Ruined Performativity, (Post-)Imperial Illusions:

Rum Liturgies at the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray Church in Istanbul

Christina Banalopoulou

"I am certain that we did not perform the liturgy at the ruins of a temple but inside a finished church. Within an already ready temple and that our faith has even more value when we have rationality and dream" (Βικέτος 2023).[1] With these words, archimandrite Grigorios reflected on the liturgy that he and other clergy had just performed at the ruins of the Panagia Paramythias, also known as Vlach Saray, a Greek Orthodox church in Fener [Φανάρι in Greek], Istanbul, on January 21, 2023. Archimandrite Grigorios's invitation to experience the sky as a dome represents liturgical creativity, transforming material absence into spiritual presence. This innovative adaptation allows the community to maintain sacred practices through physical destruction. By invoking collective dreaming, the archimandrite invited participants to experience the fragmented ruins as a complete temple. The undoing of the church's ruination depended upon the suspension of disbelief of everyone involved in the mystery.

Contextualized within the experiences of the Rum community in Turkey, the invocation of illusory wholeness through fragmented ruins gains significant meanings. The term Rum [Rum in Turkish/Ρωμηός in Greek/Rūm in Romanized Arabic] referred to the Roman subjects of the Byzantine Empire. In the Ottoman Empire, among the largest non-Muslim religious communities were the Rum, Jewish, and Armenian millets—religious communities within the Ottoman Empire, organized internally by their own religious structures while remaining under Ottoman governance. The transition from

[1] All translations are by the author unless otherwise stated.

empire to nation-state transformed the circumstances of these communities through multiple intersecting pressures. The Armenian community was devastated by the 1915 genocide, the Orthodox Anatolian populations faced systematic violence as part of the Pontic genocide officially memorialized in 1919, and the Jewish community faced parallel forms of targeting, including the 1942 *Varlık Vergisi* [Wealth Tax], which imposed disproportionate tax burdens on non-Muslim minorities, resulting in economic and demographic consequences for these communities. These pressures operated alongside internal contradictions within the millet system, which coincided with the emergence of more separatist forms of ethnoreligious and linguistic belonging. European powers strategically supported minority nationalist movements to advance their geopolitical interests in Ottoman territories. The overlapping internal imperial contradictions and external interventions created the conditions within which the Rum community found itself increasingly caught between competing imperial, national, and transnational frameworks.

When Turkey became a nation-state in 1923, the Rum community inherited complex legacies of multiple, often contradictory affiliations, including religious, ethnic, imperial, national, and civic belonging. It was transformed into a nationalized minority that was both part of the newly formed Turkish nation-state and associated with Greece. As the competing tensions between Greek and Turkish nationalisms intensified throughout the twentieth century, the Rum minority was strategically utilized by both states, with Greece leveraging support from Western European powers and later the United States, to enhance their negotiating power in the eastern Mediterranean region. The negative employment of the Treaty of Lausanne's reciprocity principle, which

rendered the lives of the Rum Orthodox populations in Istanbul and the Muslim populations in Thrace who were exempted from the 1923 Greco-Turkish compulsory population exchange interdependent, is an indicative example of this ongoing instrumentalization (Akgönül 2008). The liturgies that the community organizes at the ruins of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church offer an exemplary site for investigating the community's various negotiations and contestations of its imperial pasts within national frames. They serve as manifestations of the community's active negotiations of its contradictory affiliations with imperial and national legacies through ritual engagement with architectural fragments. Far from solely functioning as debris of the past, the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray's ruins contribute to the constitution of Rum minoritarian presence and futurity. As a practice that experiments with the suspension of the attendees' disbelief, performance plays a crucial role in these invocations.

The congregants' suspension of disbelief regarding the wholeness of the building was also embedded in the liturgy's dramaturgy: plastic portable white chairs replaced the church's destroyed wooden pews; a material relic on the wall functioned as a hanger for the thurible; while there was no established *Ιερό* [sanctuary], there was an invisible and yet very present impermeable fourth wall between the ones who performed and the ones who attended the liturgy; and the sky performed the role of the basilica in its collapsed absence. After the liturgy, archimandrite Grigorios framed the sky as the church's dome: "What is prettier than, instead of a dome, we have the sky as a dome" (Βικέτος 2023). The community's interaction with fragmented ruins *as if* they were whole entails agency regarding the Rum minority's complex negotiations of community coherence and

contradictory frameworks of belonging. The invitation for congregants to experience the sky as the missing basilica reflects how the community navigates fragmented space not as absence but as extended presence, aligning with philosophical traditions that theorize place as "interval and extension" rather than merely a defined limit (Papachristou 2024). This spatial framework enables the community to generate meaning through and across architectural gaps rather than despite them.

Drawing upon the performative function of ruins—that is, their ability to perform in contemporary contexts (Stoler 2013)—while evoking possibilities of wholeness through fragmentation that entail complex political stakes (Hamilakis 2007, 2016), I introduce the concept of ruined performativity. Ruined performativity refers to the specific performative processes and suspensions of disbelief through which minoritarian communities navigate fragmented temporal landscapes by selectively mobilizing imagined imperial and national pasts to construct viable presents and futures at sites of material and historical ruination. It addresses how communities use performance to selectively reenact imperial, national, secular, and civic continuities and discontinuities at sites of historical and material fragmentation.

In the case of the Rum minority, the selective reconstructions of the past involve complex negotiations between Byzantine continuities, Ottoman legacies, and the often competing Greek and Turkish nationalist projects. Rather than simply establishing boundaries between imperial and national frameworks, ruined performativity sheds light on the performative mobilization of ruins from multiple historical periods. It addresses performance's contribution to transforming the debris of intersecting political formations—imperial, national, civic, and religious—into resources for resilience, while,

at times, simultaneously reproducing the exclusionary logics that necessitate such creative reconstruction. Ruins simultaneously invite projections of coherence while fostering belonging through diversity. Their material fragmentation resists singular narratives, creating space for multiple identifications to coexist without resolution.

The Rum liturgies at Panagia Paramythias invoke Byzantine heritage, while negotiating Ottoman imperial legacies, funded through transnational networks, yet operating within often competing national frames. The concept of ruined performativity addresses three interconnected dynamics: 1) the performative transformation of ruins into sites of minoritarian coherence, 2) the selective reconstruction of temporalities within seemingly exclusive yet interdependent political frames, and 3) the simultaneous inclusion and exclusion through these survival strategies. Ruined performativity, thus, reveals how communities mobilize ruins through performance as part of minoritarian resilience and how these practices both enable and constrain collective futures.

In the twenty-first century, the community is faced with a paradox. On the one hand, many of its churches, schools, and cultural centers, such as the Panagia of Balino church and the Galata Rum School, are restored. On the other hand, the proliferation of restored Rum buildings is accompanied by the community's demographic decline. While in the early twentieth century, the Rum population numbered approximately 160,000, it has declined to roughly 2-4,000 (Αναστασιάδου and Ντυμόν 2010, 26-27). The relationship between Rum demographics and church establishment extends back centuries. As Meropi Anastassiadou-Dumont documents (2005), the Rum community historically established churches to create new parishes, thereby securing not only a religious but also a political and institutional presence in Istanbul's urban space.

Contemporary restoration efforts operate through similar logics in reverse: maintaining institutional presence amid demographic decline rather than during demographic growth. The ability to sustain complex institutional and international networks and cultural practices in spite of intense demographic decline demonstrates the organizational resilience of the community. As Anastassiadou-Dumont's work demonstrates (2005), church construction was always embedded in complex negotiations with imperial and state power—from Ottoman permit requirements to legal practices—situating Panagia Paramythias within the community's ongoing minoritarian politics.

