

This paper takes the production of classical scholarship in Greece as a frame to look at the formative tension between East and West that has preoccupied Greece and its observers alike over (at least) the last two hundred years. How much and what kind of classical scholarship would we expect to have taken place in a country that was itself the object of that scholarship elsewhere?

The look to (Western) Europe, and an awareness of Europe's look towards Greece, has been part of Greece's fabric since the late eighteenth century. One of its first expressions, around 1800, came in the calls for Greek re-education in their neglected ancient heritage, that would allow Greece-in-the-making, in a privileged position, to become part of the congress of civilized nations. The relative 'knowledge' of Greece, measured in the production of scientific scholarship, became therefore a common indicator. In real terms this meant a reliance on Western classical scholarship as normative, but also, in terms of institutionalization, the advent of Western, especially German scholars, who staffed the University of Athens in its early days and shaped the system of training and education with long-term effects. Still, would all that explain the relative dearth of information on Greek classical scholarship? (Or the prominence of Greek poetry on classical themes instead?)

I begin my investigation in 1933, on the 100th anniversary of Adamantios Korais' death, when the Academy of Athens re-establishes the series *Hellenic Library*, commemorating his editorial project of classical texts which he begun in the early 1800s. The main editor of the project is the young, German-trained Classicist Ioannis Sykoutris, who was also writing on issues of Hellenism, nationalism and the continuous history of Greek literature for the press. This episode leads me to ask first about the factors that shaped the development and the perception of classical scholarship in early twentieth-century Greece, in its tight relation with foreign national scholarship on the one hand and its own preoccupation with Hellenic identity on the other. While the contested status of the ancient Greek heritage is an issue that has, in Modern Greek studies, rightly been discussed with reference to the 1930s, the actual approaches to the study of ancient Greece, however, and their social, cultural and institutional manifestations, have received next to no attention so far.

Sykoutris prefaces the first volume of the new *Hellenic Library* with an overview of the fate of classical edition projects in Greece –as a sequence of enthusiastic beginnings and no or few results. Taking up Sykoutris' lead, I follow his thread back into the nineteenth century to identify some of the parameters that helped to situate classical scholarship in its strangely unexplored position. Among those, I will ask whether the dynamic and limiting perching between East and West is a helpful angle to come to a better understanding of the ramifications of Hellenism, and of the way we have been studying Greece.