Artemis Papatheodorou

Independent researcher, Athens, Greece
artemisuni@yahoo.gr

Photography and other Media at the Service of Ottoman Archaeology

Abstract

From its earliest days, photography was linked to material remains of the past. Western pioneers of the medium were attracted to photographing Ottoman lands, especially the land of the Pharaohs, and the Holy Land. The Ottomans also seized upon photography themselves, turning the lens upon monuments and artefacts within their own Empire. The literature on archaeological photography in the region has focused on European travel photography, and on the upper echelons of state officialdom. This article shifts attention to Ottoman bureaucracy, and to the societal level. It discusses the relationship between photography and the daily tasks associated with the Ottoman administration of antiquities. Additionally, it looks at the ways that an important learned society, the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, used photography. The article treats Ottoman archaeological photography in its own right, largely on the basis of primary material in Ottoman Turkish and Greek. The article argues that photography was a new, technologically advanced medium that – in tandem with other visual reproduction techniques – was instrumental in promoting visions of modernisation. Photography, and other visual media, helped the Ottoman state promote state centralisation and modernisation, while enhancing the Hellenic Literary Society's civilising mission.

Keywords: Late Ottoman Empire, photography, archaeology, Imperial Museum, Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, Ottoman Greeks

1. Introduction[1]

One may be familiar with photographs of high-ranking foreign dignitaries posing in front of famous monuments in the Ottoman Empire.[2] Similarly, one may be familiar with Osman Hamdi Bey's photographs, in which, in his capacity as director of the

1 I wish to thank the two reviewers for their valuable insight and suggestions. Also, an earlier version of this article was presented at the workshop "The First Century of Photography – Photography as History/Historicizing Photography in (Post-)Ottoman Territories (1839-1939)" that was organised by the Boğaziçi University Archives and Documentation Center, ANAMED – Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, IFEA – Institut français d'études anatoliennes, Aix Marseille Université – LabExMed & IDEMEC in Istanbul on June 22-23, 2018. My many thanks go to both organisers and participants for their comments.

2 See, for example, the pictures from Kaiser Wilhelm's visit to Baalbek in Kirchen n.d.

Imperial Museum in Istanbul, he laid claim to the ruins.[3] This article shifts the focus from the high echelons of state officialdom to the mundane day-to-day administration of antiquities, and provides critical analysis of how the Ottoman administration utilised photography for archaeological purposes. It also discusses the way in which archaeological photography was used at the societal level, through analysis of the archaeology-related photographic initiatives of an important learned society, the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, and its members. This article is largely based on textual sources, rather than photographs themselves. Few of the photographs to which this article refers are in evidence – they have not been discovered by modern researchers yet, or they simply did not survive. We may even doubt they ever existed. Primary material from the Ottoman archive in Istanbul in Ottoman Turkish and from the periodical of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, which was published in Greek and covers the years 1861 to 1911,[4] allows one to discuss why photographs were commissioned, to discover their intended audiences, and to understand how such archaeological photographs were used. Research reveals that photography was not the only medium for reproducing the material culture of past civilisations. Other techniques – such as drawing, sketching, moulding, estampage and mapping – were part of a toolkit at the service of archaeology in the Ottoman Empire. Significantly, photographs and other visualisations, though clearly part of a modernising state and society, were not produced in a bid to emulate the West or in an effort to showcase Ottoman modernity to foreign audiences. In the case of the Ottoman state, they served the needs of a bureaucracy that sought to centralise decision-making with regards to archaeology, and turn itself into the sole guardian of antiquities. For the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, archaeological photography was part of its efforts to spread knowledge in the Empire and to preserve monuments, especially those that related to the ancient Greek and Greek Orthodox cultures.

2. Archaeological Heritage, Photography and the Orientalist Critique

Since its introduction to the public, photography has gone hand in hand with antiquities, especially those within Ottoman domains. In 1839 François Arago, the person in charge of introducing photography to the French chamber of deputies, attempted to capitalise on the potential that photography had for Egyptologists and Orientalists. In his effort to promote the new medium, Arago highlighted the advantages of photography offered for the documentation of hieroglyphs and monuments in the region, specifically its capacity for fidelity. This link between photography and the study of the Orient was far from random. With no less than four architects and eight draughtsmen, the French expedition to Egypt in 1798 had *inter alia* generated an impressive number of drawings of the antiquities discovered. In 1802 Napoleon ordered

3 Çelik 2016, 158-160.

4 For a list of the principal publications of the Society, including its periodical, see Vassiadis 2007, 263-268.

these, together with the images of the fauna and flora of Egypt, to be published in what turned out to be a nearly twenty-year long publication project known as *Description de l'Egypte*. In 1839 memories of this expedition and, more importantly, the subsequent publication project were still vivid, and Arago did not miss the opportunity to invite the deputies to contemplate the benefits that Daguerre's invention would have brought to the endeavour. At the same time, he suggested equipping the Egyptian Institute (another scholarly by-product of the French expedition to Egypt) with the new invention.[5] Indeed, less than three months after Arago introduced Daguerre's invention to the chamber of deputies, the first photographic expedition to the Middle East set out with a view to photographing Egyptian antiquities. In the following years more Europeans travelled to the region, especially Egypt and the Holy Land, with the aim of photographing antiquities.[6]

It was not only Europeans who were interested in photographing the ancient monuments of the Ottoman lands in those years. The Ottoman state too exhibited an interest in photographing its archaeological heritage. Edhem Eldem has pointed to a document from 1884 concerning the dispatch of one hundred photographic plates of ancient sites and cityscapes. In it, Ahmed Hamdi Pasha, governor of Syria, addresses the Grand Vizier:

