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Kyriakos N. Demetriou, University of Cyprus
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Demetriou, Kyriacos N.

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Kyriakos N. Demetriou

Abstract

The history of classical scholarship abounds with examples of metaphors that function as organic links between past and present. As vehicles for contemporary emulation or allies of particular moral and political ideologies, interpretations of ancient life have mirrored the anxieties and controversies of their times. Alexander the Great has been a prominent figure in such historically contextualized interpretations. A comparative study of the reception of this legendary hero by two leading nineteenth-century historians, George Grote and Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, provides a platform for reflecting on the influence that different versions of Hellenism have had on the construction of historical narratives. Two contrasting Alexanders emerge from the works of the Victorian radical and the Greek national historiographer. Grote’s Alexander was the deadly enemy of ancient liberalism and conqueror of a glorious civilization that was never to be resurrected. Paparrigopoulos’s Alexander, in contrast, was a national heroic ancestor who bridged the classical with the Byzantine in the Hellenic world. In this form, Alexander emerged as a symbol of national unity and his achievement became the historical analogue of nation-building.

“Hellenism, properly so called . . . never passed over into Asia. Instead of hellenising Asia, Alexander was tending to asiatise Hellas.”
—George Grote (History 12:192)

“What is really genuine and what spurious Hellenism? Through the inscrutable ways of Providence, Alexander carried the flag of Hellenism to the East.”
—Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos (Istoria 2:176)

Political historiography, like the history of ideas, is always subject to the political, social, and intellectual circumstances (the Weltanschauung) of the historian. The contextuality of philosophical exposition and other fields has been a source of constructive scholarly debate since the early
twentieth century. The present study provides a critical examination of the parallel historicity of classical scholarship by presenting a specific illustration of the ideological appropriation of Greek antiquity for the pragmatic purposes of the nineteenth century. The historiography of Alexander the Great constitutes a particularly suitable case for reflecting on the metaphorical applications of the classical past. Within the wide spectrum of interpretations of Alexander, I specifically focus on the reception of this legendary hero in two seminal historical masterpieces: the *History of Greece* (12 vols., 1846–1856, hereafter *History*) by George Grote (1796–1871), and the *Ιστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ έθνους* (*History of the Greek Nation*, 5 vols., 1860–1874, hereafter *Istória*) by Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos (1815–1891).

The voluminous works of Grote and Paparrigopoulos give ample testimony to the impact of political ideology on historiography. Their writings emerged from radically different civil and cultural contexts, and their interpretations of the character of Alexander as well as their evaluation of his accomplishments were thus bound to vary. Anti-clerical and reformist, Grote belonged to the circle of Jeremy Bentham and the philosophical radicals and is generally known as the liberal historian of ancient Greece.¹ The philosophical method of James Mill, the analytical eye of the utilitarians, and the secularist perspective of Victorian debating societies were brought forward and thoroughly utilized in his *History*. This was a widely-read and revolutionary work that succeeded in overturning an entire anti-democratic and pro-Spartan tradition in Greek historiography.²

Paparrigopoulos, on the other hand, is the acknowledged national historiographer *par excellence* of Modern Greece.³ Living in a period of rapid change in the Balkans with interminable intestine rivalries and discord, Paparrigopoulos was convinced that Greeks needed to subscribe to a higher vision of national unity to override sectional interests and promote union with the vast non-liberated lands not yet part of the nation-state. He became increasingly concerned, from the early 1840s to his death, with affirming the legitimacy of irredentism in a massive historiographical work that persistently proclaimed the unity and continuity of the “Greek nation.” It is pertinent to this discussion that romantic nationalism and religious fundamentalism (of which Paparrigopoulos was a formidable representative) contributed to the decline of the liberal tenets of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Greek Enlightenment and inevitably clashed with its optimism for Westernized educational and institutional reforms.⁴

Grote and Paparrigopoulos were both ideological historians of the first rank, with fertile and lasting influence. Self-made scholars, they were each actively engaged in the political affairs of their own countries.
Accordingly, a comparative study of their treatment of Alexander provides an engaging platform for considering the recurrent transformations of historical narratives under the influence of practical concerns shaped by contemporary politics and ideas. This essay elaborates a particular case of what may be called the “appropriation of the classics” for contemporary emulation. It probes two distinct interpretations of Alexander, pulled from the seemingly inexhaustible mine of classical scholarship that has developed on the character and adventures of the Macedonian.

The received image of Philip and Alexander

Exploring the symbolic reinvention of Philip and Alexander in political historiography is an exercise in discovering how intellectuals wove the vision of myth into a compound fabric of culture and ideology. For well over a century before Grote engaged in his magnum opus, historians drew upon the story of Philip and Alexander in the conviction that it could provide readers with instructive lessons about the fortunes of rulers, as well as universal maxims for the guidance of the state and the individual. A synoptic investigation into the uses of the Macedonian example and its metaphorical implications in eighteenth-century texts serves two purposes: first, it helps us understand the ways in which Grote’s and Paparrigopoulos’s ideas of Alexander drew upon (or diverged from) their immediate predecessors; and second, it shows the contextualized nature of such interpretations, thus leading us to some understanding of how the different intellectual and political environments of these two historians eventually guided them to such divergent treatments of Alexander.

In Georgian England, prior to the social and political upheavals associated with the revolution in France and the rise of nationalism and romantic historiography generally, the study of classical antiquity was expected to provide antidotes to a perceived moral decay. Lengthy disquisitions and edifying rhetorical essays were typically prefixed to translations of ancient texts or inserted in the heart of quasi-historical narratives. In the growing humanist literary tradition, in which general lessons about society and morals were derived from narratives of events and the deeds of statesmen, study of such legendary heroes as Philip and Alexander was used for extraction of universal moral lessons rather than development of recipes for political organization. Not surprisingly, the portrait of Alexander in fashionable didactic eighteenth-century histories was a mixture of heroism and imprudence, of humanism and brutality, of friendly overtures and tyrannical disposition.

Within this moralistic and edifying corpus, an interesting early
specimen was the work of Charles Rollin (1661–1741), a sometime rector of the University of Paris. His *Histoire ancienne* was published in Paris between 1730 and 1738 and enjoyed great popularity in Britain. Embedded in the humanist tradition, Rollin’s understanding of history was Plutarchean in substance, viewing the speculative journey into the past as a quest for moral lessons. The story of Alexander deserved, of course, a central place in such a moralizing journey, and in it Rollin detected two completely different Alexanders. During the first years of his reign, Alexander displayed “an unparalleled liberality;” he was prudent, courageous, friendly, and “void of pride and arrogance” (Rollin 1837:4:320–322). After the siege of Tyre, in which he displayed the abilities of a great warrior and prince, Alexander began to exhibit a lamentable transformation: “we see the virtues and noble qualities of this prince degenerate on a sudden, and make way for the grossest vices and most brutal passions” (Rollin 1837:4:324). Taking into consideration the universal maxim that “every war, undertaken merely from views of ambition, is unjust,” and that Alexander’s “frantic ambition” knew neither law nor limits, Rollin proclaimed the father, the modest Philip II, to be superior inasmuch as he only aimed at the subjection of Darius (1837:4:327). By defeating the Persians, who were the professed enemies of the Greeks, Philip aspired to liberate the grievously long-suffering colonies in Asia Minor. To Rollin, such ambition was morally just and, all things considered, politically justified. It is worth observing that Rollin’s declared preference for Philip instead of Alexander anticipated the apologetic biography of Philip by Claude Mathieu Olivier (1740), as well as Thomas Leland’s (1758) lengthy examination of the prince’s life and military activity—both of which Grote preferred to the panegyrics of other eighteenth-century historians (Grote 1815).

Temple Stanyan (d. 1752), the first to write a moralizing history of ancient Greece not as a part of a wider project, considered the Macedonians a warlike tribe, related to the Greeks only by virtue of their interference in Greek affairs (1781:2:205–6). Greece was, however, subsequently swallowed by Macedonia, and the task of an historian of ancient Greece thus required Stanyan to end with a narrative of the military operations and political status quo established by Philip. Stanyan exonerated the patriotic quality of Demosthenes’s statesmanship, emphasizing his edifying role in the middle of an “insolent [multitude] . . . , factious and divided, [and] so jealous of the power of the *Democracy*” (1781:2:244, 322).

By a mixture of some good qualities, with a great many bad ones, he [Philip] accomplished his ends, so far at least, that he had thoroughly opened the way to the *destruction of the liberties of Greece*, and laid the
foundation of all his son’s glory. And if the actions of each of them be duly weighed, it will be found, that Philip’s part was the more difficult of the two. For it was certainly easier to conquer Asia with the assistance of the Grecians, than to break the power of the Grecians, who had so often beat the Asiaticks. Wherefore we may venture to pronounce, That though Alexander was the greater conqueror, Philip was the greater man. (Stanyan 1781:2:340–41)

A similarly cautionary note was sounded by Oliver Goldsmith’s (1728–1774) Grecian History, translated into Greek by Dimitrios Alexandrides in 1806–1807. According to this prolific writer and poet, Philip and Alexander were born among “a people hitherto obscure, and in a manner barbarous” (Goldsmith 1823:1:378, 393); they were looked upon as foreigners and indeed did not deserve the name Greek. Alexander had the privilege to be the pupil of Aristotle. Under the guidance of the Greek philosopher, he “applied himself chiefly to morality, which is properly the science of kings, because it is the knowledge of mankind, and of their duties. This he made his serious and profound study, and considered it . . . as the foundation of prudence and wise policy” (Goldsmith 1823:2:54–55). Upon accession to the throne, Alexander found himself surrounded by many dangers, “nor had he less to fear from the Greeks themselves” who struggled to restore their autonomy (Goldsmith 1823:2:59). Goldsmith pointed out the integrity and patriotism of Demosthenes, hailing him as a tragic patriot, whom “all the gold in Macedon could not bribe” (Goldsmith 1823:2:397). By the end of Alexander’s conquests, a degenerate Greece had resulted, and Alexander himself had become “swollen up by success, spoiled by flattery, and enervated by vices, exhibiting a very doubtful character, and mixing the tyrant with the hero” (Goldsmith 1823:2:152).

