens in relation to the social meaning of the destruction of the old in favour of the classical. However, the initial plans for Athens were, to a large extent, hostile to the old both because it was usually perceived as a testimony to the city's Middle Ages and because it disrupted the direct connection of the nineteenth century with the classical polis. Two different plans, and the definitive change in the topography of Athens resulting from the final decision concerning the location of the palace, may justify this hypothesis. The problem begins with the very choice of Athens as a capital for Greece and, perhaps, Europe. Whilst by 1914, Antonio Sant' Elia would declare, in the "Manifesto of Futurist Architecture" that, "things will endure less than us. Every generation must built its own city,"<sup>883</sup> the majority of the first architects of Athens were determined, a century earlier, to build a city that would outlive them as well as a capital that would pay homage to a distant antiquity.

Despite the fact that Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan was finally halted and modified according to Klenze's revisions, their plan successfully defined significant parts of the city, some of which are still evident today. At the same time, and this is what interests us more here, it largely maintained the theoretical preconditions and the symbolic rules behind the re-building of Athens. After all, it was their friend Ross who had first said that they were living in 'classical Greece'. Before we discuss the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan, however, there is a problem concerning our perception of 1833 Athens, which can, if solved, explain much in the context of the building of modern Athens. This problem arises from the fact that, misled by the imaginary of Athens depicted in travellers' accounts, the literature on the city habitually calls it a 'village'. As Georgios Sarigiannis argues, its 12,000 population actually forbids us to sustain the argument that 1833 Athens was a

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<sup>883</sup> A. Sant' Elia "Manifesto of Futurist Architecture," in U. Apollonio ed., *Futurist Manifestos*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973, p.172, emphasis on the original.

village.<sup>884</sup> Rather, Sarigiannis maintains that Athens was a city that played a very important role in the geo-economic structure of the Southern Balkans.<sup>885</sup> The description of Athens in the early 1830s as a ‘small village’, therefore, points to two possible hypotheses. First, that Athens might appear as a village because it did not, as imagined, resemble the recorded version of a ‘once upon a time’ Periclean polis. Second, that Athens was not referred to as a town because, from 1833 on, it was not perceived as a mere city. Rather, it was Europe’s chosen capital. In either case, the fact that Athens was continuously inhabited since c.4000BC and the observation that there were 12,000 people living in the city in 1833 also prevents us from speaking of the building of modern Athens as such. Rather, we should speak of the rebuilding of the city of old Athens as the new capital. Like Guttenshon, who had no actual plan in relation to the city’s population, Kleanthes and Schaubert, as well as Klenze after them, often chose to neglect this detail. The planning, sanitization and rebuilding of Athens itself meant the foundation of the post-classical capital as the Periclean polis.

Kleanthes and Schaubert, who first met in Berlin during their studies in the Royal Academy of Architecture,<sup>886</sup> were officially entrusted with the plan for Athens in May 1832.<sup>887</sup> The plan was re-approved and ultimately halted in order for Klenze to revise it. In refusing to accept Klenze’s revisions, Kleanthes and Schaubert submitted their resignation in November 1834.<sup>888</sup> Whilst their resignation – accepted a month later – left Kleanthes without public office, Schaubert was soon reappointed in a more prestigious position in the Architectural Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>889</sup> How did a plan with such a short and turbulent life define modern Athens? Once more, the answer may lie initially in the choice of Athens as the capital. Olga Badema-Foudoulake, an authority on Kleanthes’ work, maintains that, when drawing the first plan for Athens, Kleanthes and Schaubert did *not* know that they were planning the capital.<sup>890</sup> Although generally accepted, this argument may, nonetheless, be questioned in light of the fact that, during his studies in Berlin, Kleanthes had already envisaged Athens as the capital.<sup>891</sup> Moreover, in an 1828 plan for Athens, Kleanthes had designed a parliament.<sup>892</sup> At the same time, in using a map

<sup>884</sup> G. Sarigiannis *Athens 1830-2000*. [Athens 1830-2000] Athens: Symmetria, 2000, p.54.

<sup>885</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>886</sup> For Kleanthes see O. Badema-Foudoulake *Kleanthes 1802-1862*. Vol.1, Athens: Municipality of Athens and Municipality of Vervendo, 2001, O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2002, and M. Kardamitse-Adame and M. Bires “Stamatios Kleanthes,” in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. *op. cit.*, 1996, pp.64-74. For Schaubert see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1999.

<sup>887</sup> See O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2001, p.25. For a copy of the appointment see O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2002, Appendix 25, p.27.

<sup>888</sup> O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2001, p.71.

<sup>889</sup> *Ibid.* p.25.

<sup>890</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>891</sup> *Ibid.* 112.

<sup>892</sup> *Ibid.*

of Athens drawn up by William Leake,<sup>893</sup> both Kleanthes and Schaubert's *first* plan as well as their own reformulations of that plan, included a palace. Does this mean that they knew that they were planning the capital? To begin with, it is illogical to accept that the Regency – and above all Ludwig – would authorize the implementation of a city-plan that included a palace without simultaneously founding that city as the capital. Furthermore, Kleanthes and Schaubert submitted two memoranda with their plan to the Regency,<sup>894</sup> wherein they explicitly stated that, although they did not know that they were planning the capital,<sup>895</sup> their plan was predicated upon this precondition.<sup>896</sup> In other words, whereas we can accept that, initially, they were merely hoping that they were planning the capital, we do not understand why they decided, in their second memorandum, to repeat that they did not know if Athens would be the capital. After all, by that time, their hopes were more than realized.

To remain with what Kleanthes and Schaubert did or did not know, and whilst Papageorgiou-Venetas has successfully disproved all the arguments concerning the possible implication of third parties in the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan,<sup>897</sup> we might at least entertain the idea that, even though their teacher was inactive in the actual plan itself, Kleanthes and Schaubert knew about the 'debate' concerning the choice of a capital for post-revolutionary Greece. Although we cannot actually know whether they knew or not, the question concerning what the two young architects 'knew' may be important for two reasons. In the literature, there is a unanimous agreement concerning their 'ignorance' in terms of the choice of the capital. Consequently, if we are misled and blindly sympathise with Kleanthes and Schaubert whose plan was 'destroyed' by a malicious Klenze,<sup>898</sup> we will probably neglect what Kleanthes and Schaubert actually did whilst they were responsible for the planning and rebuilding of Athens. In emphasizing that they did not know if Athens was going to be the capital, the majority of the literature on the subject tends to over-romanticize Kleanthes and Schaubert's actions and intentions. Knowingly or not, Kleanthes and Schaubert suggested that – capital or not – Athens had to have a palace. Hence, we can explore how the location Kleanthes and Schaubert proposed for the palace,

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<sup>893</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, 105.

<sup>894</sup> For a copy and analysis of the first memorandum see K.H. Bires "To Shedion ton Athenon kai to Ypomnema Kleanthous kai Schaubert." [The Plan for Athens and the Kleanthes-Schaubert Memorandum] *Nea Estia*. Year 1B' [12], Vol.23, Issue 276, Athens, 15 May 1938[b], pp.667-669, and K.H. Bires *Athenaikai Meletai*. [Athenian Studies] Vol.1, Athens, 1938, pp.10-20. For a copy of the second memorandum see O. Badema-Foudoulake op. cit., 2002, Appendix 9, pp.28-35. Both memorandums were written in German. Bires and Badema-Foudoulake provide Greek translations. Bires' translation was the first to appear in Greek that is more than a century after the memorandum was submitted.

<sup>895</sup> Ibid., p.29.

<sup>896</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>897</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001. For the hypothesis that Schinkel helped his students with the plan see K.H. Bires "O Agnostos Tritos tou Shediou ton Athenon." [The Unknown Third [Agent] in the Plan for Athens] in K.H. Bires 1938, pp.28-30.

<sup>898</sup> This is an argument supported by Bires throughout his works.

as well as their treatment of the post-classical antiquities, are indicative of a collective rejection of social reality. What we doubt here is not their choices. Rather, what we cannot accept uncritically is the argument that whereas all others who were involved in the planning of Athens as the capital cleansed the city and its Acropolis from the ‘rubble’, Kleanthes and Schaubert were radically more ‘sensitive’ towards old Athens.

Most architects today argue that Kleanthes and Schaubert were more sensitive than Klenze with regard to medieval monuments.<sup>899</sup> For example, in overemphasizing the role of modern Athens in the construction of some ‘national identity’, Eleni Bastéa argues that the plans for Athens, including the Kleanthes-Schaubert one, established a significant association between the new Greek state, and the Byzantine Empire.<sup>900</sup> Whereas the former argument remains highly debatable, the latter is naïve if not altogether wrong. This becomes particularly clear in the case of the capital, and especially with the first two plans – the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan and Klenze’s revisions. To remain with Kleanthes and Schaubert, however, although it may be true that, in the beginning at least, they intended to preserve and restore ‘all churches’,<sup>901</sup> and even though their proposal to preserve a significant part of the old town was the main cause of their disagreement with Kaftantzoglou,<sup>902</sup> the Kleanthes-Schaubert memoranda reveal hidden motives. Why is it wrong to explore a relationship between the state and Byzantium in the context of Athenian modernity and the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan? In their second memorandum, the young architects explicitly proposed the:

Documentation of the names of the surviving churches *because*, from the name of a church, archaeology can sometimes reach conclusions concerning the building that *previously* occupied the space.<sup>903</sup>

This documentation, they believed, would be in the interest of the ‘educated world of Europe’,<sup>904</sup> and would, therefore, provide a knowledge that would satisfy Greeks and foreigners alike. But pointing directly to Mauer’s Law, the architects of the first authorized plan for Athens maintained that the surviving churches should be preserved and that their

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<sup>899</sup> See for example O. Badema-Foudoulake op. cit., 2001 and E. Bastéa op. cit., 2000, p.86.

<sup>900</sup> Ibid., p.35. Note, however, that, concerning the architectural details of the Kleanthes-Schaubert proposal for Athens, Socratis Georgiadis maintains that Bastéa identifies the original plan with its printed version. See S. Georgiadis’ Book review of Bastéa’s *The Creation of Modern Athens: planning the Myth*, in JSAH, Vol.60, No.3, September 2001, p.362.

<sup>901</sup> I. Travlos op. cit., 1993, p.244.

<sup>902</sup> For their disagreement with Kaftantzoglou see A. Papageorgiou-Venctas op. cit., 1999, endnote 46, p.62. The old town was mostly built below and around the Acropolis.

<sup>903</sup> Kleanthes and Schaubert second memorandum cited in O. Badema-Foudoulake op. cit., 2001, pp.28-29, my emphasis.

<sup>904</sup> See *ibid.*, p.28

names should be documented because archaeology, notwithstanding their friend Ross, could search for and perhaps discover an ancient building beneath the medieval one. Christian Athens, in other words, was worthy of Kleanthes and Schaubert's attention mainly in so far as it could reveal the ancient beneath the old. Indeed, contrary to Bastéa's argument that the creation of the modern capital is exemplary of a relation between the state and the Byzantine Empire, the fathers of modern Athens, including Kleanthes and Schaubert, were indifferent, if not altogether hostile, towards the old that was Christian.<sup>905</sup>

## VI

After the government's settlement in Athens in 1834, the Regency solved the urgent problem of the housing of the different public services by regularly converting churches into courtrooms.<sup>906</sup> In turn, the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s saw the demolition of seventy-two Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches.<sup>907</sup> Whilst the remains of the churches were often plundered in order to be used as materials for private residences,<sup>908</sup> after 1842 the government ordered the use of those materials in the building of the Athens Cathedral.<sup>909</sup> If it is true that, in the nineteenth century, the fathers of modern Athens built a Cathedral, can we still sustain the argument that they preferred the ancient to the old? In other words, does the fact that Christian Orthodoxy had nothing to do with the representation of Athens as antiquity reveal a contrast with the Bavarians' neoclassical Athens or does it create a contradiction in our hypotheses that the fathers of the capital resented its post-classical past?

At first, the answer to both questions appears to be in the affirmative. Yet, the contradiction is not as clear as it may appear to be. On the one hand, it is true that none of the founders of modern Athens denied the 'necessity' of a city Cathedral. Actually, the foundation stone for the Athens Cathedral – the Metropolis – was laid in 1842 and Otto himself was one of the sponsors of the project.<sup>910</sup> On the other hand, however, and this may validate our hypothesis that the building of the Cathedral is not necessarily radically different from the project of a neoclassical Athens, in 1842 the government did not hesitate

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<sup>905</sup> It is interesting to note that Bires maintains that nineteenth-century archaeologists were interested only in classical antiquity and were completely 'heartless' and 'unloving' towards medieval churches. See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.90.

<sup>906</sup> In this context see M. Kardamitse-Adame and Aristeia Papanikolaou-Christensen "Metatropi Ekklesion se Althouses Dikasterion." [Transformation of Churches into Courtrooms] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 48, September 1993, pp.56-66.

<sup>907</sup> See K.H. Bires "Ekklesies tis Palias Athenas. [Churches of Old Athens] in K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1938, pp.23-24 and K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.90-92.

<sup>908</sup> See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1938, pp.23-24.

<sup>909</sup> See N. Harkiolakis "Oi Ekklesies tis Plakas – Oi Semantikoteroi Sozomenoi Naoi tis Periohes." [The Churches of Plaka – The most Important Surviving Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Temples in the Area] in E. Traiou ed., *op. cit.*, 1997, p.62. For the Athens Cathedral see also K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, pp.132-134. The Cathedral was initially designed by Theophil von Hansen in 1842, and was finished by F. Boulanger and P. Kalkos in 1860. See *ibid.*

<sup>910</sup> N. Harkiolakis in E. Traiou ed., *op. cit.*, 1997, pp.66-67.

to legalize the demolition of old churches in order to use the materials for the Cathedral. In other words, the Athens Cathedral – which it should be emphasized – is not typically Byzantine, was a *new* structure whose building legitimated the demolition of old churches and implied that the government preferred one new church to hundreds of old ones. Hence, they destroyed medieval Athens and, instead, imposed on the modern a building that was *new* and, therefore, empty of, and open to, history. In turn, the fact that this building was Christian and a rather unimpressive Cathedral instead of a mere small and yet old church implied, in the context of Christian Athens, the complete substitution of the old by the new, thereby generating a process that was opposite to the one applied on the Acropolis. Whereas the sanitization of the Sacred Rock aimed at the discovery of the chosen ancient beneath the old, the building of the Cathedral, with the material of the medieval churches, meant the destruction of the old for the celebration of the modern. Contrary to the initial assumption that the Cathedral is a building that we cannot include in our discussion of modern antiquity, we can see how, in overemphasizing the ancient, the fathers of modern Athens also succeeded in secretly and subtly imposing the new whenever they thought it was essential. Modern Athens could be Christian, but it could not be distinctively Byzantine. Indeed, it could be Christian in the Cathedral but not in the hundreds of scattered churches that distracted one's view of the sanitized Acropolis.

In exploring the massive destruction of medieval Athens, Nikos Harkiolakis, an architect of the office for the restoration of Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, maintains that the period between 1835 and 1850 was 'fatal' for the majority of Athenian medieval churches.<sup>911</sup> Having demolished almost seventy churches in order to open new roads, create new town squares and new town blocks, the government soon authorized the demolition of thirty more churches in order to facilitate excavations.<sup>912</sup> Finally, following the great fire of 1885, the churches that had been damaged were ultimately also demolished, thereby offering a convenient excuse for more excavations.<sup>913</sup> Most commentators agree on one conclusion: although we cannot easily undermine the importance of the excavations, for medieval Athens, the first half of the nineteenth century was 'fatal'. Strange as it may sound, we could argue that the period that condemned medieval Athens to destruction and oblivion was itself as 'dark' as the Middle Ages. Yet this time, religious dogmatism and fanaticism were replaced by archaïomania. The results of these modern Middle Ages remain acutely felt in Athens today.

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<sup>911</sup> Ibid., p.62.

<sup>912</sup> Ibid.

<sup>913</sup> See S.B. Mamaloukos "Byzantines Ekklesies pou Hathikan. I Periodos meta tin Epanastase tou 1821 itan Olethria gia ta Byzantina Mnemeia." [Byzantine Churches that are Gone. The period after the 1821 Revolution was Fatal for Byzantine Monuments] in E. Traiou ed., op. cit., 1997, pp.110-112.

Whereas in 1833 there were one hundred and forty Byzantine and post-Byzantine surviving temples in Athens, by 1940, only thirty-eight of them had been spared.<sup>914</sup> Of the twenty-seven Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches of ‘old’ Athens in the area today,<sup>915</sup> four are actually either completely abandoned or half-ruined.<sup>916</sup> Not surprisingly, one of them, Saint Nikolaos is located on the north slope of the Acropolis.<sup>917</sup> Moreover, in looking at the remaining churches, we also realize that most of them were actually restored in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>918</sup> Thus, whilst they were giving birth to a new capital with a new Cathedral, the fathers of modern Athens aborted the old. Whereas the justification for the sanitization of the Acropolis was that they were destroying the ‘traces of barbarism’, the cleansing of the city could not easily justify how the founders of nineteenth-century Athens, themselves Christians, destroyed the traces of their own faith. Neither could it explain how, although they said that they were looking for the specifically ‘Greek’, they destroyed the churches that testified to the ‘Greekness’ of Orthodox Christianity.

Ever since the schism, in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, of the Christian Church into the Western Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Church, the former was, until the Reformation, the dominant faith in Western Europe, and the latter was, until the formation of the Socialist Block, the faith of the Eastern European countries. To be more precise, what interests us here is that when the Bavarians came to Greece, Orthodoxy was the faith of the majority of Greeks and, most importantly, the Russians.<sup>919</sup> In having established their political power in the transfer of the capital from Nafplion to Athens, Britain, France and the Prussian-Bavarian fathers of modern Athens undermined Russia’s influence over Greece in a powerful symbolical way. Although Russia remained a ‘Great Power’ influencing Greek politics, Athens, more than a mere national capital, belonged to the entirety of Christian – Catholic and Protestant – Europe. Indeed, whereas Greece could remain Orthodox, the capital of European antiquity – and modernity – was, at best, allowed to be plainly Christian. But its Christian element was not allowed to hide the ancient one, which would establish Athens as the ‘cradle’ of Western European ‘democracy’ and ‘civilization’. In some respects, the desire to be the descendants of classical Athens also

<sup>914</sup> K.H. Bires cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, endnote 37, p.56. Note also that, in this context, Travlos argues that by 1960 only 24 out of 129 churches existed in the ‘old’ town. See I. Travlos op. cit., 1994, p.244.

<sup>915</sup> See Main Map, Back Side, numbers 85-115.

<sup>916</sup> See *ibid*, numbers 98-E3, 101-Γ5, 105-E5, and 110-Γ7.

<sup>917</sup> *Ibid.*, number 105-E5.

<sup>918</sup> See description of the history of the different churches in *Ibid*. In this context see also E. Kounoupiotou-Manolesou “Sozomenes Byzantines Ekklesies. Ennea Diateroun tin Arhiki tous Morfe, eno se Tesseris exoun ginei Metagenosteres Prosthikes.” [Extant Byzantine Churches] in E. Traiou ed., op. cit., 1997, pp.113-121.

<sup>919</sup> For a historical analysis of Greek Orthodoxy and the 1833 foundation of the Church of Greece see J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, 141-151.

allowed modern Europeans, including the ‘architects’ of nineteenth-century Athens, to become the city’s avengers.

Like the Byzantines’ practice of erasing or at least ‘hiding’ pagan Athens, Pericles’ modern ‘descendants’ accepted the ‘holy mission’ of cleansing the capital from everything that was ‘un-Athenian’, thereby undoing what ‘should not have been done’ to Athens. At the same time, they broke the traditional religious link between the Byzantine Empire, Greece and Russia and emphasized the new link between Europe and Athens. Indeed, for the first time in history, the Greek Church was separated from the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>920</sup> In July 1833, the government passed a – Mauer inspired – decree according to which the church of Greece “became autocephalous, acquired its own Synod, and recognized King Otto as its Head.”<sup>921</sup> Hence, the fathers of modern Athens did a lot more than merely choosing history. Rather, they established that in order for Athens to ‘belong’ to Europe, it had to be rebuilt as Pericles’ polis and with Otto – and not the Ecumenical Patriarch – as the Head of the Church of Greece. In turn, in order for the new city to weaken its bonds with the ‘East’ and reclaim its classical past, it had to forget that it was once the Byzantines’ province. This is how the moderns *rewrote history* and revenged Athens’ sufferings upon the Byzantines:

It is a tragic irony for one to consider that the churches, which were built next to ancient monuments in order to expiate the idolatrous space, were demolished and, therefore, sacrificed in order to elevate the grandeur of the ancient world.<sup>922</sup>

Athens betrays the truth in the argument that “Christianity was forced against its will to assist in making the ‘world’ of antiquity immortal.”<sup>923</sup> The moderns *undid*, symbolically as well as materially, what the Byzantines did to Athens. In this way they reduced Byzantine history to a veil over antiquity. Whereas that other ancient city, Rome, was the seat of the Pope, the Head of the Catholic Church, Constantinople and not Athens was the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch.<sup>924</sup> Indeed, although many Greeks, supporters of the irredentist

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<sup>920</sup> The Ecumenical Patriarch is the Orthodox equivalent of the Pope and literally means ‘the world’s patriarch’.

<sup>921</sup> I.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Vereinis op. cit., 2004, 141. Except from Mauer, T. Farmakides and S. Trikoupis, the later Prime-Minister of Greece supported the autonomy of the Greek Church. See *ibid.* The Patriarch did not recognize the new institution until 1850. See *ibid.*

<sup>922</sup> A. Papanikolaou-Christensen “Byzantine Athens in Travellers’ [Accounts] The Interest in Greek Antiquity Overshadows the Christian Monuments,” in E. Traiou ed., op. cit., 1997, p.148.

<sup>923</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.269.

<sup>924</sup> Thessalonike was the Byzantines’ other favourite city after Constantinople. The Byzantine influence is more obvious in Thessalonike today than it is in Athens. Whereas Constantinople is still under Turkish occupation, Thessalonike was liberated during the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913.

'Great Idea',<sup>925</sup> hoped that Athens was only the temporary capital of Greece and that, once Constantinople was free, the capital would be transferred to the spiritual and material seat of Orthodoxy,<sup>926</sup> Europe's choice of Athens emphasizes the city's representation as the capital of European antiquity. In the choice of Athens as capital, therefore, "Constantinople was degraded. New Greece wants to be the continuation of the ancient, not of the Eastern Roman empire."<sup>927</sup> Indeed, even though many Greeks soon embraced the identification of Athens with classical antiquity, nineteenth-century Greece was dominated by a 'dualism' that confused the dialectic, in the modern, between the old and the new even more: "on the one hand, an acceptable history which accepts two ancestors – the ancients and the Byzantines – and on the other hand, a silently diffused notion that wants us [the Greeks] to descend exclusively from the ancients."<sup>928</sup> Nevertheless, this 'dualism', which may highlight an ideological and cultural conflict in post-revolutionary Greece, was often suppressed in the arguments concerning the rebuilding of Athens. Thus, in nineteenth-century Athens, it was said "the ancients are leading the younger to modernization".<sup>929</sup> Was this part of the intentions of the first plans for Athens?

Contrary to Schinkel's flexible attitude towards Christianity, Klenze was far less ambivalent as to what was 'Athenian'. Initially Klenze argued that, despite the importance of the excavations, all monuments should be preserved.<sup>930</sup> This was the main premise of the Klenze-inspired Mauer's Law. But in reality, Klenze was completely indifferent towards Athenian monuments,<sup>931</sup> with the exception of the Acropolis. As far as the Acropolis itself was concerned, Klenze condemned the acts of 'barbarous love towards antiquity',<sup>932</sup> performed by Elgin and others, but nonetheless maintained that the only accretion that ought to be preserved was the Frankish tower.<sup>933</sup> Klenze would tolerate medieval monuments on the Acropolis only in so far as these accretions were neither distinctively Christian nor specifically Orthodox. Whilst they both used Christian architecture as the testimony to a future united Germany, Klenze and Schinkel largely excluded the Christian from the 'classical' Athenian that would be modern Athens in the nineteenth-century. Like Klenze and their teacher's definition of Athenian history,

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<sup>925</sup> For the 'Great Idea' and the consequent disaster in 1922 in Asia Minor see R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, esp. Ch.3, pp.47-99 and J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, esp. pp.227-235.

<sup>926</sup> For the belief that, after its liberation, Constantinople should be the capital of Greece see A. Politis *Romantika Hronia – Ideologies kai Nootropies stin Ellada tou 1830-1880*. [Romantic Years – Ideologies and Attitudes in Greece during 1830-1880] Athens: Mnemon, Society for the Study of New Hellenism, 2003, pp.66-67.

<sup>927</sup> Ibid., p.76.

<sup>928</sup> Ibid., p.111.

<sup>929</sup> Ibid., p.108.

<sup>930</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.30.

<sup>931</sup> Ibid., p.173.

<sup>932</sup> Klenze cited in ibid., p.370.

<sup>933</sup> In this context see also Klenze's list of Athenian monuments in ibid., pp.368-370.

Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan for the capital mirrored a bond, not between the State and the Byzantine Empire, but rather between the State and the 'pure' Acropolis. Their proposal for the palace was dedicated to this aim.

## VII

In his analysis of the general characteristics of nineteenth-century German urban planning, Sarigiannis observes that, amongst other principles, such as a clear 'geometrical composition', architects' town plans tended to leave the old city intact, whilst proposing the opening of one or two central streets, that effectively "connected the centre of the old city with the new area".<sup>934</sup> According to Sarigiannis, in proposing the opening of "three basic axes that emphasized the archaeocentrism of the neoclassical ideology of the bourgeoisie,"<sup>935</sup> Kleanthes and Schaubert embraced this general principle of a direct connection between the new and the old. Yet, whereas Sarigiannis explores the planning of Athens in terms of the rising power of the bourgeoisie, the emphasis on class issues may obscure our present exploration of Athenian modernity. Despite the validity of the argument that the bourgeoisie was very much involved in the building of the capital, the archaeocentrism that dictated the image of a new capital in the nineteenth century often transcended – or perhaps merely disguised – class conflict. On the other hand, since we are exploring the possibility of nineteenth-century Athens as the capital of European antiquity, to argue that the rebuilding of the city was the exclusive desire of the bourgeoisie would further imply that the European bourgeoisie in general was supporting the foundation of the capital. Such a mono-causal analysis, however, may be an obstacle to our understanding of the dynamics behind Athenian modernity. At all events, what interests us, for now, is the meaning of the opening of those basic axes that sought to geometrically 'connect' the modern capital with the old town.

All three axes in the Kleanthes-Schaubert proposal commenced from the palace and each was carefully designed in order to terminate in a specifically 'ancient' site: the ancient cemetery of the Cerameicus,<sup>936</sup> the Stadium,<sup>937</sup> and the Acropolis.<sup>938</sup> Both this geometricality and the third axis that established a direct connection between the palace and the Sacred Rock betray the modern ancient element in the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan. Although architects have not reached a unanimous conclusion concerning the city that

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<sup>934</sup> G. Sarigiannis *op. cit.*, 2000, p.71.

<sup>935</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72.

<sup>936</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72.

<sup>937</sup> *Ibid.*, p.73.

<sup>938</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72.

constituted the 'prototype' for the first plan for Athens,<sup>939</sup> we can, nonetheless, start from the premise that the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan was not as uniquely 'Greek' as Ross, for example, might assume it to be. It is necessary to examine how this plan, influenced by foreign urban planning principles, overemphasized an already socially constructed image of antiquity as present. What we can see, therefore, is how, whilst Ross was re-constructing the Acropolis, Kleanthes and Schaubert envisaged the new palace as a direct juxtaposition to what their friend left from the past on the Acropolis.

In the memorandum that accompanied their second plan, Kleanthes and Schaubert maintained that, from the eleven streets that started from the Palace Square, Athena's street, the central axis that connected Otto's residence with the Acropolis should be the one with the greatest width, as well as the one with continuous lines of trees.<sup>940</sup> In turn, the architects believed that, structured in this manner, Athena's street would be perfect for 'promenading'.<sup>941</sup> More importantly, however, in locating the palace to the north of the Acropolis in 'Othon' Square<sup>942</sup> – now Omonoia Square in the centre of Athens<sup>943</sup> – Kleanthes and Schaubert wished to use the 'most important antiquities' as '*points de vue*'.<sup>944</sup> What they proposed, therefore, was a symbolic as well as a physical connection of the palace to the Sacred Rock. Whilst remaining in the palace, the King and his court could see the Acropolis. At the same time, in leaving the palace, they could walk *directly* towards the Acropolis without ever losing it from their sight. Finally, assisted by the continuous rows of trees, the promenade towards the Sacred Rock provided an uninterrupted and undistracted *view* of its monuments. Yet, whereas this uninterrupted stroll towards the Acropolis was open for all Athenians to enjoy, only the King and his court would have the exclusive privilege of watching the monument from the upper rooms and stairs of the palace. Indeed, only the King and his court could enjoy that symbolically condensed promenade from the new to the 'ancient'. Faithful to this aim, Kleanthes and Schaubert had designed the main entrance of the palace in a direct juxtaposition to the Propylaea of the Acropolis. Kleanthes and Schaubert's first plan for a modern Athens and the opening of Athena's street, in 1834,<sup>945</sup> as the 'when' and 'where' modernity was waiting for antiquity,

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<sup>939</sup> For instance, Sarigiannis suggests that the Kleanthes-Schaubert was distinctively 'German', Papageorgiou-Venetas maintains that we might identify Russian influences, and Badema-Foudoulake argues that the plan used the basic principles of Louis XIV Versailles. See *ibid.*, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, and O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2001 respectively.

<sup>940</sup> See Kleanthes and Schaubert's second memorandum in O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2002, p.32.

<sup>941</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>942</sup> Othon is the Greek equivalent for Otto.

<sup>943</sup> For the history of Omonoia Square (Concord Square) see M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *Odonymika*. [Street names] Vol.3, Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Organization, 1997, pp.381-382. Othon Square was renamed into Omonoia Square in 1863. See *ibid.*, p.381.

<sup>944</sup> Kleanthes and Schaubert's second memorandum in O. Badema-Foudoulake *op. cit.*, 2002, p.32.

<sup>945</sup> For the history of Athena's street see M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis eds., *Odonymika*. [Street names] Vol.1, Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Organization, 1997, pp.65-66.

illustrates the hypothesis that, in seeking to 're-enchant' the world, modern antiquity was designed as a unique experience of the ancient *in* the modern.

In addition to their proposal for a direct 'visual connection' of the new city with the Acropolis,<sup>946</sup> Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan established two more dominant notions: the "characteristic triangular-radial town-planning structure according to the logic of the enlightened monarchy's eighteenth-century city,"<sup>947</sup> and the "lining of the main streets in the form of a right-angled triangle."<sup>948</sup> This geometrical arrangement of urban space was further divided into five, clearly defined and structured sectors. First, to the west of Piraeus street, the 'commercial zone'<sup>949</sup> was comprised of public buildings such the theatre, 'temples' of the developing capitalism such as the stock-exchange, the casino and the department stores, and the food market.<sup>950</sup> Second, around the palace in the northern part of the city centre, what we can define as the 'political zone', consisting of parliaments, ministries, the arsenal, the foundry, and the mint.<sup>951</sup> Third, the 'cultural zone', with the University, the National Library, and the Botanic Gardens in the eastern part of the city near Stadiou Street.<sup>952</sup> Fourth, the 'military zone' with the barracks,<sup>953</sup> and finally the 'undesired' but yet 'necessary zone' with the hospital, the cemeteries, the slaughterhouse, and the oil presses.<sup>954</sup> This last sector was, planned outside the city.<sup>955</sup> Whereas a casino, a police department, and the department stores were, for Kleanthes and Schaubert, appropriate neighbours to the Acropolis, the city's sick, its dead, as well as the animals that would soon be food in the market were not. The calculated geometry of Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan outlined a spatial order, which many, including Ludwig I, criticised as 'ugly'. The justification behind the argument that the geometrical arrangement of the capital was 'ugly' and, therefore, 'inappropriate' was that this manner of urban planning was 'alien' to how the ancient Athenians built their city. Once again, the Parthenon becomes exemplary of this debate over the ideal of beauty that was supposed to define the modern capital.

## VIII

In seeking to establish the 'law of visual cohesion' in the Sacred Rock, architect Konstandinos Doxiadis wrote, in 1938, that, "man wants to see the sunset and the sunrise because, contrary to eastern civilizations, he, and not God, is the measure of

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<sup>946</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, p.26.

<sup>947</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>948</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>949</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>950</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>951</sup> *Ibid.*, p.50.

<sup>952</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>953</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>954</sup> *Ibid.*, p.51.

<sup>955</sup> *Ibid.*

everything.”<sup>956</sup> Hence, Doxiadis argues that the Acropolis was built in terms of a specifically ‘anthropocentric’, ‘western’ and apparently geometrical ‘system’.<sup>957</sup> Three months later, architect Michaelis published his reply to Doxiadis’ article and primarily suggested that, “no beauty can be created without the feeling of unity.”<sup>958</sup> Nevertheless, although Michaelis accepts Doxiadis’ main hypothesis concerning the prevalence of harmony between the buildings on the Acropolis, he criticises his colleague for describing this ‘harmony’ in terms of a ‘static geometry’. Influenced by Nietzsche,<sup>959</sup> for instance, Michaelis suggests that, despite ‘technique’, the law that prevails in the Acropolis is that of ‘Art’ and of ‘Beauty’.<sup>960</sup> Whereas ‘technique’, for Michaelis, corresponds to ‘static geometry’, the harmony – the ‘Art’ and ‘Beauty’ – which characterizes the Sacred Rock, is ‘dynamic’ and “opens the eyes of the soul”.<sup>961</sup> The ancients’ art, argues Michaelis, established people as the measurement of everything, but it also accomplished something more than a mere superficial spatial arrangement.<sup>962</sup> Rather, their art ‘forced’ even the most ‘artless’ and ‘unsophisticated’ of spectators to discover the ‘life within space’.<sup>963</sup> Not mathematical logic, but rather, the ‘art of the Beautiful’ is, for Michaelis, the law according to which the ancients built the Acropolis. Although we cannot explore the technical accuracy of either Michaelis or Doxiadis’ arguments, we can discuss how the debate concerning the prevalence or not of geometry ultimately leads to a difference between the building of the Parthenon and the Kleanthes-Schaubert geometrical plan. This difference becomes eloquent in light of the fact that the Parthenon defied geometrical logic.

Alexander Philadelphus was amongst the first to emphasize – in 1924 – the manipulation of geometrical rules in the building of the Parthenon.<sup>964</sup> In his *Monuments of Athens*,<sup>965</sup> for instance, he maintained that the Parthenon is exemplary of an intriguing contradiction: what constitutes the Parthenon’s ‘harmony’ is its ‘disharmony’.<sup>966</sup> Moreover, Philadelphus maintains that, although “none of its forty-six columns has

<sup>956</sup> K. Doxiadis “Peri tou Tropou Syntheseos ton Mnemeiakon Poleodomikon Sygrotematou Ypo ton Arhaion Ellenon.” [On the Manner of the Composition of Monumental Urban-Planning Complexes under the Ancient Greeks] *Technical Chronika*, Year H’/XIII, No.145-146, 1-5 January 1938, p.20.

<sup>957</sup> For an analysis of Doxiadis’ proposed ‘system’ see *ibid.*, pp.9-23.

<sup>958</sup> T.A Michaelis “O Horos kai ta Poleodomika Sygrotemata ton Arhaion Ellenon.” [The Space and Urban-Planning Complexes of the Ancient Greeks] *Technika Chronika*, Year Z’/XIII, No.151,1 April 1938, p.281.

<sup>959</sup> See Michaelis’ reference to and citation of Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>960</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.291-292.

<sup>961</sup> *Ibid.*, p.290.

<sup>962</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>963</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>964</sup> See A. Philadelphus *Monuments of Athens*. Athens, 1924.

<sup>965</sup> I am mostly using the latest edition by the author’s grandson. Although I found the original in the Athens City Council Library, the latest edition has been published in both Greek and English so in having acknowledged the original source, I preferred to refer to its English publication. In order to avoid confusions, note also that the author’s grandson has the same name. See A. Philadelphus ed., *op. cit.*, 2004.

<sup>966</sup> *Ibid.*, p.28.

exactly the same dimensions”,<sup>967</sup> the Parthenon remains the “finest and most impressive monument ever conceived by mortal man.”<sup>968</sup> Eloquent of yet another contradiction, the possibility for mortal people to create such an ‘immortal’ monument, Philadelphus’ argument forces the conclusion that, if the Parthenon is beautiful because of its disharmony, then geometry must be the enemy of ‘Beauty’. Nevertheless, even though we may question the ‘immortality’ of the Parthenon, Philadelphus maintains that the manner of its structure was, by no means, accidental:

At first, this [disharmony] would appear to be due to the impossibility of turning out by hand only two columns exactly alike, but on further study it becomes evident that this seeming discrepancy is deliberate and forms the basis of the harmony prevailing in the Parthenon.<sup>969</sup>

The ancients, therefore, supported a definition of Beauty according to which the artist was free – if not required – to bend the rules of geometrical logic.<sup>970</sup> To leave the ancients, however, the question remains open. Was it the difference between their geometrical city-plan and the ancients’ approach towards aesthetics that prevented the complete realization of Kleanthes and Schaubert’s plan? The debate concerning geometry and beauty, which attracted Doxiadis, Michaelis, Philadelphus, and others, in the twentieth century, was also present in the first plans for the modern capital.

Even though in 1834, Klenze secured certain important revisions in the plan for Athens, Kleanthes and Schaubert’s proposals were authorized a year earlier and some of the main streets were opened, or at least defined as early as 1833.<sup>971</sup> So why did Ludwig I send Klenze to revise a plan that had already started to shape the image of the new city?<sup>972</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas argues that the 1834 revision of the plan was required because of the “illegal building in the old city, the speculation over land [...] and the people’s complaints against the strict expropriation measures”<sup>973</sup> Yet, despite all the practical necessities that justified Klenze’s revisions of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan, Klenze justified his role precisely in terms of his colleagues’ ‘artless’ choice of geometry. He

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<sup>967</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>968</sup> Ibid., p.28.

<sup>969</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>970</sup> This hypothesis applies to the Acropolis as well as to ancient town-planning in general. In this context see I. Travlos op. cit., 1994, and R.E. Wycherley *How the Greeks Built Cities*. New York: Anchor Books, 1969.

<sup>971</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.29.

<sup>972</sup> In this context note that the foundation stone of the Kleanthes-Schaubert finally unrealized palace was set already on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1834. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.88.

<sup>973</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.29. For the problems arising due to the compulsory expropriations – either for building or for excavations – see also K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, and E. Bastéa op. cit., 2000.

wrote, for instance, "I think that geometrical regularity and repetition should be considered as the error of monotony and not as beauty."<sup>974</sup> Contrary to Kleanthes and Schaubert, Klenze's plan for Athens emphasized the 'beautiful' and the 'picturesque' – the 'Beautiful' as opposite to the geometrical.<sup>975</sup> But like his younger colleagues, Klenze knew that he was not merely planning a capital for Greece. For him, "building in Athens is a European art-subject and, in a way, one is obliged to account to the whole of Europe for it."<sup>976</sup> Klenze, too, was building a beautiful capital for Europe.

## IX

Shortly after his arrival at Nafplion, Klenze received a letter from Kleanthes, in which the young architect was expressing his admiration for him and his confidence that Klenze's interference would effectively solve the practical problems that had occurred during the first year of the rebuilding of Athens.<sup>977</sup> A few months later, on the twenty-ninth of September 1834, Klenze wrote a letter to Ross, in which he sent his warmest regards to Schaubert, but also blamed Kleanthes – Schaubert's 'Mephistopheles' as he called him – for 'profiteering' and for 'deplorable intriguing'.<sup>978</sup> The period between July and September 1834 was as important for the relationships amongst the different architects of new Athens as it was for the city itself. Even though Klenze's revisions were substantial, a significant – material as well as symbolical – part of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan was, in all respects, successful. Aside from the Kleanthes-Schaubert influences, modern Athens owes a great part of its layout – some still evident – to Leo von Klenze's revisions of the first plan for Athens.

An initial analysis of Klenze's plan highlights the practical necessities of Klenze's interference with the plan for the capital. Such practical issues involved the reduction of the city's extension as well as the abolition of a number of squares and streets designed by Kleanthes and Schaubert.<sup>979</sup> Yet, Klenze's revisions of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan can also be related to a broader theoretical context whose social impact shaped the representation as well as the image of Athens as the capital of European antiquity. However indifferent towards Athenian monuments – aside from the Acropolis – Klenze nonetheless proposed the preservation of thirty-nine of the one hundred and fifteen

<sup>974</sup> Klenze cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.60.

<sup>975</sup> For Klenze's critique of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, pp.45-108. Note, however, that, as Papageorgiou-Venetas maintains, Klenze's reading of Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan was erroneous. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *ibid.*, p.60.

<sup>976</sup> Klenze cited in K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.34.

<sup>977</sup> Kleanthes' letter to Klenze dated 16 July 1834, in O. Badema-Foudoulake op. cit., 2002, Appendix 15, p.46.

<sup>978</sup> For Klenze's letter to Ross see *ibid.*, Appendix 16, p.46.

<sup>979</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1933, pp.19-21.

churches documented in Kleanthes and Schaubert's first memorandum.<sup>980</sup> Furthermore, in suggesting that the palace should be built in the Cerameicus – which is to say closer to the Acropolis – Klenze argued that Othon Square, where Kleanthes and Schaubert had designed the palace, was the perfect site for the Church of Sotiros, the Saviour,<sup>981</sup> thereby envisaging Athena's street<sup>982</sup> as a straight street between Christianity and 'antiquity'.<sup>983</sup> Does the fact that his plan included a *new* Cathedral mean that Klenze's definition of Athenian Christianity embraced the Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches of pre-1833 Athens? Even though, by 1838, twelve churches were restored and functioning,<sup>984</sup> two letters sent to Klenze four years earlier guaranteed the destruction of medieval Athens as well as anticipating the future of the capital.

On the sixteenth of September 1834, Otto sent a letter to Klenze in which he personally thanked him for his plan for Athens and informed him of the realization of Klenze's own suggestion concerning the setting up of the 'Building Committee of Athens the Capital City'.<sup>985</sup> Kleanthes, Schaubert and Ross were all members of the committee.<sup>986</sup> In turn, the Regency sent another letter to Klenze with an enclosed copy of the royal decree of the thirtieth of September 1834 concerning the transfer of the capital to Athens.<sup>987</sup> Article 6 of the decree is a bizarre combination of the seemingly incompatible proposals concerning post-classical monuments submitted by Kleanthes and Schaubert on the one hand, and Klenze on the other. We read, therefore, that public buildings, including Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches, should be preserved only if they are '*useful*', if they are "*considered worthy of preservation because of [either] historical interest,*" or because of their '*picturesque*' character.<sup>988</sup> In borrowing Kleanthes and Schaubert's definition of the 'usefulness' of medieval monuments – that they may reveal their ancient predecessors – and in combining it with Klenze's overall vague concept of the '*picturesque*',<sup>989</sup> the Regency decided that classical Athens was the only proper and legitimate ancestor of the modern capital of European antiquity. Medieval Athens was 'useful' and preserved only as long as it could provide evidence that would validate this conviction.

<sup>980</sup> Ibid., p.20. Klenze's proposal for the preservation of churches is also maintained by A. Papageorgiou-Venetas. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.30.

<sup>981</sup> The 'Saviour' refers to Christ. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1933, p.19.

<sup>982</sup> Note here that, as we will see later, Klenze changed the names of the streets. According to his plan, for example, Athena's street was renamed into Nike's Street. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.39.