> As it is clear that His Majesty our Lord Benefactor, well aware of all truths, possesses perfect knowledge of every circumstance in His Well-Protected Imperial Domains, it would be advantageous and useful and would merit His august approbation that photographic images be made of a number of antiquities which are found in the province of Syria and which great numbers of people from Europe are keen to observe and examine by choosing to go through much discomfort in their travels, and that they be kept in the splendid palace of His Majesty the Caliph as an index of His Imperial Majesty's productive knowledge; thus one hundred photographic plates of Baalbek, of Mount Hauran, of Jerash, of Palmyra, of antiquities and of some famed buildings of the Land of Palestine, and of certain towns well-known to the Europeans, such as Jerusalem and Nazareth, and of towns on the shores of Syria have been placed in a case and entrusted to Selim, a sergeant of the Beirut gendarmerie, together with a list of their numbers and names.[7]

The text demonstrates the deep roots of the Ottoman interest in photographing monuments and ancient sites. The pictures were worthy because 'great numbers of people from Europe are keen to observe and examine [them]' by travelling long distances in uncertain terrain. Here the European understanding of the landscape and its history informed Ottoman decision-making. Yet, European taste was not solely re-

5 For Arago, see Behdad 2013, 13-14. For the French expedition to Egypt, see *Description de l' Egypte* 1997.

6 Behdad 2013, 14. Also, Shaw 2003, 139-140. For a discussion of Lebanon in particular, see Debbas 2000, 50-68.

7 Y.MTV.13/123, 18 Rebiyülahir 1301 (3 Şubat 1299 and 14 February 1884), as quoted in Eldem 2015, 112-113.

sponsible for prompting the Ottoman administration to commission the photographic images of antiquities; these pictures were also seen as 'an index' of sultanic 'productive knowledge'. What Eldem calls 'the Western gaze' and a wish to acquire and organise knowledge are at the roots of the Ottoman administration's archaeological photography initiative of 1884.[8]

In the 1890s, historical monuments remained one of the main subjects in Sultan Abdülhamid's photographic collections. Compilations of photographs from the collections, and among them pictures of monuments, were offered as gifts to western rulers and knowledge institutions. This confirms that Ottoman archaeological photography was sensitive to western preferences, but also that the Ottoman state instrumentalised archaeological photography for foreign policy reasons.[9]

However, a number of scholars argue that Ottoman engagement with photography cannot be explained solely with reference to a 'Western gaze'. They identify motivations and processes that are independent of such a gaze. And so, whilst these scholars of Oriental photography recognise the value of Edward Said's critique of 'Orientalism', they also recognise limitations of such an approach.

For example, Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan (in their book *Photography's Orientalism*) argue that, in spite of the value Orientalism brings to the analysis of the photography of the Middle East, not everything can be interpreted through its lens. Europeans' photographs of the Middle East, in particular, may display more than a racial and imperialistic understanding of the region and its peoples. Similarly, photography by locals is not merely a reflection of Western influence, neither developed only in opposition to the West, nor an expression of vernacular cultures.[10] In his effort to provide an alternative to Orientalism, Christopher Pinney built an analytic structure that employs three novel concepts: transculturation, purification and autonomy. In his view, transculturation refers to 'a contact zone characterized by copresence and interaction'. Purification concerns 'the creation of two putatively "entirely distinct ontological zones"', while autonomy is used to denote the large segment of visual and material culture that developed in parallel to colonialism but was hardly influenced by it'.[11] Nancy Micklewright has suggested that analysis should shift to the commercial, technical and social history of photography, and that photographs should be interrogated in order to illuminate Ottoman political and social history. She positions her historical approach as an alternative to the dominant Orientalist paradigm, but she does acknowledge that the distinction between alternative and dominant histories of Ottoman photography can be unclear.[12] Amongst the old photographs of the Bosphorus in Istanbul, Esra Akcan identified a previously undesignated genre: the panoramic city album. This category includes cityscapes which imply a panoramic view rather than explicitly present

8 Eldem 2015, 112-113.
9 Shaw 2003, 142-144.
10 Behdad and Gartlan 2013, 4.
11 Pinney 2013, 34-39, especially 34 for the quotations.
12 Micklewright 2013, 75-92, especially 89.

an entire vista. Legible only to those who know the Istanbul landscape, these city albums act as cognitive maps and are, thus, endowed with a topographic value.[13] Besides pictures of the Bosphorus, for Akcan, some photographs of the Dolmabahçe Palace qualify as examples of the panoramic city photograph. Taken from a distance, they depict the palace within its surroundings. The Bosphorus is an essential part of the frame, and the urban context (i.e. parts of Istanbul's neighbourhoods) may also be included. Such compositions, Akcan suggests, transform the Dolmabahçe Palace into a gateway to the Bosphorus.[14] Edhem Eldem argues that knowledge about Ottoman photography has focused on a particular set of images, ignoring photography produced in the provinces, and photographs taken in the capital that address the needs of people other than Europeans and the Ottoman elite. Eldem maintains that surviving public and private collections, no matter how important and impressive these might be, are compromised by prejudice and bias. He argues that the literature so far has put too much emphasis on well-known photographers, has focused excessively on the "golden age" of photography, and has limited itself to a narrow range of themes and genres. His work introduces vernacular photography into the field of study. This category is defined by the status of production (the "lower-end" output from famous studios), subject (i.e. ordinary people) and the presence of indigenous elements – certain poses, garments, topics and settings.[15] Turning her attention to the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Martina Baleva discusses the photographs of Ottoman Bulgarian revolutionaries, often known as "Bulgarian national heroes". Their pictures, which were all *carte de visite* portraits, showed them in uniform, either of the Albanian-Greek style, the Turkish-Montenegrin style or the Hungarian-Romanian style. Importantly, argues Baleva, these photographs exhibited a strong sense of masculinity whilst also conveying ideological messages consistent with the Bulgarian nationalist cause. And so whilst these pictures sought to inspire more men to join the armed struggle, they also sought to inspire support for the struggle amongst the wider Bulgarian public.[16] Finally, Wendy Shaw charts the shift from Orientalist photography to an Ottoman photography. She explains how early photography in the Ottoman Empire was largely monopolised by foreign photographers who depicted the region and its peoples as the "exotic Orient". Early Ottoman photographers emulated their foreign colleagues and continued the Orientalist tradition. During the reign of sultan Abdülhamid (r. 1876–1909), Ottoman photography shifted its focus to convey the modernisation of the Empire to foreign audiences. Ultimately, Shaw identifies a critical paradigm shift in Ottoman photography upon the 1891 publication of a manual by Hamdi Pashazade M. Khalid called *Detailed account of the practice and theory of photography*. As a manual aimed at amateurs in the Empire, Khalid's book enabled the vantage points of ordinary Ottoman would-be photographers to come to the fore. No longer in dialogue

