

## 2. Greek Identities and French Politics in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1846–1900)

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### Abstract

The longevity of the magazine *Revue des Deux Mondes*, its position among the French magazines, its contents, contributors and directors, all prominent scholars of France, establish the *Revue des Deux Mondes* as an important record of intellectual and political life in the nineteenth century, as well as of the way in which the West in general and France in particular regarded contemporary Greece during the same period. This study aims to provide an overview of all Greek-themed articles in the magazine from 1829 to 1899, with the purpose of exploring the various aspects of ancient and contemporary Hellenism, in relation to France's foreign policies as well as the activities of the French School at Athens.

**Keywords:** Modern Greece, ancient Greece, French School at Athens, French policies, geography, Mediterranean travels

The French magazine *Revue des Deux Mondes*<sup>1</sup> was created on 1 August 1829, with the title: *La Revue des Deux Mondes, recueil de la politique, de l'administration et des mœurs* [The Magazine of the Two Worlds: An Overview of Politics, Administration and Customs]. Prosper Mauroy (political editor)

<sup>1</sup> Thereafter abbreviated to *RdDM*. This study expands and deepens the first outcome of a research on the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, which was carried out within the broader research programme 'Travel Literature in Southeast Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, 16th-20th c.' of the Institute of Historical Research/National Hellenic Research Foundation. Part of the research material, based on literary articles of the *RdDM*, has been published in O. Polycandrioti, 'Όψεις της Ελλάδας του 19ου αιώνα στο περιοδικό *Revue des Deux Mondes*' [Aspects of Greece of the nineteenth century in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*], Proceedings of the Colloquium *La France et la Grèce au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. by Evangelhos Chryssos and Christophe Farnaud (Athens: The Hellenic Parliament Foundation, 2013), 301–312.

and Pierre de Ségur-Dupeyron (from the Ministry of Interior Affairs) were the founders of the magazine. Initially, its content was mainly geographical. On 8 February 1830, Mauroy bought the magazine *Journal des Voyages* (founded in 1818), which merged with the *Revue des Deux Mondes* to form a new entity bearing the long title: *Revue des Deux Mondes, journal des voyages, de l'administration, des mœurs, etc., chez les différents peuples du globe, ou archives géographiques et historiques du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* [Magazine of the Two Worlds: Journal of Travels, Administration, Customs etc., among the Different Peoples of the Globe, or Geographical and Historical Archives of the Nineteenth Century]. The publication ceased the day after the Revolution of 1830 and the magazine, at least in part, ended up in 1831 in the hands of the gifted François Buloz, who remained its editor until his death in 1877. Buloz, born in 1804, was just 27 years old when his life was inextricably linked to that of the *RdDM*. Buloz passionately fought for the financial survival of the magazine, and managed to turn it into an established publication in continuous circulation, in spite of occasionally adverse political circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

The strict selection of contributors and the attraction of the best writers from other publications, as well as occasional mergers (such as the one with the *Revue de Paris*), the adoption of tested methods for boosting circulation (such as the serialisation of novels), the wider variety of content, Buloz's ability to maintain a delicate political balance, even his remarkable intransigence in editing and typesetting essays himself, eventually turned the *RdDM* into an institution in nineteenth-century France. After Buloz's death in 1877, his son Charles succeeded Buloz as editor, with the help of long-time collaborators of his father's. Yet Charles Buloz had neither the wide appeal his father enjoyed, nor the same level of altruistic self-denial. In 1893, Buloz's family decided to hand direction of the magazine over to Ferdinand Brunetière, previously secretary to the editor, who had published over 200 articles on literature and philosophy.

The magazine's longevity, its special status among French print publications – a status also linked with French foreign policy – the topics covered by the magazine (politics, history, diplomacy, literature, geography), its contributors and editors, who were important figures in France, make the *RdDM* an important collection of evidence on political life during the nineteenth century, an aspect of which involved the way in which the West more generally, and France more specifically, addressed Hellenism during the same period.

<sup>2</sup> See Broglie, *Histoire politique de la Revue des Deux Mondes de 1829 à 1979*, and Furman, *La Revue des Deux Mondes et le romantisme* (1831–1848).