Ruined performativity unpacks the politics of the disproportionate relation between the recollection of ruins and people. For Ann Laura Stoler, ruins function less as "memorialized monumental 'leftovers' or relics" and more as "what people are left with," asking "how do imperial formations persist in their material debris, in ruined landscapes and through the social ruination of people's lives?" (2013, 9-10). These politics of ruination—the concentrated framing of minoritarian resilience around the Rum minority's fragmented pasts—unfold within broader political landscapes that encompass the intersections between liberal identity politics and state-sponsored neo-Ottomanism, i.e., the politics of reimagining and reenacting imperial pasts within national frames and across regions (Rüma 2010; Türkeş 2016; Yavuz 2020; Raudvere and Onur 2023). These processes operate through imaginative and dream-based practices that situate contemporary Turkey within imperial continuities (Karakaya 2020). Nostalgias for imperial glory and the Ottoman Empire's ethnoreligious diversity can intersect with contemporary political projects that selectively mobilize imperial legacies.

While official discourse celebrates Ottoman diversity, evident in state support of some Rum restoration projects, this multiculturalism operates within limits. As scholarship demonstrates, neo-Ottoman investment in multicultural and minority sites operates through international corporate and diplomatic networks (Luke 2018), serves both external and internal political objectives (Aykaç 2021), and legitimizes gentrification processes (Fişek 2018). The selective mobilization of Ottoman heritages in both Rum and Turkish histories reflect broader political dynamics. As Rüstem Ertuğ Altınay's work demonstrates, "as the inception of the republic was framed as a sudden breach with the empire by the proponents and critics of this shift alike, the Ottoman Empire emerged as a nostalgic object of desire […] for generations of conservative Muslim Turks" (2015, 99). Far from solely empowering the minorities who become subjects of romanticized multiculturalism, systemic inequities often limit their agency. As Örs notes, "cosmopolitanist nostalgia is apersonal because, in spite of the popularity of the nostalgic discourses—or perhaps because of them—there is little effort made to understand the subjectivities involved in the loss of pluralism" (2018a, 83). This disparity between multiculturalism as a discourse of nostalgia and lived minoritarian experience shows how narratives regarding reviving imperial ethno-religious diversity can serve the avoidance of answerability. As Nurdan Türker writes, depicting the past in a "romanticized and aestheticized way entails simultaneously the capacity to disclaim responsibility" (2018, 41). The nostalgic orientation toward romanticized imperial diversity emerged during my fieldwork. Rum restoration efforts thus navigate a paradox: heritage designation enables access to funding and preservation resources yet often also transforms living

communities into cultural artifacts. These dynamics reflect broader tensions in how imperial pasts are mobilized within national frames.

Scholarship increasingly addresses how empires are revisited as alternatives to nation-state failures (Mikhail and Philliou 2012), while also demonstrating the limitations of this turn: selective deployments of decolonial frameworks can reproduce power asymmetries in non-western contexts (Sehlikoglu 2024) and revisionist Ottoman scholarship tends to overlook the Empire's hierarchical sectarian structures (Masters 2001, 1). In the case of Turkey, Ottoman legacies span the political spectrum, encompassing both liberal articulations of ethno-religious diversity (Philliou 2011) and conservative nationalist deployment of ethnic polyphonies (Altınay 2015). The Panagia Paramythias liturgies reveal how minoritarian communities navigate these competing mobilizations, simultaneously resisting and internalizing mechanisms of imperial and (post-)imperial governance.

As the boundaries between the ethnic-cleansing logics of nationalism and imperial revivalism blur in Turkey and beyond, the performative mobilization of imperial ruins in nationalized contexts calls for critical attention. Spanning the Ottoman Empire to modern Turkey, the ruins of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church shed light on how minoritarian imaginaries both intersect with and challenge imperial and nationalist modes of belonging. Against the backdrop of the rise of authoritarianism and the global far-right, examining the performativity of ruins can unpack the illusory aspects of both the reproduction and questioning of revivalist imperialism and nationalism. While this study focuses on Rum experiences, the dynamics of ruined performativity offer insights into

how non-Muslim minorities across Turkey deploy heritage sites to negotiate precarious positioning between state-sponsored multiculturalism and structural marginalization.

After providing a history of the diverse genealogies of the Rum minority in Turkey, I turn to the Panagia Paramythia/Vlach Saray church and the community's restoration efforts. I examine how performance informs Rum resilience through ruined performativity. The ruined dimension refers not only to the material state of heritage sites but also to the Rum minority's fragmented temporal landscape, where imperial pasts, nationalized presents, and uncertain futures are actively reconstructed and reenacted as a whole through performance and imaginative engagement. Ruined performativity captures how communities utilize performance to work with and through historical and material fragmentation to claim presence and futurity, even when such reconstructions reproduce the exclusionary logics that fragment them.

My analysis employs a mixed-methods approach combining ethnographic observation with discourse analysis. My primary evidence comes from participant observation at the January 21, 2023 liturgy at the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray ruins, where I attended as a congregant. As a second-generation Rum diaspora member whose immediate family left Turkey in the 1970s, I bring both insider knowledge and critical distance to this analysis. I documented the event through detailed field notes taken immediately following the service, capturing liturgical practices, spatial arrangements, and participant interactions. This ethnographic data is supplemented by a systematic analysis of community discourse, including restoration materials from the church's official website, public statements by church and community leadership published in media outlets in Greek and English, and restoration promotional materials. I analyzed

sources that directly addressed the restoration project and community identity, positioning the church's significance within broader historical narratives.

Rumness (Dis-)Entangled

The term "Rum" historically referred to the Roman subjects of the Byzantine Empire, who, despite their diverse histories, were classified as Greek-speaking Greek Orthodox populations in the Ottoman Empire (Kaldellis 2019). As scholarship demonstrates, Roman identity (Stouraitis 2014, 17) and Romanness (Kafadar 2017, 17) encapsulate cultural ways of living and belonging that, while interconnected to geographic specificity, exceed the Roman Empire's spatial and temporal borders. Despite its resilience throughout the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, Romanness in Byzantium remains undertheorized. Anthony Kaldellis defines discourse's neglect of the Roman aspects of Byzantium as "Roman denialism," a Western historiographical bias that maps fabricated continuity between Hellenism and Byzantinism, ignoring the diverse ways in which Roman subjects engaged with Hellenic heritages (2019, 3).

Recent scholarship has made important advances in questioning Western historiography's association of the Byzantine Romans with essentialist notions of blood, ethnicity, and religion (Stouraitis 2017; Kaldellis 2019) and Hellenism and Greekness (Kaldellis 2007; Kafadar 2017). While they vary in terms of the specifics that shape identity politics, these significant contributions lay the grounds for understanding Rum belonging as cultural processes that are practiced rather than given. Revealing a complex picture of how Roman identity functioned in practice, Florin Curta's (2016) work shows how Roman origin claims operated more as a strategic cultural resource than a consistent ethnic framework. Curta's examination of Vlach origin narratives illustrates this

contingency: “During the last quarter of the twelfth century, some learned members of the Byzantine elite began to invoke the Roman origin of the Vlachs, most likely because of the cultural fads of that time, especially the fascination with the history of Republican and early imperial Rome” (2016, 456). Yet this deployment was not universal—“However, neither Choniates nor the chroniclers of the Fourth Crusade made any reference to the Roman origin of the Vlachs” (Curta 2016, 456). This selective invocation reveals how Roman identity claims arose from multiple overlapping factors—elite intellectual fashions, tactical strategies, cultural trends—that acquired constitutive power for community formation despite their contingent and sometimes arbitrary aspects. Addressing how Roman identity operated as a contested and contextual resource complicates both Western historiographical bias and continuity narratives.