<sup>983</sup> The importance of 'straight versus crooked streets' in the construction of the urban fabric will be further discussed in the following chapters.

<sup>984</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.50.

<sup>985</sup> For Otto's letter to Klenze see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.329.

<sup>986</sup> Ibid. For the Building Committee see also K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p. 40-43. The committee's first meeting took place in 15 September 1834. See *ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>987</sup> For the Regency's letter to Klenze see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.330.

<sup>988</sup> Ibid., my emphasis.

<sup>989</sup> For Klenze on the '*picturesque*' see *ibid.*, p.30.

To return to Klenze's plan, however, whereas Kleanthes and Schaubert proposed an immediate rendezvous between the Acropolis and the palace, which consequently located the latter in the centre of the city,<sup>990</sup> Klenze dreamt of the palace away from both the centre and public buildings, thereby suggesting the maximum autonomy of the Royal residence in terms of its position in the city's web.<sup>991</sup> This vision of a palace in a physical – and indeed social – autonomy from the city may be indicative of Klenze's own archaïomania. Even though he is, in general, more sympathetic to Klenze than Bires, who blames Klenze for many of the problems of post-1834 Athens,<sup>992</sup> Papageorgiou-Venetas argues that Klenze's decision to locate the palace away from the city was "impressively arrogant towards the city's inhabitants."<sup>993</sup> In taking Guttenshon's argument a step further, Klenze, who, nonetheless, recognised Athens as the only possible capital, excluded the Athenians – rich and poor – and argued that the King should have an *independent* and *private* relationship to the Acropolis. Whereas Guttenshon saw the monument as the mere décor for a royal country home, Klenze saw it as the ancestor of the palace. Klenze's 'use' of the Acropolis justified the choice of Athens as the capital, but at the same time, in maintaining an even greater 'proximity' than Kleanthes and Schaubert between the monument and the palace, Klenze disguised the newness of both. The restored Acropolis was the eternal monument and the new palace was its undisputed descendant. Indeed, in Klenze's plan, the new and the 'old' were one. Moreover, in locating the palace away from the rest of the new city, Klenze's plan aimed at a direct connection between Ludwig's Munich and Otto's Athens. How should Athens look for Klenze?

One of Klenze's fervent convictions was that "Greece should not be Bavarianized,"<sup>994</sup> and that it should remain 'Greek'. What did that mean? If Klenze's misinterpretation of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan translated geometry as an attempt to 'Bavarianize' and, therefore, to 'Westernize' Athens, then his own plan defined the 'Greek' in terms of a beautiful, albeit cleansed, Acropolis. How could a capital with a Bavarian king<sup>995</sup> whose palace was only a breath away from the Acropolis avoid 'Bavarianization'? In ignoring the contradiction in his argument, Klenze argued that, "whenever somebody founds cities on classical ground, the 'Greek revival' is not managed

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<sup>990</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.61-62.

<sup>991</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>992</sup> In almost all his works, Bires takes a very critical position against Klenze. See, for instance, K.H Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, and K.H. Bires *I Protevousa Thyma Poleodomikou Empaigmou*. [The Capital Victim of Urban-Planning Scorn] Athens, 1961. Bires' main argument is that Klenze was wrong to narrow the streets. See *ibid.*, pp.6-7. For Bires' other argument that Klenze initiated a 'persecution' of the Byzantine monuments, see K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.39.

<sup>993</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, p.61.

<sup>994</sup> *Ibid.*, p.319.

<sup>995</sup> Note here that Otto usually wore Greek clothes. Most, if not all of the images we have of the young monarch and his wife Amalia depict the royal couple in Greek dress.

through the sterile imitation of its forms, but rather through the adherence to the ancient Greek principles of planning.<sup>996</sup> Did Klenze's plan adhere to the rules set by the ancients? Even though it is true that the initial implementation of Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan and the consequent opening of some of the capital's main streets does not distinctively yield knowledge of Klenze's 'ideal' Athens,<sup>997</sup> as far as modern antiquity is concerned, we may still discuss some of the principal premises that structured his argument concerning the rebuilding of Athens. Indeed, Klenze's ideological legacy may be more plethoric than his strictly architectural one. In the context of Athenian modernity, his undisputed archaioomania – apparent in all the trouble he went to purify and to 'preserve' the Acropolis -- is as interesting, or even more fascinating, than a real plan could be. Hence, despite the fact that his own plan was, by definition, forced to adjust to Kleanthes and Schaubert's outline, Klenze was very influential in establishing the vital role of the city's 'antiquity' in the capital's modernity. In the end, we might suspect that although Klenze might have wished his plan to be realized, in reality, what he did manage to do was exactly what Ludwig I had sent him to do in Athens. This hypothesis might be confirmed by the fact that Ludwig did not support Klenze's proposal for the palace.

In attempting to create the 'illusion of originality' in his plan, Klenze renamed all the streets.<sup>998</sup> For instance, Klenze renamed Athena's into Nike's Street, Stadiou into Phidias' Street, and Aeolou into Poseidon's Street.<sup>999</sup> In this way, he also managed to 'retain [certain] differences' from Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan<sup>1000</sup> as well as emphasize his dedication to the Acropolis. It is in his selective treatment of the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan as well as in his overall work in relation to the Sacred Rock, that we can discuss Klenze's archaioomania in terms of a modern Athens as the capital of European antiquity. Klenze embraced three ideas from the first plan for the capital.<sup>1001</sup> First, the "triangular arrangement of the main streets which still characterizes the city centre,"<sup>1002</sup> second, the "juxtaposition of the old city with the new one,"<sup>1003</sup> and, finally, the "opening of certain principal streets in the old city."<sup>1004</sup> Of all these three ideas, the second one, that of a 'juxtaposition' of the 'old' with the new', may reveal part of Klenze's 'ideal' Athens. Klenze argues in a letter to the Regency, dated fifth of August 1834:

<sup>996</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.161.

<sup>997</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.160-161.

<sup>998</sup> *Ibid.*, note 33, p.183. See also K.H. Bires op. cit., 1961.

<sup>999</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.39. Although we will discuss this later, note here that, in either case, the streets have classical and/or mythical names.

<sup>1000</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, note 33, p.183.

<sup>1001</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35.

<sup>1002</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1003</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1004</sup> *Ibid.* These streets are Ermou (Hermes'), Aeolou (Aeolos'), and Athena's. For their importance in today's city centre see Main Map.

So in order to have a definite guarantee for the rebuilding of Athens and for the *spirit* that will govern it, a guarantee which will appear to the whole of Greece as well as to *Europe*, there is no other means except the instant initiation, after the final formation of the plan for Athens, of the excavations and of the restoration of the ancient monuments, indeed with the restoration of the Parthenon, the most important monument of Athens.<sup>1005</sup>

Klenze's definition of the 'spirit' that should govern Athens denies the city's newness. As a capital of European antiquity, Athens rejects – or appears to snub – the fact that it is modern. Klenze's retreat into the past, therefore, is, perhaps, exemplary of Nietzsche's critique of a modernity which, albeit arrogant at times, its "spirit [...] offers resistance to itself, bears up against itself".<sup>1006</sup> Indeed, in order for modern Athens to become the nineteenth-century capital of European antiquity, it ought, for Klenze, to 'resist' and to 'bear up against' its modernity. This meant that it had to refuse the modernity that re-defined and re-constructed its antiquity.

The difficulty in distinguishing between modernity, antiquity, and modern antiquity in the context of the rebuilding of Athens is itself a product of the modernity that created Klenze's perceptions of Athens. Except from the palace, Klenze denied any necessity for *new* elements in the city. Klenze highlighted two things in the rebuilding of Athens, for Greece and Europe: the restoration of the Parthenon and the excavations. Whereas his interference in Mauer's Law guaranteed the former, his plan aimed at the latter,<sup>1007</sup> thereby re-confirming and re-establishing the vital role not merely of antiquity or the Acropolis, but, specifically, the Parthenon.

The restoration of the Parthenon and the excavations which would reconstitute the city's classical *past as present* were, for Klenze, equally important for Greece and Europe. Moreover, like Kleantes and Schaubert, Klenze, too, was aiming at a 'direct visual contact' with the Sacred Rock.<sup>1008</sup> But whereas Kleantes and Schaubert allowed the rebuilding of the old town, Klenze favoured its almost complete preservation.<sup>1009</sup> In this way, he could satisfy the demands of the Athenians whose houses were threatened with demolition because of excavations as well as, most importantly, establish an 'open juxtaposition' between the architecture of the new city with that of the 'picturesque' old

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<sup>1005</sup> Klenze cited in *ibid.*, note 14, p.181, my emphasis. See also *ibid.*, p.153.

<sup>1006</sup> F. Nietzsche *op. cit.*, 1991, p.296.

<sup>1007</sup> In this context see Klenze's own description of his revisions of Kleantes and Schaubert's plan cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.158-160.

<sup>1008</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *ibid.*, pp.161-162.

<sup>1009</sup> *Ibid.*, p.163.

town.<sup>1010</sup> Yet, his proposal for the new city to the south of the Mouseion Hill<sup>1011</sup> was contradictory.<sup>1012</sup> Although he designed new Athens to the south, Klenze also favoured the preservation of the ancient relics on the hills to the west of the Acropolis, thereby arguing for a dys-analogous juxtaposition of the new to the west. The reason for the contradiction may lie in Klenze's definition of the city's past. Despite his agreement with Kleanthes and Schaubert in terms of the necessity for the area around the Sacred Rock to be left open for excavations and in spite of the fact that his plan preserved a greater part of the old town than the first plan for Athens,<sup>1013</sup> Klenze avoided mentioning that he was actually *minimizing* the archaeological area.<sup>1014</sup> His decision to design the palace closer to the Acropolis was part of this problem.

As with previous proposals, Ludwig I rejected Klenze's plan for the palace. Yet, the rationale behind the location and the style of Klenze's palace remain significant instances of the modern ancient element of Athenian modernity.<sup>1015</sup> Initially, Klenze's plan for the palace in the Cerameicus – the ancient cemetery – points to the building's 'arrogant' autonomy as well as to its rather morbid foundation of the new on the dead. Yet, once he defined the location and ignored the morbidity of his design Klenze oscillated between 'styles'. In his description of the plan, Klenze wrote to the Regency that,

Even though it is undisputedly proven that the Byzantine order – as well as any other order of the romantic Middle Ages – is hardly satisfactory in expressing the tendency of our time, which is obviously characterized by a positive anthropomorphism, we do *not* mean to reject these [orders] as the dead rust of a spiritually decadent era.<sup>1016</sup>

In his attempt to find and to imprint the 'tendency' of his time into built form, Klenze appears reluctant to reject the Byzantine, or any other medieval, architecture. Yet, pointing to Kleanthes and Schaubert's circumstantial 'sympathy' towards medieval monuments Klenze soon explained that Byzantine architecture might be important *because* it contains elements of "ancient perception and constructive consistency as the reverberation of Greek antiquity".<sup>1017</sup> In other words, Byzantine architecture, and the history which it encloses, are

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<sup>1010</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1011</sup> Ibid., p.27. Mouseion is the Greek word for museum.

<sup>1012</sup> Ibid., p.163

<sup>1013</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>1014</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1933, p.19. For Klenze's careful avoidance of the subject see, for example his description of his plan cited in A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, pp.371-376.

<sup>1015</sup> See Klenze's description of his plan for the palace cited in *ibid.*

<sup>1016</sup> Klenze cite in *ibid.*, pp.371-372, my emphasis.

<sup>1017</sup> *Ibid.*, p.372.

interesting as long as they could reveal the ancient beneath the medieval. In the end, having demonstrated exactly why and how medieval – including Byzantine – Athens, under specific circumstances, could inform the style of building in the modern capital, Klenze expressed his admiration for Schinkel's plan and concluded that the circumstances surrounding the rebuilding of Athens as the capital necessitated the choice of the most 'pre-eminent architecture'.<sup>1018</sup> Not surprisingly, Klenze's definition of the normative architecture par excellence for the modern capital was ancient Greek.<sup>1019</sup> To be exact, the perfect architecture was for Klenze, classical Athenian, probably that of the Parthenon, the 'most important monument of Athens'. In almost complete agreement with the 'traveller' Ross, with whom he worked very closely during the cleansing of the Acropolis, Klenze further established the imagery of the Parthenon as the perfect Greek building whose 'harmonious disharmony' ought to set the rules for the rebuilding of modern Athens in terms of a representation of the city as European antiquity. Yet, despite the ultimate rejection of his plan for the palace Klenze was successful in setting the rules that defined Athenian modernity. In this respect, although he did not build the palace, he nonetheless perpetuated the representation of modern Athens in terms of a complete identification with classical antiquity, and thus by satisfying and justifying Ludwig's choice of Athens as the capital whose future – and chosen past – was bound to the Bavarian dynasty.<sup>1020</sup>

## X

Six years after the transfer of the capital to Athens, Lysandros Kaftantzoglou<sup>1021</sup> submitted a plan, which, for the first time, proposed the building of the city in the eastern plain between Lycabettus Hill and Ilissos River.<sup>1022</sup> Even though it was never implemented, Kaftantzoglou's proposal was quite different to the previous plans and, therefore, remains a unique instance in Athenian city planning.<sup>1023</sup> In submitting his plan in 1839, Kaftantzoglou congratulated Klenze and Johann Friedrich von Gaertner – the father of the definitive plan for the palace – for effectively removing the new city from the old

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<sup>1018</sup> Ibid., p.373.

<sup>1019</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1020</sup> Note here that as Papageorgiou-Venetas tirelessly explains in almost all his work, Ludwig's decision to reject his plan for the palace may have been the primary reason behind Klenze's later hidden hostility towards him.

<sup>1021</sup> For Kaftantzoglou's life and work see D. Philippides *Lysandros Kaftantzoglou*. Athens: Ministry of Culture, Cultural and Technical Foundation, ETBA, 1995.

<sup>1022</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, p.43. Ilissos is now covered with concrete.

<sup>1023</sup> For the significance of Kaftantzoglou's plan see D. Philippides "Kaftantzoglou's Proposal for Athens (1838-1839). An Insignificant Footnote in the Capital's Plans" in Conference Notes: *The Planning of Capital Cities*. Hellenic Urban and Planning History Association. 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference, International Planning History Society, 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference. Thessalonike, 17-20 October 1996, pp.449-455.

one.<sup>1024</sup> In turn, he argued that the government was wrong to have transferred the capital to Athens,<sup>1025</sup> and even more wrong to have authorized Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan, thereby having allowed the "formation of the new capital's centre upon the ruins of the old one."<sup>1026</sup> Influenced by the French neo-classicist painter Dominique Ingres, whom he had befriended during his stay in Paris,<sup>1027</sup> Kaftantzoglou was the first nineteenth-century architect to defend a plan whose main principle was the *complete separation* of the new city from the old urban fabric.<sup>1028</sup> Not only did Kaftantzoglou oppose the construction of an imaginary proximity between the past and the present – as did Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan for the palace – he also advocated the acceptance and maintenance of the distance between them. Yet, the separation of the old from the new city was as significant for the capital's modernity as it was for its antiquity. Kaftantzoglou's plan sought to highlight each in its own right. Despite the fact that commentators on his work emphasize Kaftantzoglou's attitude towards antiquity, including his respect towards medieval monuments,<sup>1029</sup> there is also hidden in his proposal a very interesting attitude towards the capital's modernity.

Kaftantzoglou who, in 1846, referred to Ludwig I as the 'Pericles of Germany',<sup>1030</sup> believed that romanticism was an 'incurable leprosy',<sup>1031</sup> and remained ambivalent in his approach towards the 'past'. As Philippides explains, Kaftantzoglou's, "relationship with the ancients presents two sides; on the one hand, a culture which is brought from abroad and which insists on the revival of antiquity, and on the other hand, the local reclaiming of a yet unknown heritage."<sup>1032</sup> As one of the very few to suggest, in the nineteenth century, the preservation of the city's medieval past, Kaftantzoglou was aware of the fact that Athenian history was being rewritten. At the same time, however, he, too, was concerned with the possibility of the new city covering a 'yet unknown heritage'. Nevertheless, for Kaftantzoglou, this heritage would be discovered and, therefore, would become known only once it was fully unearthed. This meant more excavations. Hence, his proposal for the complete separation of the modern capital from the old city, "primarily aimed at the

<sup>1024</sup> See L. Kaftantzoglou "Shediographia ton Athenon" (1839) [Chart of Athens] in L. Kaftantzoglou *Peri Metarrythmiseos tis Poleos ton Athenon – Gnomai*. [On the Reformation of the City of Athens – Opinions] Athens, 1858, p.13.

<sup>1025</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>1026</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>1027</sup> For Kaftantzoglou's acquaintance with Ingres and the painter's opinions concerning 'new' Athens see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1999, endnote 46, p.62.

<sup>1028</sup> See L. Kaftantzoglou *op. cit.*, 1858, p.11.

<sup>1029</sup> See, for example, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1999, pp.57-70, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.222-227, K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 33-36, D. Philippides *op. cit.*, 1995, and D. Philippides "Lysandros Kaftantzoglou – Enas Ellenas Arhitektonas." [Lysandros Kaftantzoglou – A Greek Architect] in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. *op. cit.*, 1996, pp.102-105.

<sup>1030</sup> L. Kaftantzoglou cited in D. Philippides *op. cit.*, 1995, p.139.

<sup>1031</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>1032</sup> D. Philippides in *ibid.*, p.209.

complete abandonment of old Athens in order to facilitate the future exhaustive excavation of the ancient city.”<sup>1033</sup> If modern antiquity implies the sacrifice of the old in favour of the ancient, Kaftantzoglou’s proposal might partly belong to this context. The ‘abandonment’ of the old city in favour of the excavations that would unearth the ancient polis points to a familiar search, in modern antiquity, for the ancient beneath the old. How is this argument justified in the light of Kaftantzoglou’s sympathy towards Medieval Athens? His suggestion that the modern capital should be built neither too close to, nor upon, the old town did not necessarily imply that he wanted to restore all that was Medieval Athens. Unlike Kleanthes and Schaubert and Klenze’s plans whose primary goal was the construction of an aesthetically perceived image of the past as present, Kaftantzoglou’s proposal for the capital aimed at the construction of a, still aesthetically conceived, cleansed image of antiquity as the past of the modern. However much he accepted the significance of classical antiquity, Kaftantzoglou maintained that the past was *not* the present per se, but rather, that it was the antiquity of modernity. In being the first to “project the idea of an extensive central cultural park as a monumental core for the future development of the city,”<sup>1034</sup> Kaftantzoglou was also the first to propose that, although related, antiquity and modernity ought to be separated. This, however, could not be achieved within a single city.

In order for the present to escape the ‘nightmare’ of its past, Kaftantzoglou proposed that modern Athens should be built separately from the restored and unearthed remnants of the classical polis. Kaftantzoglou was convinced of this one ‘necessity’: ancient Athens should be excavated, whilst at the same time the new capital ought to be worthy and proud of its European modernity. He maintained, for instance, that the separation of the modern capital from the old town would help the former become the equal of other modern cities.<sup>1035</sup> This separation between the past and the present could be achieved by means of a ‘tree lined wide street’ that would imitate “all other European cities,”<sup>1036</sup> such as London.<sup>1037</sup> Whereas an unearthed heritage would bear testimony to the capital’s ‘glorious’ past,<sup>1038</sup> for Kaftantzoglou, a distinctive modernity would celebrate the city’s newness – or at least its ‘sensation of newness’. In separating it from the new city, Kaftantzoglou did not exclude antiquity from modernity. Rather, he outlined its *use* as the

<sup>1033</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.26.

<sup>1034</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.38. See also A. Papageorgiou-Venetas in *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 2001, p.43.

<sup>1035</sup> See L. Kaftantzoglou op. cit., 1858, p.11.

<sup>1036</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1037</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1038</sup> For Kaftantzoglou’s analysis of the excavations see L. Kaftantzoglou “Olga Tina Peri tis Anaskafis tou Arhaiou Edafous tou Kata to Tetarton Tmema tis Neas Poleos ton Athenon.” (1858) [A Few Comments on the Excavation of the Ancient Land in the Fourth Section of the New City of Athens] in *ibid.*, pp.19-32.

ornament and the perfect re-enchantment of the present. This attempt by the modern to explicitly use the 'ancient', might partly explain his enthusiasm concerning Gaertner's palace. Unlike previous plans, Kaftantzoglou and Gaertner introduced a 'braver' modernity, indeed one that, in having appropriated the 'ancestors' revived by the earlier plans, aimed at glorifying its own newness. Two years before the submission of Kaftantzoglou's plan, the 'Pericles of Germany', whom he admired greatly, resolved the debate over the location of the palace, as well as, more importantly, offered the city its first modern monument. This is how Ludwig I participated in the construction of Athens' modern face. Gaertner's palace is not a mere building. Rather, it is the centre of a hidden plan for a *modern* Athens.

## XI

Ludwig I came to Greece in December 1835 and left for Munich in March 1836.<sup>1039</sup> Accompanied by Johann Friedrich von Gaertner who, after Klenze, was his favourite architect,<sup>1040</sup> Ludwig finally approved the "location of the palace to the eastern vertex formed by the main axes of the city [...] with a *panoramic view* towards Lycabettus [Hill], the Acropolis, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and the Saronic bay."<sup>1041</sup> Above all, the different architects' contest concerning the location of the palace demonstrates how the father of the foreign King of Greece was the determining agent throughout the process of choosing Athens and of rebuilding it as the capital. After all, none of the first – or even the later – plans for Athens dared undermine the considerable importance of the Acropolis and 'antiquity' in the capital. To have done so, would have meant that the architects would have dared contend with Ludwig's will and the undisputed 'bond' between the city and its Sacred Rock. During the reign of his son, Ludwig, or those he had appointed in different key positions, defined Athens. Whether in terms of the past that was 'appropriate' or whether in respect to what form of the new was acceptable in modern Athens, acting as the 'voice' of Europe, Ludwig had the final word. To remain with Otto's palace as an eloquent example of this hypothesis, what is very strange is that, despite the fact that Gaertner was one of Ludwig's favourite architects, the palace was his only monumental building outside Germany.<sup>1042</sup> The reason behind this peculiarity may lie in Ludwig's archaïomanic perception of Athens as the city of the Acropolis.

Ludwig's archaïomania is important in the context of Athenian modernity because his final choice over the location of the palace imposed a 'radical change' in the plan and

<sup>1039</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.36.

<sup>1040</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, endnote 15, p.30.

<sup>1041</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001, p.36. The main axes are Stadiou, Ermou, and Athena's streets.

See Main Map.

<sup>1042</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.86.

topography of modern Athens.<sup>1043</sup> Moreover, Gaertner's palace generated a significant feature of this new topography. This was a relationship between the past and the present that was different to the one proposed by Schinkel or his students. In building the palace to the east of the Acropolis, Gaertner and Ludwig I erected the new – the palace – as a *modern monument* surrounded by the ancient ruins and the hills. If we remember that modernity, as Benjamin has warned us, hides its antiquity like a 'nightmare', we soon understand how the palace is exemplary of the modern's attempt to *pretend* the death of the old. In this respect, Gaertner's palace hides a plan because, if we explore the meaning of its location, we realize that he actually created an image of Athens as two *panoramas*. The first panorama was reminiscent of both the Kleanthes-Schaubert and Klenze's plans and the second was unique in giving an essential emphasis upon the new palace. Indeed, whilst the former offered the palace a privileged view of a panorama of antiquity, the latter depicted the developing modern city as a panorama of which Otto's residence, and not the Acropolis, was a 'pivot point'. [Fig. X and XI]

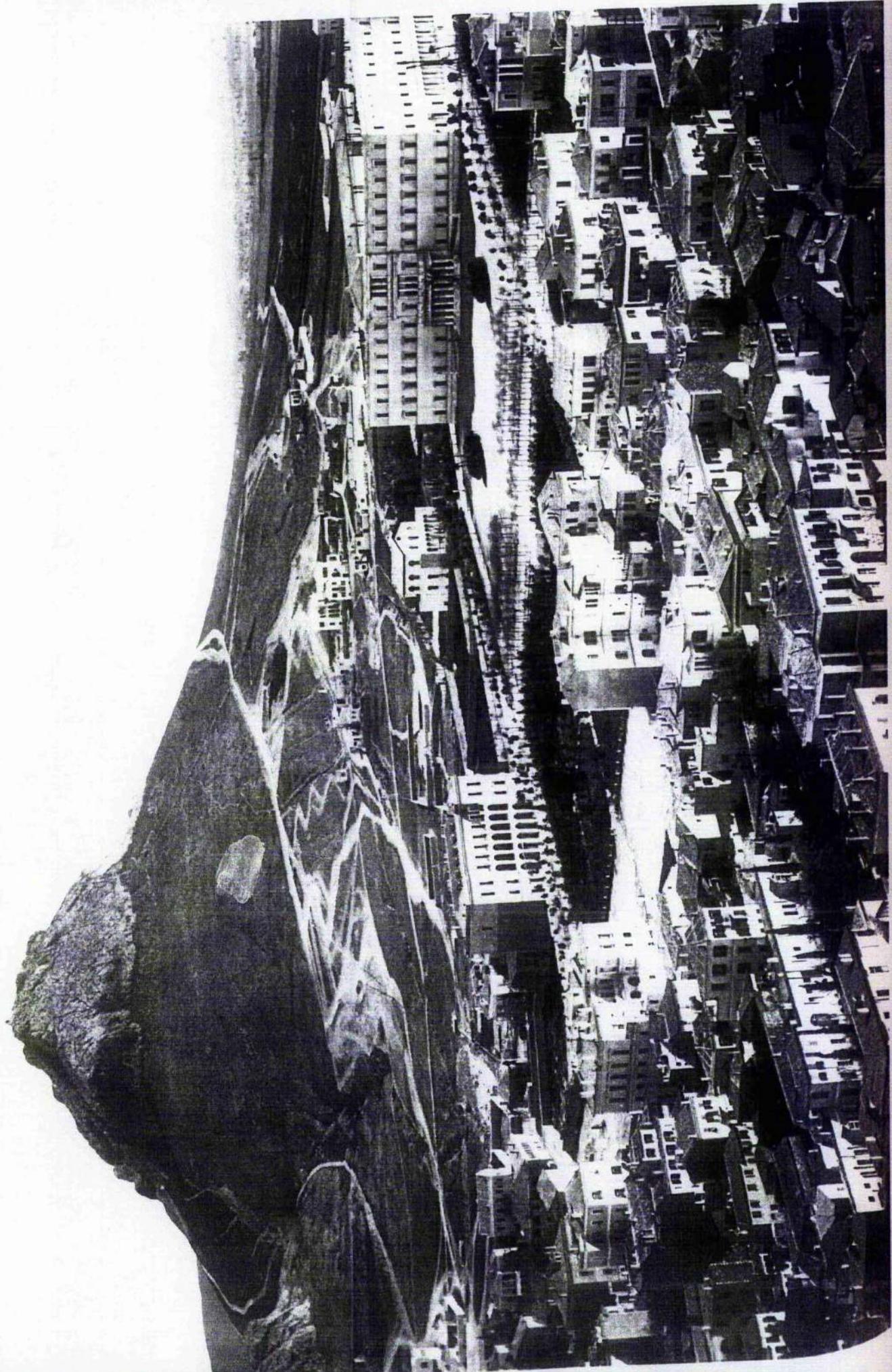
Despite its initial apparent denial of the modern, Gaertner's palace conveys different representations of new Athens as *both* modernity and antiquity. Unlike previous plans, Ludwig's final decision over the location of the palace offered, for the first time, an *equation* between the 'past' and the present. Otto's residence – today's Parliament – symbolized the 'marvellous' descendant from a 'splendid' antiquity and not that antiquity itself. Hence, in rejecting the identification of the present with the past that was in the heart of Schinkel's plan, Gaertner's palace is the first festival of the modern in the new capital. This was the greatest aspiration and success of the twin panorama of the two different cityscapes. In highlighting the modern as partially independent from, and equal to, its supposedly ancient ancestor, Gaertner's palace and the modern panorama that it dominated, secretly introduced a new kind of governing, new power relations, and new politics. In removing political life from its historical Athenian location, the Agora, Gaertner's modern monument became the eternal symbol of the city's, and the country's, passage to a new centralized authority. Finally, the distance between the ancient and the modern, signalled by the building of Otto's residence, becomes even more significant in the light of the fact that this was actually the *first* building on a 'monumental scale' in the new capital.<sup>1044</sup> The city's first modern monument initiated, but also disguised, a process of *separation* between the modern city and the unearthed ancient polis.

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<sup>1043</sup> Ibid., p.24. Gaertner's palace is now the Greek Parliament in Syntagma (Constitution) Square. See Main Map.

<sup>1044</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame *Neoklassike Arhitektonike stin Ellada*. [Neoclassical Architecture in Greece] Athens: Melissa, 2001, p.88.

X. Modern Athens Cc. 1865-1870



XI. Modern Athens (c.1873-1880)



With the modern monument rivalling the ruin that was transformed into a monument in order to bring the ancient city 'back to life', the modern capital demanded that revived ancient city to return to the shadows. In this way, the modern reaffirmed its ability to overshadow the antiquity which it has previously chosen to breathe life into, thereby also maintaining its power to use the glories of the past as testimonies of the magnificence of the present. Was this dream of a re-enchanted modern world realized? According to an 1882 guide to Greece,<sup>1045</sup> because of its unique combination of ancient and modern monuments, late nineteenth-century Athens was one of the "most beautiful cities in Europe."<sup>1046</sup> But as John Ruskin observed a few years later, "the Acropolis of Athens, Parthenon and all, has, I believe, been dwarfed into a model by the palace lately built beneath it."<sup>1047</sup> Ruskin did not go to Athens and he did not see Otto's palace. This means that, by the end of the nineteenth century, the word had spread that the modern palace was a massive structure that had 'dwarfed' the Acropolis. The modern monuments had 'dwarfed' the ancient one that the fathers of modern Athens claimed to love. The Acropolis was restored in order for the palace to shine next to it. And so it was, that, despite the love for antiquity, in modern Athens with its 'Parthenon and all', modernity and the new reclaimed the city and abandoned the old.

## XII

However dedicated to the construction of an experience that would re-invest the modern world with meaning, modern antiquity pursued this aim in suggesting something eternal: the omnipresent Acropolis. Modern antiquity used this re-constructed image of the beautiful as a shield *against* and a mask *over* the fleeting and momentary element of modernity of which the rendezvous and the adventure may be characteristic. Hence, if the sociological significance of the adventure and the rendezvous lies, among others, in their being temporary 'escapes' from everyday life, the sociological importance of modern antiquity lies in its attempt to construct their dialectical other. The sanitization of the Acropolis and the city, the opening of a street that directly connected the modern capital with the restored monuments, and the building of the palace as a modern monument are all instances of the creation of a social experience of an eternal time and space. In other words, modern antiquity-as-a-rendezvous is farcical because the invited party did not show up after all. Unfortunate as it was, and Simmel does not tell us what happens in this case, whilst modernity was all dressed up and waiting in Athena's street and outside the palace,

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<sup>1045</sup> See M.S. Gregoropoulos *Perigrife ton Episemoteron Poleon tou Ellenikou Vasileiou*. [Description of the most Formal Cities of the Hellenic Kingdom] Athens, 1882.

<sup>1046</sup> See *ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>1047</sup> J. Ruskin *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. London: 1895, p.132.

antiquity never went to the rendezvous. Rather, it was its clone, which strolled the boulevard and observed the palace holding hands with the modern.<sup>1048</sup>

Although Ludwig I rejected Kleanthes and Schaubert's proposal for the palace, Athena's street remains one of the few places in Athens where people can directly see the Acropolis whilst waiting. At the same time, Athena's street, the street of the Goddess Athena,<sup>1049</sup> remains part of a still evident geometry, which illustrates how modern antiquity as a rendezvous between modernity and its chosen ancestors was the ulterior motive behind the choice of Athens as the capital of European antiquity. As for the palace, the Parliament today, it was the first indication of a violent modernity that, despite its protestations to the opposite, actually adored and hated itself almost as much as it loved and despised the old. The plans that followed the first proposals were increasingly indicative of this contradiction and of the fact that Athens was a capital for European modernity.

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<sup>1048</sup> Interestingly enough, Athena's street is still a very popular meeting point in Athens for tourists, people from the provinces, immigrants, the 'underworld' and Athenians alike.

<sup>1049</sup> In Greek, 'Athena's street' means 'the street of the Goddess Athena'. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *op. cit.*, 1997, Vol.1, pp.65-66.

## Chapter 6: Modern Athens or the City Fragmented

*"The road we have taken, good or bad, was dictated by our social circumstances. It is not our purpose to judge the Athens that is becoming. The fact is one: that it is becoming and expressing what we are and what we can. And in this rebuilding, the new steps over the demolition of the old."*<sup>1050</sup>

*"Many ideas have entered the world as errors and fantasies but have become truths, because men have afterwards foisted upon them a substratum of reality."*<sup>1051</sup>

*"Athens, Athens, this is the end, we have lost you for good. Your inhabitants have made you wither away, and the only hope of you coming back to life remains the vengeance of Heaven. – An earthquake."*<sup>1052</sup>

### I

In embracing the image of the city as the eternal antiquity in, and of, an eternal modernity, the majority of the proposals that followed the plans submitted by Kleanthes and Schaubert, Klenze, Kaftantzoglou and Gaertner, often adopted and further perpetuated the belief in a genealogy between a cleansed Athenian antiquity and European metropolitan modernity as the undisputed descendant of this antiquity. Yet, although we have discussed the manner in which this genealogy was constructed, there are two phenomena that further confuse our understanding of nineteenth-century or other Athenian modernity. The first derives from the massive demolitions of the nineteenth-century city in the 1950s and 1960s, and the second from the fact that from 1834 onwards, Athens was actually a city that had grown *independently* of the plans. Both phenomena are exemplary of how the city's population did not always accept the governments' choices.<sup>1053</sup> Nevertheless, the population's defiance of, and resistance to, the plans does not necessarily imply their opposition to the general principles of modern antiquity. On the contrary, like the generally accepted 'necessity' for restorations and excavations, the planning of the capital was initially identified with the revival of the city's classical past. The fact,

<sup>1050</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1996, p.18.

<sup>1051</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.260.

<sup>1052</sup> N. Velmos cited in S.B. Skopelitis *Neoklassika Spilia tis Athenas kai tou Peiraias*. [Neoclassical Houses of Athens and Piraeus] Athens: Gnosi, 1981, no page number.

<sup>1053</sup> There is a significant debate concerning the identity of the population. As far as the demolitions are concerned, especially after the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922 and the massive flows of immigration in the 1950s and 60s, the Athenians complain that it was actually the 'foreigners' who destroyed the 'old', that is the nineteenth-century, city. Athenians' responses to the demolitions are further explored in the next chapter where we examine how nineteenth-century Athens itself became 'old'.

nonetheless, remains: modern Athens is a city *without* a plan. The reasons behind the continuous illegal building that forced the numerous expansions of the plan may be related to unanticipated increases in population, as well as to the Greeks' 'convictions' concerning individual property rights. But the city dwellers' distance from the plans may also reside in the social meaning and implications of the plans themselves. What we examine here is the power of the capital's city-plans to give a built form to both modern antiquity and modernity.

In repeating the same logic that justified the transformation of the Athenian ruin into a European – and indeed a 'world' – monument, the majority of the twentieth-century plans for Athens continued to project an image of the city itself as an 'aesthetically perceived' icon of the past in the present. Ironically, however, the fathers of nineteenth-century new Athens believed in the eternity of their modernity and failed to suspect that their present would soon be rendered old. They did not suspect that, in having empowered a cleansed image of antiquity with the capacity to overshadow the old, once it became past, their 'eternal present' would become mortal and suffer the same fate that they had previously imposed on another old Athens. From 1834 onwards, the founders of a new Athens were doomed to see their new city demolished. This vicious circle of rejecting the old as inferior to the classical is the eternal fate of Athenian modernity. Nothing new has succeeded in obviously overshadowing modern antiquity in Athens. This is the story of Athens today. The real question then is: did modern Athens ever become what it was reborn to become?

Even though the focus of his analysis was directly related to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century bourgeoisie, Benjamin's discussion of the 'dreaming collective' may point to modern antiquity as part of that 'phantasmagoric' modernity, which intoxicated the bourgeoisie. Benjamin writes, for instance, that "the dreaming collective knows no history. Events pass before it as always identical and new. The sensation of the newest and the most modern, is, in fact, just as much a dream formation of events as 'the eternal return of the same'."<sup>1054</sup> The plans for Athens – and especially nineteenth-century ones – often renounced history and the distance between the classical polis and the nineteenth-century modern capital. In turn, itself 'always identical and new', the redefined classical antiquity imposed a radical change within Athenian modernity. This change meant the appreciation of modernity's present as eternal time. In moving away from the Kleantes-Schaubert and Klenze proposals, which aimed at creating a 'sensation of the old', the majority of the later plans for the capital sought to impose modernity. With the dream about 'modern' Athens extending to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the new capital itself emerges as a

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<sup>1054</sup> W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.546-S2,1.

“historical copy plus architectural dream of a deceased society.”<sup>1055</sup> Nevertheless, like the first plans for the capital, the majority of the following proposals sought to transform temporal distance into sensory proximity. Once again, they employed imagination and attempted to construct a balance between a sensation of the old, the restored Acropolis, and one of newness – the modern city. Imagination, therefore, is one of the greatest components of the dream of anything new in Athens. Imagination, we read:

Decomposes all creation; and with the raw materials accumulated and disposed in accordance with rules whose origins one cannot find except in the furthest depth of the soul, it creates a new world – it produces the sensation of newness.<sup>1056</sup>

With imagination making the dream of a modern and yet ancient Athens appearing possible, the ‘sensation of newness’ in Athens was based on a ‘still alive’ ancient culture whose revival was the prerequisite for the glorification of a ‘new world’. The foundation of Athens as the capital and the consequent redefinition of its past, therefore, were the means to the celebration of the *evolution* of antiquity into a *glorious new world*. What becomes increasingly evident in our final exploration of the plans for the capital is, above all, that modern Athens was designed in order to create the pretence of the realization of the ‘unlimited’ potentials of the present. And having proven to itself that it can choose and revive its ‘ancestors’ at will, modern Europe also desired to convince itself that its modernity was equally glorious, or even superior, to its ‘past’. But, the plans for Athens were often doomed to see their modernity crushed by a modern antiquity, of which the city’s first architects dreamt. Modernity finally chose to separate itself from antiquity. Modernity in Athens became ugly already in the century that tried to deny the death of the modern.

## II

Even though the building of the palace appears different from the re-definition of antiquity in the context of the restorations and excavations, the emphasis on the modern which Otto’s residence implied, reveals a hitherto disguised side of modern antiquity. Once the chosen old was revived, the modern also had to discover its own character as an undying present. After all, modern antiquity is a means to re-enchant the world of the modern and not of the ancient. The plans for the capital that we discuss here, therefore, were the means to a representation of Athens as *simultaneously* ancient and modern. But

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<sup>1055</sup> E. Bloch *Heritage of Our Times*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, p.350.

<sup>1056</sup> C. Baudelaire cited in W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.290-J34a,1.

the dream of restraining the tensions, in the modern, between the past and the present, soon became the nightmare of modern antiquity. In fact, a further exploration of the plans for Athens leads us to argue that, in reality, the conflict between the old and the new was not meant to be resolved, but, instead, to be masked in modern Athens. Both Gaertner's palace and Kaftantzoglou's proposal for the separation of the old town from the modern city maintained the twin representations of the capital as antiquity and modernity. Yet, their dream became a nightmare because, from 1836 onwards, the capital was never again one city. In proving themselves unable to tame the ideological and social power of the antiquity which they themselves had revived, the founders of modern Athens – including Kleanthes, Schaubert, and Klenze – confronted yet another, *new* conflict between their new capital and their constructed image of the past. They were confronted with themselves. The dual identity of the founders of new Athens in the nineteenth century, that of being simultaneously modern and the deserving descendants of the ancients, was the nightmare that has split modern Athens itself into two. As an instance of this we can see how, with more than a century separating them, two visitors shared the experience of two cities within Athens.

In his forward to Michael Llewellyn Smith's – a former British Ambassador's to Greece – 2004 *Athens*,<sup>1057</sup> Roderick Beaton suggests that, "Athens is famous among cities for being *old*,"<sup>1058</sup> but, nevertheless, concludes with the observation that, except for a few Byzantine churches, everything in Athens is "either [...] very old (more than 1500 years minimum) or [...] really pretty new (less than 180 years maximum)."<sup>1059</sup> Beaton attributes this contradiction to the early nineteenth-century plans, which instituted a "principle of respectful divorce [...] between the ancient ruins and the modern city."<sup>1060</sup> Interestingly enough, this 'respectful divorce' was 'legitimated' as early as 1838, that is to say only two years after Ludwig I made up his mind about the location of his son's residence. In having already expressed his opposition to the choice of Athens for the new capital as well as his fears that the modern would destroy the very ancient it was searching for, for instance, Raoul Rochette wrote, in 1838, that in the Athens,

Two cities arose side by side: a new Athens that borrowed from everywhere and came to resemble nowhere, and the scenographic illusions of ancient Athens, ephemeral as a dream.<sup>1061</sup>

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<sup>1057</sup> See M. Llewellyn Smith *Athens*. Oxford: Signal Books, 2004.

<sup>1058</sup> R. Beaton, Forward to *ibid.*, p.viii.

<sup>1059</sup> *Ibid.*, p.ix.

<sup>1060</sup> *Ibid.*, p.viii.

<sup>1061</sup> R. Rochette cited in C. Boyer *op. cit.*, 1996, p.170.

For Rochette, Athens was not one city. Rather, it consisted of two different, albeit related, cityscapes: an incomprehensible and undistinguished new capital and the 'ephemeral' and 'scenographic' antiquity. Neither was real, according to Rochette, neither was unique, but, above all, neither was eternal. Yet, the capital's division into different cityscapes does not end here. Like Beaton and Rochette, Kaftantzoglou, too, identified two cityscapes in Athens, one of which was the modern city.<sup>1062</sup> Nevertheless, unlike Beaton and Rochette's discussion of the 'ancient' cityscape, Kaftantzoglou's second Athens referred to the 'old' city whose unplanned character was evidence of the Ottomans' influence over the Greeks' perceptions concerning city building.<sup>1063</sup> Hence, Kaftantzoglou introduced a third cityscape. Already in the mid-nineteenth century, therefore, Athens was three cities: the modern capital, the modern ancient product of the restorations and the excavations, and, finally, the people's dwellings that covered part of the ancient. Two things are of note here. First, the distinction between the 'ancient' and the modern city does not appear to change with time. In this respect, new Athens has never actually managed to be completely identified as or with antiquity. Second, although the arbitrarily built dwellings that comprised Kaftantzoglou's second cityscape were ultimately demolished, the Athenians continued – and still do – to build in this manner. This way, the un-planned city created a chaos wherein its illegal dwellings usually dominated the modern, planned city centre, which in turn, was in conflict with the excavated areas. This was the supreme 'unintentional consequence' of the first plans for modern Athens. Indeed, although Rochette referred to it as an 'ephemeral' dream, that 'scenographic' antiquity became the rival of any modern Athens. In being eternally doomed to conform to the twin panorama of new Athens as antiquity and modernity, the majority of the later plans for the capital saw their modernity bow before a fictitious Athens.

The greatest paradox and secret of new Athens is that its antiquity is often modern and that the past has been largely destroyed. This secret was always kept safe and none of the plans for the capital undermined or questioned this 'antiquity'. In the meantime, of course, the Athenians continued to build at will. With this in mind, however, we still have to evaluate the power of the plans to realize the capital's different cityscapes as a whole city. The Athenians did not question the perception of Athens as a 'whole' any more than did its governments and different architects address it. In this final evaluation of the consequences of the proposals for the capital we may discern the elements of Athenian modernity from the nineteenth-century and beyond.

