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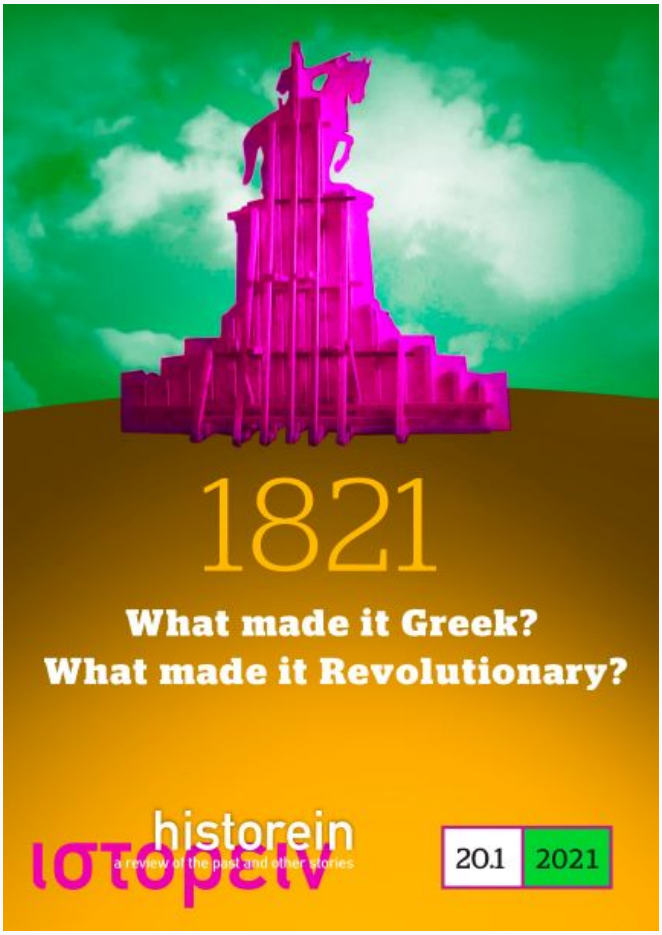
1821: What Made it Greek? What Made it Revolutionary?



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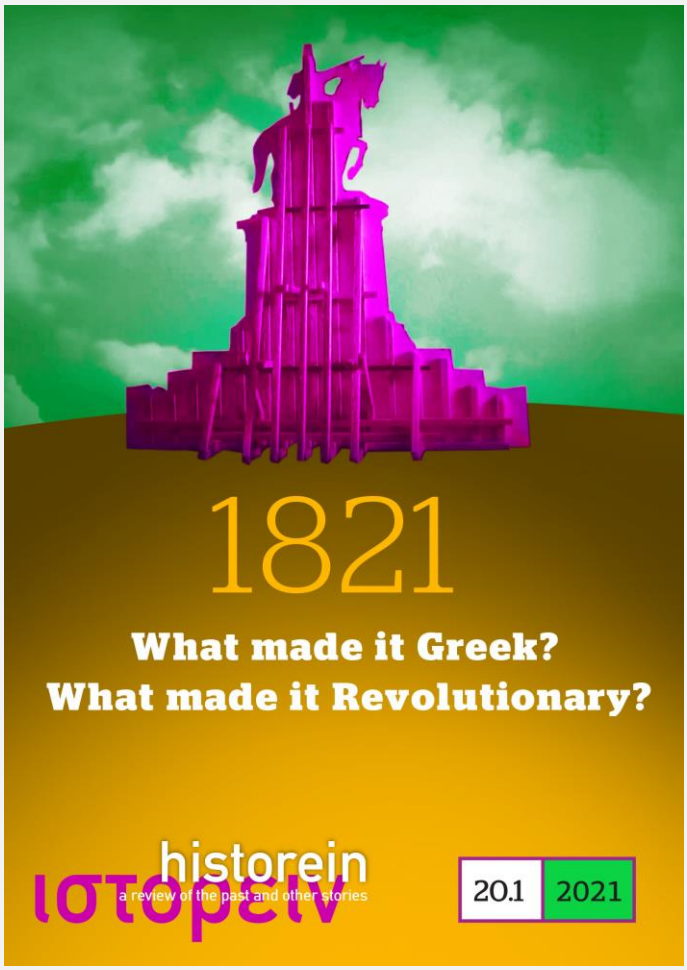

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“United we stand, divided we fall”: Sovereignty and Government during the Greek Revolution, 1821–1828

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This article explores the political languages which Greek revolutionaries employed between roughly 1821 and 1828, and the multiple ways in which these languages found their way in the political projects they put into force (or sought to do so). As it shows, these projects were not just different takes at political organisation, nor were they simply the result of power games among factions fighting for survival or political preponderance. Underneath these power games, so the article argues, lay different understandings of sovereignty and the location of authority. Greek historiography has conventionally understood the revolution teleologically, with the *telos* being (depending on the author) national regeneration, the triumph of democratic values, the coming of modernity and/or the arrival of Greece in Europe. More often than not, historians of political thought have concentrated on how liberal ideas forged in “Europe” or in the “West” were diffused in (or “received” by) the Greek world, paving the way, or so the story goes, to the revolution, and informing political practices after its outbreak. This has led them to focus primarily on texts of a philosophical or prescriptive character that allegedly guided revolutionary action – texts usually formulated by “intellectuals” (Greeks or/and philhellenes) well versed in “Western” liberal ideas.

Such interpretations have a number of limitations. First, most take “political theory” to be a coherent, relatively abstract set of political ideas that has both explanatory and normative, if not predictive, power. Second, despite their recognition of the importance, if not the distinctiveness of, the Greek Revolution, they take revolutionary ideas and practices as derivative of developments elsewhere – in particular France, America or more generally “Europe” or the “West”. They are thus based on a methodological bias. Not only do they distinguish sharply between “big” and “small” places, but they assume that the latter simply *feels* the impact of developments in the former. And as in other “small” cases around the world – in the European periphery or the colonial world – the Greek Revolution, in contrast to the alleged “big” cases, seems to lack coherence and substance. Thus, many works imply that in order to understand the revolution, we simply need to understand the global

background (whether that is the global diffusion of ideas, imperial competition, global trade, etc.).

This article by contrast argues that while this background may be of crucial importance for understanding why the revolution began, it cannot in itself explain why it took the form it did from 1821 to 1828.[1] In other words it maintains that revolutionary politics had a logic of its own and that the Greek Revolution, however "small" a case, was a profoundly intense and dynamic political laboratory in its own right – one in which the processes of change were much more than an aftershock of the "big" revolutions, or a simple reaction to global forces of change, or, as has also been maintained, just a local affair that drew on an indigenous political culture (whether deemed "traditional" or not).[2] In order to explore the multifarious political dimension of the revolution, this article looks at the language that revolutionary actors themselves employed and through which they set out to organise themselves after the initial violent confrontations with the Ottomans.

In so doing, the article draws on, and contributes to, a body of literature that has in recent years complicated our understanding of the Age of Revolutions. This literature has not only criticised the diffusionist framework with which the period has been conventionally studied by expanding the geographical scope and by stressing global connections. It has also proposed alternative chronologies of historical change such as those demonstrated for Latin America or the Mediterranean, for example.[3] This complexity notwithstanding, there seems to be an agreement among historians on the importance of empires and interimperiality as the context of the age's transformations. As this literature has shown, in the face of imperial rivalries and increasing military competition, metropoles attempted to extract more resources from their populations, and expand their reach in their territories – usually at the expense of local powerholders. These processes triggered political innovations, revolutionary events but also imperial responses. As a result, traditional empires were destabilised, disaggregated (Spanish, Portuguese, British), dissolved (Venetian) or significantly reformed. But they did not go away.

Although the emphasis of this literature has been on the European empires and the transatlantic world, scholars have shown that the Ottoman world did not go unaffected. Ali Yaycioglu, for example, has shown that from 1760 to 1808 the Ottoman Empire faced parallel political developments; ones that produced three types of responses (and which resembled processes elsewhere): "top-down" centralisation, "bottom-up" self-government and "negotiated" contractual partnership.[4] That said, parallelism does not mean connections. In fact, other scholars have argued that notwithstanding these parallelisms, the Ottoman case seems to be more an example of imperial resilience than of collapse or reform, at least until the 1840s.[5] Implied in this thesis is that the Ottoman world had thin links with the revolutionary age, and that Ottoman upheavals can be explained as indigenous political processes.