Although scholarship has been crucial in establishing a more diverse Rum history, research that focuses on the Istanbul Rum community specifically leaves room for approaches that include a broader spectrum of Rumness. Existing literature examines the community’s negotiation of Turkey’s nationalization project (Philliou 2011; Philliou 2022), elite endorsement of Greek nationalism (Kamouzis 2021), intersections between imperial and (post-)imperial contexts (Iğsız 2018), Rum identity formation through nostalgias of an imagined past (Örs 2018a), responses to demographic losses during the twentieth century’s migratory expulsions (Αναστασιάδου and Ντυμόν 2010), and citizenship politics amid Balkan national revolutions (Gondicas and Issawi 1999).

Despite these important advances, the ways in which the Rum community strategically entangles and disentangles itself from Hellenism and embraces or denies its Roman and Ottoman pasts remain relatively unexplored. According to Örs, “The Rum

Polites thus fill in the vacuum between the two stereotypes of Hellenism and Romiosini while casting an identity for themselves that both incorporates and complicates the two by crossing over the duality with the multiplicity of their identity" (2018b, 116). This polyphonic identity is sustained through what Örs describes as a "nostalgic reconstruction of a cosmopolitan cultural heritage, a multicultural social system as exemplified in the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, which is opposed to a singularistic nationalistic idealization of the past" (116). Analyzing Rumness and Rum belonging as expressed at the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church can unpack the complex tensions and interconnections between Hellenism, Romanism, Byzantinism, and Ottomanism, as well as their selective revival in (post-)imperial national contexts. As Kaldellis observes, debates over Hellenism remain "superimposed onto a renewed polarization between East and West" (2007, x). Contemporary restoration discourse complicates these dynamics in how Rumness becomes entangled or disentangled with Hellenism.

In discussing the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray restoration, the President of the Ephorate Committee, Lakis Vigas shared the following:

> Why spend so much money since the prospects of Hellenism in Turkey are limited? […] But we here, the descendants of the Byzantine Rumi and the continuers of the Greek Orthodox heritage, experienced and continue to experience the ups and downs of history and political rivalries. But we never thought of discarding the legacy of our ancestors and allowing ourselves to be assimilated by the wider society (Soltaridis, "Conversation").

The invocation of both "Byzantine Rumi" and "Greek Orthodox heritage" reflects the complex entanglements between multiple historical frameworks within restoration efforts.

Contemporary restoration discourse often positions Rum identity as preserved despite rather than through its competing yet interconnected national and imperial

contexts. Understanding how these multiple frameworks intersect requires attention to the complex ways Roman and Ottoman legacies continue to shape contemporary Rum life. As Kaldellis demonstrates, "the [Byzantine] Empire's official Hellenization in national discourse was only possible because Western historiography had already stripped it of its Romanness" (2019, 17). The patterns Kaldellis identifies in western historiographical treatment of Byzantium illuminate similar dynamics in discourse on Rum histories, where emphasis on Greek-Orthodox heritage may inadvertently reproduce "denialisms" that have affected scholarly understandings of the Byzantine Empire. Byzantium's Hellenization has often served as a strategy for its inclusion in Western historiographical frameworks that have otherwise overlooked it as a "fundamentally non-western oriental 'other'" (Kaldellis 2007, 3). This engagement with Roman and Ottoman legacies, alternating between selective invocation and erasure, has contributed to the definition of Rum identity through complex processes of belonging and othering.

The complexities of imperial interruptions and continuities extend beyond Western historiographical frameworks to reflect deeper structural tensions within imperial identity categories themselves. Dimitris Krallis's (2019) analysis reveals how Roman and Byzantine identities operated across multiple competing registers—state citizenship, religion, and ethnolinguistic belonging—requiring constant negotiation. Krallis demonstrates how Byzantine historian and judge Attaleiatis affirmed Roman political identity while insisting that patriarchal authority "was distinct from the state and limited to the realm of a clearly circumscribed philanthropic Church" (2019, 230). These competing registers operated as potentially contradicting claims.

The entanglement between Rum identity and Hellenism has facilitated their deployment as both objects and instruments of othering. In Kafadar's terms, "the words Rum & Rumi […] together with other indicators of belonging have constituted one of the multifunctional and meaningful ways of saying 'me' or 'they'" (2017, 38). Rather than emerging as a smooth synthesis, the combination of what Constantinos Tsoukalas (2010) defines as Greco-Christianity is contradictory in itself, as Hellenism and Byzantinism share tensions regarding their approach to religion. Within these Greco-Christian frames, where ancient Greek religious practice conflicts with Christian Orthodoxy, "for over a thousand years the fate of the Greek tradition was in the hands of those who saw themselves as its opponents in a fundamental sense, albeit in a sense that was always negotiable" (Kaldellis 2007, 30). In addition to being self-referential, Byzantium's mono-civilizational association with Hellenism also reproduces discriminatory othering that historically has served a wide range of divisions, including class divisions both with the Roman (Kaldellis 2007, 33) and Ottoman Empires (Kafadar 2017, 89).

However, the contested relations between Rumness and Hellenism are not only a product of Western historiography. At times, the dissociation of Rumness from Hellenism has served competing interests since "some Arab intellectuals were keen to deny precisely that the Byzantines were Greeks because they were rivals for the ownership of that tradition" (Kaldellis 2019, 15). Contrary to popular historiographical accounts that consider Hellenism as an integral part of Rumness, it was not until the Ottoman Empire that Rums were grouped together as an ethnoreligious Christian Orthodox millet. As Kaldellis argues, "It was only after centuries of Ottoman rule that a segment of the Greek-speaking portion of the millet of Rum began to experiment with notions of

Hellenic nationality" (2007, 44). For Kaldellis, the Rum millet's explorations with Hellenism in the Ottoman Empire laid the grounds for "the origin of the modern Greek misunderstanding of Byzantium, which projects modern national definitions onto the non-national religious community of the millet of Rum and, from there, back onto the politically defined community of the medieval Romans" (44). Against the backdrop of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, the Rum community was further nationalized. In an article published on the church's official website as part of its restoration initiatives, Rum Simeon Soltaridis writes:

> From the time when Orthodoxy, as well as the Greek language, gave identity to the subjects of the Ottoman Empire, everyone was considered a community, from the Transdanubian regions, the northern border of the empire, to the African shores in the Mediterranean, princes from the region of Moldavia resided in mansions in the area of Phanar, on the shores of the Keratitis gulf (Sol, "Panagia Paramythia").

The invocation of geographic breadth alongside Orthodoxy and Greek language as connective tissue reflects the complexities of Rum identity formation within the Ottoman Empire. The fragmented materiality of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray ruins preserves rather than resolves the simultaneously inclusive and selective complexities of Rum belonging.

As part of its gradual Greekification, Greek-speaking and non-Greek-speaking members of the Rum community were increasingly dissociated. In the Ottoman Empire, the term "Rum" encompassed diverse populations with varied linguistic practices including Bulgarian, Serbian, Romanian, Albanian, and Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians, among others. According to Bruce Masters, "the Orthodox Christian Arabs (or simply the Rum in both contemporary Arabic and Ottoman Turkish texts), who comprised the largest single Christian community in the Arab provinces, were subsumed

in the eighteenth century in a millet dominated by Greeks, who occasionally exercised linguistic imperialism over their non-Hellenic coreligionists" (2001, 12). This linguistic hierarchy, however, operated differently across regions. As Masters's work shows, some Balkan Vlach and Slav communities adopted Greek, while Syrian Orthodox Christians maintained stronger resistance to assimilation (12). These linguistic negotiations within the Rum millet reveal how the category itself encompassed multiple forms of belonging.

