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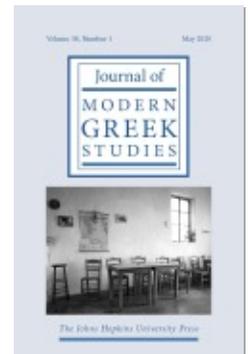
*Roidis and the Borrowed Muse: British Historiography,
Fiction and Satire in Pope Joan* by Foteini Lika (review)

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was incomplete: “Missing were all the parts that made Eva so very relevant today” (229). In restoring those missing parts, Leontis has created not just the scope of a life, but a compelling study of the role of Eva Palmer Sikelianos in transforming the cultural landscape of Greece—and, to an extent, the West’s perception of it—a century ago.

The biography also stands as an example of a paradigm shift in how we approach the history of Greece and its people and past today. Traditional historical and archaeological analyses have been broadened and redefined in recent decades to include alternative perspectives. Scholars have delved into the opinions and preoccupations of both individual subjects and social groups. In addition, the personal lives of archaeologists, historians, politicians, artists, and ordinary citizens are now fodder for a deeper understanding of cultural change. Feminist and queer theory, among other approaches, contribute significantly to this shift. The work of such scholars as Susan Hueck Allen, Mary Beard, Mark Mazower, Kostis Kourelis, Despina Lalaki, Michael Herzfeld, and Margalit Fox—among many others—brings personal idiosyncrasy into the arsenal of historical analysis. Artemis Leontis makes a telling contribution to this opening up of historical study in her riveting book.

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Palmer-Sikelianos, Eva. 1993. *Upward Panic: The Autobiography of Eva Palmer-Sikelianos*, ed. John P. Anton. Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Foteini Lika, *Roidis and the Borrowed Muse: British Historiography, Fiction and Satire in Pope Joan*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019. Pp. xiii + 295. Cloth £47.99.

Drawing upon Gérard Genette’s theory of architextuality, Foteini Lika provides the first monograph-length analysis of the wide range of sources—most notably, those of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British authors—which inspired Greek novelist Emmanouil Roidis’s *Pope Joan* (*Η Πάπισσα Ιωάννα*), first published in 1866.

In the Introduction to her book, Lika charts *Pope Joan's* controversial history and explains that various nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers, including Michail Damalas, Charilaos Meletopoulos, and Alkis Thrylos, criticized the novel for everything from its generic hybridity to its borrowing from other texts. According to Lika, “these evaluations found their official sanction” (4) in Konstantinos Th. Dimaras’s highly influential *History of Modern Greek Literature* (1949). In the 1980s, however, *Pope Joan* underwent a dramatic reassessment: “for the first time, it was analyzed as a multi-layered rhetorical synthesis in terms of politics and ideology, intertextuality and reader-oriented criticism” (6). For example, Dimitris Tziiovas has stressed “the importance of a comparative and reader-oriented examination of *Pope Joan* with other British texts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (7), while Athina Georganta has demonstrated the novel’s European influences with a particular emphasis on Lord Byron. With these types of scholarly preoccupations established, Lika moves on to the heart of her study.

In Chapter One, Lika charts the novel’s moments of marked intertextuality (both in the main body of the text and in the notes), as well as borrowings from texts that go unacknowledged by the author. According to Lika, *Pope Joan's* primary influence was Pierre Gustave Brunet’s *Curiosités Théologiques* (1861), “a manual that comprises diverse paradoxes, mostly of theological interest, such as apocryphal narrations, legends, miracles, superstitions and peculiar ideas shared by ancient and modern peoples” (21). While Roidis claims in his notes to be citing authors such as l’abbé Migne or Michel Guérin, he is in fact copying Brunet’s citations of these sources. Intriguingly, Lika suggests that Roidis uses references in ways that allows them to “retain some of their initial referential burden,” while they are “at the same time . . . imbued with new meaning because of the different context that he had in mind” (46).

In Chapter Two, Lika explains that while Roidis, in writing his novel, openly acknowledges his dependence on Spyridon Zambelios’s *Byzantine Studies* (1857)—a book that sought to secularize medieval Greek history—he was less open about his use of Edward Gibbon’s *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788). As Lika details, however, both Gibbon and Roidis emphasize the connection between ancient Greek pagan idolatry and Byzantine iconolatry (and hence ways in which Christian faith retains pagan cultural practices), though Roidis takes Gibbon’s mocking of medieval Greeks a step further by “linking the Byzantines to the superstitious Greeks of the nineteenth century” (77). By adopting Gibbon’s “dismissive and enlightened views” (88) of medieval Greek history, Roidis ends up following the British historian in orientaling this period. This chapter also examines Roidis’s admiration of

historian Thomas Babington Macaulay's ability to intertwine history and fiction in his writing. Lika, however, characterizes Macaulay's blending of history and fiction as straightforward and sincere, but defines Roidis's as "considerably more self-conscious, ironic and subversive" (107).

