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Αναζητώντας την Άνδρο. Κείμενα και εικόνες 15ου-19ου αιώνα από τη Συλλογή Ευστάθιου Ι. Φινόπουλου, Επιστημονική επιμέλεια και συντονισμός έκδοσης Μαρία Γιουρούκου, (In search of Andros: Texts and Images (15th-19th cent.) from the Efstathios J. Finopoulos Collection), Αθήνα 2021, 472 pp., ISBN 978-960-476-291-0.

There are several motives which compel travelers to journey to cities and lands in the Eastern Mediterranean: during the Renaissance, and later in the times of the European Enlightenment, because of a deeper desire to see Greek and Roman antiquities *in situ*; out of a genuine sense of curiosity to become acquainted with other cultures; in order to study fauna and flora in different areas; to seek out religious and non-religious manuscripts; so as to conduct linguistic research on the languages spoken in the Mediterranean region; to meet financial goals; for the enrichment of the disciplines of cartography and geography; in order to collect coins or paintings; finally, in order to purchase antiquities. The catalogue of motives can be longer.

The majority of travelers were wealthy but there were also those who traveled on behalf of commissions which financed them to record various subjects. There were also scientists driven by specific projects as well as those on educational missions, two categories of travelers who have invariably produced travel journals of high quality. The contribution of these travelers is especially important, owing to both their writings and the images they may have left behind, which are very often the main sources we possess in order to construct our knowledge of how various regions developed over time, as well as the state of the antiquities and libraries that were devastated as a result of military conflict, or by forces of nature themselves.

The transition to antiquity in the 15th century, during the Renaissance, signals a growing interest of travelers to discover the lands which had flourished in antiquity. Ancient Greek and Roman authors were translated into various European languages and these texts were resurrected from the obscurity of many centuries. At the same time as the pilgrimages that flourished, there were travelers who journeyed to the Mediterranean and visited Greece, Asia Minor, the Aegean isles, Cyprus and oftentimes



Map of Andros. Fr. Ferretti,
Diporti notturni, Ancona 1580.
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Collection.

the Middle East, principally for religious reasons. Moreover, the fact that Erasmus was those who laid the groundwork of classical philology within the framework of Christian Humanism also became a driving force behind these travels.

The routes varied depending on the travelers' interests. It was easier to access the most visited lands in Europe but not as easy to travel to other destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean. At that time, travel books concerning the Ottoman Empire written in European languages were published. From the 18th century onwards many of these were translated into other languages and thus their various editions helped travelers on their journeys.

The volume *In Search of Andros* includes 471 pages of travel descriptions, images and maps focusing on the island of Andros, produced by more than 70 travelers. The texts are translated into

Greek with accompanying commentaries by researchers. The one who initially conceived this work and from whose vast collection the books and engravings have been mainly drawn was the collector Efstathios J. Finopoulos, who did not live long enough to see his vision realized. This Finopoulos Collection includes 20.000 volumes of books and 5.000 maps and prints, and it is located in Benaki Museum in Athens. It was he who selected the books in this volume, in his quest to contribute to our knowledge of the history of Andros. In addition to the texts, there are also engravings and maps that make the collection very interesting. All are arranged in chronological order. Each entry provides their author's name, some basic information about their life and *oeuvre*, as well as information about the book from which the quote, picture, drawing, or map originates, followed by brief excerpts of translated text.

The comprehensive introduction to the volume and the laborious work of its scientific editing is owed to the philologist and paleographer Dr. Maria Yiouroukou. The authors and translators are many and have produced a very extensive volume which amounts to a small treasure for researchers and connoisseurs of travel literature alike; especially so for those who are interested in delving into various aspects of the Mediterranean in these centuries: indeed, without these travelers we would have limited knowledge on many subjects.

Several authors are featured in this book, beginning with Cristoforo Buondelmonti who was educated in classical studies and became interested in geography and cartography. He traveled to the Aegean islands in 1414 and resided in Rhodos until 1420. He traveled to Andros in 1419 and compiled the first known map of the island. He was the first cartographer who visited the isles and produced maps of them. At the same time, he made some notes on the geography and history of the isles.

The final contribution to the volume is by the Romanian archaeologist and historian Teofil Sauciuc-Săveanu, who visited the island in the years 1910-1912 and wrote a dissertation which focused on Andros' ancient history and the archaeological findings that had been unearthed from the excavations until that time.