In contrast, in the 1780s, certain other historians found Greek antiquity a convenient channel to articulate resentment toward the liberal tenets of the Enlightenment, as well as apprehension about the possible effects of the French Revolution in Britain. A rigorously pro-Macedonian camp of historians made its appearance in British partisan histories, developed largely as vehicles for conveying conservative and broadly anti-revolutionary ideas. The didactic aims of these partisan historiographers were reflected in their uniform practice of contrasting the constitutional order of the Greek pòleis with the virtuous mixed British constitution. The Greek republics were judged inferior, prone to faction and decadence, and thus of limited life. These works abounded with stern criticism of the excessive liberties of Athenian democracy and a political particularism viewed as dividing the ancient world. The only
exceptions to misrule and ruinous faction were found in the rigid Spartan constitution and the regimes established in Macedonia. Significantly, this renewed interest in (and approval of) Macedonian imperialism was markedly political in orientation, unlike the moralizing focus of pre-revolutionary accounts.

In the *History of Greece* (1838) composed by William Mitford (1744–1827), Grote’s major conservative rival, both Philip and Alexander were thus treated with undisguised and enthusiastic admiration. Writing in the wake of the French Revolution, the monarchist historian addressed a damning indictment against ancient democracies and their monomachia with (a misconceived) autonomy and segmentation, in which he saw the dreadful origins of all evil. “Full of the spirit of discord as all Greece at this time remained, every republic [was] hostile to many others” (Mitford 1838:7:9). Not surprisingly, Mitford praised the beginning of a new era that commenced with Philip and matured in the reign of his celebrated son. The historian’s encomium for Philip and Alexander (perennial types of princely clemency, disinterested virtue, and liberality) was notably in inverse proportion to his hatred towards Demosthenes. The orator was not a genuine patriot. He was blind to the opportunities then open to Greece and did not scruple to enter into shameful negotiations, invoking assistance from Persia instead of siding with the promising Macedonian confederacy (Mitford 1838:7:6–51, 8:43–44). But despite internal opposition and strife, Greece (i.e., the “Greek nation”), under the reign of the Macedonians, not only extended its borders to distant regions, injecting the seeds of civilization to the rest of the world, but the formerly faction-ridden republics at long last enjoyed the real blessings of security, property, and life (Mitford 1838:7:199–200).

Not surprisingly, the direction chalked out by Mitford found several followers among Grote’s predecessors. An apt case is that of John Gillies (1747–1836), Scotland’s Royal Historiographer and eminent classical scholar. Gillies shared the same ideological anti-democratic allegiances as Mitford and, accordingly, the same contempt for the “licentious” and “jealous” Athenian democrats, as well as the flat demagogy of Demosthenes (Gillies 1793:4:63–69). Judged by Gillies’s standards, Philip’s administration of conquered Greece was “liberal” in its preservation of the ancient forms of disparate constitutions. Philip was extraordinarily fitted to carry out his new political duties, because “he united all the prominent features of the Grecian character, valour, eloquence [and] flexibility to vary his conduct without changing his purpose” (Gillies 1793:4:237). His illustrious victory over “the only communities that opposed his greatness, pointed him out as the general
best entitled to conduct the military force of Greece and Macedon in the long-projected invasion of Persia” (Gillies 1793:4:233). But it was his successor, Alexander, who changed the history of humankind forever.

In generosity and prowess, he [Alexander] rivalled the greatest heroes of antiquity; and in the race of glory, having finally outstripped all competitors, became ambitious to surpass himself. His superior skill in war gave uninterrupted success to his arms; and his natural humanity, enlightened by the philosophy of Greece, taught him to improve his conquests to the best interests of mankind. (Gillies 1793:4:385)

Admittedly, in the end, Alexander was corrupted by “prosperity and flattery” (Gillies 1793:4:390), but as a general of combined Greece, he “changed and improved the state of the ancient world” (Gillies 1793:4:397).

We thus see how the political tumult of the late-eighteenth century and the conservative reaction in Britain led to a reassessment of the import of Macedonian imperialism and presented both Philip and Alexander in a new, favorable light. The nineteenth century witnessed an increasingly stronger attachment to the Graeco-Macedonian politics of national cause. So pronounced was this tendency among scholars that even the liberal bishop of St. David’s, Connop Thirlwall (1797–1875), an eminent classical scholar and Grote’s most respected predecessor in Britain, did not hesitate to argue that

the immediate operation of his [Alexander’s] conquests was highly beneficial to the conquered people . . . : by a great immediate increase of the general well-being, by a salutary excitement of industry, and commercial activity . . . And yet this was perhaps the smallest part of his glory: it was much indeed so to cultivate, enrich, and beautify the fairest portion of the earth: it was something more, to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the people: and this was in a great degree the effect, in a still greater degree the tendency, of Alexander’s measures and institutions. (Thirlwall 1845:7:110–111)

While Thirlwall saw Alexander’s rule as opening “a prospect of progressive improvement” in Asia, he also believed that its effect in Greece was a change for the worse (1845:7:111). Greece was to reap bitter fruit in the century that followed the conquest. Demosthenes, who tried to “shake off the Macedonian yoke” (Thirlwall 1845:7:168) in opposition to the rival party headed by Aeschines, foresaw the fatal results emanating from the extinction of sovereignty and independence both for his city and others (Thirlwall 1843:6:2–3). Apparently, as a liberal thinker who believed in the idea of progress, Thirlwall could not question the idea that Alexander promoted the benefit of the conquered lands. Even so,
however, he believed that while the East prospered, the Greek mainland suffered a social and political blow under the rule of the Macedonian kings whom the enlightened bishop never called “Greeks.”

Despite Thirlwall’s neutralizing voice, Alexander was fully rehabilitated as the national leader of the Hellenic League in the work of Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884), Professor of History at Berlin. His treatment of Alexander can be considered the most comprehensively symbolic reading of the present into the past. The youthful Droysen devoted an entire monograph to Alexander: his *Geschichte Alexanders des Großen*, which anticipated Paparrigopoulos’s interpretation to a great extent, was published in Hamburg in 1833. When the Macedonians came into the foreground, Droysen contended, Greek values were in rapid decline, and their obsessive attachment to local autonomy was undermining social and political order while opening the gates of Greece to Persia. The racially Greek Macedonians initiated a sacred and “national” war against Persia, a goal that eventually united all Greeks into a free and powerful sovereign state (Droysen 1833:15–16, 33–37).

In Droysen’s view, while Alexander advanced a war of unity and the liberation of all Hellenes, sophists like Demosthenes were incapable of coping with the new spirit of the times. Being shortsighted, they preferred old-fashioned freedom to national grandeur.

Knipfling rightly remarked that Droysen’s work “seems to have been written under the urge of the current Prussian impulse of nationalism: the relations between the military monarchy of Macedon and the pernicious Hellenic particularism of the past were to teach by precept and example the need for Prussian hegemony over the small, rival German states of his own day” (1921:659). It also appears that Droysen wrote under the influence of Hegel’s concept of dialectical progress in which nationalism was the cornerstone and Alexander succeeded in leading humankind into the safe harbor of rationality. Droysen’s book on Alexander, which was supplemented by a comprehensive *Geschichte des Hellenismus* (1836–1843), won him a solid reputation among historians that lasted at least until the end of the century.

By the time Grote embarked systematically on his grand historical project, i.e., by the late 1830s, the prevailing view concerning Alexander’s character and political designs seems to have been embodied in the works of Mitford and Droysen, Grote’s declared opponents. In parallel fashion, especially after the constitutional reforms of 1843, the general climate in Greece also turned in favor of a defense, if not mystification, of Alexander for reasons not difficult to decipher. From the first years of Greek independence until the time of Droysen’s translation into Greek in 1859 by Konstantinos Frearitis (1819–1902), several popular books on “Macedonian Hellenism” and the Great king were published (Dimaras
1986:71–72). The vision of irredentism and a civilizing mission in distant regions (which embraced *inter alia* the coastal regions of Asia Minor) may well have been solidified through employment of such symbols of national consciousness and diachronic unity. Thus works, such as those by Jakob P. Fallmerayer (1790–1861), who argued in his *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters* (1830–36) that after the Slavic conquests at the close of the eighth century, the original population of northern Greece practically disappeared, were, understandably, anathema to the nationalist Greek intelligentsia.

It is thus not accidental that Paparrigopoulos opened his literary career by a work entitled *Περί τῆς ἐποικισθέας σλαβικῶν τινῶν φυλῶν εἰς τὴν Πελοπόννησον* (*On the Slavic Colonies in the Peloponnesse*, 1843), which intended to provide a decisive reply to Fallmerayer. Paparrigopoulos felt it necessary to show that casting doubt on the archaic origins of modern Hellenes, and thereby depriving them of the distinction of having preserved and consolidated Orthodoxy during the Byzantine period, was wrong as a “scientific” historical account and pernicious for the nation’s self-consciousness and development. Likewise, in his *Εγχειρίδιον Γενικής Ιστορίας* (*A Manual of General History*, 1849:195), Paparrigopoulos defended the Greekness of “the Macedonian kings” by tracing their claim to be descended from Zeus, thereby displaying his eagerness to establish the uninterrupted continuity of Greek national existence. In the late 1840s, Paparrigopoulos had little opposition, certainly no formidable opponent, to his belief in the Hellenic origins of the Macedonians. By the time he embarked on narrating Alexander’s campaigns for the *Istoria* early in 1861, Grote’s twelfth and last volume of the *History* (in which the Macedonian period was examined) was already five years old. Predictably, Paparrigopoulos’s dreadful adversary, particularly in terms of the Macedonians and Alexander, became nobody else than Grote.

**Grote’s Alexander: the destroyer of proper Hellenism**

The practice among Grote’s predecessors had been to end their histories at the moment Greece became an appendage to Rome. In contrast, Grote closed his 12 volume *History* with a narrative detailing the expeditions of Alexander. His exploration into classical antiquity traced an era of intellectual and social progress that culminated in the fifth-century participatory democracy in Athens—the liberal prototype. This golden period, in Grote’s judgment, was regrettably interrupted by Macedonian expansionism. Alexander’s military power and relentless activity crushed the autonomy of the Greek city-states and drove the Athenian democrats to such disgraceful actions and submissive conduct
that the historian felt “that the life has departed from his subject, and with sadness and humiliation [he decided to] bring his narrative to a close” (History 12:303). Indeed Grote’s two last volumes, in which he recorded the Macedonian affairs, sporadically inserting reflections on the contrast between liberty and servility, are devoid of the liveliness and enthusiasm with which his earlier accounts were imbued.