This article puts to test this hypothesis by drawing on very recent scholarship that has reassessed the links between the Ottoman and the transatlantic worlds at an intellectual and a material level – both stemming to an extent from the military-fiscal competition among and within empires so characteristic of the age.[6] And as Peter Hill has suggested, when studying Mount Lebanon and emphasising in that context the more material links (shared politico-economic dynamics), three factors were crucial in determining how these dynamics played out: imperial drives in “frontier” lands, the fiscal confrontation between central authorities and local structures of power (like the *ayans* in the Ottoman case), and the role of military personnel. In fact, Hill has shown what is to be gained if we focus on those peripheries where empires met, the Eastern Mediterranean among them.[7]

The Ottoman-Greek world lay in such an imperial periphery and went through some similar processes. But compared to Mount Lebanon, where external influences were probably thinner than conventionally believed, in the Greek case external influences were rather strong – but in more complicated ways than Greek historians have acknowledged. Indeed, in light of the collapse of Ottoman legitimacy, actors responded in all three ways identified by Yaycioglu and Hill (“bottom-up”, “negotiated”, “top-down”). And they did so by blending to a great extent and in an original fashion local political cultures with political innovations borrowed from a global constitutional language, itself the product of experiences in the Euro-Atlantic zone. In order to understand these processes, we need to sketch the historical circumstances out of which actors sought to conceptualise the revolution.

As I have argued with Antonis Hadjikyriacou elsewhere, two points need to be taken into account from the outset if we wish to understand how they did so.[8] First, that the Greek revolt, like all revolutions of the age, had manifold currents and contradictions, and involved diverse social and cultural groups, sometimes with conflicting interests. Territorial cleavages cut across these currents and groups, creating further tensions among the rebels. The second is that the revolution was an open-ended political crisis that unfolded within a power vacuum. And even though there were fierce disagreements, especially after the first important military successes, about how to fill this vacuum (and therefore about the meaning of the revolution), most central actors (local notables, military commanders, bishops, Phanariots and other previously rank and file imperial elites), seemed to agree that the Ottomans had lost their legitimacy, and professed indignation at their injustice, tyranny and despotism. They were thus forced to address either in theory or (most often) in practice the fundamental issues of political power: its source (where does it originate from), its location (who rules and under what right) and its organisation (how is it exercised). Their responses drew on several frameworks for political action (or “scripts”) – local, regional, national, federal – and increasingly on a transnational constitutional and liberal language.[9] Gradually and in the context of the ongoing war, this variation stirred up tensions over political organisation, representation as well as boundaries and loyalties that quickly fed into

alternative state projects.

The article seeks to uncover and understand these alternatives, as well as to explain why some predominated over others, by looking at some of the most important texts with which revolutionaries framed their actions: proclamations, declarations, constitutions, laws, decrees, and directives published by local or national authorities, official or personal correspondence. In so doing it answers three interrelated sets of questions – and it is structured accordingly. The first section focuses on how actors justified the revolution and their taking up arms against what was at the time a legitimate ruler – and how they did so in light of the different audiences they had to address. The second section seeks to understand the different political projects that were articulated during the first crucial years, and the ideas that informed them. The third sheds light on how and why these political visions were transformed in light of changing circumstances – both domestic and international. This last set of questions raises a methodological point: as in most similar revolutionary situations, the political languages of the revolution were in evolving engagement with pressing events. Instead of looking only for the ideological influences on, or origins of, these political "scripts", the article pays attention to the dynamic nature of the events and, in light of them, to how the "scripts" were constituted, negotiated, used and contested.

As we will see, some actors sought a sort of "home rule", an idea often accompanied by questions of "who should rule"; others sought a radical transformation in society and politics. Intersecting with this variation, two contemporary concepts were constitutive of political action and of evolving conceptions of Greek statehood: *patris* and *ethnos* (nation). Both overlapped with *genos*, a term that denoted the Christian Orthodox denomination, alongside connotations of blood lineage and cultural bonds. Emphasising as it did religion over other markers of identity, *genos* was politically reconceptualised during the nineteenth century in response to these two concepts that sought to define a people as a political collective and had a much stronger territorial dimension.

Patris, connoting immediate local affinities, encompassed concepts and practices characteristic of the Ottoman period (self-government and historic privileges). *Ethnos* encompassed new concepts and revolutionary practices that drew on contemporary European and American experiences, such as national sovereignty, liberty, natural rights and federalism. It was the dialectic between the two idioms, and the ways in which they fed into a struggle between federalism and centralism – which gradually became the main challenge that revolutionaries had to resolve – that may help us understand the evolution of the revolution, or the ways in which local contentions took new forms when regional or national authorities attempted to assert fiscal and political authority. Although the analysis has no pretensions of being exhaustive, the overall aim is to arrive at some conclusions about the character of the political language and more generally the political culture of the

revolution, and to offer an interpretation of the political developments that took place during its course.

Justifying the revolt

Accounts of the Greek Revolution usually start with the revolt in the Danubian Principalities in February 1821, organised by the Filiki Etaireia, before moving on to events in the Peloponnese in late March and April, and then to the rapid spread of the rebellion in southern Rumelia, and the Aegean (including Crete). Historians have long grappled with the difficulty of tracing the “origins” – structural and contingent – of the uprisings, usually taking them to be part of one and the same process, the Greek Revolution.[10] Some have focused on international factors: the spread of revolutionary ideas, and the impact of the Napoleonic wars on Greek shipping and commerce. Others have adopted a more regional perspective looking at the impact of the above factors on the Mediterranean – broadly defined – and how they opened new political horizons as the cases of the Ionian islands and the Filiki Etaireia testify. In line with this regional focus, historians have also emphasised Ottoman developments and the attempts of the central authorities to alter the balance of social and political power in the empire by turning against the grandees, Ali Pasha in particular.[11] These factors, combined with more contingent ones such as years of bad crops, heavy taxation and deadly local politics (among Rumelian warlords, but also in the Peloponnese and the islands), created a mix that was hard to contain. The effects varied. In many cases it led to rebellions, which were a rather common form of negotiation, and to the making of new pacts with the Porte. Increasingly however, Mahmud’s policies and the central state’s assertion of authority were interpreted as an attack on the privileges that many provinces enjoyed. Ottoman Greek elites’ participation in the Filiki Etaireia during 1820–1821 must be understood in this light.

But what about after the initial skirmishes? How did the insurrectionaries justify and legitimise their insurrection or their *ἀποστασία* (rebellion, literally “cessation of obedience”).[12] What language did they employ when doing so? The declarations and proclamations produced during the first year of the revolution indicate two distinct political idioms, corresponding to two different versions of constitutionalism and institution-building, but also to two different symbolic frameworks. As already mentioned, the first invoked *patris* and had a local or “regional” character; the second invoked the *ethnos*. Although these two idioms initially overlapped, with the choice depending on the intended audience, as the war dragged on they would come to clash and to seem incompatible.

Combined with both idioms we find two revolutionary claims that, even if they were rhetorical, cut across political, social and geographical divides. One was that to be subject to the sultan’s arbitrary will was by definition to live in a state of servitude, to live under tyranny. And as evidenced in the motto “freedom or death” (which also echoed a French revolutionary slogan), but also in many revolutionary texts, the more radical idea here was

that such an unfree life, a life under a tyrant, was not worth living. The other claim was the religious reference: whatever the source of inspiration, Greek rebels presented their cause as a religious conflict between an oppressed Christian population and its Islamic oppressors.