While Chapter Two gestures toward British novelist Sir Walter Scott's influence on Roidis, Chapter Three examines this literary engagement in greater depth. In particular, Lika discusses the historical framing apparatuses both authors use in their texts, including the prefaces, introductions, footnotes, and endnotes (i.e. their paratexts). Lika distinguishes Scott's willingness to use his imagination to create historical moments from Roidis's insistence upon the truthfulness of his account (i.e. his privileging of sources rather than fancy). In the second half of the chapter, Lika compares Scott's and Roidis's textual thematics; this section of the chapter is underdeveloped and reads like a series of distinctions (e.g. Scott's "authentic" historical figures vs. Roidis's "caricatured" protagonist) whose underlying relevance is not fully explored or explained.

Chapter Four suggests that Roidis used simile and metaphor comparably to how Jonathan Swift employed these literary techniques in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), while Chapter Five compares *Pope Joan* to Laurence Sterne's masterpiece *Tristram Shandy* (1759). In particular, Lika examines Roidis's and Sterne's texts' estranging devices (including printer's devices, footnotes, and self-conscious narrators) and concludes that, for both authors, "the defamiliarization of the reader was their utmost concern" (172). Estranging devices in both *Tristram Shandy* and *Pope Joan*, argues Lika, "divert the reader's attention from the content to the physical presence of the text thus keeping the reader in a perpetual suspension between text and gloss and fragmenting any sense of a coherent whole" (172). This is a strong chapter that provides many concrete examples of Roidis's and Sterne's similar narratorial practices and argues, clearly and convincingly, that both authors sought to destabilize any sense of narrative certainty.

Finally, Chapter Six examines how Roidis is influenced by Byron's satirical method in *Don Juan*—in particular, the poet's use of digressive storytelling, conversational tone, and epic tropes (including the invocation of a muse, beginning *in medias res*, a shipwreck motif, and epic similes). According to Lika, neither *Don Juan* nor *Pope Joan* can be easily defined generically: "in the same way that *Pope Joan* has been characterized by critics as a biography and a novel, a historical anti-novel, an anti-romantic novel and a metafiction, Byron's *Don Juan* was regarded as an epic, an anti-epic, and an unheroic poem 'though not simply mock epic'" (212). This chapter provides many interesting parallels between Roidis's and Byron's works and draws attention to how both

men invert the ideologies of the secondary texts that they employ and engage in polemics against their contemporaries (Byron satirizes Robert Southey while Roidis lampoons Panagiotis Soutsos). With inspiration from Byron's mock epic, Roidis not only was able to find the right tone for his own history (which acted as a critique of historical fiction of the period) but also "contributed to the differentiation and therefore to the generic evolution of the novel itself" (233). This chapter is a highlight of the book. Near the end of the book, however, Lika writes that "even though *Pope Joan* traces back her lineage to Swift and Sterne, we can swiftly and sternly state that she is a Byronic offspring after all" (235). Lika thus unnecessarily pigeonholes her own study.

Roidis and the Borrowed Muse is a meticulous book that evinces deep research into, and knowledge of, the sources that inspired Roidis's *Pope Joan*. As this book has cross-disciplinary potential, it would have benefitted from a more thorough background on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British historical and literary practices for readers unfamiliar with British writing of this period. Sometimes, too, the "borrowed muse" aspect of the study becomes strained when Lika charts thematic and literary similarities between Roidis and the writers whose work inspired his own but fails to explain how these similarities are manifest in Roidis's novel. Despite these critiques, Lika's generic and cross-cultural analysis of *Pope Joan* is a welcome addition to the field of comparative literature, which requires more studies that, like Lika's, examine cross-cultural engagement between Greek and British literatures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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Alexandros Nafpliotis, *Britain and the Greek Colonels: Accommodating the Junta in the Cold War*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2013. Pp. viii + 307. Cloth \$40.38.

Despite the 45 years that have passed since the collapse of the Greek Junta, more questions than answers remain regarding the role of foreign powers in the Colonels' regime. What role did the "Great Powers" play in instigating and supporting the coup (1)? Once in power, how did these governments work with the Colonels to further their own economic, security, and other interests? Many have speculated on answers to these questions. However, only a minority of scholars have systematically studied the role of foreign governments and