For Grote, Alexander “was not a Greek, but a Macedonian and Epirot, partially imbued with Grecian sentiment and intelligence.” The basis of his character, like his father’s, “was the self-will of a barbarian prince, not the ingenium civile, or sense of reciprocal obligation and right in society with others, which marked more or less even the most powerful members of a Grecian city, whether oligarchical or democratic” (History 11:468). Sheer power and timely exploitation of contingencies, however, brought this man and the Macedonian hordes to Greece. The brave Demosthenes opened communication with the Persians in Asia Minor, thereby doing the right thing. At this juncture, according to Grote, the political interests of Persians “coincided with that of all Greeks who aspired to freedom. Darius had no chance of becoming master of Greece . . . Now the purpose of a Greek patriot would be to preserve the integrity and autonomy of the Hellenic world against all foreign interference” (History 11:485, emphasis added). This goal was pursued by many patriotic Greeks who “set an example of devoted self-sacrifice in the cause of Grecian liberty, not less honourable than that of Leonidas at Thermopylae” (History 11:499).

It is worth observing that in Grote’s understanding, while the Greek pôleis were autonomous political entities, they nevertheless had a consciousness of a “common Hellenism” that helped to transcend fragmentation in times of emergency. Religious festivals, increasing trade communications, and various alliances fostered a conspicuous web of Hellenism that was solidified by the Greek disposition to operate through “voice and persuasion, and not through the Persian whip and instruments of torture” (History 9:235). This proto-nationalist commonality (the “Hellenic order”) linked the “Hellenes” as opposed to those who were identified as “barbarians.” In the context of a noble struggle to protect this “common Hellenism,” the people of Thebes fell under the Macedonian sword. The brutal destruction of their city, “the violent extinction of life, property, liberty, and social or political institutions” shocked the Greeks who became even more alarmed at the sight of Alexander’s sacrilege against the local gods.

Grote’s preliminary observations on Macedonian life and politics, as well as his scattered remarks on the disagreeable features of Alexander’s character (features entirely alien to the Greek civil and military ethos) are clearly indicative of his intellectual preferences. The use of such
ideas and concepts as “reciprocity of obligation and right,” and respect for “life, property and liberty” within a political community were both theoretical components and practical concerns of Benthamite utilitarian liberalism. The citizens of Athens and other democratic communities of ancient Hellas practiced, to a greater or lesser degree, such ideals, until the time they “dwindle into outlying appendages of a newly-grown [Alexander’s] Oriental empire” (*History* 12:1).

Grote’s antipathy towards Alexander and his sorrow for the consequences of Macedonian hegemony reached their climax in his narration of the Asiatic campaigns of the legendary hero. It is important to keep in mind, Grote remarked, that Alexander neither represented an existing “Grecian aspiration” to humiliate Asia nor had anything of “that sense of correlative right and obligation which characterized the free Greeks of the city community” (*History* 12:20). Alexander’s “conquests were the extinction of genuine Hellenism, though they diffused an exterior varnish of it, and especially the Greek language, over much of the Oriental world. True Grecian interests lay more on the side of Darius than of Alexander” (*History* 12:34, emphasis added). It will be vital to remember the words cited in emphasis when we later compare Grote’s and Paparrigopoulos’s interpretation of what constitutes “Hellenism.” As for Grote’s identification of the interests of ancient Greeks with Darius, suffice to say that little could be more blasphemous for a Greek λόγιος of the mid-nineteenth century.

“No victory recorded in history was ever more complete in itself, or more far-stretching in its consequences, than that of Issus” (*History* 12:68). First of all it “overawed all free spirit throughout Greece” (*History* 12:70). Secondly, Darius’s “melancholy timidity, and the like incompetence for using numbers with effect” at Issus as well as the subsequent battle of Arbela (weaknesses rooted in the oriental nature of his political culture), opened the gates of the Persian empire to Macedonia (*History* 12:69). One of those captured at Issus was the Athenian Iphikrates, son of the great Athenian officer of that name. He was treated cordially by Alexander and was enlisted among his troops, only to die shortly afterwards from sickness. The event offered Grote an opportunity to compare the status of a free Greek and a Greek under the rule of Macedonia. The contrast is vivid:

The difference of position, between Iphikratês the father and Iphikratês the son, is one among the painful evidences of the downward march of Hellenism. The father, a distinguished officer moving amidst a circle of freemen, sustaining by arms the security and dignity of his own fellow-citizens, and even interfering for the rescue of the Macedonian regal family; the son, condemned to witness the degradation of his native city by Macedonian arms, and deprived of all other means of reviving or rescuing
her, except such as could be found in the service of an Oriental prince, whose stupidity and cowardice threw away at once his own security and the freedom of Greece. (History 12:71, emphasis added)

But the worst was yet to come, for both Greeks and Asiatics. The unrivalled military expertise of Alexander, which caused the submission of the Asiatic world with or without opposition, filled the leader’s soul with vanity and egoism. Early in 332 B.C., the people of the Phoenician city of Tyre, “one of the most spirited, wealthy, and intelligent communities of the ancient world,” experienced the barbarity of a prince who simply out of pride, and even against his immediate political interests, embarked on a prolonged siege of the city “in order to make display of his power” (History 12:76). For Grote, the treatment of the Tyrian captives was cruel and oriental in character: 2,000 surviving warriors were crucified to satiate Alexander’s wrath, while the remaining 30,000 were sold into slavery. But the treatment of Batis, the eunuch general in command of Gaza, which, like Tyre, refused to capitulate, “stands out in respect of barbarity from all that we read respecting the treatment of conquered towns in antiquity.” Imitating his legendary hero, Achilles, Alexander “directed the feet of Batis to be bored, and brazen rings to be passed through them; after which the naked body of this brave man, yet surviving, was tied with cords to the tail of a chariot driven by Alexander himself, and dragged at full speed amidst the triumphant jeers and shouts of the army” (History 12:85).

Alexander stayed four or five months in Egypt, founding Alexandria on its coastal region. His trip through the hazardous sandy desert to the temple of Zeus Ammon was the most notable incident of his stay. Alexander undertook a potentially perilous pilgrimage knowing that a positive pronouncement of the oracle at Siwah would confirm his divine descent. Predictably, the priest gave him the answer he desired. For Grote, the whole affair was “chiefly memorable as it marks his increasing self-adoration and inflation above the limits of humanity” (History 12:87). Indeed, Alexander’s achievements during those last three years so transcended the expectations of all, himself included, that he started to imagine himself as superhuman. Admittedly, Grote argued, no one can question Alexander’s “military genius;” his successes were earned by indefatigable effort, faultless tactics, and the “admirable organisation of his army” (History 12:105; see also 12:187). Yet, such recurring emphasis on the military competence of Alexander by a liberal historian was apparently designed to depreciate the political and civic virtues of the Macedonian hero. Interestingly, in describing the retreat of the Ten Thousand under the leadership of Xenophon, Grote called attention to the admirable twofold character of a Greek general: expertise and courage in battle, but also intellectual and moral qualifications, “persua-
sive discourse and publicity of discussion” that could create a *sensus communis*, discretion in dealing with his officers, and democratic aptitude. These are characteristics that Xenophon, raised in the atmosphere of liberal Athens, could not have failed to develop and cultivate to an admirable degree (History 9:164, 217, 252). 14

Following the battle of Arbela, Alexander marched to conquer the rest of the Persian Empire. The first four years of his Asiatic expeditions had an important effect on the condition and destinies of the Greek city-states. But the last seven years of his campaigns over *terra incognita*, across the vast fields of southern and central Asia, scarcely touched the Greek world. “To the historian of Greece, therefore, these latter campaigns can hardly be regarded as included within the range of his subject. They deserve to be told as examples of military skill and energy, and as illustrating the character of the most illustrious general of antiquity—one who, though not a Greek, had become the master of all Greeks” (History 12:116). The story of Alexander’s metamorphosis deserved to be told only because it showed that his so-called “transformation” was in effect both the result, as well as the confirmation, of his not being a Greek. It should be remembered that Grote’s predecessors, largely copying Plutarch and Curtius, stressed the lamentable moral deterioration of Alexander’s character that presumably occurred during the last years of his life. Grote observed that Alexander’s indulgences in wine-drinking and other vices, which he had amply exhibited earlier, were now simply “multiplied and prolonged.” “But the change of most importance in Alexander’s conduct was, that he now began to feel and act manifestly as successor of Darius on the Persian throne; to disdain the comparative simplicity of Macedonian habits, and to assume the pomp, the ostentatious apparatus of luxuries, and even the dress, of a Persian king” (History 12:123). Thus, for Grote, the moral dimension of Alexander’s transformation (if indeed it was a transformation) was of little interest. The political symbolism of this so-called metamorphosis was, however, highly consequential: Alexander eventually turned into an oriental prince. At first, only exterior manifestations pointed to such a dramatic alteration. Soon everyone was to realize that the despicable change was exceedingly deep-rooted.

The policy of this new orientalized Alexander, namely promotion of the fusion between Greeks and Persians, naturally aroused anger and resistance among his commanders and the Macedonian forces. To mitigate the consequences of such opposition, Grote reported that Alexander regularly resorted to abominable actions. The murder of Philotas and Parmenion, among the “many tragical deeds recounted throughout the course of this history,” displayed Alexander’s natural ferocity. His behavior towards these faithful and wise comrades convinced
Grote, once more, that “we have passed out of the region of Greek civic feeling into that of the more savage Illyrian warrior, partially orientalised” *(History* 12:133). Indeed nothing could be more contemptible to a Greek soul than large-scale human sacrifice, yet Alexander’s belief that he was destined to execute the wrath of Apollo against the Branchidae, whose ancient ancestors had robbed the temple of the god, led to the wholesale massacre of this unfortunate tribe. It was “in fact an example of human sacrifice on the largest scale, offered to the gods by the religious impulses of Alexander, and worthy to be compared to that of the Carthaginian general Hannibal, when he sacrificed 3,000 Grecian prisoners on the field of Himera, where his grandfather Hamilkar had been slain seventy years before” *(History* 12:137). The cruel treatment of Darius’s assassin, Bessus, who was captured by Alexander in Bactria and then mutilated (his nose and ears were cut off before being delivered to his executioners), appeared to Grote as yet another instance of how much the king of Macedon had taken on oriental dispositions *(History* 12:139).