The idiom of *patris* (and a local understanding of it) was mainly articulated by the ruling councils which were set up immediately after the outbreak of the revolt and sought to represent local or regional political entities.[13] Although we still lack knowledge about many of them, a number of local initiatives and collectivities were set up during the spring of 1821 and after, which obviously drew on local political cultures. To name but a few: the Achaian Directorate (in Patras), the Messenian Senate (in Kalamata), the Ephoreia of Karytaina, the Ephoreia Imlakia, the Koinotita (Community) of Ilida (in Gastouni), the Koinotita or Kangelaria of Corinth, the Kangelaria of Argos (along with an oppositional council called the Consulato), the Authority of Athens, the Vouli of Psara, the Archigia ton Oplon tis Samou, the Vouli of Santorini, and a number of cases where local councils of community elders took on extended administrative duties (like in the islands of Hydra, Spetses, Kassos and in Koroni, etc.).[14]

Historians have generally not explored the language produced by these local collectivities, except probably to say that it was evidence of a traditional political culture and of the local elites' opportunistic efforts to control events and preserve their position of power. Yet if we look at the claims the rebels made, a more complicated picture comes to the fore. For one, most of the early proclamations justified the insurrection by recalling the injustices that had come to characterise the life of subjects under the "Ottoman yoke". Given this injustice, the armed insurrection was nothing but inevitable. This call to justice should not surprise us as it was part of the political imagination of the Ottoman Empire, according to which the Ottomans were supposed to safeguard justice in exchange for loyalty.[15] But these texts were not only about "why" a revolt takes place. They were also about "who" it is that revolts. They announced both the existence of a revolt and that of a political actor or a collective. To a great extent who it was that was rebelling, or being called to do so, was less clear than conventionally believed. That they were Christians and belonged to the Greek *genos* was a usual claim. But in many texts even that reference is lacking (probably because it was a given), and it is local "Greeks" who are called to arms: the "Peloponnesian Greeks" for the Messenian Senate and Petrobey Mavromichalis who signed the proclamation, the "residents of Arcadia" for Papaflessas and Theodoros Kolokotronis, the "residents of Crete" for the Cretans and so on and so forth.

At the same time, these texts could potentially work as constitution-like pacts that sought to bind together the collective they were calling into existence. Constitutive of this pact-like character of many texts were claims about the political values that should define this collective. These values were negative: fear and condemnation of the usurpation of,

and ambition for power (*ἐπιβουλής ἐξουσίας*, *φιλαρχίαν*), but also of corruption and avarice (*φιλοπλουτείαν*). They were also positive: virtue (*ἀρετή*) that should be cultivated by the political authorities, the duty of members of the collectivity to secure its survival and well-being even by sacrificing themselves, etc.[16] Related to these positive values was an affective language that had been widespread in the texts before, but was especially so during the revolution, and that used family metaphors and communitarian values, such as love (*ἀγάπη*), happiness (*εὐτυχία*), brotherhood (*ἀδελφότητα*), friendship (*φιλία*, this value promoted in particular by the Filiki Etaireia), unity (*ἑνότητα* or *ἕνωση*), good order (*εὐταξία*), good laws (*εὐνομία*), etc. Interestingly enough, after the setting up of the national administration in the early 1822, this affective language continued uninterrupted with the Provisional Administration being presented as the “Mother”, who cares for the “brothers”. Historians have yet to grasp the importance of this move away from a language of patriarchy and patronage towards a more affective language.[17]

If taken together and compared to other contexts, many of these claims constituted a language of autonomy and self-government that was very similar to the idiom of republicanism so characteristic of the Euro-Atlantic zone. To claim that this idiom was imported (or to call it modern or traditional) seems to be missing the point, because it was part of local political culture; one that was much richer than conventionally believed. Indeed, early modern sovereignty was not confined to a system of a singularly, territorially-bounded state, but was hybrid, fragmented, layered and composite in nature. Oaths, contract-like agreements or constitutional-like pacts were practices that went with this understanding of sovereignty bounding peasants, members of community, or warlords to one another and/or to authority. In fact, in their own way such practices and especially oaths of loyalty created sovereignty from within the community (or at least gave expression to the notion that subjects or communities had political wills).[18]

As legitimacy was being questioned especially in early 1820, these political precedents were put to new use. One such move was made by Ali Pasha himself. Foreseeing his falling out with the central authorities and seeking to secure the allegiance of the provinces under his control, he proposed to representatives of Muslims and Christians a constitutional pact, according to which southern Rumelia and the Peloponnese would be autonomous states under his protection.[19] As these moves to redefine the political order failed, more radical solutions came to the fore. Indeed, as elsewhere in the empire, the moves of the Porte against local magnates such as Ali Pasha, and the eventual rejection of the central state’s attempt for a “top-down” politics in early 1821 broke down an elaborate political system based on “negotiated politics”, one that was controlled by a pluralistic elite and sustained by its capacity to mobilise violence.[20] This gave room for manoeuvre to new groups which had means other than wealth or access to this politics (military groups in the Peloponnese, or other groups in other places, as the examples of Oikonomos or Logothetis in Hydra and Samos illustrate, respectively). In trying to navigate through the displacement of the sources of power, and the spread of local initiatives, actors

blended some of the forms of the "negotiated politics" (loyalty oaths, written or unwritten pacts of submission) with more localised bottom-up practices (collective assemblies). This blending and the refoundation of the "local elites" were to have both short- and long-term consequences.[21]

Indeed, the "root of radicalism" lay to a large extent in this blending. There is probably no better illustration of this than the most "traditional" text produced during the first days of the insurrection: the one allegedly issued by the archbishop of Patras, Paleon Patron Germanos.[22] The text was addressed to the clergy and the "believers" (the flock) of the Peloponnese (to "beloved friends", as its opening line reads), and was steeped in theological references. But Germanos uses these references to argue, first, that Ottoman rule is despotic (as it had surpassed "the measure of inequities") and, second, that the Greek *genos* has a religious duty not just to stand up against it, but to do so even if that means to perish. And that it should do so, "in the name of God, to Whom we owe love stronger than to death".

As the war dragged on, further novelties were introduced in an effort to both control and better organise local initiatives. These drew to a great extent on liberal idioms that were circulating at the time. But we should be careful not to treat liberalism in an essentialist way, as a boxlike category simply to be contrasted with traditional political culture. Liberals were a broad church during the period, and historians have in recent years emphasised the hybrid and syncretic nature of nineteenth-century liberalism. In conditions of war and revolution this nature was all the more complicated. One novelty to be introduced was the setting up of regional organisations with which revolutionaries sought to move beyond localism: the Peloponnesian Senate, the Organisation of Western (mainland) Greece in Messolongi, and the Legal Command of Eastern (mainland) Greece in Amfissa. The latter two bodies, led by Phanariots well versed in liberal constitutionalism (Alexandros Mavrokordatos and Theodoros Negris, respectively), developed a more national spatial vision (evidenced even in their title), compared to previous ones that had emphasised localism (the Peloponnesian Senate included). That said, while this regional mental mapping represented a break from the Ottoman equivalent, it built on, and in part overlapped with, the pre-existing Ottoman territorial imagination (as this had been formed at least under the command of Ali Pasha).

Another novelty was that the discourse emanating from these organisations was newly framed in terms of "rights" or "liberties". Nonetheless, as invoked by the Greeks, these were historical, not natural, rights. This combination was in fact present from early on, in the declaration of the Messenian Senate:

> the insupportable yoke of Ottoman tyranny has weighed down for over a century the unhappy Peloponnesian Greeks … In this state, deprived of all our rights [*δίκαια*], we have unanimously resolved to take up arms against our tyrants … we now celebrate

> a deliverance which we have sworn to accomplish, or else to perish … that we may … reconquer our rights, and regenerate our unfortunate people.[23]

This was a lexicon which the patriarchate incorporated. Even as it condemned the *apostasia*, it reminded Orthodox Christians that the church had long defended the “liberties” (life, property, honour – *ἐλευθερίες*) that the sultan had granted to them in exchange for their subjection (*ὑποτέλεια*).[24] The third novelty was related to citizenship. Because they formalised their self-organisation while waging war against the Ottomans, the revolutionaries made identity a matter of choosing loyalties. Thus, an active conception of citizenship developed, tied to participation in the revolution. Conversely, nonparticipation or treason came to be seen as grounds for exclusion from the political community. This entailed a shift from a political system built around social hierarchy to one based on commitments consolidated amid the turmoil of events.[25] This conception was articulated primarily by the *autochtones* (those residing in the strongholds of the revolution), otherwise associated with more traditional political attitudes. And as we will see below, most regional councils did seek to legitimise their rule by resorting to some sort of popular approval. Overall, the political logic that stemmed from these developments was that of federalism. Although not theoretically elaborated, this logic saw local political entities – in some cases actually called republics (*πολιτεία*) as in Hydra, or cantons by external observers – as autonomous within a federal union.[26] Hence the continuous references throughout the revolution to “our common patria” (*κοινῆς ἡμῶν πατρίδος*), to policies that sought to bring justice and unity to the various “peoples” of Greece, and to a language of “brotherhood”.[27]

But what about the idiom of the nation? Although it was ubiquitous in the early stages of the insurrection, it was when addressing the international arena that revolutionaries employed it with force. The key moment here was the convocation of the first National Assembly in December 1821, the promulgation of the first constitution, and the setting up of a provisional national administration. These moves were designed to be an expression of state sovereignty that would put Greek authorities in a position to negotiate with the great powers (not least for a loan). But, in terms of justifying the revolution in national terms and asserting independence, the key text was of course the declaration (of independence) by the National Assembly on 15 January 1822.[28] Scholars have tended to debate the sources used and the inspirations behind the making of the text, and the role in this of Greek leaders such as Mavrokordatos, Negris and Mavromichalis, and of foreign exiles like Vincenzo Gallina. But what has not been adequately explored is how the framers asserted independence, what the meaning of their doing so may have been, and what the position of the entity they were claiming to be independent was within the existing international context. Because, notwithstanding appearances, the text’s audience was, just as with the other declarations of the time, and especially the Americans’, international public opinion.