13 Akcan 2013, 93-114.
14 Akcan 2018, 221-236, especially 230-233.
15 Eldem 2018, 29-56.
16 Baleva 2018, 237-256.

with western audiences, Ottoman photography could now facilitate the expression of the Ottoman self for itself.[17]

These approaches share an attempt to go beyond the binary distinction between Orientalist photography on the one hand and resistance to or derivation from it on the other. They seek to disentangle Ottoman photography from the monopoly of Orientalism-related critical discourse and, to the extent possible, treat Ottoman photography in its own right. The catalogue of the exhibition 'Mendel – Sebah: Documenting the Imperial Museum' is a case in point with particular reference to archaeological photography. In it, Edhem Eldem provides an analysis of commercial photography associated with the Imperial Museum and traces the publication of the illustrated catalogues of the museum. Drawing on information from Ottoman sources that have survived in the archives of the Office of the Presidency in Turkey, and of the archaeological museum in Istanbul, Eldem bears witness to the rationale of the administration of the largest museum in the Empire.[18]

3. The Ottoman Administration on Antiquities and Visual Representation Technologies

The Ottoman state's engagement with the material remains of the past predates the first regulation on antiquities which was adopted in 1869. New regulations in 1874, 1884 and 1906 provided an increasingly comprehensive regulatory framework for the administration of antiquities. A specialised regulation in 1912 enriched the provisions on the protection of monuments and established new administration for the provinces. The Imperial Museum (which could trace its history to 1846) also expanded in those years, adding new buildings and wings in Istanbul to house the most important finds from throughout the country, opening new provincial museums in Bursa and Konya and mounting numerous excavations. Parallel to these state-led initiatives, a large number of foreign institutions and individuals enhanced their engagement with the archaeological wealth of the Empire (which required state permission).[19]

Photography was a useful tool for the Ottoman administration in its efforts to manage antiquities in the vast expanse of the Empire. Photography enhanced the impression of the central state's strength by allowing it to assert its authority in archaeological matters. One can identify at least five ways in which the Ottoman state utilised archaeological photography. Photography helped the Ottoman administration improve its knowledge about heritage, document heritage and preserve monuments. In an era when the Ottoman state increasingly sought to block foreign ownership of antiquities, photographs were a way of compensating the foreign archaeologists who

17 Shaw 2018, 173-192.

18 Eldem 2014, 106-153.

19 For the Imperial Museum, see Shaw 2003. For the excavations, see Koçak 2011. For the regulation of 1912, see DH.İD., 129/12, 16 Safer 1330 (17 Temmuz 1328 and 5 February 1912).

excavated them. Photography also guided decisions about the transfer of finds from the provinces to the capital.

Documents that have survived in the Ottoman archive in the Office of the Presidency show that the government could request photographs or copies of photographs of finds from the local government and/or foreigners who had been authorised to conduct archaeological research. For example, in 1877, on the occasion of the discovery of artefacts made of clay and other materials, the Council of Education (*Meclis-i Maarif*) notified the Governor-General of Tripoli (of the two sites "Tripoli" could refer to, it is most likely they were referring to the one in North Africa rather than Syria), that photographs of the immovable artefacts should be sent to the capital together with an inventory of their type, value and weight.[20] In that year, on the occasion of the discovery of a sarcophagus, the Governor-General of Salonica was similarly informed that, if not possible to dispatch the sarcophagus itself, photographs should be sent to the Council of Education in the capital.[21] In both cases, the central government, informed about the finds, wished to acquire them. With the possibility that the heft of the artefacts would prevent this, the state requested detailed information by means of photography, as an inventory or other textual description alone would have been insufficient. Foreigners too had to share photographs of their discoveries with the central government in Istanbul. In 1883, British archaeologist Ramsay was requested to share with the Imperial Museum a copy of each photograph of antiquities he was to take in his explorations.[22] In 1907, Dr Gortlik, envoy of the king of Saxony to the Ottoman capital tasked with studying works of history, was similarly required to share a copy of the photographs he would take.[23] Although not universally applied,[24] such provisions reflect the central state's desire to be knowledgeable about heritage in the Ottoman lands. In the context of this effort, local administration and foreign scholars were sources of information to be tapped.