From the indexing of the magazine's volumes, and with the help of the comprehensive index which has been published for the period 1829–1899,<sup>3</sup> a total of about 380 articles on Greece (ancient and modern) have been identified to date. An initial picture of the manner in which Greece is presented in the *RdDM* context can be obtained by looking at its position in the index categories. In the thematic index, under the 'Travel and Ethnography' theme, Greece is placed in the subcategory 'Europe', as is Turkey. Greece also includes Cyprus. At the same time, the subcategory 'Asia' includes travelogues on the countries of the Levant ('pays du Levant'), that is, Asia Minor, eastern Turkey, and more generally the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean. It is notable that the geographic categorisation of the articles in the index is made on historical terms, which indirectly explain its title: Greece is filed under 'Old World' ('Ancien monde'), together with European countries. Greece is therefore neither part of the East nor of the Levant, but a part of the European old world. This categorisation reflects the intellectual, classically educated profile of the magazine's contributors, while also demonstrating that Greece is perceived through the filter of classical antiquity as the foundation of Western civilisation.

Among the articles are approximately 160 on topics pertinent to purely archaeological knowledge: archaeology (38), ancient history (20), classical philology (54), philosophy and religion (22), sciences (7), ancient art, or contemporary art featuring ancient Greek themes (16). References to Byzantium or the Middle Ages are few and far between: just 5 articles on Byzantine history topics, and another 5 in modern history (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries). Contemporary Greece is featured in about 138, distributed as follows: 76 articles address events in contemporary Greek politics, society, economy, and education, including 30 pertaining to the Eastern Question. In addition to these, there are 57 travelogues, plus 5 articles on military issues. This thematic categorisation of the content is of course only indicative, as the articles often contain a wide variety of information, as is the case, for example, with travelogues.

The spread and frequency with which articles focusing on Greece through the ages appeared reflects the successive forms that French interest in Greece took, and could be the subject of extensive study. Let it be noted that there is not a single year between the foundation of the magazine and the late nineteenth century during which a minimum of three articles on Greece were not published. Equally remarkable is the fact that not a single

3 The index was gradually published in four volumes in 1875 (1831–1874), 1886 (1874–1885), 1893 (1886–1893) and 1901 (1893–1901).

article is authored by a Greek. To the contrary, chief among the authors are the members of the French School at Athens, founded in 1846.

Generally, the image of Greece in the *RdDM* reflects the magazine's scholarly character, with emphasis on ancient art, philosophy, and philology, while its contemporary image is moulded to reflect the interests of French foreign and diplomatic policy in the broader area of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. The image of Greece through the articles in the *RdDM* is two-sided: on the one hand, Hellenic antiquity is promoted as the shared heritage of Western civilisation and the object of classical studies, defying any national categorisation. On the other hand, antiquity indirectly permeates the totality of articles on contemporary Greek society, and remains the uninterrupted comparative measure by which it is assessed, thereby also reflecting the political pursuits of France and her interests on the new conditions under Greek state sovereignty. The multiple references to antiquity do not only highlight the classical education of the magazine editors, but also constitute, for readers, a self-explanatory comparative interpretative filter, which to them constitutes the most familiar criterion for examining the new Hellenism. It eventually becomes apparent that the cultural context for evaluating contemporary Greece is not so much that of the East and of orientalism, but that of classical antiquity, with the inevitable consequence that, slowly but surely, the ancient past fades in light of the modern state being created.

In the period between 1829 and 1846, the year in which the French School at Athens was founded, classical antiquity dominates the magazine's pages. The philhellenic movement and the aftermath of the Greek Revolution of 1821 are linked to the spirit of Romanticism permeating the magazine's early decades. This, for example, is the period when Victor Hugo's poem 'Canaris' was published,<sup>4</sup> as well as other romantic poems featuring ancient Greek themes.<sup>5</sup> Very generally, however, treatises on classical philology and philosophy seek not only to develop knowledge in these fields, but also to identify the root of the Western spirit and civilisation, in terms of reviving antiquity in contemporary thought. Indicatively, between 1834 and 1837, Eugène Lerminier published a series of treatises on ancient Greek history and philosophy (Thucydides, Pindarus, Herodotus, Aristotle),<sup>6</sup> alternating with treatises on Latin philology. Edgar Quinet studied how

4 'Fragment', *RdDM*, 1 November 1832, 323-3-326.