Indeed, as David Armitage has argued, the declarations of independence were key

symptoms of the contagion of sovereignty that swept the world during the Age of Revolutions and marked the transition from a world of empires to a world of nation-states – that "most momentous but least widely understood development in modern history".[29] Such declarations usually had three dimensions: they announced to the world the existence of a political actor, they asserted its entrance into the international system on equal terms, and they explained the grounds for taking revolutionary action. Inspired by theories of international law and in particular that of Emer de Vattel, the declarations made independence fundamental to the definition of statehood and the mark of sovereignty.[30] The Greek declaration was, of course, for its part deeply influenced by these precedents. Like most such declarations, it was an announcement in the form of a (carefully structured) argument. It announced to the world "who" the rebels were, "why" they were rebelling, "what" they were doing, "how" they were doing it, and what their objectives were. In addition, the framers knew that announcing independence was not enough. It was imperative to *perform* it as well. Indeed, the fact that the declaration was issued by the national assembly was meant to endow this latter and the subsequent administration with international personality as a sovereign body – even though the legitimacy for doing so was questionable.

That the text was an announcement is evidenced by its very beginning when it states loud and clear that it was "the nation of the Greeks, a nation contemporary to the enlightened and well-governed peoples of Europe" that was rebelling. Although most declarations were documents of state-making, the Greek one was heavily invested with the language of the nation. It was thus also a document of nation-formation. The use of this language was very careful. Indeed, the framers used it only when referring to their own struggle. When addressing their audience, they spoke of European "peoples" (and not "nations"). The reason was of course that most states listening to the announcement were empires, not nation-states. What made matters more difficult was that, while addressing empires, revolutionaries had to justify their cause – the secession from an empire – as legitimate within the law of nations. This they did with two moves. The first was by referring to the "tyrannical" nature of the "Ottoman *state*" (my emphasis), which "knows no other law than its own will". Unable to suffer any longer under this condition of "slavery" and a regime that was "unprecedented in its despotism", they could not but take up arms, and start a war. Thus, compared to other declarations, the Greek one played down the anti-imperial overtones (not least by narrowing down the list of grievances against the Ottomans).

The second move they made was to emphasise strongly and with confidence that theirs was a "national" and "holy" war, with which they sought "to reconquer the rights of individual liberty, property and honour" – natural rights which they had been deprived of for 400 years. In so doing, and by additionally identifying themselves with their "fellow European Christians", they deliberately and explicitly distanced themselves from

“demagogic, seditious or selfish principles” (an allusion to the Carbonari and to factionalism). This allowed them to present their cause as being within the bounds of “legitimacy” – a key concept in the international order established by the Congress of Vienna and the Holy Alliance. These arguments were not novel. Russian diplomacy (of which Kapodistrias had formerly played a key part) had long argued that the Ottoman exercise of power exceeded the limits of “legitimacy” and more generally that an agreement between Christians and Muslims was impossible.[31] Although the framers drew on these arguments, they also knew that this was not sufficient to justify their revolt as “legitimate”. Asserting that you are subjugated by an illegitimate ruler is one thing. Claiming that you have a right to revolt is another. This is where the claim that the Greek nation was a historic nation played a key role. Because it allowed the rebels to argue that, first, they had no relationship with the Ottomans – they were a conquered nation that had never sanctioned the conquest – and, second, that as a historic community they had the natural right to administer their own affairs. In a remarkable, rhetorical step, they then asked on what grounds would it be possible to deny the Greek nation this right.

This was immediately followed by a statement of their moderate objectives – to “be governed by just laws” – and by an explanation of why they were making these statements now, almost one year after the initial uprising. This is further evidence of the great care with which the framers proceeded, mindful as they were of the fact that the setting up of local organizations could be (and were) identified with seditious movements. It was thus crucial to state their willingness to go beyond the local organisations by setting up “national institutions”, such as a “provisional” administration (again carefully affirming their moderation), which all the “peoples” residing in Greece would recognise. This last reference is evidence of how conscious they were of the federal logic that seemed to have developed during the first year of the war and how strategic it was to create legitimate bodies that went beyond this logic. Only thus, in their view, could a revolt within the Ottoman Empire be turned into a war between two legitimate belligerents.

Political projects in the making

These two different political visions – (con)federal and national/unitarian – informed the way the revolutionaries set out to become organised. To be sure, political developments were affected by events on the ground, and by the need to acquire some sort of authority in diplomatic talks with the Ottomans.[32] But they were also a reflection of these two political logics. Indeed, as the revolution was being solidified, actors realised the need to restate the principles of the political order, and to reconstitute (or constitute) the body politic. In the beginning it was traditions of local self-government that affected political organisation. But they did so in dialogue with other proposals, usually made by actors with political experience from within high imperial structures – Phanariots and others.[33] Even though most constitutional-like pacts claimed sovereignty for the nation, how the nation would be

represented and who would speak for it and how, varied across time and place. In fact, from 1821 to 1823, a number of different political projects were devised, themselves usually the outcome of a blending of (and a compromise between) local republican-like practices and liberal idioms (including elitist strands).

An illustrative case of this is the Peloponnese, the main theatre of the revolution during 1821. Drawing on local practices, the assembled leaders in Kaltezes (May 1821) established a system that concentrated power in the senate. The political system they devised had strong federal connotations and was based on a sort of bottom-up consent. For one, the senators were supposed to "convene, care and govern both for the partial [the local constituency's] and the general [interest]" – presumably in that order. Electors and senators also had to have written proof of consent signed by the "inhabitants of the provinces" they represented. Dimitrios Ypsilantis' proposal (as a leader of the Filiki Etaireia) in the two meetings in Vervena, and later in Zarakova (June 1821), was actually an attempt to curb these practices and to concentrate power within a single political body, with him at the head, for which he used a more "national" and "democratic" idiom ("National Legislature"). All attempts at a compromise failed mainly because they were rejected by Ypsilantis and his entourage.

The disagreements were much more than just a matter of personal ambition or different social interests. It was about sovereignty and whom within the political order was to be invested with what power, as well as about who had the authority to allocate authority. As is usually the case, it was in questions about jurisdiction (of the local vs the central administration) and about how to check political power that the different understandings of sovereignty were expressed. Interestingly enough, it was local leaders who proposed an elected local administration for the whole of the Peloponnese, and a more procedural "checks and balances" system (between the legislature and the executive, which, in an attempt at compromise, they made between the Senate and the "General Commissioner of the Authority", that is Ypsilantis). For Peloponnesian leaders, still operating according to local political culture as this had mutated because of the revolution, sovereignty rested with the "people" of the Peloponnese and was vested in a layered political system (community–regional–central) that tended to secure its balance through compromises (although in theory the senate was to "surrender" to the wishes of the National Administration, when and if this was established).[34] Given that elected senators spoke for their constituents, the Senate was assumed to be a house of mandated delegates (therefore, the senators did not have absolute power). For Ypsilantis, sovereignty was personified: it rested with local leaders, primates and others, and was absolute (this last point was also the case with Lykourgos Logothetis in Samos, although there power did indeed stem from the people). That said, as the war dragged on the vision of the relationship between the people and the government became narrower and more pragmatic, especially when warlords (the former

kapoi) took power from their erstwhile bosses (the notables) – although even then representative institutions were understood as an assemblage of local governors.[35]