The Imperial Museum was able to document antiquities in its possession by means of photography. At least this is suggested by the fact that the museum was endowed with a photography studio, as mentioned in its internal regulation that was adopted in 1888.[25] Significantly, the ability of the Imperial Museum to provide third parties with photographs of antiquities came only a few years after the adoption of the 1884 regulation on antiquities, which stipulated complete state ownership of finds.[26] The reaction of foreign archaeologists, who were thus deprived of a previously acknowl-

20 MF.MKT., 51/184, 27 Zilkade 1294 (21 Teşrinisani 1293 and 3 December 1877).
21 MF.MKT., 51/185, 27 Zilkade 1294 (21 Teşrinisani 1293 and 3 December 1877).
22 MF.MKT., 80/11, 24 Cumadelula 1300 (21 Mart 1299 and 2 April 1883).
23 BEO., 3042/228125, 15 Rebiülevvel 1325 (15 Nisan 1323 and 28 April 1907).
24 Unlike Ramsay and Gortlik, Japanese architect Ito was allowed to take pictures of ancient artefacts and edifices without having to share any copies with the Ottoman state; BEO., 2371/177885, 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1322 (8 Temmuz 1320 and 20 July 1904).
25 'Belge No. 41 – Müze-i Hümâyun için bir yönetmelik hazırlanması hakkında ve hazırlanan yönetmelik', Cezar 1995, 547-551, especially articles 6 and 21.
26 Reinach 1884, 336-343, article 3.

edged right to own finds, could arguably be softened by being given access to photographs of artefacts for study purposes.[27]

The preservation of antiquities was another reason for the Ottoman administration to utilise the photographic lens. A regulation of 1912 stipulated that monuments that posed a public hazard could only be demolished after their decorations and inscriptions were rescued. Photography could be part of this process. The regulation read in particular: 'if [a decoration or inscription is] painted on plaster, its photographs are taken, or its drawing is made, or its shape is captured by other means […].'[28] Thus, before a monument could be demolished, its decorative elements and inscriptions had to be copied, *inter alia*, by means of photography. Although the original artefact may be lost, its image would be preserved for future reference thanks to visual reproduction technologies, such as photography.

Photography helped centralise decision-making concerning finds in the provinces, particularly about whether they should be transported to the capital. In 1896 the Director of Education in the province of Syria informed the Ministry of Education in Istanbul about the discovery of valuable ancient slabs from the times of the Assyrians and the Romans. These slabs had survived as spolia incorporated into the walls of buildings in the *kasaba* of Süveyda. The Director requested funding for their dispatch to Istanbul. But the Imperial Museum instead approved funding for their transfer to the preparatory school (*idadi mektebi*) in Damascus – and requested photographs of the slabs. These photographs would allow the Ministry to decide if the transfer of the slabs to the capital was indeed required.[29] The following year, a modification to the 1884 regulation on antiquities turned this arrangement into a legal provision. An addition to article three of the regulation stipulated in particular that finds in the provinces would first be transferred to the preparatory school for photographing before the most important ones were sent to the Imperial Museum.[30] Photography was pivotal in this process, as it facilitated the authorities in the Ottoman capital to select those antiquities that should be transferred to Istanbul leaving the provincial authorities with no say other than who the photographer would be. In this way, photography allowed an administration with limited financial resources to make informed decisions in archaeological matters.

27 For an example of a western reaction to the new regulation, see Reinach 1884, 336 and 344. Also, Hitzel 2010, 179. Years later and in relation to the three-volume illustrated catalogue of Greek, Roman and Byzantine sculptures that he prepared on behalf of the Imperial Museum, Gustave Mendel wished 'that all drawings may be used as study documents'; quoted in Eldem 2014, 31.

28 '[…] eğer sıva üzerine menkuş ise fotoğrafileri veya resimleri alınır veya sair suretle eşkali zabt edilir […].'; DH.İD., 129/12, 16 Safer 1330 (17 Temmuz 1328 and 5 February 1912), article 5.

29 MF.MKT., 338/53, various dates, especially 22 Eylül 1312 (4 October 1896) and 2 Kanunusani 1312 (14 January 1897).

30 *Letters by T. Macridy – Imperial Museum*, 27, footnote 95.

Photography was by no means the only visual reproduction technology used in the archaeological contexts already discussed. It was part of an array of tools that also included drawing and sketching as well as mapping. For example, when the Ministry of Education requested the Governor-General of Tripoli to document ancient artefacts found in his jurisdiction, photography was actually one of two options – alternatively, a drawing could be commissioned.[31] According to the regulation on antiquities that was adopted in 1874, the Ottoman state could request sketched outlines of research areas from any petitioners seeking to undertake excavations.[32] In addition to a photography studio, there was a studio for making plaster casts (*modelhane*) in the Imperial Museum.[33] The regulation on the preservation of monuments prescribed photography alongside drawing and other means to capture the details of decorations and inscriptions.[34] The regulation on antiquities that was adopted in 1884 acknowledged the right for those carrying out an archaeological excavation to make imprints (*moulages*) and drawings of their finds.[35] Few were the instances where no alternative to photography was provided, as in the case of the sarcophagus discovered in Salonica.[36] Photographers, though, could be expected to be readily available in this major port city compared to other parts of the Empire in 1877. Overall, photography operated alongside or as an alternative to other techniques of visual representation, rather than being singled out. Photography and these other techniques together formed a toolkit available to the Ottoman authorities for the visual reproduction of heritage in the capital and the provinces.

4. The Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople and Visual Representation Technologies

The Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople was an Ottoman Greek learned society with an international outlook. It is considered the most important and prolific of all Ottoman Greek learned societies and had a long lifespan that covered the period from 1861 to 1923. Established alongside state and societal initiatives that reflected a quest for progress, the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople focused on the production and dissemination of knowledge, as understood in Enlightenment terms. It operated on the basis of specialised committees, including on philology, archaeology, biology, architecture, the sciences and anthropology. These committees expanded the horizons of the Society, beyond its inception as a modest literary salon. The Society

31 MF.MKT., 51/184, 27 Zilkade 1294 (21 Teşrinisani 1293 and 3 December 1877).
32 Article 13 of the regulation. For the text of the regulation in Ottoman Turkish, see 'Asar-ı Atika Nizamnamesi', *Düstür* 1, no. 3 (1289 and 1872/1873), 426-432. For the text of the regulation in French, see Aristarchi Bey 1874, 164.
33 'Belge No. 41…', Cezar 1995, 547-551, articles 6 and 21.
34 DH.İD., 129/12, 16 Safer 1330 (17 Temmuz 1328 and 5 February 1912), article 5.
35 Reinach 1884, 338, article 12.
36 MF.MKT., 51/185, 27 Zilkade 1294 (21 Teşrinisani 1293 and 3 December 1877).