Alexander’s murder of Cleitus, who had saved his life at the battle of Granicus, gave ample evidence to Grote of Alexander’s intolerant character and “exorbitant self-estimation” *(History* 12:141). Cleitus, the Macedonian co-commander of the Companion Cavalry, refused to heap praise upon Alexander’s achievements when addressed by several flatterers (mainly “servile Asiatics”) and even when received by the boastful king himself. During a symposium at Samarcand in 328 B.C., following Cleitus’s protest against the presence of barbarians and Asiatics among the Macedonians, Alexander, outraged and intoxicated by wine, wrenched a spear from one of his bodyguards and killed Cleitus outright. He soon forgot whatever bursts of remorse and grief he felt.

Just as disturbing to Grote, Alexander eventually came to ask not “merely for the reputation of divine paternity, but for the actual manifestations of worship as towards a god” *(History* 12:148). The required ritual homage, including *proskynesis* (obeisance), was an honor reserved in the Greek-speaking world exclusively for the gods. In this light, the philosopher Callisthenes refused to take part in the new court ceremony, thus temporarily earning popularity among some Macedonians who also felt offended by the ritual. Callisthenes was subsequently implicated by Alexander in the assassination conspiracy of 327 B.C. The machination worked, and the philosopher was sentenced to death, tortured, and then hanged. For Grote, the unjust condemnation of Callisthenes symbolized Alexander’s “hatred towards that spirit of citizenship and free speech,” which the philosopher cherished in common with other Greeks *(History* 12:154).

Near the end of his career Alexander became completely asiatized
in both character and appearance. He took additional wives and adopted Persian costume and ceremonies. The death of his friend Hephaestion in 324 B.C., after excessive drinking, turned things for the worst. The execution of Glaukias, Hephaestion’s physician, and the extravagant funeral preparations that followed, were, for Grote, unmistakable signs of Alexander’s ungovernable passions. Alexander “stayed at Ekbatana until winter . . . , seeking distraction from his grief in exaggerated splendour of festivals and ostentation of life. His temper became so much more irascible and furious, that no one approached him without fear, and he was propitiated by the most extravagant flatteries. At length he roused himself and found his true consolation, in gratifying the primary passions of nature—fighting and man-hunting” (History 12:175).15

With this story, Grote’s narrative of Alexander’s Herculean conquests approached its conclusion. Together with the politics of Philip, Macedonian imperialism took more than a volume of Grote’s twelve volume apparatus. In the last pages of his critical narrative, and before entering into a brief account of the Hellenistic successors, Grote criticized the established view of Alexander, putting forward his own overall judgment. Alexander, Grote stated, is generally credited “for grand and beneficent views on the subject of imperial government, and for intentions highly favourable to the improvement of mankind. I see no ground for adopting this opinion” (History 12:187–8). On the contrary, for Grote, Alexander numbered all “mankind, known and unknown” among his enemies, and pursued and slaughtered not only those who opposed him in the battlefield, but also those who abandoned their property and fled to the mountains. He was imbued with an insatiable aspiration to become the master of the globe. With the master passion of his soul being universal dominion and aggrandizement, he had no time for “the improvements suited to peace and stability.” The political organization of Alexander’s vast empire resembled the Persian. If he had lived to realize it, Grote felt that Alexander would have organized an “aggregate of satrapies and dependent principalities, furnishing money and soldiers” (History 12:189), and left to the uncontrolled despotism of local commanders. In this respect, Alexander would have contributed only one improvement: the military organization of the empire.

As Grote saw it, near the end of Alexander’s life, he “became more Persian than either Macedonian or Greek.” What is worse, he was convinced of his divine parentage, and considered it his mission to fuse the disparate conquered tribes into one. Thus he took pains to transform the Macedonians into Persians, forced intermarriages, and had a plan for massive relocation of inhabitants. But, for Grote, such “reciprocal
translation of peoples would have been felt as eminently odious, and
could not have been accomplished *without coercive authority*. It is rash to
speculate upon unexecuted purposes; but, as far as we can judge, such
compulsory mingling of the different races promises nothing favourable
to the *happiness* of any of them, though it might serve as an imposing
novelty and memento of imperial omnipotence” (*History* 12:190–91,
emphasis added).

Droysen’s eulogy of Alexander as having achieved the “systematic
diffusion of Hellenic culture for the improvement of mankind” (Droysen
1833) was contestable and problematic for Grote. In the first place,
Grote viewed Alexander’s disposition and character as far from Hellenic
and full of an “Oriental violence of impulse, unmeasured self-will, and
exaction of reverence above the limits of humanity” (*History* 12:192).
Secondly, Alexander’s plan for an ecumenical government, would, in
Grote’s mind, have worked against the less numerous Macedonians and
Greeks, who would have been absorbed by the Asiatic multitudes. The
outcome of Alexander’s policies, as carried out until his death, was the
construction of large military bases and not independent *póleis*. All
things considered, Grote argued that “instead of hellenising Asia,
[Alexander] was tending to asiatise Macedonia and Hellas” (*History* 12:192,
emphasis added), although he did concede that “a new Hellenic blood
was poured into Asia during the century succeeding Alexander” (*History*
12:194).

When it is said however that Asia became hellenised under Alexander’s
successors, the phrase requires explanation. Hellenism, properly so called—
the aggregate of habits, sentiments, energies, and intelligence, manifested
by the Greeks during their epoch of autonomy—never passed over into
Asia; neither the highest qualities of the Greek mind, nor even the entire
character of ordinary Greeks. The *genuine Hellenism* could not subsist under
the over-ruling compression of Alexander, nor even under the less
irresistible pressure of his successors. Its living force, productive genius,
self-organising power, and active spirit of political communion, were
stifled, and gradually died out. All that passed into Asia was a faint and
partial resemblance of it, carrying the superficial marks of the original.
(*History* 12:195, emphasis added)

Admittedly, during the next centuries Greeks and Macedonians trans-
formed the many new cities in Asia into places of flourishing commerce
and social and religious activity. But Droysen’s argument that Hellenism
was injected into these places primarily through the use of the Greek
language was false in Grote’s estimation. It was not language that made
proper Hellenism, but mentality and political ethos.
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[The Greeks of Antioch, or Alexandria, or Seleukeia, were not like citizens of Athens or Thebes, nor even like men of Tarentum or Ephesus. While they communicated their language to Orientals, they became themselves substantially orientalised. Their feelings, judgements, and habits of action, ceased to be Hellenic . . . Greek social habits, festivals, and legends, passed with the Hellenic settlers into Asia; all becoming amalgamated and transformed so as to suit a new Asiatic abode. Important social and political consequences turned upon the diffusion of the language, and upon the establishment of such a common medium of communication throughout Western Asia. But after all, the hellenised Asiatic was not so much a Greek as a foreigner with Grecian speech, exterior varnish, and superficial manifestations; distinguished fundamentally from those Greek citizens with whom the present history has been concerned. So he would have been considered by Sophokles, by Thucydides, by Sokrates. (History 12:196–197)

Paparrigopoulos’s Alexander:
the apostle of Hellenism predestined by Divine Providence

For Paparrigopoulos, the distressing verdict of Grote on a symbol of primordial Hellenism required urgent refutation, even if done respectfully “like a student criticizing his mentor” («ώς εἰς μαθητήν ἀντιλέγοντα πρός διδάσκαλον») (Dimaras 1986:309). Paparrigopoulos considered the Victorian scholar the most commanding contemporary historian of classical Greece. We possess both internal and external evidence of Paparrigopoulos’s high appreciation of Grote. Paparrigopoulos mentioned “the great English historiographer” («Ὁ μέγας Ἀγγλὸς ἱστοριογράφος») in complimentary fashion as early as 1856 in his On the origins and formation of the tribes of the ancient Greek Nation (Περὶ τῆς ἄρχης καὶ τῆς διαμορφώσεως τῶν φολῶν τοῦ ἄρχαίου Ἐλληνικοῦ Ἠθούς). That 1856 was also the year when the last volume of Grote’s History was published is indicative of Paparrigopoulos’s wide-ranging mastery of secondary sources. The abundant in-text references to Grote in the five-volume Istoría provide additional internal evidence and confirm Paparrigopoulos’s recognition of the scholarly virtues of the Victorian radical. A comparison of Pericles with certain Englishmen most likely alluded to Grote, who was a Member of Parliament in the 1830s:

And Pericles generally, by virtue of his education, character and life, reminds us of those Englishmen, who, from the concerns of public affairs move to the tranquillity of theoretical study; for they derive from that study itself new energy in order to carry out their practical decisions.

Καὶ ἐν γένει ὁ Περικλῆς, λόγῳ παιδείας, χαρακτῆρος καὶ βίου ἐνθυμίζει εἰς πολλά τοὺς πολιτικοὺς ἑκείνους τῆς καθ’ ἡμᾶς Ἀγγλίας ἄνδρας.
The nationalist historian Edward Augustus Freeman (1823–1892) provides external evidence of Paparrigopoulos’s respect for Grote (Freeman 1856:172). So does an anonymous review article published in the newspaper Κλείστα of Tergeste in April 1865 (reproduced in Dimaras 1986:299–317). The reviewer recognized Grote’s superiority in terms of “scientific” precision and erudition, emphasizing his intellectual inventiveness and accordingly the novelty of his arguments: “George Grote has been very innovative on many important issues related to ancient history” (“Ο Γεώργιος Γρότε έχαιροντόμησε λίαν δεξιός καὶ περὶ ἄλλα πολλά σπουδαίατα τῆς ἀρχαίας Ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας ζητήματα”) (Dimaras 1986:305). The anonymous author also stressed Paparrigopoulos’s substantial agreement with Grote on controversial issues related to “Greece of the first period” or “first Hellenism” (“ὁ πρῶτος Ἑλληνισμὸς”), as for instance in his eminently favorable understanding of classical Athenian democracy.17 But when Grote argued that “the Macedonian hegemony was not Greek but barbarous,” the author found no room for agreement. “Such a dogmatic assertion must, by any means, be rebutted by a Greek historian” (“Τοιούτον δόγμα ψυχῆ Ἑλληνος ἱστορικῷ ἔτρεπε νά ἀποκρούση τάση δυνάμει”) (Dimaras 1986:314). All things considered, Paparrigopoulos had to wage a sacred war against the idea that Macedonia was not Greek. And his narrative, according to the Tergestean reviewer (contra Grote, consistent with Droysen), was successful.