5 See, for example, Auguste Barbier, 'Terpsichore'; Edgar Quinet, 'Prométhée'; V. de Laprade, 'Éleusis'.

6 Lerminier, 'Études de l'antiquité. Thucydide'; 'Pindare'; 'Hérodote'; 'La politique d'Aristote'.

Homeric epics survived through the centuries,<sup>7</sup> as well as the relation between Christianity and the myth of Prometheus.<sup>8</sup> The magazine also published Jules Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire's inaugural lecture, following his election to the chair of Greek and Latin philosophy at the Collège de France, which addressed the need to revive Aristotle's peripatetic philosophy.<sup>9</sup> Charles Magnin searched for the roots of contemporary Western theatre in the theatre of ancient Greece,<sup>10</sup> while Louis A. Binaut notes the revival in classical studies and highlights the perennial idea of personal freedom and individual responsibility. He attributes the progressive spirit of Europe to ancient Greece, and contrasts it to the inert spirit of the East.<sup>11</sup> In the same spirit are many presentations of new publications of ancient texts in studies in classical philology.

Contemporary Greece had not yet made its presence felt in the pages of the *RdDM*, while the impetus for the relatively limited references to it is, on the one hand, the Eastern Question, and, on the other, descriptions of travels. Most of the authors of these articles had travelled in Greece and Turkey, so the opinions they express are through personal experience and personal reflection on the circumstances. The expression of disappointment towards the image of contemporary Greek society, which falls short of mythologised antiquity, is apparent in travel texts,<sup>12</sup> but permeates philological ones as well. Jean-Jacques Ampère, attempting to learn about the place which bore ancient Greek poetry, compares the Greece of ancient texts to the contemporary image of the country in an article titled 'La poésie grecque en Grèce' [Greek poetry in Greece, 1844] and notes that: 'We must always remember that modern Greece is but the skeleton of ancient Greece, coated in memories.'<sup>13</sup> Philhellenic inspiration is progressively replaced by disappointment with the modern reality befalling ancient Greece.

During this period, most of the texts relating to Greece in a general sense or to topics of Greek interest appear between 1837 and 1838 and in 1841. The

7 Quinet, 'Des poètes épiques. Homère'.

8 Lerminier, 'De la fable de Prométhée considérée dans ses rapports avec le Christianisme'.

9 Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, 'Collège de France. Cours de philosophie grecque et latine. Étude du Péripatétisme'.

10 Magnin, 'Études sur les origines du Théâtre antique pour servir d'introduction à l'histoire des origines du théâtre moderne'.

11 Binaut, 'Homère et la Philosophie grecque. Bibliothèque grecque publiée par Firmin Didot'.

12 This disappointment is also expressed by Alexis de Valon in his description of Tinos from 1843: 'Que d'illusions s'envolent quand on arrive en Grèce' [Illusions shatter when we arrive in Greece] ('L'île de Tine').

13 'Il faut nous rappeler toujours que la Grèce actuelle c'est le squelette de la Grèce ancienne, avec un manteau de souvenirs' (Ampère, 'La poésie grecque en Grèce').

themes of the sixteen texts published between 1837 and 1838 more or less correspond to those which have already been pointed out: these are texts on ancient philosophy and art, literary texts with themes pertaining to antiquity, texts on ethnology and travelogues, as well as articles on political and contemporary history, on the Eastern Question and the role of France in the political stakes in the wider area of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans. Two extensive ethnological texts are published in 1837, one on Wallachia and Moldova,<sup>14</sup> plus another one on Turkey, the Asia Minor coast and the nearby islands (Tenedos, Limnos, Rhodes, Kos), Egypt and other areas of the Near East.<sup>15</sup> The first text addresses a need to inform readers on the two small states of Wallachia and Moldova, which play a significant role in the Eastern Question, which is referred to as the 'question of the future'. The text includes a general geographical description, a social overview, including a generous dose of stereotypes, a historical and contemporary description of the political situation and, to conclude, of course, a discussion of the role that France should play in this difficult balancing act: should it support the Christian communities and Russia, or the Muslim communities and Turkey?<sup>16</sup> In the other text, the traveller's point of view, that of the duke of Ragusa, Auguste-Frédéric Louis Vieesse de Marmont, as reported by Eugène Lerminier in his article for the magazine, proves his deep understanding of antiquity. Yet Lerminier's own comments and conclusions are political and are testament to France's key positions on the Eastern Question circa 1837<sup>17</sup>: the Ottoman Empire must be preserved as much as possible, while France's attempt to dominate the wider area, mainly the Arab countries and Egypt. Another eight articles featuring themes pertinent to or of interest to Greece were published on 1841. Of those, two address the Eastern Question, three are studies of classical philology and literature, two are articles on contemporary politics, of which one is about Ioannis Kapodistrias's correspondence and the

