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978-1-108-07332-5 - Greece Under the Romans: A Historical View of the Condition of the Greek Nation, from the Time of Its Conquest by the Romans Until the Extinction of the Roman Empire in the East

George Finlay

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Classics

From the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, Latin and Greek were compulsory subjects in almost all European universities, and most early modern scholars published their research and conducted international correspondence in Latin. Latin had continued in use in Western Europe long after the fall of the Roman empire as the lingua franca of the educated classes and of law, diplomacy, religion and university teaching. The flight of Greek scholars to the West after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 gave impetus to the study of ancient Greek literature and the Greek New Testament. Eventually, just as nineteenth-century reforms of university curricula were beginning to erode this ascendancy, developments in textual criticism and linguistic analysis, and new ways of studying ancient societies, especially archaeology, led to renewed enthusiasm for the Classics. This collection offers works of criticism, interpretation and synthesis by the outstanding scholars of the nineteenth century.

Greece under the Romans

A philhellene who took part in the Greek war of independence alongside Lord Byron, George Finlay (1799–1875) later published this work on the country's ancient history in 1844. The text covers political, religious and social life in Greece from the Roman conquest of 146 BCE until 717 CE, the beginning of the Isaurian dynasty of the Byzantine Empire. By focusing on the many ways in which Greece differed from Rome, Finlay demonstrates that the Roman Empire was by no means homogenous in terms of culture or political organisation, and that these differences contributed to the more obvious divides between the eastern and western empires, not only in terms of social life and government but also in terms of their ultimate demise. Also reissued in this series are Finlay's *History of the Greek Revolution* (1861) and his seven-volume *History of Greece* (1877), covering the period from the Romans to 1864.

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GREECE UNDER THE ROMANS

A HISTORICAL VIEW

OF THE

CONDITION OF THE GREEK NATION,

FROM THE TIME OF ITS CONQUEST BY THE ROMANS

UNTIL THE EXTINCTION OF THE ROMAN

EMPIRE IN THE EAST.

B. C. 146—A. D. 717.

BY GEORGE FINLAY, K. R. G.,

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, AND CORRESPONDING
MEMBER OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE AT ROME.

*Καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες
αὐτῶν ἀρετῆστίστον φανίται.*

THUCYD. i. 22.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,

EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

MDCCCXLIV.

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ERRATUM.

For Achæa, throughout the work, read Achaia.

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P R E F A C E.

THE social and political organization of life among the Greeks and Romans was essentially different, even during the period when they were subject to the same government; and this difference must be impressed on the mind, before the relative state of civilization in the Eastern and Western empires can be thoroughly understood.

The Romans were a tribe of warriors. All their institutions, even those relating to property and agriculture, were formed with reference to war. The people of the western empire, including the greater part of Italy, consisted of a variety of races, who were either in a low state of civilization at the time of their conquest by the Romans, or else had been already subjected to foreigners. They were generally treated as inferior beings, and the framework of their national institutions was every where destroyed. The provincials of the West, when thus left destitute of every bond of national union, were exposed to the invasions of warlike tribes, which, under the first impulses of civilization, were driven

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on to seek the means of supplying new wants. The moment, therefore, that the military forces of the Roman government were unable to repulse these strangers, the population of the provinces was exposed to subjection, slavery, or extermination, according as the interests or the policy of the invading barbarians might determine.

In that portion of the eastern empire peopled by the Greeks, the case was totally different. There the executive power of the Roman government was modified by a system of national institutions, which conferred, even on the rural population, some control over their local affairs. The sovereign authority was relieved from that petty sphere of administration and police, which meddles with the daily occupations of the people. The Romans found this branch of government completely organized, in a manner not closely connected with the political sovereignty, and the institutions of the Greeks proved more powerful than the despotism of their conquerors. Their nationality continued to exist in full vigour, even after their conquest; and this nationality was again called into activity when the Roman government, from increasing weakness, gradually began to neglect the duties of administration.

The conquest of Greece by the Romans had indeed left the national existence nearly unaltered; but time, as it changed the government of Rome,

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modified likewise the institutions of the Greeks, Still, neither the Roman Cæsars, nor the Byzantine emperors, any more than the Frank princes and Turkish sultans, were able to interrupt the continual transmission of a political inheritance by each generation of the Greek race to its successors; though it is too true, that, from age to age, the value of that inheritance was gradually diminished.

The history of the Greek nation, even as a subject people, cannot be destitute of interest and instruction. The Greeks are the only existing representatives of the ancient world. They have maintained possession of their country, their language, and their social organization, against physical and moral forces, which have swept from the face of the earth all their early cotemporaries, friends and enemies. It can hardly be disputed, that the preservation of their national existence is to be partly attributed to the institutions which they have received from their ancestors. The work now offered to the public will attempt to trace the effects of the ancient institutions on the fortunes of the people under the Roman government, and to shew in what manner they were modified and supported by other circumstances.