Against the backdrop of the nationalization projects of the ethnic and ethnoreligious minorities in the SWANA region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the establishment of Turkey as a nation-state in 1923, the Rum community became further fragmented. The liturgy at the Panagia Paramythias demonstrates how the contemporary Rum community in Istanbul navigates its complex imperial legacies. Its Greek-speaking members remain associated with the Greek nation-state—a connection that exposes the minority to precarity since its interests do not always align with those of Greece, which is often in geopolitical antagonism with Turkey. Meanwhile, Arabic-speaking Rums who resided in the Antioch-Alexandretta region were under the French Mandate for Syria, navigating multiple competing national configurations. These geopolitical antagonisms exemplify "conflicts between states [that] are often exacerbated by those states being aligned with a religious majority which is at odds with an opposing state-religion alliance" (Goldstein 2022, 3). The Rum minority is rendered precarious by these overlapping tensions.

The community's educational institutions reflect the complex dynamics between fragmentation and continuity across different regions. Istanbul's Rum schools have been admitting Antakya Rums since the 1980s. While Antakya Rum students speak Arabic and

Turkish, the bilingual schools' curriculum is split between Greek and Turkish, meaning students take classes partially in a language they do not speak. As Ayşe Ozil (2014) demonstrates, the legislation governing Rum schools dates back to the Ottoman Empire and has not been adjusted to the community's demographic changes. These institutional structures intersect with power hierarchies shaped by class, regional, and affiliation differences, among others, within the community (Kaymak and Beylunioğlu 2018).

While scholarship has significantly unpacked the complexities of Antakya Rum histories and contemporary presence (Theodorelis-Rigas 2015; Dağtaş 2020), the broader power dynamics between the community's Arabic-speaking and Greek-speaking populations still remain relatively under-researched. The contemporary mobilization of the Panagia Paramythias ruins, thus, offers a vital platform for examining how inherited frameworks of identity—shaped by centuries of imperial and national pressures—continue to create present and future possibilities and constraints. Contemporary restoration discourse often positions the Ottoman Empire and Turkey as contexts rather than formative influences on Rum formulations. Christine Philliou argues that Rum independence is hindered by both the imaginative frameworks through which communities envision imperial and nationalized belonging, "particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth century when Rum experience was overshadowed by the Greek national imaginary as well as the dominant Ottoman imaginary of the capital city and beyond" (2022, 17). Therefore, when Philliou (14) describes the Rum experience as "histories that took place in but were not of Ottoman history" she addresses both the exclusion that the minority faced in imperial and (post-)imperial Turkey but also the Rum politics of selective heritages.

Having established the complex genealogies within contemporary Rum identity formation, I now turn to an examination of how these dynamics play out in the specific case of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church. The long and rich histories of this site illuminate the competing tensions between Hellenism, Romanism, Byzantinism, and Ottomanism, as well as between religion and secularism and between Turkish and Greek nationalisms.

The Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray Church

Located in the Fener area of Istanbul, the ruins of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church include the building's exterior walls and the base of the church's bell tower. While damaged by fire, the temple's exterior structure remains stable enough to allow liturgies inside the church, though the interior remains uncovered. The church is close to buildings and institutions of emblematic significance to the Rum community, including the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Patriarchal Cathedral Church of St. Georgios, Metochion of the Holy Sepulcher, Church of St. Mary of the Mongols, St. Nikolaos of Tzimbali, Methochion of Sinai/St. Catherine's Monastery, Phanar Greek Orthodox College, and the semi-ruined Joakimio Women's School, among others.[2]

Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray is also near other churches important to Eastern Orthodoxy, such as the Bulgarian St. Stefanos church (the Bulgarian Iron Church). As a historic neighborhood with rich geopolitical, commercial, and administrative significance, "Phanar was conveniently located near the many docks of the Golden Horn where crucial provisions arrived in the capital. It was a short boat ride from Topkapı Palace, the seat of the sultanate, and an even shorter one across the bay to Kasımpaşa,

[2] For more on the church's location see https://grey-cornet-wlbe.squarespace.com/about

where the imperial shipyards and arsenal were located" (Philliou 2009, 155). Due to its location, the church has been at the center of these activities. Throughout its long history, the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church has been damaged and restored numerous times.

Built in the mid-sixteenth century, the church was destroyed by fire and rebuilt twice before being destroyed again in 1974. The hegemons of Vlachia—a region in the Balkans under Ottoman control—donated the church to the Patriarchate in 1587. The church's dual naming reflects the complex alliance politics between Rum and Wallachian communities. These alliances were both strategic and precarious (Center for Democracy and Reconciliation Southeast Europe 2009, 65), and they were shaped not only through political institutions but also through religious and cultural ones.

Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray is surrounded by numerous historical residences that belonged to the Vlach community during the Ottoman period. They included the Palace of Prince Dimitrie Cantemir—confiscated in the early eighteenth century when the Prince supported the Russian army against the Ottoman Empire (Endres n.d.) and is also currently semi-ruined and administered by the Fatih municipality. The church served as a Greek Orthodox place of worship until it was destroyed by fire in the mid-1970s. Its connections to Wallachian rulers reflect the broader Phanariot system that shaped Rum governance in the Ottoman Empire.

Since 2010, the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church has been registered as part of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray Vakıf—a territory donated to a religious entity. According to the Vakıf's President, Vigas:

After many months of effort, our community, due to a binding clause that was in force since 1973, managed to obtain the property title of the church of Panagia Paramythia in

2010 and to register its name in the TAPU (land registry). We should note that this church is the only asset of our Foundation (Soltaridis "Conversation").

This legal achievement represents minoritarian persistence, as the community navigates complex Ottoman property law and Turkish bureaucracy and establishes organization over decades.

The church's double name, Panagia Paramythias, which in Greek translates as the church of the Comforter Mother Mary, and Vlach Saray, which in Turkish translates as the Vlach's Palace, indicates the long and complex relations between the Rum community and the Ottoman Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia in the Transdanubian region. Addressing the importance of these interdependencies, the President of the Ephorate Committee of Panagia Paramythia/Vlach Saray church, Lakis Vigas shared the following:

> Even today, the title Vlach-Sarai prevails over the name Panagia Paramythia. This shows that although five centuries have passed since its foundation, the identity of its founders has remained unchanged. The historical memory is kept alive and is a point of reference not only for the Greek Orthodox world but for the entire Orthodox community to this day (Soltaridis "Conversation").

The commitment to preserving Wallachian identity demonstrates the community's investment in maintaining complex genealogical alliances across centuries of political change.

The collaborations between the Rum community, primarily the elite of the Phanariots, and Wallachia and Moldavia were essential to Christian Orthodox bonds within the Ottoman Empire. The emphasis on selective alliances reflects the minority's multilayered negotiations of the tensions between "integration and separation" (Philliou 2009, 153). On the one hand, "the Phanariot administration of Ottoman Moldavia and

Wallachia was serving as a portal for Orthodox Christians of both Greek and non-Greek speaking origins—to enter the world of the Phanariot, and by extension Ottoman governance" (172). As Philliou (2009) argues, Hellenization and learning the Greek language were considered prerequisites for the non-Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians to enter Ottoman administration. Hellenization, thus, operated in complex ways—at times facilitating Ottoman integration, while creating conditions for further disintegration.

