

abolished. In the present case, we need to identify the ways in which Christian, imperial culture somehow came up with an alternative version, or versions, of the theatre. This means, firstly, revisiting the secondary literature: not only the recent studies on the *logikon theatron* of Byzantine intellectuals, but also the older works on the Byzantine theatre, which, however misguided, may still have something to offer. Thus the book by Venetia Cottas (1931), who saw theatre in almost every aspect of Byzantine public life, bears re-reading in the light of some recent trends, for example the choice of 'display' as the theme of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies (London 2006), and an article by Anestis Vasilakeris on 'Theatricality of Byzantine Images'. Secondly, in literature as in art, the Byzantine religious tradition has important dramatic material that Andrew White does not consider: the texts generated by the contemplation of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. Leaving aside the para-liturgical drama of *Χριστός Πάσχαων*, the hymns of the Orthodox Passion service, sung on the Thursday evening of Holy Week, are charged with emotion, to the point that they could spark anti-Jewish pogroms in the Greek communities of the Ottoman Empire. Thirdly, the Christian condemnation of the theatre must not be read in isolation from the many passages where John Chrysostom, its most severe and vocal critic, uses the metaphor of the theatre in a positive sense. The subject merits extensive study; here we may just note that he often refers to the Divine Liturgy as 'spiritual theatre', and, developing a metaphor of St Paul (1 Cor. 9, 24), likens the Christian life of virtue to an athletic contest, making frequent and detailed comparisons with the Olympic games that were still held in his home city of Antioch. In the spiritual and the agonistic sense, theatre was compatible with Christian values, and theatrical culture did have a future in Byzantium.

Paul Magdalino
University of St Andrews

Roderick Beaton, *Byron's War: Romantic Rebellion, Greek Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xviii + 338
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Roderick Beaton's *Byron's War* has upended the traditional narrative of Byron and his role in the establishment of modern Greece, and for that alone it will remain one of the most important books about Byron and the Greek War of Independence. The conventional premise views the poet's efforts as so hesitant and his grasp of the realities of Greece so misguided, that in the end it was Byron's and Greece's good fortune that his early death prevented either abysmal failure or complete disillusionment. Against an almost unanimous chorus that Byron dead was worth more to Greece than Byron alive, Beaton makes a cogent case that it might have been better if the poet had lived longer. Beaton argues that while most philhellenes 'brought their prejudices and expectations with them.... What makes Byron's contribution unusual, if not unique, is his insistence that the new political realities in Greece should be allowed to forge a new form of government, never seen before' (265-66). For Beaton, Byron's goal was to establish a new national government in Greece, not simply the old structure with Greek chieftains replacing Turkish pashas. This new government would be the first of the new European nation states created in the nineteenth century, and therefore a model that could be used elsewhere on the continent.

The first of four sections covers Byron's first trip to the Greece and the Levant (1809-1811) and the poetry that emerged from it. Here Beaton lays the groundwork for his argument and, while very readable, it does not contain much new material. He notes Byron's fascination with the wildness of the Greek landscape and the klephts and pirates who became models for Byronic heroes. Beaton does not, however, see Byron making a commitment to Greek freedom, or to freedom generally, at this point. Beaton does stress that later on Byron had to consciously suppress his own natural affinity for the anarchic world of Greek klephts when he joined the Greek struggle. To move the cause of a new Greek nation forward, Byron discovered that he had to become a statesman and place the cause above personal freedom and desire.

The second section deals with the relationship between Byron and Shelley. This subject has generated thousands of pages of criticism and, here again, Beaton is providing the context for what is to come. His main point, that Shelley inspired in part Byron's political consciousness, is

undeniable, as is the fact that Shelley, through his acquaintance with Alexander Mavrokordatos, kept the Greek rebellion on Byron's radar. Beaton argues that Byron came to see Shelley as a kind of doppelgänger, and it was the impact of Shelly's death that caused Byron to want to serve a cause greater than himself. While one can debate these points, Beaton has the virtue of making us re-examine Byron's re-engagement with Greece after nearly a decade.

It is in the third and fourth sections that Beaton carefully makes his case for a new, politically astute, Byron. Beaton reassesses the known record and utilizes new material from Greek archives, as he slowly untangles what the information tells us. When Byron arrived in Cephalonia in 1823, he had few reports about the state of affairs in Greece and no direction from the Greek Committee in London, whose agent he was designated to be. But, as Beaton shows, Byron had one of the best advisers possible available when he arrived in Cephalonia, the philhellenic governor of the island, Charles Napier. Beaton makes clear how important Napier was to Byron, for it was Napier who wrote to Byron to deal with Mavrokordatos, to delay his arrival in Greece, and to keep all funds out of the hands of various warlords. One of the virtues of Beaton's work is that he takes documents that we have all read, such as Napier's letters to Byron, and, by careful reading and combining with new Greek material from various archives, constructs connections that have not been seen before. He shows that Byron joined Mavrokordatos in Missolonghi as part of a logical and consistent plan. Beaton stresses that Byron and Mavrokordatos functioned as a team between Byron's arrival in January and his death in April, and his account is both plausible and illuminating for the examination of the tumultuous period of the two civil wars fought during the Greek War of Independence.

As with any bold new argument, not everyone will be convinced on specific points. Did Byron see the struggle for freedom in Greece as the opportunity for a new national model that would inspire movements elsewhere? Most might say that it was Shelley who had that kind of broad political view, and may not think that Byron took as much from Shelley as Beaton suggests. Beaton makes us realize that Byron may well have had ideas about a government for Greece, but the evidence is not clear about what sort of government that would be. Byron was accused by two philhellenes he knew well, Edward Trelawny and Leicester Stanhope, of betraying the cause of freedom by a willingness to establish a foreign monarchy in Greece (as did happen later). Did Byron and Mavrokordatos have a real partnership, or was Mavrokordatos' motivation for a close cooperation with Byron the same as that of the other Greek leaders who sent him numerous missives— Byron's willingness to spend his own money and his role as agent of the Greek loan that was arranged in London? Beaton suggests that there was a rift between the two in early April 1824 after the 'show trial,' to use Beaton's term, of Georgio Karaiskakis for treason. Beaton might be right, but some sources, such as the historian George Finlay, suggest that the relationship was not warm. Beaton notes that Finlay arrived in Missolonghi six weeks after Byron, but that was still well before the disagreement concerning Karaiskakis occurred.

Byron's War changes how we look at Byron's last trip to Greece, and will open new discussions in the studies of both Byron and Modern Greek history. Beaton's Byron, a selfless servant of the 'the Cause', presents new post-colonial problems for the scholar. For the Bryon in these pages really did want to bring Greece into a new national European movement, and was going to use money to do it. As Beaton shows, the tale of Byron and his role in the Greek loan demonstrates that foreign money and bankers have been an issue for Greece since before independence. We may be glad for Byron's sake that he died before he became Greece's first foreign banker. There might be fewer streets named after him.

David Roessel
Stockton University

Peter Jeffreys, *Reframing Decadence: C.P. Cavafy's Imaginary Portraits*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015. Pp. 272.
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Peter Jeffreys argues that Cavafy's early exposure to Aestheticism during his years in London (1874–77) was to play a crucial and continuing part in the development of his literary imagination. His Modernism (like that of Joyce, Yeats and Eliot) has deep roots in the cult of beauty and