The second volume of the Istoría covers the period that commenced with the rise of Macedonia and Alexander’s empire (Book 6), passes into the reign of the Diadochi or what we know as the Hellenistic period (Book 7), and ends with a narrative of the events that surrounded Greek submission to the Roman empire (Book 8). In contrast to the apparatus criticus exhibited in Grote’s History, the reader finds a much less detailed account of Alexander’s life and expeditions. While Philip’s “Hellenic origins,” military organization, and “national policy” occupy the first 73 pages of the volume, the space devoted to such a legendary hero as Alexander is surprisingly small, confined to a hundred pages. This curious option by Paparrigopoulos becomes explicable if we assume that he might not have wanted to expand on the deeds and demeanor of the “transformed” Alexander, especially following the battle at Arbela. Moreover, Paparrigopoulos’s sources, which are not explicitly cited, seem to be limited to Plutarch and Arrian. The historian
considered Arrian’s judgment “safe” and his exposition of facts “accurate” (*Istoria* 2:106). Grote, on the other hand, was thoroughly critical of Arrian’s statements and Curtius’s rhetorical dramatization. The bulk of Grote’s sources, both ancient and contemporary, were aimed at correcting the tendency of Alexander’s biographers to idealize their hero.

According to Paparrigopoulos, the victory of Philip II in Chaeronea (338 B.C.) was a crucial moment for the national destiny of Hellas. The idea circulated by rhetors and historians like Demosthenes and Pausanias that the battle of Chaeronea signaled the submission of Greece to a non-Greek power—“brought into slavery the whole of Greece” («ἐπήγαγε τὴν δουλείαν συμπάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος») (*Istoria* 2:69)—was rooted in a hyperbolic, not to say pathological, attachment to the tradition of political autonomy, “the remorseful feeling of the lost autonomy” («τὸ αἰσθήμα τῆς ἀπολευθεῖσις αὐτονομίας») (*Istoria* 2:70). Those ancient literati should be excused, especially because they could not anticipate the triumphant spread of Hellenism in the ages to come. Paparrigopoulos was here being entirely consistent with his recurring criticism of the segmentation that plagued the Greek world. The remedy to this endemic political weakness was to be provided by the patriotic kings of Macedonia.

For Paparrigopoulos, the condescending treatment of the Macedonians by a few ancient historians was justifiable by taking into consideration the narrowness of their political vision—a vision shaped by the values and experience of the epoch in which they lived. On the other hand, Grote’s treatment of Alexander—to confine ourselves to the most important of modern historians” («ίνα περιορισθῶμεν εἰς τὸν ἐπιφανέστερον τῶν νεωτερικῶν ἱστορικῶν»)—deserved far more serious attention. For Paparrigopoulos, Grote’s misjudgments and faulty picture of Macedonian Hellenism ensued from his failure to see that the war against Asia was “the perennial dream of the Hellenic race” («τὸ αἰώνιον όνειρον τῆς ἐλληνικῆς ἐθνότητος») (*Istoria* 2:75). In the eyes of Paparrigopoulos, Grote erred in arguing that Greeks had no interest in occupying Asia.

The first beneficial result of the march into Asia Minor was the liberation of many Greek cities from the yoke of the barbarians. Then, numberless cities were founded by Alexander and his successors as far as Caucasus, Indus, and Ethiopia, and were inhabited by Greek settlers; their organization followed closely the example of Hellenic civil institutions; the language spoken was the Greek one; Greek artists decorated them; Greek generals protected them; and gave to the world Greek philosophers, astronomers, geographers, grammarians, rhetors—political and ecclesiastical—. . . to eternalize the name of the Greek race.
After a spirited introduction, Paparrigopoulos embarked on narrating Alexander’s statesmanship and military campaigns. He first praised Alexander’s ability to cope with the chaotic conditions in Macedonia that followed Philip’s assassination. Under conditions of political disorder and out of sheer necessity, the young prince “committed several murders” («διέπραξε δὲ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος, καὶ ἄλλους πολλοὺς τότε φόνους»). All things considered, therefore, Paparrigopoulos considered it wrong to stamp Alexander as “a person greedy of blood” («αἰμοβόρος») (Istoria 2:81). Having quelled the intestine rivalries in Macedonia, Alexander had to deal with the other Greek politieiai and the disturbing “ancient convention and claim for complete autonomy” («ἀρχαῖαν ἔξιν καὶ ἀξίωσιν τῆς ἐντελούς αὐτονομίας») (Istoria 2:86; also 2:152). The Thebans were victims of this obstinate and anachronistic attachment. By refusing to submit to Alexander, who promised them general amnesty, they forced him—against his will—to siege the historic city. For Paparrigopoulos, the tragic end, “the ruthless massacre of the defeated” («ἀνθλεψε τῶν ἠττηθέντων σφαγή»), was not a fault for which Alexander alone must be held accountable. “Alexander neither wished the destruction of Thebes, nor unnecessary bloodshed” («Ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος δὲν ἐπεθύμη τὴν καταστροφὴν αὐτῶν, δὲν ἐπεθύμη ματαίαν αἷματος χύσιν») (Istoria 2:88–89). Instead he wanted to avoid civil war, thus saving the energy of his troops for the noble task of subduing Hellas’s arch-enemy, the Persians. Paparrigopoulos’s Alexander expressed the collective feeling of revenge which Greeks felt in their bosoms, but could never have pursued due to domestic strife and lack of coherence. In this light, an essential prerequisite for the sacred struggle in the East was “a united nation . . . and the enterprise which Philip had worked out and Alexander was to accomplish was national, Hellenic, and the causes just” («νέα τις τοῦ Ἑθνικῆς ἐνωσις . . . Τὸ ἐπιχείρημα λοιπὸν ἀπεφάσισεν ὁ Φίλιππος καὶ προεκεῖτο νὰ διαπράξῃ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος, ἢτο Ἑθνικόν, Ἑλληνικόν, καὶ αἱ ἄρομαί αὐτοῦ ἦσαν δίκαιαι») (Istoria 2:94, emphasis added).

For Paparrigopoulos, the first four years of Alexander’s campaigns
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in Asia, from March 334 B.C. until spring 330 B.C., recorded the activity of a military genius, endowed with outstanding bravery and superior mental and ethical qualities. An extensive civilized mission in the East “carried the flag of Hellenism throughout Asia Minor, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Babylon, Susiana, and particularly Persia” («Ὁ ἐλληνισμός . . . περνάγαγε τὰς νυκτήρους αὐτοῦ σημαίας καθ’ ὄλην τὴν μικράν Ἀσίαν, τὴν Παλαιστίνην, τὴν Αἰγύπτιον, τὴν Συρίαν, τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν, τὴν Ἀσσυρίαν, τὴν Βαβυλώνιαν, τὴν Σουσιανήν, καὶ τὴν ἰδίως Περσίδα») (Istória 2:150). Eminent Greek philosophers and orators, like Isocrates, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Aeschines, and even the uncompromising and obstinate Demosthenes, eventually came to celebrate Alexander “as a benefactor of Hellenism” («ὁς ενεργήτην τοῦ ἐλληνισμοῦ») (Istória 2:151). Indeed, Paparrigopoulos believed that the beginning of an all-important stage in the progressive development of the Greek nation, “the phase of modern Hellenism” («τοῦ νέου ἐλληνισμοῦ στάδιον»), could be traced to Alexander’s sovereignty over the above mentioned cities (Istória 2:153). This new Hellenism flourished in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, even though the Greek character of the colonies founded in more distant regions faded and died out soon after Alexander’s death.

With his priorities markedly defined, Paparrigopoulos did not have to expand on his view of the so-called second stage of Alexander’s military expeditions to southern and central Asia through Scythia and India. His narrative summarily visits only the main events of this campaign. Facts displeasing to the Modern Greek reader and unflattering to the great hero are given only in overview. Although not entirely concealing these facts or the dark side of Alexander’s transformed character, Paparrigopoulos passed them in haste on the way to his précis of the Macedonian prince and judgment on the importance of this period for the construction of Hellenic nationality.

Paparrigopoulos handled the “transformation” of Alexander in the following manner. He felt that Alexander’s growing tendency to assimilate Greek and Asiatic tastes offended his companions. Unable to handle their (real or imaginary) reaction, Alexander was sometimes forced to resort to violence. On one such occasion he caused the death of Parmenion and Philotas. But nothing was more offensive to Alexander’s memory than the murder of Cleitus. Indeed he deeply repented for his emotional over-reaction. Yet, “what’s the purpose? His paroxysms were growing dreadful; his passions frantic; the circumstances arduous; the causes of the conflicts incessant; so that the last years of his life became a real tragedy” («Ἀλλὰ τί τὸ ὄφελος; Αἱ παραφοραὶ ἴσαι δεινοὶ· τὰ πάθη ὁξύτατα· αἱ περιστάσεις δυσχερεῖς· αἱ ἀφορμαί τῶν διενέξεων ἀδιάκοποι· ὥστε τὰ τελευταῖα τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ ἔτη εἰς ὀληθῆ τραγῳδίαιν
The condemnation of Callisthenes, though “possibly unjust” («ἀδίκως καθ’ ὅλας τὰς πυθανότητας», could be justified (Istoria 2:160). But the excessive grief and attestation of impulsive manners that followed the loss of Hephaestion were a prelude to Alexander’s end: no mortal, not even the great king of Macedon, could surpass the human limits of grandeur and power “and go unpunished” («ἀτιμωρητεύ·»). Paparigopoulos cautioned, however, that we should not be misguided into assuming that Alexander was eventually transformed into an Asiatic king. Constant strife, intrigues, and often violent conspiracies were not enough to distract him from the “great mission of reforming Asia” («τοῦ μεγάλου ἔργου τῆς ἀναμορφώσεως τῆς Ἀσίας»); neither did he cease “to delight his soul with the springs of Greek poetry and history” («νὰ δροσιζῇ ἑαυτὸν διὰ τῶν ναμάκτων τῆς ἕλληνικῆς ποιῆσεως καὶ ἱστορίας») (Istoria 2:161).

Alexander died in Babylon in 323 B.C., but, for Paparrigopoulos, his heritage proved immortal for all humankind. For many centuries the magnificent impetus of the Hellenic advance on the eastern countries was reflected in repeated transformations, unions, and divisions—political, religious and linguistic. Through Hellenism, the nations of the East were gradually accustomed to the values of European civilization (Istoria 2:172). Yet, Paparrigopoulos complained,

Some historians claim that Alexander’s politics did not tend to hellenize Asia, but to asiatize Greece; that the assumed spread of the seeds of Hellenism in Asia was not his work, but the work of his successors... [That] he preserved the traditions and habits of the Persian kings... and improved only the military efficiency of the subject cities.

