



■ [Help - Article](#)

■  [Print](#)

■ [E-mail or Retrieval](#)

■ [Links](#)

■ [Browse list](#)

■ [View mark list](#)

Back to ...

■ [Citations](#)

■ [Search](#)

■ [Gale Group Databases](#)

■ [Library](#)

La Trobe University - Trial



THE  **TIMES**

Digital Archive 1785–1985



Article 51 of 1620



The Times, Saturday, Sep 29, 1821; pg. 2; Issue 11364; col

Mark F

Modern Greece And The Cause Of The Greeks.

Category: News

MODERN GREECE AND THE CAUSE OF THE GREEKS.

The Greek population, whose submission rendered the name of Greek a term of scorn and reproach, has suddenly been reanimated with the spirit which history relates so eminently distinguished the ancient inhabitants of their soil. Unarmed and unprovided with the *materiel* of armament, but impatient of further oppression and degradation, the Greek slave has heroically, rather than prudently, engaged in a terrible and unequal contest.

The publicist cannot deny his right of revolt; the Christian cannot impugn the zeal which elevates the banner of the cross. The Turk won the soil by his sword—conquest is his only title. The conquered owe him no allegiance; and his claims to obedience cease, when he has no longer the power to command. The Turk, fanaticized in the tenets of a religion hostile to European civilization, is the general enemy of European society; and the hand which is raised to strike down the crescent, is a hand raised in favour of European freedom and morality.

The Christian community cannot, therefore, be indifferent to the appeal which is made by the civilized Greeks for aid and succour. This is no time to censure that temerity which assumed the offensive without sufficient preparation. The triumph of the Turks would be the ignominy of all other nations; and the liberties of mankind would, from various collateral dependent circumstances, receive a fatal shock if that catastrophe should occur. It is not, however, to be disguised that the expulsion of the Turks, and the consequent appropriation of the territory subject to their government, is one of the most important subjects that can be brought under consideration. The difficulty of surmounting the numerous impediments which

most important subjects that can be brought under consideration. The difficulty of surmounting the numerous impediments which opposed amicable arrangements has been the preservation of the Turkish dominions. Dismemberment, repeatedly threatened, has never been carried into execution, because the partitioners could frame no satisfactory project for the distribution of the spoil. Even Napoleon and Alexander preferred to suspend their united war against Turkey, which had been resolved upon at Tilsit and Erfurt, rather than hazard a misunderstanding when the hour arrived for the allotment of the respective portions. On further reflection, it was found that the site of Constantinople was too valuable; that the acquisition conferred too many preponderating advantages, which admitted of no adequate compensatory indemnification.* At that epoch, the re-establishment of an independent Greek empire was not contemplated, as the most natural and least objectionable mode of accommodating all interests. The Greeks were regarded as a degenerate race, incapable of constituting a state: they had scarcely manifested any disposition to release themselves from their chains; and they could inspire no confidence in an ability to defend a freedom which they had made no effort to acquire.

Had Moldavia and Walachia proclaimed Greek liberty; had ancient and modern Greece risen simultaneously; had a Greek navy gained the command of the Archipelago, there can be no doubt but the key of the Bosphorus would have been consigned to the care and custody of a Greek authority. But since that period, there is no France, no Europe to support the pretensions of the Greeks, and dispute the right of conquest and sovereignty with Russia.

France is powerless, because the Government and the people are disunited. Austria, from the self-destructive policy she is pursuing, until she abandons it and adopts one more conciliatory and natural, is a Zero in the European system. Prussia is a voluntary vassal to Russia, and a power whose national interests should rather than otherwise encourage the direction of Russia towards the Danube. Poland has ceased to exist. Sweden, since the loss of Finland and the island of Aland, has no connexion with the continent, except through the frozen regions of Lapland, or across the waters of the Gulf of Bothnia. England, loaded with debt, and struggling with increasing domestic embarrassments, has no longer any disposition, secret or avowed, to involve herself in precarious negotiations, which might, and probably would, commit her honour or render a financial revolution inevitable.

