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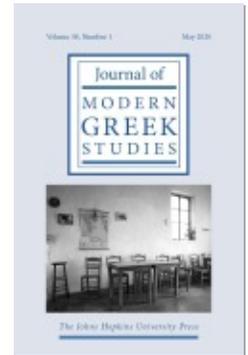
Greek-Serbian Relations in the Age of Nation-Building ed. by
Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Sophia Matthaïou (review)

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Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Sophia Matthaiou, editors, *Greek-Serbian Relations in the Age of Nation-Building*. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2016. Pp. 257. Paper € 20.00.

Greece and Serbia's special relationship is one that is often expounded upon by politicians in both countries. Despite the significance of the political and cultural ties between these two countries and peoples, there is notable lack of research on the topic outside of specialized and often isolated works. *Greek-Serbian Relations in the Age of Nation-Building* explores the various aspects of this relationship and how it developed over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The chapters are drawn from papers given at a conference on Greco-Serbian relations held in Athens in 2010. Although the edited volume raises significant methodological issues in its assumption of a primordialist nationalist view, the chapters make a valuable contribution to understanding the multifaceted nature of the Greco-Serbian relationship.

The editors organized the book into three sections demonstrating the expansive nature of the Greco-Serbian relationship. After a brief introduction by Kitromilides, which emphasizes the historical connections between the peoples who inhabited the territories that would become modern day Serbia and Greece, Dušan Bataković and Ljodrag P. Ristić explore, in separate chapters, the diplomatic relationship between the emerging Greek and Serbian states in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The analyses provided by two of the more renowned historians of modern Serbia establish a sound foundation for the subsequent sections of the volume, even if the points raised are not necessarily new: the introductory section serves as a foundation for those who might be lacking in general knowledge of the region, but this section's substance and methodology are rudimentary, and it will leave those with pre-existing knowledge desiring more.

The comparative section has three chapters and is generally convincing but, at times, inconsistent. Miroslav Svirčević and Marios Hatzopoulos assess, respectively aspects of parliamentary government and prophetic structures of the Orthodox community in both states. The authors show how the Greco-Serbian connection extends beyond high politics and influences such pivotal aspects of national life as parliamentary traditions and religion. However, Čedomir Antić's chapter on Prince Stefan Lazar Eugene Lazarovich Hrebelianovich, a pretender to the Serbian throne, does not quite mesh with the other chapters in the volume, as the focus on the Greco-Serbian relationship is minimal. Nevertheless, the other chapters in the section do a good job

of demonstrating that the Greco-Serbian dynamic is one that is not limited to international politics alone.

The final section examines the cultural ties that exist between the Serb and Greek peoples and is the strongest part of the volume. Chapters in this section highlight various aspects of the relationship from the less examined perspective of culture and society. Ioannis Koubourlis investigates the influence of the Greek intellectual Constantinos Paparrigopoulos on the Serbs and Montenegrins and emphasizes the intellectual currents that bind the different Balkan peoples together. Djordje Kostić and Sanja Lazarević Radak explore Greece's cultural impact in separate chapters on, respectively, the naming of the Greek Queen Inn in Belgrade and the identification of Pančevo and Novi Sad as "Serbian Sparta" and "Serbian Athens." These two chapters, when examined in tandem, build upon the points raised by Koubourlis to show that one cannot explain away the Greco-Serbian connection as operating only among the countries' elites. Sophia Matthaiou's essay analyzes how the Koumanoudis family in Serbia straddled both identities, which was both an advantage and disadvantage from a political and social standpoint. Finally, Vojislav Pavlović and Ljiljana Stošić consider different aspects of the Orthodox faith in Serbia and Greece, and how religious belief has worked to bind the two nations together, even if political tensions between the two churches sometimes pulled them apart. It is this section that foregrounds connections between the Greek and Serb peoples that scholars typically do not scrutinize in detail.

The strength of the volume is its diversity of chapters and perspectives on the Greco-Serbian connection, covering political as well as social and cultural elements. At first glance, the chapters seem to lack of a common thread—for example, there is little connecting Svirčević's examination of parliamentary systems to Koubourlis' examination of Greek intellectual Constantinos Paparrigopoulos. And yet the scope of the volume means that none of the chapters feels out of place. The added advantage of the editors' inclusion of such a wide variety of topics is that the volume ends up being representative of the whole wide range of Greco-Serbian studies, rather than being restricted to a specific subcategory.

While the individual chapters are of high quality, the assumption behind the volume itself is problematic. In the introduction, Kitromilides argues that one of the reasons for the volume is that "the Greeks and Serbs have not fought a war against each other since the fourteenth century and if we were to be more chronologically specific since the siege of Thessaloniki by the Serbs in the year 1331 or the conquest of Serres in 1345" (11). This implies a primordialist perspective on the countries' relationship since the late medieval period, but

one should not equate peoples' identities in the pre-modern era with those of ethnic nationalism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As the title of the volume suggests, it is during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that a special relationship between the two peoples developed in earnest, as each nation-state created its own ideological and national frameworks. The editors, by suggesting that the relationship is based on continued peaceful coexistence for seven centuries, undermine the excellent scholarship of the authors throughout the volume.

Despite the volume's problematic conceptual orientation, the various chapters help shed light on aspects of the Greco-Serbian relationship that are typically overlooked in the existing literature. The Greco-Serbian relationship, as the chapters make clear, is one that deserves greater attention and should not be dismissed as a construct of Balkan elites. The implications of such a connection extends beyond these states and national movements. Conceptual issues aside, the volume makes a valuable contribution to the literature.

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Artemis Leontis, *Eva Palmer Sikelianos: A Life in Ruins*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. Pp. xlv + 392, 51 illustrations. Cloth \$35.00.

In 1898, a Bryn Mawr undergraduate, Eva Palmer, was expelled from her dormitory—and from Bryn Mawr itself—for a year. Why? Because she had been caught doing something “strictly prohibited” in her room (10). President M. Carey Thomas, who had enthusiastically welcomed Eva two years earlier, made the determination to banish her from campus. Eva decided to travel to Europe with her brother during this period of exile, but the following academic year she returned and finished her degree. We shall undoubtedly never know what infraction of the rules aroused the ire of M. Carey Thomas, but the incident stands as an emblem of the enigmatic Eva Palmer, who throughout her life broke rules, asserted her independence, embraced eccentricity, defied convention—and acted rashly, often to her own detriment.

Artemis Leontis, C.P. Cavafy Professor of Modern Greek and Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan, has written a gripping, deeply researched biography of Eva Palmer Sikelianos (as she eventually became known). This was not an easy task, given the complicated life of her subject, a life that kept changing focus over the course of many decades. Leontis's approach