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<sup>1062</sup> See L. Kaftantzoglou *op. cit.*, 1858, pp.19-32.

<sup>1063</sup> See *ibid.*, p.23. Note here that, contrary to Kaftantzoglou, Travlos argues that the arbitrary manner of building was actually characteristic of ancient Athenians and that, at the time, to built in an 'Attic' manner meant to built illegally. See I. Travlos *op. cit.*, 1993, pp.70-71 and p.258.

### III

Even though we have discussed them separately, when exploring the first plans for the capital, the literature on the subject usually refers to Schinkel's plan for the palace on the Acropolis, Kleanthes and Schaubert's two proposals, Klenze's revisions of the second Kleanthes-Schaubert plan, Gaertner's palace, and Kaftantzoglou's 1839 outline for the modern capital.<sup>1064</sup> Of these proposals, Schinkel and Kaftantzoglou's plans were not realized. Yet, whereas architectural theorists tend to emphasize the practical consequences of the plans – and especially the ones that were implemented – we can further explore the social meaning of these consequences as well as discuss the plans that were not implemented. This becomes particularly true in the light of the fact that the Athenians rarely built according to the plans.

In his evaluation of the consequences of the first plans for Athens, for instance, Papageorgiou-Venetas argues that the most negative one was that, in failing to demolish the old city, as Kaftantzoglou had suggested, Athens missed the opportunity of creating a uniform green area around the Acropolis.<sup>1065</sup> Yet, for Papageorgiou-Venetas, the positive consequences outweigh the negative ones. First, the first proposals prevented the building on the historic hill;<sup>1066</sup> second, they established a “symbolic and functional connection between the new and the old city;”<sup>1067</sup> third, they constituted the “eastern part of the eastern central green zone with beautiful views towards the Acropolis;”<sup>1068</sup> and, finally, assisted by the relatively slow, in the nineteenth century, population increase, they carried out the reforestation of the hills.<sup>1069</sup> Nevertheless, whereas from the 1830s onwards, the question of the de-forestation of the Acropolis and the reforestation of the city took hilarious proportions,<sup>1070</sup> the ‘beautiful views’ must be attributed both to Gaertner's palace as well as to the Kleanthes-Schaubert and Klenze's proposals. As for the attempted

<sup>1064</sup> Other plans like A. von Quast's are less known and explored. Although not in the same detail as Klenze's plan, for example, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas discusses von Quast's proposal. See, for example, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2001.

<sup>1065</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.27. Note, however, that Papageorgiou-Venetas advocates its preservation today. See, for example, A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *Plaka – Mia Protasi gia tin Palia Polia*. [Plaka – A Proposal for the Old City] Offprint from the General Edition of the Technical Chamber of Greece, Issue 10, November-December 1965.

<sup>1066</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999, p.27.

<sup>1067</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1068</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1069</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1070</sup> For instance K. Pittakes suggested that all foreign trees should be removed from the Acropolis area. See A. Pikione and M. Parousis eds., op. cit., 2001, p.271. Before World War II, A. Dragoumis complained that Athens was a bare land and that the ‘good Metaxas’ – the dictator – would correct all mistakes. See A. Dragoumis “Ta Fysika tis Periohis tis Protevousis.” [The Plantation of the Capital] *Technika Chronika*. Year H'/XV, 15 August 1939, No.184, pp.317-320. On another occasion, in 1976, I. Dragoumis argued that, whatever a great artist, in being a permanent resident of Paris, Yiannis Tsarouhis had no right to suggest that only the monuments should adorn Athens. See A.F. Fratzeskaki ed., *Ion Dragoumis – Aesthetika Keimena*. [Ion Dragoumis – Essays on Aesthetics] Athens: Dodoni, 1992, pp.124-126. For Tsarouhis and his belief that Athens did not need any landscaping with trees see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas ed., *Athenon Aglaisma*. [Athenian Glance] Athens: Hermes, 1999(b), pp.135-138.

connection between the ancient and the new city, Athens' first plans managed another change in our perception of the past as well as of the present as an 'adversary' of a newly redefined antiquity. In other words, the connection between the old and the new was not, and is not, necessarily successful. The expansions of the 'plan', therefore, may be indicative of the tensions between the city's different cityscapes and the consequent revitalization of the conflict between the past and the present.

Whereas the Kleanthes-Schaubert plan defined an area of 2,890,000 sq.m., Klenze's revisions limited the city into 2,240,000 sq.m. – by 1930, Athens covered 29,083,000 sq.m.,<sup>1071</sup> and today, it covers 30,000 hectares.<sup>1072</sup> This spatial difference between the ancient and the contemporary city is partly due to the uncontrolled expansions of the plans for the modern capital. For instance, from 1863 to 1930 alone, there were one hundred and nine officially authorized expansions of the city-plan.<sup>1073</sup> Although the increasing numbers of the population may partly explain the expansions, the meaning of the population's movements is not limited to demographics. To remain with the statistics for a moment, whereas in 1848, Athens had 3% of the country's population, in the first decade of the twentieth century, it already accounted for 10%.<sup>1074</sup> Yet, starting its new life in 1830 with 12,000 inhabitants, Athens did not reach a million until after the early 1930s.<sup>1075</sup> Indeed, although by 1907, the capital had reached a population of 242,000, in 1870 it only had 55,000 inhabitants.<sup>1076</sup> To relate this to the expansions until 1930, fifty-five of the additions to the plan had occurred by 1899 when the capital's space had already increased by 14,361,000 sq.m.<sup>1077</sup> In turn, by 1870, the capital of 55,000 had already increased its boundaries by 2,531,000 sq.m.<sup>1078</sup> In other words, if we read the demographics in relation to the expansions carefully, we can see that the former cannot possibly be the only logical determinant of the latter. After all, despite Klenze's proposal to decrease the city's outline, Kleanthes and Schaubert's plan anticipated a maximum of 40,000 people. Hence, the 15,000 people that separated the architect's plan with the real population of the city in the 1870s do not justify the size of the expansions.

The argument against a causal relation between a population rise and the expansions is further confirmed by the fact that, although in 1870 the capital had exceeded Kleanthes and Schaubert's estimation of the population, the city actually covered *less*

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<sup>1071</sup> K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.318.

<sup>1072</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1999(b).

<sup>1073</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.318.

<sup>1074</sup> See G. Burgel op. cit., 1976, p.143.

<sup>1075</sup> For the statistics on the city's population see G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, pp.177-208.

<sup>1076</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1077</sup> See K.H. Bires 1999, op. cit., 1999, p.318. The majority of these fifty-five expansions occurred in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and especially from 1880-1899.

<sup>1078</sup> See *ibid.*

space than their outline. In other words, as it was designed, the intended but never realized 'Master-plan' could by all means satisfy the population and we should, therefore, understand the expansions as possibly independent from demographics. Whereas demographics can certainly explain the later expansions to the plan, and especially in the twentieth century, as far as the first ones are concerned, we might need to abandon statistics. This may be true because the very first recorded expansion to the plan coincided with the final decision concerning Otto's palace,<sup>1079</sup> in a time when the population was considerably lower. To give an example of the speed of the expansions in the nineteenth century: whereas in April 1836, Otto's administration passed a royal decree concerning the implementation of the plan,<sup>1080</sup> only a few months later, on the twenty-fourth of November 1836, the government implemented another decree concerning an 'addition' to the plan.<sup>1081</sup> Further, to offer a complementary example of how successive governments revised the city outline in terms of where Athenians used to build, on the twenty-sixth of September 1874, the administration, this time under King George I, implemented a royal decree authorizing the expansion of the plan towards Patisia.<sup>1082</sup> Contrary to the government's intentions, the Athenians had started building arbitrarily in Patisia as early as the first decades after the city's foundation as the capital.<sup>1083</sup> Whatever connection between the expansions and the largely illogical illegal building that necessitated them, the fact remains that, even though Papadopoulos-Vrettos' 1860 guide to the capital informed its readers that, "Athens [was] already the most beautiful city of the East,"<sup>1084</sup> driven by the unplanned character of the developing city, the nineteenth century delivered a capital that lacked more than just a plan. Indeed,

The dawn of the twentieth century found Athens without having the basic infrastructure. Athens had only a few tarred-roads, [it] had no water

<sup>1079</sup> The first expansion is dated 11 November 1836. See *ibid.*

<sup>1080</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.20, 15 May 1836, Royal Decree "Peri Ekteleseos tou Shediou tis Poleos ton Athenon." [On the Implementation of the Plan for the City of Athens] 21 April 1836.

<sup>1081</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.91, 31 December 1836, Royal Decree "Peri Prosthesis eis to peri tou Shediou tis Poleos ton Athenon Diatagma." [On Addition to the Plan for the City of Athens] 24 November 1836.

<sup>1082</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.36, 22 October 1874, Royal Decree "Peri Tropopoliiseos tou Egekrimenou Diagrammatos tis pros ta Patisia poleos ton Athenon." [Concerning the Revision of the Authorized Outline of the Expansion of the City of Athens towards Patisia] 26 September 1874.

<sup>1083</sup> See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.318. In this context, A. Sokos argues that, contrary to the first plans, the Athenians were right to choose to build in the area. See A. Sokos *Shedia tis Poleos ton Athenon*. [Plans of the City of Athens] Athens: Geometrographikai Meletai, 1969, p.5.

<sup>1084</sup> See M. Papadopoulos-Vrettos *op. cit.*, 2001, p.18.

supply, no sewage system, no lights in the roads and no means of city transportation.<sup>1085</sup>

Why had the capital, whose building was a matter of 'European interest', failed to provide its inhabitants with the very basic technology and infrastructure that made other nineteenth-century European cities, such as London or Paris, appear so new and so well-equipped?

The answer may lie in the fact that, in general, the nineteenth-century architects and governments failed to impose a complete and concrete mater plan. For instance, Andreas Sokos, a twentieth-century urban planner, argues that, the period between 1835 and 1839 was confronted with a 'mosaic of plans'.<sup>1086</sup> Furthermore, architect Ilias Kribas maintains that, as far as the later plans are concerned, and with the exception of the construction of Alexandra's Boulevard, the period between 1860 and 1906 must be seen as the 'Middle Ages' of the planning of Athens, mainly because this is when the city's development was defined according to individual and unplanned expansions.<sup>1087</sup> Once again, the preoccupation, if not obsession, with antiquity may partly explain how, despite its modernity, the modernization of nineteenth-century Athens was not equally advanced. Concerned mostly with the street network, the last proposals of the nineteenth century were soon confronted with a reality that, only for a while, appeared to escape the dialectic between the past and the present. In turn, this forced the government to deal with the practical issues of modernizing the capital. In moving away from the grand and ambitious plans of the 1830s, the last six decades of the nineteenth century produced fragmentary proposals that were either financially unrealistic or in disagreement with some of the Athenians' own material interests.

#### IV

Soon after rejecting the plan of the 1846 Committee because it limited the palace square,<sup>1088</sup> the government authorized another plan, submitted in 1867 by a Committee of Army Engineers.<sup>1089</sup> Although the 1847 plan was implemented and began to shape the city's layout, in 1856-1858, some Athenians complained that the plan limited their land.<sup>1090</sup>

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<sup>1085</sup> E. Marmaras "From the Policy of Town Planning to that of Urban Compactness: Athens during the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.460. Note here that, as we will see in the next chapter, the main problem was with the water supply, sewage, and the streets.

<sup>1086</sup> See A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, p.10.

<sup>1087</sup> See I. Kribas "I Ekseliksisis tou Shediou Poleos ton Athenon kai oi Simerines Prospatheies tou Demou." [The Development of the City-Plan for Athens and the City Council's Efforts Today] *Technika Chronika*. Year E'/IX, Issue 98, 15 January 1936, p.82.

<sup>1088</sup> See G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.76. I have not found anything else about this Committee and suspect that Sarigiannis has mistaken the dates.

<sup>1089</sup> See I. Kribas op. cit., 1936, p.81 and A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, p.11.

<sup>1090</sup> *Ibid.*

Soon after that, the government decided to re-revise the plan. As a result, in 1860 a Committee of civilians and army officials, supervised by Colonel D. Stavridis<sup>1091</sup> and directed by Kaftantzoglou,<sup>1092</sup> submitted yet another plan, which was partly authorized three years later.<sup>1093</sup> Aside from its significance for the history of Athens' city-planning history, the plan of the Stavridis Committee is important because it was the first to suggest the building of a modern monumental complex. Closely related to the building of the palace, the 1860 plan was the first to include the University, Academy, and Library of Athens. Later, these were amongst the few neoclassical buildings to survive the massive demolitions of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, thereby continuing to enjoy supreme status as *modern monuments*.<sup>1094</sup> Indeed, although the 1860 plan was also never implemented, this time because of the Municipality's financial difficulties,<sup>1095</sup> the 'Athenian Trilogy' still dominates the city's centre. Athens' first thirty-year period closed with the authorization of the 1862 Committee plan. This time the plan was implemented and its great 'success' was that it facilitated more excavations!<sup>1096</sup> Implemented or not, the plans for the capital from 1836 to 1862 were seeking to establish the modern primarily by means of excavating the ancient polis. In some respects, it seems almost as if the architects were hoping that the products of the excavations would somehow miraculously inspire them and guide them in building the modern city. The more they tried to create something new, the more they were compelled to go back and look for the dead. Athens waved the nineteenth century goodbye without having solved this difficulty. The extent of dependency upon the ancients was evident in the last two proposals of the nineteenth century.

Even though neither of Pavlos Vakas' 1896 and 1898 proposals was realized, they both aimed at constructing that all-desired proximity between a sensation of the old and one of the new.<sup>1097</sup> Over half a century after Kleanthes and Schaubert had drawn up the first plan for Athens with Athena's street connecting the palace with the Acropolis, Vakas'

<sup>1091</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1092</sup> See I. Kribas op. cit., 1936, pp.81-82.

<sup>1093</sup> See A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, p.11. For a more detailed analysis of the 1860 plan see *Master Plan of Athens*. I. Vasiliadis-Loverdo tr., (in English and French), Athens: Ministry of Public Works, 1965, no page numbers, K.H Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.108-110, and T. Hall *Planning Europe's Capital Cities*. London: E&F Spon, 1997, p.109.

<sup>1094</sup> The University already built by 1860 – the Academy, and Library of Athens comprise the 'Athenian Trilogy' and is the main focus of the following chapter.

<sup>1095</sup> See I. Kribas op. cit., 1936, p.82. The Athens City Council was founded in 1835. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.86-88. For the division of Attica into different Municipalities and the foundation of the Municipality of Athens see Government Gazette, No.17, 11 November 1835, Royal Decree "Peri Schematismou ton Demon tis Eparhias Attikis." [On the Formation of the Municipalities of the Province of Attica] 1 October 1835, pp.70-73.

<sup>1096</sup> See I. Kribas op. cit., 1936, p.82.

<sup>1097</sup> For Vakas' proposals see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1994, p.66, K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.275-276, E. Marmaras "Athena 1910-1940. Poleodomikes kai Arhitektonikes Episeauseis." [Athens 1910-1940. Urban-Planning Proposals and Architectural Stampings] in *Arhitektonike...* op. cit., 1996, p.270, and E. Marmaras "From the Policy of Town Planning to that of Urban Compactness: Athens During the First Half of the Twentieth Century," in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.461.

proposals echoed their use of streets as a bridge between a new landmark and an ancient topos:

The first one would connect the University of Athens with the archaeological site of [the] Acropolis and Thission; the second [Vakas] proposal concerned the connection of Monastiraki Square with Zappion exhibition area, and the widening of the Monastiraki Square as well.<sup>1098</sup>

In an attempt to follow a tradition as old as the first plan for a new, nineteenth-century Athens, Vakas' plans marked the end of the century with the same suggestion that justified the foundation of the city as the capital: the modern was related to the ancient such that neither appeared to compete with the other. As for the streets that begin to become important in the context of Athenian modernity, in surrounding certain modern monuments, like the Parliament and the University, they too became symbols of the city's twin cityscape. To remain still with the plans, from the beginning of the twentieth century, architects and city planners, both Greek and foreign, were quite convinced that there was an undisputed relationship between the past and the present, and especially, that Athens could, and should, become the symbol of the origin of modern European 'civilization'. This is the greatest legacy of the nineteenth-century Athens city plans: the idea that building in Athens was a 'pilgrimage'<sup>1099</sup> to the place where it had all begun, once upon a time. What remained as a task for the next century was to prove that, whatever its 'past', Athens was worthy of European modernity.

## V

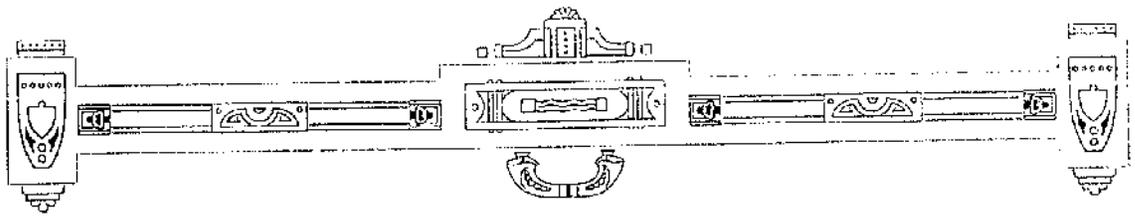
In spite of their success in establishing the representation of modern Athens as the antiquity of European modernity, the nineteenth-century plans largely failed to modernize the city. Nor unrelated to the architects' preoccupation with antiquity, this problem assigned to twentieth-century architects and city planners a double mission. They had to sustain the twin panorama of Athens as well as to simultaneously introduce the city to modernization and capitalism, even though the latter was often hidden behind the former. At the same time, after 1900, Athens was forced to justify its role as the capital of a rapidly developing nation state. With the country expanding its borders<sup>1100</sup> and with a significant

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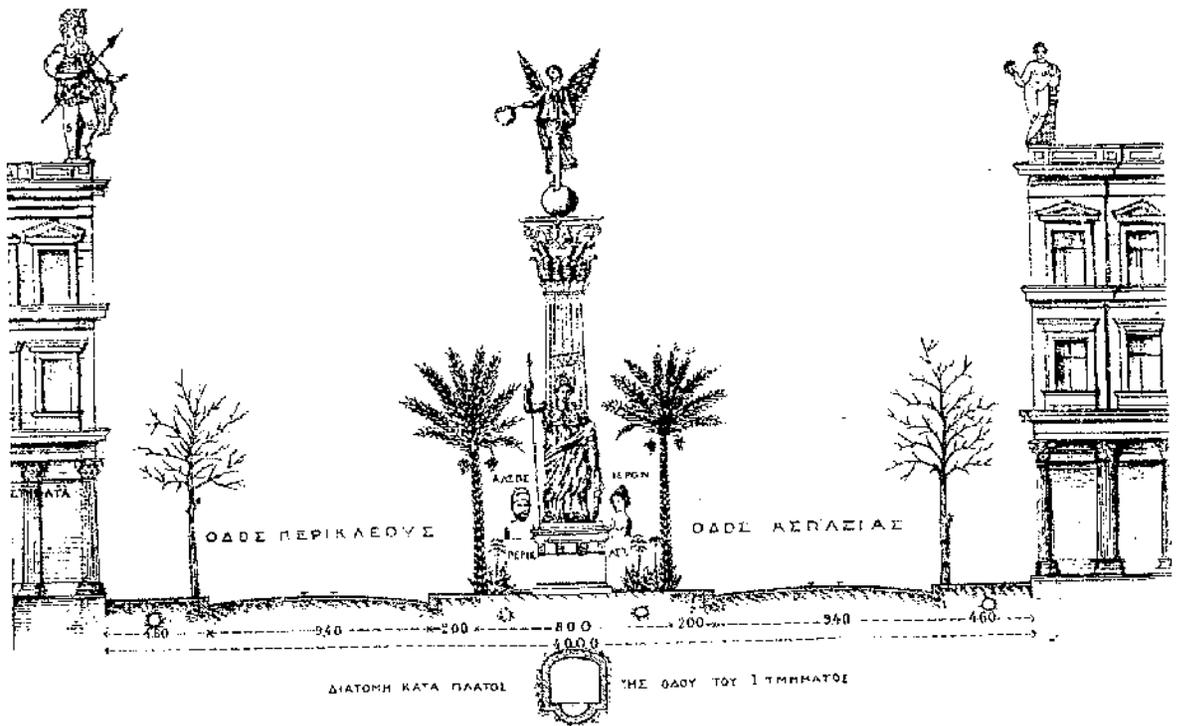
<sup>1098</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1099</sup> Architect V. Tsagris argues that this was the main attitude of the city's nineteenth-century architects. See V. Tsagris "Arhitektonike kai Poleodomike Ekseliksisis en Elladi kata ton Proto Aiona tis Eleftherias tis." [Architectural and Town Planning Development in Greece During the First Century of its Freedom] *Technika Chronika*, Year H'/XVI, Issue 187, 1 October 1939, p.470.

<sup>1100</sup> For the annexation of different territories post-1834 see R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, pp.47-99, and J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2002, pp.327-347.

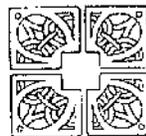


ΥΠΟ ΑΘΑΝ. Σ. ΓΕΩΡΓΙΑΔΟΥ ΚΟΜΟΜΗΧΑΝΟΥ



ΛΕΩΦΟΡΟΣ  
ΠΕΡΙΚΛΕΟΥΣ - ΑΣΠΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝΟΣ

ΕΝ ΔΙΑΤΟΜΗ ΘΕΩΜΕΝΗ





part of the population upholding the irredentist Great Idea that claimed the lands once occupied by the Byzantine Empire, Athens had to prove itself worthy of the nation's place in Europe. Despite its finally constructed railways,<sup>1101</sup> cars,<sup>1102</sup> and city-lights,<sup>1103</sup> the arbitrarily developed cityscape was a persistent problem for the capital. The earlier official division of the city into smaller and therefore easier to control and police, districts provided the answer to this predicament. As if the capital's division into different cityscapes was not confusing enough, the government and the municipality attempted to organize Athens by means of fragmentation.

Whereas Ermou Street was the official axis for the judicial division of Athens into the Northern and Meridional Districts since 1836,<sup>1104</sup> on the eighth of June 1856, King George I decreed the "Division of parishes into cities, small market towns, and villages."<sup>1105</sup> Although the Parliament voted the decree two years later, on the thirtieth of May 1857,<sup>1106</sup> the first official administrative division was created fifty years later, in 1908.<sup>1107</sup> Notwithstanding its role in the facilitation of policing in the city, the division of Athens into distinctive districts also meant that city planners were now free to choose between a plan for the city or one for an individual district or area. The first twentieth-century plans, therefore, enjoyed a privilege that was hitherto enjoyed only by Gaertner. The architects and city planners of twentieth-century 'new' Athens did not fail to recognise this new opportunity.

Athanasios Georgiadis, a state-employed city engineer, submitted two proposals, one in 1906 and the other in 1908, both of which suggested the opening of new streets, proposals that implied and resulted in much more.<sup>1108</sup> The first Georgiadis proposal, which "consisted of a ring road around [the] Acropolis archaeological site"<sup>1109</sup> later resulted in the "construction of Aghiou Pavlou Avenue, as an extension of the existing Dionyssiou Areopagitou Avenue."<sup>1110</sup> Although Georgiadis is not 'responsible' for it, the outcome of

<sup>1101</sup> Two lines started operating in 1885, this is to say fifty-years after the initiation of the restoration of the Acropolis. See K.H. Bires op. cit., p.195.

<sup>1102</sup> The first car was imported in 1896. See *ibid.*, p.250.

<sup>1103</sup> The Athens City Council started replacing petrol lamps with gas lamps in 1877 and installed a limited network of electric lamps in 1889. See *ibid.*, pp.193-195.

<sup>1104</sup> See E. Skiadas *Oi Perioches ton Athenon*. [The Districts of Athens] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Organization, 2001, endnote 3, p.165. Note also that Skiadas discusses the importance of the Great Idea in the context of dividing and building Athens in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. See *ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>1105</sup> *Ibid.*, endnote 5, p.166.

<sup>1106</sup> *Ibid.* After Otto granted a constitution in 1844, the Greek political system was defined as a 'constitutional monarchy' and in 1864, under King George I, it was redefined into a 'crowned democracy'. With the exception of short periods of Parliamentary rule, Greece did not become a Republic until after the 1974 referendum. See J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2002, pp.11-140.

<sup>1107</sup> See E. Skiadas op. cit., 2001, p.28.

<sup>1108</sup> See E. Marmaras in *Arhitektonike ...* op. cit., 1996, p.270, G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.78, A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, p.19, and E. Marmaras in *The Planning ...* op. cit., 1996, p.461.

<sup>1109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1110</sup> *Ibid.*

the partial realization of his 1906 proposal has a twofold meaning for Athenian modernity. First, it symbolically reinstated Christianity as a rightful element of modern Athens. Both avenues surrounding the Sacred Rock bear distinctively Christian names: that of the Apostle Paul,<sup>1111</sup> and that of the first Christian bishop and patron saint of Athens.<sup>1112</sup> Second, it created a contrast between a great avenue and the old city's small crooked streets,<sup>1113</sup> thereby introducing Athens to a debate that had previously been a part of the 'modern' character of other European capitals and was to be in the heart of Georgiadis' 1908 proposal. Influenced by Vakas' 1898 plan,<sup>1114</sup> Georgiadis submitted his second plan in which he "suggested the connection of the University of Athens with Monastiraki Square, and the connection of the latter Square with the suggested (in his first proposal) ring-road around the Acropolis archaeological site."<sup>1115</sup> Even though it, too, was never realized, this plan contained certain elements that are indicative of the peculiarities of Athenian modernity. In addition to his position as a state employed civil engineer for the Municipality of Athens, Georgiadis was also a councillor of the Hellenic Archaeological Society. His interest in archaeology and the consequent concern for ancient Athens makes his proposals increasingly eloquent. To begin with, his 1908 plan was primarily concerned with the opening of the 'Pericles – Aspasia's and Parthenon Boulevard',<sup>1116</sup> which would effectively connect the University of Athens to the Sacred Rock.<sup>1117</sup> The plan, in other words, advocated the construction of a proximity between the new – a modern monument – and the Acropolis, by means of a boulevard whose name would obscure the distance between the University of Athens and all that has been on the Sacred Rock. [Fig. XII and Fig. XIII] Indeed, even though this strange event did occur later, if his dream had been realized, Georgiadis would have been the one to offer Athenian modernity the 'gift' of removing the Parthenon from the Acropolis and locating it at the level of the city's asphalt, and thereby making it a more obvious part of the modern city.<sup>1118</sup> At all events, the plan pointed to an interesting street network that started from Panepistemiou Street<sup>1119</sup> and extended Korai Street into the Pericles and Aspasia's Avenue which, in crossing Athena's Street, continued as Parthenon Avenue and ended in an Acropolis Avenue below the

<sup>1111</sup> The avenue is now largely pedestrianized. See Main Map. For the history of Apostle Pavlou Avenue see M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.1, p.146.

<sup>1112</sup> See *ibid.*, p.326. All Greek cities – still – have their own patron saint.

<sup>1113</sup> See Main Map.

<sup>1114</sup> For the similarities between the two plans see E. Marmaras in *The Planning ...* op. cit., 1996, p.461.

<sup>1115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1116</sup> See A.S. Georgiadis *Leoforos Perikleous-Aspasiou kai Parthenonos*. [Pericles-Aspasia and Parthenon-Boulevard] Athens, 1908.

<sup>1117</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1118</sup> There is now a Parthenon Street in Athens. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.2, pp.485-486.

<sup>1119</sup> This means University Avenue. See Main Map

Acropolis archaeological site.<sup>1120</sup> Georgiadis sought to construct a genealogy between the modern University, the Greek Enlightenment,<sup>1121</sup> and the unearthed polis. Yet, despite his argument that his new boulevard would “facilitate the uncovering of a great part of the ancient polis,”<sup>1122</sup> Georgiadis subtly emphasized the modern.

On the twelfth of May 1911, George Mistriotis, the vice President of the Hellenic Archaeological Society and Professor of Hellenic Scholarship, and Alexander Philadelphus, Professor of History and Reader of Archaeology, delivered two lectures in support of Georgiadis’ 1908 plan.<sup>1123</sup> Both speakers discussed how the boulevard would facilitate the excavations as well as insisting on its beneficial and modern character. Philadelphus, for instance, argued that the boulevard would ‘embellish’ the modern city but also provide a ‘commercial area’.<sup>1124</sup> In turn, Mistriotis suggested that in being built upon the ‘foundations of the ancient polis’, and in emerging from the “ashes of Sophocles and Phidias,”<sup>1125</sup> the capital could not but “produce new fragrant flowers of civilization.”<sup>1126</sup> Indeed, despite his conviction that the transfer of the capital to Athens “harmed the science of archaeology,”<sup>1127</sup> Mistriotis declared his faith in the modern capital and explained how the construction of the Pericles-Aspasia’s Boulevard would bear testimony to those ‘new fragrant flowers of civilization’:

Just as confined space produces narrow-mindedness, a wide [space] broadens the horizons of the spirit. In addition to these virtues of boulevards, the moral benefit is also considerable. Whereas side streets and lanes are [populated] with thieves and murderers, in the boulevards the electric vehicles of civilization [circulate].<sup>1128</sup>

Such an argument is neither original nor alien to the question of modernity. On the contrary, Mistriotis’ argument echoes an earlier debate concerning the ‘newness’ or

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<sup>1120</sup> See A. Georgiadis op. cit., 1908, no page number.

<sup>1121</sup> Korai Street has taken its name from Adamandios Korais (1748-1833), one of the prominent fathers of the Greek Enlightenment. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.2, pp.125-128.

<sup>1122</sup> A. Georgiadis op. cit., 1908, no page number.

<sup>1123</sup> See Lecture Notes: *Dialekseis peri tis Anaskafis tis Arhaias Poleos ton Athenon kai tin Kataskevi tis Neas Leoforou Perikleous-Aspasiou kai Parthenonos eis tin Polin ton Athenon*. [Lectures on the Excavation of the Ancient Polis of Athens and the Construction of the New Pericles-Aspasia’s and Parthenon Grand Boulevard in the City Athens] Athens, 1911.

<sup>1124</sup> A. Philadelphus in *ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>1125</sup> G. Mistriotis in *ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>1126</sup> *Ibid.* Note, however, that, in echoing Rochette, Mistriotis also argued that the capital should have been transferred to Piraeus, thereby allowing the full excavation of Athens.

<sup>1127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1128</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7. Mistriotis’ purist Greek is very difficult to translate. Although I have made some changes, I chose a more faithful to a more eloquent translation that might obscure the argument.

'oldness' of nineteenth-century Berlin and Vienna.<sup>1129</sup> Similarly to the content of Philadelphus and Mistrionis' lectures, the question of a modern Berlin and Vienna were often related to the debate over 'straight or crooked streets'.<sup>1130</sup> It is here that the twin cityscape of modern Athens might illustrate the hypothesis that the building of Athens as the capital cast a shadow over both antiquity and modernity as well as further justifying the argument concerning the dubious character of the exclusive representations of modern metropolises as either particularly 'new' or emphatically 'old'.<sup>1131</sup>

With the German city planner Joseph Stübben and the Viennese architect Otto Wagner discussing the advantages of straight streets on the one hand, and with their respective colleagues Camillo Sitte and Karl Henrici advocating the beauty of crooked streets,<sup>1132</sup> on the other,

This debate on straight or crooked streets in the 1890s raised issues associated with the power of capital, the circulation of commodities and individuals, traffic configurations, the aesthetics of the street, historical memory, modernity and antimodernity, street infrastructure, pathologies of urban life, and many others.<sup>1133</sup>

Amongst its various theoretical, symbolic, and practical implications,<sup>1134</sup> the debate over straight or crooked streets in late nineteenth-century Berlin and Vienna shares certain affinities with the project of constructing a modern Athens. To stay only partly with this debate for now,<sup>1135</sup> what we need to discuss is how the dimensions of the new and the old in the imaginaries of Berlin and Vienna<sup>1136</sup> are both part of Georgiadis' proposal for a modern and great boulevard that would, nonetheless, bear a distinctively – if not *the* ultimate – classical name. In pretending to deny the modernity-antimodernity question that was part of the debate over a modern Berlin, for instance, the 'Pericles-Aspasia's and Parthenon Boulevard' is indicative of the perpetuation of the twin representation of Athens as modernity and antiquity. In Georgiadis' plan, Athens gains the absolute victory of the modern over the past: whereas the imaginary of Vienna often disguised its modernity,

<sup>1129</sup> For 'new' and 'old' Berlin and Vienna see D. Frisby op. cit., 2001.

<sup>1130</sup> See D. Frisby "Streets, Imaginaries and Modernity: Vienna is not Berlin." Typescript, 2005 and D. Frisby "Straight or Crooked Street? The Contested Rational Spirit of the Modern Metropolis." in I. Boyd Whyte ed. *Modernism and the Spirit of the City*. London: Routledge, 2003, pp.57-84.

<sup>1131</sup> For the problems with the representations of Vienna as 'old' and Berlin as 'new' see D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, and D. Frisby op. cit., 2005.

<sup>1132</sup> See *ibid.*, and D. Frisby in I. Boyd Whyte ed., op. cit., 2003, pp.57-84.

<sup>1133</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 2005, p.3.

<sup>1134</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1135</sup> The political and symbolic significance of streets will be explored in the next chapter.

<sup>1136</sup> See D. Frisby op. cit., 2005, p.21, and D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, esp. pp.158-179.

Athens simultaneously claimed the old and the new on a single site. But it failed in both. As a testimony of the 'unanticipated consequences' of modern antiquity, Athens steadily began to unveil the contradictory character of the very same modern world that it was supposed to re-enchant. Still, the city's reconstructed past and Europe's consequent claim of this past as its own antiquity ensured the prolongation of the dream of a modern and ancient Athens. The two proposals that followed Georgiadis' 1908 plan accentuated the bond between Europe and Athens as its historical origin. In order to legitimize this bond, a German architect and a British town planner "had as their basic aim to give Athens the glamour of a European capital,"<sup>1137</sup> thereby shifting their attention to the city as a whole. [Fig. XIV]

## VI

In 1910, the architect and 'general director of the Department of Structural Works of the Municipality of Berlin', Ludwig Hoffmann,<sup>1138</sup> drafted the first master plan for twentieth-century Athens.<sup>1139</sup> Above all, Hoffmann wanted to "give a definitive solution to the circulation problem of Athens by creating a ring road,"<sup>1140</sup> as well as to manage the "reconstruction of squares and built blocks."<sup>1141</sup> On a practical level, this proposal meant opening up and clearly defining the functional purposes of the urban space. On a symbolic level, however, it advocated an obvious separation and distinction between the modern city and the antiquities. This distinction became even more elaborate in the plan that followed Hoffmann's proposal. Whereas in the mid-nineteenth century, architects had to deal with the modern capital and the remaining antiquities – this is what was left from the cleansing of the city – their twentieth-century colleagues had to tackle the problem of an abundance of antiquities that were the result of continuous excavations. Despite the fact that Thomas Mawson was an experienced British city planner, his plan, too, was unrealized because of its incompatibility with the material interests of Athenian landowners.<sup>1142</sup> Nevertheless, Mawson's 1914 plan, is more than a mere interesting instance of Athenian urban planning history.<sup>1143</sup> [Fig. XV]

In general, Mawson's 'marvel of a plan'<sup>1144</sup> emphasized five principal points. First, the "creation of some parts with certain land use;"<sup>1145</sup> second, the "building of new

<sup>1137</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.466.

<sup>1138</sup> Ibid., p.462.

<sup>1139</sup> For Hoffmann's 44 pieces plan see ibid., E. Marmaras in *Architektonike...* op. cit., 1996, p.271, G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.76, K.H Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.276-277, and *Master Plan of Athens*. op. cit., 1965.

<sup>1140</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.462.

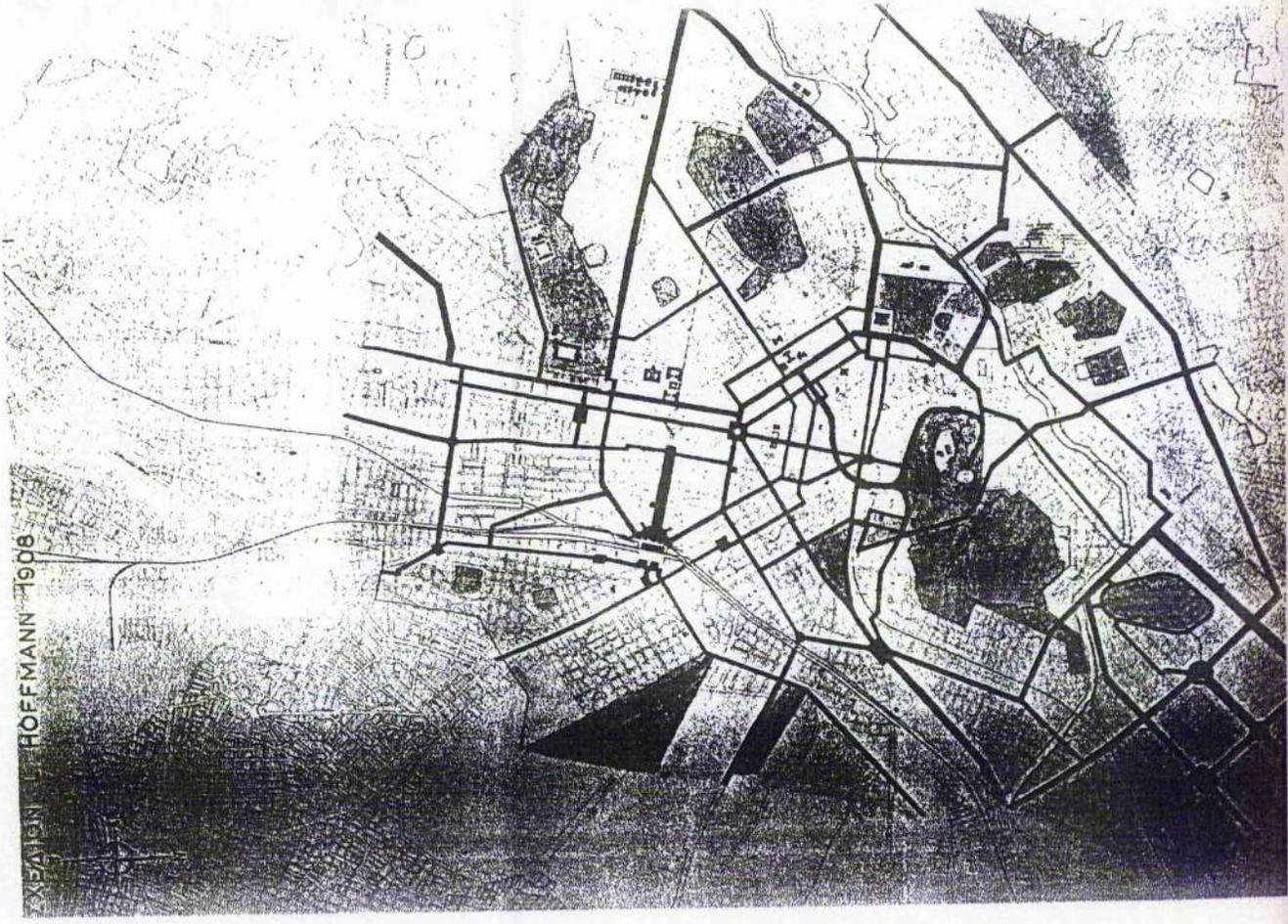
<sup>1141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1142</sup> Ibid. Note here that although Hoffmann was invited by Spiros Merkouris, the then Mayor of Athens, and Mawson was invited by Queen Sophia, the Athenian landowners proved themselves more powerful.

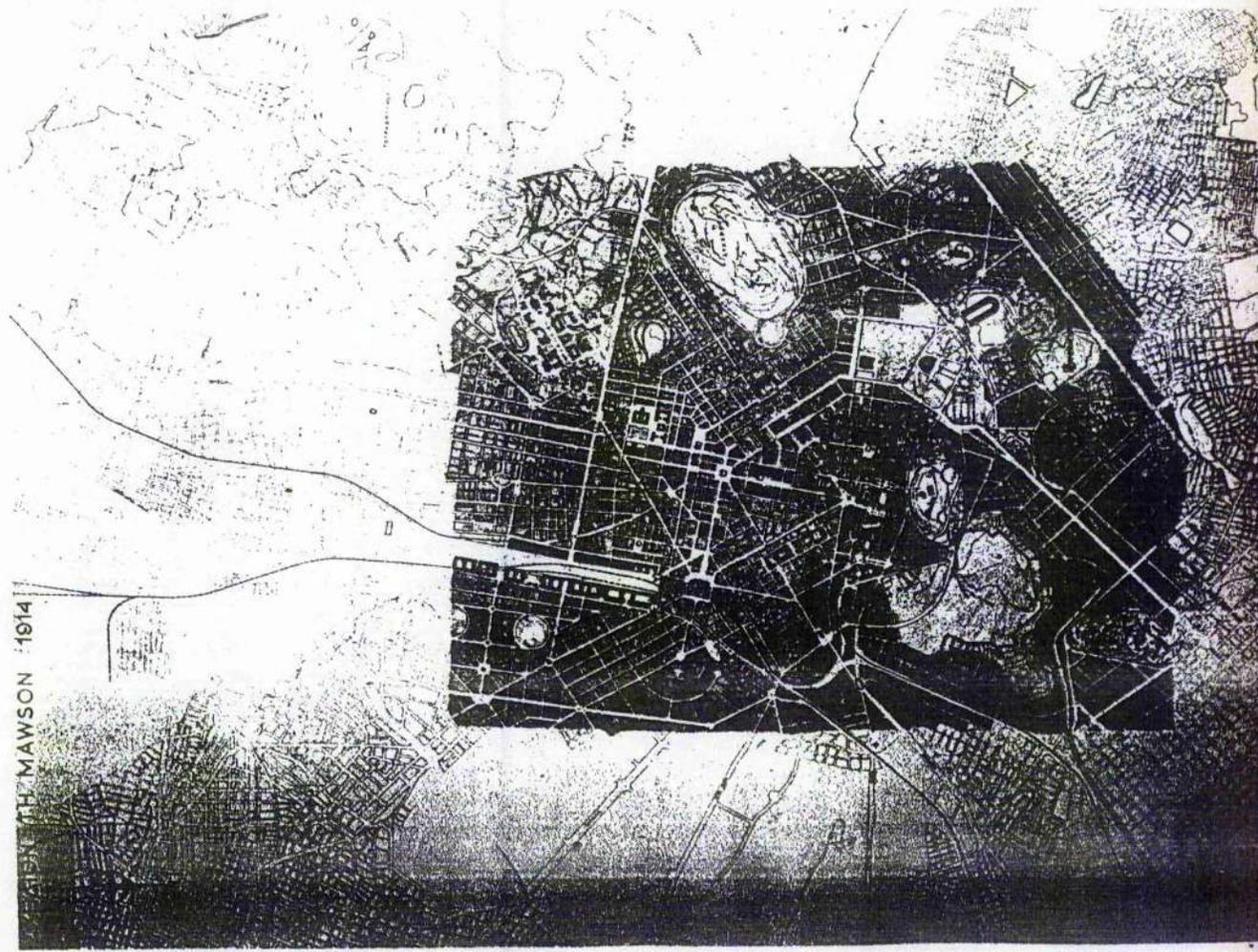
<sup>1143</sup> For the urban planning significance of the plan see ibid., pp.462-463, *Master Plan of Athens*. op. cit., 1965, and K.H. Bires op. cit., pp.277-278.

<sup>1144</sup> See A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, pp.12-13.