14 Bucharest, 'La Moldavie et la Valachie'.

15 Lerminier, 'Voyage du duc de Raguse (en Turquie, Égypte, etc.)'.

16 Bucharest, 'La Moldavie et la Valachie', 169–170.

17 Lerminier, 'Voyage du duc de Raguse (en Turquie, Égypte, etc.)': 'Il ne faut apporter dans les affaires ni précipitation, ni désespoir. Les périls qui menacent l'empire ottoman, loin d'inspirer à la France de la négligence et du dégoût, doivent l'exciter au contraire à lutter par tous les moyens contre l'ingratitude de la situation. Il importe que l'empire turc vive le plus long-temps possible. [...] Soutenir l'empire turc le plus long-temps possible, montrer à la race arabe que son meilleur allié, dans l'Occident, est le peuple et le génie de la France, exercer une grande autorité morale en Égypte, une domination réelle en Afrique; voilà, pour ce qui regarde l'Orient, le thème de la politique française. Ces intérêts, bien que leur théâtre soit lointain, n'en ont pas moins une réalité très positive. La France doit toujours songer à l'Orient, *Oriente[m] componi*, suivant l'expression de Tacite' (760–761).

other is about the issue of the opening of the Suez Canal. On contemporary literature, there is one text referring to the second translated edition of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* by Piccolo.<sup>18</sup>

The above distribution of topics reflects both the image of Greece in the eyes of the French as well as, in the main, France's political interests at the time, which concerned the wider area of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans, with political dominance as its main concern and prospect. Some years later, in 1846, the French School at Athens was founded while other French Schools followed around the Mediterranean: the French School at Rome was founded in 1875, and the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology was founded in 1880 in Cairo. The French School at Madrid (Casa de Velázquez) was founded last, in 1920. In relevant texts, Greece is generally largely absent during that time. The Greek presence is articulated through the idea of antiquity as shared European heritage, or via a wider geopolitical overview, of which Greece is part. In any case, it becomes clear from the relevant magazine articles that France's main concern during the long nineteenth century is the acquisition of a strong position in geopolitical developments in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, which is unstable during, as well as after, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

During the period between 1846 and 1870, the image of modern Greece, a destination for archaeological excavations, scientific missions, as well as political interests, appeared lacking in the articles of the magazine, in favour of that of ancient Greece, with the exception of a few glimpses of memory from the recent glory days of the Revolution.<sup>19</sup> To philological and philosophical studies were added articles on archaeology, which reflect the particular interests and goals of the French School at Athens, which progressively became an established presence.<sup>20</sup> This is an important event with respect to the content of the magazine, as members of the French School increasingly contributed to it: archaeological studies increased in number, while reviews and correspondence on the contemporary situation in the country and its cultural milieu were the expected by-product of prolonged stays in Athens. The aim is twofold. The French School could not possibly ignore the contemporary reality of the country in which it is hosted while, at the same time, through the bleak conclusions drawn from the descriptions, it consolidated the need for its continued existence.

18 Mars, 'Œuvres de M. Piccolo en grec moderne, traduction de *Paul et Virginie* en grec'.

19 See, for example, Yéméniz, 'Les héros de la Grèce moderne. I. Photos Tsavellas – II. Marc Botzaris – III. L'amiral Miaoulis'.

20 See Basch, *Le Mirage grec*, 52–57.



And yet, at the same time, through the increasing devaluation of modern Hellenism, the philhellenic current continued to be perceived as an established interpretive filter of Hellenism by scholarly Europe, in a romantic context. This philhellenic and romantic attitude towards Hellenism reveals, on the one hand, the tradition of classical antiquity and, on the other, serves as a precursor to the trends which would later appear in Greek intellectual life, which became especially prominent from 1880 onwards: these tendencies have been traced in Europe since the beginning of the nineteenth century, but in modern Greek literature they manifest themselves more clearly through the development of ethnography. More specifically, they consist in the search for antiquity and the associated Greek cultural identity in local traditions and folk songs, an element which reveals ethnography's debts to Romanticism.