A more elaborate system was devised in Eastern Greece by the plenipotentiaries assembled at Salona (Amfissa) in November 1821 – where there is evidence of a clearer blend and mixture of local quasi-republican practices with a novel liberal idiom.[36] The result was a highly-structured federal system based on checks and balances, on self-government, with a firm distinction between citizens and aliens. To be sure, charter in the guise of a constitution that was promulgated did refer to the future National Parliament as the national body politic that would represent the “future monarch of Greece, who will be appointed by Christian Europe”. Apart from the obvious diplomatic reasons, this formulation rested on the (somewhat old) idea that the king encapsulates the public will and that it is in his person that the various “peoples” of Greece come together. The nation, in this logic, was understood as a congeries of corporate bodies related to each other through the king. The same went for the National Parliament, given its role as the representative of the king. In the latter’s absence the parliament would preside over a federal Greek state comprising autonomous and self-governed regions. Eastern Greece was just such a region, itself organised as a federation of provinces which had a high degree of autonomy on administrative and military affairs. Indeed, the constitution derived its authority from its approval “by the public opinion of the City and every province of the Country”. The Areios Pagos, the high regional council composed of 12 annually-elected members, was understood as the “bond” among the provinces, and the link between the federation and the central state. At the same time, it had extensive powers vis-à-vis the parliament in a system that sought to put the different structures of the administration on an equal footing.[37] The electoral system followed this federal logic. Plenipotentiaries called *synigoroi*, that is, advocates sent by Eastern Greece to the National Assembly – and later delegates (*παραστάται*) to the National Parliament – were elected by each province with the mandate to “defend all the interests of their provinces, and of the whole of Greece”.[38]

The political system devised in Western Greece was a delicate mixture of the above practices. In fact, here as in Eastern Greece, framers located lawmaking authority in representative bodies in a clearer fashion, and spoke of rights and freedoms (religion, speech, press), adopting to an extent a “national” idiom. But they did not explicitly articulate this as a transfer of authority from the people or the local communities; instead they aimed at rule for the common good. Indeed, the constitutional-like pact that was voted by the assembly of representatives or commissioners (*ἐπίτροποι*) delegated by the eparchies (which corresponded basically to the *armatolikia* – regions in Rumeli that prior to the Revolution resembled regional administrative units run by the *armatoloi*, local groups of armed men) and presided over by Mavrokordatos in Messolongi in November 1821 established a three-layered administrative system: local–provincial–central. Local officials were elected by their constituents (via indirect election with limited suffrage), the provincial governors (*ἔφοροι*) by the local officials, and senators by the governors and the military

captains. The highest administrative body, the Senate, was responsible for the general "supervision of the affairs in Western Greece", and would, in theory, be subordinate to the future "National Parliament".[39] This was a liberal moderate, if not elitist, political project. It held that to achieve progress and safeguard the common good, a modern government should be based on an administrative system of rational and "prudent" norms (the word *φρόνιμος* is repeatedly used in the official documents), and on publicity – the "heart of justice", as the announcement of the newspaper *Ellinika Chronika* in Messolongi read.[40] For framers in Western Greece, the printed word would not only create an enlightened public; it would constitute the body politic, and provide the link between the political institutions and the people. In other words, the people were to be enlightened via the press, but only few among them were to participate in the political procedures and the government.

Many of these formulations (the federal logic prominent among them) found their way into the first National Assembly and the provisional constitution that it went on to promulgate in 1822. Historians have debated at length the intellectual influences, the power games and the political compromises that went into the first and the subsequent constitutions – all allegedly of a "democratic" and "liberal" character, a character usually taken to be expressed in the establishment of representative institutions, the separation of powers, and the protection of individual rights.[41] But things were far more complex, not least because this was a constitution for a confederation – as many foreign observers argued at the time.[42] As almost everywhere in similar cases, (con-)federalism complicates the nature of the location of authority and thus of the relationship between central and regional institutions. The constitution was in fact an attempt to strike a difficult balance between practices of self-government and a national administration: the former backed mainly by local leaders, the latter more by former Ottoman administrative elites and other liberals who were closely following developments in the international arena.[43] The result was a system that sought to mix and balance power by splitting administrative and law-making authority between two equal and mutually contributing bodies, that is, legislature and executive (which were also responsible for the election of the members of the judicature – no separation of powers here). More to the point, it left the question as to the relationship between the two bodies unanswered (the executive was not elected by the legislature but by a specially elected convention). In other words, even though the framers had located sovereignty in the nation, they left open who speaks for the nation.

This was a deliberate and widely accepted choice; and not just the result of power games. How can we make sense of it? One thing to note is that a shared tenet of both local and somewhat republican political culture and of liberals after Napoleon was the fear of a unitary executive, not least because such a body would be more prone to suspend civil liberties and local privileges; the legal pluralism so familiar to the local populations and the ambiguity that defined to a great extent local jurisdictional orders. This last fear was evident

in the setting up of the regional organisations. It also informed the drafting of the constitution. John Lee Comstock was wholly correct to argue that “[the Greek constitution’s] grand defect is that, in common with all republican theories, it imposes shackles on the executive power, scarcely compatible with an efficient discharge of the functions of government”.[44] What he failed to acknowledge was that “imposing shackles” was the goal.

But then why not give the legislature the authority to speak for the nation and restrict the power of the executive? Because such a move would have compromised the very logic of a confederation and of the idea that sovereign power is diffused to the different “peoples” of Greece (who were represented by the local councils). To be sure, the constitution stipulated that the regional councils were under the control of the central administration. But the authority of the latter was rather limited and derived in fact from the former – which had, as many contemporaries admitted, wide-ranging powers.[45] That this was so was not just a pragmatic observation. It was a conceptual understanding of the constitution and a widespread practice. Although the National Assembly did make the *ethnos* the source of sovereignty, it conceptualised it as an assemblage of distinct parts. In fact, it was formally constituted by the “*πληρεξούσιοι παραστάται* [plenipotentiary delegates] of the different parts of Greece”. Indeed, the delegates were elected from, and authorised to participate by, the regional assemblies.[46] This conception of the nation as an amalgam of the different *patridai* that shared the Greek language and Orthodoxy would remain very strong in the following years.[47] When petitioning or communicating with government ministers, people found it necessary to send their letters both to the regional councils, and to the said ministers, in many cases showing their puzzlement over the confluence of authority.[48]

The main political and indeed constitutional question in the following years was how to fuse these two spatial imaginaries and political logics. Change would come only gradually and inevitably tensions were raised from early on. These were very similar to other revolutionary situations at that juncture and were of three kinds: a) a tension between a particularistic social order and the universalistic implications of a gradually centralising government – this was primarily expressed in conflicts over taxation and local privileges and between administrative agents and local governors; b) a tension between justice as the mode of government action in preserving each his due and administration as a governing mode that sought to mobilise resources for the “public” or “common” good (terms that were hard to define); and, c) a tension between the attempt to define and integrate public authority and the problematic way this was implemented.[49]

Indeed, the Hydriots were very vocal in their calls for strengthening central institutions and in their criticisms of local resistances to central directives (especially when it came to local reluctance to contribute to the national treasury and a propensity to refuse to recognise the due authority of people sent by the national administration).[50] Gradually it was becoming evident that this confluence of authority was feeding the centrifugal forces. In fact, words that would come to dominate the political lexicon such as *εὐταξία* (good order), *εὐνομία* (good laws), *τάξη* (order) and their opposites *ἀναρχία* (anarchy), *ἀταξία* (disorder),

were conceptual devices used in these circumstances to distinguish the "good" centralised political system from the "bad" (con)federal one.

Several attempts were thus made to change course and turn what was a conglomeration of *patridai* into a singular national *patris* by curbing the power of the regional authorities.[51] Various directives to the central and local officials are a telling illustration of this point. A key duty of the minister for religion was

> to teach the peoples [*λαοί*] of Greece to respect, subject themselves to and love the lawful Administration of Greece … in that way the administration will enjoy the people's faith, and thus will be able to … to act unhindered, and to establish in this way its reputation among the other nations.