Oi ἱστορικοὶ οὗτοι ἄξιοῦσιν, ὅτι τὸ πολίτευμα αὐτοῦ ἔτεινεν ὅχι εἰς τὸ νὰ ἐξελληνίσῃ τὴν Ἀσίαν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ νὰ ἔξεσσασον τὴν Ἑλλάδα• ὅτι ἡ λεγομένη διάδοσις τοῦ ἐλληνισμοῦ εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν ὑπήρξεν ἔργον ὅχι αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ τῶν διαδόχων αὐτοῦ... ἀπλῶς δὲ ἔξεσσασον τὰς παραδόσεις καὶ ἔξεις τῶν βασιλέων τῆς Περσίας... καὶ πρὸς τούτους ὅτι ἐβεβλήσαν ἐπί τὸ μακεδονικότερον τὴν συνορύτησιν τοῦ στρατοῦ. (Istoria 2:173)

Though not referenced by name, the historian in question was undoubtedly Grote. As shown above, the idea that Alexander “tended to asiatize Greece instead of hellenizing Asia” clearly falls within his rhetorical style and overall characterization of the Macedonian prince.

We concede, Paparrigopoulos went on, that, “speaking about the Hellenism in Asia,” we “do not mean that the two cardinal virtues of ancient Greece—intellectual freedom and high-mindedness (ἡ ἐλευθερία τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ ἡ τοῦ φρονήματος γενναιότητης)—were ever disseminated into Asia” (Istoria 2:173). These “virtues” constituted the non-
transferable property of the first Hellenic wave that could never have passed into the East. But other important constituents, like “language, education, art, manufacture and certain institutions,” were transplanted there, infusing into the subject-citizens a new intellectual and moral force. Greek art and intellect may have declined in the metropolis, but they continued to flourish in Pergamum, Ephesus, Antioch, Sidon, Alexandria, Syria, and many other places. For Paparrigopoulos, perhaps the most important development was that the Greek language prevailed over local dialects. Greek became the language of intellectuals, employed in literature, philosophy, commerce, government, “and all the highest and noblest activities” («ός ὁργανόν ἐνί λόγῳ ὅλων τῶν ὑβηλοτέρων καὶ εὐγενεστέρων σχέσεων»). This common use of Greek facilitated the fusion of the several local deities into a system of common devotional ancestry, which three hundred years later facilitated the dissemination of the holy truths and doctrines of the New Testament. The “most artistic and perfect” of the ancient languages was “the most suitable to explain and expand on the highest truths and concepts of the new religion” («δευκολύνθη ἡ ταχίστη διάδοσις τῶν ἀληθειῶν ὅσας ἐκήρυξε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, λαλοῦντας δὲ ἐνταῦθ’ τὴν τεχνικωτάτην καὶ τελειοτάτην τῶν γλωσσῶν, τὴν ἐπιτηδειοτέραν ἵσως πάσης ἀλλης εἰς τὸ να ἐξηγήσημαι νά ἀναπτύξη τάς υψηλὰς ἀληθείας καὶ ἐννοίας τοῦ νέου θρησκεύματος») (Istoria 2:175–176).

For Paparrigopoulos, an all-inclusive intellectual, commercial, and socio-political mobility followed the spread of Hellenism in the East by the Macedonian Greeks. That

The Hellenism transplanted there was not the ancient. . . . we have already confessed, pointing out the differences between the old and the new; that it was not Hellenism at all we most firmly deny. For what is really genuine and what spurious Hellenism?

"Ὅτι δὲν εἴναι τ’ ἀρχαῖος ἐλλησμός, τὸ . . . μολογήσαμεν, ὑποδείξαντες καὶ κατὰ τί διαφέρει ἐκεῖνον· ὅτι ὁμως δὲν εἴναι παντάπασιν ἐλλησμός, τὸ ἀρνούμεθα πᾶσα. δυνάμει . . . Τί ἐστι τοιούτι γνήσιος ἐλλησμός, καὶ τ’ νόθος; (Istoria 2:176, emphasis added)

The historian, Paparrigopoulos concluded, should be able to see the unity in the constant flux of moral and political ideas, to detect the line of continuity in change. Can anybody, he asks, deny “the close bond of national unity” («τὸν στενὸν δεσμὸν τῆς έθνικῆς ἐνότητος») in England because of the significant differences in public and private life that occurred between Elizabeth’s and Victoria’s reigns (Istoria 2:177)? “How, then, can those who maintain that Macedonian Hellenism was not Hellenism at all because it differed from the older one as far as some of its political and moral components are concerned be right?” («Πῶς
To a historian such as Paparrigopoulos, who accepted unity and continuity in the life of nations, the second wave of Hellenism, its destiny and future development down to the Byzantine Empire, was closely connected to the propagation of Christianity. The miracle that surrounded Alexander’s achievements was inexorably linked with the triumph of Christian religion. Among the key ingredients of Hellenism, as transplanted in the East, was the Greek language, which, in turn, was the instrument that paved the way for the dissemination of the New Testament. Not surprisingly Paparrigopoulos, much later in his narrative, when about to embark on his study of the Greeks under the Romans, returned to the Macedonians and declared once more the debt of Hellenism—and indeed of the whole Christian world—to Alexander. There, Divine Providence and Hellenism were made to function harmoniously.

In this manner, through the inscrutable ways of Providence the spread of Hellenism had been accomplished. We do not deny of course the ingenuity of Alexander and the skillfulness and persistence shown by his diadochs. But Alexander and his successors obviously carried out an order determined from above (obeyed a divine order).

Paparrigopoulos thus proclaimed Alexander to be the apostle of Hellenism in Asia and, in that capacity, servant to a divine scheme. Through the Hellenism of Judaea, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Persia, and so many other countries, the God of Abraham translated to the known world the Christian message of salvation. And, through Christianity, the Greek nation itself survived and flourished.

Two visions, two Alexanders

Grote’s and Paparrigopoulos’s presentations of Alexander are pieces of classical scholarship so unlike that they seem to come from alien cultural and historical eras. Yet they were separated by only five years. Their proximity in time bestows an uncommon pointedness to the comparative project involving these two works. Their contrast becomes even
more interesting when we consider that Paparrigopoulos admired Grote’s scholarship and generally followed its results. When Macedonian imperialism and Alexander entered the picture, however, the two historians were bound to differ. Their divergent interpretations offer profound testimony on the impact of ideological factors in the critical reception of the classical world in the nineteenth century.

According to Grote, in the course of his imperialist expeditions, Alexander moved away from a Greek political ethos into a cruel orientalism. Moved by excess of violence, vindictiveness, self-adoration, and aspiration to become the Achilles redivivus, instead of hellenizing Asia, he asiatized Hellas. Alexander was, for Grote, the demolisher of the Greek classical edifice. His autocratic rule, despotic oppression not only of conquered people but also his companions, and massive, unnecessary massacres (sometimes of unarmed fugitives) had no connection whatever with Greek political principles and moral beliefs. After Alexander, Greeks perished because they had lost the superior qualities that characterized their race; that is, qualities related to the distinctive merits of their mentality and their political and social constitution. Language (ἡ ἐλληνικὴ γλώσσα), according to Grote, despite its perfection and instrumentality, held only a subordinate place in the hierarchy of Greek values. For him, “genuine Hellenism” could not be defined without reference to democracy, individual liberty, and freedom of expression as actualized by the Socratic elênhus in the Senate and the crowded agora of Athens. Hellenism minus the ideal of education and the Periclean cluster of political values incorporated in the famous Funeral Oration was nothing but a dead concept. The Graeco-asiatic amalgam that sprang from Macedonian imperialism, so foreign to the liberal historian’s idealized picture of Greek communities, instigated in Grote only scorn and humiliation. The policy of fusing Greeks and Orientals was seen as a betrayal of the prerogative of Hellenism, especially as non-Greek ideas, religions, and cultures began to take hold in the Greek póleis. (Grote, not unlike other utilitarians, believed that Christianity was hostile to the well-being and intellectual progress of humankind.) What is worse, a new form of government—monarchy—which had long been considered a sign of asiatic barbarity, was now fully embraced, while the democratic ideal had fallen into oblivion.

For Grote there was a pervasive antagonism between Greeks and Macedonians, thoroughly documented in ancient literary sources. Greeks who resisted the rise of Macedonia, like Demosthenes and the Thebans, symbolized the tragic resistance of freedom against political servility and decadence. In addition, for a liberal historian, former M.P. for the radicals, and spirited advocate of the Reform Bill and the ballot, Alexander’s imperialism was disturbing for still other reasons. Most
importantly, it should be remembered that Bentham, James Mill, and the radicals of Grote’s era opposed any effort to maintain colonial territories, which they regarded as economically useless and a cause of war. They proposed instead programs of self-government on democratic principles for the colonies, believing that measures towards democratization would mitigate the misuse of colonial privilege. Alexander’s grand dynasty, based on sheer force and exploitation of Asia, stood as an anti-type to imperialist rule, whereas Athens’ hegemony in the fifth century, its mild policy towards subject-allies, wise financial control and protection of trade in the Aegean, and dissemination of democratic civil ethos provided the English radicals with an archetype or golden standard for Britain’s imperialist rule.

Grote’s version of the Greek political and cultural experience and its legacy for moderns, as well as his understanding of the role of Alexander in dislocating a unique and miraculous edifice, are perhaps reflected in his curious absence from the philhellenic movement of the 1820s. The historian who composed the paean of ancient Hellenism is surprisingly absent from the membership list of the London Greek Committee launched in 1823 (Woodhouse 1977:247–250). This is especially surprising insofar as Bentham, godfather of British utilitarianism and Grote’s mentor (to whom the historian showed an unwavering lifelong allegiance) was energetically involved in the workings of the Committee from the outset. So was another of Grote’s intimate friends, David Ricardo, the famed economist and liberal philosopher, who readily associated his name with the cause of the Greek Committee.

