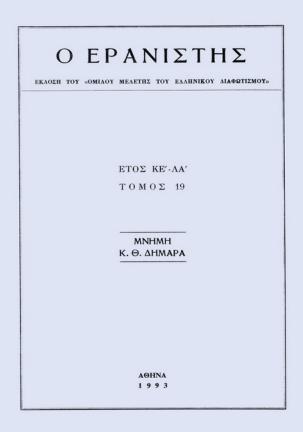




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In Memoriam of C. Th. Dimaras



## An unpublished letter of Korais

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## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF KORAIS

In SEARCH OF RELEVANT material for an exhibition of letters and documents related to the Balkans and Greece one particular item attracted my attention. In the catalogue of the Diederichs collection in the University Library of Amsterdam I came upon a letter attributed to one K. M. Koimas. Being shown the original I was surprised to notice that the letter proved to be an autograph of Adamantios Korais. I came to this conclusion by comparing the handwriting with other letters and because Koimas stated categorically that the letter was an "idiograph" of Korais. Meanwhile it had become clear to me that and why the collector and librarians had wrongly attributed the letter to Koimas. They had mistaken the ypsilon for an iota. The unknown Koimas was in fact the well-known scholar Koumas.

On February 22nd, 1823 the letter was forwarded by Korais to the "Frères Ralli, negocians Grecs" in Vienna. From Korais using the singular in his letter I conclude he was probably addressing Theodoros Rallis.<sup>4</sup> This unpublished letter is all about the subscription of Korais planned editions of Plutarchs "Ethics" and "Politics".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1.</sup> H. M. Diederichs was a 19th century liberal newspaper owner and a passionate collector. After his death his son donated the collection to the Municipality of Amsterdam in 1878. Later it was transferred to the library of Amsterdam University.

<sup>2.</sup> Under nr. 136 Al at the Handschriftenafdeling van de Zaal Kostbare Werken in the Library of the University of Amsterdam.

<sup>3.</sup> It is unknown when and how Koumas got possession of the Korais letter.

<sup>4.</sup> As far as I know from the published correspondence Korais wrote his first letter to Th. Rallis on December 9th, 1820 and his second on February 20th, 1821. See 'Αλληλογραφία, ed. Ο.Μ.Ε.Δ., v. 4, 1817-1822, Athens 1982, nr. 883 καὶ 890.

Korais separated from the "Ethics" five chapters which were purely political.

He urged Rallis and the other members of the Greek community in Vienna to put their names on the subscription list. He pointed out that two Russian officials in Paris had already ordered 40 and 20 copies respectively. Furthermore he requested Rallis to make 200 or 300 reprints of the announcement of this forthcoming publications and "sow them all over Germany". If the printing could not be done in Vienna, the Leipzig printers would do as an alternative.

In the letter under discussion he also stated that he had recently sent the same announcement to Pantoleon Vlastos,<sup>7</sup> also in Vienna and Pantaleimon Maurogordatos<sup>8</sup> in Triest. At the very same day he wrote a reminder about the same subject to Jacobus Rotas.<sup>9</sup> From both letters we may deduce that he felt miserable, mentally and physically, because of the events in Greece, particularly those at Chios and by the stupendous amount of work related to his publications.<sup>10</sup>

|¹[Θεόδωφος Ράλλης] |²Φίλε συμπατριῶτα, 22 Φε $β_0$ . 1823

[3Πατρίδος, τῆς ὁποίας αἱ ἀπροσδόκητοι συμφοραὶ ἐφαρμάκευσαν τὰς τελευταίας ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς μου. Ἐδῶ κλεισμέν[ην] βλέ[4πεις προκήρυξιν,
τὴν ὁποίαν ἐπενόησαν οἱ δύο μου φίλοι, ὁ μεταφραστὴς καὶ ὁ τυπογράφος,
ἐλπίζοντες ἀπ' αὐτὴν μικρὰν παρηγορί[αν][5 δι' ὅσους τῶν συμπατριωτῶν
ἐστέρησεν ἡ σκληρὰ τύχη ὅχι μόνον τὴν πατρίδα, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ πρὸς
ζωὴν ἀναγκαῖα.

 $|^6 \Pi_Q \delta$  δλίγων ήμερῶν τὴν ἔστειλα καὶ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸν  $B \lambda (a \sigma \tau \delta r)$  καὶ εἰς

<sup>6.</sup> The Russian officials were Prince Labadoff and Count Orloff. See 'Αλ-ληλογοαφία, v. 5, 1823-1826, Athens 1983, nr. 968.