During that time, there are more travel narratives on the region, enriched with descriptions of contemporary society. Italian Sansimonist Christina Trivulgio di Belgiojoso (1808–1871) travelled to Near Eastern countries during that time, including a visit to Athens, and recorded impressions and local folklore and customs in a series of 'Turco-Asian narratives' – short, fictionalised socio-ethnological texts, permeated by a romantic orientalism, with young Edina as their protagonist. All these texts were published in the magazine during 1856 and early 1857.<sup>21</sup>

The year 1863 marks a climb in the number of articles the magazine publishes on Greece or more generally topics which could be considered as being of Greek interest. The year is, in any case, pivotal for both France and Greece. In France, Napoleon III is forced to carry out elections in order to provide greater democratic freedoms and to address reaction within the country. At the same time, the *Revue des Deux Mondes* toned down its oppositional stance, without fully abandoning its critical stance towards the government.<sup>22</sup> In Greece, the year 1863 is that of the so-called mid-reign, between the expulsion of Otto in October 1862 and the crowning of George I as the new 'King of the Greeks' in October 1863. The new constitution, which replaced constitutional monarchy with crowned democracy, was voted on in 1864, while the Heptanese was also transferred to Greece by Britain that year.

The understanding of antiquity is always at the forefront of articles on Greek topics. In the 1 January 1863 issue George Sand published a short play

21 See, for example, Belgiojoso, 'Récits turco-asiatiques. Emina' and 'Récits turco-asiatiques. Un paysan turc'.

22 Broglie, *Histoire politique de la Revue des Deux Mondes de 1829 à 1979*, 122–126.



titled: 'Plutus. Étude d'après le théâtre antique'. Based on Aristophanes's *Plutus*, enriched with contemporary social concerns, the play is among those stages at the theatre which George Sand had set up in her home in Nohant. Besides a number of articles on ancient history, art and philology, we also read a presentation by Imbert de Saint-Amand of Dora d'Istria's travel publication *Excursions en Roumélie et en Morée*,<sup>23</sup> as well as a series of travel narratives on Asia Minor by renowned Hellenist Georges Perrot.<sup>24</sup> Perrot's travel narratives continued over the next year and describe the rest of his travels in Crete.<sup>25</sup> These publications formed the basis of the stand-alone editions of Perrot's travel narratives in Asia Minor and Greece.

The articles referring to modern Greece and therefore newer Greek literary outputs are therefore few and far between. Under the category 'Literature' in the comprehensive *RdDM* index, Greece is mainly represented by the romantic poets Aristotelis Valaoritis, Geogios Zalokostas and Theodoros Orfanidis. In those articles, the reading of contemporary Greek poetry is less literary and more factual and ethnographic, aiming to revive heroic moments of the struggle for freedom under the shadow of classical antiquity, while clearly being a reflection of the philhellenic spirit. Those articles tackle contemporary Greek poetry exclusively through the prism of revival, a revival not documented, as perhaps the Greeks of the time would expect, by the artificially resuscitated archaistic language, nor by the poetically processed demotic. To the contrary, for the authors of the articles, revival is documented by the unadulterated language of folk songs, which they view as being the undeniable proof of historical continuity. This remark contradicts the tendencies occurring in Greece at the same time, when it is the archaistic artificial language *katharevousa* which is considered to be the mirroring of the ancient language and the proof of continuity.

Dora d'Istria wrote about the poetry of Aristotelis Valaoritis in an article titled: 'La poésie grecque contemporaine dans les îles ioniennes. M. Valaoritis et ses souvenirs des guerres de l'Indépendance'.<sup>26</sup> The questions which Dora d'Istria identifies as pertinent include, on the one hand, the need to appreciate the literary value of poetic output from the Ionian Islands and,

23 *RdDM*, 1 October 1863.

24 Perrot, 'Souvenirs d'un voyage en Asie Mineure. I. L'Olympe galate et les Turcs d'Anatolie – II. Trois mois à Angora, l'Administration turque et les Chrétiens – III. La vie Turque en province – IV. Amasia et l'influence chrétienne en Turquie'.

25 Perrot, 'L'île de Crète. Souvenirs de voyage. I. Le Pays: caractères physiques et productions naturelles. Les ruines – II. Les habitants: Turcs, Grecs et Sfakiotes. L'île depuis la guerre de l'indépendance'.

26 *RdDM*, 1 March 1858, 57–88.

on the other, the need to determine the extent to which this poetic output constitutes a true intellectual renaissance for the Greek space. The first part of the article focuses on a comprehensive presentation of the Ionian Islands which, through their poetry, according to Dora d'Istria, 'revealed unexpected glimpses of power and vitality'. According to her geographical and historical description of the Ionian Islands, the links to their ancient past are ever present, and function as a point of reference for understanding the present.