XIN

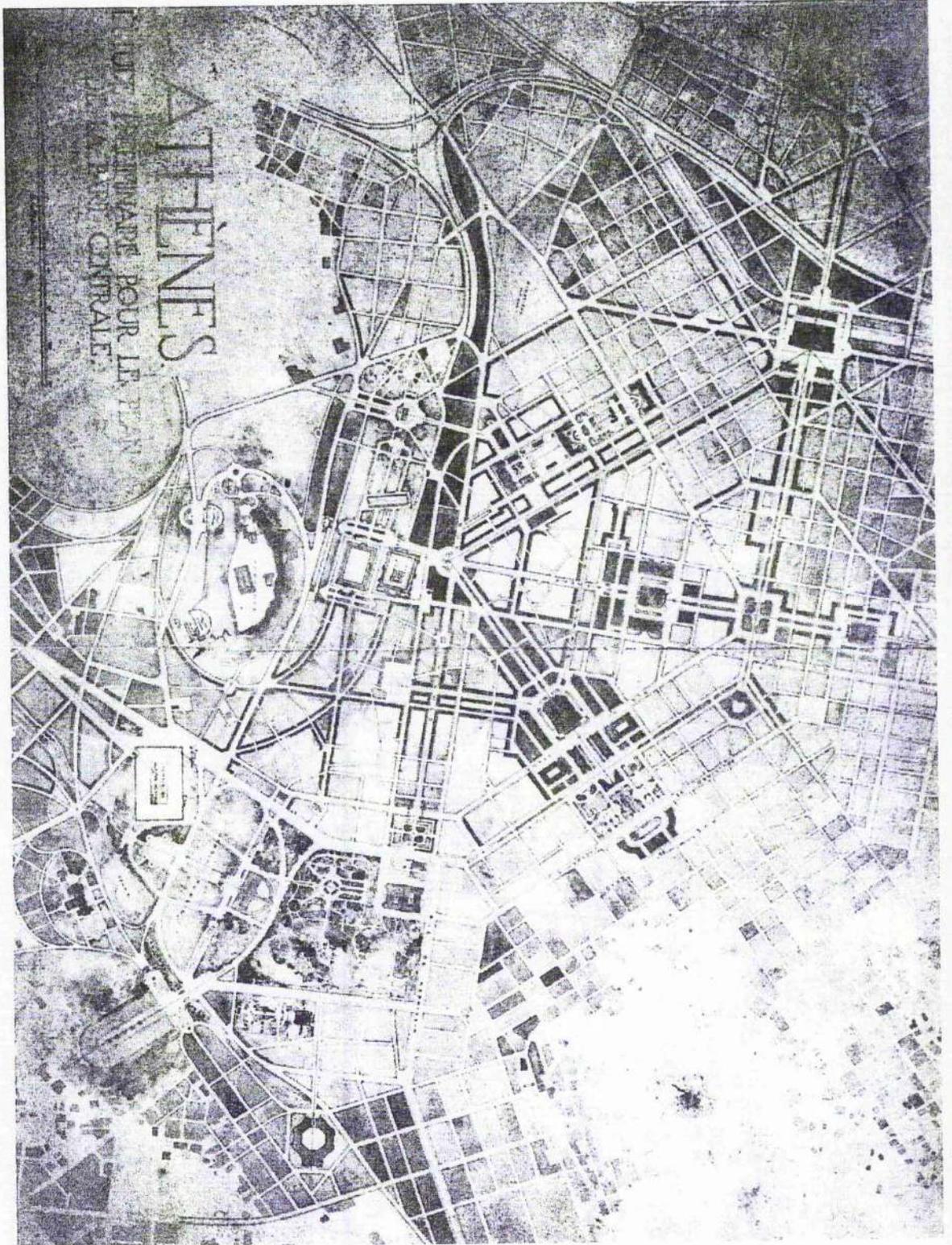


HOFFMANN 1908



MAWSON 1914

XV.



settlements for the working class;<sup>1146</sup> third, the “upgrading of the area surrounding the Acropolis archaeological site;”<sup>1147</sup> fourth, the “improvement of the road conditions in the old centre of Athens;”<sup>1148</sup> and, finally, the “constitution of an essential machinery, having as subject the implementation and the managements of suggested proposals.”<sup>1149</sup> With support from the ‘national euphoria’ that followed the victories of Greece in the Balkan Wars,<sup>1150</sup> Mawson’s vision of a European Athens hides a fascinating attitude towards modernity.

Mawson’s plan may be, as Papageorgiou-Venetas maintains, the ‘model’ for later proposals, because he was the first to suggest the “idea of a unified zone of green spaces and recreation in the city centre,”<sup>1151</sup> but despite his intention to ‘upgrade’ the Acropolis archaeological site, he did not consider the problem of the demolition of existing houses for further excavations.<sup>1152</sup> In reality, as we will see, Mawson used antiquities as “elements for the decoration of the modern metropolis.”<sup>1153</sup> One year after the official presentation of his plan,<sup>1154</sup> he maintained that because the “very idea of remodelling and replanning Athens seemed to many as out of place as the revision of the Bible did to our fathers when it was suggested,”<sup>1155</sup> and because Athens is the “field from which all classical learning has sprung,”<sup>1156</sup> Athens, “of all cities calls for reverent handling.”<sup>1157</sup> Nevertheless, for Mawson, Athens was not of a mere scholarly interest. Rather, he maintained, that:

There is [...] very much in the history of Athens that is of supreme interest to us, and many parallels in their history which *helps us to*

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<sup>1145</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.462. An example of a certain land use was the proposed creation of a new University Campus. See *ibid.*

<sup>1146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1147</sup> *Ibid.*, p.463.

<sup>1148</sup> *Ibid.* In this context, Marmaras also points to the similarities between Mawson, Vakas, and Georgiadis’ plans. See *ibid.*

<sup>1149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1150</sup> See *ibid.* For the Balkan Wars and their impact in Athenian society, see M. Haritatos ed., *Exhibition Catalogue / Athena ton Valkanikon Polemon*. [Athens in the Balkan Wars 1912-1913] Athens: Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Athens and Hellenic Literary and Historical Society Archives Society, 1993.

<sup>1151</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *O Athenaios Peripatos kai to Istoriko Topio ton Athenon*. [The Athenian Stroll and the Historic Landscape of Athens] Athens: KAPON, 2004, p.34.

<sup>1152</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1994, p.72.

<sup>1153</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2004, p.34.

<sup>1154</sup> The plan was officially presented on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 1918. See E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.462.

<sup>1155</sup> T.H. Mawson “The Replanning of Athens.” *Architectural Review*, 1919, Vol.45, Number 268, p.48.

<sup>1156</sup> T.H. Mawson “The Re-Planning of Athens.” *Gardens, Cities, and Town Planning*. 1919(b), Vol.6, Number 8, p.107.

<sup>1157</sup> *Ibid.*

*understand our own [the British] evolution from the ancient to the modern, which gives its study a more than literary interest.*<sup>1158</sup>

In order for the British<sup>1159</sup> to understand the *progress* from ancient Athens to modern Britain, the rebuilding of Athens as a capital had to ensure that, “necessity must be met and met in a way that will conserve all that Ancient Athens meant.”<sup>1160</sup> What did ancient Athens mean and how could new Athens demonstrate its relationship to modern Britain? Despite his passionate arguments, Mawson was hardly interested in *all* that antiquity meant. On the contrary, he wished to celebrate the modern. Indeed, he declared that,

In a scheme for the remodelling or rejuvenation of an old city [...] some sacrifices of the ancient and the picturesque must necessarily be made, but it need not be to such an extent that we lose the *glamour* of the ancient, which is what I am afraid is happening at Rome, but which it shall be my most strenuous endeavour to prevent in Athens.<sup>1161</sup>

What connected the ancient to the modern, for Mawson, was their presumably shared ‘glamour’. His general indifference towards the complexities of the excavations, therefore, was due to the fact that what he was seeking was already provided in the Acropolis. Even though his perception of antiquity appears to differ from that of the earlier architects – and especially Klenze – Mawson relied on their imaginary of the cleansed Acropolis as the all-encompassing definition of the Past. At the same time, in arguing that ‘antiquity’ was the ornament of the modern, Mawson, too, concealed the fact that the restored Acropolis was actually used in order to provide modernity with a more beautiful image of itself. Yet, what distinguishes Mawson and his generation from their nineteenth-century colleagues, is that, in being empowered by the latter’s actions, they appreciated their modernity in a more obvious way. This revitalized faith in the modern also meant that Athens ought to resemble other European capitals. For instance, in 1925, in a celebration of the anniversary of the capital’s first ninety-years, the ‘Society of Friends of Athens’ explained that the Society was founded,

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<sup>1158</sup> *Ibid.*, my emphasis.

<sup>1159</sup> Mawson contrasts the Greek and the British to the French and the Italians. See *ibid.*

<sup>1160</sup> T.H. Mawson *op. cit.*, 1919, p.49.

<sup>1161</sup> T.H. Mawson *op. cit.*, 1919(b), p.109, my emphasis.

With the high and noble aim [...] of establishing Athens equal to its old glory and comparable to the capitals of the rather more advanced younger nations.<sup>1162</sup>

Although Athens appears increasingly important for the 'nation', its imaginary as Europe's past also meant the continuous representation of the modern metropolis as both classical antiquity and European modernity. Notwithstanding continuous excavations, the later twentieth-century plans betrayed an unmistaken faith in their modern and were more concerned with the city's modernization. Although they, too, remained nothing but dreams, Aristidis Balanos, Stylianos Leloudas, and Petros Kalligas' plans were "closer to real conditions."<sup>1163</sup>

## VII

Whereas Balanos'<sup>1164</sup> 1917 plan aimed at avoiding the "future illegal urban growth"<sup>1165</sup> in Athens' 'western boundaries',<sup>1166</sup> and Kalligas' Committee had to consider the population increase that had followed the Asia Minor Catastrophe,<sup>1167</sup> Leloudas, a lawyer and "amateur town planner with a great instinct concerning the future"<sup>1168</sup> of the city, was the "first who saw the basin of Athens as the area where an urban growth should take place."<sup>1169</sup> But he was also the first to imagine Athens as a great capital. Passionately dedicated to his dream of a capital for the new century, Leloudas published his different ideas for over a decade.<sup>1170</sup> As a result, in 1929, he formulated a plan entitled "The Greater Athens Area,"<sup>1171</sup> in which he divided the city's 'nucleus' into seven zones, each with a designated point of reference: the 'Antiquities', the 'Administration/State', 'Justice', the 'Church', 'Education', and finally, 'Recreation'.<sup>1172</sup> [Fig. XVI]

<sup>1162</sup> Feuilleton: *I Enefikondaetiris ton Athenon*. [The Ninety-Years Period of Athens] Publication of the Society of the Friends of Athens, Athens, 1925, p.24.

<sup>1163</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.464.

<sup>1164</sup> Balanos was a civil engineer and a member of the Athens City Council. See *ibid.*, 463. See also G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, pp.77-80.

<sup>1165</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.463.

<sup>1166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1167</sup> The Committee was founded in 1920. See *ibid.*, p.464. A. Sokos also maintains that all the members of the Kalligas Committee worked without pay. See A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, pp.111-113. For the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the 'transfer' of more than 1,000,000 Greeks to the mainland see R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, pp.101-103 and J.S. Kofopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, pp.129-132.

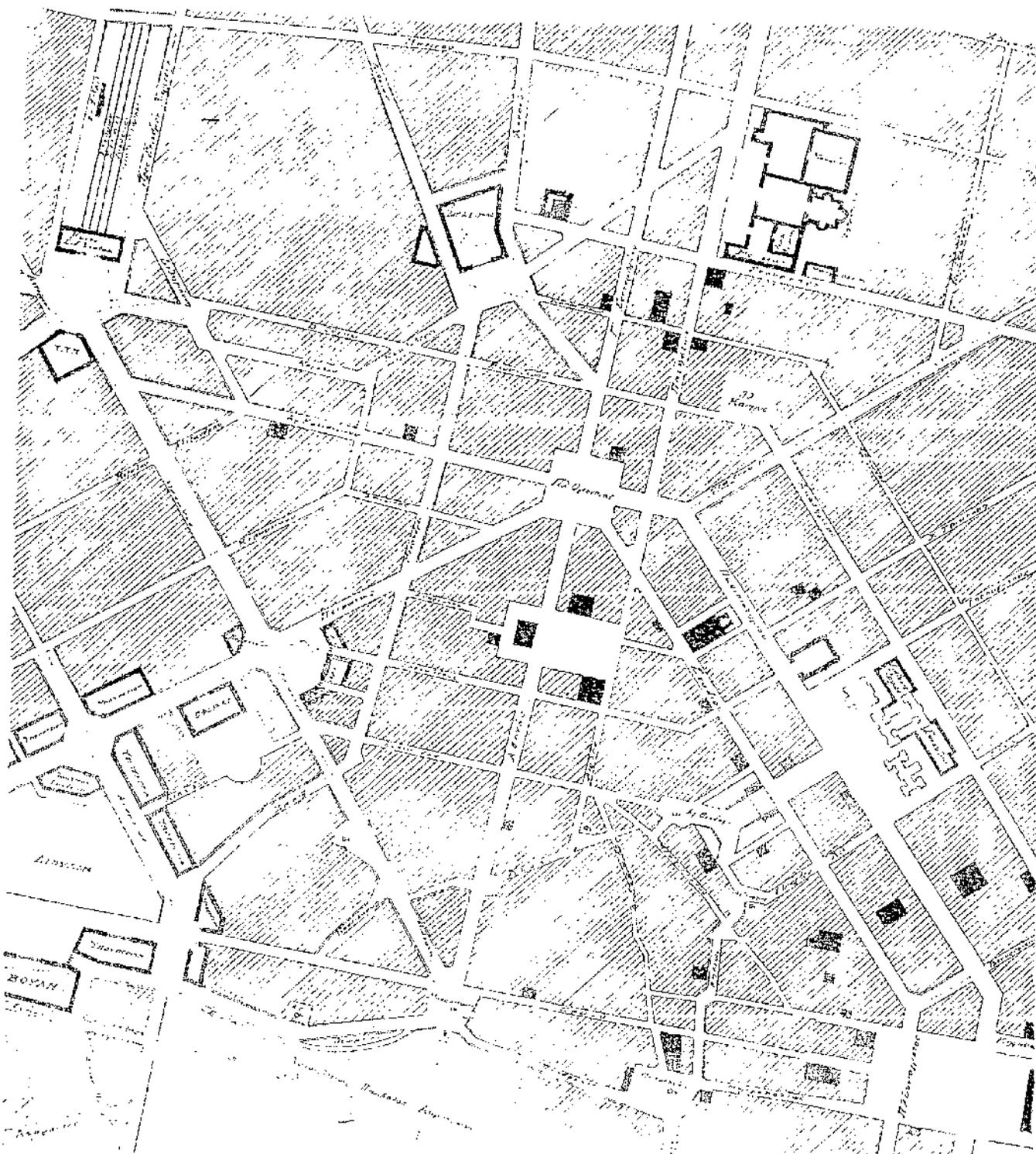
<sup>1168</sup> E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, p.463.

<sup>1169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1170</sup> Marmaras also points to two publications, one in 1918 and the other in 1921. See *Ibid.* I have also found another article published in 1928 and will explore it in relation to Leloudas' main plan. For Leloudas dedication to the city see also his speech in Conference Notes: *Synedriou Peri tou Neou Shediou tis Poleos ton Athenon*. [Conference on the New Plan for the City of Athens] Hellenic Polytechnic Society, Athens, 1927, pp.11-15.

<sup>1171</sup> See *ibid.*, 463-464. See also S. Leloudas *Athenai ai Evryterai - Shediagramma*. [The Greater Athens Area - Diagram] Athens, 1929.

<sup>1172</sup> See *ibid.*, Plan IV, no page numbers, I am reading the plan clockwise. For a more detailed outline with the arrangement of buildings see *ibid.*, Plan VII.



Ο ΠΥΡΗΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΛΕΩΣ

ΣΤ. ΛΕΛΟΥΔΑ

ΤΟ ΣΧΕΔΙΟΝ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ

VII

ΤΑ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΗΜΑΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑΚΩΝ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΩΝ  
 ΗΑ Ο ΔΙΕΥΞΗ ΤΩΝ ΓΕΩΜΕΤΡΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΩΝ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝ  
 ΔΙΑΒΟΥΝ ΟΡΘΟΓΩΝΙΟΝ ΓΕΩΜΕΤΡΙΟΝ



One thing stands out in this outline. Despite the unavoidable conformity to the triangular arrangement of the Kleantes-Schaubert plan, Leloudas' 'Administration/State' zone bears an astonishing similarity with Klenze's proposal for the palace.<sup>1173</sup> In this respect, they both dreamt of constructing an aesthetically perceived proximity between the short-lived Periclean democracy, of which the cleansed Acropolis was supposed to be paradigmatic, and a *new* regime. Nevertheless, whereas Klenze's mission was to house the monarchy close to the Sacred Rock, Leloudas designed a Parliament for the new – and itself short-lived – Republic of 1927-1935,<sup>1174</sup> thereby implying the return of the *same* regime that first built the Parthenon. In other words, his was an outline for the long anticipated complete recovery of Athenian democracy. However modern, Leloudas' plan for Athens was the first to appear entitled to finally depict Athens as being what it was reborn to become: the 'splendid' descendant of the first historical democracy.<sup>1175</sup> Although we have generally attempted to discuss why the building of modern Athens cannot be exclusively confined within the context of the birth of the nation state, Leloudas' proposal is undoubtedly a case in which the question is certainly relevant. Yet, contrary to his representation of modern Athens as the revival of the classical polis, the nation might have been of secondary importance to Leloudas.

According to "The Greater Athens Area" outline, the "Pantheon of the Hellenic Nation"<sup>1176</sup> ought to consist of a complex of buildings, three of which would house a Museum, a new Cathedral, and the Holy Synod respectively.<sup>1177</sup> As far as the 'nation' was concerned, therefore, its past included Christianity and antiquity as compatible elements of the same Pantheon.<sup>1178</sup> But whereas Paris, for example, housed its Pantheon in a single building, Leloudas' Athenian equivalent required a complex of different buildings. Hence, however much a part of the nation's past, as far as Athens alone was concerned, Christianity would live under the shadow of antiquity. Christianity and antiquity could be compatible, but not equal. Indeed, in Leloudas' plan, the Cathedral is physically separated from the Sacred Rock. In other words, although he certainly dreamt of a capital for the nation, Leloudas' hierarchy of values seems to highlight Athens *before* the nation. Indeed, his proposal appears to imply that the modern capital is the first and rightful descendant of the classical polis. The 'nation', 'Europe', or the 'world' could claim their classical

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<sup>1173</sup> See *ibid.*, plan VII, Bottom left.

<sup>1174</sup> For the foundation of the Republic until the return of King George II see R. Clogg *op. cit.*, 1999, pp.108-115.

<sup>1175</sup> Leloudas is here close to Mannheim's definition of the Weimar Republic as the 'second Periclean Athens'.

<sup>1176</sup> See S. Leloudas *op. cit.*, 1929, Plan X.

<sup>1177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1178</sup> I have not found any further information concerning the contents of the Museum, but as the National Museum always included fragments of different historical periods, it is relatively safe to assume that Leloudas was thinking of a collection of 'all' of the 'nation's' history.

heritage only after modern Athens had maintained its own.<sup>1179</sup> This might explain the connection, in Leloudas' plan, between the Athenian Trilogy, the 'Recreation' zone, and the Acropolis.<sup>1180</sup> In locating the Academy-University-Library complex in the middle of the "Centre of Scholarship and the Arts,"<sup>1181</sup> Leloudas was repeating the necessity for the creation of a spacious square around the Athenian Trilogy.<sup>1182</sup> At the same time, in suggesting the construction of a 'Recreation' zone between the modern monuments and the Acropolis archaeological zone,<sup>1183</sup> Leloudas portrayed modern Athens as a finished and perfect project. With the 'Recreation' zone consisting of a Concert Hall and a Gallery what lay between the modern and the 'ancient' was the zone wherein the former could celebrate itself as the deserving child of the latter. Like previous plans, however, Leloudas' proposal for a twentieth-century Athens remained a dream. Nevertheless, the ideas and the principles that guided all these plans, from Gaertner to Leloudas, saturated the city. The ambitions and expectations were so high, so unrealistic and so paradoxical that they made modern Athens often appear disappointing. And yet, architects and urban planners never abandoned the dream of an ancient and a new city in one single modern metropolis.

### VIII

Despite their refusal to abandon the project of a modern Athens, architects and city planners alike were torn between the ancient city that was constantly uncarthed and a modern capital whose infrastructure was still inadequate. With the plan expanding continuously,<sup>1184</sup> and with a number of proposals experimenting with various possibilities, by the end of the 1930s, the city was in a quite chaotic state.<sup>1185</sup> Yet, in refusing to admit their or their colleagues' mistake or even megalomania, some architects attributed the city's chaos to its population. For some, 1930s Athens was not what it should be, not because those responsible – the governments and the city planners or architects – were building a modern capital as the 'once upon a time' and distant polis, but because its

<sup>1179</sup> Athenian chauvinism first became obvious after the Asia Minor Catastrophe with the 'Athenians' complaining about the refugees. The second occasion of hostility to non-Athenians occurred during the demolition of the nineteenth-century city in the 1950s and 60s. The Athenians often tend to refer to the city as 'Ours'. We will discuss these issues further in the following chapter.

<sup>1180</sup> See *ibid.*, Plan VII. The 'Recreation' zone is the complex of the two buildings on the left.

<sup>1181</sup> See *ibid.*, Plan XIa.

<sup>1182</sup> For Leloudas' article on the benefits of a square around the Athenian trilogy see S. Leloudas "I Kykloforia eis Kendrika Tina Semeia ton Athenon." [The Traffic in Certain Central Parts of Athens] *ERGA*, Year IV, Issue 73, 15 June 1928, pp.128-131.

<sup>1183</sup> See S. Leloudas *op. cit.*, 1929, Plan VII.

<sup>1184</sup> For the expansions in the early 1930s see A. Demetrakopoulos "I Epektasis tou Shediou Poleos ton Athenon." [The Expansion of the Athens City-plan] *Technika Chronika*, Year Γ'/V, Issue 52, 15 February 1934, pp.156-163. Demetrakopoulos was a member of the Kalligas' Committee. For the 1936 expansions see K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, pp.321-324.

<sup>1185</sup> See K.H. Bires "Peri to Poleodomikon Provlima ton Athenon." [On the Urban Planning Problem of Athens] *Technika Chronika*, Year Ε'/IX, Issue 98, 15 January 1936, pp.99-101.

citizens were 'uncivilized'. For instance, a century after the foundation of the city as the capital, architect and city planner Patroklos Karandinos argued that:

The wealth of its natural beauties [...] the climate, and the archaeological treasures establish Athens as a privileged city. Inhabited by civilized people, it would be the most beautiful city of the world. But, today, it offers the image of a pathetic and amorphous city.<sup>1186</sup>

However repetitive, the argument persists from the nineteenth century onwards: since Athens had its 'archaeological treasures' and a mild climate, it should be easy – if not 'natural' – to transform it into a modern metropolis. The difference between the nineteenth and the twentieth century's mode of the argument, however, is that although the exploration of the former has helped us understand some of the reasons behind the argument, the analysis of the latter betrays a confusion in respect to the failure of the modern metropolis to become what it 'should' be. More sober than Karandinos, an anonymous author writing on the centenary of modern Athens suggested that:

We [the Athenians] should not be deluded with the idea that we are the chosen people of Israel just because we happen to inhabit the land wherein the spirit once triumphed. Yet, there is hope [for us] to understand that we are not as civilized a people as we imagine and as we could be, and this [understanding] will benefit us a lot more.<sup>1187</sup>

Civilization acquires a specific connotation here. It does not mean that the Athenians, or the Greeks for that matter, were not as civilized, as Karandinos argued, as other Europeans but, rather, that they were not, as they might like to believe, as 'cultured' as the ancients. Just as the city's people had to prove that they, too, were capable of 'great deeds' like the ancients, the modern city had to win the right to be called Athens again. The chance occurrence of inhabiting the land, and the fact that the capital was rebuilt on the site where the classical polis flourished 'once upon a time' were, therefore, no longer enough. Yet, whereas they were both enough for Europe to choose the city as the capital, neither was sufficient for the survival of the city in the twentieth century. Still, despite its unanticipated consequences, modern antiquity was always at the heart of a new Athens.

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<sup>1186</sup> P. Karandinos "Dia to Shedion tis Poleos ton Athenon." [On the Athens City-Plan] *Technika Chronika*, Year E'/IX, Issue 100, 15 February 1936, pp.214-218.

<sup>1187</sup> Anonymous "Ta Paraleifthenda apo tin Ekatondaetirida ton Athenon." [The Omissions from the Centenary of Athens] *Technika Chronika*, Year Δ'/VII, Issue 76, 15 February 1935, pp.199-204.

In general, successive governments and the municipality tried to solve the problems of the capital – including the Athenians’ arbitrary and illegal building – by means of the foundation of a number of committees. Whilst the ‘Organization for the Athens City Plan’ of the Municipality of Athens was founded in 1925,<sup>1188</sup> the state’s 1933 ‘Urban Planning Higher Committee’ survived only three years.<sup>1189</sup> In turn, in 1924 and in 1940, the government authorized the Kalligas Committee and Karandinos’ plans respectively.<sup>1190</sup> The former was abolished in 1926,<sup>1191</sup> whereas the ‘Organization for the Administration of the Management of the Capital’ that the latter suggested, was abolished on the twentieth of April 1941.<sup>1192</sup> In turn, in March 1937, the Metaxas Dictatorship<sup>1193</sup> supplemented the forced Law 44/1936 concerning the foundation of the institution of the ‘Management of the Capital’<sup>1194</sup> with Law 508/1937, which founded the ‘Supreme Urban Planning Organization of the Capital’.<sup>1195</sup> The organization was sub-divided into two committees, the ‘Supreme Urban Planning Council’,<sup>1196</sup> and the Konstandinos Doxiadis’ directed ‘Office of City-Planning Studies’.<sup>1197</sup> In reality, in spite of the possible ‘good intentions’ of the governments, as far as the actual ‘management’ of Athens was concerned, all these different organizations, committees, and councils proved largely ineffective. Yet, as far as the imaginary of the modern capital as simultaneously new and ancient was concerned, the dictatorship that governed the country before World War II decided that, whatever the necessity for modernization, no plan could be submitted for Athens without considering what the city was ‘once upon a time’.

In 1937, Alexandros Dragoumis published an article in which he outlined the maps that the government and the City Council would expect any future plan for Athens to contain.<sup>1198</sup> Except for the different topographical and geographical maps, the general plan for Athens and its environs was to include a map with all the protected art monuments whose “existence should in no way be jeopardized by the general plan,”<sup>1199</sup> a map of the

<sup>1188</sup> See G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.111.

<sup>1189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1191</sup> Both the Kalligas Committee and Law 1709/1924 that had founded it were abolished by the General Pangalos Dictatorship. See *ibid.*, Pangalos established a dictatorship in June 1925 and was overthrown in 1926. See R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, p.108.

<sup>1192</sup> See G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, pp.115-117.

<sup>1193</sup> General Metaxas established a dictatorship on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1936. See R. Clogg op. cit., 1999, p.117.

<sup>1194</sup> The Law gave the Athens basin municipalities authority over the plans. See G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.114 and K.H Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.325-330.

<sup>1195</sup> G. Sarigiannis op. cit., 2000, p.115.

<sup>1196</sup> The dictator was the president and A. Demetrakopoulos, K.H.. Bires, and P. Karandinos were members of the council. See *ibid.*

<sup>1197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1198</sup> See A. Dragoumis “To Genikon Shedion Athenon – Perihoron.” [The General Plan for Athens and its Environs] *Technika Chronika*, Year ΣΤ’/XI, Issue 126-127, 15 March-1 April 1937, pp.226-232.

<sup>1199</sup> *Ibid.*, p.227.

historical development of Athens,<sup>1200</sup> a map that clearly defines the areas that have buildings of 'historic' or 'artistic value',<sup>1201</sup> and, finally, a map that should specify the areas that ought to be preserved.<sup>1202</sup> On the eve of World War II, in other words, modern Athens was still dependent on the prescribed past. Despite their general confidence in their modernity, twentieth-century architects and city planners were still holding on to the vision of a new Athens in the image of a distant antiquity. In 1901, Kostas Palamas, one of the greatest Greek literary figures described the passage from the nineteenth to the twentieth century in the most astonishing way:

The moderns think that it is bad and are ashamed of being other, of being modern. They want to be the same, they want to be the ancients.<sup>1203</sup>

Thirty-five years later, Konstandinos Bires examined the urban-planning problem of the capital and argued that all the plans proposed from 1846 to 1922 were unrealistic and overestimated the country's financial and technological resources.<sup>1204</sup> Modern Greeks, he continued, were less 'disciplined' than other people and they forgot that Greece was a poor country.<sup>1205</sup> Bires concluded that, although his contemporary city-planners were right to abandon the nineteenth-century 'illusion of romanticism', they were wrong to adopt the opposite extreme, thereby supporting a functionalism whose aim was to transform the capital into a 'machine'.<sup>1206</sup> But the debate over a functional or a beautiful capital, that Bires attempted to introduce, was suddenly halted.

Mussolini's Italy declared war against Greece in October 1940.<sup>1207</sup> Soon after that, on Sunday the twenty-seventh of April 1941, the Nazis marched into Athens, raising the swastika on the Sacred Rock<sup>1208</sup> and Penelope Delta, a prominent woman of letters, was so devastated by the Nazi flag on the Athenian Acropolis that she committed suicide.<sup>1209</sup> On that day "Athens [was] a dead city."<sup>1210</sup> The swastika was taken down on the twelfth of October 1944 and bells signalled the city's freedom – "The Athenians climbed on the roofs

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<sup>1200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1201</sup> Ibid., p.229.

<sup>1202</sup> Ibid., p.230.

<sup>1203</sup> K. Palamas op. cit., *Apanda*. Vol.6. Athens, Bires, p.353.

<sup>1204</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1936, p.99.

<sup>1205</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.100-101.

<sup>1206</sup> See *ibid.*, p.100.

<sup>1207</sup> See J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, p.290.

<sup>1208</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.325-330. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 1941, members of the Resistance, M. Glezos and A. Sandas took the swastika down and raised the Greek flag. See G. Kairofyllas *I Athena tou '40 kai tis Katohis*. [Athens of the '40s and the German Occupation] Athens: Filipotes, 1985, p.161.

<sup>1209</sup> See *ibid.*, p.134. The Nazis imposed a very strict occupation in Athens and the city had thousands dead.

<sup>1210</sup> Ibid.

of their houses in order to celebrate.”<sup>1211</sup> They wanted to see ‘their’ Acropolis with the Greek flag.<sup>1212</sup> This is not poetry. However starved and shattered by the war, on the day of the city’s liberation, its people first turned towards the Acropolis. There is no other site that enjoys such a fascinating devotion. The Acropolis is what the Athenians were taught to derive their identity from. The rebuilding of the capital after the war parallels the Athenians’ celebration; the architects and city planners that sought to reconstruct the bombarded city first looked at the Acropolis.

## IX

Even though the capital was attracting great numbers of Greeks already in the 1900s, the post-World War II period was marked by a massive urbanization. With the Civil War (1946-1949) pushing more and more people to the urban anonymity that could sometimes protect their lives<sup>1213</sup> and with peasants migrating to an increasingly developing labour market in the capital after the late 1940s,<sup>1214</sup> Athens gradually accumulated half of the country’s population. Whereas out of a total population of 2,400,000 in 1896, 80,000 lived in Athens, the capital of 1951 housed 1,379,000 out of 8,500,000 Greeks.<sup>1215</sup> In turn, whereas according to the census of the fourteenth of March 1971, Athens had a population of 2,503,207,<sup>1216</sup> the early 2000s ‘greater Athens’ with its suburbs and surrounding municipalities is the house of more than 4,000,000 people.<sup>1217</sup> But despite the increase in the population, the planning and development of the capital was largely in a standstill until the ‘destructive’ 1950s. Indeed, with a few exceptions, such as Konstandinos Bires 1945-1946 ‘Plan for the Reconstruction of the Capital’,<sup>1218</sup> the planning of Athens was not discussed until the mid-1950s. Yet if the lack of planning is understandable in light of the fact that the country was at war for the greatest part of the first half of the twentieth century, the post-1950s chaos is not. From 1950 until 1955, there were 68,358 new houses build in Greece – 62,658 of them in Athens.<sup>1219</sup> In a shocking move on the part of the government, and raising an understandable criticism,<sup>1220</sup> Law 3275/1955 legalized all pre-

<sup>1211</sup> Ibid., p.247.

<sup>1212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1213</sup> See J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, pp.189-190.

<sup>1214</sup> For the relationship between the capital and the country in this context see G. Burgel op. cit., 1976, esp., pp.19-45 and pp.363-397. Note also, that, apart from Athens, many Greeks migrated abroad after the war. See J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, pp.200-211.

<sup>1215</sup> See *ibid.*, p.154.

<sup>1216</sup> See G. Burgel op. cit., 1976, p.19.

<sup>1217</sup> J.S. Koliopoulos and T.M. Veremis op. cit., 2004, p.154. Greece now has 10,000,000 people. See *ibid.* Obviously, the statistics exclude the thousands of illegal immigrants. There is also a ‘problem’ concerning people who either refuse to participate in the census or do not have a permanent address, for example the homeless.

<sup>1218</sup> See “Shedio Anasygroteses Protevousis,” in K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.345-355.

<sup>1219</sup> See J. Kairofyllas *I Athena stin Dekatia tou '50*. Athens: Filippotes, 1993, pp.170-171.

<sup>1220</sup> See K.H. Bires *Gia tin Syghroni Athena*. [On Contemporary Athens] Athens, 1957, pp.85-87.

1955 arbitrary and hitherto illegally constructed buildings.<sup>1221</sup> One year later, on the fifth of April 1956, Bires sent a letter to the Minister of Education and complained about the continuous 'inappropriate' treatment of the capital's medieval past.<sup>1222</sup> Three years later, the development of the capital reintroduced the question between the new and the old.

In following the 1959 re-formulation of Bires' earlier plan for the reconstruction of Athens,<sup>1223</sup> the Department of Settlement – itself proposing a new plan concerning the opening of new streets – organized a conference that took place in July 1959.<sup>1224</sup> But the conference was to be about more than the streets that would embellish the capital. During the session of the fifteenth of July,<sup>1225</sup> Georgios Markakis, President of the Department of Settlement, proposed the construction of 'new' and 'bigger' buildings that would replace the old ones, thereby 'smartening up' and 'boosting' the commercial life of Monastiraki Square below the Acropolis.<sup>1226</sup> Moreover, Markakis argued that, if his Department's plan was not realized, the area would surrender to 'age', 'abandonment' and 'decadence'.<sup>1227</sup> Two days later and having already referred to his 1959 plan, Markakis read a letter by Bires.<sup>1228</sup> Whilst Bires was accusing the Department of Settlement for supporting a plan that restrained the excavations around the Acropolis,<sup>1229</sup> Markakis apologised for the 'misunderstanding' and tried to explain how the building heights in the area would not be increased.<sup>1230</sup> But when Markakis had previously attempted to convince his audience that 'decadence' would destroy the commercial life of the area, he had also reminded them that such decadence was 'anti-tourist'.<sup>1231</sup> Yet, however significant in the context of another experience of Athenian modernity, tourism was not the main concern of the majority of the architects and urban planners in the mid-twentieth century. Indeed, the 1950s had to tackle the problem of overpopulation of the capital.

A few months after the July 1959 conference, Konstandinos Doxiadis<sup>1232</sup> argued that whereas Athens had gradually become the gravitas centre of the country,<sup>1233</sup> the city's

<sup>1221</sup> See A. Sokos op. cit., 1969, p.23.

<sup>1222</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1957, pp.123-124.

<sup>1223</sup> In 1959, Bires was the Director of the plan for Athens. For his 1959 plan see K.H. Bires "Ekthesis." [Report] *Technika Chronika*, Issue 179-180, July-August 1959, pp.115-116.

<sup>1224</sup> For the Conference Notes see "Praktika Syzeteseon eis to Technikon Epimeleterion Ellados. Dianoiksis Neon Odon eis tin Kedrikin Periochin tis Protevousis." *Technika Chronika*, Issue 179-180, July-August 1959, pp.12-114.

<sup>1225</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.15-33.

<sup>1226</sup> See G. Markakis' proposal in *ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>1227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1228</sup> For the notes of the session of the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1959 see *ibid.*, pp.34-57.

<sup>1229</sup> See *ibid.*, p.34.

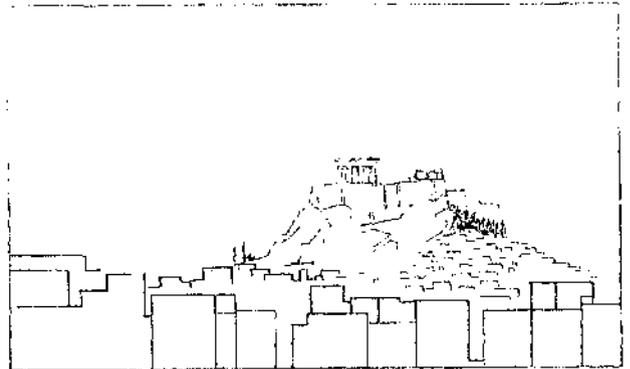
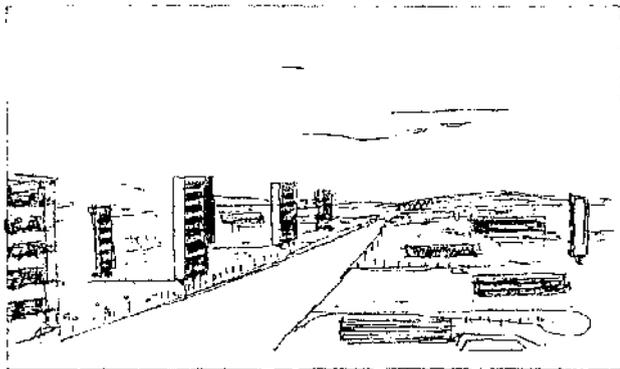
<sup>1230</sup> See *ibid.* The problem with building heights is further discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>1231</sup> See notes of the session of the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, in *Praktika...* op. cit., 1959, p.19. Note here that from the 1950s, tourism in Greece increased by 187%. See J. Kairofyllas *I Athena stin Dekaelia tou '60*. Athens: Filippotes, 1997, pp.153-154.

<sup>1232</sup> See K. Doxiadis *I Protevousa mas kai to Mellon tis*. [Our capital and its Future] Athens, 1960.

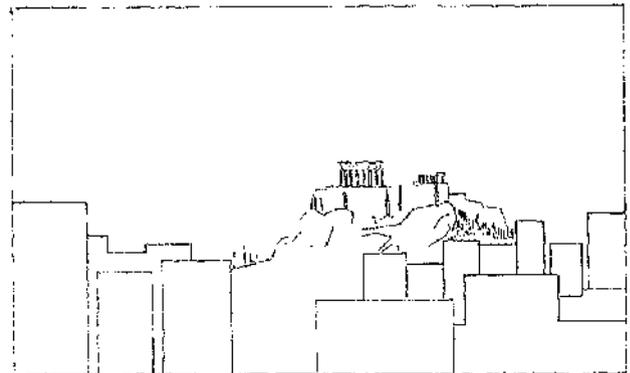
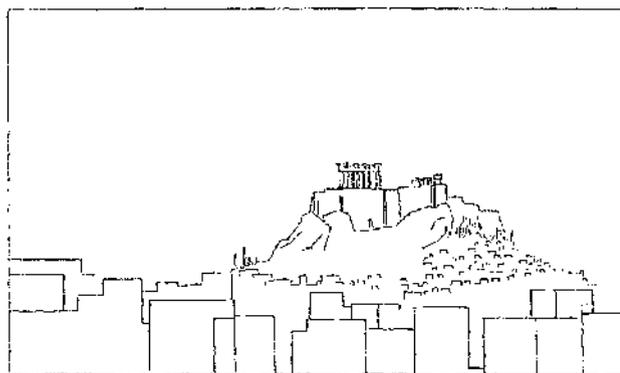
<sup>1233</sup> See *ibid.*, p.44.

ΠΟΙΟ ΔΡΟΜΟ ΠΡΕΠΕΙ ΝΑ ΠΑΡΟΥΜΕ  
WHAT WAY MUST WE FOLLOW



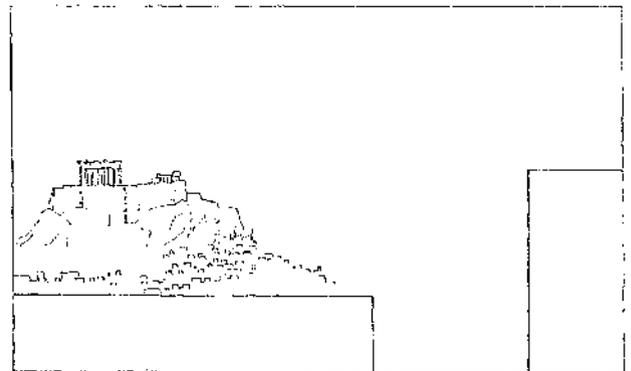
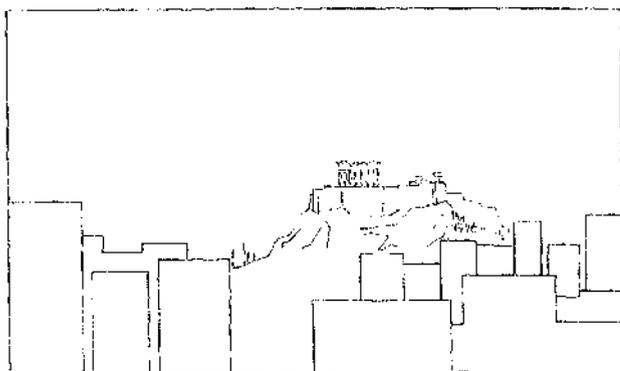
ΚΑΙΝΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΠΡΟΤΕΥΟΥΣΑ  
A NEW CAPITAL

Ή Η ΣΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ;  
OR TODAY'S?



ΟΓΩΣ ΕΙΝΑΙ Η ΠΡΟΤΕΥΟΥΣΑ  
AS IT IS

Ή ΑΛΛΑΓΜΕΝΗ;  
OR CHANGED?



ΕΠΙΔΙΟΡΘΩΣΗ  
REPAIRED

Ή ΑΝΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΗ;  
OR REFORMED?

development since 1834 suggested that Attica, and not Athens, was the real capital of 1960 Greece.<sup>1234</sup> For Doxiadis, the early 1960s Athens had two problems: first, it erroneously believed that it was the capital, and second, it erroneously believed that it was old.<sup>1235</sup> But he also suggested that,

Many of the sufferings of today's [1960s] Athens are due to a topographical archaeolatry. We [the Greeks] think that Greece and Athens will not be saved unless we all cling on the Acropolis [...]. And then we say that our city is ancient and – in the name of antiquity – we attempt to give it a false mask.<sup>1236</sup>

For Doxiadis, the capital of the early 1960s was wearing a 'false mask'. This was partly the mask of the nineteenth century. But the problem persisted. Even Doxiadis had to account for antiquity. In seeking to answer the question 'What way must we follow?',<sup>1237</sup> Doxiadis introduced three pairs of dilemmas. [Fig. XVII] Should the Athenians choose Athens as it was in the late 1950s and early 1960s or should they create a new capital?<sup>1238</sup> Should Athens remain as it was or should it change?<sup>1239</sup> Should it be repaired or reformed?<sup>1240</sup> The only instance where Doxiadis imagined a capital independent of the Acropolis was when he considered the option of a *new* capital. In all other options, Athens engaged in a dialogue with its Sacred Rock. For the first time since Athens' foundation as the capital in 1834, Doxiadis' 1960 proposal maintained that if the Greeks wanted to have a *really new* capital, they would have to build it away from the Acropolis. But however insightful, Doxiadis' proposal was not implemented.