On the other hand, the alliances between the Empire's Balkan Orthodox populations and the Rum minority also increased the power of the latter. Therefore, especially the Rum populations that resided in the Phanar area were formulated as what Philliou defines as "an Ottoman community on the verge, not just of national succession but of imperial integration" (2009, 181). In addition to the administration of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey's nation-building processes, the advancement of the Phanariots also involved the competing project of Greek nationalism. As Philliou's work demonstrates (2009, 2011), while often associated with the spark of the national revolutions in the Balkan region, including the Greek War of Independence in 1821, the Phanariots occupied a complex position of a liminal state in the Ottoman governance's center and periphery that involved processes of both inclusion and exclusion.

The Greek War of Independence was not solely a product of national consciousness that rose from communities with a shared notion of Hellenic belonging built on Greek Orthodoxy and language. Rather Greek national awakening was entangled with competing geopolitical investments of Western Europe, North America, and Russia in the eastern Mediterranean (Fouskas and Dimoulas 2013; Banalopoulou 2023). The projection of national interests onto politics of belonging that preceded the nation-state

can overlook the broader international dynamics that contributed to competing nationalisms and their tensions and affinities with imperial revivalisms. In the case of the Rum minority, these dynamic tensions complicate their sense of belonging.

The Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray church has been at the center of the interplay between imperial and national logics and the global relations that inform them. In 1578, it served as the Patriarchate, and in 1593, it hosted the Synod that recognized the Patriarchate of Russia (Σολταρίδης 2021). According to Vigas, the Panagia Paramythias church entails unique historical significance due to its function as "a symbol of the integration of the Slavic peoples into the spiritual, social, and artistic world of the Ecumenical Patriarchate" (Soltaridis "Conversation"). These Slavic Orthodox connections carried multiple dimensions. Beyond their spiritual significance, connections between some Phanariots and Russian governance contributed to "a secessionist uprising that would later unfold into the Greek War of Independence" (Philliou 2009, 151). According to Kafadar, eighteenth-century discourse started dissociating Anatolia from "the land of the Rum" and referred to Rumness as integral to "Russian political mobilization to establish an independent 'Rum (Greek) state' and to establish a Russian noble as its king" (2017, 127). The fragmented materiality of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray ruins thus reflects the complexity of these histories, serving as a site where the Rum community navigates multiple, often competing tensions between imperial and national formulations.

Scholars have debated over whether nation-state frameworks can be projected onto imperial formations that precede them (Kaldellis 2007; Stouraitis 2017). Regardless of the specificity of these debates, examining how imperial and national logics intersect

in Rum contexts reveals the permeable boundaries between these formations. As Sertaç Sehlikoglu's work (2021) demonstrates, due to its epistemological and empirical Eurocentrism, as well as its primarily cognitive methodologies, scholarship often neglects the interconnections between imperial and national imaginaries, especially regarding their populist and far-right manifestations. As a result, "rationality-oriented Eurocentric theories are limited in their ability to grasp and analyze the imaginative forces that are at stake" (360). For Sehlikoglu, affect, emotion, and imagination play a significant role in the ways in which "the dream of resurrecting the Islamic Empires, or of connecting them under a unified leadership for the Muslims in their region" are interconnected to the "far-right discourses taking place in the West" (361). Understanding these contemporary dynamics, and their disruption, requires attending to the long and complicated histories between Ottomanism and Hellenism.

The historical trajectory of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray occurred within a field of multiple assertions of imperial succession. As Selim Deringil observes, "the Ottoman authorities understood only too well the implications of the Russian tsars' claims to the status of protecter of all Greek Orthodox subjects in the Ottoman realm, and of their pretention to being 'descendants of the Byzantine emperors,' with Moscow as the "Third Rome" (1999, 28). The Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray exemplified these competing legitimacy claims, functioning simultaneously within Ottoman administrative frameworks, Wallachian networks, and Orthodox ecclesiastical authority. Yet simultaneously, "the Byzantine past was a sensitive issue as the Ottoman official mythology stressed the position of the Ottoman sultans as the successors of Rome and Byzantium" (Deringil 1999, 28-29). This suggests that integration-separation functioned

not merely as a strategic response available to minority elites navigating between stable imperial frameworks, but as a fundamental logic of imperial legitimation itself, with the Ottoman Empire employing the contradictory mechanisms identified among Phanariot communities.

The dynamics of varied historical mobilization operated across Ottoman minority communities, each developing distinct strategies based on their linguistic, religious, and geographic circumstances. Masters's (2001) analysis reveals the internal contradictions within the millet system itself, since ethnoreligious belonging was essential for administrative organization while also fostering communal isolation. Masters writes, "Greeks and Armenians could make the intellectual leap from a community based solely on sectarian identity to one that was reconfigured by adding mother tongue as a criterion for inclusion without too much confusion" (11). Rather than solely representing strategic alternatives, participation in governance, while justifying administrative distinctiveness, functioned as a paired requirement within the imperial framework. Minorities participated in imperial governance while simultaneously maintaining the ethnoreligious boundaries that justified their separate administrative status, rendering inclusion and exclusion both essential and mutually undermining. These structural contradictions manifest in Rum engagements with architectural ruins, where fragmented material spaces hold multiple, often competing, legacies—Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and national frameworks coexisting in tension.

Because the Rum minority in Turkey remains characterized by precarity, the relationship between demographic decline and the proliferation of restoration efforts for churches and buildings offers important insights into minoritarian strategies of presence.

On December 1, 2016, the Rum community organized an event at the Fener Rum Okulu titled “The Virgin of the Fairytale-Vlach Saray: Thoughts for the Present and Future” to inaugurate the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray restoration efforts. The next section examines how the Rum community mobilizes architectural restoration to negotiate contemporary presence and futurity.

Ruined Performativity

Growing literature addresses ruins less as static objects and more as dynamic processes of ruination, demonstrating how imperial governance extends into (post-)imperial contexts and blurs colonial and (post-)colonial boundaries (Stoler 2013). This research shows how ruins illuminate the porousness between liberal and “segregative biopolitics” (Iğsız 2018) and between cosmopolitanism and sectarianism (Seigneurie 2011). Applied performance scholarship demonstrates how performative engagement with heritage sites can activate repertoires of decolonial care (Fahmy 2024). Theatre and performance studies scholars argue that performing in ruins impedes ruination, since aging contradicts the goals of late capitalism (Huyssen 2010), dramatizes the materiality of the ruins into disruptions of hegemony (Couta 2024), operates within both power and resistance (Lavery and Gough 2015) as well as the reproduction (Beasley-Murray 2010) and the undoing (Barndt 2010) of the ruins’ preassigned symbolic value. Performance in ruinified sites shows how financial, sociopolitical, and archaeological ruination reproduces hegemonic relations and international asymmetries (Hamilakis 2016; Murray 2020). Despite these advances in addressing performance’s contribution to ruins’ geopolitical dynamism, existing research tends to primarily associate the liveness of these performative events with presence and futurity.

In the case of the Rum community, ruination operates through extensive focus on ruins and their restoration through performance, shaping much of Rum public and cultural life. To ruinify, thus, involves not only transforming Rum life into social ruins—echoing Stoler's "social ruination" (2013, 10)—but also rendering restoration a dominant site for self-determination, community building, and access to governmental and international funding resources. The restoration efforts of buildings essential to the minority's public life, primarily churches— except the Galata Rum School, which functions as a cultural center—proliferate with the support of multiple funding agencies: the European Union, which has recently also enabled the emergence of organizations such as the RUMVADER Association for the Support of Rum Community, community fundraising, private sponsorship initiatives, mainly by the Rum diaspora, Turkish, and multinational corporations, Turkish universities, as well as the Turkish government.