Women of the island of Andros. A. L. Castellan, Turkey, being a description of the manners, London 1821.

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Among the well-known travelers who wrote books that others read and used as travel guides on their journeys, we will mention some of them in order to exemplify the intellectual breadth of those who traveled. They left behind them important pieces of knowledge about the island across many different fields and time periods, often contained within the same book, thus providing us with a holistic viewpoint of the island.

J. Pitton de Tournefort (1656-1708) was a French botanist who remained in Andros for ten days in November 1700. His three-volume edition entitled *Relation d' un voyage du Levant* (1717), a work containing numerous fine engravings, including a copper engraving with women of Andros as well as a map of the island, would become a travelogue for many travelers in the Mediterranean who used it as a reference book. He analyzed the history of the island since ancient times, describes its productive capacities, its administrative features and its religious organization. He also visited a monastery and described the service as well as the people who attended it. Much like the Swede Carl von Linné, who has been influenced by Tournefort in his botanical pursuits, he produces long systematic descriptions in the same spirit as other traveling botanists.

There are other travelers who became famous in their time for different reasons, such as Pasch van Krienen. He claimed to have unearthed Homer's tomb on the isle of Ios, something which is also referenced in Rigas Velestinlis' famous *Carta of Greece* (1797). In May 1772 he transported the tombstone to Livorno in Italy, where he met the Swedish orientalist and traveler Jacob Jonas Björnståhl. The latter provides us with an extensive description of van Krienen, who had shown him copies of inscriptions that were on the tombstones. Björnståhl informed him that the letters on the tombstones in fact belonged to an alphabet which was in usage long after Homer.

Another traveler was Benjamin Mary, a diplomatic representative of the Kingdom of Belgium in Athens between 1830 and 1844. During this period, he traveled to various regions in Greece but also to Smyrna, Constantinople, Cyprus and Egypt, where he drew the portraits of people he met, both famous and not. During his stay in Andros, Mary produced the portrait of the abbot of the Panachrantou monastery. In 2020 (English ed. 2021) an excellent publication was produced by the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation and the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, under the title *History Has a Face - Figures of 1821 in Othonian Greece by the Belgian Diplomat Benjamin Mary* – an edition containing the portraits of people he had met during the years he was in Greece.

Jean Baptiste-Gaspar de Villoison was a Hellenist and a philologist. He was also a member of the French Academy in Paris which, among other things, published the Homeric Lexicon of the Iliad and the Odyssey by Apollonius the Sophist. He traveled to Greece and Asia Minor between 1784 and 1786. He described various customs from Andros associated with wedding feasts and collected material about the dialect spoken on the island. He also provided insights into its various products, how its people lived, how they dressed and how they congregated to conduct business.

Two women presented among these travelers originate from England and Denmark respectively. Lady Elisabeth Graven, an English writer and noble, traveled to Europe in 1783-1786 and remained for two days in Andros. Her notes about the isle were published in her book *A journey through the Crimea to Constantinople* (1789), which also contains a

copper plate depicting a bay as well as a monastery. The Dane Christiane Luth (1806-1859) was the wife of the Queen of Greece's personal pastor who resided in Greece between 1839 and 1852. Throughout her stay she kept a diary with her everyday life in Athens and also compiled notes about her travels that she had made in Greece. She came to Andros on two different occasions in 1845 and 1846. She described her walks on the island and how she experienced the islanders. She meets the priest Theofilos Kairis (1784-1852), a distinguished Greek enlightener who founded a school for orphans, and was later accused by the Church of having taught philosophy instead of theology. Luth describes both him, the children and the school.

Among the geographers who traveled to Greece and wrote about their journeys is Albert Philippson (1864 – 1953), a professor in Bonn who stayed at various regions of Greece, beginning in 1887. He cross-fertilized geography with field studies, diligently analyzing the manner by which the people, the areas they resided in and their customs and practices were all interconnected. With respect to Andros he provided detailed information on the geography of the island, its people and the means they employed to exploit its land through agriculture. The volume includes excerpts from Philippson's account that have been translated into Greek, which provide us with vivid descriptions of the island during the time he was there.

The completion of this book required many researchers, translators, language editors and image curators to collaborate in order to achieve the excellent result we see before us. The copious references to publications, archives and databases make this volume not merely a work on the history of Andros over four centuries, but also an exceptional example that should be emulated by all those who seek to produce similar publications on other places in Greece.

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