Five years later, the Ministry of Public Works published its 1965 *Master Plan of Athens*,<sup>1241</sup> that effectively divided greater Athens in seven sections: Central Athens, Piraeus, Eastern Athens, North-eastern Athens, Western Athens and North-western Athens.<sup>1242</sup> The Ministry accepted part of Doxiadis' proposal and finally established a 'greater Athens' as the capital. But aside from the administrative division and the geographical re-definition of the capital's boundaries, the Ministry also maintained the

<sup>1234</sup> See *ibid.*, p.12. For the graphic development of Athens and Attica from 1834 to 1960 see *ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>1235</sup> See *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>1236</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>1237</sup> See *ibid.*, p.41.

<sup>1238</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1239</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1240</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1241</sup> See *Master Plan of Athens*. *op. cit.*, 1965.

<sup>1242</sup> See *ibid.*, no page numbers.

cultural significance and priority of the capital's first section – a Central Athens that included both the ancient polis and the city of the nineteenth century.

In having himself already proposed the re-organization of the capital's street network in 1956,<sup>1243</sup> Andreas Sokos' 1969 plan suggested the transfer of military public offices to Kifissos River.<sup>1244</sup> But he, too, maintained that one of the top priorities of his proposal was the 'liberation' of the ancient monuments from the modern city.<sup>1245</sup> Sokos' proposal was not realized and late 1960s Athens remained a site where the ancient monuments suffered from the modern city and where the modern city could not change because of the ancient monuments.

Ten years later, the Alexandros Fotiadis group proposed the "creation of an artificial hill to the east of the Olympeion in order to separate the archaeological site from the sports' facilities to its east."<sup>1246</sup> For Papageorgiou-Venetas, the Fotiadis group's proposal exhibited "a painful lack of respect towards the historic landscape."<sup>1247</sup> Indeed, for Papageorgiou-Venetas, however good its intentions, if the Fotiadis' group plan were realized, it would annihilate the already injured spirit of Athens.<sup>1248</sup> But by the late 1970s it was not only the ancient city that suffered from the new capital.

The nineteenth-century city was largely destroyed in the mid-twentieth century. For the second time since the city's foundation as the capital, the new had to distinguish between the old and the ancient. Only this time, whatever was left from the old was defined as 'historic'. Greece became a member of the European Union – then the European Economic Community – on the first of November 1962.<sup>1249</sup> Pre-EU Greece maintained the cultural significance of classical antiquity. Post-1962 Greece, on the other hand, maintained the historic significance of the time that was designed as the descendant of this antiquity: the nineteenth century.

## X

On the twenty third of March 1929, the government decreed the characterization of the archaeological sector of part of the capital,<sup>1250</sup> thereby successfully maintaining three main objectives: first, the specification of the archaeological site around the Acropolis,<sup>1251</sup> second, the foundation of the Office of Expropriations which would compensate for the

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<sup>1243</sup> See A. Sokos "Dioikitikon Kendron kai Demosioypallelike Polis kai to Kendro ton Athenon." [Administrative Centre and Public Servants' City and the Centre of Athens] in A. Sokos op. cit., 1969.

<sup>1244</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1245</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1246</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 2004, p.50.

<sup>1247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1248</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1249</sup> See J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1997, pp.118-119.

<sup>1250</sup> See Decree "Peri Harakterismou os Arhajiologikou Tmematos tis Poleos ton Athenon." Government Gazette, No.113, 23 March 1929, Vol.A, pp.1085-1091.

<sup>1251</sup> See *ibid.*, p.1085.

demolition of private houses in the archaeological sector,<sup>1252</sup> and third, the allotment of excavations to the American Archaeological School.<sup>1253</sup> As a supplement to the 1929 Decree, on the twenty sixth of April 1930, the government implemented Law 4512, which defined the archaeological sector as the *archaeological centre* of Athens.<sup>1254</sup> A century after Athens became the capital, its antiquity was legally separated from the modern cityscape. This also meant that Athenian antiquity would never again include anything new. Reminiscent of Rochette and Beaton's nineteenth- and twentieth-century experiences, Law 4512 maintained the simultaneous existence of an ancient and a modern cityscape within Athens. But the establishment of an archaeological sector within an already developing modern city required more excavations. In contrast to their grand parents and parents, twentieth-century Athenians did not always welcome the demolitions that these excavations implied. Indeed, whereas by the late 1990s, many plans and proposals were dedicated to the unification of the capital's archaeological sites,<sup>1255</sup> the Decree that followed Law 4215/1930 introduced a debate concerning the historic and aesthetic value of the old that would be destroyed by the excavations.

In having already congratulated the American School for having at least considered the documentation of what its archaeologists were destroying during the 1930s excavations,<sup>1256</sup> Bires condemned the 'light', 'unscientific' and 'unexamined' manner of the excavations in pre-1940s Athens.<sup>1257</sup> For Bires, the demolitions, combined with the excavations, caused two serious problems: first, they abandoned the Acropolis area in an unscen depopulation and in a fake historic image,<sup>1258</sup> and second, they often sacrificed a potentially meaningful old.<sup>1259</sup> Bires warned his contemporaries that if they continued to adopt the nineteenth-century practice of the indiscriminate destruction of the old for the sake of the ancient, and if they abandoned the capital to its illogical twin cityscape, they, too, would be guilty of destroying its history.<sup>1260</sup> The old, argued Bires, is Athens' intermediary history; it is that which can actually reveal if there is a relationship between the ancient and the modern.<sup>1261</sup> But Bires' 'old' was not confined to the remnants of pre-1834 Athens. His old also included the aging capital of the nineteenth century. His contemporaries did not listen to his warnings and by the late twentieth century, his old

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<sup>1252</sup> See *ibid.*, p.1086.

<sup>1253</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.1086-1087.

<sup>1254</sup> See *Government Gazette*, No.127, Vol.A, 28 April 1930, p.996.

<sup>1255</sup> See, for example, I. Demakopoulos "I Athena kai I Enopoiese ton Arhaiologikon tis Horon." [Athens and the Unification of its Archaeological Sites] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 48, September 1993, pp.26-38.

<sup>1256</sup> See K.H. Bires *Athenaikai Meletai*, Vol.3 [Athenian Studies] Athens, 1940, p.14.

<sup>1257</sup> See *ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>1258</sup> See *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>1259</sup> See *ibid.*, p.13.

<sup>1260</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.13-14.

<sup>1261</sup> See *ibid.*, p.14.

Athens was largely destroyed in order to reveal the ancient behind the old as well as to give its place to another – the late twentieth century – new Athens. The character of contemporary Athens was defined in the late 1970s. It was then that the capital was introduced to yet another cityscape: its ‘historic centre’. Like its archaeological centre, the historic centre of Athens is a city within the centre of the Central Athens of today’s capital.

In the late 1970s, the historic cityscape covered a mere 1/100<sup>th</sup> of greater Athens.<sup>1262</sup> In turn, whereas the character of the ancient cityscape was already formed in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, the definition of the historic cityscape was not clarified until the late 1970s.<sup>1263</sup> This problem was the outcome of the combination of the demolition of pre-1834 Athens in the nineteenth century with the destruction of pre-1950s Athens in the second half of the twentieth century. Hence, the definition of the ‘historic’ in today’s Athens does not necessarily point to the old. According to Papageorgiou-Venetas, in order,

For a town or urban sector to be regarded as a ‘historic settlement’ it must possess:

a) an original and characteristic urban structure (originality in the composition);

b) significant architectural qualities (architectural monuments or interesting buildings) whose structure points to a marked degree of continuity of the urban development of the settlement (aesthetic and historic value of the composition) [and],

c) a continuing social life; i.e., some form of civic activity, which presupposes the existence of an active population (‘living’ condition of the composition).<sup>1264</sup>

The historic centre of Athens was partly defined according to these prerequisites. On the twenty first of September 1979, the government decreed the “Characterization of the Traditional Sector of the City of Athens – The Historical Centre,”<sup>1265</sup> and identified the historical sector with the twin cityscapes of pre-1970s Athens. In other words, the historic centre of Athens comprised archaeological centre and the remnants of nineteenth-century old Athens. But the circular arrangement of the cityscapes of contemporary Athens also created another, ‘miscellaneous’ cityscape in central Athens. Whereas it was considered a

<sup>1262</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1971, p.51.

<sup>1263</sup> See E. Papakonstandinou “Yparhei kai Allos Tropos na Doume tin Athena.” [There is Another Way to Approach Athens] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 48, September 1993, p.21.

<sup>1264</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1971, p.28.

<sup>1265</sup> See Decree “Peri Harakterismou os Paradosiakou Tmematos ton Athenon.” *Government Gazette*, No.564, 13 October 1979, Vol.Α, pp.6549-6556. The Historic Centre is the grey area in our Main Map, Front Side.

'disgraceful' site in the nineteenth century,<sup>1266</sup> the Plaka – the neighbourhoods below the Acropolis – is now often defined as Athens' 'pride',<sup>1267</sup> itself emerging as the historic centre of the historic centre of 1970s Central Athens.<sup>1268</sup> But then again this may only be the tourist or the official interpretation of today's Athens. The heart of the city whose modernity and passage through time we are exploring here may beat elsewhere, away from the Acropolis and closer to the dream of a nineteenth-century 'glorious' capital.

## XI

Like the nineteenth-century plans for a modern Athens, the twentieth-century proposals maintained the bond between the ancient and the new. But contrary to the nineteenth-century plans, the twentieth-century proposals gradually suggested that, albeit related, the ancient and the new are different elements of the same city. We cannot pretend to have exhausted the nineteenth- or twentieth-century plans for the capital. The proposals that we have discussed illustrate how, in gradually distancing the modern city from the Acropolis, the plans for the capital celebrated a modernity that has come to represent the best in the Athenian past. Above all, the twentieth century maintained that the capital of the second half of the nineteenth century is the rightful descendant of its chosen antiquity. Hence, modern antiquity became Athens' antiquity and nineteenth-century modernity became Athens' past. The new of the nineteenth century has aged and suffered the same fate that it had prescribed for a past that it deemed useless. But it has not died. In becoming 'history', it has maintained its eternity in Athens. And it has also maintained the representation of Athens as another modernity, one that simultaneously loves and despises itself.

The Cultural-Historic Centre of twenty-first-century Athens is divided in twelve sectors.<sup>1269</sup> In including sites such as the Acropolis, the Cerameicus, the Athenian Trilogy, the Plaka, the Zappion and the Olympeion, these twelve sectors represent antiquity and the nineteenth century as equal parts of the same history. In this respect, the nineteenth century enjoys the same status as antiquity. But few will argue that the Parliament – Otto's former palace – is superior to the Acropolis. Here we abandon the once upon a time polis whose glory inspired the foundation of a new Athens in the nineteenth century and go in search of

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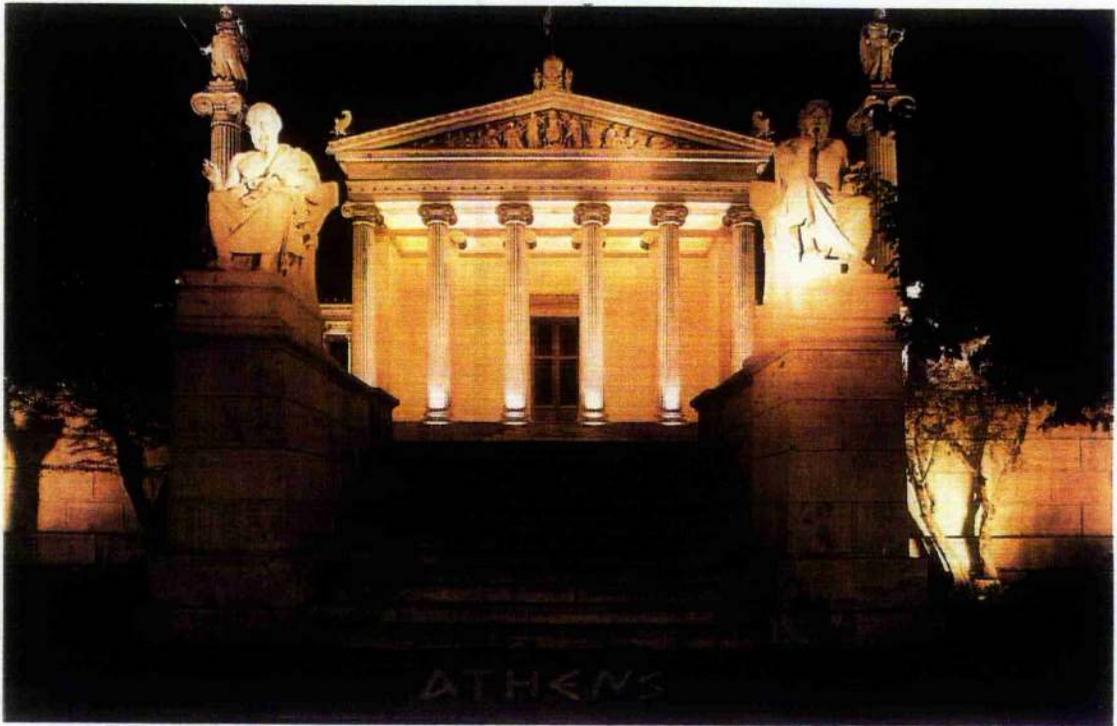
<sup>1266</sup> This may have been partly so because of the 'Anafiotika' – now a protected area – the area, that is, that concentrated the houses of the people who came from the island of Anafe in order to work as builders in Otto's Athens. The Anafiotika below the Acropolis are characteristic of island architecture of the nineteenth century: small white houses with coloured window frames and doors.

<sup>1267</sup> See E. Papakonstandinou *op. cit.*, 1993, p.23. Note here that, although the home and meeting point of many Athenians, the Plaka is Athens' primary tourist destination, literally after the Acropolis.

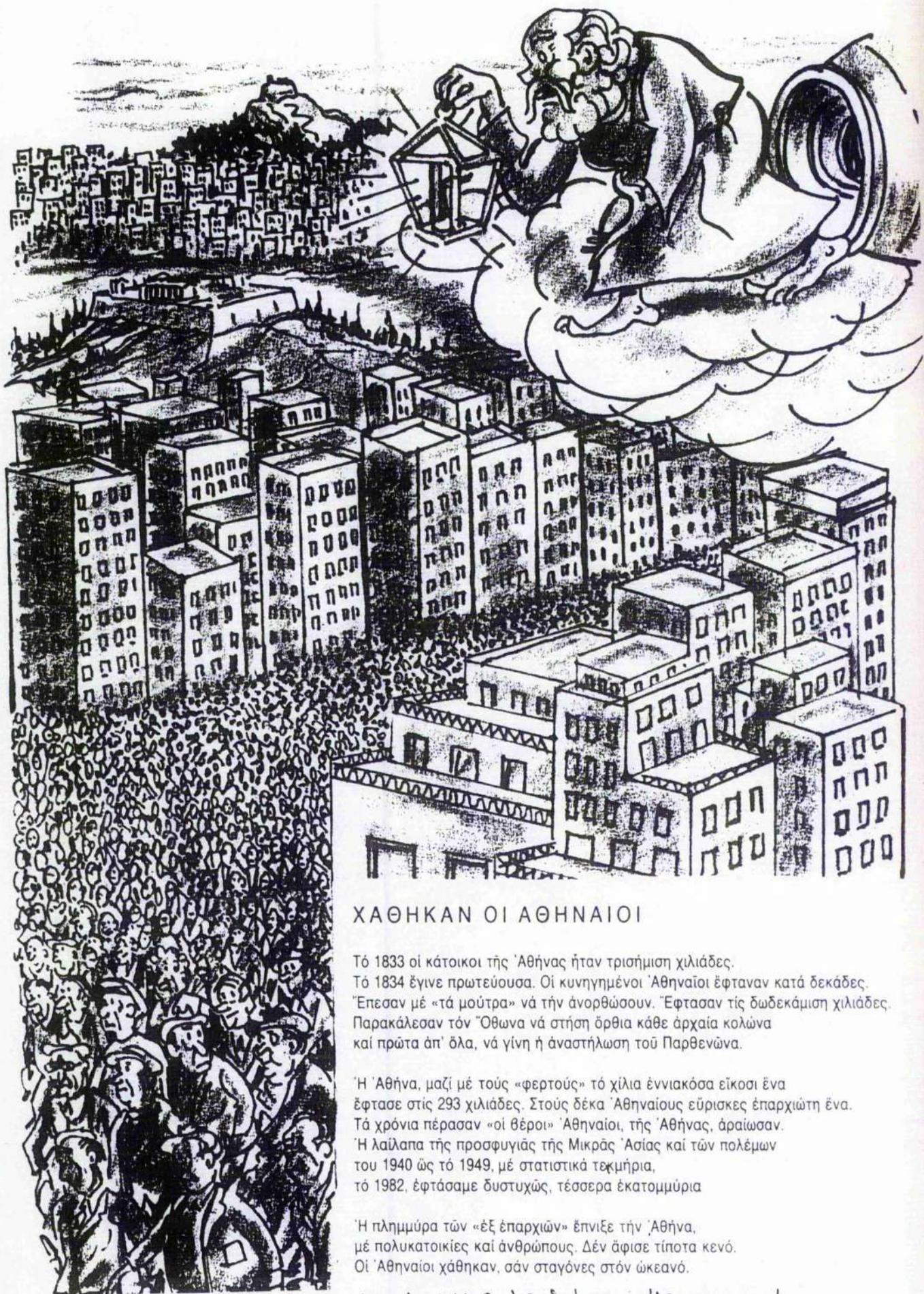
<sup>1268</sup> See, for example, *TA ATJHNAIKA*. (Special Issue) "Gia tin Soteria tis Plakas." [For the Salvation of the Plaka] Issue 69, April 1978 and *TA ATJHNAIKA*. (Special Issue) "Ta Istorika Kendra Romes kai Athenas – Plaka – Omilies." [The Historic Centres of Rome and Athens – Plaka – Omilies] Issue 65, December 1976, pp.1-21.

<sup>1269</sup> For the 12 sectors see A. Papageorgiou-Venetas *op. cit.*, 1994, pp.131-201.

the capital whose loss and re-discovery lies in the heart of the experience of the dialectic between the new and the old in the Athens that we live in today.



xviii The Academy of Athens



## ΧΑΘΗΚΑΝ ΟΙ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ

Τό 1833 οί κάτοικοι τής 'Αθήνας ήταν τρισήμιση χιλιάδες.  
Τό 1834 έγινε πρωτεύουσα. Οί κυνηγημένοι 'Αθηναίοι έφταναν κατά δεκάδες.  
'Επεσαν μέ «τά μούτρα» νά τήν άνορθώσουν. 'Εφτασαν τής δωδεκάμιση χιλιάδες.  
Παρακάλεσαν τόν 'Οθωνα νά στήση όρθια κάθε άρχαία κολώνα  
καί πρώτα άπ' όλα, νά γίνη ή άναστήλωση του Παρθενώνα.

'Η 'Αθήνα, μαζί μέ τούς «φερτούς» τό χιλία έννιακόσα είκοσι ένα  
έφτασε στις 293 χιλιάδες. Στους δέκα 'Αθηναίους εύρισκες έπαρχιώτη ένα.  
Τά χρόνια πέρασαν «οί βέροι» 'Αθηναίοι, τής 'Αθήνας, άραιώσαν.  
'Η λαίλαπα τής προσφυγιάς τής Μικράς 'Ασίας καί τών πολέμων  
του 1940 ως τό 1949, μέ στατιστικά τεκμήρια,  
τό 1982, έφτάσαμε δυστυχώς, τέσσερα έκατομμύρια

'Η πλημμύρα τών «έξ έπαρχιών» έπνιξε τήν 'Αθήνα,  
μέ πολυκατοικίες καί άνθρώπους. Δέν άφισε τίποτα κενό.  
Οί 'Αθηναίοι χάθηκαν, σάν σταγόνες στόν ώκεανό.

XIX. Athenians have disappeared

## Chapter 7: New Athens or Modern Athens Demolished

*"Architecture can be found in the telephone and in the Parthenon."*<sup>1270</sup>

*"If not plainly hideous, these [cement] buildings show, indisputably, a corruption of taste. In my opinion, architecture has failed humanity, at least in my own country [Greece]."*<sup>1271</sup>

*"The divine Plato and grandpa Socrates, in front of the Academy in Panepistemiou Street, are looking at us, looking after us; when we go, they will look after our children. They are Athens' family."*<sup>1272</sup>

### I

The plans for Athens gradually betrayed a shift from antiquity to modernity. The buildings of Athens that we discuss here explain how this modernity triumphs from the nineteenth century to-day. Albeit largely demolished now, the capital of the nineteenth century survives in certain buildings that have the power to illustrate how, whilst pretending to highlight antiquity, the nineteenth century replaced the city's pre-1834 past and itself emerged as the past. The building of nineteenth-century Athens was not entirely unregulated. Rather, the arbitrary manner of building that actively forced different governments to adjust their plans was predominantly related to some of the Athenians' private dwellings. In contrast to this unplanned and fortuitous aspect of the capital's development, the greatest part of the morphology of the city's centre realized the nineteenth-century dream of an ancient-looking modern metropolis. Albeit constantly surrounded by an often unregulated city, nineteenth-century central Athens with its bourgeois mansions and its modern monuments provided the means for the systematization of the modern ancient image of the city as past. Later, this process was complemented by the construction of a street network that directly reminded the 'world' that this was the city of Pericles, Phidias, Aristotle, and the Goddess Athena.<sup>1273</sup> Nineteenth-century central Athens aimed at the construction of modernity in the image of a re-defined past. Contrary to its imaginary that suggested a spatially unlimited and huge Athens, the capital of the

<sup>1270</sup> Le Corbusier *Towards a New Architecture*. F. Etchells tr., and Introduction, New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1986, p.15.

<sup>1271</sup> S.V. Skopelitis op. cit., 1981, no page numbers.

<sup>1272</sup> E. Bistika "Mia Episkepsi stin Giagia Athena." [A Visit to Grandma Athens] "K" – Kathimerini. "Athena – Mia Poli pou Allazei." [Athens – A Changing City]. Issue 44, 28 March 2004, p.95. Note here that, in strengthening Bistika's argument concerning 'family', the Greek word for divine [theios] also means uncle. I chose 'divine' because, in Greek, it is an adjective often used to define Plato. For the statues see Fig. XVIII.

<sup>1273</sup> The city that we will discuss here corresponds to the grey area of the map, which draws the borders of nineteenth-century Athens. See Main Map, Front Side.

nineteenth century was a small city. And yet, according to its imaginary, that small Athens was meant to represent the polis that gave birth to all cities.

The plans for Athens maintained a spatial proximity between the Acropolis and the nineteenth century. In turn, the building of specific parts of the city's centre validated this proximity by means of the formation of two more bridges that, this time, connected the city with an imaginary beyond the Parthenon. The first bridge included a complex of key symbolic neoclassical monuments and the second resulted in the naming of streets that ultimately revived not the memory, but rather the myths of ancient Athens. From 1834 onwards, the 'language game'<sup>1274</sup> behind the building of modern Athens usually played with myths. But themselves distorted by modernity, myths were not what they used to be.<sup>1275</sup> When confronted with modernity, myths replaced history, and often harboured ideology.<sup>1276</sup> From the nineteenth century onwards, new Athens was associated with a specifically urban beauty. The nineteenth-century search for beauty that underlined the building of cities as monuments and works of art also implied a beauty contest between Europe's new capitals.<sup>1277</sup> From 1834 onwards, Athens has sometimes been conceived as partly Berlin, partly Vienna, and at other times as partly Paris. Nineteenth-century Athens competed against its own imaginary: it had to be worthy of its 'glorious' name and become Athens once more. In turn, the capital of the second half of the twentieth century competed against the nineteenth-century capital that was now depicted as having succeeded in becoming Athens. Beautiful or not, the capital that has dominated our discussion of Athenian modernity is now largely destroyed. Its sanitized Acropolis outlived the new of the nineteenth century.

## II

In contrast to the overall lack of contestation, in the nineteenth century, concerning the demolition of pre-1834 old Athens, the mid-twentieth century gave the impetus for the emergence of a generation of Athenians who, in referring to the city as '*our Athens*',<sup>1278</sup> did contest the demolition of the post-1834 old capital. The old Athens that we explore here is the new capital of Kleanthes and Schaubert, of Klenze, Kaftantzoglou, and the Hansen brothers, Christian and Theophil. By the mid-twentieth century, their new capital had become the old city to which Athenians pledged loyalty. Beginning in the 1950s, and for a period of more than twenty years, there was a tension between Athenians and

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<sup>1274</sup> For the application of Wittgenstein's 'language games' in the context of the modern metropolis see D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, pp.181-182.

<sup>1275</sup> For the uses and meaning of myths in antiquity see M.I. Finley op. cit., 1965, pp.281-302.

<sup>1276</sup> For the relationship between myth and ideology see B. Halpern " 'Myth' and 'Ideology' in Modern Usage." *History and Theory*, Vol.1, No.2, 1961, pp.129-149.

<sup>1277</sup> See, for example, D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, esp., pp.159-253.

<sup>1278</sup> See, for example, N. Stathatos "I Athena Mas." [Our Athens] *TA ATHENAÏKA*, Issue 78, December 1981, pp.23-24.

'strangers' that soon became a battle between the old and the new generations of the capital. In 1984, for instance, on the occasion of the capital's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Society of Old Picturesque Plaka<sup>1279</sup> published a brochure in which its members complained about the 'neo-barbarians' who were destroying 'their' Athens in a 'parvenu jamboree'.<sup>1280</sup> [Fig. XIX] Similarly, another contemporary publication provided a profile of the city's new inhabitants:

Burdened with its memories, the first thing that today's city-stroller feels before anything else is embarrassment. The [observation] is incontestable. Athens does not exist [...]. This city does not concern its inhabitants. They are completely indifferent towards it. Neither do they know it, nor do they want to know it, and nor do they suspect how they could [know it].<sup>1281</sup>

Nevertheless, the question of knowledge – or potential lack of it – that might in part explain the demolition of the majority of the nineteenth-century city is related to a number of other factors. First, the unprecedented urbanization of the 1950s;<sup>1282</sup> second, the State's weakness, unwillingness and shocking failure to protect Athens' modern history;<sup>1283</sup> third, the rich and parvenu sacrifice of history at the altar of profit;<sup>1284</sup> and fourth, the uncontrollable "bulimia of the [new] settlers."<sup>1285</sup> In the end, as Demetrios Gerondas, a keen observer of the city, argued in 1973, "oldness [was] still sacrificed beside antiquity."<sup>1286</sup> It was not only the new settlers who destroyed old Athens. The governments and some Athenians themselves assisted the demolitions.

Although it is probably true that whereas pre-1834 Athens was destroyed in order to be replaced with a more 'authentic' Athenian cityscape and that post-1834 Athens was demolished in order to provide housing for the new population and a greater income for the rich and parvenu – and in so doing largely dismissing the question of beauty – both of

<sup>1279</sup> Plaka, the part of the city directly below the Acropolis was the only area of the nineteenth-century capital to partly survive the demolitions. As we will see in the conclusion, it now belongs to the 'historic' district of Athens.

<sup>1280</sup> Society of Old Picturesque Plaka *I Athena Mus*. [Our Athens] Athens, 1984, p.11.

<sup>1281</sup> K. Spanos ed., Feuilcton: *ATTIKA KAI ATHENAIKA*. "150 Iironia Athena". [150 Years Athens] Year 1, Issue 1, Athens, 1985, p.58.

<sup>1282</sup> See J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1993, pp.19-22.

<sup>1283</sup> See J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1997, pp.160-162.

<sup>1284</sup> Many houses were demolished with the full consent of the owners who exchanged their land for a number of apartments or, sometimes, for an entire multi-storey public tenement. See D.A. Gerondas "I Apsihi Athena." [The Soul-less Athens] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 72, April 1979, pp.58-60.

<sup>1285</sup> See D.A. Gerondas "Skepseis Gyro apo tin Poli." [Thoughts on the City] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 2, December 1955, pp.52-56.

<sup>1286</sup> D.A. Gerondas "Ta Arhondika Hanondai me tin Arhondia." [The Mansions are Lost along Nobleness] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 56, December 1973, p.47.

these old cities were deemed to be of lesser historical significance than antiquity. After all, despite the demolitions in the city, the Acropolis was restored and its surrounding area excavated for the greatest part of the twentieth century. Moreover, like the later nineteenth-century disdain for the old, the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s were also characterized by a lack of documentation of the post-1834 city that was being destroyed.<sup>1287</sup> And yet, contrary to the flattening of old, post-1834 Athens, legal measures were supposed to have provided for this problem. On the second of August 1950, the government implemented Law 1469 “On the Protection of a Special category of Buildings and Works of Art Subsequent to 1830.”<sup>1288</sup> Article 5, Paragraph 1 of the Law maintained that post-1830 buildings *might* be classified in the same category with the pre-1830 ones.<sup>1289</sup> As with Mauer’s Law on antiquities, this optional provision of Law 1469 meant that there were no objective criteria as to what constituted a historic building. Thirty years later, on the twenty-fourth of October 1980, the government implemented a Decree “On the Characterization of Preservable Buildings within the Planned Sector of the Plaka.”<sup>1290</sup> On the one hand, the implementation of this Decree proves how, despite Law 1469, the new demolitions had assumed such a speed and had covered such an extensive area that they finally threatened the slopes of the Acropolis. On the other hand, both the Decree and Law 1469 attempted – however unsuccessfully – to protect a category of buildings that previous legislation had excluded.<sup>1291</sup> In other words, whereas they did everything in their power to protect classical antiquity, the legislators of nineteenth-century Athens did not provide for the preservation of their own new city. In assuming that their new Athens would live forever, the fathers of modern Athens did not foresee its future demise, thereby offering us a striking example of modernity’s arrogant and illusionary claim to what Simmel identified as an eternal present. By the late 1970s, the contrast between a ‘beautiful’ old city that was lost and the ‘ugly’ new city that had replaced it led some to argue that late twentieth-century, “Athens [had] degenerated into an urban-planning monster; in order to become a proper city, it must be completely demolished and re-built from the beginning.”<sup>1292</sup> To the disappointment of many, this ‘monster’ was never demolished but is the Athens that we

<sup>1287</sup> Alongside its implications for historical truth and ‘collective memory’, in general, this lack of documentation has created an irresolvable problem for researchers who attempt an understanding of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Athens. In this context see M. Bires *Athenaike Arhitektonike. 1875-1925*. [Athenian Architecture. 1875-1925] Athens: Melissa, 2003, pp.7-8.

<sup>1288</sup> See Law 1469/1950 “Peri Prostatias Eidikes Kategorias Oikodomematon kai Ergon Tehnes Metagenesteron tou 1830.” *Government Gazette*, No.169, 7 August 1950, Vol.A, pp.866-868.

<sup>1289</sup> See *ibid.*, p.867.

<sup>1290</sup> See Decree 24 October 1980 “Peri Harakterismou os Diatereteon Ktirion Keimenon endos tis Periohes Plakas tou Rymotomikou Shediou.” *Government Gazette*, No.617, 8 November 1980, Vol.A, p.6856.

<sup>1291</sup> The state’s official protection of neoclassical architecture began after 1975 and was related to the definition of the historical centre of the capital. See D. Philippides *Istoria tis Ellenikes Arhitektonikes kai Poleodomias*. Vol.4. [History of Greek Architecture and Urban Planning] Patra: Hellenic Open University, 2001, p.79.

<sup>1292</sup> K. Kazantzis, Speech for the Society of the Athenians, *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 69, April 1979, p.1.

now experience as our contemporary modern capital. As far as modernity is concerned, this new city that we experience today is not radically different from the one built in the nineteenth century. But for the generation that was born in the capital before the 1970s, today's Athens has failed its mission to realize what it was reborn to become.

### III

The destruction of Otto's new city replaced the beauty contest between the city and its imaginary with a competition between the 'victim' and the result of the demolitions.<sup>1293</sup> In general, old Athens was, and is, perceived as a more beautiful city than the new one. Although Athens was once again competing against itself, this mid-twentieth century antagonism was between two cityscapes, both of which were often inhabited by the same generation. In drawing from a tradition of 'Athenian Authors'<sup>1294</sup> that goes back to Kambouroglou, Athens now possesses an astonishing production of writings considering its pre-1950s past.<sup>1295</sup> Nevertheless, from the exploration of the socio-political life of the city from 1834 to the mid-twentieth century,<sup>1296</sup> to a more focused analysis of its social spaces,<sup>1297</sup> and from a detailed description of the customs and character of 'old' Athenians,<sup>1298</sup> to dwelling in specific areas of the capital,<sup>1299</sup> the specific nature and degree of the contrast between the old and the new city are varied in such works. Whereas for

<sup>1293</sup> For the difference between a post- and a pre-1950s Athens see Fig. XX and Fig. XXI.

<sup>1294</sup> In Greek this corresponds to 'Athenaiografoi', which literally means authors of Athens, i.e., those who write about Athens.

<sup>1295</sup> The number of writings on old, nineteenth-century Athens is daunting. The sources that we use point only to a sample and by no means do they pretend an exhaustive list.

<sup>1296</sup> See J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1997, J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1993, J. Kairofyllas *I Romandike Athena*. [Romantic Athens]. Athens: Filippotes, 1987, J. Kairofyllas *I Athena tis Belle Époque*. [Athens of the Belle Époque] Athens: Filippotes, 1985(b), K. Demetriades *Enas Aionas Romandismou*. [A Century of Romanticism] Athens: Estia, no date, K. Demetriades *Stin Palia Athena*. [In Old Athens] Athens: Estia, 1965, L. Miheli *I Athena se Tonous Elassones*. [Athens in Minor Tones] Athens: Dromena, M. Markogianni *Maties stin Athena pou Efyge*. Vol.1. [Glances at Athens that is Gone] Athens: Filippotes, 1995, M. Markogianni *Maties stin Athena pou Efyge*. Vol.2. Athens: Filippotes, 1996, and A.S. Verveniotis *I Athena tou 1900*. [Athens in the 1900s] Athens: Verveniotis Sholi, 1963.

<sup>1297</sup> See M. Skaltsa *Koinonike Zoe kai Demosioi Horoi Koinonikon Synathroiseon stin Athena tou Dekatouenatou Aiona*. [Social Life and Public Spaces in Nineteenth-Century Athens] Thessalonike, 1983, P. Kyriazis "Filologika Kafeneia tis Palias Athenas." [Literary Cafés of Old Athens] *ISTORIA*, No.253, July 1989, pp.30-34, K. Kazantzis "Palia Athenaika Stekia." [Old Athenian Haunts] in S. Filippotes and J. Kairofyllas eds., *Athenaiko Emerologio – 2004*. [Athenian Calendar – 2004] Year 15, Athens: Filippotes, 2004, and A. Skounbourde *Kafeneia tis Palias Athenas*. [Cafés of Old Athens] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Centre, 2002.

<sup>1298</sup> See J. Kairofyllas *I Athena kai oi Athenaiotai*. 2 Vols. [Athens and the Athenians] Athens: Filippotes, 1983, J. Kairofyllas *I Athena kai oi Athenaiotissas*. [Athens and Athenian Women] Athens: Filippotes, 1982, C. Reppas "Palia Athena: Psychagogia kai Ethe." [Old Athens: Entertainment and Mores] *ISTORIA*, No.162, December 1981, pp.88-93 and V. Attikos *Efthymes Eikones tis Palias Athenas*. [Joyful Images of Old Athens] Athens, 1961.

<sup>1299</sup> See Feuilleton: *7 IMERES* [Seven Days]: "Mets – Ardettos. Aroma Palias Athenas." [Mets – Ardettos. Scent of Old Athens]. *Kathimerini*, Sunday, 4 September 2005, 1. Kandyles "I Kendrike Perioche tis Athenas opos ti Gnorisame Kata ta Prota Hronia tou Aiona." [The Central Area of Athens as we have Known it During the First Years of the {20<sup>th</sup>} Century] *TA ATHENAIIKA*, Issue 82, March 1986, pp.1-19, and A. Andonopoulos "I Neotera Polis ton Athenon." [The New City of Athens] *TA ATHENAIIKA*, Issue 64, September 1976, pp.44-50.

some, old Athens is completely lost,<sup>1300</sup> others who “do not belong in the category of those who find all old things beautiful and all new things ugly,”<sup>1301</sup> maintain that, despite the demolitions, the city is still capable of beauty.<sup>1302</sup> For this latter group, history cannot be completely destroyed. The belief in this effect was often determined by the degree of one’s love for the city. Without necessarily falsifying Andreas Vlassopoulos’ belief that, “nowhere in the world do people love their city like the Athenians,”<sup>1303</sup> not all Athenians loved the same city. Different generations of Athenians have loved their different, albeit sometimes ugly, Athens.

Despite being appalled by the demolitions of the nineteenth-century Athens and the new settlers’ indifference towards the city, John Kairofyllas is amongst the few who still refuse to condemn the present altogether. In describing the youth of the 1960s, for instance, he has argued that they were “thinking, dreaming, and making plans.”<sup>1304</sup> In contrast, Demetrios Skouzes,<sup>1305</sup> whose principal interest concerned the aesthetic contrast between antiquity and the twentieth-century concrete buildings, was more than willing to blame the city’s degradation on its younger inhabitants. For Skouzes, twentieth-century Athens, and Greece, suffered from two enemies: the left and the, presumably ‘morally decadent’ youth. Whereas he readily attributed the former ‘problem’ to “silly foreign ways,”<sup>1306</sup> he described the latter in relation to his conviction that “people of old times were incomparably better and more spiritually elevated than today’s flighty and doddering youth.”<sup>1307</sup> For Skouzes, post-1950s Athens was a monstrous city that had forgotten about the ‘good old times’.<sup>1308</sup> But the old times were not always as beautiful as Skouzes assumed.

#### IV

Contrary to the dominant perception of a beautiful Athens that was destroyed in the mid-twentieth century, from 1834 onwards, the question of the modern capital’s glory was heavily contested. The Swiss traveller Pierre Charles Schaub,<sup>1309</sup> for instance, wrote in his

<sup>1300</sup> See A. Tavoularis “I Athena pou Hasame.” [Athens that we Have Lost]. *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 72, April 1979, pp.1-17.

<sup>1301</sup> V. Konstandinopoulos “I Athena tou Htes kai tou Simera.” [Athens of Yesterday and of Today] *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 68, December 1977, p.5.

<sup>1302</sup> See T. Garios *Athens kai Pali Athens*. [Athens and Again Athens]. Athens: Y.V. Vasdekis, 1984.

<sup>1303</sup> A. Vlassopoulos *Athens mou Palia*. [My Old Athens] Athens, 1982.

<sup>1304</sup> J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1997, p.334.

<sup>1305</sup> See D. Skouzes *I Athena pou Efyge*. Vol.2. [Athens that is Gone] Athens, 1970, and D. Skouzes *I Athena pou Efyge*. Vol.3, Athens, 1964.

<sup>1306</sup> D. Skouzes *I Athena pou Efyge*. Vol.1, Athens, 1961, p.175.

<sup>1307</sup> *Ibid.*, p.187.

<sup>1308</sup> See D. Skouzes *Nostalgies*. Athens, 1975. Skouzes’ description of the ‘good old times’ is largely limited to a description of the social life of the aristocracy and the upper-middle classes.

<sup>1309</sup> For P.C. Schaub’s three-month visit to Athens see K.D. Mertzios “Ai Athenai tou 1840.” Part I. [Athens in 1840] *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 1, 1955(a), pp.12-18, K.D. Mertzios “Ai Athenai tou 1840.” Part II. *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 2, December 1955(b), pp.30-34, and K.D. Mertzios “Ai Athenai tou 1840.” Part III, *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 3, March-April 1956, pp.23-29.

journal of 1840 Athens: "if Pericles came today to visit his mother city, which he worked so hard to smarten up, he would certainly call these new architects barbarians."<sup>1310</sup> For Schaub, therefore, the architects of modern Athens were the neo-barbarians who unjustifiably claimed to be the worthy descendants of Pericles polis. Twenty years later, Spyridon Filles<sup>1311</sup> argued that, despite the common water famine<sup>1312</sup> and the dust that covered the city,<sup>1313</sup> Athens' central streets, for example Panepistemiou, were "adorned with beautiful buildings."<sup>1314</sup> Fourteen years later, in 1874, John M. Francis,<sup>1315</sup> a former United States' Minister to Greece, was delighted with Athens. In his attempt to praise the 'progress' of the modern capital, Francis exaggerated the conditions of pre-1834 Athens and – erroneously – argued that by the time of its liberation, it was "reduced to a mere hamlet, containing less than one thousand inhabitants."<sup>1316</sup> Even more interestingly, however, Francis also commented that, "in the peculiarity of its edifices,"<sup>1317</sup> Athens bore "a striking resemblance to German cities."<sup>1318</sup> In the meantime, whilst new Athens was becoming increasingly German, other travellers to the land insisted on antiquity. Charles de Moy, for instance, a French diplomat and Ambassador to Rome, Constantinople and Athens from 1880 to 1887,<sup>1319</sup> argued that,

Only in the land of Attica can one enter this clarity. In the Vatican, in the Louvre, in all the museums of the world one confronts a many times false splendour; but the luminous sun does not shine outside the Acropolis of Athens.<sup>1320</sup>

Himself fascinated with antiquity and willing to overlook the city's problems, Eduardo Scarfoglio, who stayed in the capital for two years, from 1887 to 1889,<sup>1321</sup> maintained that the dust of Athens, about which both its visitors and its dwellers often complained, was

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<sup>1310</sup> P.C. Schaub cited in *ibid.*, 1995(a), p.13.

<sup>1311</sup> See S.P. Filles "Ai Athenai tou 1860." [Athens in 1860] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 34, September 1966, pp.35-40.

<sup>1312</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>1313</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1314</sup> *Ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>1315</sup> See J.M. Francis "Address. Subject: Greece as it is." *Journal of the American Geographers of New York*, Vol.6, 1874, pp.138-168.

<sup>1316</sup> *Ibid.*, p.139.

<sup>1317</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1318</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1319</sup> See C. de Moy "Lettres Athéniennes." D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 52, September 1972, pp.46-47.

<sup>1320</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47.

<sup>1321</sup> See E. Scarfoglio "Athenai." [Athens] D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 35, Christmas 1966, pp.4-8.

"the dust of heroes."<sup>1322</sup> A few years later, George Horton, an American diplomat,<sup>1323</sup> suggested that 'real' Athens was to be found in the Athenians' dwellings behind the city's central streets,<sup>1324</sup> and that the capital was actually two cities, each defined by climate and by the people's habits and 'qualities'.<sup>1325</sup> Whilst, for Horton, the Athenians experienced both summer and winter Athens,<sup>1326</sup> travellers, diplomats, and "those who [sought] mild climates"<sup>1327</sup> usually found 'refuge' in the latter which was a 'European Athens'.<sup>1328</sup> Nevertheless Horton's 'real' Athens with its "classical dust"<sup>1329</sup> was to be found outside the modern cityscape. Hence, he proclaimed that,

When this big sphere [the moon] is calmly floating over Hemettus, gently caressing the tops of the ancient temples, smoothing the darkness between the Parthenon's columns, and touching the night's breath over the silver sea you know that you are really in Athens, the only eternal city.<sup>1330</sup>

Whereas Athenian and other Greek authors often attempted to praise the capital's 'progress', some foreigners insisted on their disguised monomania with respect to antiquity. The foreigners' interest in the modern city, therefore, was almost always related to its 'eternal antiquity'. Paradoxically, the more modern Athens developed, the more this attitude increased. Half a century after Horton, on the aftermath of World War II that had devastated Greece and Athens, the French author Noel Guy's<sup>1331</sup> description of 1948 Athens excluded the modern city altogether. In defining it as "the city of marbles,"<sup>1332</sup> for instance, he wrote that, "the centuries have passed without corrupting anything of Athens' radiance."<sup>1333</sup> Athens he maintained, "always remains Athens."<sup>1334</sup> As far as travellers were concerned, Athens remained the classical polis. Athens remained Athens even a century after it was founded as the capital.