Likewise, the duties prescribed to Ioannis Kolettis after being appointed as *eparchos* (local governor) of Evripos were, among others,

> to try to make the people of the *eparchia* respect the National Administration and the Nation, to make our constitution known to the *eparchia*, so that the nation recognises the need for the administration, and that without one, nor can it be named a nation, nor is it in fact a nation.[52]

The creation of a regular army, of a "national" local administration, and many other administrative measures were key aspects of this endeavour.[53] Measures such as appointing the eparchs centrally and not through election by the local population were designed to subordinate local administration to the interior ministry. The same goes for administration at the community level: the elders would elect a council of three officials, which would be presided over by someone appointed by the government. What is more, all appointments to the lower offices of the eparchies were made by the legislature in what was an attempt on the part of this latter to affirm its role as the source of national authority.[54]

But another crucial way of affirming central power that has not attracted much attention was by way of words and of symbolism. This discursive power was used by state officials both at a national and increasingly at a local level. An illustrative example is the recognition of people's military service and their appointment to military rank. Although this may seem like an ordinary, if not banal, practice, it was not. More often than not, the petitions to the war ministry came from local authorities or from individual people (including widows asking for the recognition of their husbands' sacrifices for the nation). In most petitions, people used a "national language" based on their services to the "nation" or the "national struggle". This differed from the "patriotic" idiom they usually employed in relation to other military matters, and implied a more local understanding of one's allegiance. For the central administration, such petitions and the official responses to them were a means to gain legitimacy as the supreme authority in the land. And because petitioning required some sort of reference or proof coming from the ground (from villagers, primates, or

warlords who verified an individual’s sacrifices and services in the national struggle), it was an effective procedure, involving people as it did in actually “speaking” to power, thereby consolidating the notion that state legitimacy came from below.[55]

Changes

Ways of thinking certainly changed during the revolution: the concept of the nation underwent development; language became a criterion for citizenship; regional congresses and organisations were eliminated, and two civil wars took place, at the end of which, and by virtue of the 1827 constitution, sovereignty was placed in the nation. War drove many of these changes. After 1823 the Peloponnesians, and especially the military captains, dominated the political scene (Mavromichalis from Mani was president, with Kolokotronis as vice-president), while leaders from western and eastern Rumelia and the islands were frustrated by their exclusion and their dire economic plight. As these latter fell to the advancing Ottoman forces, they also faced an existential political dilemma: they could maintain their local orientation, risking that the Peloponnesians would go it alone or negotiate with the Ottomans for a Serbia-like status; or they could nationalise political and military institutions and sacrifice their autonomy. They opted for the latter. In their proposals for the second constitution in 1823, the Hydriots had already pinpointed the problem: the parliament represented not the nation, but rather the “different regions of Greece”.[56]

The second National Assembly played a key role in changing the political framework of the revolution by first and foremost abolishing the regional councils. The change of tone was evident in its declaration, which provided a statement of what were for the framers the conditions of statehood. All were “national” at their core. One was to secure and solidify the national territory (the spatial/territorial precondition). Another was to declare, as a separate nation, independence (the international precondition). A third was to set up a national administration (the domestic/political precondition). The declaration emphasised this latter when it stated that the assembly would act as representative of the Greek nation and that its goal was for Greece to become “a completely independent nation, separate, autonomous and fight for our independence”. In the context of the time this emphasis implied a determination to dispense with other solutions – possibly Serbian- or Ionian-like – which many in the Peloponnese were contemplating. Likewise, the assembly revised the law on local administration rendering the central control of it all the stronger.[57]

The two civil wars that transpired, during which Rumelian warlords entered the Peloponnese, changed the situation by promoting a national spatial imaginary distinct from, but encompassing, the local *patridai*. Karaiskakis, who in the early years of the war had personified the tension between the two spatial visions, articulated this shift as commander-in-chief of the Greek army in 1827: “the *patris* is one; the struggle is the same everywhere; there is no difference between Rumeli and the Peloponnese.”[58] This does not mean that the central political question of the location of sovereignty had been resolved by 1827 when the

presidency of the Greek state was bestowed on Kapodistrias by the third National Assembly. There remained marked limits to willingness to surrender local power. In fact, this is borne out by developments after the third National Assembly first met in April 1826. As the plenipotentiaries decided to postpone their deliberations – because of the fall of Messolongi and news about the imminent sailing of the Ottoman army – they set up a Governmental Committee to run the country in the short term. The members of the committee were once again elected as representing the various parts of Greece (Peloponnese, mainland Greece, islands). At the same time, they called the communities to elect "ephors" in order to mediate between their constituents and the committee.[59] In certain islands, Hydra among them, the local councils of primates came back to life in order to oversee the defence against pirates and the Ottoman navy.[60] But even after the promulgation of the third constitution (1827) that clearly located sovereignty in the nation, things were no less complicated. According to a resolution of the regional council of Hydra in 1827, the islanders declared loyalty to the dictates of the national administration but stated that "our local government … will administer our domestic and foreign affairs in an absolute fashion".[61] That said, the de facto suspension of the 1827 constitution by Kapodistrias temporarily resolved the constitutional point, as disagreements on the location of sovereignty were sidelined for the sake of effective government. As I have argued elsewhere, these tensions would come back with a vengeance after the assassination of Kapodistrias and the establishment of the Bavarian monarchy in Greece. And they would be resolved only with the constitution of 1864 – and in that case only partially.[62]

Conclusion

This article has attempted to show how claims about independence, sovereignty, rights, constitutionalism, representation, and the best form of government played out in the course of the Greek Revolution. As I have shown, the outbreak of the revolution opened up questions about political power, political organisation and, ultimately, about sovereignty. In seeking to respond to these challenges – sometimes pressed by events on the ground – actors introduced several political innovations: collective assemblies, constitution-like pacts, use of delegates and representation, and so forth. These innovations drew on several sources: local, regional and, increasingly, on a transnational constitutional and liberal language. A key argument of the article is that if we want to understand these innovations, we need to look both at influences from "Europe" and at political precedents at the local level. Two concepts were constitutive of political action: *patris* and *ethnos* (nation). The first, connoting immediate local affinities, drew on pre-existing concepts and practices of self-government. The second encompassed new concepts and revolutionary practices that drew on contemporary European and American experiences, such as national sovereignty,

liberty, natural rights. Underneath the differences between these two conceptions on how to organise political power lay a fundamental conceptual difference: whereas the first understood sovereignty and public power in more personal and space-specific terms, the second had a more abstract vision of them as properties of impersonal agencies (*nation* and *state*). Although confederation seemed initially like an ideal way out of an eventual deadlock, gradually and in the context of the ongoing war, tensions arose that quickly fed into alternative state projects and eventually into civil war. Only in theory would the establishment of the Greek state resolve the problem. But what are the wider implications of the article’s take on the languages of the Greek Revolution? One such implication is historiographic. The convention among historians of the Greek world (or of the Greek state) tends to either ignore the Ottoman legacy or to blame it for incomplete modernisation and clientelism (usually seen as the key characteristic and legacy of “traditional” political culture). What I have tried to show, however, is that elements of modernity and tradition were not mutually exclusive: they both supplied terminology and political tools. As global historians have shown this was hardly exceptional during the nineteenth century, when empires and emerging states sought to assert greater legal hegemony over local jurisdictions. As there was no universal plan leading to modern statehood, state-like institutions were, to a great extent, the outcome of struggles over the structure of the political and legal order. This literature has also shown that these struggles became very sharp in spaces characterised by a plurality of legal and administrative orders, different spatial imaginaries, and widely varying social and economic characteristics. The Greek case was such a case and these conflicts should be understood as part of the attempt to replace the fluid legal pluralism that characterised the period before independence with state-like legal orders.[63]

The other implication of the analysis is epistemological. The article showed that in the circumstances of a hard-won revolution, language was invested with a particular force, becoming an instrument of political and social change. Historians of the Greek Revolution have a tendency to study language as an expression of ideological positions, which they construe as being, more often than not, determined by social or political interests. What I have tried to show is that, as in fact in most revolutionary circumstances during this period, language helped shape the perception of interests, and the agendas and identities of political and social groups. When actors established the Messenian Senate, the National Assembly, or the war ministry and issued proclamations or petitions, they were both challenging the traditional foundations of politics and inventing a social and political order. As is almost always the case in similar situations, political discourse was rhetorical and dialogical.

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[1] David Bell, “Words from David Bell,” replies to Richard Drayton and David Motadel, “Discussion: The Futures of Global History,” *Journal of Global History*, 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21.