Commenting on the Heptanesian intellectual output, Dora d'Istria of course refers to Solomos for his *Hymn to Liberty*, which was translated widely and which tugged on the heartstrings of Europe, but also for *Lambros*, while at the same time highlighting the Western influences in his poetry, which make it lack in genuinely Greek character. She argues, in fact, that Solomos did not know ancient Greek, a language which could provide great linguistic depth, so he instead confined himself to spoken Greek, in which he was also not fluent in. Solomos's language, according to Dora d'Istria, is a language without character ('sans caractère') while, on the other hand, the language of Valaoritis, namely the idiom of Epirus, echoes its Doric roots. Valaoritis's poetry is appreciated in the context of the heroic events it describes, and which Dora d'Istria writes about extensively, in such a way that her text ends up being its own unique and exciting narrative. In summary, her presentation of the poetry of Valaoritis is a narrative of heroic scenes from the Revolution, and is clearly part of the philhellenic tradition and the diptych at its core: on the one hand, the model of antiquity, which always operates in terms of origin, continuity, and comparison with modern Hellenism and, on the other, the heroic deeds of the Greeks in their battle for freedom. It could even be argued that this text by Dora d'Istria attempts to restore the chasms of philhellenism and the discounting of modern Hellenism, which was progressively taking place in the European consciousness.

Diplomat Eugène Yéméniz, of Greek heritage, Consul of Greece in Lyon, France, wrote about the poets Georgios Zalokostas and Theodoros Orfanidis, in an article notably titled: 'De la renaissance littéraire en Grèce. Les poètes Zalokostas et Orphanidis'.<sup>27</sup> According to Yéméniz, the lack of interest on the part of Europe for contemporary Greek literature is because the ancient language is long dead and no one is interested in examining its modern mutation. Always within the spirit of the philhellenic and romantic diptych of antiquity and patriotism/heroism, Yéméniz stresses that contemporary Greek poetry has, on the one hand, succeeded ancient Greek poetry, in the

<sup>27</sup> *RdDM*, 1 May 1860, 212–242.

same language and the same geographical space and, on the other hand, is permeated mainly by the feelings of love towards the homeland and towards freedom.<sup>28</sup> In an attempt to stress the Greekness of this poetry, he clearly distinguishes it from European Romanticism: Greek poets draw from folk songs, which are the spontaneous creations of heroism and love of freedom. For this reason, their poetry is completely alien to the 'sweet melancholy, vague sadness, and dreamy fantasies of Westerners'.<sup>29</sup> The poetry of the Greeks, according to Yéméniz, is narrative poetry based on reality, without abstract exaggerations, while the perhaps excessive editing of the lyrics can but originate in the language of Homer and Plato. Reading *Hani of Gravia* and *Armatoloi and Klephts* by Georgios Zalokostas, Yéméniz, like Dora d'Istria, revives heroic moments in the struggles of the Greeks for freedom. Zalokostas's language, Yéméniz notes, is not the *katharevousa* (an archaic, purified form of Greek) of the Athenian poets. Yéméniz claims that the demotic idiom was cultivated in the spirit of the ancient language and ended up becoming a pure, harmonious, and melodic tongue, having rid itself of every foreign and barbaric element.<sup>30</sup> The school of the 'vulgaristes', the demoticists, that is, the group to which Zalokostas belonged, was of course replaced by adroit and elegant writers, such as Georgios Orfanidis, who penned *Anna and Floros, or the Tower of Petra* and *Chios Enslaved*. In the competently edited *katharevousa* of Orfanidis, Yéméniz notes a continuity from antiquity: 'Reading his verses, we'd sometimes like to believe that they were written 2000 years ago, and this is the greatest praise we could give.'<sup>31</sup>

However, Yéméniz clarifies the ancient roots of Greek romantic poetry by declaring the new directions of the philhellenic movement and, more generally, the new intellectual trends in Greek society. He contrasts, that is, the pure and genuine Greekness of the folk tradition with the European spirit. Thus, although the form and style of Zalokostas's poetry still carry obvious semi-barbaric elements, an influence of centuries of decline and oppression, his thought, on the other hand, is permeated by the ancient spirit<sup>32</sup> and his heroes are closely related to those of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In contrast,

28 *Ibidem*, 215.

29 'La douce mélancolie, la vague tristesse, les rêveries des imaginations occidentales sont des sentiments étrangers à la muse des Grecs modernes', *ibidem*, 215.

30 'En lisant ses vers, on serait parfois tenté de les croire écrits depuis deux mille ans, et c'est le plus bel éloge qu'on puisse en faire', *ibidem*, 230.

31 *Ibidem*, 242.