adopted a "civilizing mission" in the Ottoman context. It considered all persons capable of progress, and that everyone had the right to knowledge. It aspired to be a pioneer in the production of knowledge not the least by maintaining a right of first publication for unpublished work discussed under its roof. It amassed a large network of members (in Istanbul, the Ottoman provinces and abroad), and it encouraged the readers of its periodical to contribute to the work of the Society; its operation resembles what is nowadays called "citizen science".[37]

The Society showed an early interest in photography when, in 1861, it hosted a presentation '[o]n the photographic images on organic and inorganic matter produced by the thunder'.[38] The famous, Istanbul-based photographer Guillaume Berggren was a member of the Society and was on its archaeological committee, and the names of other photographers appear on the pages of the periodical.[39] Photography was incorporated in the workings of the Society in various ways and, in the case of the archaeological committee, it served two main purposes: the production and dissemination of knowledge, and the preservation of heritage through its documentation.

Photography repeatedly underpinned the production and dissemination of knowledge about antiquities. For instance, photographs were used during the discussion of finds. As early as 1864, K.A. Karatheodore presented a find to the Society also by means of a photograph.[40] At times, people from the provinces sent photographs of antiquities to be presented and discussed, or simply to be shared with the members of the Society for their information. In 1869, Dr Cullen from Costanza did not only send textual information on finds but also photographs.[41] Twice in the early 1870s Vlassios Skordeles from Philippoupole (Felibe/Plovdid in present-day Bulgaria) sent

37 Vassiadis 2007. Also, *O en Konstantinoupolei Hellenikos Philologikos Syllogos. Sygramma periodikon* [Periodical and, from now on, Society's periodical]. year Α', vol. A (1863-1864), γ'-δ'.

38 Vassiades, Herokles. 'Peri ton hypo tou keravnou Photographikon eikonon epi organikon kai anorganon onton [On the photographic images on organic and inorganic matter produced by the thunder]'. As mentioned in Pentekontaeteris [50th Anniversary Issue (1861-1911)] 1913-1921, 439.

39 For Berggren's membership in the Society and its archaeological committee, see Society's periodical, vol. IZ'. (1886), στ' and κδ' respectively. Berggren (1835-1920) was from Stockholm (Sweden). He settled in Istanbul in 1866 and lived there for the rest of his life; Özendes 2013, 205-210. For the names of other photographers, see Society's periodical, vol. KB' (1891), 34 (St. Konstantinides) and the references to Vassilis Kargopoulos and Nikolopoulos in this article.

40 Society's periodical, vol. Β', issues Η'-Θ' (1863-1864), 122. Konstantinos Karatheodore (1802-1879) was an Ottoman Greek physician and member of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople. He was born in Edirne, studied medicine in Pisa (Italy), taught medicine at the military school in Istanbul and was personal physician to Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839) and Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839-1861); Mavrogenes 1885.

41 Society's periodical, vol. Δ' (1871), 250.

photographs of finds to be discussed in the Society.[42] In 1872, it was the turn of Heinrich Schliemann to share the photograph of a vase with the Society.[43] Clergymen were also amongst those who supported the archaeological work of the Society by sending photographs, as was the case of the photograph of an inscription from Avlona (Vlorë in present-day Albania) sent by the Metropolitan of Belgrade in 1872, and photographs from a church shared by the Metropolitan of Derkoi in the early 1870s.[44] In 1889, Reverend C. G. Curtis from the Anglican Church in Istanbul presented the photograph of an inscription from the Byzantine fortifications that survived in the city.[45] When not returned to their owners, these photographs entered the archive of the Society. On rare occasions, they could also find their way to its periodical.[46]

The inclusion of photographs in presentations to the Society did not only help better illustrate what was under discussion, but could be an intrinsic part of the process. It is hard to imagine how Théodore Reinach, in 1890, could have spoken on 'numismatics and history' without either the coins themselves or their pictures being available during the presentation. Thanks to photographs prepared by a certain Mr. Nikolopoulos who, as one reads in the periodical, was also the owner of the camera, Théodore Reinach was able to show his audience the pictures of the coins to which he referred in his talk. At the end of the presentation, the president of the archaeological committee did not miss the opportunity to express his gratitude not only to the speaker but also to Mr. Nikolopoulos for the photographs.[47] For K. Makres, who in 1905 made a presentation on his excavations on the small island of Keras close to Ar-

42 Society's periodical, vol. Δ' (1871), 256 and Society's periodical, vol. ΣΤ' (1873), 238-240. Vlassios Skordeles (1835-1900) was an Ottoman Greek schoolteacher. He was born in Stenemachos (Asenovgrad in present-day Bulgaria) and studied in Athens (Greece) and in Leipzig (Germany). Between 1859 and 1863 he served as headmaster of the Greek school in his native Stenemachos. In 1863 he moved to Philippoupole where he was appointed headmaster of the Central Greek School as well as inspector of all Greek schools of the Felibe province; Pantos 2009, 233-234.

43 Society's periodical, vol. ΣΤ' (1873), 254. Heinrich Schliemann (1822-1890) was a German businessman and archaeologist. He excavated important prehistoric sites in Greece and Troy in the Ottoman Empire; Kuiper and Glyn n.d. For more examples, see Society's periodical, vol. ΚΔ' (1895), 47 (An. Stamoules); Society's periodical, vol. ΚΖ' (1900), 196 (K. Makres); Society's periodical, vol. Λ' (1908), 74 (G. Pachtikos).

44 Society's periodical, vol. ΣΤ' (1873), 254 and Society's periodical, vol. Ζ' (1874), 295 for the Metropolitan of Belgrade and the Metropolitan of Derkoi respectively.