[2] Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," *Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012): 572–606; Nikiforos Diamandouros, *Οι απαρχές συγκρότησης σύγχρονου κράτους στην Ελλάδα, 1821–1828* [The beginnings of the formation of a modern state in Greece, 1821–1828] (Athens: National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation, 2006). For a different and more subtle take but with the same epistemological presuppositions, see Dionysis Tzakis, "Πόλεμος και σχέσεις εξουσίας στην Επανάσταση του 1821" [War and power relations during the 1821 Revolution], in *Όψεις της Επανάστασης του 1821: Πρακτικά συνεδρίου* [Aspects of the 1821 Revolution: conference proceedings], ed. Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Christos Loukos and Panagiotis D. Michailaris (Athens: Society for the Study of Modern Hellenism–Mnimon, 2018), 153–74.

[3] David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c.1760–1840* (London: Palgrave, 2010).

[4] Ali Yaycioglu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016); see also Aysel Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire: The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017).

[5] Armitage and Subrahmanyam, *Age of Revolutions*, xxvii–xxix.

[6] Yusuf Ziya Karabıçak, "Ottoman Attempts to Define the Rebels During the Greek War of Independence," *Studia Islamica* 114, no. 3 (2020): 316–54; Peter Hill, "How Global was the Age of Revolutions? The Case of Mount Lebanon, 1821," *Journal of Global History* 16, no. 1 (2020): 65–84.

[7] Hill, "How Global."

[8] Michalis Sotiropoulos and Antonis Hadjikyriacou, "*Patris, Ethnos* and *Demos*: Representation and Political Participation in the Greek World," in *Re-imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780–1860*, ed. Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 99–124.

[9] Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein, *Scripting Revolutions: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015). See also Samuel Moyn, "Imaginary Intellectual History," in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Darrin M. McMahon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 112–27.

[10] For an overview, see Michalis Sotiropoulos, "Η Ελληνική Επανάσταση και η Εποχή των Επαναστάσεων: Ιστοριογραφικά προβλήματα και προοπτικές" [The Greek Revolution and the age of revolutions: historiographical issues and prospects], in *Ιστορία, μια καλή τέχνη: Κείμενα αφιερωμένα στο Γιώργο Β. Δερτιλή* [History, a fine art: Studies dedicated to George B. Dertilis], ed. Panagiotis Kimourtzis, Anna Mandilara and Nikolas Boubaris (Athens: Asini, 2021), 147–64.

[11] Şükrü Ilıcak, "A Radical Rethinking of Empire: Ottoman State and Society during the Greek War of Independence (1821–1826)" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2011); Thomas Gallant, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, 1768 to 1918: The Long Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 51–106.

[12] *Ἀποστασία*, rather than *ἐπανάσταση* (revolution), is the preferred nomenclature in the early phase of the insurrection. See Alexandra Sfoini, "Επανάσταση: Χρήσεις και σημασίες της λέξης σε κείμενα του '21" ["Revolution": Uses and meaning of the word in documents of the Greek Revolution of 1821] in Dimitropoulos, Loukos and Michailaris, *Όψεις*, 307–40.

[13] Dean J. Kostantaras, "Christian Elites of the Peloponnese and the Ottoman State, 1715–1821," *European History Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2013): 628–56.

[14] Georgios Dimakopoulos, "Η διοικητική οργάνωσις κατά την Ελληνική Επανάστασιν, 1821–1827" [The administrative organisation during the Greek Revolution, 1821–1827] (PhD diss., Panteion School of Political Science, 1966), 40–43.

[15] Frederick F. Anscombe, *State, Faith and Nation in Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Lands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[16] There is an abundance of sources to that effect. See, for example, a number of documents published in David Antoniou, ed., *Η εκπαίδευση κατά την Ελληνική Επανάσταση, 1821–1827: Τεκμηριωτικά κείμενα* [Education during the Greek Revolution, 1821–1827: Documents] (Athens: Hellenic Parliament, 2002), such as the Proclamation of the Peloponnesian Senate, issued on 16 March 1822, vol. 1, 62; a letter from Odysseas Androutsos to Adamantios Korais sent on 20 April 1823, vol. 1, 101–2, but also the “General Organisation of the Provisional Government of Greece” on the duties of the religion ministry, issued on 27 February 1822, vol. 1, 42–43.

[17] See the works of Lynn Hunt, in particular *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[18] Joanna Innes, “Popular Consent and the European Order,” in Innes and Philp, *Re-imagining Democracy*, 271–99, here 274–76.

[19] Thanos Veremis and John S. Koliopoulos, *1821, Η γέννηση ενός έθνους-κράτους: Η συγκρότηση εξουσίας στην επαναστατημένη Ελλάδα* [1821, the birth of a nation-state: The formation of power in revolutionary Greece] (Athens: Skai, 2010), 2:22–23.

[20] See Hill, “How Global.”

[21] For an interesting case study, see Mark Mazower, “Villagers, Notables and Imperial Collapse: The Virgin Mary on Tinos in the 1820s,” in *Networks of Power in Modern Greece: Essays in Honor of John Campbell*, ed. Mark Mazower (London: Hurst, 2008), 69–88. See also Sophia N. Laiou, “Η προφορική παράδοση ως όπλο διαπραγμάτευσης: Το ζήτημα των προνομίων της Σάμου, 1830–1834,” in *Συνταγματικά κείμενα της Ηγεμονίας Σάμου* [Constitutional texts of the Hegemonia of Samos], ed. Sophia N. Laiou (Athens: Hellenic Parliament, 2013), 19–45; and Veremis and Koliopoulos, *1821*, 96–113.

[22] Although presented as a declaration issued by Germanos, the text was in fact written with the active involvement of Pouqueville for *Le constitutionnel: Journal du commerce, politique et littéraire* (6 June 1821). These publishing tactics do not alter the importance of the language used in the text. See Vassilis Kremmydas, “Μηχανισμοί παραγωγής ιστορικών μύθων: Σχετικά με μια ομιλία του Παλαιών Πατρών Γερμανού” [Producing historical myths: on a talk of Paleon Patron Germanos], *Mnimon* 18 (1996): 9–21.

[23] The proclamation appears in Antonis M. Pantelis, Stefanos I. Koutsoumpinas and Triantafyllos A. Gerozisis, eds., *Κείμενα συνταγματικής ιστορίας, 1821–1923* [Texts of constitutional history, 1821–1923] (Athens: Sakkoulas, 1993), 1:20–1. The same logic in the “Συνελεύσεις Καλτεζών,” in *Αρχεία της Ελληνικής Παλιγγενεσίας* [Archives of the Greek regeneration], vol. 1 (1857; Athens: Library of the Greek Parliament, 1971), 441–42 (available at https://paligenesia.parliament.gr/). All references are from this online source and will be mentioned as AEP hereafter.

[24] Sia Anagnostopoulou, “Η διπλή ανάγνωση της επανάστασης στο πλαίσιο της αυτοκρατορικής λογικής περί εξουσίας του Πατριαρχείου Κωνσταντινούπολης: Από τον οθωμανορθόδοξο πατριωτισμό στον ελληνικό αλυτρωτισμό” [The double reading of the revolution in the context of the imperial logic of the power of the Patriarchate of Constantinople: From the Ottoman-Orthodox Patriotism to Greek Irredentism], in *Η Ελληνική Επανάσταση του 1821: Ένα ευρωπαϊκό γεγονός* [The Greek Revolution of 1821: A European event], ed. Petros Pizanias (Athens: Alexandria, 2009), 289–306.

[25] Eleni Andriakaina, “The Promise of the 1821 Revolution and the Suffering Body: Some Thoughts on Modernisation and Anti-intellectualism,” *Synthesis* 5 (2013): 61–62.

[26] Indicatively see Ioannis Philimon, *Δοκίμιον ιστορικόν περί της Ελληνικής Επαναστάσεως* [Historical essay on the Greek Revolution] (Athens: Soutsas kai Ktenas, 1860), 3:424, the letter with which local primates vest power in Konstantinos Oikonomos on 31 March 1821, and Thomas Gordon, *History of the Greek Revolution* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1832), 1:15 when talking about Mani.

[27] On the duties of the religion ministry, see “Γενικός Οργανισμός της Προσωρινής Διοικήσεως της Ελλάδος,” Corinth, 27 February 1822, in Antoniou, *Η εκπαίδευση* [Education], 42–43.

[28] Pantelis, Koutsoumpinas, and Gerozisis, *Συνταγματικά* [Texts], 30–33.

[29] David Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007) and Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), the quotation on 191.

[30] Armitage, *Declaration*, 38–39.

[31] Konstantina Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean: Stammering the Nation, 1800–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Grigori L. Arsh, *Ο Ιωάννης Καποδίστριας στη Ρωσία* [Ioannis Kapodistrias in Russia], trans. Anastasia Belozerova (Athens: Asini, 2015).