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<sup>1322</sup> Ibid., Ftn, 1, p.4.

<sup>1323</sup> See G. Horton *Syghrone Athena (1897)*. [Modern Athens (1897)] A. Dema tr., Athens: Patakis, 1997.

<sup>1324</sup> See *ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>1325</sup> See G. Horton *op. cit.*, 1997, p.15.

<sup>1326</sup> *Ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>1327</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>1328</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1329</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

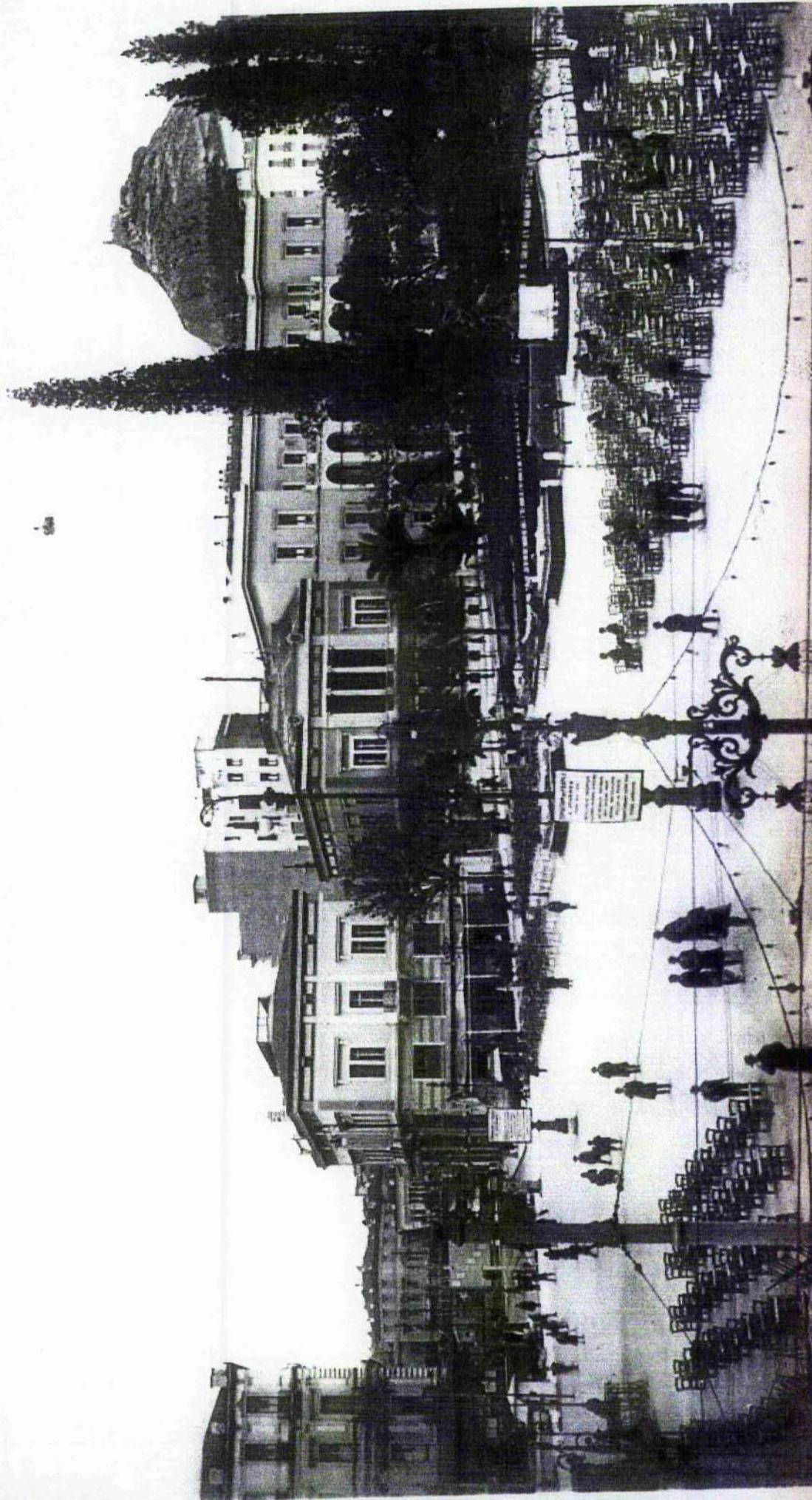
<sup>1330</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

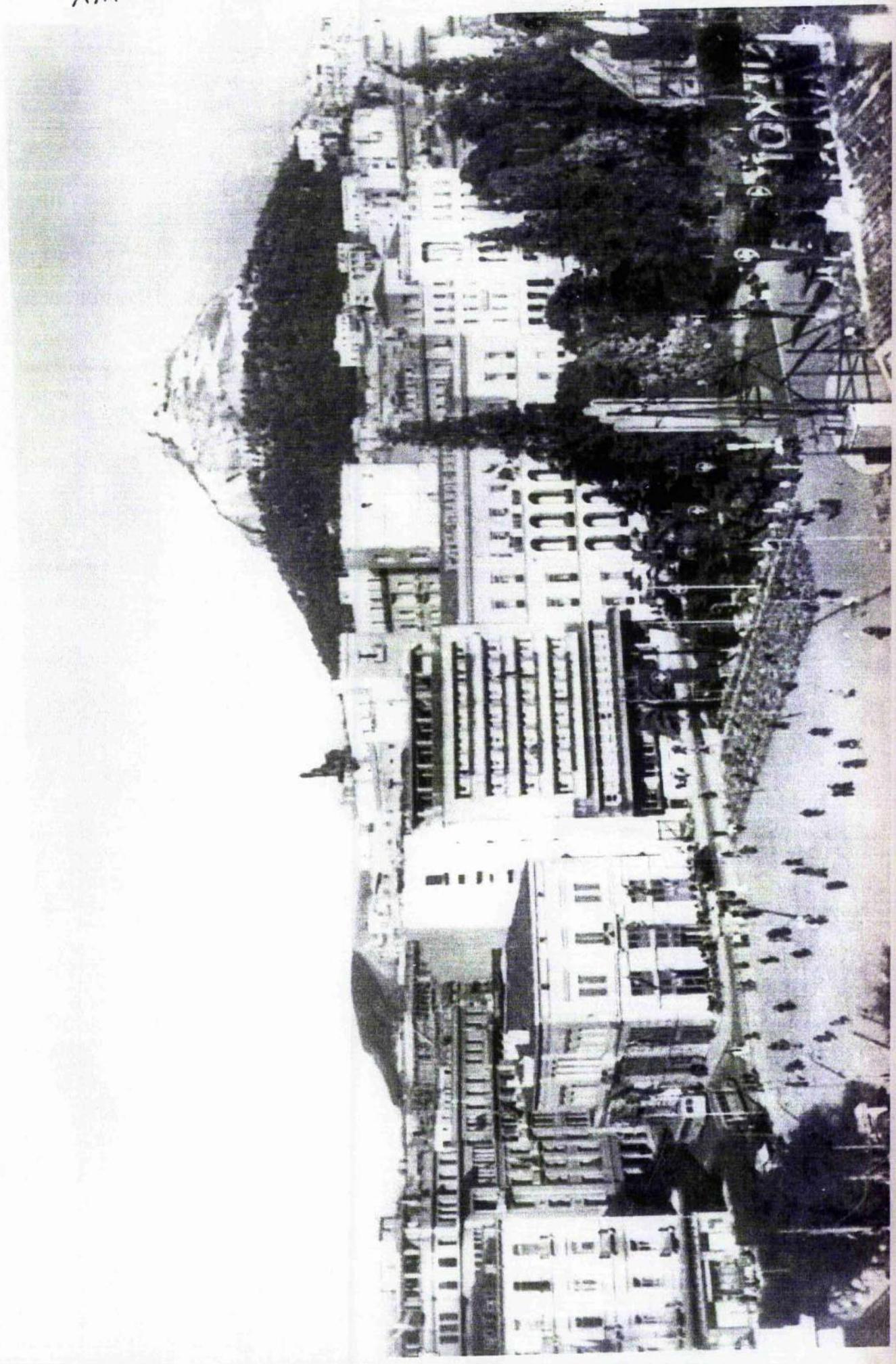
<sup>1331</sup> See N. Guy "Athenai." Part I. [Athens] D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 38, Christmas 1967, pp.46-49, N. Guy "Athenai." Part II. D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 42, Easter 1969, pp.23-28, and N. Guy "Athenai." Part III. D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 44, Christmas 1969, pp.31-37.

<sup>1332</sup> N. Guy *op. cit.*, 1967, p.46.

<sup>1333</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1334</sup> *Ibid.*





The Athenians often contested the foreigners' myopic approach to the city. Demetrios Gerondas, for example, to whom we owe our knowledge of Guy, complained about the post-1950s demolitions but was, nonetheless, sensitive enough to propose that,

In all of its commendable development, our Athens must preserve or create something of its own. Its cold marbles and its innumerable monuments are not enough; its incomparable landscape is not enough to distinguish it. It also needs some of its own life, [something], that will reveal and offer to it its own colour.<sup>1335</sup>

Amidst the unwelcome demolitions of old, 'beautiful' Athens, Gerondas invited the moderns to be worthy of the city's past, but without abandoning their new capital to the past. Yet we should not rush to assume that such ambivalence was specific to a more thoughtful and historically sensitive, post-1950s Athens. Rather, it was the result of some Greeks' and Athenians' interpretation of the destruction of their history in and after the nineteenth century. In anticipating the reaction against a beloved – albeit oppressive – antiquity, Kostas Palamas was amongst the first, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to contest the obsession with the "shadows of the ancestors."<sup>1336</sup> It is these 'shadows', argued Palamas, that prevented modern Greeks from realizing that if they desire to be worthy of the past, they must stop hiding behind the glory of the past and instead, produce a splendour of their own.<sup>1337</sup> These 'shadows', he continued, constituted schools as "spiritual tortures,"<sup>1338</sup> transformed books – in both content and form – into "storehouses of fatuity and deceit"<sup>1339</sup> and turned the "so-called divine sermon"<sup>1340</sup> into a "pathetic concoction that only clergymen and preachers themselves concoct, swallow and digest – when it is digestible."<sup>1341</sup> Finally, for Palamas,

The shadows of the ancestors did not let us [the Greeks] work with all the freedom, with all the concern and with all the agony of those who lack

<sup>1335</sup> D.A. Gerondas "[I Palaia kai I Nea..." [The Old and the New {Athens}...] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 1, 1955, p.53. By 'colour' in Greek we also understand 'character'. For the uniqueness of the Athenian landscape, see K. Ouranes' definition of a "purely, exclusively spiritual beauty" whose "staring upon remains an ever-new miracle," in K. Ouranes *Taksidia stin Ellada*. [Journeys to Greece] Athens: Filoi tou Vivliou, 1949, p.12.

<sup>1336</sup> See K. Palamas "Ai Skiai ton Progonon" in K. Palamas op. cit., *Apanda*, Vol.15, pp.442-450.

<sup>1337</sup> See *ibid.*, p.444.

<sup>1338</sup> *Ibid.*, p.445.

<sup>1339</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1341</sup> *Ibid.*

ancestors towards a gradual creation of a history of our own that would be a creature of our own hands, a breath of our breath. The shadows of the ancestors have left our history hump-backed.<sup>1342</sup>

Palamas never rejected the ancestors and antiquity. On the contrary, in his poem about Athena – that is, for the city and its synonymous Goddess – in which he praised that “immortal and glorious Athens,”<sup>1343</sup> and in a number of essays about “The Parthenon’s Death”,<sup>1344</sup> “The Acropolis as a Source of Inspiration,”<sup>1345</sup> and the ancients as the fathers of the beautiful idea of art,<sup>1346</sup> Palamas was increasingly concerned with the moderns’ indifference concerning the past. Indeed, whilst he lamented the demolition of pre-1834 Athens,<sup>1347</sup> he was increasingly worried about the fact that whereas Athens’ marbles had a ‘soul’, its new inhabitants did not, thereby forcing them to hide their embarrassment behind antiquity.<sup>1348</sup> For those not dazzled with the Acropolis, Palamas’ ‘hump-backed’ history that sacrificed its oldness before antiquity was obvious in nineteenth-century Athens. Already familiar for his opposition to the sanitization of the Acropolis, Karl Krumbacher argued that, although Athens is “the spiritual capital of the world,”<sup>1349</sup> in the 1886 capital, “the contrast between the old and the new époque [emerged] acutely and inexorably.”<sup>1350</sup> Despite his general satisfaction with modern Athens, Krumbacher, too, was disappointed with the city’s evident loss of history. By the early twentieth century, another traveller to Athens contested Krumbacher’s disapproval of the contrast between antiquity and the new city.

In attributing the survival of part of the medieval quarter of Plaka to the ‘short-sightedness’ of nineteenth-century Greek governments,<sup>1351</sup> Lionel B. Budden – writing in 1912 – was mostly interested in the buildings and street network of the capital.<sup>1352</sup> Whereas his analysis of the latter was dominated by the triangular arrangement of Hermes’, Piraeus’, and Stadiou streets,<sup>1353</sup> and the view of the Acropolis from Aeolou and Athenas’

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<sup>1342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1343</sup> Ibid., Vol.1, p.200. For the complete poem see *ibid.*, pp.176-204.

<sup>1344</sup> See *ibid.*, Vol.15, pp.524-525.

<sup>1345</sup> See *ibid.*, Vol.13, pp.339-355.

<sup>1346</sup> See *ibid.*, Vol.12, pp.149-154.

<sup>1347</sup> See *ibid.*, Vol.4, pp.441-445 and *ibid.*, Vol.15, pp.542-544.

<sup>1348</sup> In this context see Palamas’ contrast between ‘soul-full’ marbles and the ‘soul-less’ moderns see K. Palamas “Marmaron Parapona,” in *ibid.*, Vol.6, pp.351-355.

<sup>1349</sup> K. Krumbacher *Elleniko Taksidi*. [Greek Voyage] G. Thanopoulos tr., and intro., Athens: Historites, 1994, p.101.

<sup>1350</sup> *Ibid.*, p.445.

<sup>1351</sup> See L.B. Budden “Modern Athens.” Part I. *The Architectural Review*. Vol.XXXI, January-June 1912, p.315.

<sup>1352</sup> Note here that, concerning the plan of Athens, Budden mentions Schaubert only. See *ibid.*

<sup>1353</sup> *Ibid.*

streets,<sup>1354</sup> his description of the former was largely limited to the Athenian Trilogy – the Library, University, and Academy of Athens – which he defined as “unquestionably the finest group of buildings in the city.”<sup>1355</sup> Yet, the Athenian Trilogy did not, for Budden, enjoy the ‘best site’.<sup>1356</sup> That was occupied by the palace, which did “not [have] the character of the palace.”<sup>1357</sup> Budden was very clear about this inconsistency. In contrast to Ruskin’s observation concerning the palace, Budden maintained that the design of the building was “not equal to the possibilities of its position.”<sup>1358</sup> In other words, the design of the palace did not measure up to the Acropolis. The Athenian Trilogy, and other parts of Athens, on the other hand, successfully served the city’s antiquity. For Budden, despite the “charming French and Italian designs,”<sup>1359</sup> and “excluding the squalid medieval quarter, Athens is, in a sense, one of the most homogenous cities in Europe.”<sup>1360</sup> According to Budden, this homogeneity was due to the German architects’ Greek inspiration<sup>1361</sup> that “maintained and developed [Athenian architecture] in all types of buildings.”<sup>1362</sup> Hence, he suggests that, for the Athenian buildings, “it is [...] the absolute supremacy of the spirit of one style and of the tone of certain materials that gives to them a homogeneity particular to itself.”<sup>1363</sup> Furthermore, in arguing that, “not even Rome or Paris [approached] this uniformity of tone in their architecture,”<sup>1364</sup> Budden attributed modern Athens’ architectural success to the fact that, like the Parthenon, its new buildings were made from Pentelic white marble.<sup>1365</sup> Hence, despite the “existence of unmade roads [and] broken pavements,”<sup>1366</sup> Budden concluded his description of Athens with the observation that,

More and more is Athens tending to become a show-place, a city of fine architectural works and gardens grouped about the Acropolis, a city as modern as Washington, but whose indissoluble connection with antiquity is typified in its Stadion and whose citadel is crowned by the ruins of the Parthenon.<sup>1367</sup>

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<sup>1354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1355</sup> Ibid. Note also that he considered the Library’s curving stairs as an ‘imperfection’. See *ibid.*

<sup>1356</sup> See L.B. Budden “Modern Athens.” Part II. The Architectural Review. Vol. XXXII, July-December 1912(b), p.6.

<sup>1357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1360</sup> Ibid., pp.9-10.

<sup>1361</sup> Ibid., p.10.

<sup>1362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1365</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1366</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>1367</sup> Ibid.

More and more, therefore, did Athens become the showplace of a modernity that displayed its chosen antiquity. Simultaneously as modern as Washington and ancient as the polis, the potentially 'German-looking' pre-1950s Athens also became the showplace of antiquity in modernity and of modernity in antiquity in a way that neither could be distinguished from the other. Yet, like the celebrated glory of Athenian antiquity, the splendour of its pre-1950s modernity was often identified with architecture and, consequently, with specific buildings.

Determined to preserve the 'indissoluble' bond between antiquity and modernity that was being threatened by the post-1950s demolitions, Solon Kydoniates<sup>1368</sup> proclaimed that, "Athens, a historic and glorious city must offer everyone the thrill of its classical past. With faith, fanaticism, and imagination, this is attainable."<sup>1369</sup> According to Kydoniates, the 'ugly' Athens of the 1980s should follow Haussmann's suggestion that "the audacity of decisions must correspond to the magnitude of the danger."<sup>1370</sup> Yet, since Kydoniates could not demolish the post-1950s city, he was content with the restoration of that which 'counted' in Athens. Hence he argued: "after the ancient monuments and the small Byzantine churches, the only buildings that count in Athens are the remnants of neoclassicism."<sup>1371</sup> Once the style that dominated the capital, by the 1980s, neoclassicism existed only in fragments. This explains Kydoniates' interest in the Athenian Trilogy.<sup>1372</sup> Although a fragment of a largely destroyed city in Kydoniates' time and an element of a living capital during Budden's visit, the choice of the Athenian Trilogy was not accidental for either of the two men. In remaining central for both pre- and post 1950s Athens, the National Library, the University, and the Academy of Athens is the most eloquent example of the style that dominated the modern 'city of marbles'. In a sense, the Athenian Trilogy itself emerges as the new Athens of the nineteenth century.

## VI

The idea of a built representation of Athens as antiquity nurtures modernity and encapsulates the fundamental "trap in the history of thought."<sup>1373</sup> This trap, according to Chrestos Malevitses is that, "what the descendants perceive as a starting-point, for the ancestors, was the zenith."<sup>1374</sup> For Malevitses, we should perceive the Acropolis "as a

<sup>1368</sup> See S. Kydoniates *ATHENAI - Parelthon kai Mellon*. Vol.1. [ATHENS - Past and Future] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Centre, 1985.

<sup>1369</sup> *Ibid.*, p.92.

<sup>1370</sup> Haussmann cited in *ibid.*, p.109.

<sup>1371</sup> S. Kydoniates "Synendefksi gia ta 150 Hronia tis Athenas." [Interview for Athens' 150 Years] *TA ATHENAÏKA*. Issue 81, June 1985(b), p.29.

<sup>1372</sup> For Kydoniates' call for the protection of the Athenian Trilogy see S. Kydoniates *op. cit.*, 1985, pp.215-216, pp.279-288, and p.327.

<sup>1373</sup> See C. Malevitses "I Mnemeiake Arhitektonike kai to Pnevma tis Polcos." [Monumental Architecture and the Spirit of the City] in *Arhitektonike...* *op. cit.*, 1996, pp.87.

<sup>1374</sup> *Ibid.*

glorious outcome."<sup>1375</sup> But after 1834, the architecture of the Acropolis was perceived as a pinnacle of achievement whose glory could be equalled by modern cities, including Athens, and so Greece's 'tyranny over Germany' became the tyranny of Germany over Athens. In 1830, only a few years before his visit to Athens, Klenze maintained: "that it should be the Greeks who discovered this perfect architecture was merely coincidence, or even more divine destiny, it belongs as much to Germany as to Greece."<sup>1376</sup> Notwithstanding his nationalism, Klenze's ideas concerning the application of this perfect architecture would undermine the physical and temporal distance between the polis and Germany. With the conviction that "there could be no blossoming of art independent of the service of God,"<sup>1377</sup> a precondition that he did not apply equally to Athens and to Germany, Klenze also maintained that:

Greek architecture in itself must be considered perfect. It is therefore clearly the case that Greek architecture is not merely an architecture for all times and lands, but, even more important, it must be recognized as the only architecture for the true, essential, and positive Christianity.<sup>1378</sup>

For Klenze, the perfect, classical Athenian architecture was the only possible image of a Christian modernity. Indeed, if we recall that Klenze actively reinforced the cleansing of the Acropolis, and that the only sample of his architecture in Athens is the eclectic, and non-Gothic, Catholic Church of Saint Dionysius in Panepistemiou Street,<sup>1379</sup> we can assume that as far as the city was concerned, he would in general allow his Christian modernity to adopt the 'pagan', albeit 'perfect', architecture. But Klenze sought to conceal the explosive contradictions in his proposal concerning the image of the modern. The first contradiction points to the fact that the early Christians destroyed classical architecture. The second refers to the affinity between Saint Dionysius, the patron saint of modern Athens today, and that heated ancient god whose worship was praised by Nietzsche for its capacity to reveal the very same animal instincts that Christianity usually suppresses. Klenze's only application of 'perfect' architecture in modern Athens is located in the same boulevard as the neoclassical Athenian Trilogy. The fact that modern Greece's first administrations were German and its architects and artists either predominantly German or graduates of schools outside Greece can explain the singularity of style that dominated the

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<sup>1375</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1376</sup> Leo von Klenze cited in B. Bergdoll op. cit., 2000, p.15.

<sup>1377</sup> M. Schwartzer *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.65.

<sup>1378</sup> Leo von Klenze cited in *ibid.*, p.66.

<sup>1379</sup> See I. Travlos *Neoklassike Arhitektonike stin Ellada*. [Neoclassical Architecture in Greece] Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece, 1967, p.24.

capital.<sup>1380</sup> More significantly, however, these facts can explain why this new style was denied its newness.

Even though neoclassicism in general can be defined as a “style of the late eighteenth century, of the culminating revolutionary phase,”<sup>1381</sup> of the Enlightenment, a style, moreover, that expressed a reaction against rococo<sup>1382</sup> and was, mostly as far as painting was concerned, replaced by romanticism in the 1820s and 1830s,<sup>1383</sup> the architectural style in question here outlived the nineteenth century. In the context of a historicist modernity whose traces are sometimes decipherable today, “ancient Greece is ever present, either as a deceitful idol or as an unreachable yet compelling ideal.”<sup>1384</sup> But Greece, and especially Athens, remained trapped in a deceit, in which architecture becomes an instance of the conflict between an ancient and an ancient-looking modern Athens. Faithful to historicism, which is “false and not true to modern life [and] envelopes architectural reality in *masks*,”<sup>1385</sup> neoclassicism became the mask over a new Athens and was, therefore, established as the official representation of the city as antiquity. Indeed, although the term ‘neoclassicism’ whose impact was already evident in the late eighteenth century<sup>1386</sup> was developed a century later,<sup>1387</sup> in the greatest part of the nineteenth century, the new artistic movement was usually described as expressive of the ‘true style’.<sup>1388</sup> As far as the architects of modern Greece and Athens were concerned, on the other hand, neoclassicism implied more than truth. In exhibiting a “lack of any trace of historical identification,”<sup>1389</sup> they defined the new style as ‘Hellenic Architecture’.<sup>1390</sup> For them, the Enlightenment-inspired neoclassicism,<sup>1391</sup> whose “ethos was born of the conviction that architecture might engender a renewal of civic life, or even a revival of that strong moral fibre of society Winckelmann admired in ancient Greece,”<sup>1392</sup> had quite literally found its

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<sup>1380</sup> We should remember, for instance, that whereas Kleanthes had studied in Berlin under Schinkel, Kaftantzoglou, a close friend of Ingres, had studied in Paris. Naturally, Greece did not have a University before the liberation. In 1836, Otto decreed the foundation of a ‘School for Building’. The classes started a year later under the direction of the Bavarian engineer Friedrich von Zertner. In 1847, under the direction of Kaftantzoglou, the school was renamed ‘polytechnic’. The “Polytechnic School” of Athens in Patesion Street was designed by Kaftantzoglou. See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op., cit., 2001, p.83.

<sup>1381</sup> H. Honour *Neoclassicism*. London: Penguin, 1991, p.13.

<sup>1382</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1383</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.184-190 and I. Travlos op. cit., 1967, p.26.

<sup>1384</sup> S. Kondaratos “I Evropaike Arhitektonike tou Aiona mas kai I Ellada.” [European Architecture of our Century and Greece] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*. Issue 27, June 1988, p.74.

<sup>1385</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 2001, p.198.

<sup>1386</sup> See H. Honour op. cit., 1991, p.14.

<sup>1387</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1388</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1389</sup> D. Philippides op. cit., 2001, p.55.

<sup>1390</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1391</sup> For the relationship between the two see also B. Bergdoll op. cit., 2000, p.43.

<sup>1392</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

way home.<sup>1393</sup> Hence, this imported and new architecture was the vehicle for the quintessential representation of antiquity as the present. In representing 'hellenic architecture', neoclassicism, traces of which were lost in the private lower-middle and working class dwellings<sup>1394</sup> that retained many traditional elements<sup>1395</sup> was often even used in the rhetoric of the irredentist Great Idea.<sup>1396</sup> In fact, neoclassicism was actually praised in relation to what Philippides has defined as 'official architecture' – the modern monuments of the state, and the private, bourgeois and aristocratic mansions.<sup>1397</sup> Indeed, despite the late nineteenth-century and early-twentieth century anticlassical movements of Jugendstil and Beaux Arts,<sup>1398</sup> 1930s Athens witnessed a return to neoclassical forms.<sup>1399</sup> Although this return to 'hellenic architecture' was probably connected to the volatile political scene of the 1930s and to the 1936 dictatorship, what interests us here is that, it was this 'being at home', this belief that official neoclassicism was the quintessential Greek style ultimately distinguishes Athens from other capitals, including Ludwig's, and Klenze's, Munich.<sup>1400</sup>

As with a more detailed reading of the plans, the exploration of neoclassicism in Athens distinguishes the creation of a new Athens from the more general nation-building project. More specifically, whereas Bastéa's analysis of modern Athens attempts to prove that architects "have little if any control over the meaning of their creations,"<sup>1401</sup> and that "architectural sites derive their meanings from the local history and culture,"<sup>1402</sup> the architects of the capital imposed a largely imported representation of the city as antiquity. Moreover, contrary to Bastéa's argument concerning the introduction of neoclassicism by the Bavarian court,<sup>1403</sup> Manos Bires and Maro Kardamitse-Adame have established that "the first neoclassical buildings [in Greece] were already being built from 1815 when the English occupation of the Ionian Islands was completed with the conquest of Corfu."<sup>1404</sup> Yet, although this observation may undermine Bastéa's main argument concerning the

<sup>1393</sup> For the prevalence and problems of this assumption see H. Fessas-Emmanouil *Essays on Neohellenic Architecture, Theory – History – Criticism*. Athens: University Research Institute of Applied Communication, 2001, and D. Philippides *Neohellenike Arhitektonike*. [Neo-hellenic Architecture] Athens: Melissa, 1984, pp.17-45.

<sup>1394</sup> See *ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>1395</sup> See D. Philippides *op. cit.*, 1984, p.101.

<sup>1396</sup> See D. Philippides *op. cit.*, 2001, p.71.

<sup>1397</sup> See *ibid.*, and D. Philippides *op. cit.*, 2001, p.55.

<sup>1398</sup> For Athens in this context see M. Bires *op. cit.*, 2003, pp.172-210. For Athens and Greece in general see M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.263-292.

<sup>1399</sup> See *ibid.*, 292-296.

<sup>1400</sup> For the Greek Revival Munich see B. Bergdoll *op. cit.*, 2000, p.150.

<sup>1401</sup> E. Bastéa *op. cit.*, 2000, p.3.

<sup>1402</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1403</sup> See *ibid.*, p.147.

<sup>1404</sup> M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame *op. cit.*, 2001, p.53. Note, however that in 1815 Greece was not yet free, and the Ionian islands were not again part of Europe until the twentieth century. Bires and Kardamitse-Adame, therefore, examine Greek neoclassicism in relation to the country's current borders.

significance of the capital for the construction of a Greek identity, it nonetheless highlights the city's representation as eternal past in the present. Athens is not the first example of the Greek neoclassical tradition. But it remains the city where architects, archaeologists, and artists "each sought to leave his own mark,"<sup>1405</sup> indeed, a testimony to the eternal present of their new city. With the exception of the Greek architect Demetres Pikiones,<sup>1406</sup> a friend of Giorgio De Chirico<sup>1407</sup> and an advocate – thanks to De Chirico – of Nietzsche's 'eternal return',<sup>1408</sup> early and mid-nineteenth-century Athenian architecture was dominated by neoclassicism. In fact, even the approach towards antiquity remained limited for a long time. As Papageorgiou-Venetas explains in the context of his teacher's – Pikiones' – work, "the first wide-range attempt to explore the ancient heritage outside the Acropolis commenced in the 1930s."<sup>1409</sup> It took almost a century, therefore, for the representation of Athenian antiquity to include anything outside the sanitized Acropolis. What became known as Athenian Classicism<sup>1410</sup> was largely related to 'official neoclassicism', thereby excluding the private dwellings of the lower social classes.<sup>1411</sup> Even when Athenian houses began to incorporate certain neoclassical elements, such as miniature casts of antique-looking figures,<sup>1412</sup> gradually resulting, by the end of the nineteenth century, in a differentiation of Athenian classicism that facilitated the "development of a typology of the suburban villa,"<sup>1413</sup> the Athens whose destruction was lamented in the late twentieth century was a city largely consisting of the new monuments of the state and of the bourgeois mansions in central Athens. From the 1920s onwards, the capital witnessed a change in both its social and demographic conditions in all of its districts, thereby breaking

<sup>1405</sup> M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.83.

<sup>1406</sup> For D. Pikiones' work see A. Pikione and M. Parouses eds., *Demetre Pikione - Keimena*. [Demetre Pikione – Essays]. Athens: Educational Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 2000.

<sup>1407</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.26-30 and D. Philippides op. cit., 1984, p.157.

<sup>1408</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1409</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1996, p.120. For Papageorgiou-Venetas' analysis of Pikiones' work see *ibid.*, pp.59-134.

<sup>1410</sup> Note here that, in the relevant literature, classicism and neoclassicism are used indiscriminately. See, for example, *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, M. Kardamitse-Adame "Athenaikos Neoklassikismos." [Athenian Neoclassicism] *TA ATHENAÏKA*. Issue 107, 2001, pp.5-17, G. Panetos "I Sygrotese tou Athenaikou Klassikismou." [The Constitution of Athenian Classicism] in H. Bouras et. al., eds., op. cit., 2002, pp.388-435 and K.H. Bires "Ekato Hronia Athenaikos Arhitektonikes." [One Hundred Years of Athenian Architecture] *Technika Chronika*, Year H'/IX, Issue 73, 1 March 1939(b), pp.171-181.

<sup>1411</sup> For the non-neoclassical pre- and post-1834 Athenian houses that we do not explore here in detail, see A. Konstandinides op. cit., 1983.

<sup>1412</sup> For the incorporation of neoclassical elements in lower-middle and working class houses as well as for the characteristics of the traditional Athenian home see K.H Bires op. cit., 1938, pp.25-27 and M. Kardamitse-Adame "To Athenaike Spiti sta Protota Meta tin Apeleftherose Hronia." [The Athenian House in the First Years After the Liberation] *Arhitektonike...* op. cit., 1996, pp.142-149 and T. Zapas "I Athena kai ta Neoklassika Spitia." [Athens and the Neoclassical Houses] *TA ATHENAÏKA*. Issue 75, June 1980, pp.24-26.

<sup>1413</sup> P. Lefas "Merikes Apopseis gia tin Arhitektonike sto Telos tou 19ou Aiona kai o Athenaikos Neoklassikismos." [Some Aspects of Architectural Theory in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and Neoclassical Architecture in Athens] *Technika Chronika*. Year A', Issue 2, Volume 6, 1986, pp.83-93.

the traditional bourgeois character of the city's centre.<sup>1414</sup> Yet, as far as the nineteenth century was concerned, partly driven by the lack of building plots in the densely populated old city, wealthier Greeks and Athenians built their mansions close to the palace.<sup>1415</sup> As Bires suggests, by the 1900s, bourgeois owners and architects of the greatly mourned mansions were convinced that these new structures were destined 'for eternity'.<sup>1416</sup> Nevertheless, this eternity was even more short-lived than the 1950s demolitions lead us to assume. In fact, the destruction of nineteenth-century Athens had begun already in the early twentieth century. According to Emmanuel Marmaras, although "the quantitative urban-planning sparing (sic) of Athens was completed after World War II, its qualitative [equivalent] was defined during the Interwar period."<sup>1417</sup> Whereas the former consisted of the unprecedented urbanism of the 1950s that crowded Athens and led to the rise of the number of new buildings that housed the new population,<sup>1418</sup> the latter was accelerated with the introduction, after the Balkan Wars, of reinforced concrete.<sup>1419</sup> This last development was closely related to a jigsaw legislation concerning the building heights that ultimately transformed the capital into the concrete city that exists today.<sup>1420</sup>

Motivated by the construction, in 1917, of the seven-storey Giannaros building in Syntagma Square that caused a general outcry amongst Athenians, the government implemented Law 585 regarding the regulation of building heights.<sup>1421</sup> The Law operated until 1922.<sup>1422</sup> In the meantime, in November 1919, the government implemented the first decree that specified building heights, thereby establishing that they should *not* exceed a 22-meter limit.<sup>1423</sup> This decree was soon lifted and the maximum building height was soon raised into a 26m limit.<sup>1424</sup> More specifically, the Royal Act of the twenty-fourth of August

<sup>1414</sup> See M. Bires op. cit., 2003, pp.30-31.

<sup>1415</sup> See *ibid.*, p.19 and E. V. Marmaras in *Architektonike...* op. cit., 1996, pp.269-281.

<sup>1416</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 239. For the building of 1900s Athens see *ibid.*, pp.236-239.

<sup>1417</sup> See E. Marmaras in *Architektonike...* op. cit., 1996, p.269. Marmaras divides the Interwar period into two sub-periods: first, from 1910 to 1921, and second, from 1922 to 1940. See *ibid.* For this Period see also K. Arseni *Athens Between the Wars – Through the Photographs of Petros Poulidis*. Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece, 2004.

<sup>1418</sup> By the end of 1955, there were 81,990 new apartments in Athens. In turn, from 1950 to 1954, there were 68,358 new buildings created and 31,904 new storeys added to already existing buildings. See J. Kairofyllas op. cit., 1993, pp.170-171.

<sup>1419</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit 1999, p.290.

<sup>1420</sup> According to Bires, pre-1917 buildings rarely exceeded a maximum height of 14m. See *ibid.*

<sup>1421</sup> See *ibid* p.298. For the restrictions on building height see also A.I Demetrakopoulos "I Nea Rythmisis tou Periorismou tou Ypsous ton Oikodomon tis Protevousis." [The New Regulation of the Restrictions of the Height of the Capital's Buildings] *Technika Chronika*. Year Γ'VI, Issue 61, 1 July 1934, p.557. Note, however, that whereas Bires discusses a Law 858, a mistake that may be typographical, Demetrakopoulos analyses a Law 959. The Government Gazette, on the other hand, which we assume to give the correct number, published the implementation of Law 585 which we cite here. See Royal Decree of the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1917, "Peri Kanonismou tou Megistou Ypsous ton Anegeiromenon Oikodomon." [On the Regulation of the Maximum Height of the Under-Construction Buildings] Government Gazette. No.191, 7 September 1917, Vol.A.

<sup>1422</sup> See A. Demetrakopoulos op. cit., 1934, p.558.

<sup>1423</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.298.

<sup>1424</sup> See *ibid.*

1922 defined three zones with different height limitations:<sup>1425</sup> first, the city centre – excluding sites near archaeological monuments – whose maximum height limitation was 12m;<sup>1426</sup> second, areas with archaeological monuments; and finally, other areas whose maximum height was set at a limit of 24m.<sup>1427</sup> The maximum height in the archaeological areas was to be set between the 12m and 24m limit of the other two zones.<sup>1428</sup> One year later, the government implemented the first town-planning Law,<sup>1429</sup> and in 1929 it examined and activated the “first technical legislation on general building regulations.”<sup>1430</sup> The beton-armé urban development of Athens is not irrelevant in the context of Athenian neoclassicism. Even though the question of the uncontrolled and illegal building and neglect of height limits was more pressing after the post 1950s demolitions,<sup>1431</sup> this new, ‘concrete modernism’ actually strengthened the illusion of eternity that the neoclassical monuments claimed. Sidney Hopper’s description of 1939 Athens, for example, was still marked by what he saw as the “sharp contrast between the splendour of public and the indigence of private architecture.”<sup>1432</sup> In sharing the same fate as the private dwellings that insulted Hopper’s aesthetic sensibility, the – no doubt neoclassical – buildings that impressed him were largely demolished in the mid-twentieth century.

Despite the post-1950s destruction of ‘old’ Athens, the capital still retains some of its nineteenth-century monuments: for example, the Zappion,<sup>1433</sup> the elder Hansen’s and later Kaftantzoglou’s Ophthalmiatrieon,<sup>1434</sup> the National Archaeological Museum,<sup>1435</sup> the Old Parliament in Stadiou Street,<sup>1436</sup> and the Arsakeion, whose commission caused animosity between Kleanthes and Kaftantzoglou.<sup>1437</sup> Even though most of these neoclassical monuments –not discussed in detail here – such as the Arsakeion, are named after the individuals who funded their building, and in so doing, established the bourgeois

<sup>1425</sup> See E. Marmaras in *The Planning...* op. cit., 1996, pp.467-468.

<sup>1426</sup> See *ibid.*, p.467. The building heights were calculated in relation to the street’s width. In this case, for example, the height of the building should not exceed the 17,5/10ths of the street’s width. See *ibid.*

<sup>1427</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.467-468.

<sup>1428</sup> See *ibid.*, p.468.

<sup>1429</sup> See *ibid.*, p.465.

<sup>1430</sup> *Ibid.*, p.468.

<sup>1431</sup> See, for example, Bires’ analysis of the uncontrollable building of the capital in K.H. Bires *Gia tin Syghrone Athina*. [On Contemporary Athens] Athens: Aster, 1956, esp., pp.17-19, pp.115-120, and pp.124-126. See also A.I Siagas “Omilia eis tin Syskepsin en to Demarheion, epi tou Ypsous ton Oikodomon, 8es kai 9es Augoustou 1966.” [Speech in a Meeting in the Athens Town Hall concerning the Heights of Buildings, on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of August 1966] *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 35, Christmas 1966, pp.20-24.

<sup>1432</sup> S. Hopper op. cit., 1939, p.39.

<sup>1433</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.212-214.

<sup>1434</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.141-142. The ‘Ophthalmiatrieon’, the Eye-Hospital of Athens is a unique case of experimentation with Byzantine architecture in Panepistemiou Street where the Hansen brothers built the Athenian Trilogy.

<sup>1435</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.210-211. For the contents of the Museum in the late nineteenth century see F.B. Tarbell “Letters from Greece.” *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts*, April-June 1893, pp.230-238.

<sup>1436</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.149-150. The Old Parliament is now a museum and the house of the Historic and Ethnologic Society of Greece that retains a precious archive.

<sup>1437</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.138-139.

character of nineteenth-century new Athens,<sup>1438</sup> the buildings that we do discuss take us beyond class issues and explain why Athens is the 'showplace of modernity'. Four years prior to Hopper's visit to the city, Camille Mauclair<sup>1439</sup> stood in awe before the Sacred Rock and reaffirmed its eternal significance for the capital: "visible from almost every part of the city, [the Acropolis] dominates it, stays awake besides it and, in an apothecosis of azure colour, it elevates the marvellous and supreme trilogy of the Propylaea, the Erechtheium, and the Parthenon."<sup>1440</sup> Half a century after Mauclair, the Athenian author Kostas Demetriades also praised the capital's "three temples of wisdom [which], with their classical hellenic style, remain the most glorious built jewels of Athens and with which none of the State's later buildings can compete."<sup>1441</sup> But Demetriades is eulogizing a modern, not the ancient trilogy. Amidst the concrete buildings of today's capital there still exists a fragment of the nineteenth-century city. Both exemplary of the 'zenith' of Athenian neoclassicism<sup>1442</sup> and the commonly shared experience from that old city to-day, the Athenian Trilogy complements its ancient predecessor and becomes the eternal symbol of modern Athens. If the Acropolis represents the modern ancient in Athens, the Academy, Library, and University celebrate the victory of the modern. These nineteenth-century monuments promote the representation of Athens as a modernity that, despite appearances, still reigns in the capital.

## VII

In creating the modern reflection of the old that was already chosen on the Acropolis, the architects of the Athenian Trilogy, the Danes Christian and Theophil Hansen,<sup>1443</sup> and the numerous individuals who funded the project, finally decided upon the desired, albeit hidden, representation of the capital as modernity. The studious post-1834 sanitization and planning of the new capital created a very focused image of the preferred antiquity whose glory was to be compared with that of the modern Athenian Trilogy. Born

<sup>1438</sup> According to M. Bires, we should not hurry to argue that the people who funded the building of the different public modern monuments, usually Greeks returning from Europe or Russia, were singularly driven by speculative interests. See M. Bires op. cit., 2003, p.13. On the other hand, a study of the sponsors of neoclassical monuments may illustrate the undisputed power of the bourgeoisie over the young Greek monarchy. For an introduction of the individuals that funded the construction of Athens' public institutions see, for example, Exhibition Catalogue: *I Athena ton Evergeton*. [Benefactors' Athens] Athens: Municipality of Athens, Cultural Centre and Ethnokarta, 1997.

<sup>1439</sup> See C. Mauclair "Athènes." D.A. Gerondas tr., *TA ATTIENAIKA*, Issue 26, Christmas 1963, pp.1924.

<sup>1440</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>1441</sup> K. Demetriades *I Athena pou Zisame*. [Athens that we Lived] Athens: Estia, 1984, p.48.

<sup>1442</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitsc-Adame op. cit., 2001, pp.135-170, and M. Sanoudou "Ermeineia Klassikismon kai Klassikes Arhitektonikes gia mia Epikairopoiese tis Klassikes Arhitektonikes stin Ellada. Diahorismos Theorias kai Praxeos. Parermeineies." [Interpretation of Classicisms and Classical Architecture for a Contemporaneousness of Classical Architecture in Greece. Distinction Between Theory and Practice. Misunderstandings] *Arhitektonike...* op. cit., 1996, pp.244-268.