45 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΑ' (1891), 253.

46 For example, Society's periodical, vol. ΚΗ' (1904), 215.

47 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), 82. Théodore Reinach (1860-1928) was a well-known French scholar of ancient Greece. He was professor of numismatics at the Collège de France and member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. In collaboration with Osman Hamdi Bey, he published *Une nécropole royale à Sidon* on the famous finds at Sayda; R.D. 1928, 364.

take (Erdek in present-day Turkey), the use of photographs were crucial for amplifying the veracity of his arguments.[48]

The donation of photographs of monuments to the Society further attests to the importance that photography had in terms of acquiring thorough knowledge of heritage within the Empire. Edwin Freshfield from London was a generous donor of photographs to the Society. In 1877, he offered a collection of forty seven pictures of some of the better-known edifices in the Ottoman capital.[49] A few years later, in 1880, he added to these twenty-four photographs of churches converted into mosques and of other monuments in Istanbul.[50] In 1890, Society member Chr. Papadopoulos from Mega Revma (Arnavutköy) in Istanbul donated twenty-four photographs of ancient monuments from Syria and, in 1908, Avrelios Spathares twelve pictures of the interior and exterior of old houses in the historical neighbourhoods of Fener, Balat and Cibali in the Ottoman capital.[51]

Though rare, photographs of artefacts that were considered heritage could accompany publications in the periodical of the Society. This could be a fortunate coincidence or part of a systematic attempt to illustrate publications. For example, the archaeological committee was able to match the article on Damatrys by Society member X. Sideropoulos with the photographs of certain inscriptions mentioned in it. The illustration of this article though was only made possible thanks to another member of the Society, Mr. Mordtmann, who years earlier had purchased the photographs in question from photographer G. Abdoullah and kindly offered them to accompany the text.[52] The Mavrogordateios Library – which emerged from a large project to catalogue the Greek manuscripts found in the libraries of the East – provided further opportunities to illustrate the ensuing publication.[53] Thus, when in 1883 and as part of his work for the Mavrogordateios Library project Athanassios Papadopoulos Kerameus conducted research in certain community and monastic libraries on the island of Lesbos

48 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΘ' (1907), 84.

49 Society's periodical, vol. ΙΒ' (1879), 112. Edwin Freshfield (1832-1918) was a British solicitor and antiquarian. He was member of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople and trustee of the British School at Athens; 'Edwin Freshfield'. n.d.; 'Managing Committee' 1898/1899; Society's periodical, vol. ΙΖ' (1886), κβ'.

50 Society's periodical, vol. ΙΒ' (1879), 189.

51 For Papadopoulos' membership and donation, see Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), κε' and 16 respectively. For Spathares' membership and donation, see Society's periodical, vol. ΛΑ' (1909), θ', 42 and 77 respectively. Avrelios Spathares was author of *To Oikoumenikon Patriarcheion: aionovios panorthodoxos thesmos*, which appeared in English under the title *The ecumenical Patriarchate: a many century old institution*.

52 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), 111. Xenophon Sideropoulos (1851-1929), also known by the surname Siderides, was a Greek entrepreneur and Byzantinist from Istanbul. Besides the periodical of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, he published in various other media. He was member of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople and corresponding member of the Academy of Athens; 'Siderides, Xenophon' 1931, 462; Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), κγ'.

53 Society's periodical, vol. ΙΖ' (1886), 185-189.

and in Smyrna, he copied or produced descriptions for over 300 manuscripts, the most important of which were also photographed.[54]

Notably, this early instance of using the photographic lens to scan scholarly documents was not just an isolated case. The Society allowed scholars conducting research in its manuscript collection to take photographs in support of their work. This was, for example, the case with Louis Petit, a reference to whose request for permission to take more pictures of a manuscript that belonged to the Society survives in the periodical of the Society from 1907.[55]

Besides the production and dissemination of knowledge, photography also supported the efforts of the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople to preserve heritage at risk. When in 1891, the archaeological committee realised that important Byzantine edifices (namely, the remains of the church of the Forty Martyrs, and the cistern named after it) were being demolished in the course of construction work in the Gedik Paşa district of the capital, it acquired funding from the Society and purchased four photographs of the ruins in question. The justification was that the edifices would be salvaged by means of their photographs.[56] Whilst that was an *ad hoc* initiative, the archaeological committee of the Society did attempt to initiate larger-scale projects for salvaging historical monuments at risk through their photographic documentation. In 1873, the committee discussed the idea of collaborating with the well-known photographer Vassilis Kargopoulos 'to photograph those mosques that used to be Byzantine constructions'.[57] Almost ten years later, in 1882, the Society considered again the possibility of creating an album with sketches, drawings and photographs of the Classical and Byzantine monuments of Constantinople that were at risk due to '[t]he avarice of businessmen and of travellers – the needs of the 19th century – and even rain and wind, which add up to the catastrophes brought about by time […]'.[58]

54 Society's periodical, vol. ΙΗ' (1888), 44. Athanassios Papadopoulos Kerameus (1856-1912) was an Ottoman Greek self-taught medievalist. Besides his work for the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, he served as curator of the library and museum of the Evangelical School at Smyrna and organised the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem. He published mainly on Byzantine topics; 'Papadopoulos Kerameus, Athanassios' 1930, 420.

55 Society's periodical, vol. ΛΛ' (1909), 29. Louis Petit (1868-1927) was a French clergyman who was appointed director of the Kadıköy school in Istanbul in 1895 and Catholic archbishop of Athens in 1912. While in Istanbul, he set up the *Echo d'Orient*, a periodical specialising in byzantine studies; 'Peti, Loudovikos' 1930, 643.

56 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), 109.

