

**Kitromilides, Paschalis M. and Constantinos Tsoukalas (eds.):
The Greek Revolution. A Critical Dictionary. Cambridge,
Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press,
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The bicentennial of the Greek Revolution in 2021 was accompanied by celebrations, commemorations, and several new publications about the Revolution. Among them, the *Critical Dictionary* stands out. It is a one-of-a-kind publication that elevates Greek historiography by bringing it into dialogue with modern scholarship, thereby, earning a place next to internationally established research. Such a foundational work was, until now, missing from the Greek bibliography.

The two renowned editors, Professor Emeritus of Political Science Paschalis Kitromilides and Professor Emeritus of Sociology Constantinos Tsoukalas, both at the University of Athens, achieved a herculean feat: they combined forty-six essays by thirty-nine authors into one coherent volume. The cohort of these experts ranges from Greek scholars to eleven foreign Hellenists. Their high-quality essays cover a wide spectrum of topics related to the Revolution and demonstrate “the uniqueness of the Greek example in the age of revolution” (p. 6).

The accomplished editor and member of the Academy of Athens Paschalis Kitromilides—inspired by the *Dictionnaire Critique de la Revolution Française*, edited by François Furet and Mona Ozouf and published in Paris in 1988 for the bicentenary of the French Revolution—envisioned a similar Greek dictionary. The title “Dictionary” refers to “its character as a record of ongoing exploration that can be revisited and enriched in future incarnations” (p. xiii). Thus, the volume “does not pretend to be exhaustive or to provide a general history of the Revolution” but instead offers “an overview” to both specialists and nonexperts (p. xii). The *Critical Dictionary* will offer students, educators, scholars, and the general readership both “reliable information ... and a critical revisiting” of their knowledge about the Greek Revolution (p. xiii).

The volume starts with a comprehensive introduction by Paschalis Kitromilides which embeds the Greek Revolution within the broader frame of the revolutionary era. Additionally, the introduction raises four important historical issues: the debate regarding the beginning of the Revolution; the survival of Greek archaeological heritage during the ten years of the war; the refugee crisis and forced migration caused by the yearlong battles; and the phenomenon of the civil wars during the Revolution. Kitromilides concludes his thorough introduction by paying tribute to “the founder of the Greek *politeia*, Ioannis Capodistrias”. Introductions are very hard to write but Kitromilides succeeds masterfully in offering a succinct overview.

The essays are grouped in seven thematic categories. The first part is titled “Contexts” (p. 19-78) and includes four essays. The first two essays refer to the reaction in the “Balkan Hinterlands”, namely the Danubian Principalities and the South Slavic lands, occupied by Serbs, Montenegrins, and Bulgarians (written by Andrei Pippidi and Slobodan G. Marković respectively). The third essay analyses the historical experience of the Revolution in the different Greek communities of the European diaspora and reflects on the fact that there was never a unanimous reaction of either support or opposition to the Greek cause (by Mathieu Grenet). The fourth essay places the Revolution within the Ottoman context by discussing the changes caused in Ottoman society by the Revolution (by H. Şükri İlcak).

The three essays of the second part, “On the Way to Revolution” (p. 81-144) describe the historic and cultural contingencies which led to the war: the organization of the communities of enslaved Greeks (by Vaso Seirinidou); the various forms of resistance during 1770-1821 (by Vasilis Molos); and a historical account of the secret Society of Friends and its predecessors (by Constantinos C. Chatzopoulos).

The third part, “Events and Places” (p. 147-328) comprised of fifteen essays, constitutes the main part of the volume. The essays, geographically ordered, cover the Revolution as it occurred in the following areas: the Aegean islands (by Katerina Galani and Gelina Harlaftis), Asia Minor (by Stavros Th. Anestidis), Athens (by Maria Efthymiou), Chios (by Christos Landros), Constantinople and Thrace (by Stavros Th. Anestidis), Crete (by Paschalis M. Kitromilides), Cyprus (by Paschalis M. Kitromilides), Epirus (by Dionysis Tzakis), the Ionian Islands (by Eleni Angelomatis-Tsougarakis), Macedonia (by Basil C. Gounaris), Mesolonghi (by Markos Karasarinis), Morea (by Dionysis Tzakis), Navarino (by Robert Holland), Rumeli (by Markos Karasarinis), and Samos (by Christos Landros). These densely written essays offer a compact view of the Revolution on the local scale. Invaluable cartographic material complements the essays and makes them more accessible to the reader.

"Persons" (p. 331-436) is the fourth part of the volume, consisting of six essays which refer to clergymen (by Phokion Kotzageorgis), civilian leaders (by Dimitris Livanios), diplomats (by Ioannis D. Stefanidis), intellectuals (by Roxane D. Argyropoulos), military leaders (by Dimitrios Papastamatiou), and women (by Eleni Angelomatis-Tsougarakis). The essays demonstrate the revisionist approach that the *Critical Dictionary* wants to offer its readers. The discussion of clergymen, for instance, "sketch[es] the framework (ideological, political, religious) within which the Orthodox clergy was operating before and during the struggle" (p. 332) and avoids the extreme views that have been adopted until now regarding the clerical stance on the Revolution. Similarly, the last essay about women refers not only to the few known female leaders (such as Bouboulina, Manto Mavrogenous, Evanthia Kairi etc.) but also honors the everyday anonymous women who experienced the atrocities of the war while trying to save themselves or their children.