The absence of Grote’s name from the ranks of the Committee requires some explanation, although nothing can be said with complete confidence. Any explanation necessarily remains conjectural, for Grote never mentioned, in the History or elsewhere, anything about modern Greeks that would allow us to ascribe to him any particular feelings about the revolution and the rising state. Furthermore, his biographer and wife, Harriet Grote, nowhere hinted at any communication or transaction between the historian and anyone associated with the Greek Committee. She did, however, allude to a letter addressed to her husband by John Stuart Mill (n.d., possibly December 1861), in which the liberal philosopher invited Grote to join him in a journey to Greece. It was an opportunity for the historian to see at last, and at least, the object (not the subject) of his monumental work, but Grote kindly refused because he thought that at his elderly age he could not suffer the “fatigue of horse and foot exercise, which an excursion in Greece must inevitably entail” (H. Grote 1873:257). It is most telling that this is the only reference to modern Greece in the literature associated with Grote.
Perhaps the most tempting, albeit hypothetical, explanation of Grote’s conspicuous absence from the philhellenic circle is his particular version of a bygone glorious Hellenism. The Greeks vanished long ago, and Macedonian imperialism had been the catalyst. Such beliefs may well have led Grote to the belief that the modern inhabitants of Greek soil had nothing in common with the ancients. This possibility is reinforced by the profound and massive literary evidence that it was another Greece that formed the subject of Grote’s *History*—not Hellenistic Greece and definitely not Paparrigopoulos’s nation-state, the resurrected Hellas. The association of the refined ideals of ancient Greece with the sentimental debt of Europeans to assist both in the liberation of modern Greeks and establishment of civil and political independence, unambiguously reflected in the first three articles of the *Political Subscription for the Greeks* (London Greek Committee, 23 March 1823), would have not been logically convincing to a philosophical historian who, if we push his thinking to extremes, may have believed that there was no longer any “Greek race.” Grote’s distance thus obtains a symbolic character: for him, “Greece” was an idea and an ideal—an ὀὐτόπια (utopia), literally and metaphorically. It may not have been accidental that Grote decided to embark on his grand historical project in the autumn of 1823 (Demetriou 1999:62–63), just a few months after the Committee was founded. While the Committee pursued the political future of Greece, Grote looked backwards, with eyes fixed to the classical miracle.

Another plausible, and perhaps more realistic, explanation for Grote’s absence may be that the London Greek Committee was comprised of a strikingly heterogeneous group of intellectuals and politicians. Many influential members were not Benthamite radical idealists. The remoteness of Greece enabled Whigs, Radicals, and even some Tories to come together in the Committee, and the political ideologies that underlay their participation naturally took conflicting forms—one highly nationalist, the other not (Rosen 1992:6). Given that the activist radicals of the 1820s were preoccupied with parliamentary reform in Britain and the cause of Greece was not part of this struggle, one can understand why several distinguished radicals never joined the Committee: among those in absentia were such eminent figures as Grote, James Mill, Francis Place, and William Cobbett. The Committee was not a crystallized branch of the radical movement (the sentimental Christian overtones of the *Political Subscription* conspicuously proved that), and a prolonged embroilment in its activities would have been a distraction from the political program of the radical group. Having said this, it should be stressed, however, that disengagement from the Committee by no means implies that people like Grote and Mill did not share the
ideology and politics that animated Bentham’s approach to Greece. Bentham was not disposed to emphasize nationalist aspirations or flatly moralistic principles; on the contrary, he consistently highlighted the importance of good government and constitutional democracy based on popular sovereignty over national self-determination.

Whereas, for Grote, Macedonian imperialism ended the historical life of proper or “genuine Hellenism,” for Paparrigopoulos, it gave birth to a second wave or phase in the continuing existence of Hellenism. Paparrigopoulos did, of course, believe that the archaic and classical periods produced an intellectual and cultural miracle. The cultural heritage of the ancients inspired future generations of Greeks both in their familiar geographic regions and in the East and beyond. Paparrigopoulos also admitted that the ideas and values transmitted to the new Greek colonies were not exactly those of the classical period. But he found these new patterns by no means inferior. They answered the needs of a politically diversified and multicultural environment, in which the Hellenic element, through the prevalence of Greek language and culture, unequivocally predominated. In addition, Paparrigopoulos felt that the manifold miracles of the ancients should not obstruct our vision of the political weakness that their world also contained. Indeed he was depressed by what he saw as a lack of national unity and solidarity among Greeks, running from as far back as the sixth and fifth centuries down to the time of Philip II.

Macedonian rule, in Paparrigopoulos’s mind, succeeded in purging the Greek nation of the curse of centuries, namely, disunion. More importantly, Alexander opened the gates of Hellenism to the East, paving the way for dissemination of Christianity and thus also the Byzantine Empire. Macedonia was central to Paparrigopoulos’s scheme of the progressive continuity of the Greek nation. The Greeks of ancient Macedonia were pioneers in promoting the national cause. Furthermore, if the Macedonia of Philip and Alexander deserved such a high place in the history of the Greek nation, so did the Macedonia of the 1860s. It should be pointed out that Paparrigopoulos wrote about Alexander at the time the Bulgarian irredentist movement was competing with the Greek for sovereignty over multi-ethnic Macedonia (Veremis 1997:30–31; Dimaras 1986:287). The province of Macedonia, which suffered from chronic disorder, was a focal point of Greek nationalist enthusiasm. In their wishful anticipation, once Macedonia was gained, the absorption of all unredeemed territories would be much easier. Paparrigopoulos thus felt it imperative to show that the Macedonian kings shared a direct historical connection with the rest of the Greek world.
Furthermore, for Paparrigopoulos, Alexander offered the historical analogue of nation building and demonstrated that the expansionist objectives of Hellenism might not be futile. Ancient Greeks, united under the wise leadership of Macedonia, managed to liberate Greek colonies in Asia Minor; likewise modern Greeks, by overcoming sinister interests, could assist their enslaved compatriots in Thessaly, Epirus, Crete, and elsewhere. Thus, Alexander provided a focus for the national commitment and ideological solidarity of Greeks: a vibrant symbol of national unity as opposed to factious particularism. Implementation of the Great Idea implied nothing less than reconstruction of the Byzantine Empire. Alexander had set the example: first liberation of the surrounding frontiers and then expansion to Constantinople and the coastal regions of Asia Minor.

It would be yet another study to examine the reception of the ideas of these two historiographers over the century or so since the History and the Istoría were published. Here I will simply suggest the main directions pursued by their immediate successors. Soon after its publication, Grote’s History earned a reputation that surpassed the British borders. It was translated into German, French, and Italian. It was also widely read and praised, recommended as a textbook at universities and colleges, and extensively reviewed. Free from the illiberal bias of his predecessors, Grote’s scholarship marked the beginning of a new era in the study of Greek antiquity. Late nineteenth–century readers, however, were not ready to accept either his judgment on Macedonian imperialism or his portrayal of Alexander. In Britain, the sharpest criticism came from the distinguished advocate of the unity of history and nationalism, E.A. Freeman—who otherwise endorsed the results of Grote. Not surprisingly, Freeman’s critical remarks contained the germs of Paparrigopoulos’s position. Grote, according to Freeman, failed to understand that Alexander “founded the civilisation of Alexandria and Constantinople. He founded the modern Greek nation” (1856:171).19 “[A]s the pioneer of Hellenic cultivation, [Alexander] in the end became the pioneer of Christianity” (1889:183). William B. Donne (1807–1882) similarly maintained that in dealing with Alexander, Grote “dropped the calmness of the judge and adopted the prejudices of the advocate. He sees only with the eyes and hears only with the ears of Demosthenes and his faction” (1856:53–54).

In their interpretations of the Graeco-Macedonian affairs, the majority of German historians from the 1880s to the first decades of the twentieth century were guided by the Bismarckian doctrine of the state as well as by contemporary nationalist politics. Julius Beloch (1884), Adolf Holm (1907), Benedictus Niese (1893–1903), Julius Kaerst (1901),
Robert von Pöhlmann (1909), Ulrich Kahrstedt (1910), and Walter Otto (1916), to mention only a few, highlighted the contribution of the Macedonian kings to the Greek national cause at a time when the city-states had lost their right to exist. They saw Philip and Alexander as inspired by the Panhellenic idea for the national unification of Greece. In his “Preface,” Holm characterized Alexander as “the founder of a new epoch” and “the fulfiller of hopes which had long been cherished by the best men in Greece,” while he criticized Grote for deriding Alexander simply through “a skillful use of dialectic” (1907:298). For Holm, the Macedonians undertook to fulfill the “old aspirations of the Greeks which had been driven into the background by internal dissensions” (1907:245). More importantly,

the Macedonians grasped and utilized for their own ends the one great principle which hold nations together and which the statesmen of independent Greece had neglected for some fifty years, like the pearl of great price which its lawful owner cannot appreciate and thrown away—the principle of nationality. The task set before the Greeks had been that of every nation: the maintenance of liberty at home and of dignity abroad. The first part of it they had always accomplished, the second they neglected in the fourth century . . . It was neglect of national feeling which deprived the independent Greek states of their position in the world. (Holm 1907:286, emphasis added)

Eduard Meyer defended the Greek origins of the Macedonians, who, being the most powerful, were bound by a sacred duty to liberate the nation from the Persian yoke; in this account Isocrates is called the “real political spokesman of the nation;” the man who saw the possibilities that opened to Greece, which the doctrinaire and self-centered Demosthenes was unable to envisage (Meyer 1902:280). In the same spirit, J. Kessler (1911) praised the Realpolitiker Isocrates, who was devoted to the noble idea of unification of the city-states, which themselves had been ineffective in realizing the national task.20

Epilogue

As we have seen, after the French Revolution the Macedonian kings began to be represented as national heroes and their policy seen as the expression of national will. In this view, they helped the unruly Greeks of the former autonomous regimes to become united. In the nineteenth century, this interpretation was solidified in the work of Droysen and Paparrigopoulos. Grote’s critical narrative not only reflects a liberal protest against Alexander’s despotism, but also serves as a reminder of how differently the idea of nationalism was interpreted by British utilitarians. For Bentham and many philhellene liberals of the London Greek
Committee, Greek independence was seen “as an opportunity to establish a government which secured civil and political liberty and constitutional democracy” (Rosen 1998:90). The nation was a political aggregate of people practicing self-rule and enjoying constitutional liberty, free press, and education. The nationalist movement in Greece developed within an ideological minefield that generated tension with the liberal tenets of the Enlightenment. Greek intellectuals, Paparrigopoulos included, diverted their energies to building the idea of nationhood.