57 '[...] ina photographese osa tsamia tes poleos esan allote oikodomemata vyzantina […].' In Society's periodical, vol. Ζ' (1874), 300. Kargopoulos (1826-1886) opened his studio in the Pera district of Istanbul in 1850. He later expanded his business in Edirne as well as in Istanbul. In 1879, Kargopoulos was appointed court photographer; Özendes 2013, 105-108.

58 'E aplestia ton epicheirimation kai ton periegeton – ai anagkai tou XIX aionos – kai afti akome e vrochi kai o anemos hypovoethousai tas tou chronou katastrophas […].' The quote and other pieces of information in Society's periodical, vol. ΙΣΤ' (1885), 372.

As seen, the archaeological work of the Society much benefitted from photographs sent by its members, while the archaeological committee also proactively acquired photographs of heritage at risk. In these cases, photographs were or would be produced by third parties, since the Society did not have a camera to lend to its members. The fact that in 1889 the archaeological committee requested funding to purchase a small camera is a strong indication of the importance that photography had acquired in its study of archaeological heritage. Significantly, the committee argued that the camera would allow it 'to easily copy many inaccessible monuments and inscriptions' making thus manifest that a camera was expected to provide it with an enhanced vision.[59] It remains unknown whether funding was actually provided but the subsequent volumes of the periodical suggest that this request did not materialise.

As in the case of the Ottoman administration, photography was not the only visual reproduction technique that the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople employed in its engagement with antiquities. References to sketches and drawings, estampage on paper, moulds of coins and mapping abound in the periodical of the Society. The first known instances of sketching are from 1865. In that year, a small number of sketches of monuments and of an Armenian icon were deposited in the archive of the Society.[60] In the early 1870s, when public works near Hagia Sophia in Istanbul revealed a number of antiquities, the archaeological committee tasked architect and Society member K. Paregores to produce drawings of the finds.[61] Similarly, in 1892, a certain Orphanoudakes sent a drawing of a sarcophagus that had been discovered in Artake to the Society.[62]

References to estampage, too, figure regularly in the periodical of the Society. For example, in 1886, Athanassios Papadopoulos Kerameus informed the Society that, during his field visit to Thrace, he had made copies, including estampage copies, of ancient monuments.[63] In the early 1890s, Frank Calvert sent two estampage copies on paper from the Dardanelles, while A. Long, Professor at Robert's College in Istanbul, sent the estampage on paper of an inscription at the Imperial Museum.[64] As far as inscriptions are concerned, the use of estampage copies instead of simple hand-written

59 'pros efkolon antigraphen pollon aprositon mnemeion kai epigraphon'; the quote and other pieces of information in Society's periodical, vol. ΚΑ' (1891), 253.

60 Society's periodical, vol. Γ", issues ΙΓ"-ΙΕ' (1868), 84.

61 Society's periodical, vol. Ζ' (1874), 298. For Paregores' membership, see Society's periodical, vol. Ζ' (1874), ια'.

62 Society's periodical, vol. ΚΔ' (1895), 58 and 80.

63 Society's periodical, vol. ΙΖ' – Parartema tes Archaiologikes Epitropes [Annex of the Archaeological Committee] (1886), 25.

64 For Calvert and Long, see Society's periodical, vol. Κ'-ΚΒ' – Parartema tes Archaiologikes Epitropes [Annex of the Archaeological Committee] (1892), 13 and 16 respectively. Frank Calvert (1828-1908) was a British consular agent and amateur archaeologist based in the Troad region in the Dardanelles. He excavated in Hisarlık/Troy before Schliemann and collected a considerable number of antiquities from the Eastern Mediterranean in general and the Troad in particular; 'Frank Calvert' n.d.

transcriptions were particularly important for the Society. By providing for more accurate readings, they gained in objectivity compared to the more subjective and thus less reliable hand-written ones.[65] The Society even contemplated paying for estampage copies of inscriptions. In 1886, for example, the archaeological committee suggested compensating a certain A. Vachariades with as many as three Ottoman lira in return for the twenty estampage copies of inscriptions that he had sent from Herakleia (possibly Ereğli in present-day Turkey).[66] Such was the importance that the Society ascribed to estampage copies of inscriptions that they became a prerequisite for the publication of an inscription in the periodical. Thus, in 1886, various inscriptions from Rodosto (Tekirdağ in present-day Turkey), though inscribed on the codex of inscriptions that the Society maintained, remained unpublished due to the lack of their estampage copies.[67]

Although far less common than estampage, moulding coins was another visual reproduction technique that may be found in the periodical of the Society. Arguably the most impressive example is that of 150 moulds of ancient coins that a certain K. Georgiades from the Balkan town of Serres (in present-day Greece) sent to the Society in 1885 'for them to be studied by the archaeological committee of the Society before sharing its opinion with him'.[68]

The Society had big ambitions to produce maps. Even though considerable resources were dedicated to this endeavour, and significant results achieved, actual mapping activity remained more modest than the Society's aspirations. In the early 1870s, the archaeological committee spent time developing a comparative map of the ancient/Byzantine city and contemporary Istanbul.[69] Following years of hard work, in the 1880s, the Society was able to publish a topographical map of the Byzantine land walls that survived in the Ottoman capital. The map was bilingual, in French and Greek, and also included a number of drawings.[70] In 1888, the archaeological committee tasked its member and architect Pelopidas Kouppas with the production of an archaeological topographical map of Constantinople

65 For similar reasons, in his manual *Conseil aux voyageurs archéologiques en Grece et dans l'Orient hellenique* (1886), Salomon Reinach expresses himself in favour of mechanically produced copies of inscriptions; Shaw 2003, 138-139.

66 Society's periodical, vol. K' (1891), 65.

67 Society's periodical, vol. IZ' –Parartema tes Archaiologikes Epitropes [Annex of the Archaeological Committee] (1886), 76.