In this state of things, when Russia sees herself invited by the most favourable circumstances that ever tempted the achievement of a favourite national policy, it would be too much to expect that the existing Government would or *could* sacrifice the opportunity and the great interests which attach to a lodgment on the shores of the Bosphorus: it would, in fact, be a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of conquests! If it be impossible to prevent the Russian occupation of Constantinople, or its tributary dependence on Russia, which in some respects, offers her more advantages, ought the Governments of Europe to remain supine spectators of the war? Whatever may be the jealousy of any particular state against Russia, there is no state so immoral or so indifferent to the force of public opinion as to be capable of rendering assistance to the Turks. But every state has the faculty to unshackle its subjects from those restraints which check private zeal, and thus, without odium or expense, to counteract any ambitious views which Russia might ultimately entertain beyond a reasonable confine.

act any ambitious views which Russia might ultimately entertain beyond a reasonable confine.

Whilst Russia is engaged in sanguinary and costly operations, whilst her armies are occupied in the siege of *Warna*, in forcing the formidable rampart of the Balkan mountains, and manœuvring in Armenia to check the march of Asiatic reinforcements, the Powers of Europe may, by a mere order to their frontier guards and custom-house officers, assure independence to three millions of Greek inhabitants of continental Greece, the *Marezzi* or ancient *Hebrus*, and of the islands in the Archipelago.

The *Morea* alone, which may be considered as the citadel of Greece, contains nearly 14,000 square miles, covered with the most valuable forests, and enriched by the finest pastures, teeming with many excellent productions, though but partially cultivated, on account of the insecurity of property and the lawless violence of the Government. Its coasts abound with gulfs and bays, while it is the nursery of an existing skilful maritime population. Its climate is highly favourable to vegetation, and where local insalubrity is found, neglect of drainage is in most instances the cause.

The islands of the Archipelago are some of them amongst the most desirable gems of the Ocean. *Candia*, *Cyprus*, *Rhodes*, *Samos*, *Meteline*, *Lemnos*, *Samothrace*, *Negropont*, *Spezia*, *Milo*, *Hydra*, and many others now thinly inhabited, possess all the elements of a powerful maritime empire.

Are the Governments of Europe prepared to see these important stations annexed to *Odessa*, to *Moscow*, and *St. Petersburg*? Have they made up their minds to see the Russian autocrat sovereign or protector of these regions? Are they sufficiently intrepid or blind enough to be fearless of the consequences of an union which infuses irresistible energies into every artery of an empire that already enrolls above one million of armed men in disciplined ranks? There are statesmen, indeed, who speculate upon a centrifugal principle in the Russian policy—who assume that disunion and separation are the inevitable consequences of extension and expansion; but they calculate erroneously who think separation is near, so long as Russia can march, as England has done in *India*, from conquest to conquest, and, moreover, colonize the conquered as she proceeds. There is not a Russian, and it is a natural feeling, who is not proud of his name, and who, reflecting on the increasing growth and power of the empire, does not flatter himself that he belongs to a country destined to exercise influence over a tributary world. As long as this feeling continues, as long as courage can win reward, Russia, vast as she is, will remain consolidated, and still add limbs to her giant frame.

Abandoned by the Governments, and deprived of the co-operation of the people, of Europe, the Greeks have no alternative between death or penalties worse than death, and surrender at discretion to Russia. Single-handed, they must perish; and every principle of reason and policy dictates a measure which saves from immediate destruction, and affords a chance, in the instability of human affairs, for the independence of their posterity.

It may be asked, when Greece, aided by the people of Europe, succeeds in delivering herself from the Turk, how is she to defend herself against the Russians, after the occupation of *Constantinople*? The answer is, not so much by arms as by that bulwark more formidable in modern times than any which art can create—"the bulwark formed by the spirit of the age"—a bulwark which Austria, it is true, has despised, but as the event will prove, has despised to her own calamity, if she does not see her error in time.

it is true, has despised, but as the event will prove, has despised to her own calamity, if she does not see her error in time.

If Greece owed her safety to Russia, the latter would acquire fair pretensions to the territory from which she had driven the destroyer. If Russia invaded Greece already delivered from the oppressor, she could only establish her dominion on the ruins of Greek liberty; such a dominion would not be easily accomplished, and certainly could not be easily maintained. That the generous feeling already roused in Europe would convey to Greece all the aid of which she stands in need, provided the Governments withdrew their restrictions, and no longer opposed a *veto* to military enterprise and commercial adventure, no doubt can be entertained by those who have made inquiries on the subject. Every one must recollect the exertions which have been made in favour of South American independence; and those which were tendered in aid of the Constitutional Government of Naples. Greece offers greater inducements and better securities: the intercourse is rapid, the communication certain, and stations can be obtained in which friendly vessels may ride, secure from the elements and hostile attack, whilst they are discharging or disposing of their cargoes.