<sup>1443</sup> For an introduction of the Hansen brothers work in Athens see I.I.I. Russack *Arhitektones tis Neoklassikes Athenas*. [Architects of Neoclassical Athens] K. Sarropoulos tr., Athens: Govostis, 1991, pp.106-113.

in 1803, Christian Hansen<sup>1444</sup> arrived in Athens in late August 1833,<sup>1445</sup> more than a year before Athens became the capital. Although the architect of the University soon befriended Ross,<sup>1446</sup> Kleanthes and Schaubert,<sup>1447</sup> we can argue that his acquaintance with the dream of modern Athens preceded his visit to the city. This occurred a few years earlier when Christian Hansen studied and was impressed by Schinkel's Berlin and by Klenze and Gaertner's Munich.<sup>1448</sup> Hansen's dream of modern Athens was not alien to the questions concerning the Acropolis which he visited daily and where he spent all his summer nights, sleeping under the shadow of the ruins that inspired his new creations.<sup>1449</sup> A letter to his brother Peter illustrates how this dream anticipated Christian Hansen's 'strict classicism'<sup>1450</sup> that established the new style as the perfect image of new Athens. Hence he wrote that,

Here I live like a hermit [...]. When somebody comes here from Naples, he feels like the dead in the grave. Although this melancholic tranquillity suits my character, I would almost wish that I could live all my life here if only to be always able to see the ruins of these magnificent temples.<sup>1451</sup>

Christian Hansen set out to create the first element of the modern trilogy. His University would later become the 'model' that 'sealed' Athenian classicism until the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>1452</sup> But Hansen's University was not the first academic institution of modern Athens.

On the twelfth of January 1837, the government decreed the foundation of the University of Athens.<sup>1453</sup> A few months later, in April 1837, the decree was supplemented with a temporary regulation of the institution.<sup>1454</sup> In a highly symbolic gesture, the first

<sup>1444</sup> See A. Papanikolaou-Christensen *Hristianos Hansen – Epistoles kai Shedia apo tin Athena*. [Christian Hansen – Letters and Drawings from Greece]. Athens: Okeanida, 1993, p.9.

<sup>1445</sup> See I. Haugsted "Ta Ellenika Tetradia Shedion tou Arhitektona Hristianou Hansen." [From the Greek Sketchbooks of the architect Christian Hansen] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*, Issue 17, November 1985, p.57.

<sup>1446</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1447</sup> See A. Papanikolaou-Christensen *op. cit.*, 1993, p.10 and K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1938, p.6.

<sup>1448</sup> See A. Papanikolaou-Christensen *op. cit.*, 1993, p.9 and A. Papanikolaou-Christensen "Ta Demiourgika Hronia tou Hristianou Hansen," [The Creative Years of Christian Hansen] *Athens-Munich. op. cit.*, 2000, pp.133-144.

<sup>1449</sup> For Christian Hansen's visits to the Acropolis see V. Tsagris *op. cit.*, 1939, p.470.

<sup>1450</sup> According to K.H. Bires, Christian Hansen, Gaertner and P. Kalkos defined the 'strict', the first stage of Athenian classicism. See K.H. Bires *op. cit.* 1999, p.99.

<sup>1451</sup> C. Hansen's letter of the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 1833 cited in A. Papanikolaou-Christensen *op. cit.*, 1993, p.58 and in I. Haugsted *op. cit.*, 1985, p.60.

<sup>1452</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitsc-Adame *op. cit.*, 2001, p.96.

<sup>1453</sup> See *Government Gazette*. "Diatagma Peri Systaseos Panepistemiou." [Decree on the Establishment of a University] No.86, 31 December 1836/12 January 1837, pp.179-188.

<sup>1454</sup> *Government Gazette*. "Diatagma Peri Systaseos Panepistemiou kai Peri Prosorinou Kanonismou tou en Athenais Sysythesmenou Panepistemiou." [Decree on the Establishment of a University and on the Temporary Regulation of the University of Athens] No.16, 24 April 1837, pp.62-69.

University of modern Athens<sup>1455</sup> was housed in Kleanthes and Schaubert's house below the Acropolis.<sup>1456</sup> Although this building was not the monument that its successor became, it was nonetheless the meeting point of some of the fathers of modern Athens: Ross delivered his first lecture there in 1837.<sup>1457</sup> Christian and Theophil Hansen, both frequent visitors to Kleanthes and Schaubert's house, later taught in the Polytechnic School.<sup>1458</sup> The old University of modern Athens, its first owners and dwellers, bear testimony to how the capital's first architects and archaeologists were also its first teachers. In 1861, after Hansen had built the new University, the building was bought by private owners.<sup>1459</sup> After a renovation that lasted from 1979 until 1986,<sup>1460</sup> and which was largely the state's delayed response to some of the Athenians' complaints concerning the mid-twentieth century dereliction of the building,<sup>1461</sup> the Ministry of Culture<sup>1462</sup> transferred ownership of Kleanthes' first residence to the University of Athens, and finally made it the Museum of its history that it is today.<sup>1463</sup> The old University was the place where Christian Hansen, his brother and their friends imagined and planned modern Athens. His University on the other hand, also realized their plans as a part of a modern architectural complex whose symbolic and practical importance for modernity even overshadowed the palace.

Whereas Kleanthes and Schaubert's house was built with the resources of the two young architects, the construction of the new University necessitated the accumulation of capital that the government alone could not guarantee. Even though Otto – and Ludwig I – were its primary sponsors,<sup>1464</sup> the continuously interrupted project illustrates how, economics aside, the creation of the University depended on the generosity of a great

<sup>1455</sup> For the history of the University of Athens from antiquity see S.K. Samaras *To Panepistemion Athenon*. [The University of Athens] Thessalonike, 1937.

<sup>1456</sup> See M. Kardamitse-Adame "To Spiti tou Kleanthe sto Rizokastro." [Kleanthes' House in Rizokastro] Exhibition Catalogue: *Ethniko kai Kappodistriako Panepistemio Athenon 1837-1987. Ekaton Penenda Hronia*. [National and Kappodistrian University of Athens 1837-1987. One Hundred and Fifty Years] Athens: Museum of the History of the University of Athens, 1987, pp.21-23, M. Kardamitse-Adame "Neotera Stoiheia gia to Palio Panepistemio." [New Information on the Old University of Athens] *ARCHAIOLOGIA*. Issue 17, November 1985, pp.51-55, A. Andonopoulos "Oikia Kleanthous kai Schaubert." [The House of Kleanthes and Schaubert] Part I. *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 71, December 1978, pp.19-25, A. Andonopoulos "Oikia Kleanthous kai Schaubert." Part II. *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 72, April 1979, pp.18-25, A. Andonopoulos "To Palio Panepistemio." [The Old University] *TA ATHENAIKA* Issue 73, September 1979, pp.7-11 and A. Andonopoulos "I Oikia Vlahoutse kai to Panepistemio." [House Vlahoutse and the University] *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 74, Christmas 1979, pp.34-36. For the exact location of the building see Main Map, backside, number 124.

<sup>1457</sup> See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1997(b), endnote 22, p.42.

<sup>1458</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.85 and M. Bires "I Anasygrotese tis Athenas kata tin Othonike Periodo. I Arhitektonike ton Ktirion tis." [The Re-constitution of Athens During the Othonean Period. The Architecture of its Buildings]. *Athena-Monaha*. op. cit., 2001, p.101.

<sup>1459</sup> See A. Andonopoulos op. cit., 1979, and A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1997, endnote 22, p.42.

<sup>1460</sup> See *ibid*.

<sup>1461</sup> See, for example, G. Pouloupoulos "To Ktirio tou Protou Panepistemiou na Ginci Mouseio." [Make the Building of the First University a Museum] *TA ATHENAIKA*. Issue 34, September 1966, pp.16-17.

<sup>1462</sup> The Ministry of Culture bought the building in 1962. See A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit., 1997, endnote 22, p.42.

<sup>1463</sup> See *ibid*.

<sup>1464</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.92.

number of individual 'Athenians'. On the ninth of June 1839,<sup>1465</sup> for example, and on the twenty-sixth of August 1840,<sup>1466</sup> the Government Gazette featured the list of names of the University's sponsors. According to the first list, Kleanthes and Schaubert had each donated fifty drachmas,<sup>1467</sup> whereas Pittakes, the curator of the Acropolis had offered another thirty drachmas.<sup>1468</sup> In the University, therefore, the architects and archaeologists of modern, nineteenth-century Athens also became its sponsors. Hansen cast the foundation stone of the 'Othonean' – now the National-Kappodistrian – University of Athens<sup>1469</sup> on the second of July 1839, on the site where his brother Theophil later built the Academy.<sup>1470</sup> Yet the constitutional change and the events of 1843 that forced all foreign officials with public offices to abandon their posts and leave Greece meant that the completion of Christian Hansen's University had to be halted. Later entrusted with the project and assisted by the financial aid of Demetrios Bernadakes, Kaftantzoglou, Alexander Georgandas, and then Anastatios Theophilas and a number of engineers overcame the dispute concerning Theophilas' contested fidelity to Hansen's plan<sup>1471</sup> and completed the University in 1864.<sup>1472</sup> Both in appearance and decoration, the University of Athens masquerades the dialectic between the old and the new and effectively deludes the spectator. [Fig. XXII]

According to K. Bires, in seeking to retain the morphology of the elements of the relevant ancient order, 'strict' classicists, including Christian Hansen, often "sacrificed the expression of the true constitution of the building."<sup>1473</sup> In the case of the University, the façade gives the impression of a one-storey building, whilst the side of the building reveals its true, two-storeys structure,<sup>1474</sup> thereby illustrating how an architectural stratagem can serve as a means for the immediate disorientation of the spectator. In this, the formal structure of the University is complemented by a decoration that exemplifies the building's symbolic significance. With its statues of the prominent figures of the Enlightenment, Regas Pheraios and Adamandios Koraeas, of the Patriarch Gregory V, of the British

<sup>1465</sup> See Government Gazette, No.13, 9 June 1839, pp.60-64.

<sup>1466</sup> See Government Gazette, No.17, 26 August 1840, pp.81-82.

<sup>1467</sup> For Kleanthes and Schaubert's donations see Government Gazette, op. cit., 1839, No.13, p.61 and p.62 respectively.

<sup>1468</sup> See *ibid.*, p.61.

<sup>1469</sup> The University was renamed 8 days after the constitutional change of 1843. See T. Hrestou "I Idrisis tou Panepistemiou," [The Foundation of the University] *Athena-Monaha*, op. cit., 2000, p.68.

<sup>1470</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.116.

<sup>1471</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op., cit., 2001, p.96. According to K. Bires, when Theophilas took over from Kaftantzoglou, Kaftantzoglou accused him of deviation from the original plans. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.117.

<sup>1472</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op., cit., 2001, p.92. For the location of the University see Main Map, Front Side, Number 95.

<sup>1473</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.99.

<sup>1474</sup> See *ibid.*

philhellene Gladstone and of Ioannis Kappodistrias,<sup>1475</sup> the University of Athens itself becomes a lesson in modern Greek and Athenian history. With Pheraios, Korae and the Patriarch representing the Enlightenment and the Church in 1871, 1872 and 1875 respectively,<sup>1476</sup> and with the British Prime Minister and the first statesman of Greece<sup>1477</sup> representing the continuously interrupted, century long, passage from the monarchy to the republic, the 'purely' neoclassical University<sup>1478</sup> became the perfect symbol of new Athens. Albeit more inclusive in its historical approach than the Acropolis today, Hansen's University is not necessarily true to the past. In his attempt to establish a bond between the Enlightenment, whose promise of the intellectual and artistic re-enchantment of the world was presumably a fact in new Athens, and the Church, whose head in Greece was none other than the King, Christian Hansen had suggested the elevation of the statues of Pheraios and the Patriarch alone.<sup>1479</sup> What he sought to make us forget, however, was Koracs' fiery anti-Church teachings. Yet, none of these historical figures represent the main character, the hero of the institution. Again, this is none other than Otto.

Designed by the Bavarian painter Karl Rahl and completed by his Polish colleague Lebietsky<sup>1480</sup> the University fresco illustrates the "Renaissance of the Sciences and of the Arts Under Otto's Reign." [Fig. XXIII] What we see in the fresco is a laurel-crowned and victorious Otto surrounded by the Sciences, such as History, Philosophy and Medicine. Whilst his architects and archaeologists, engineers and officials taught in his schools, the Bavarian King of Greece was, and still is, portrayed as the regal deity of the education and knowledge that the University is supposed to embody. In having chosen the 'proper' history, Otto and the State now had full control over the teaching of this chosen history. During the 1920s, nearly a century after Otto had come to Athens, the University had reached such a status that the teaching staff suggested that the entire area of the institution should become an "isolated part of the city."<sup>1481</sup> Even though this proposal was never realized, the centenary of the University revealed an unexpected success in terms of the concealment of a turbulent Athenian modernity.

<sup>1475</sup> For details on the statues see *ibid.*, pp.119-120.

<sup>1476</sup> See *ibid.*

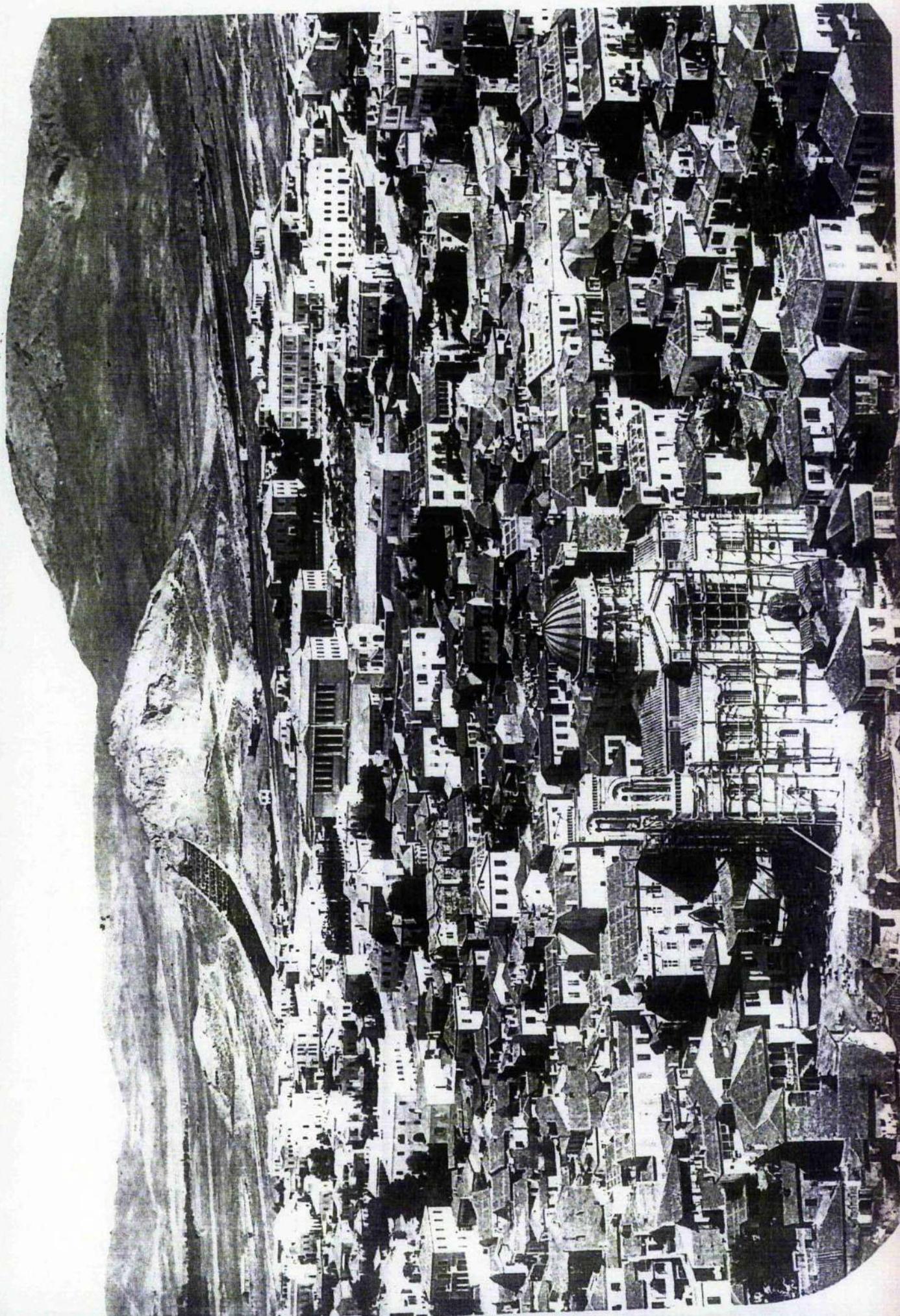
<sup>1477</sup> Gladstone's statue was placed outside the University in 1885 whereas the 1928 foundation of Kappodistrias' statue coincided with the 1920s republic. See *ibid.*

<sup>1478</sup> Travlos agrees with Bires that Christian Hansen was a 'pure' classicist. See I. Travlos *op. cit.*, 1967, p.27. M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame, on the other hand, argue that Kafantzoglou, whom neither K. Bires nor Travlos classify as such, was also a 'strict' classicist and that in the University, Hansen's 'spiritual classicism' adopted a more human scale than Gaertner did in the Palace. See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame *op. cit.*, 2001, pp.92-96.

<sup>1479</sup> See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.120.

<sup>1480</sup> Rahl's University Fresco was a commission by Baron Sinas, the sponsor of Theophil Hansen's Observatory and academy of Athens. See *ibid.*, p.119.

<sup>1481</sup> See I. Kandyles' analysis of the early history of the University in I. Kandyles "To Panepistemiako Kendro kai i Peri Auto Perioche tis Athenas Kata ta Prota Hronia tis Athenas." [The University Centre and its Surrounding Area of Athens During Athens' First Years]. *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 83, December 1986, p.8.

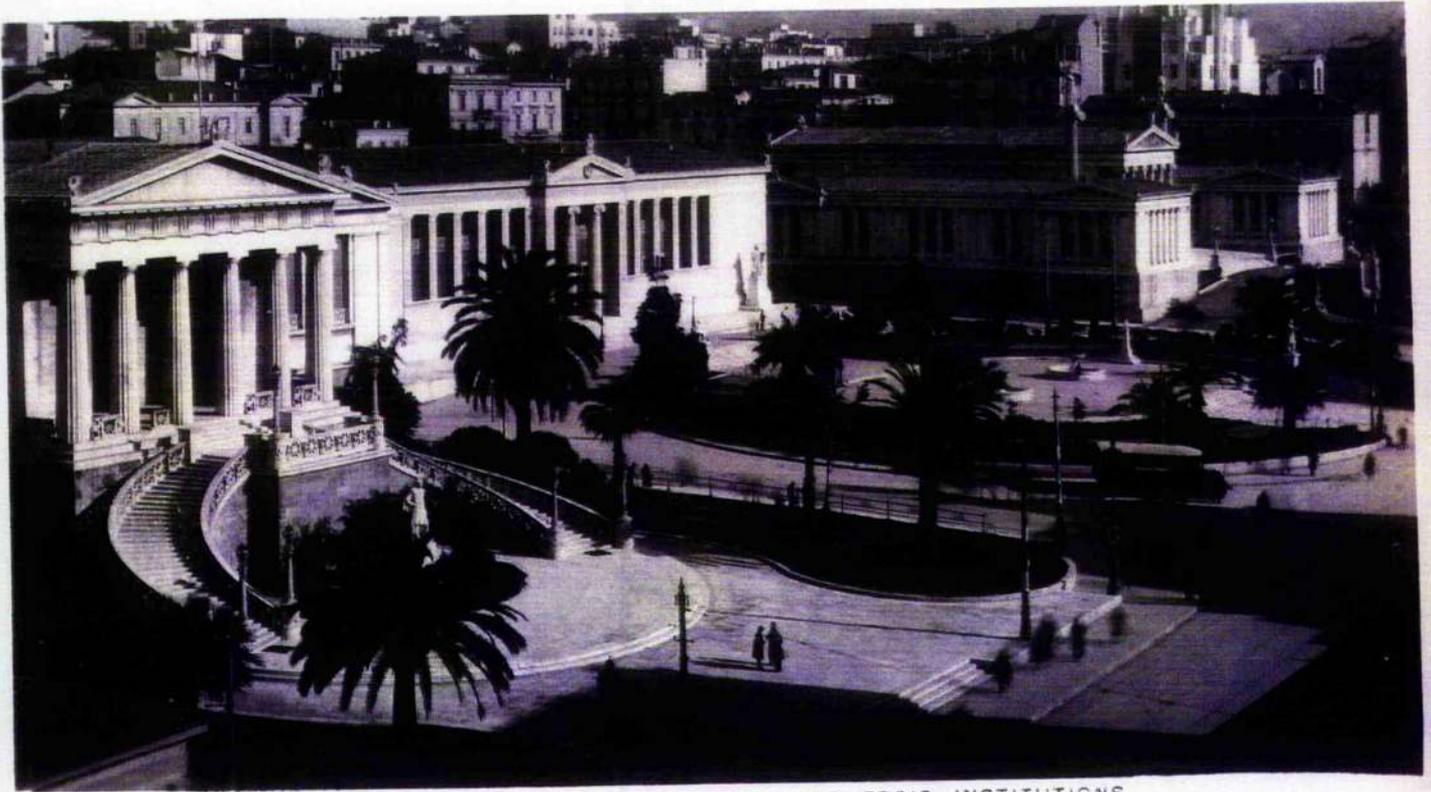


XIII University of Athens - Fresco. (2004)



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XIII.



4 ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΤΑ ΕΘΝΙΚΑ ΙΔΡΥΜΑΤΑ

ATHENES LES TROIS INSTITUTIONS

According to Miller's report on the different events that comprised the celebration of the centenary of the University of Athens,<sup>1482</sup> foreign delegates attended and delivered a series of speeches, "one by a representative of each nationality,"<sup>1483</sup> as well as one by different Greek representatives such as the King and the Archbishop of Athens.<sup>1484</sup> The program also "included a service at the Cathedral,"<sup>1485</sup> a series of performances on the Acropolis,<sup>1486</sup> and four dinner-parties at the palace.<sup>1487</sup> The celebrations concluded with a garden-party, again, at the palace.<sup>1488</sup> One thing stands out at the delegates' schedule: the 1937 University was 'blessed' by the Church and the palace as the only legitimate embodiment of a modern history that had started on the Acropolis. Of the three buildings of the modern Athenian Trilogy, the University is the one that hides the debatable character of the relationship between the State, the Church, and education.<sup>1489</sup> In contrast to the University and the Academy that concludes our discussion of the Athenian Trilogy, the Library appears as the most symbolically neutral of the three buildings. Both the Academy and Library had their origin in a Decree of the tenth of May 1859,<sup>1490</sup> which maintained that the Academy should be built to the East with 'another building' to the West of the University.<sup>1491</sup> Initially intended for an archaeological museum that was later build by Lange in Patesion Street,<sup>1492</sup> adjacent to Kaftantzoglou's Polytechnic School of Athens, the space of the undefined building finally housed the Library.<sup>1493</sup> On the first of November 1887, the front page of the Athenian newspaper To Asty<sup>1494</sup> depicted a sketch for the new building. The architect was Christian Hansen's younger brother, Theophil.

## VIII

In accepting an invitation by his brother, Theophil Hansen – himself a student of Schinkel – arrived in Athens in 1838,<sup>1495</sup> and soon became a member of the Kleanthes,

<sup>1482</sup> See W. Miller "The Centenary of Athens University." The Journal of Hellenic Studies, Vol.57, Part 1, 1937, pp.80-81.

<sup>1483</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81. Miller reports that the British delegation consisted of 11 members and that due to 'distance', the Australian and Indian delegates could not come to Athens. Moreover, Miller regrets that the British government did not follow the French example's initiative to send its Minister of Education as a representative. This, for Miller, was a lost opportunity for the British government, which could have maintained its connection to 'modern Greek history'. See *ibid.*

<sup>1484</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1485</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1486</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1487</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1488</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1489</sup> We should remember here, that an issue of great dispute in Greece is that the Ministry of Education is yet to be separated from the Church.

<sup>1490</sup> See Government Gazette. Royal Decree "Peri Egerseos Katastematou Epi tin Plateias Panepistemiou Othonos." [On the Building of Establishments in the Square of the Othonean University] No.24, 10 June 1859.

<sup>1491</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1492</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitsc-Adame *op. cit.*, 2001, p.145.

<sup>1493</sup> For the location of the Library see Main Map, Front Page, Number 96.

<sup>1494</sup> See To Asty, Year Γ', Number 111, 1 November 1887.

<sup>1495</sup> See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.105.

Schaubert and Ross cycle.<sup>1496</sup> A few years later, Theophil Hansen would become a prominent representative of the second, 'eclectic' decade of Athenian neoclassicism,<sup>1497</sup> that some, such as Konstandinos Bires, considered as the "beginning of the decadence of classicism in Greece,"<sup>1498</sup> whereas others, such as Manos Bires and Maro Kardamitse-Adame appreciate it as the introduction of a 'less dogmatic' classicism that marked the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>1499</sup> In any case, the character of Theophil Hansen's classicism is related to his contribution to Athenian modernity. Like his brother's University, Hansen's Library was not the first building to house the nation's knowledge. Rather, Kappodistrias had founded a public library in Aigina,<sup>1500</sup> the then capital of Greece, as early as 1829.<sup>1501</sup> In 1834, the Bavarian administration moved the books to Athens, and in 1842 it transferred them to the front section of the University.<sup>1502</sup> Sixteen years later and having secured the first necessary funds for the project, the Prime Minister, Harilaos Trikoupis renewed Otto's earlier order and asked Theophil Hansen to draw up the plans for the Library.<sup>1503</sup> Nevertheless, whilst Hansen had given his plan to his student and associate Ernst Ziller in 1884,<sup>1504</sup> the Library of Athens<sup>1505</sup> was only completed in 1902.<sup>1506</sup> However impressive in its details and praised as part of the Athenian Trilogy,<sup>1507</sup> Hansen's Theseium-inspired Doric Library<sup>1508</sup> is not his Athenian 'masterpiece'. This we can relate symbolically to an early commission for the Observatory.<sup>1509</sup>

In 1842, Otto asked Schaubert to supply a plan for the Observatory of Athens.<sup>1510</sup> When the King rejected his neo-gothic plan for an Observatory on the top of Lycabettus Hill,<sup>1511</sup> Schaubert met with Sinas and suggested that Theophil Hansen should undertake

<sup>1496</sup> For T. Hansen's relation to other architects as well as for his work – including some bourgeois mansions – in Athens see R. Wagner-Rieger and M. Reissberger *Theophil Hansen*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1980, esp., pp.16-26.

<sup>1497</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.105.

<sup>1498</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1499</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.138, M. Kardamitse-Adame "I Gennese tis Neoterēs Athenas." [The Birth of Modern Athens] *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, pp.14-24, and M. Bires "I Akme tou Athenaikou Klassikismou." [The Zenith of Athenian Classicism] *ibid.*, pp.102-105.

<sup>1500</sup> Aigina is an island to the South-East of Athens.

<sup>1501</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.214.

<sup>1502</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1503</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1504</sup> See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.145. Hansen, who had invited Ziller to Athens, had also given him a copy of Leake's *Topography of Athens*. Hansen had met Leake in Athens Ziller later became one of the most successful architects of late nineteenth-century Athens. See M. Kardamitse-Adame and A. Papanikolaou-Christensen eds., *Ernst Ziller – Anamnesis*. [Ernst Ziller – Memories] Athens: Libro, 1997.

<sup>1505</sup> The Library of Athens also bears the name of the Vallianos' family who was its primary sponsor, thereby also being known as the Vallianeios Library.

<sup>1506</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.215 and H.H. Russack op. cit., 1991, pp.148-150

<sup>1507</sup> See, for example, D. Rupp *Peripatoi – Athenian Walks*. Athens: Road, 2002, pp.230-232.

<sup>1508</sup> See I. Travlos op. cit., 1967, p.33 and M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.146.

<sup>1509</sup> For the Observatory of Athens see H.H. Russack op. cit., 1999, pp.114-124.

<sup>1510</sup> A. Papageorgiou-Venetas op. cit, 1997, endnote 24, p.42.

<sup>1511</sup> See *ibid.*

the plan.<sup>1512</sup> The building of Hansen's Observatory on the top of the Nymphs Hill opposite the Acropolis, commenced on the twenty-sixth of June 1842 – a day of a total solar eclipse – and was completed in 1846, forever bearing an inscription by its architect: *Servare Intaminatum* – 'To Stay Intact'.<sup>1513</sup> Perhaps what Hansen wished to remain intact was simply his Observatory. Perhaps it was the Acropolis, which all could see from the Observatory before raising their eyes towards the stars. Then again, what the younger Hansen desired intact and, therefore, unspoiled and frozen in time, could be the new capital that he, his brother and their friends had destined for eternity. Fourteen years after he commanded the next generations not to harm the Observatory, and maybe the Acropolis and Athens, Theophil Hansen transferred modern Athens to an emphatically mythical modernity that maintained the modern-ancient Athens as an eternal metropolis. Inspired by the Propylaea and the Erechtheium,<sup>1514</sup> that constituted two thirds of what Mauclair defined as the ancient trilogy, Theophil Hansen built what some have characterized as "possibly the finest neoclassical building anywhere"<sup>1515</sup> – the Academy of Athens.

## IX

Works on the Academy started in 1859, thereby realizing a Greek dream concerning such an institution that was expressed even before the country's liberation.<sup>1516</sup> In 1863, discontented with Otto's expulsion, Baron Sinas, the primary sponsor of the Academy, halted the building works that were re-commenced five years later.<sup>1517</sup> After Sinas' death, his wife undertook responsibility for completion of the Academy which, again under Ziller's supervision, was finally opened to the public on the sixteenth of December 1885.<sup>1518</sup> For some, the neo-Ionic Academy was the perfect example of 'Greek' architecture. On the twenty-ninth of November 1856, for instance, Schaubert sent a letter to Theophil Hansen<sup>1519</sup> wherein he expressed his joy concerning the 'purely' Greek character of the plan for the Academy.<sup>1520</sup> Hansen received the letter in Vienna, which he has embellished with another eclectically Ionic building, this time surrounded by Caryatides – the Parliament.

<sup>1512</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.131.

<sup>1513</sup> See *ibid.*, p.131. For the location of the Observatory see Main Map, Front Page, Number 128.

<sup>1514</sup> See I. Travlos op. cit., 1967, p.33, and K. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.154.

<sup>1515</sup> E. Speller *ATHENS*. London: Granta, 2004, p.213.

<sup>1516</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.151-154 and H.H. Russack op. cit., 1991, pp.138-142. Note, however, that according to M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame the building of the Academy started in 1860. See M. Bires and M. Kardamitse-Adame op. cit., 2001, p.142.

<sup>1517</sup> See K. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.154.

<sup>1518</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1519</sup> For Schaubert's letter to Theophil Hansen see O. Badema-Foudoulake op. cit., 2001, p.42 and endnote 137, pp.240-241.

<sup>1520</sup> See *ibid.*, p.240.

Although Hermann J. Kienast<sup>1521</sup> suggests that the *Reichsrat* in Vienna is merely an enlargement of the Athens Academy,<sup>1522</sup> the formal and symbolic differences and similarities between the two buildings may reveal the continuity in their architect's approach to a modern that appears as the ancient. Above all, the two Hansen monuments that concern us here illustrate their architect's attempt to engage with those nineteenth-century architectural theories that "vainly sought to bridge an epistemological chasm between a premodern and a modern world, between the polis and the metropolis."<sup>1523</sup> In further attempting to conceal the problematical character of this quest,<sup>1524</sup> Theophil Hansen attempted to bridge the gap between the new and the old by means of buildings that we can now identify as twins. Indeed, whilst the Academy was a reality in 1885, the *Reichsrat* was offered to the modern only a year earlier, in 1884.<sup>1525</sup> The most obvious similarity between the *Reichsrat* and the Academy of Athens is that they both reveal the state's power to create and use modern monuments. What is at stake here is the disguise of the differences between the newness of the nineteenth-century 'democracies' and the 'original' Periclean regime. Consequently, the possible tensions between the state, the aristocracy, the emerging bourgeoisie, and the distance between antiquity and modernity, are all issues that hide in those monuments. Above all, both the Academy of Athens and the Austrian Parliament include statues of the Goddess Athena. This way, they both claim the wisdom that the Olympian represented once upon a time. A political institution on the one hand, and a presumably apolitical academic institution on the other, Theophil Hansen's Viennese and Athenian 'masterpieces' point to two, albeit related, routes to modernity: Historicism and Myth.

In connecting all the buildings of the Viennese *Ringstrasse*, the *Reichsrat* ultimately relates all the modern monuments of the street to the State.<sup>1526</sup> Whichever way one wishes to stroll the *Ringstrasse* from the Parliament, both the right and left directions begin with the assumption that the building embodies a charismatic authority. Ascending the *Reichsrat* from the left today, we encounter the paired statues of Xenophon and Thucydides, of Herodotus and Polyvius. To the left of the building's entrance we read Article 1 of the post-World War II Declaration of Human Rights, and then we move on to see Theophil Hansen's bust. Descending, finally, from the right, we see another two sets of paired statues, this time of Titus Livius and Tacitus, of Sallustius and Julius Caesar. In other words, depending on how we ascend to the entrance, history in the *Reichsrat* begins

<sup>1521</sup> See H.J. Kienast "I Neoklassike Arhitektonike stin Athena kai ta Protypa tis." [Neoclassical Architecture in Athens and its Models] *Athenaikos Klassikismos*. op. cit., 1996, pp.45-56.

<sup>1522</sup> See *ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>1523</sup> M. Schwartz op. cit., 1995, p.269.

<sup>1524</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1525</sup> See *ibid.*, p.69.

<sup>1526</sup> C.E. Schorske *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1980.

either with Thucydides, the historian that glorified his friend's, Pericles' polis, or with the most powerful Caesar of the Roman Empire. All eight statues hold books in their hands. Tacitus' book, the only legible one, reads: *Historiae Annales*. Caesar, the ancient *Kaiser*, stands in front of Tacitus, with his back turned on him. The tallest features of the *Reichsrat* are the two poles whose tops are decorated with the Emperor's eagle, possibly suggesting that the *Kaiser* has the legitimate authority to undermine the democracy that the Parliament represents. This negotiable democracy was exemplified in the 1873 Austrian elections that preceded the initiation of the building works for the *Reichsrat* by one year. From a total of twenty and a half million population, only one and a half million had the right to vote.<sup>1527</sup> The lower social orders did not have a right to vote until 1896.<sup>1528</sup> Indeed, the 1873 Austrian elections gave the aristocrats and the wealthy peasants that traditionally supported the monarchy, a majority of sixty per cent of the total seats.<sup>1529</sup> The 'Greek'-looking *Reichsrat* in Vienna uses the statue of Athena and the Ionic order as a means for the concealment of the class struggles that are yet to fully constitute democracy. Although not unrelated to her Viennese story concerning the debatable character of modern democracies, the Athena of the Academy takes a step back from the centre of attention and hands the city over to philosophy. After all, if Vienna was a metropolis for the empire, with the ancient Greek and Byzantine empires merely the dream of the supporters of the irredentist Great Idea, Athens was a capital for a modernity that highlighted the city as the re-enchantment of the world.

The principal façade of the Academy includes two columns upon which there stand two statues. The figure on the right depicts Apollo, the Olympian Sun-God, whereas the one on the left portrays Athena.<sup>1530</sup> Appalled by the site of this "Athena of the Academy,"<sup>1531</sup> the notorious Athenian satirical poet Georgios Soures<sup>1532</sup> wanted to take the statue down because it reminded him of a schoolteacher.<sup>1533</sup> Although one of the most distinguished cultural and educational institutions of modern Greece, the appearance of the building that houses the Academy of Athens teaches a lesson about modernity that some, for example Soures, did not believe. Soures' resistance to the Athena of the Academy was not confined to an Athenian aesthetic exhaustion with the imitation of ancient forms. On

<sup>1527</sup> See A.J. Mayer *The Persistence of the Old Regime*. London: Groom Helm, 1981, pp.170-171.

<sup>1528</sup> See *ibid.*, p.172.

<sup>1529</sup> See *ibid.*, p.172.

<sup>1530</sup> See A. Philadelphus *op. cit.*, 2004, pp.117-118.

<sup>1531</sup> See G. Soures *Apanda*. [The Complete Works] Vol.2, T. Spyropoulos ed., Athens: P. Koutsoumbas, 1971, pp.92-93.

<sup>1532</sup> Soures was a nineteenth-century Athenian celebrity for both intellectuals and the rest of the Athenians. See for example, *Nea Estia*. (Special Issue) Year KZ', Vol.54, Issue 637, Athens, 1 December 1953. "Tria Afieromata – Georgios Soures (1853-1953), Sotetes Skipes (1881-1954), Stefanos Xanthoulides (1864-1928)." *esp.*, pp.1734-1765.

<sup>1533</sup> See *ibid.*, p.92.

the contrary, in being convinced that his time and contemporaries should respect, but, nonetheless, escape those 'glorious' but tyrannical ancestors, Soures believed that modern Greeks should dispute Athena's lesson and create a culture that would make them proud and not ashamed of their modernity. Soures' main objection is that Athena does not teach history in the Academy. Rather, she teaches the myths that the Greek schools still teach. In verifying Nietzsche's observation that, "only where the radiance of myths falls is the life of the Greeks bright [and that] elsewhere it is gloomy,"<sup>1534</sup> the relief in the central pediment depicts the birth of Athena,<sup>1535</sup> the birth, in short, of Athens. In the Academy, myth is radiating that which makes the life of Greeks – ancient and modern alike – glorious. Contrary to the Parthenon that celebrated the Athenians themselves, Hansen's Academy implies that his modernity rejects the Christian God as well as that his modernity is the direct heir of the 'city of all cities'. Only if we walk towards his brother's University do we suspect that, with the blessings of the Church, Otto had taken the place of Zeus, Athena's father, as the head of the modern Pantheon.

In the Academy, Hansen has replaced the *Reichsrat's* tale about history with one about philosophy. Two seated figures welcome the stroller into the Academy: Socrates on the right and Plato on the left.<sup>1536</sup> Nevertheless in the Academy, Socrates and Plato, whose statues were added to the building after Sinas' death in 1876,<sup>1537</sup> ignore the existence of Aristotle. Perhaps this is because Aristotle supported oligarchy or maybe it is because he was not an Athenian.<sup>1538</sup> Indeed, nobody served the polis more faithfully than Plato whose teacher, Socrates, died as a testament to his faith in the polis. In the Academy, they are represented as the gatekeepers of a modernity that has revived their polis. The hidden argument here is that, if this new Athens is still accompanied by its glorious ancient fathers, then its modern fathers must also be capable of great deeds, indeed of the very spirit and intellect that modernity seems to lack.

Faithful to Hansen's sketches and created by Christian Grinpeckel, who was teaching painting in Vienna, the frescos of the main conference hall of the Academy depict the myth of Prometheus.<sup>1539</sup> In so doing, they point to how Hansen took a step further from antiquity. In selectively reproducing the formal elements of the ancient monuments, and thereby illustrating historicism's dependence upon great narratives, Hansen conceived of the Academy as a key symbolic monument that appears as continuous from antiquity.

<sup>1534</sup> F. Nietzsche op. cit., 1991, p.122.

<sup>1535</sup> The pediment of the Academy was design by Rahl and was pained by Leonidas Drosos. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.154.

<sup>1536</sup> See A. Philadelphus op. cit., 2004, p.118.

<sup>1537</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.154. Note here that Bires mistakes Socrates' statue with one portraying Aristotle. See *ibid*.

<sup>1538</sup> Aristotle was born in Stageira, Macedonia.

<sup>1539</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.154.

Then, in choosing Prometheus, he further concealed the fact that, above all, the new wants to create its own monuments. The appearance of the Academy may tempt us to assume that it is an old building but the Prometheus myth leaves no doubt as to the fact that the new believes that it does not really need the past. Like the deity who sacrificed himself for human autonomy and rejection of the old regime of the Olympians, Theophil Hansen firmly believed in the supremacy of his present's potential as the eternal modernity that has at last tamed antiquity. As long as the Athenian Trilogy, [Fig. XXV], and especially the Academy, still stands, the nineteenth century is the present that has survived and will outlive the future. In this, it is assisted by the history of the ambivalent victory of antiquity in the capital's streets.

## X

According to Maro Vouyiouka and Vasilis Megaridis,<sup>1540</sup> the naming of streets satisfies two primary objectives.<sup>1541</sup> In relation to the numbering of their buildings, the naming of streets satisfies a 'pure function' and becomes one's home and address.<sup>1542</sup> At the same time, the address also becomes the site where the state can always locate the city's dwellers for its 'needs': for taxation, for detection of the electorate or for policing. The other purpose of street names is, for Vouyiouka and Megaridis, 'ethical-social'.<sup>1543</sup> Here, 'society' finds the opportunity to pay tribute to the people, events, and places that have contributed to the greater good of the 'nation', 'society', and the 'world'.<sup>1544</sup> This latter 'function' points to the question as to who chooses street names, as well as to why these choices are relevant in the context of Athenian – or any other metropolitan – modernity. Close to his analysis of Benjamin's work as exemplary of the *flâneur's* "desire to know and to analyse that which is new in the modern metropolis,"<sup>1545</sup> Frisby maintains that, amongst other modern techniques for deception, mythology and "architectural façades (especially historical ones [...] function as veils,"<sup>1546</sup> that block our understanding of the city. Especially in their names, streets themselves emerge as veils. But like the exploration of the meaning of architectural façades, that of street names can also expose the modernity's fascination with veils.<sup>1547</sup> In complementing the "labyrinth of urban

<sup>1540</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.1.

<sup>1541</sup> See *ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>1542</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1543</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1544</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1545</sup> D. Frisby "The Metropolis as Text: Otto Wagner and Vienna's 'Second Renaissance'," in N. Leach ed., *Hieroglyphics of Space*. London: Spon, 2002, p.1.

<sup>1546</sup> D. Frisby op. cit., 1997, p.92.

<sup>1547</sup> This is the assumption behind Benjamin's reappraisal of the *flâneur*. See, for example, W. Benjamin "The Return of the Flâneur," in W. Benjamin, *Selected Writings*. M.W. Jennings, H. Eiland and G. Smith eds., R. Livingstone and others trs., Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999(a), pp.262-267 and W. Benjamin "Review of Hessel's *Heimliches Berlin*," in *ibid.*, pp.69-71.

dwellings,”<sup>1548</sup> street names constitute the “linguistic network of the city”<sup>1549</sup> that contributes to the city itself as a “linguistic cosmos.”<sup>1550</sup> But Benjamin’s exploration of streets introduces a dialectic in the modern metropolis, one that is not clear in Athens. For him, the ‘street’, “must be profiled against the older term ‘way’.”<sup>1551</sup> Both nurture antiquity, but the former leads “to the monotonous, fascinating, constantly unrolling bond of asphalt,”<sup>1552</sup> and belongs to the modern metropolis and, especially, Paris.<sup>1553</sup> How is Benjamin’s ‘capital of the nineteenth century’ related to the modern city that retains its Sacred Way?<sup>1554</sup> Taking the argument back to Vouyiouka and Megaridis’ analysis of street names in the context of who and why defines the city’s – literally written – ‘language games’, Daniel Milo’s,<sup>1555</sup> study of the streets of France reveals that, “even if what street names teach us about collective memory and renown remains ambiguous, they do tell us about the establishment’s representations of the national memory and the nation’s great men as well as about the means of promoting these representations.”<sup>1556</sup> For instance, Milo explains that, since 1789, despite the continuous renaming of streets as the means to the propagation of the revolutionaries’ objectives,<sup>1557</sup> with the subsequent restoration of pre-revolution names, under Napoleon I,<sup>1558</sup> and the subsequent adoption of this practice by the succeeding governments, central Paris later emerged as an ‘imperial city’.<sup>1559</sup>

In this respect, therefore, the streets of Paris, or of any other metropolis, constitute a ‘streetscape of memory’ that hides the dialectic between remembering and forgetting, but which can also be read in order to expose the reasons behind the debatable character of the memory of the city. In regards to a past that is represented and one that is not, and as far as the State appears as the primary determining agent in the naming of streets, Athens is close to the Parisian example. But then again, what made Paris the capital of the nineteenth century was not its streetscapes as such. Rather, it was the grand Parisian boulevards, which disguised the functional character of the street.<sup>1560</sup> The fact that nineteenth-century

<sup>1548</sup> See W. Benjamin op. cit., 2002, p.84-C1a,2.