The Panagia Paramythias restoration involves sponsorships from Özyeğin University, the Cultural Heritage Grant Program of the U.S. Ambassador Fund for Cultural Preservation, the Ephorate Committee of Panagia Paramythia/Vlach Saray, Rum community members' donations, as well as the support of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Phanar Greek Orthodox College, and the Turkish Ministry of Culture (Soltaridis "Conversation"; Vema 2023). As these efforts contribute to preserving Rum cultural heritage, they also significantly shape the Rum community's visions of present and future through heritage frameworks.

The visions of Rum futurity enabled by restoration networks depend not only on material preservation but on collective dreamwork that imagines projected wholeness. Archimandrite Grigorios's post-liturgical reflections on performing within a "finished

church" rather than ruins, and his reframing of architectural absence as spiritual presence—where the sky becomes the missing basilica—demonstrate how performative projection transforms material fragmentation into selective wholeness. Yet this very process simultaneously resists completion, as the physical fragmentation persistently reminds congregants of what remains absent, requiring ongoing suspension of disbelief.

The ruins activate collective projection of architectural and liturgical wholeness onto fragmented space. These liturgies operate productively, enabling belonging within a community reshaped by expulsions and migrations (Τουρκέρ 2018, 28). The capacity of ruins to create collective experiences aligns with Diana Taylor's "performatic" (2003, 6)—the embodied, sensed dimensions of performance. However, the interplay between completion and fragmentation also reveals tensions. Performance operates through what Sarah Fahmy describes as "a site for full-body knowledge transformation: physically, emotionally, and intellectually" (2024, 193). Yet this multisensorial engagement of affect and cognition creates friction across multiple registers of experience. While embodied experiences of ruins render the minority more inclusive of diverse genealogies, that inclusivity encounters limits when these performatic dimensions intersect with restoration discourse's performative aspects, which frame legitimacy through particular historical and genealogical claims.

Addressing the importance of the church's restoration, Simeon Soltaridis writes, "The historical continuity regarding the Phanar area and especially about Vlach Saray that has been occupying us lately is uninterrupted and it is the debt of all of us to make sure that it will not be interrupted in the future" (Σολταρίδης 2022b). The discourse of continuity and obligation shows how restoration practices operate through performative

enactments of historical interconnectedness, where material reconstruction fosters temporal coherence. Yiannis Hamilakis (2016, 238) maps connections between ruins as sites that introduce the elusive promise of the possible completion of the fragmented and notions of debt as a responsibility of the involved community to reach wholeness. Ruined performativity addresses how constructions of historical debt operate through heritization processes within selective genealogical and temporal frameworks that shape minoritarian futures. It also indicates how the orientation toward heritage persistence as futurity occurs alongside demographic contraction.

The liturgical practices at Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray show how ruined performativity operates by linking future community viability to maintaining particular relationships with the past. Ken Seigneurie theorizes *mythic utopianism* as a cultural process where "ruins in the present provide the tangible link to a traumatic past and a potentially utopic future" (2011, 11). Its "deep appeal lies in its capacity to kindle nostalgic and utopian sentiments all at once by recoding an image of the past as simultaneously a utopic image of the desired future" (9). Restoration discourse regarding the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray demonstrates this recoding mechanism as selective. This selective process creates what Seigneurie calls "a compelling, tight narrative that leaves nothing to chance or ambiguity" (2011, 11). Yet, even as *mythic utopianism* becomes dominant, Seigneurie demonstrates how, in the case of Lebanon, "many Lebanese rejected it" (11). Similarly, the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray ruins complicate closure by requiring constant performative reconstruction. The ongoing oneiric work—the dream-invoked completion—persistently reasserts the ruins'

fragmentation, requiring constant performative reconstruction rather than achieving resolution.

The physical fragmentation of the church—its missing dome, destroyed interior, and crumbling walls—introduces the need for collective suspensions of disbelief that both project and resist closure. The oneiric work necessary to experience the church as complete also continually reminds congregants of what remains absent. The dream-invoked redemption, thus, performs as an "appearance of being redemptive (but it is not)"—to borrow a phrase from Goldstein (2006, 62). As Rüstem Ertuğ Altınay (2021) demonstrates, far from merely serving progressive ends, the utilization of utopias also reproduces hegemonic power relations. During the formative years of contemporary Turkey, "as a foundational myth, the Turkish History Thesis reframed the Ottoman Empire as a short phase in Turkish history," and "the thesis aimed to serve the Kemalist utopian project of creating a powerful secular, European nation-state […] also by undermining competing ethnic, religious and national identifications and by providing a racialized sense of belonging" (Altınay 2021, 120). Ruined performativity operates in the gap between multiple projects envisioning utopian completion. Yet, the physical fragmentation that requires constant performative reconstruction perpetually defers these utopian completions even as it enables them to coexist.

While not explicitly described, utopian frameworks emerged during restoration fundraising events and liturgical gatherings, where speakers framed the church's reconstruction as ensuring the community's future. According to Vigas, the restoration of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray is crucial because "this is our destination, to support and strengthen our presence in modern Turkey. That is why we are building our

Cultural Center in Galatas, supporting our schools in Imbros and looking for solutions for our other emblematic buildings, which adorn the city with their architecture and are points of reference for our identity" (Soltaridis "Conversation"). Restored buildings operate as guarantors of minoritarian resilience, where architectural wholeness performs functions typically assigned to demographic sustainability. Heritage preservation serves as a proxy for community building amid demographic transformation.

Ruined performativity also reveals how ecclesiastical frameworks shape contemporary Rum public life: "since parishes were established as communities for a particular church, the history of Rum communities is interconnected with the history of Orthodox churches" (Achladi 2022, 22), and restoration efforts intersect ecclesiastical and community organization. This dynamic resonates with what Lori G. Beaman defines as the "'will to religion' [which] accompanies the new religious normal, shaping the responsibilized citizen as a religious citizen" (2013, 5). While Turkey's secularization project officially separated religion from state governance, this separation often blurs the boundaries between religious and secular spheres. As Şener Aktürk demonstrates, the "secular and monolingual nation-state model" preceded "an Islamic mobilization against non-Muslim opponents," creating foundational contradictions between religion and secularism (2015, 778). Because of these contradictions between Turkey's foundational demographic policies and secularization processes, "theories of nationalism that were developed based on the European experience of ethnic or linguistic nationalism need to be modified in explaining the religious nationalism that is found in the origins of some of the major nation-states in the Muslim world" (778). Theatre scholarship illuminates how cultural production became a vehicle for negotiating the contradictions of Turkey's

nationalism, addressing the theatrical grounds of seemingly incompatible ideologies reconciled in public discourse. The intersections between gender, theatre, and performance offer valuable vantage points for examining how Turkey's nationalization and modernization processes (Banalopoulou 2024; Altınay 2013), and how such intersections were also employed to homogenize the newly emerged Turkish Republic while rendering it culturally distinct, influenced by yet differing from European modernities (Adak and Altınay 2018; Altınay 2018).