32 'Zalokostas subit encore dans sa forme et dans son style semi-barbares l'influence des siècles de décadence et de servitude que les Hellènes ont traversés. En revanche, sa pensée est tout empreinte du génie antique', *ibidem*, 242.

Orfanidis, despite the fact that the form of his poetry reflects the ancient language, has dared to delve into Western and modern experimentation, which spoil the heroism of his characters and which renders the influence of his poetry in the development of Greek literature doubtful. One thing is certain for Yéméniz: the Greeks owe their political renaissance to the vitality and unbroken presence of the ancient spirit ('génie antique'), in their race ('race'), which is the only factor capable of securing their intellectual renaissance.

The wider turn of French thought towards the search for the ancient spirit in the living folk tradition is corroborated by the folkloric pursuits of travellers. In 1855, Émile Beulé, in an article titled 'Athènes et les Grecs modernes',<sup>33</sup> written on the occasion of *Athènes aux quinzième, seizième et dix-septième siècles* by Léon de Laborde, notices the reversal of the philhellenic European attitude. Yet the disappointment of the travellers, according to Beulé, is due to the ills of civilisation encountered, after all, in every European city. In order to experience the real Greece, one must travel outside of Athens, to the countryside, in order to meet simple folk going about their everyday family lives. This is exactly Paul d'Estournelles de Constant's goal who, in 1876–1877, published a series of travel narratives from his journey to Greece.<sup>34</sup> Contemporary Greece is, of course, disappointing when compared to the imaginary memory of ancient Greece. However, the natural landscape, glorious, romantic, and bucolic, often serves a unifying link between the past and the present and, to a certain degree, sanctifies it.<sup>35</sup>

Let us also not forget that, in 1876, the Eastern Question took centre stage, with the Herzegovina Uprising, and uprisings in Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro the following year. France's political interest was particularly intense, while the uprisings also sparked debate on national identities. This interest was expressed in the magazine through political correspondence and commentaries as well as through articles of greater national and local

33 *RdDM*, 1 June 1855, 1042–1057.

34 Paul d'Estournelles de Constant, 'La vie de province en Grèce -- I. Dix mois de séjour en Achaïe -- II. La Locride des Ozoles -- III. Excursion en Achaïe et en Arcadie'.

35 'Je ne pouvais détacher mes yeux de ce tableau; tout ce que j'avais lu, tout ce que j'avais appris, me revenait à la pensée; il me semble que j'ai mieux compris à cet instant pourquoi l'antiquité ne cherchait pas dans le vague de l'infini la demeure de ses dieux: en présence de cette nature si grandiose, l'homme ne pouvait rêver pour eux de plus splendide séjour que ces belles montagnes qu'un soleil d'or éclaire, et dont les cimes brillantes semblent toucher aux cieux. La nuit venait, claire, silencieuse, comme toutes les nuits d'Orient; à peine entendais-je encore, avec le dernier appel du berger, résonner le tintement des clochettes d'un troupeau de chèvres broutant au-dessous de nous quelques pousses perdues', Paul Estournelles de Constant, 'La vie de province en Grèce -- II. La Locride des Ozoles', *RdDM*, 1876, 464.

interest. This gaze is not only – or at least not exclusively – that of the classicist,<sup>36</sup> but also that of the curious, the person who is interested in the contemporary makeup of the people of the broader Balkan region, their everyday lives, and their folklore. As a result, 1877 marks the year during which relevant articles on history and politics increased dramatically.<sup>37</sup>

Besides, from the mid-century, an increasingly more intense discussion is being developed on the genealogical and cultural identity of the Greeks. Without adopting Fallmerayer's opinions, the Indo-European origin of the Greeks and the genealogical and cultural contiguity with the peoples of the East is highlighted in an article by Émile Burnouf, published one month after the Cretan revolt in August 1866, titled 'Origines de la poésie hellénique. L'hymne, l'épopée et le drame'.<sup>38</sup> Burnouf, presenting the French translation of the work by Otfried Muller, *Histoire de la littérature grecque* [History of Greek literature, 1866] notes:

We are surprised that Muller took no notice of the simple fact that almost none of the names of Greek deities is a Greek word. These gods and their names are therefore coming from afar, and it is there where their original meaning can be found, the origin of which we ought to study.<sup>39</sup>

He even cites the story of Hercules as an example; the myth is of Asian origin, but the Greeks, in setting it within their own geographical space, imbued it with their own particular spirit. For Burnouf, the cradle of Western civilisation is the holy scripture of the Indians, the Vedas, which constitute