68 '[…] opos meletethosin hypo tes archaiologikes epitropes tou syllogou kai pemfthe auto e gnome aftes.' The quote and other pieces of information in Society's periodical, vol. K' (1891), 35.

69 Society's periodical, vol. Z' (1874), 338.

70 Society's periodical, vol. IΔ' – Parartema tes Archaiologikes Epitropes [Annex of the Archaeological Committee] (1881), Plan Archéologique des Murailles de Constantinople du Côté de la Terre. Also, Society's periodical, vol. H' (1874), 304-305 and 339; Society's periodical, vol. IE' (1881), 33, 34, 45, 46, 47-48, 49, 77-79 and 96; Society's periodical, vol. IΣT' (1885), 332, 337, 364-365, 383 and 385-386; and Society's periodical, vol. IZ' (1886), 150, 165, 194 and 195.

> aimed at defining to the extent possible the location of those ancient monuments that survive standing in the city or their ruins, providing their names to the extent possible, defining the location of eclipsed monuments, on the basis of reliable testimonies by authors and travellers and older topographical sketches.[71]

This topographical map was due to consist of many folios at a scale of one millimetre per meter. This map, however, does not seem to have materialised – possibly due to Kouppas' sudden death two years later, in 1890.[72]

5. Conclusion

From its beginning, photography went hand-in-hand with antiquities. Not only did Europeans engage themselves in archaeological photography in the lands of the Middle East, but both the Ottoman state and a significant learned Society in Istanbul took up archaeological photography early on. Archival documentation reveals that the Ottoman bureaucracy engaged with photography as early as the 1870s, but even earlier engagement may be revealed by further research. For the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, the use of archaeological photography dates back almost to the Society's creation in the early 1860s.

So, the Ottomans caught up fast with the new invention. But Arago's argument that photography offers the highest degree of fidelity to an original seems to have carried little, if any, significance to Ottoman bureaucrats and scholars. Of available visual representation techniques, photography monopolised neither the Ottoman administration nor the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople. It was, instead, part of a toolkit that also contained drawing, sketching, moulding, estampage and mapping. Practical reasons may have accounted for this. For example, making estampage copies of inscriptions on paper could provide a similar degree of accuracy at a much lower cost, and without requiring so much technical knowledge.[73] One should also consider the question of availability. Who would each time be more readily employed in the

71 '[…] skopountos ton oson enesti akrive orismon tes topothesias ton mechri toude sozomenon archaion tes poleos mnemeion e ereipion, ten kata to enon pisten onomatologian afton, ton prosdiorismon tes topothesias ton katastraphenton mnemeion, vasizomenos epi diaphoron peistikon martyrion ton syggrapheon e ton periegeton e epi archaioteron topographikon diagrammaton'; Society's periodical, vol. ΚΑ' (1891), 195 and especially 218-219. The quotation from the latter pages.

72 Pelopidas Kouppas (c. 1842-1891) was an Ottoman Greek architect and amateur archaeologist. He studied architecture in Paris and was member of both the archaeological and architecture committees of the Society. Kouppas was the first to identify the Kahriye mosque in Istanbul with the byzantine Chora monastery; Theodoridou 2018, 469-494. On Kouppas' death, also see Society's periodical, vol. ΚΒ' (1891), 109.

73 Salomon Reinach similarly argues that 'moulage was both more effective under various lighting conditions and less cumbersome than photography […]'; quoted in Shaw 2003, 139.

vast domains of the Empire? Someone who possessed a camera and was able to take and develop photographs? Or someone who could draw?

If the Ottomans cared less about the question of fidelity, the importance of photography and the other visual reproduction techniques with regards to promoting a modernisation agenda linked to the issues of centralisation and progress did not evade their attention. The Ottoman administration on antiquities used these media to embed a centralised modern state. Indeed, the 19th and early 20th centuries saw the peak of Ottoman modernisation efforts that had first seen the light of day in the late 18th century with military reforms. Starting with the Tanzimat reforms in 1839, the Ottoman administration underwent a series of modernisation reforms that aimed primarily at promoting a stronger centralised state. The central state wanted to know more and have more of a saying regarding its citizens and its possessions, including its archaeological heritage.[74] The analysis above has shown that photography and other visual representation techniques supported the state in increasing its knowledge about antiquities, in documenting artefacts and in consolidating its position *vis-à-vis* contenders for the ownership of finds. Also, photography and other visual representation techniques facilitated the preservation of heritage at risk, if only on paper, and enhanced the centralisation of decision-making with regards to finds in the provinces.

During these years, wider Ottoman society experienced a drive for modernisation that ran parallel to state efforts. Modern schools, the idea of the nation, the spread of new media (such as the newspaper and theatre) and an increase in the books printed and read all point to a rapidly changing society. Now people were able to organise themselves in new forms of joint activities, such as the learned societies, and collectively pursue progress – this was a novel concept.[75] One of these societies was the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople. For this Society, photography and the other reproduction techniques supported its civilising mission, especially with regards to its focus on the acquisition, organisation and sharing of knowledge. These visual technologies were the means by which the Society produced and disseminated knowledge on ancient and medieval finds and monuments, while contributing to its efforts to preserve monuments at risk through accurate documentation.

Crucially, in all these uses, photography and the other media were employed in an Ottoman context that was largely independent of the 'Western gaze'. It appears that most of the photographs and the other visual representations discussed above depicted little more than ancient artefacts. The social context though within which these were commissioned and used shows that taking a picture, making an estampage or drawing a map served needs that Ottomans had identified in reference to themselves.

74 Findley 2008, 11-37; Fortna 2008, 38-61; Hanioğlu 2008, 62-111.

75 Findley 2008, 11-37, esp. 21-23, 27-30 and 36-37; Fortna 2008, 38-61, esp. 50-54; Hanioğlu 2008, 62-111, esp. 98-108.

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