The culturalization of religion expands ecclesiastical influence into new spheres. According to Vigas, "the renaissance of Vlach-Sarai does not concern only the Greek Orthodox community but will be a point of reference for the entire Phanar district, which from then until today has elements of multiculturalism and inclusion. It will be a place of worship but also open to events and activities of concern to all the residents of the area" (Sol "Panagia Paramythias"). While this discourse of cultural openness culturalizes religious space, it simultaneously extends ecclesiastical governance over community programming and cultural production. Within neo-Ottoman contexts, restoration practices operate as performances of ethno-religious continuity within frameworks that determine which genealogies, temporalities, and forms of community belonging gain institutional support.

Conclusion

Dreams, illusions, and other imaginative practices entail socio-politically constitutive power. Warren Goldstein distinguishes between repressive dreams that "perpetuate a system of domination" and emancipatory dreams that enable collective awakening and transformation (2006, 63). The Rum community's oneiric practice—transforming

fragmented ruins into imagined wholeness through the Panagia Paramythias liturgy—complicates this binary. Shared dreaming enabled minoritarian resilience while simultaneously operating within frameworks that privilege certain genealogies and temporalities over others, demonstrating how collective dreaming can enable minoritarian persistence precisely through processes that also constrain it, operating in the productive tensions between limitation and potential.

The fragmentary aspects of the Panagia Paramythias/Vlach Saray ruins further complicate these dynamics. Rather than producing homogenization, the ruins' persistent incompletion creates space for heterogeneous belonging. Community members can explore collective identity without requiring synthesis into singular frameworks, thus resisting both imperial assimilation models and nationalist unification projects. Ruined performativity reveals how suspension of disbelief functions as connective tissue between the community's interactions with ruins as material culture, both embedded in and resistant to selective historical meanings. This framework illuminates how Rum politics of belonging navigate tensions between imperial legacies and national frameworks, generating creative possibilities alongside structural constraints.

Works Cited

Achladi, Evangelia. 2022. "Rum Communities of Istanbul in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: A Historical Survey." *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 9 (1): 19-49.

Adak, Hülya, and Rüstem Ertuğ Altınay, eds. 2018. "Introduction: Theatre and Politics in Turkey and Its Diasporas." *Comparative Drama* 52 (3/4): 185-214.

Akgönül, Samim. 2008. *Reciprocity: Greek and Turkish Minorities – Law, Religion, and Politics*. Bilgi University Press.

Aktürk, Şener. 2015. "Religion and Nationalism: Contradictions of Islamic Origins and Secular Nation-Building in Turkey, Algeria, and Pakistan." *Social Science Quarterly* 96 (3): 778-806.

Altınay, Rüstem Ertuğ. 2013. "Şule Yüksel Şenler: An Early Style Icon of Urban Islamic Fashion in Turkey." In *Islamic Fashion and Anti–Fashion: New Perspectives from Europe and America,* edited by Ema Tarlo and Annelies Moors, 107-122. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Altınay, Rüstem Ertuğ. 2015. " The Queer Archivist as Political Dissident: Rereading the Ottoman Empire in the Works of Reşad Ekrem Koçu." *Radical History Review* 122: 89-102.

Altınay, Rüstem Ertuğ. 2018. "Staging Queer Marxism in the Age of State Feminism: Gender, Sexuality, and the Nation in Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's Kadın Erkekleşince [When Woman Becomes Masculine]." *Comparative Drama* 52 (3/4): 243-273.

Altınay, Rüstem Ertuğ. 2021. "Hidden Archives, Closeted Desires, Postponed Utopias." *Performance Research* 26 (8): 116-125.

Annastasiadou-Dumont, Meropi. 2005. "Construction d'églises et affirmation identitaire: L'installation des Grecs orthodoxes à Péra/Beyoğlu (Istanbul) au xixe siècle." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 107 (110): 185-204.

Aykaç, Pınar. 2021. “Multiple neo-Ottomanisms in the construction of Turkey’s (trans)national heritage: TIKA and a dialectic between foreign and domestic policy.” *Turkish Studies* 23 (1): 1-29.

Αναστασιάδου, Μερόπη και Πολ Ντυμόν. 2010. *Οι Ρωμηοί της Πόλης: Τραύματα και Προσδοκίες*. Εστία.

Banalopoulou, Christina. 2023. “The Performative Politics of Greek Debt.” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 26 (6): 776-794.

Banalopoulou, Christina. 2024. “Viral Interstitiality and Unlikely Resources: Gender and Labour in Turkish Public Theatre During the Covid-19 Pandemic.” *Theatre Research International* 49 (1): 101-106.

Barndt, Kerstin. 2010. “Memory Traces of an Abandoned Set of Futures.” In *Ruins of Modernity*, edited by Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle, 270-293. Duke University Press.

Beaman, G. Lori. 2013. “The Will to Religion: Obligatory Religious Citizenship.” *Critical Research On Religion* 1 (2): 141-157.

Beasly-Murray, Jon. 2010. “VILCASHUAMÁN: Telling Stories in Ruins.” In *Ruins of Modernity*, edited by Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle, 212-231. Duke University Press.

Βικέτος, Χ. Αριστείδης. 2023. “Κωνσταντινούπολη: Ο Ουρανός Θόλος στα Ερείπια της Παναγίας Παραμυθίας «Βλαχ Σαράι.»” *Νυχθήμερον*, 28 Ιανουαρίου, 2023. https://www.nyxthimeron.com/2023/01/blog-post_521.html?m=1.

Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe. 2009. The Ottoman Empire. Workbook 1. Teaching Modern Southeast European History Alternative

Educational Materials, edited by Bogdan Murgescu and Halıl Bertay. Senior Editor Christina Koulouri. CDRSEE.

Couta, Melita. 2024. “Contested Spaces as Spectacles.” *Theatre and Performance Design* 10 (1/2): 8-29.

Curta, Florin. 2016. “Constantinople and the Echo Chamber: The Vlach’s in the French Crusade Chronicles.” *Medieval Encounters* 22: 427-462.

Dağtas, Seçil. 2020. “The Civilizations Choir of Antakya: The Politics of Religious Tolerance and Minority Representation at the National Margins of Turkey.” *Cultural Anthropology* 35 (1): 167-195.

Deringil, Selim. 1999. *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Endres, Clifford. n.d. “Dimitrie Cantemir and the Phanar Palace.” https://www.panagiaparamythiachurch.org/news/dimitrie-cantemir-and-the-phanar-palacenbsp.

Fahmy, Sarah. 2024. “Performing on the Nile: Young Women Embodying Ecofeminist Decolonial Care.” *Environmental Communication* 18 (1/2): 191-199.

Fişek, Emine. 2018. “Palimpsests of Violence: Urban Dispossession and Political Theatre in Istanbul.” *Comparative Drama* 52 (3/4): 349-372.

Fouskas, Vassilis, and Constantine Dimoulas. 2013. *Greece, Financialization and the EU: The Political Economy of Debt and Destruction*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldstein, S. Warren. 2006. “Dreaming of the Collective Awakening: Walter Benjamin and Ernst Bloch’s Theories of Dreams.” *Humanity & Society* 30 (1): 50-66.

Goldstein, S. Warren. 2022. “On the Religious State, the Secular State, and the Religion-Neutral State.” *Critical Research on Religion* 10 (1): 3-6.

Gondicas, Dimitris, and Charles Philip Issawi. 1999. *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century*. Darwin Press.

Hamilakis, Yiannis. 2007. *The Nation and Its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and the National Imagination in Greece*. Oxford University Press.

Hamilakis, Yiannis. 2016. “Some Debts Can Never Be Repaid: The Archaeo-politics of the Crisis.” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 34 (2): 227-264.

Huyssen, Andreas. 2010. “Authentic Ruins: Products of Modernity.” In *Ruins of Modernity*, edited by Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle, 18-28. Duke University Press, 18-28.