Grote’s and Paparrigopoulos’s attempts at reconstruction of Alexander’s life and imperialism emphatically mirrored the distinct ideological traditions in which each had been raised. The reception of Alexander that followed both in Greece and abroad was mostly in line with Paparrigopoulos: not only in terms of celebrating Alexander as a Greek hero who promoted the idea of nationalism and rescued the weak and factious city-states from imminent collapse, but also in terms of accepting Paparrigopoulos’s scheme of the historical development of the “Hellenic nation” through the Byzantine era to the present.21

Two visions, two Alexanders. Grote visited ancient Greece with the eyes and intellect of a convinced liberal reformist. The Hellenic world was for him an aggregate of well-equipped autonomous political entities, in which respect for life and property were cardinal constitutional virtues. His ideal was the Athenian democracy—an imperishable school in civil virtue, tolerance of diversity, and respect for individual choice. Paparrigopoulos was a moralizing prophet and dramatist of the achievement and glories of the nation. As G. P. Gooch wrote in his now classic treatment of nineteenth-century historiography, Paparrigopoulos was the “spokesman and interpreter of Greece,” and his work “an apologia, emphasizing the culture and heroism of the Greeks and the vices of their oppressors” (Gooch 1913:453). His ideal was a united and mighty nation in which liberal individualism had a limited (if any) place.

It might be tempting to reduce these two scholars to mere propagandists of the Gospel of liberal utilitarianism on the one hand and the Great Idea on the other. But to do so would underestimate the copious scholarship and intellectual influences that converge in their works. Having said this, we must nevertheless admit that the impact of such ideologies on their thinking is undeniable and may serve to explain not only the faults, but also the merits of their narratives.
NOTES

1 For the historian of political thought, Bentham is also known for his writings on post-revolutionary Greece. The incentive was provided by his reading of the first constitution, voted by the Greek national assembly at Epidauros in January 1822. The venerable legal philosopher wished to propagate the gospel of utilitarian liberalism in newly established regimes. See Bentham (1990) and Rosen (1984).
2 On Grote, see Clarke (1962), Turner (1981), Calder and Trzaskoma (1996), and Demetriou (1999), which includes an extensive bibliography of MSS, and primary and secondary sources.
3 The most comprehensive study of Paparrigopoulos is Dimaras (1986). See also the collection of studies published in the special issue of Νέα Εστία (1991), Kitromilides (1998), and Demetriou (2000).
5 As the present essay does not deal with issues related to Alexander’s biography or ancient history per se, as a rule there will be no references or citations from ancient sources. For an extensive bibliography of twentieth-century works dealing with Alexander, O’Brien’s study (1992:278–322) is particularly recommended.
6 According to Momigliano, “In the age of enlightened despotism Philip of Macedon . . . had been a patron of historians and philosophers exactly as the historians and philosophers of the eighteenth century expected their kings to be” (1952:5).
7 On the historiography of the period with reference to classical Greece, see Peardon (1933:69–102) and Roberts (1994).
8 See Rawson’s (1969) excellent study on how the so-called Spartan ideal predominated in modern European thought.
9 “If ever, after the early age of Agamemnon,” wrote Mitford, “there was any fair prospect that the Greeks might become a united and happy nation, secure in person and property against oppression and disturbance from one another, and powerful to resist assault from foreign nations, it seems to have been when Philip the popular king of a free people, was, by the apparently free and even zealous choice of a large majority among the republics, vested with that supreme military command, and with that superintending civil patronage, which had formerly been conceded to those who had shown themselves abundantly unfit to hold it, the Lacedaemonian, and successively, the Athenian, and the Theban people” (1838:7:181, emphasis added). Further, “Alexander . . . had early conceived the magnanimous and philanthropic project to consolidate his new empire by bringing his subjects of distant parts, and different languages, manners, and religions, to coalesce as one people . . .” (1838:8:354).
10 Interestingly, Gillies (1789) pressed closely the parallel between the character and statesmanship of Philip and Frederick the Great, as the title of his book itself indicates.
11 Frearitis, Professor of Law and rector of the University of Athens between 1863–1864, was the editor of the monthly journal Ηχώ τῆς Ορθοδοξίας.
12 Dimaras makes no reference to specific sources. A number of works on Alexander the Great and the Macedonians can be identified in the invaluable Ελληνικὴ Βιβλιογραφία of Δ. Σ. Γκάνις and Β. Γ. Μέξις (1939–1957). See in particular: vol. 1 (1800–1839), nos. 12, 269, 350, 527, 593, 793, 1122, 2502; vol. 2 (1840–1855), nos. 4292, 4293, 4561, 4689, 6460, 6461.
13 On 15 September 1856, the erudite philologist Konstantinos Asopios (1785–1872) chose Alexander the Great as the theme for a lecture on his becoming rector of the University of Athens. Alexander is called «σύμβολον ἐνότητος» (“symbol of unity”) (cited in Dimaras 1986:295). Boulgaris compares Alexander with King Otto (1848:5), whereas
Spiridon Zampelios (1815–1881) enveloped his encomium of the Macedonian hero in linguistic archaisms, stating that his genius extended the borders of Greece to the East and made possible the “universal reform” through Christianity: “Συνενόησας ἀπόφρητος ἐν μὲν τῇ ἀρχῇ τῆς ὁποίας ἢ ἐλληνική μεγαλάνια καθαλυκευθείσα, καὶ εἰς τὸ κόσμον τοῦ Ἀλέξανδροῦ πρόσωπον ἑνωσαρχισμένην, ἀναπτεροῦντα, καὶ γενική τόν λαῶν εὐχῇ, ὡς ἀνθρώπως ἀποθεόεται· ἐν δὲ τῷ τέλει, Θεός ἕνακρτοπιζέτεται, εὔφρασμοικος τῶν οὐρανίων, καὶ τῶν ἐπιτεχνῶν ἀγαλλιομενον ("a divine mystical plan at the beginning of which the greatness of the Greek genius became universal, and subsequently—embodied in the noble face of Alexander—was regenerated; and by the unanimous wish of all people he, albeit a human, was worshiped like a god. The plan culminated in the Incarnation, to the great delight of earthly creatures and the rejoicing of the heavens") (Zampelios 1852:45). Notice, however, that a few years earlier the Phanariot Iakovos Rizos Neroulos (1778–1849), Chairman of the Athenian Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐταιρεία (founded in 1837) and a representative of the rapidly declining Greek Aufklärung, called Philip “a foreigner, who defeated the Greeks at the battle of Chaeronea” and “committed his grossest mistake by giving birth to Alexander.” See Neroulos’s speech of 25 May 1841, Σύνοψις τῶν Πρακτικῶν τῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας τῶν Αθηνῶν (1846:102, cited in Dimaras 1985:568). The ideological background of romantic Greek historiography, as well as the reasons behind the (conflicting) approaches to historical actors or periods by the last disciples of Enlightenment ideas on the one hand and the representatives of Neohellenic nationalism on the other are examined by Dimaras (1985: esp. 326–471). Also highly useful and informative is the work of Skopetea (1988).

14 Xenophon’s acts and speeches during the famous retreat of the Ten Thousand afford interesting specimens of “the political morality universal throughout the Grecian world . . . In the miscellaneous aggregate, and temporary society, now mustered at Kotyöta, Xenophon insists on the universal suffrage of the whole body, as the legitimate sovereign authority for the guidance of every individual will; the decision of the majority, fairly and formally collected, as carrying a title to prevail over every dissentient minority; the generals chosen by the majority of votes, as the only persons entitled to obedience. This is the cardinal principle to which he appeals, as the anchorage of political obligation in the mind of each separate man or fraction” (History 9:215, emphasis added). Grote in the history of ancient Greece discovered core instruments of political emancipation leading to a liberal society—instruments he, with the other radicals, so ardently sought to establish. Regrettably, the historian believed that under the Macedonians, Greece returned to the dark age of despotism.

15 Grote’s source is Plutarch 72.4. “To lighten his sorrow he set off on a campaign, as if the tracking down and hunting of men (κοιπήσεσν ανθρώπων) might console him, and he subdued the tribe of the Cossaeans, massacring the whole male population from the youths upwards: this was termed a sacrifice to the spirit of Hephaestion.”

16 All translations are mine.

17 Obviously Paparrigopoulos admired Athens for different reasons than Grote. For the latter, Athenian democracy had been the prototype of liberal constitution, whereas Paparrigopoulos praised Athens, because after the victory over the Persians in Salamina, Athens promoted Hellenic national unity by organizing the Delian Confederacy.

18 During the last years of his life Paparrigopoulos was actively engaged in politics and diplomacy. He was involved in the Association for the Propagation of Greek Letters, which claimed that Macedonia, as far north as the Balkan mountains, was predominantly Greek; he also presided over the Central Committee of the Council of National Defense, established to coordinate and support the revolutionary movements at the time of the Eastern Crisis (Kofos 1975:106, 194).

19 Freeman, in his Greater Greece and Greater Britain (1886), sought to extract lessons
suitable to the British Empire by resorting to the experience of the Magna Graecia and the Greek nation.

20 See also von Haagen (1908). An interesting dissenting voice among the German historian was Ernst Curtius (1814–96), Professor of History at Berlin. “The entrance of Greece into the Macedonian dominion,” he wrote, was “not a transition into a new era, which removed what had become obsolete, and called forth new germs of development, but only a retrogression and a downfall” (1874:491). Thus the historian who, interestingly, was the companion of Karl Otfried Müller in the exploration of the Peloponnese in 1840 (in which Müller died of fever), thought it not necessary to record Alexander’s expeditions as a part of his Griechische Geschichte.

21 Just five years after Paparrigopoulos’s death and at the time Greece became entangled in a new war with Turkey, Pantazides translated anew Droysen’s work under the meaningful title Ιστοριά του Μακεδονικού Ἐλληνισμοῦ (1897–9), and including the History of Alexander, and the History of the Diadochs. A hundred years after the publication of Paparrigopoulos’s second volume, Dascalakis, Professor of History at the University of Athens, could feel perfectly entitled to maintain in Hellenic overtones that “[t]he military and political genius of Alexander the Great is the fruit of his Hellenic origin, of his Hellenic environment in Macedonia, of the Hellenic tradition in which he was nurtured, of the painstaking Hellenic education he had, of the Hellenic spirit by which he was inspired and directed in word and deed all through his life” (1966:2). Interestingly, a hundred years after Paparrigopoulos’s death, Droysen proves immortal and translated anew by Apostolides (1988–92).

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