<sup>1549</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1550</sup> Ibid., p.522-P3,5.

<sup>1551</sup> Ibid., p.519-P2,1.

<sup>1552</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1553</sup> See *ibid.*, Convolute P: “The Streets of Paris,” pp.516-526.

<sup>1554</sup> Iera Odos (Sacred Way) lead the Athenians towards Eleusina, the site of the ‘Eleusinian mysteries’, a mystical and religious celebration. The street is now considerably industrialized but retains its original ancient name.

<sup>1555</sup> See D. Milo “Street Names,” in P. Nora et. al., eds., op. cit., 1997, Chapter 11, pp.363-389.

<sup>1556</sup> Ibid., p.366.

<sup>1557</sup> See *ibid.*, p.372.

<sup>1558</sup> See *ibid.*, p.378.

<sup>1559</sup> See *ibid.* Yet, even during the revolutionary period, the renaming of streets in Paris was less ‘impressive’ than it was in the provinces. See *ibid.*, p.373.

<sup>1560</sup> With Benjamin, the street hides the tensions between the past and the present but also the commodities that have seduced the ‘dreaming collective’. The boulevards in particular, mask and forget the struggles and destruction of the Commune.

Athens largely lacked Haussmann's boulevards,<sup>1561</sup> initially suggests an absence of the modernity that fascinated Benjamin in Paris. But then again, as we have suggested with the Trilogy, in Athens, modernity always creeps in, in a defensive way. In Athens we have a streetscape of a myth that looks ancient but is modern. In contrast to the Athenian Trilogy, the streets did not always impress either those who came to see or those who dwelled in the new 'glorious' Athens.

On the twenty-fourth of August 1880, for example, the satirical Athenian newspaper *Asmodaios*,<sup>1562</sup> published an imaginary dialogue between two men, one of which was asking the other for his address.<sup>1563</sup> In attempting to give his address to his friend, Yiannis told him that he had to pass through a grocery shop and then walk towards a paddock that had a cypress in its centre.<sup>1564</sup> To the left of the cypress, he would find a cobbler whom he should ask about Yiannis' home.<sup>1565</sup> In 1880, Athens' streets were named but, often, the name was nowhere to be seen. Three years later Emmanuel Roides, a prominent author and the editor of *Asmodaios*, complained about the conditions in Panepistemiou Street.<sup>1566</sup> Three years later, Krumbacher wrote that even though Panepistemiou and Stadiou streets would "constitute an honour and a jewel for any European capital,"<sup>1567</sup> others did not have pavements, were not stone-paved and, depending on the season, were either very dirty or very dusty.<sup>1568</sup> Krumbacher was not alone in arguing that the streets were one of modern Athens' main problems. Even though she would generally disagree with Krumbacher on the 'beauty' of the capital, the American geographer Annie S. Peck<sup>1569</sup> maintained that, more than any other country in Europe and because of its history and art, Greece 'deserved' the "attention of the student and the

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<sup>1561</sup> In general, the landowners often contested the opening of streets in Athens. Once more, the governments proved weak. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.102-103. One of the first few Athenian boulevards is the Apostle Pavlou-Dionyssiou Areopagitou that we have discussed in Chapter 6. See *ibid.*, p.102. Another two boulevards, Sygrou and Alexandra's (1876-1878), are the work of the topographer Ioannis Genisarlos. See *ibid.*, pp.188-190. Finally, concerning Panepistemiou Street, Klenze had defined a width of 12m but the Ministry of the Interior defined it as a boulevard of 32m. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1956, pp.29-30. In the 1870s, Panepistemiou Street incorporated the majority of the modern monuments. See A. Polites op. cit., 2003, p.80.

<sup>1562</sup> See *Asmodaios*, No.80, 24 August 1880.

<sup>1563</sup> See *ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>1564</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1565</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1566</sup> See E. Roides in *Asmodaios*, No.240, 18 September 1883, p.2. Although works on the streets had started as early as the 1850s, Athens' streets were first asphalt-paved in 1905. Aeolou, Stadiou, Athenas', and Panepistemiou were the first streets to enjoy the privilege. See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, pp.101-103, and pp.101-103. The first attempt for centrally organized public works on the part of the Ministry of the Interior was initiated with the foundation, in February 1878, of the Service of public engineers. See *ibid.*, pp.190-191.

<sup>1567</sup> K. Krumbacher op. cit., 1994, p.134.

<sup>1568</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.133-134.

<sup>1569</sup> See A.S. Peck "Greece and Modern Athens." *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol.25, 1893, pp.483-511. For Peck's definition of Athens as a 'hardly' beautiful city see *ibid.*, p.500.

traveller."<sup>1570</sup> For Peck, Greece, which had previously fallen "almost into wilderness,"<sup>1571</sup> succeeded in restoring its "imperishable glory,"<sup>1572</sup> and "once more [...] took her place among the nations."<sup>1573</sup> In having exhibited her ignorance concerning the not quite so 'wild' state of pre-liberation Greece, Peck attributed the country's return to 'civilization' to the transfer of the capital to Athens. This she defined as a "matter of sentiment, in which feeling, not only the Greeks, but the whole western world had a share."<sup>1574</sup> For Peck, 1893 Athens was adorned by the Palace, "the most striking object in the modern city,"<sup>1575</sup> and by the Athenian Trilogy.<sup>1576</sup> In all other respects, the new city looked like "many others in Europe,"<sup>1577</sup> and it had "reason to be proud of its appearance if its age [was] considered."<sup>1578</sup> As for its streets, despite the few 'handsome ones', others were 'narrow', 'circuitous' with 'little houses', 'queer little shops' and people that ultimately made Peck assume that it was better to "walk in the middle of the street."<sup>1579</sup>

It is true that the Greek government was not wealthy. Public works, including the opening, paving, and decoration of streets, were usually co-funded by the government, a number of individuals and the wealthy. For instance, in the 1850s, Michael Tositsas offered to the government 50,000 French francs for the paving of the capital's streets.<sup>1580</sup> Nevertheless, most Athenians, Greeks and travellers, complained about an overall uncomfortable situation in the streets of new Athens. What we have seen with the plans and the modern monuments and conclude with in the streets is that, in contrast to the sanitization of the Acropolis and the city, the creation of a new Athens was a difficult, expensive, and chaotic project. Above all else, this means that the search for a new Athens usually meant the restoration of the old one. It might have been easier if Athens were not the capital and was simply allowed to continue its own journey through time. Its streets, which often constituted a labyrinth of disgrace, finally narrate the story of a modern Athens whose streetscape ought to speak an ancient language that the moderns could not pronounce properly. This, however, does not mean that Athens failed its modernity.

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<sup>1570</sup> Ibid., p.484.

<sup>1571</sup> Ibid., p.492.

<sup>1572</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1573</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1574</sup> Ibid., pp.492-493.

<sup>1575</sup> Ibid., p.499.

<sup>1576</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.502-503.

<sup>1577</sup> Ibid., p.500.

<sup>1578</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1579</sup> Ibid., pp.500-501.

<sup>1580</sup> See K.H. Bires *op. cit.*, 1999, p.101.

## XI

Although the streets of greater Athens may indicate how the capital was related to a more general, albeit often contested 'national' project,<sup>1581</sup> those of central Athens often suggest a concentration of typically Athenian themes. Hence, even though Bastéa's<sup>1582</sup> reading of Athenian streets, and especially the Athena's-Panepistemiou-Metropoleos' triangle, in relation to the construction, in the capital of a nation worthy of Europe,<sup>1583</sup> and with its own 'national definition',<sup>1584</sup> may account for the bond between modern Greece and new Athens, she, nonetheless, does not explain how both these aspirations were largely defined by foreigners, whose interest in Athens was not limited to its being the capital of Greece. Yet, if read separately from the national orientation that she attaches to modern Athenian streets, what Bastéa defines as a "yearning for a strong connection – if not identification – with the classical past,"<sup>1585</sup> can help us illustrate the hypothesis concerning Athens as a capital of and for modernity. The question is: has modern Athens redeemed its antiquity in the modernity that constructed it? Reminiscent of Elgin's dysfunctional 'offer' to the city, the numbering of Panepistemiou Street begins with 200 and not with 1.<sup>1586</sup> The missing 200 numbers belong to 28es Oktovriou Street.<sup>1587</sup> But in highlighting the absurdity in Athenian modernity, 28es Oktovriou is the official name of half of Panepistemiou Street.<sup>1588</sup> In creating a contrast with Benjamin's observation that, "the numbering of houses in the big cities may be used to document progressive standardization,"<sup>1589</sup> contemporary Athenian streets continue to narrate the story of another modernity. At first, we are tempted to believe that except for the regulated sanitization of the past, all else in modern Athens went strangely 'wrong' for the modern. But the 'defensive' Athenian modernity that was introduced in the capital since 1834, now gives rise to contradictions that are not always real. In the end, it all comes down to language and to a new Athens that still attempts to speak like the ancients. Yet, parallel to the naming of the districts of the

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<sup>1581</sup> For the argument concerning the Acropolis and street names in the context of contested 'national symbols' see, for example, S. Bozos "National Symbols and Ordinary People's Response: London and Athens: 1850-1914." *National Identities*, Vol.6, No.1, 2004, pp.25-41.

<sup>1582</sup> See E. Bastéa "Etching Images on the Street – Planning and National Aspirations," in Z. Çelik, D. Farro and R. Ingersoll eds., *Streets*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, p.111-124.

<sup>1583</sup> See *ibid.*, p.112.

<sup>1584</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1585</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1586</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis "Paraxena Apanemata stous Dromous tis Athenas." [Strange Occurrences in the Streets of Athens] *TA ATHINAIKA*, Issue 107, 2001., p.22.

<sup>1587</sup> See *ibid.* The 28<sup>th</sup> of October, after which half the street is named, is a national holiday and celebration of Greece's refusal, in 1940, to cooperate with Mussolini and Hitler. The next day Greece was at war.

<sup>1588</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *op. cit.*, 2001, p.22.

<sup>1589</sup> W. Benjamin *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. H. Zohn tr., London: NLB, 1973, p.43.

capital in the late nineteenth century,<sup>1590</sup> that urged some to propose the exclusive implementation of names that would restore the city's ancient glory,<sup>1591</sup> and made others, such as Kambouroglou, to insist that all new districts should have neo-hellenic names,<sup>1592</sup> there are two different ways of reading Athenian street names.

If the streets of Athens today are exemplary of the same selective past that was the mirror for the plans of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, they cannot possibly incorporate "the vestiges of the city's long and multifaceted past."<sup>1593</sup> In constituting an integral part of metropolitan modernity, streets should logically follow the same approach to the past as the rest of the city. With regards to their names, the streets of the municipality of Athens represent antiquity by an overall 24.5%,<sup>1594</sup> and strongly point to the 'golden century'. Moreover, out of the five different categories,<sup>1595</sup> that constitute Athens' 'linguistic cosmos', the 'people – groups of people' category comprises a 66% of the sum of street names.<sup>1596</sup> 9.5% of this category refer to mythical figures whereas 16.1% 'honours' ancient Greeks.<sup>1597</sup> Conversely, this category includes 2.6% that is dedicated to Byzantine names, 3.2% that memorializes the people that lived during the Turkish occupation, and 10.2% that refer to the fighters of the Revolution and to the Philhellenes.<sup>1598</sup> In contrast to the relatively decent percentage of the representation of the period of the Turkish occupation, the Middle Ages fall to obscurity with a mere 0.1%.<sup>1599</sup> The nineteenth-century figures comprise another 10.2% of the 'people – groups of people' category, whereas the post-1900 personalities take up another 14.2%.<sup>1600</sup> Hence, the majority of Athenian street names today represent either the ancient or the very new. In joining with those who fought the revolution that created modern Greece, the fathers of the new capital are gradually becoming part of a past that is not as 'glorious' as antiquity. Finally, from all the names of people or groups in this category, only a shocking 0.9% refer

<sup>1590</sup> For the place-names of Athens see, for example, K. Kazantzis "Onomata kai Istoría ton Athenáikon Synoikion." [The Names and History of the Neighbourhoods of Athens] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 9, February 1958, pp.49-53, and I. Sarris *Ta Toponymia tis Attikes*. [Place-Names of Attica] Volume M(9), Athens, 1928.

<sup>1591</sup> In 1884, a two-member unsuccessfully proposed the naming of some of the capital's districts according to an ancient place or person. See E. Skiadas op. cit., 2001, p.32. Skiadas also maintains the relation between the naming of the districts and that of streets. See *ibid.*, esp., pp.31-39 and pp.149-153.

<sup>1592</sup> See D.G. Kambouroglou *Meletai kai Erevnai – Attika*. [Studies and Research – Attic]. Athens: Estia, 1923, p.157. For Kambouroglou's appreciation of non-classical place names see also D.G. Kambouroglou *Toponymika Paradoxa*. [Paradoxical Place-Names] Athens: I.D. Kollaros, Estia, 1920.

<sup>1593</sup> E. Bastéa op. cit., 2000, p.3.

<sup>1594</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.1, p.28. All the categorizations and statistics provided here for street names are drawn by M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis.

<sup>1595</sup> The five categories are: 'people-groups of people', 'geography', 'abstract concepts', 'animals-plants', and 'miscellaneous'. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.1, p.27.

<sup>1596</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1597</sup> See *ibid.*, p.28.

<sup>1598</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1599</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1600</sup> See *ibid.*

to women.<sup>1601</sup> To make things worse, the majority of this 0.9% refers either to mythical figures or to saints of the Christian Church.<sup>1602</sup> In fact, even here, the former constitutes a total of 5.5%, whilst the latter struggles with a mere 0.8%.<sup>1603</sup> As read from its streets, Athenian modernity is still archaïomanic and male. But the 14.2% that represents twentieth-century personalities leaves no doubt as to the modernity's confidence about itself. This, however, refers to the 'official' truth.

Like the urban-planning and demographic development of the capital, its streetscape has been formed in a chaotic manner.<sup>1604</sup> For instance, in 1911, the government added four hundred and forty six streets to Athens and Piraeus, thereby reaching the 1912 sum of one thousand and nine streets for both municipalities.<sup>1605</sup> Two years later, a guide to both cities required only thirty-six pages for the named streets of Athens.<sup>1606</sup> By 1945, Athens alone had almost two thousand, seven hundred streets.<sup>1607</sup> By the late 1980s it had approximately three thousand, one hundred and thirty streets.<sup>1608</sup> Yet, although all this information can explain the rapid development of the Athenian streetscape, it may still be misleading. After more than twenty years of research in the field, Maro Vouyiouka and Vasilis Megaridis, authors of a three volume history of today's Athenian street names, suggest that, both the opening and the naming of streets is often rendered difficult – if not impossible.<sup>1609</sup> This is due to a number of problems. The first, as we have seen with the case of Panepistemiou Street, is that Athenians do not always agree with the official name and, therefore, defy it and instead, continue using the one they like. In this case the official name is inactive but still in effect. In most cases, this is the result of a continuous renaming of the streets,<sup>1610</sup> that lasted until the official revision of 1938 and which replaced early twentieth-century names with older ones.<sup>1611</sup> Nevertheless, the state does not always have the last word in Athens.

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<sup>1601</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1602</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1603</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1604</sup> Note here that although we will discuss certain figures, the number of streets cannot easily be accounted for. This is due to the fact that a street may have been open but not yet named and, was not, therefore, always recorded. See E. Skiadas *op. cit.*, 2001.

<sup>1605</sup> I have calculated the number of streets from: E. Koures *Panellenton Istorikon Egoipion - Istoría ton Odon Athenon-Peiraios*. [Pan-hellenic Historic [...] – The History of the Street Names of Athens and Piraeus] Athens, 1912.

<sup>1606</sup> See *Neos Odegos Athenon kai Peiraios*. [New Guide to Athens and Piraeus] Athens: M.I Saliveros, 1914, pp.6-39.

<sup>1607</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *op. cit.*, 1997, Vol.1, p.20.

<sup>1608</sup> See *ibid.*, p.17.

<sup>1609</sup> See *ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>1610</sup> Massive renaming of streets occurred in 1884, 1893, 1916, 1927, 1928, 1943, and after World War II. See *ibid.*, p.17. This renaming was probably related to Constitutional and governmental changes,

<sup>1611</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *op. cit.*, 1997, Vol.1, p.21.

Although the Bavarian administration entrusted its architects and engineers, for instance Kleanthes and Wilhelm von Weiler, to restore the city's 'glory' in the streets,<sup>1612</sup> the Athenians continuously undermined their plans by naming streets after their home island or even after themselves.<sup>1613</sup> Even when the naming of streets became the responsibility of the municipality, the City Council, which would be expected to have the people's support, decided upon names that were never implemented.<sup>1614</sup> This was due to Athenians total disapproval of the official name. After World War II, for example, in its attempt to please the British government, the City Council renamed Stadiou Street as Winston Churchill Street.<sup>1615</sup> The Athenians did not appreciate the gesture so the new name was officially withdrawn.<sup>1616</sup> Stadiou Street still retains its nineteenth-century name that the Athenians liked best.<sup>1617</sup> In the streets, Athenians have sometimes reclaimed their city and, perhaps redeemed antiquity. They begin to give credit to the past that matters for them. The streets surrounding the city's ancient and modern monuments boast the glory of a modern Athens that is the direct heir of the Acropolis. The rest belong to the Athenians who defy official history and transform the city into a 'linguistic cosmos' that they can read and which makes sense to them.

## XII

More than any of its contemporaries, the Academy of Athens realizes the dream of a new, albeit, ancient metropolis. Hansen's Academy is the eternal modernity for which Athens was destined in the nineteenth century. In Milton's *Paradise Regained*,<sup>1618</sup> Satan attempts to tempt Christ by means of "the greatest of temptations for the classic soul."<sup>1619</sup> This is Athens, the 'Mother of Arts',<sup>1620</sup> and of 'Academies old and new'.<sup>1621</sup> Athens, Milton thought, is the price for which 'good' and 'evil' fight -- she is the mother of all beauty, and this time, of all knowledge too. Opposite the Academy today there stands a small neoclassical building and a late twentieth-century glass-tower that reflects a mirror image of Hansen's Athenian masterpiece, and in so doing depicts a contrast between the beautiful, 'good' old, and the ugly, 'evil' new. But this image does not necessarily reflect a

<sup>1612</sup> See K.H. Bires op. cit., 1999, p.16.

<sup>1613</sup> According to S. Bozos, this explains the concentration of manes of islands in the streets parallel to Patesion Street. See S. Bozos op. cit., 2004.

<sup>1614</sup> For the different committees of the municipality and their efforts to enforce their decisions see M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis op. cit., 1997, Vol.1, p.17.

<sup>1615</sup> See K. Kazantzis "I Istoría tis Odou Stadiou." [The History of Stadiou Street] *TA ATHENAIKA*, Issue 80, June 1985, fn.1, p.45.

<sup>1616</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1617</sup> Note, on the other hand, that the Athenians never complained about the naming of a street after an Olympic medallist. See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis "2780 Hronia Olympiakes Istorias stous Dromous tis Athenas," in J. Kairofyllas and S. Filippotes eds., op. cit., 2004, pp.101-108.

<sup>1618</sup> See Milton cited in R. Stoneman ed., op. cit., 1984, pp.120-121.

<sup>1619</sup> R. Stoneman ed., in *ibid.*, 120.

<sup>1620</sup> Milton cited in R. Stoneman ed., op. cit., 1984, p.120.

<sup>1621</sup> *Ibid.*, p.121.

contrast between the old and the new. During the 2004 Athens Olympics, the glass tower became the canvas for modernity's investment in a new Athens. Looking at the reflection of the Academy during the summer of 2004, we could also read a passage from Shelley's 'Hellas':

Another Athens shall arise,  
And to remoter time,  
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
The splendour of its prime,  
And leave, if nought so bright may live,  
All earth can take or Heaven give.

If the new Athens of the Olympics and their 'immortal spirit' of antiquity was the first instance when the modern city attempted to show to the 'world' that it, and the country, exist with antiquity in a harmonious manner,<sup>1622</sup> the Academy continues to maintain this aspiration. Since its completion in the late nineteenth century, Hansen's Academy attempts to convince the 'world' that another Athens has arisen and that it has reached the 'splendour of its prime'. During the Athens Olympics, in its reflection on the glass-tower, the Academy fulfilled Shelley's dream of a new splendid Athens, frozen in time and emerged as the perfect example of the eternity of new nineteenth-century Athens in the modern, twentieth-century Athens. [Fig. XXVI] To this future dream, Hansen had once more relied on antiquity. In its streets and in its monuments, today's Athens tells the story of a modernity that both loved and despised itself in the nineteenth century. But Athens also tells the story of a modernity that now attempts not to feel guilty for not being as 'glorious' as antiquity.

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<sup>1622</sup> Obviously, this argument can be contested if we remember that the Parthenon was amongst the first images of the television broadcasting of the Games' opening ceremony.

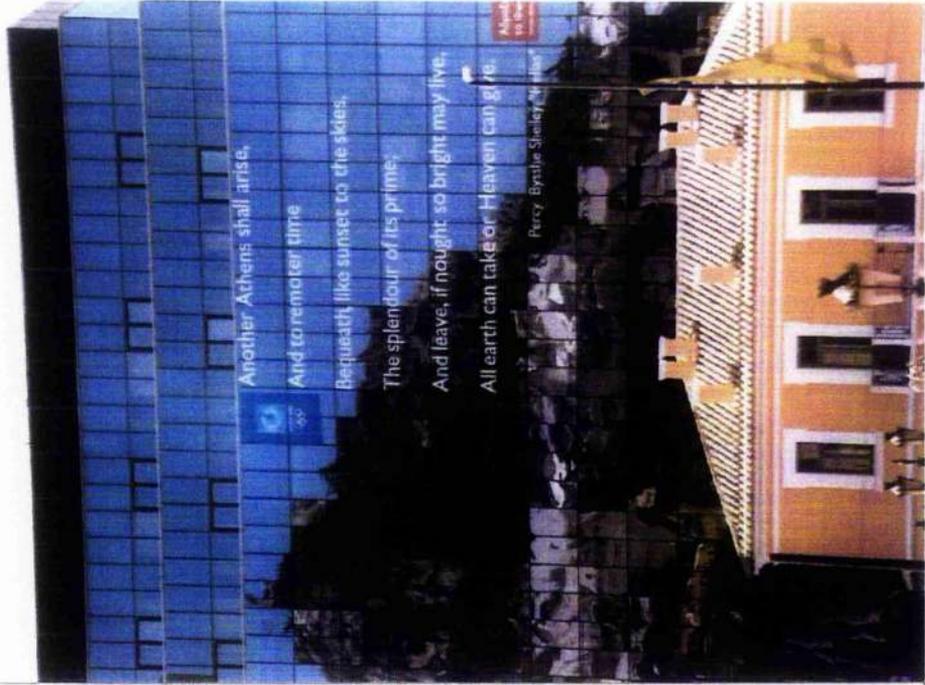
XXV

The Eternal Athenian Modernity:

The glass-towers and The reflection

of The Academy.

Summer 2004.



## ***Conclusion: Athens or Metropolitan Modernity Unmasked***

*"Classical Greece gave birth to much of what we love best about our world - notions of ethics and citizenship, love of beauty and all the fine arts, and the search for meaning; this is, after all, the cradle of reason."*<sup>1623</sup>

*"Athens is the oldest and the newest capital in Europe."*<sup>1624</sup>

*"The beauty of these temples will not be augmented by trying to imagine them whole. They possess a new beauty now, different from what they had when they were first built."*<sup>1625</sup>

### **I**

In 1909, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti published the manifesto of Futurism<sup>1626</sup> in which he declared the new movement's aim to "free [Italy] from the numberless museums that cover her like so many graveyards."<sup>1627</sup> But in affirming the "beauty of speed,"<sup>1628</sup> Marinetti contrasted the futurists' new art with that of ancient Greece and not of Italy, thereby arguing that, "a roaring car that seems to ride a grapeshot is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*."<sup>1629</sup> Two years later, and having already maintained that Europe perceived of Greece as nothing but an endless museum,<sup>1630</sup> Palamas sent a letter to Marinetti<sup>1631</sup> in which he was comparing futurism with a "handsome, tall, brave young man."<sup>1632</sup> Determined to free modern Greece from the 'shadows of the ancestors', Palamas finally wrote to Marinetti that he admired his desire to "crush the idols of past times."<sup>1633</sup> A few years later, Gregorios Ksenopoulos, a friend of Palamas, a prominent modern Greek scholar and believer in the idea that Nietzsche's 'weird', 'raw' and 'chaotic' theories should not be introduced in Greece,<sup>1634</sup> argued that if something is beautiful, it is always contemporary.<sup>1635</sup> This was in 1935. In contrast to Palamas who would admire a new beauty as much as the ancient, the beautiful for Ksenopoulos was still exemplified in the

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<sup>1623</sup> J.A. Evans "Return to Greece." *Queen's Quarterly*. No.108, Spring 2001, p.109.

<sup>1624</sup> N. Cage *Hellas - A Portrait of Greece*. Athens: Efstathiadis Group, 1985, p.143.

<sup>1625</sup> *Ibid.*, p.148.

<sup>1626</sup> See U. Apollonio ed., op. cit., 1973.

<sup>1627</sup> F.T. Marinetti in *ibid.*, p.22.

<sup>1628</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>1629</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1630</sup> See K. Palamas op. cit., *Apanda*. Vol.15, pp.524-526.

<sup>1631</sup> For Palamas' letter to Marinetti see *ibid.*, Vol.8, pp.94-96.

<sup>1632</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.

<sup>1633</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1634</sup> See G. Ksenopoulos *Apanda*. [The Complete Works] Athens: Bires, Vol.11, pp.383-385.

<sup>1635</sup> See *ibid.*, pp.324-327.

Acropolis, the “centre of the world,”<sup>1636</sup> that he so adored when he first came to Athens in 1883.<sup>1637</sup>

Although not in the city centre, Athens today has both a Gregorios Ksenopoulos and a Kostas Palamas Street.<sup>1638</sup> Modernist scholarship is welcome in new Athens. But this is an ambivalent modernism, one that attempts to escape from the ancient without desiring to destroy it. Like the reconciliation, in the streets, of those who adored antiquity with those who were longing for a modern identity that was free from antiquity, the idea of the modern in the 1930s implied an attempt to reconcile the new with the old and to maintain that the old would have approved of the beauty of the new.

Twenty-two years after Marinetti, Le Corbusier<sup>1639</sup> argued that although the ancient Greeks were successful in fully realizing the use of marble,<sup>1640</sup> the “old architectural code”<sup>1641</sup> that built the Parthenon “is no longer of interest; it no longer concerns us: all the values have been revised; there has been revolution in the conception of what Architecture is.”<sup>1642</sup> For Le Corbusier, whereas the Parthenon may appear “to us as a living work,”<sup>1643</sup> its ‘correspondence’ is with the ‘impressive machines’<sup>1644</sup> that are best described in the fast sports car. At first, one is tempted to locate Le Corbusier’s argument in the context of the romantic tradition of French Hellenism that had a century earlier supported the Greek Revolution and which had urged French historians, architects and archaeologists, such as Raoul Rochette, to believe that working in Greece was a matter of world importance.<sup>1645</sup> But, as Iain Boyd Whyte<sup>1646</sup> maintains, Le Corbusier’s “juxtaposition [...] of the Parthenon and a Delage sports car [...] and the notion of a timeless aesthetic of modernism is patently absurd.”<sup>1647</sup> Whereas Le Corbusier may erroneously lead us to consider the romanticism in his other proposal that ‘imagination’ and ‘cold reason’<sup>1648</sup> are the creative principles behind both the Parthenon and the car, the juxtaposition between the two is ‘absurd both “in terms of a common sense understanding of the machine,”<sup>1649</sup> and in terms of historiography.<sup>1650</sup> This is because, whereas the ancient world-view that built the

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<sup>1636</sup> Ibid., Vol.1, p.152.

<sup>1637</sup> For Ksenopoulos’ student years in Athens and for his admiration of the Acropolis see *ibid.*, pp.151-158.

<sup>1638</sup> See M. Vouyiouka and V. Megaridis *op. cit.*, 1997, Vol.2, p.409 and pp.448-449 respectively.

<sup>1639</sup> See Le Corbusier *op. cit.*, 1986.

<sup>1640</sup> This success was, of course, contrasted to the failure of the Romans. See *ibid.*, p.159.

<sup>1641</sup> *Ibid.*, p.287.

<sup>1642</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.287-288.

<sup>1643</sup> *Ibid.*, p.144.

<sup>1644</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>1645</sup> For the argument that Le Corbusier is the last of this tradition see R.A Etlin “Le Corbusier, Choisy, and French Hellenism.” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol.69, No.2, June 1987, pp.264-278.

<sup>1646</sup> See I. Boyd Whyte “Introduction” to I. Boyd Whyte ed., *Modernism and the Spirit of the City*. London: Routledge, 2003, pp.1-31.

<sup>1647</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1.

<sup>1648</sup> *Ibid.*, p.109.

<sup>1649</sup> See I. Boyd Whyte ed., *op. cit.*, 2003, p.1.

<sup>1650</sup> *Ibid.*

Parthenon largely perceived the new in terms of recurrence, the modern machine, in this case the sports car, implies a history that moves forward to the future and makes a claim to progress.<sup>1651</sup> Hence, we cannot uncritically compare or contrast the new with the ancient, or with the old for that matter. The greatest contribution of modern Athens is that it is unique in exposing the unstable character of the dialectic between the old and the new.

## II

Chapters one and two began with the premise that the new is doomed because it denies the fact that it will grow old. In escaping the boundaries of art, the idea of the modern soon engaged with questions concerning the potential emptiness of modern life and thereby introducing another dialectic between modernity as present and classical antiquity as the past. From this point on, our exploration of post-1834 Athens revealed a modernity that both loved and hated itself. Initially, the modern hated itself because it was not classical Athens. But in creating the representation of new Athens as the classical polis, the founders of the capital redefined antiquity and constructed a new image of the old which would re-enchant and with which they could compare their circumstances. This was the purpose of modern antiquity. Chapters three and four discussed the process of the construction of modern antiquity as the means to a re-enchanted modern world. With the sanitization of classical antiquity on the one hand and with the indiscriminate destruction of its non-classical past on the other, Athens emerged as the capital that can best illustrate a dialectic between modernity and that with which it desires to look like. Our initial approach towards modern Athens implied that it was the perfect instance of the dialectic between modernity and antiquity. Then we also introduced Athens as the ideal instance of the dialectic between modernity and modern antiquity. Finally, in realizing that modern antiquity, itself a new construct, is the other, the hidden side of modernity, we understood that, above all, Athens is unique in exposing a dialectic between modernity and itself.

Chapters five and six abandoned the dialectic between the old and the new and exposed how the modern erected the ruin anew in order to be able to create a modernity that can surpass the new and false image of the past. Since classical antiquity was already portrayed as the perfect epoch of humanity, the nineteenth-century quest was to create a new image of the old that the present could both rival and surpass. But this was a delicate process that required a belief in the illusion that antiquity was alive in the nineteenth century. [Fig. XXVII] Athens never became a new city in the way which Paris or London did in the nineteenth century. Yet, their modernity began to penetrate Athens. Until the mid-twentieth century, Athens was experienced as an ancient city with certain new elements: the Cathedral, the Palace and the Athenian Trilogy. Chapter seven, finally,

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<sup>1651</sup> Ibid., p.2.

illustrated how the new of the nineteenth century was rendered old, how it was threatened but not completely destroyed. Although the late twentieth century introduced a more inclusive approach to Athens' history, the city retains its distinctive modernity.

In contrast to that of other capitals, Athenian modernity contains four categories: the ancient, the old, the new and the new image of the old. The first category was the reason behind the representation of the classical polis as the perfect past as well as the primary motive behind the choice of Athens as the capital of modern Greece. The second category, that of the pre-1934 old, was largely destroyed in the nineteenth century. When the nineteenth-century capital became old, it, too, was also largely demolished. What exists in abundance in today's Athens is the new of the late twentieth century and the new image of the old on the Acropolis. In this respect, Athens is the perfect instance of the negative, fragmentary character of metropolitan modernity. On the other hand, since neither the pre-1834 nor the pre-1950 past is completely destroyed, and since this facilitates the reading of the traces of the past, Athens is also the perfect example of the positive fragmentary character of metropolitan modernity, one that we can understand and learn from.

### III

In attempting to overcome the lack of sociological references on Athenian modernity, our primary aim was to outline a theoretical framework for future research. What we have sought to do is to provide a starting point for the understanding of the complexities and uniqueness of a city whose representation as antiquity defined if not saturated its modernity. One of Benjamin's definitions of modernity discusses the 'new in the context of what was already there'. For Benjamin, modernity in Western Europe, and especially Paris in the nineteenth century, introduced the new versus the old as well as the significance of the ever new in commodity production. Yet, the dialectic between the new and the old also implies one between modernity and antiquity. But in Athens, the representation of modernity always had to confront antiquity and the old in a manner different from Paris. Hence, what we have sought to demonstrate is that, in Athens, the dialectic between antiquity and modernity is played out both in a different manner, and in different periods from other modern capitals. Arguing that Athens is an instance of metropolitan modernity, although largely excluded in the existing literature, was not a mere intellectual exercise. Our greatest risk was to read Athenian modernity parallel to what we defined as modern antiquity. If modern antiquity proves itself a fruitful concept, it might help us re-examine our previous understanding of metropolitan modernity in terms of the dialectic between the new and the old and focus upon a complex of dialectics, between modernity and the veils it uses in order to hide its functionalist, capitalist, and even disenchanted character. Throughout this work, in its representation as an eternal

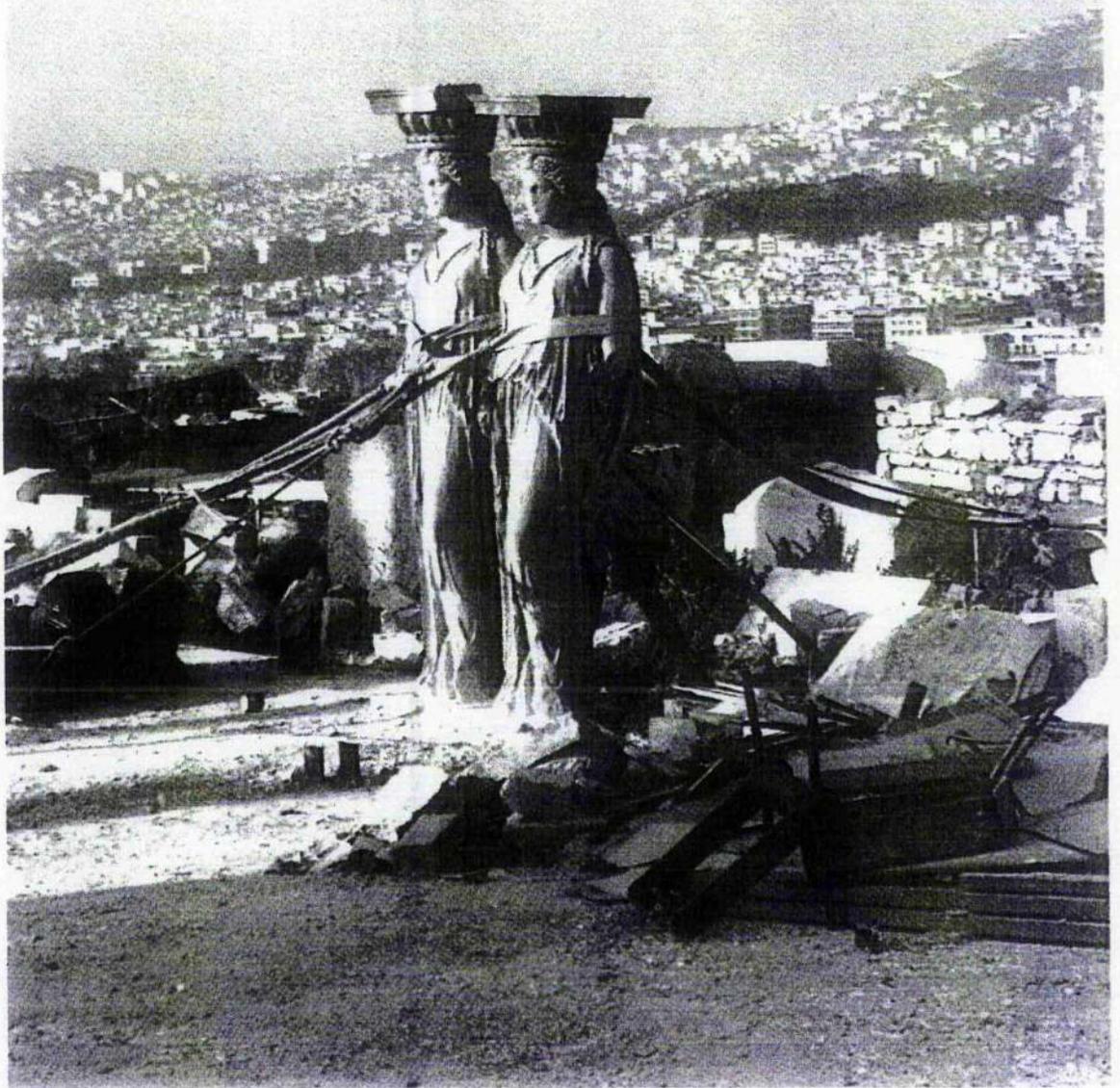
antiquity in the eternal present of modernity, modern Athens was a veil over the disenchantment of European metropolitan modernity. But in doing so, we have implied a number of possible questions that we could not answer in detail.

The obvious requirement is that future research will further explore the significance of classical education in the construction of modern antiquity, the class issues arising from the questions in regards to who it was that advocated and received this education as well as the relationship between Athens and the development of capitalism in Greece. After all, a great number of the surviving neoclassical buildings in the city centre are now housing banks. Another possible route could lead to a comparison between Athens and Thessalonike, the 'Byzantine' capital of Greece as well as one between Athens and other European capitals. The discussion of the uses of antiquity at the service of tourism and the commodification and ironical disenchantment of the ancient world could also teach us a lot about the representations of a modern Athens.

Modern Athens failed to re-enchant the modern world, but a reading of modern Athens may help us understand more about a modern world that sought to allay its lack of meaning with beauty. Athens today has finally become a city 'beyond good and evil'.<sup>1652</sup> Although neither distant nor reverent, the Acropolis is still sacred. So is Athens in a way. Even the knowledge of what has really happened does not diminish one's adoration for the Acropolis and love for the city. In Athens, modern antiquity always lies embedded in modernity's dream.

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<sup>1652</sup> For a literary portrayal of Athens in this context and for the Athenian's ambivalent response to the city's dual character as either ancient or very new see, for example, G. Seferis *Eksi Nyhtes Kato Apo tin Akropoli*. [Six Nights Under the Acropolis] Athens: Hermes, 1987.



Ακρόπολη – «Αλυσσοδεμένες» Καρυάτιδες / Acropole – Les Caryatides enchaînées

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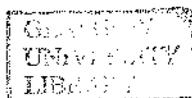
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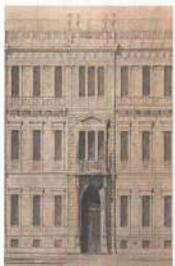
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Architectural rendering of a classical building facade.



Architectural rendering of a large classical temple complex.



Architectural rendering of a classical building facade.

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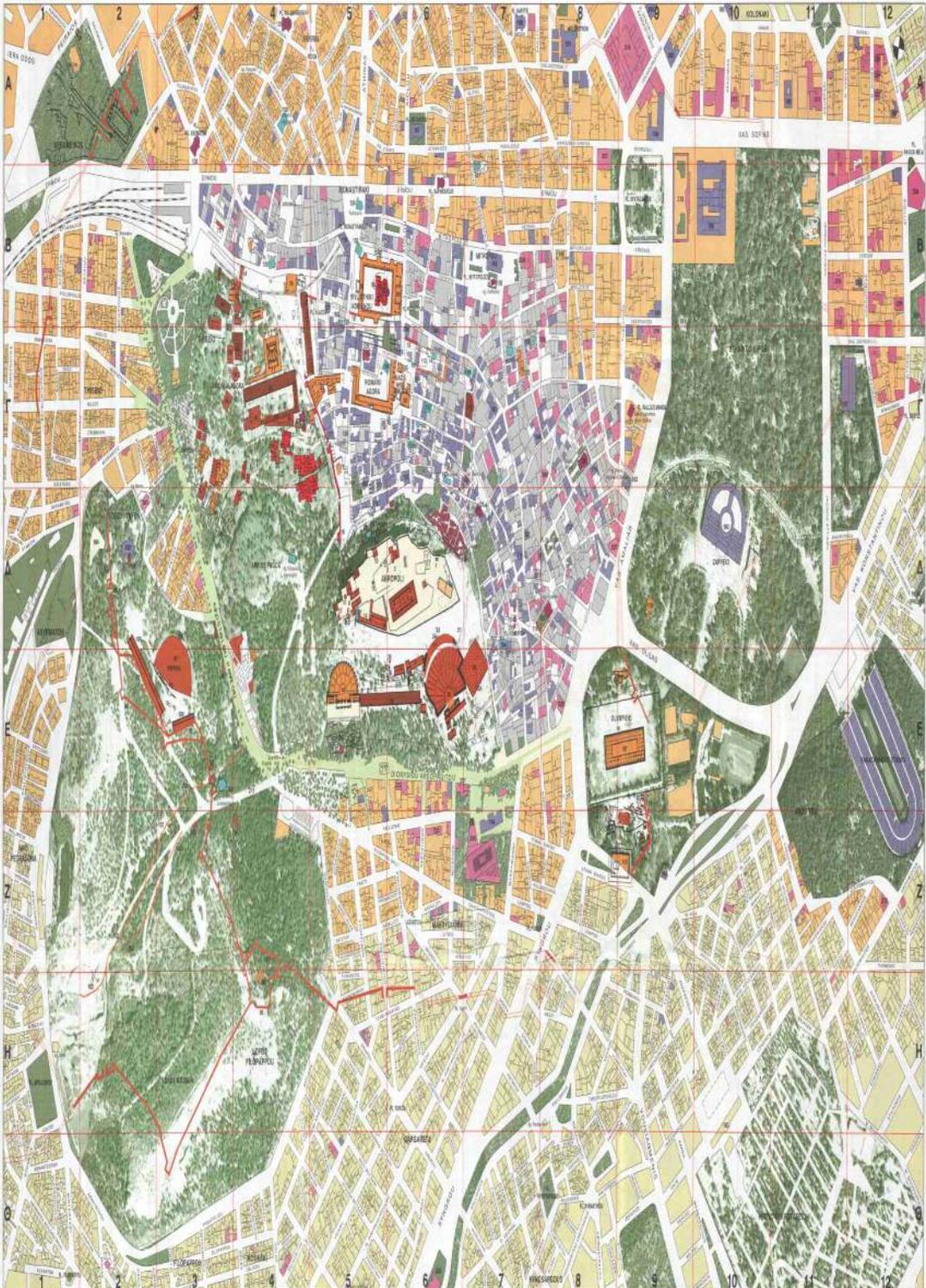
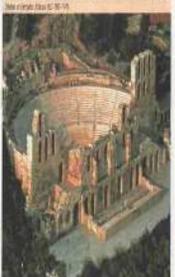


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Main text block at the bottom of the page, containing detailed project information and specifications.