[32] Amvrosios Frantzis, *Επιτομή της ιστορίας της αναγεννηθείσης Ελλάδος αρχόμενη από του έτους 1715, και λήγουσα το 1837* [History of regenerated Greece starting in 1715 and ending in 1837] (Athens: Kastorchis, 1839), 1:424; Veremis and Koliopoulos, *1821*, 128.

[33] Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism.*

[34] This was also exemplified in the "Οργανισμός περί προσωρινής διοικήσεως," which was ratified by the Senate in December 1821. Giorgos Daskalakis, *Οι τοπικοί οργανισμοί της επαναστάσεως του 1821 και το πολίτευμα της Επιδαύρου* [The local organisations in the Revolution of 1821 and the constitution of Epidavros] (Athens: Vagionakis, 1966), 238.

[35] Dimakopoulos, "Η διοικητική οργάνωσις" [The administrative organisation], 57–58.

[36] The constitutional-like pact called "Νομική διάταξις της ανατολικής χέρσου Ελλάδος," in Andreas Mamoukas, ed., *Τα κατά την αναγέννησιν της Ελλάδος ήτοι συλλογή των περί την αναγεννωμένην Ελλάδα συνταχθέντων πολιτευμάτων, νόμων και άλλων επισήμων πράξεων από του 1821 μέχρι τέλους του 1832* [On the regeneration of Greece, that is a collection of the constitutions, laws and other formal acts from 1821 until the end of 1832] (Athens: Royal Printing House, 1839), 1:43–76.

[37] Dimakopoulos, "Η διοικητική οργάνωσις" [The administrative organisation], 71–72.

[38] Mamoukas, *Τα κατά την αναγέννησιν* [On the regeneration of Greece], 1:83–85 and 88–89.

[39] Dimakopoulos, "Η διοικητική οργάνωσις" [The administrative organisation], 63–66.

[40] See *Ελληνικά Χρονικά* 6 (19 January 1824) and also the announcement of the newspaper's foundation, published on 18 December 1823, both in Aikaterini Koumarianou, ed., *Ο τύπος στον Αγώνα, 1821–1827* [The press during the Greek Revolution, 1821–1827] (Athens: Estia, 1971), 2:36–37 and 9–11, respectively.

[41] Nikos Alivizatos, "Τα συντάγματα του Αγώνα" [The constitutions of the Greek Revolution], in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού* [History of modern Hellenism], ed. Vassilis Panagiotopoulos (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2003), 10/1:171–82.

[42] John Lee Comstock, *History of the Greek Revolution* (New York: John Clark, 1829), 210. Edward Blaquière, *Report on the Present State of the Greek Confederation and on its Claims to the Support of the Christian World* (London: Whittaker, 1823); *The Provisional Constitution of Greece, Preceded by a Letter to the Senate of the Grecian Confederation* (London: John Murray, 1822).

[43] See the memoir Ignatius sent to the archpriests, the primates and chieftains of Greece in November 1821, and that of Konstantinos Polychroniades, in Phaedon Bouboulidis, "Ειδήσεις και κρίσεις περί του αγώνος 1821–1824 εκ του αρχείου Ποστόλακα" [News and judgments on the Greek Revolution, 1821–1824, from the Postolakas papers], *Deltion Istorikis kai Ethnologikis Etaireias* 12 (1957–1958): 24–32; also Dimakopoulos, "Η διοικητική οργάνωσις" [The administrative organisation], 78.

[44] Comstock, *History*, 213.

[45] Paleon Patron Germanos, *Απομνημονεύματα* [Memoirs] (Athens: Tsangaris, 1900), 144–45. Another characteristic example is that the navy ministry was headed by three people from the three key islands, Spetses, Hydra and Psara.

[46] AEP, vol. 3, 26. The Eastern Greece authorisation is in Mamoukas, *Τα κατά την αναγέννησιν* [On the regeneration], 1:88–89.

[47] On these terms, see Paraskevas Matalas, *Έθνος και ορθοδοξία: Οι περιπέτειες μιας σχέσης* [Nation and Orthodoxy: the adventures of their relationship] (Irakleio: Crete University Press, 2003).

[48] AEP, vol. 14, Letter from the “Citizens” of Corinth to the war ministry, 6 February 1822, no. 220, 170; Letter from Konstantinos Mavromichalis to the Minister of War, 13 April 1822, no. 228, 174–75; Letter from P. Giatrakos to the Minister of War, 27 August 1823, Gastouni, no. 283, 215.

[49] For the case of France, see Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 109–99.

[50] Even though they were themselves rather selective in which directives to follow. See indicatively Antonios Lignos, ed., *Αρχείον Κοινότητος Ύδρας 1778–1832* [Archives of the municipality of Hydra, 1778–1832], vol. 8 (Piraeus: Sfaira, 1927): Letter from the interior minister to the primates of Hydra, 7 March 1822, 46; Letter from the primates of Hydra to Bountouris and Nikolakis in Corinth, 8 April 1822, 85; Letter from the primates of Hydra to the Vouli of Samos, 9 April 1822, 91; Letter from the primates of Hydra to the ephoroi of Mykonos, 14 April 1822, 103.

[51] *Αρχείον Κοινότητος Ύδρας* [Archives of the municipality of Hydra], vol. 8: Letter from Kyriakos Moralis (of Samos) to A. Vokon (Miaoulis), 22 May 1822, 186; two letters from the primates of Hydra, one to the Senate of the Peloponnese, the other to the generals and captains gathered in Tripolitsa, both 14 October 1822, 547–50. And Kolokotronis’ reply, 19 April 1822, 559–60. A similar letter was sent by the primates of Hydra to the Peloponnesian Senate, 17 November 1822, 635.

[52] *Αρχείο Ιωάννη Κωλέττη* [Archive of Ioannis Kolletis] (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2002), vol. 2: Letter from the Provisional Administration to the interior ministry to Ioannis Kolettis, selected as eparchos of Evripos, 29 May 1823, ΑΚ/Β233/9, 284.

[53] According to Konstantinos Metaxas, “Mavrokordatos’ plan [in] organising the troops [was to] take power away … from the local chieftains, appoint Administrators, in one word [to] ‘educate’ [establish] regular Administration in the country,” General State Archives, Vlachogiannis Collection, Karaiskakis Archive, file 7, no. 419.

[54] AEP, vol. 1, 160–63; Dimakopoulos, “Η διοικητική οργάνωσις” [The administrative organisation], 111–12.

[55] AEP, vol. 15, 111–20 (Ministry of War).

[56] Antonios Lignos, ed., *Αρχείον Κοινότητος Ύδρας 1778–1832* [Archives of the municipality of Hydra, 1778–1832], vol. 9, 80–81.

[57] See also Anastasios Polyzoides, *Προσωρινό πολίτευμα της Ελλάδος: Και σχέδιον οργανισμού των επαρχιών αυτής αμφότερα επιδιορθωμένα και επικυρωμένα υπό της δευτέρας Εθνικής Συνελεύσεως εν Άστρει οις έπονται το Πολιτικόν Σύνταγμα της Βρετανίας και το των Ηνωμένων Επικρατειών της Αμερικής* [Provisional constitution of Greece. And a draft bill for the organization of its eparchies, both revised and ratified by the second national legislative Assembly of the Greeks in Astros, accompanied by the Political Constitution of Britain and that of the USA] (Messolongi: D. Mesthenis, 1824).

[58] Nikolaos Kasomoulis, *Ενθυμήματα στρατιωτικά της επαναστάσεως των Ελλήνων, 1821–1833* [Military memoirs of the revolution of the Greeks, 1821–1833] (Athens: Vartsos, 1941), 2:447.

[59] Dimakopoulos, “Η διοικητική οργάνωσις” [The administrative organisation], 196.

[60] Ibid., 202–4.

[61] Cited in Eleftheria Zei, *Κανάρης, Κουντουριώτης, Τομπάζης: Ο αγώνας στη θάλασσα* [Kanaris, Kountouriotis, Tombazis: The revolution at sea] (Athens: Alter Ego, 2010), 65.

[62] Michalis Sotiropoulos, *After the Revolution: Greek Liberalism and the Intellectual Foundations of the Greek State, ca. 1830–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, forthcoming).

[63] Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross, eds., *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500–1850* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).