36 See, for example, Jules Girard, 'L'interprétation de l'"Antigone" de Sophocle', *RdDM*, 1 January 1877, 105–124.

37 Valbert (pen name of Victor Cherbuliez), 'Quelques réflexions sur la Conférence de Constantinople', *RdDM*, 1 February 1877, 688–699; Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, 'La Grèce, l'hellénisme et la question d'Orient', *RdDM*, 1 April 1877, 526–556. Laurent Albert, 'La question crétoise', *RdDM*, 1 June 1877, 636–653; Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, 'Les préliminaires de la guerre turco-russe', *RdDM*, 1 October 1877, 198–213; Valbert, 'Philottomans et Turcophobes', *RdDM*, 1 October 1877, 692–704; Valbert, 'La guerre russo-turque en 1828 et en 1877', *RdDM*, 1 November 1877, 212–222; Paul d'Estournelles de Constant, 'Mémoires sur l'ambassade de France en Turquie', par le comte de Saint-Priest', *RdDM*, 15 November 1877.

38 Burnouf, 'Origines de la poésie hellénique. L'hymne, l'épopée et le drame. *Histoire de la littérature grecque*, par Otfried Muller, traduit par K. Hillebrand, 2 vol. 1866', *RdDM*, 1 October 1866, 721–7–746.

39 'On est surpris que Muller n'ait pas été frappé de ce fait si simple que presque aucun des noms des dieux helléniques n'est un mot grec. Ces dieux et leurs noms viennent donc de plus haut, et c'est là donc où ils ont une signification primordiale qu'il en faut chercher l'origine', *ibidem*, 727.

the true Holy Scripture of both the West and the East.<sup>40</sup> The same can be said about the myth of Orpheus, who was considered to be the father of poetry and music: 'His Asian origin has these days been recognised, while we know that Orpheus, just like his name, does not belong to Greece as such.'<sup>41</sup>

The reply of the most fervent philhellenes shifts the emphasis to the folk tradition. Dora d'Istria<sup>42</sup> searches for the Hellenic identity in folk songs, and addresses the criticism of Europeans by noting that: 'A few sporadic gunshots in the streets of Athens or the nearby mountains make more noise in Europe than the incessant profound improvements which renewed the face of this country in just a few years.'<sup>43</sup> This quest for national identity in folk tradition will, after all, be taken up by Greek intellectual life a little later, with Nikolaos Politis's folkloric work and the subsequent development of ethnocentric prose fiction.

It is clear that, at around the middle of the century, the spirit that prevailed in the first decades from the foundation of the Greek state changed. The West, recognising its debts to the ancient spirit, was once an ally, fighting on the side of the oppressed Greeks. Yet this same ancient spirit, when morphing from an idealistic vision into a measure of comparison to which reality could not possibly live up to, served as an impediment to the unbiased perception of the modern Hellenism. Then, some sought the traces of antiquity in the folk tradition, with equally arbitrary identifications. In the pages of a magazine, in fragments, like the pieces of a puzzle, through articles on literature, history, travel, and their comparative reading and evolution over time, a story is found. The story of a perception and its shifts, both positive and negative: disappointment, sarcasm, awe and leniency, curiosity and ignorance, stereotypical representations, romantic quests and political interests. In any case, a magazine, a fascinating microcosm of spiritual pursuits and political choices, crystallises the trends in French ideas and stereotypes, and clearly reflects the multifaceted image of Greece during the nineteenth century.

40 'C'est donc là qu'il faut chercher les premiers germes d'où sont nés plus tard les genres littéraires, et l'on voit que ces formes pour ainsi dire embryonnaires existaient longtemps avant les premiers établissements helléniques', *ibidem*, 729.

41 'Son origine asiatique est aujourd'hui reconnue, et l'on sait qu'Orphée, pas plus que son nom, n'appartient en propre à la Grèce', *ibidem*, 731.

42 'La nationalité hellénique d'après les chants populaires', *RdDM*, 1 August 1867, 587-627.

43 'Quelques coups de fusil de loin en loin dans les rues d'Athènes ou sur les montagnes voisines font plus de bruit en Europe que les améliorations profondes et incessantes qui ont en peu d'années renouvelé la face de ce pays.', *ibidem*, 627. Other articles by Dora d'Istria are written in the same spirit, researching the folk songs of the Albanians and the Turks ('La poésie populaire des Turcs orientaux', *RdDM*, 1 February 1873, 543-583).

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