The five essays of the fifth part, "Institutions" (p. 439-511), describe the founding of the independent Greek polity. The essay "Assemblies and Constitutions" (by Nicos C. Alivizatos) discusses the Epidavros, Astros and Troezen constitutions as the pathway to the establishment of a new state of law with rights and freedoms for its people. "The Economics of the Revolution" (by Kostas Kostis) analyzes the important issue of monetary contributions through loans in order to support the army, discusses "the status of the 'national properties', an issue critical for the social constitution of the new state" (p. 458), and frames the conditions for the adoption of the first national unit of currency, the phoenix, by the first governor Ioannis Capodistrias. "Education" (by Dimitris C. Mavroskoufis) argues that "between the period of the Revolution and the governorship of Capodistrias, a notable consensus was established regarding the ... need for formulating and diffusing a uniform educational machinery aimed at the progress and Europeanization of Greek society" (p. 482). "The Orthodox Church" (by Lucien Fray) emphasizes the importance of Christian faith for the Revolution ("atheism was a rare phenomenon in preindependence Greece", p. 485), and talks about the problems of "the organization of the Church, as a political body [as] an ideal tool for spreading the uprising" (p. 488). Lastly, "The Press" (by Roxane D. Argyropoulos) presents the three short-lived handwritten newspapers and the eight printed (six in Greek, one in Italian and one in French) newspapers published in the period 1821-1828.

"Ideas and Creative Expression" (p. 515-590) is the sixth part of the volume, which includes the following four essays. "Enlightenment" (by Paschalis M. Kitromilides) showcases how the ideas of the Enlightenment provided "essential meaning to the struggle" and "led to a modern, secular national community" (p. 530). "Literature, learning, and print culture" (by Alexis Politis) examines the changes in poetry, prose, and printing culture during the

revolutionary decade. "Popular Culture" investigates the folk culture as manifested in folk songs, folk rituals, religious ceremonies, folk painting, and folk pottery (by Manolis G. Varvounis). Finally, "The Revolution as Creative Experience" (by Peter Mackridge) is a comparative study of the two Greek national poets, Andreas Kalvos and Dionysios Solomos, who mused on the experiences of the Revolution, and it "trace[s] the processes by which Kalvos and Solomos reinvented themselves as poets of the revolution and voices of the Greek nation" (p. 571).

The last seventh part, titled "Resonances", is comprised of eight essays which deal with the reception and resonance of the Revolution during the last two centuries. The first essay, "Philhellenism" (by Roderick Beaton), focuses on the foreign volunteers who went to fight in Greece and the philhellenic initiatives in European countries, and the second essay "American Philhellenism" (by Ioannis D. Evrigenis) presents the philhellenic movement in America. "The Visual Narration of the Greek War of Independence" (by Fani-Maria Tsigakou) describes the reception of the Greek Revolution in European visual arts and talks about "the simultaneous presence of both classical and religious elements in philhellenic compositions" (p. 627). "The Revolution and the Romantic Imagination: Echoes in European Literature" (by Rosa Mucignat and David Ricks) argues that the forgotten material of philhellenic literature should "be reassessed ... as original expression of a key moment in European culture" (p. 639). The next essay, "Sounding the Greek Revolution: Music and the Greek War of Independence" (by Katerina Levidou), illustrates how "the Greek Revolution sparked a massive response among composers" who had otherwise "fallen into oblivion" (p. 660) and also discusses the Greek musical responses to the Revolution. The next essay, titled "Historiographical Traditions and Debates" (by Pericles S. Vallianos), the longest in this volume, covers the different historical writings about the Revolution in France, Britain, Germany, America, and Greece. "Anniversaries" (by Gonda van Steen) discusses the way the Revolution was celebrated in 1871, 1921 and 1971 and argues that "the Greeks ... had not yet reached a consensus about how to present recent Greek history" (p. 705). The last essay "Symbolic Commemorations and Cultural Affiliations", (by Constantinos Tsoukalas), offers a critical sociological approach to the Revolution and its commemorations.

The volume ends with a useful "Summary Chronology: The Greek Revolution, 1814-1834", which starts with the foundation of the Society of Friends in Odessa and ends at the official announcement of Athens as capital city of the new Greek state.

The cartographic documentation in the dictionary is impressive. Thirteen maps were drawn especially for this publication by the cartographers Nopi Ploutoglou and Elpida Daniil at the Cartographic Heritage Archives in the Historical Archives of Macedonia, the

General State Archives of Greece. Two maps are of a generic nature: one map shows the Ottoman empire in 1800, offering a general view of the geographical context before the Revolution (p. 60-61), and the other depicts the Balkan peninsula at the year of Greek Independence in 1830 (p. 381). The other eleven maps focus on specific geographic areas where the Revolution took place and embellish the texts of the third part.

Finally, the volume is aesthetically pleasing: it includes impressive illustrations. There are forty-three black and white photographs of portraits and paintings and thirty colored pictures of famous paintings by European and Greek artists (such as "Greece on the Ruins of Mesolonghi" by Eugène Delacroix, "Hellas in Gratitude" by Theodoros Vryzakis) and other lesser-known artworks from museums and private collections.

The *Critical Dictionary* is indeed the first collective endeavor to cover a variety of aspects related to the Revolution. The very conception of combining such a plurality of essays was an intellectual achievement. The editors have accomplished a paradigmatic work: they have streamlined all the essays to create one common, well-written, informative, and mostly inspiring dictionary. Additionally, each essay provides a sufficient list of references, an indispensable addition for any scholar.

The dynamic character and great scholarly potential of the *Critical Dictionary*, its remarkable breadth, and its eloquent style and aesthetic make it a precious gift for everyone who loves modern Greece.

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