In the present wretched state of Greece, its foreign commerce

* When General Savary, then French ambassador at St. Petersburg, was in 1807 ordered to urge the immediate evacuation of Moldavia and Walachia, occupied during the previous war, as the only means of rendering the mediation of France effectual, Alexander, in a conversation with that envoy of Napoleon, observed—"Ma foi! tout ce que l'Empereur voudra; je compte uniquement sur lui. Je vous dirai même que, dans nos conversations de Tilsit, il m'a souvent dit qu'il ne tenait point à cette évacuation; qu'on la traînerait en longueur pour se disposer; et qu'il n'était pas possible de souffrir plus longtems les Turcs en Europe: il me laissait même entrevoir le projet de les jeter en Asie, ce n'est qu'ensuite qu'il est revenu à leur laisser Constantinople et quelques provinces environnantes."

averages about two millions sterling annually, while some of the natural products in great request are not subject to the destructive action of hostilities. The merchant would be sure to find a ready market for his commodities. If, at the same time, he conveyed arms and ammunition, officers, soldiers, and military equipment for the service of the state, the more warlike supplies he transported, the more he would contribute to his own interests, by the consequent vigour with which the military operations might be conducted. Such auxiliaries would be sure to find protection, subsistence, and ample remuneration, in the spoil of the fugitive Turks, and in the territorial allotments which would be made in their favour.

Greece requires for her own prosperity and security, European military colonists, men who will cultivate the lands which their valour shall deliver from the barbarian sway, and which now lie desolate. Let the Governments of Europe but allow freedom of action to the brave men who are emulous of honour, in a contest ennobled by so many recollections, and consecrated by so many direct and collateral benefits to humanity; let the Greek confederacy but indicate the points of rendezvous, and assist with the primary funds of preparation and equipment; such a force would instantly be set on foot as would accomplish the prompt deliverance of European Greece, without hazard of failure, or those numberless vicissitudes that entail so much misery on the defenceless part of the population, in all countries which become the theatre of war, and which, in a war with the Turks, would be aggravated by every species of vindictive horror.

The civilized world cannot but feel a deep interest in the liberation of a people, of whom one of their most distinguished orators said, with some vanity, but in the spirit of a truth recognized in all ages—*Nomen Græcorum non jam nationis et gentis sed rationis et mentis videtur esse argumentum. Græcique ii potius appellantur, qui nostra conditionis, quam nostra originis sunt participes!*

Note.—The following enumeration of a few of the islands in the Grecian Archipelago will serve to convey some idea of its importance generally:—

Candia, 180 miles long, by from twenty to thirty in breadth; population 280,000, of whom more than two thirds are Turks. Rhodes contains nearly 30,000 souls, and possesses one of the finest ports in Europe. The population of Samos amounts to 60,000, all Greeks: that of Scio is estimated at 150,000; of whom there is but a small proportion of Turks. Lemnos contains 80,000, and not more than 1,000 Mussulmen: that of Negropont is 16,000. Though the population of Milo is scanty, it is extremely fertile, and has an excellent harbour. Hydra, with only 20,000 inhabitants, has fitted out several formidable squadrons, since the commencement of hostilities, and is celebrated throughout the Mediterranean for the excellence as well as bravery of its seamen, whose intrepidity could not have been exceeded by the heroes of Salamin and Mycale.

Full Text: Copyright 1821, The Times

Article CS35146045

View other articles linked to these subjects:

View Linked Documents

- [View articles starting in same page](#)
- [Articles in same category](#)

Print, e-mail, and other retrieval options

Browser Print — *Full Content* —

Reformat article for printing from your browser.

[\[Standard article print\]](#)

To return to InfoTrac, use the *back* function of your browser.

Acrobat Reader — *Full Content* —

View and print full newspaper page containing the article from Acrobat™ Reader.

[\[1 page portrait\]](#) [\[2 \(½\) pages landscape\]](#) [\[4 \(¼\) pages portrait\]](#)

Please allow a few minutes for the retrieval operation to complete

E-Mail Delivery — *Citation Only* —

We will send a plain text version to the e-mail address you enter (e.g. *bettyg@library.com*).

E-Mail

Address:

Subject

(defaults to
title):



[Copyright and Terms of Use](#)