<sup>7.</sup> Korais wrote many letters to members of the Vlastos family, who originated from Chios like himself. In this case it was certainly Pantoleon Vlastos.

<sup>8.</sup> I deduced this surname and Christian name from other letters in the 'Αλληλογοαφία. In the published correspondence letters to Maurogordatos are absent.

The learned merchant with whom Korais corresponded frequently. See 'Αλληλογομαφία, ... nr. 968.

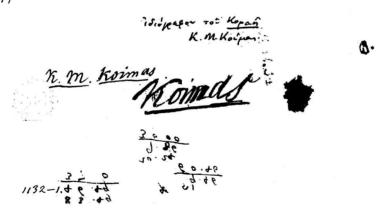
<sup>10.</sup> The phrase Πολλῶν λόγων ἐγγαστρωμένος εἴμαι refers most probably to the dialogue Περὶ τῶν ἑλληνικῶν συμφερόντων printed as a preface in the publication of Plutarchs "Politics".

Τεογέστην πρός τὸν Π. Μαυρογ(οοδάτον). Τώρα τὴν κοινοποιῶ εἰς ὅλους σας, διά 7 να φροντίσετε πρώτον να πέμψετε πρός τὸν τυπογράφον τὰ ονόματά σας καθεῖς κἂν δι' εν σῶμα τῶν 'Ηθικ(ῶν) καὶ εν τῶν Πολιτ(ικῶν). Ἐπειδή μέλλουν | 8 νὰ τυπωθῶσι τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν συνδρομητῶν, άτοπον είναι νὰ μὴ φανῶσι τὰ ίδικά σας. Έδῶ συνάγονται καθημέραν ύπογραφαί. Διὰ 40 σώ| ματα ἐπλήρωσεν ήδη ἕνας ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐπισήμους έδῶ εύρισκομένους 'Ρώσους, καὶ ἄλλος διὰ 20. Δεύτερον νὰ τὴν κοινοποιή 10 σετε καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀλλογενεῖς φίλους σας. Τοῦτο διὰ νὰ γενῆ γρήγοοα, ἐσύμφερε νὰ τυπώσετε ἀπαράλλακτα 200 ἢ 300 παρόμοια. 11 νὰ τὰ σπείρετε είς όλην την Γερμανίαν. "Αν αὐτοῦ δὲν συγχωρηται ο τύπος, εὔκολον εἶναι νὰ βαλθῆ τὄνομα τῆς Λειψίας, ἢ καὶ νὰ τυπω $|^{12}\theta\tilde{\omega}$ σιν εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν Λειψίαν.

PIN SULTAPILITE,

Mahabei a tou souse de appersonness supersonne exampeature the textulate, majore le futi pour. Est aprillent mus impanages i the souse entendeme et de appersonness the souse in the majore i the souse in the majore is the souse in the majore in the souse is the souse in the majore in the souse is the souse in the majore in the souse is the souse in the souse in the souse is the souse in the souse in the souse is the souse in the souse in the souse is the souse in the souse in the souse is the souse in the souse in the souse is the souse in the souse in

TO A Sper Synathuners Chan, all is a trapia per ter pe conjugate of los persons. To glave la A for los faits, per Coppar and also ver ed from the faits for the species of the second panels and change ! Either to K.



Facsimile of Korais's letter.

| \(^{13}Πολλῶν λόγων ἐγγαστοωμένος εἶμαι, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀδυναμία μου δὲν μὲ συγχωρεῖ τὰ τοὺς γεννήσω. Τὸ ἔλαιον τοῦ λύχνου τῆς ζωῆς \(^{14}μου ἐφύρασε καὶ ἄλλο νέον τὰ χύσω εἰς αὐτὸν δὲν ἔχω. Εἴθε ἡ ζωή σου τὰ ἦναι καὶ μακρὰ καὶ εὐτυχής ! Εἰς τὰς πρ(οσταγάς). δ Κ.

|9 In front of ἕνας deleted o. || 10 In front of 300 deleted 2.

In the handwriting of K. M. Koumas: ἰδιόγραφον τοῦ Κοραῆ, Κ. Μ. Κούμας. In other handwriting: K. M. Koimas and Koimas.

On the frontside the addressees: "Messieurs, Messieurs Frères Ralli, négocians Grecs, à Vienne en Autriche", different calculations and different stamps of the French postal service.

D. KOSTER