Iğsız, Aslı. 2018. *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange*. Stanford University Press.

Kafadar, Cemal. 2017. *Kendine Ait Bir Roma: Diyar-i Rumda Kültürel Cografya ve Kimlik Üzerine: Diyar-ı Rum’da Kültürel Coğrafya ve Kimlik Üzerine*. Metis Yayıncılık.

Kaldellis, Anthony. 2007. *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

Kaldellis, Anthony. 2019. *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium*. Harvard University Press.

Kamouzis, Dimitris. 2021. *Greeks in Turkey: Elite Nationalism and Minority Politics in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Istanbul*. Routledge.

Karakaya, Yagmur. 2020. “Imperial Daydreaming: Disentangling Contemporary Ottoman Nostalgia in Turkey.” PhD diss., University of Minnesota.

Kaymak, Özgür, and Anna Maria Beylunioğlu. 2018. “Çelişkili Kimklikler: İstanbul’da Yaşayan Antakyalı Ortodoksların Etnik/dini Aidiyet Algıları.” *DerkiPark Akedemik* 73 (4): 959-989.

Krallis, Dimitris. 2019. *Serving Byzantium’s Emperors: The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiatis*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Lavery, Carl, and Richard Gough, eds. 2015. “Introduction.” *Performance Research* 20 (3): 1-8.

Luke, Christina. 2018. “Heritage Interests: Americanism, Europeanism and Neo-Ottomanism.” *Journal of Social Archaeology* 18 (2): 234-257.

Masters, Bruce. 2001. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*. Cambridge University Press.

Mikhail, Alan, and Christine M. Philliou. 2012. “The Ottoman Empire and the Imperial Turn.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54 (4): 721-745.

Murray, Simon. 2020. *Performing Ruins*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Ozil, Ayşe. 2014. “Running the Greek Orthodox Schools: Law and Administration in Late Ottoman and Republican Education in Turkey.” In *When Greeks and Turks Meet: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Relationship Since 1923*, edited by Vally Lytra, 271-288. Ashgate.

Örs, Romain İlay. 2018a. “Cosmopolitanist Nostalgia: Geographies, Histories, and Memories of the Rum Polites.” In *Istanbul: Living with Difference in a Global*

City, edited by Nora Fischer-Onar, Susan C. Pearce, and E. Fuat Keyman, 81-96. Rutgers University Press.

Örs, Romain İlay. 2018b. *Diaspora of the City: Stories of Cosmopolitanism from Istanbul and Athens*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Papachristou, Ioannis. 2024. "Les origines de la théorie du lieu de Jean Philopon." *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences* 74 (2): 136-157.

Panagia Paramythia. n.d. Panagia Paramythia or Vlach-Sarai "Courtyard Area and Surroundings." https://grey-cornet-wlbe.squarespace.com/news/panagia-paramythia-or-vlach-sarai-courtyard-area-and-surroundings.

Philliou, Christine. 2009. "Communities on the Verge: Unravelling the Phanariot Ascendancy in Ottoman Governance." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51 (1): 151-181.

Philliou, Christine. 2011. "When the Clock Strikes Twelve: The Inception of An Ottoman Past in Early Republican Turkey." *Comparative Studies of South Asia* 31 (1): 172-182.

Philliou, Christine. 2022. "Introduction: Rum Geographies." *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies* 9 (1): 13-17.

Raudvere, Catharina, and Petek Onur. 2023. *Neo-Ottoman Imaginaries in Contemporary Turkey*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Rüma, İnan. 2010. "Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Balkans: New Activism, Neo-Ottomanism or/so What?" *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 9: 133-140.

Sehlikoglu, Sertaç. 2021. "Global Far Right and Imaginative Interconnectivities." *Social Anthropology/ Anthropologie Sociale* 29 (2): 360-362.

Sehlikoglu, Sertaç. 2024. “Genealogy, Critique, and Decolonization: Ibn Khaldun and Moving Beyond Filling the Gaps.” *Open Research Europe* 4 (14): https://doi.org/10.12688/openreseurope.16148.1.

Seigneurie, Ken. 2011. *Standing In the Ruins: Elegiac Humanism in Wartime and Postwar Lebanon*. Fordham University Press.

Sol, Simeon. n.d. “Panagia Paramythia of the City: The Church of the Rulers of Moldova.” https://grey-cornet-wlbe.squarespace.com/news/responsible-p8ab4.

Soltaridis, Simeon. n.d. “Conversation with the President of the Ephorate Committee of Panagia Paramythia/Vlach-Sarai.” https://grey-cornet-wlbe.squarespace.com/news/sustainable-3p68y.

Stoler, Laura Ann. 2013. *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*. Duke University Press.

Stouraitis, Ioannis. 2014. “Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach.” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107 (1): 175-220.

Stouraitis, Yannis. 2017. “Reinventing Roman Ethnicity in High and Late Medieval Byzantium.” In *Medieval Worlds: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies*, edited by Walter Pohl and Andre Gingrich, 70-94. Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.

Σολταρίδης, Συμεών. 2021. «Παναγία Παραμυθία: Ο Ναός των Ηγεμόνων της Μολδοβλαχίας» *Φως Φαναρίου*, Δεκέμβρης 31, 2021. https://fosfanariou.gr/index.php/2021/12/31/panagia-paramythia-vlax-saray/.

Σολταρίδης, Συμεών. 2022a. «Ο Ιστορικός Ναός της Παναγίας Παραμυθιάς ή Βλαχ-Σαράι Στα Σοκάκια του Φαναρίου.» *Newsroom*, Μάρτης 28, 2022.

https://www.vimaorthodoxias.gr/diethni-2/o-istorikos-naos-tis-panagias-tis-paramythias-i-vlach-sarai-sta-sokakia-toy-fanarioy/#google_vignette.

Σολταρίδης, Συμεών. 2022b. «Παναγία Παραμυθιάς ή Βλαχ-Σαράι: «Αύλειος Χώρος και Περίγυρος.»» *Φως Φαναρίου*, Μάρτης 28, 2022. https://fosfanariou.gr/index.php/2022/03/28/paramythia-blax-sarai-auleios-xwros/.

Taylor, Diana. 2003. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Duke University Press.

Theodorelis-Rigas, Haris. 2015. "Model Citizens or a Fifth Column? Greek Orthodox (Rum) Communities in Syria and Turkey between Secularism and Multiculturalism." In *Diasporas of the Modern Middle East: Contextualizing Community*, edited by Anthony Gorman and Sossie Kasbarian, 31-69. Edinburgh University Press.

Türkeş, Mustafa. 2016. "Decomposing Neo-Ottoman Hegemony." *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 18 (3): 191-216.

Τουρκέρ, Νουρντάν. 2018. *Δεν Έχω Πατρίδα Έχω Τον Τόπο Μου: Ρωμιοί της Πόλης χώρος, μνήμη, τελετουργίες*. Πατάκης.

Τσουκαλάς, Κωνσταντίνος. 2010. *Η Επινόηση της Ετερότητας: «Ταυτότητες» και «Διαφορές» στην Εποχή της Παγκοσμιοποίησης*. Καστανιώτης.

Vema. 2023. "Constantinople: Restoration Work Begins on the Church of Panagia Paramythia 'Vlach Saray.'" *Vema*, December 3, 2023. https://vema.com.au/constantinople-restoration-work-begins-on-the-church-of-panagia-paramythia-vlach-saray/.

Yavuz, M. Hakan. 2020. *Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism*. Oxford University Press.