It was impossible, in the following pages, to omit treating, at times, of events already illustrated by the genius of Gibbon. But these events must be viewed by the historian of the Roman empire, and of

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the Greek people, under very different aspects. The observations of both may be equally true, though inferior skill and judgment may render the views, in the present work, less correct as a picture, and less impressive as a history. The same facts afford innumerable conclusions to different individuals, and in different ages. History will ever remain inexhaustible; and much as we have read of the Greeks and Romans, and deeply as we appear to have studied their records, there is much still to be learned from the same sources.

In the references to the authorities followed in this work, a preference will often be shewn to those modern treatises, which ought to be in the hands of the general reader. It has often required profound investigation, and long discussion, to elicit a fact now generally known, or to settle an opinion now universally adopted, and in such cases it would be useless to collect a long array of ancient passages.

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CHRONOLOGY.

CHRONOLOGY FOR CHAPTER I.

BEFORE
CHRIST.

- 323. Death of Alexander the Great.
- 321. Egyptian monarchy of the Ptolemies established by the defeat of the Regent Perdiccas.
- 312. Era of the Seleucidæ dated from the time Seleucus recovered Babylonia, which is considered as the foundation of the Syrian monarchy.
- 310. Agathocles invaded the Carthaginian territories in Africa.
- 303. Demetrius Poliorcetes compelled to raise the siege of Rhodes.
- 300. The kingdom of Pontus established its independence under Mithridates Ariobarzanes.
- 280. Commencement of the Achæan League.
Pyrrhus landed in Italy to defend the Greeks against the Romans.
- 279. The Gauls invaded Greece, and were repulsed at Delphi.
- 278. Nicomedes secures himself in the kingdom of Bithynia by calling the Gauls into Asia.
- 271. The Romans completed the conquest of Magna Græcia.
- 250. The Parthian monarchy founded by Arsaces.
The Greek kingdom of Bactriana founded.
- 241. Attalus king of Pergamus.
- 212. Syracuse taken by the Romans, and the Sicilian Greeks subjected.
- 197. Battle of Cynoscephalæ.
- 196. The Greeks declared to be free by Flamininus at the Isthmian games.
- 190. Antiochus the Great invaded Greece.

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CHRONOLOGY.

- BEFORE
CHRIST.
188. The laws of Lycurgus abrogated by Philopœmen.
 168. Battle of Pydna, and end of the Macedonian monarchy.
 167. One thousand of the principal citizens in Achæa carried to Rome as hostages.
 146. Mummius took Corinth, and reduced Greece to a Roman province.
 141. Extinction of the Greek monarchy of Bactriana.
 133 or 102. Rebellion of slaves in the Attic silver mines.
 86. Sylla took Athens.
 77. Depredations of the pirates throughout Greece.
 67. Crete conquered by Metellus.
 66. Monarchy of the Seleucidæ destroyed by Pompey.
 48. Cæsar destroyed Megara.
 44. Cæsar restored Corinth as a Roman colony.
 30. Augustus founded Nicopolis.
 21. Augustus deprived Athens of its jurisdiction over Eretria and Ægina, and established the confederacy of the free Laconian cities.
- A. D. Year of Rome, 753. Olympiad, 194. 4th year. The birth of Christ in the year 5509 of the world according to the Byzantines, or 5507, as the Greek fathers place the birth of Christ two years before the received era.
22. The Senate restricted the right of asylum claimed by many Greek temples and sanctuaries.
 93. Josephus. Epictetus.
 100. Plutarch.
 124. Arrian. Lucian.
 143. Herodes Atticus consul.
 150. Appian.
 160. Ptolemy.
 170. Pausanias. Galen.
 200. Oppian. Clemens Alexandrinus. Diogenes Laertius. Philostratus.
 212. Edict of Caracalla conferred Roman citizenship on all the free inhabitants of the empire.
 215. Athenæus.
 220. Dion Cassius.
226. Artaxerxes overthrew the Parthian empire, and founded that of the Sassanides. Year 538 of the era of the Seleucidæ.

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A. D.

240. Herodian. Ælian. Longinus.
 251. The Emperor Decius defeated and slain by the Goths.
 267. Invasion of Greece by the Goths. Athens taken, and recovered by Dexippus.
 284. Era of Diocletian, called the era of the martyrs.
 312. 1st September. The cycle of indictions was first reckoned from this year.
 325. Council of Nice.
 330. Dedication of Constantinople as the capital of the Roman empire.

CHAPTER II.

330. Foundation of Constantinople.
 332. Cherson assists Constantine against the Goths.
 337. Constantine II. Constantius, Constant, emperors.
 361. Julian.
 362. Julian re-establishes paganism as the religion of the empire. Earthquake in Greece, Asia Minor, Palestine, and Sicily.
 363. Jovian.
 364. Valentinian Valens.
 365. Earthquake in Greece, Asia Minor, and Sicily. *AMM. MAR.* xxvi. 10.
 375. Earthquake in Greece and Crete, before the death of Valentinian, felt especially in Peloponnesus. *ZOSIMUS*, iv. 18. Gratian.
 376. Visigoths permitted by Valens to pass the Danube.
 378. Defeat and death of Valens. Valentinian II.
 379. Theodosius.
 392. Law of Theodosius against the abuse of asylums in churches.
 395. Arcadius, and Honorius. Huns ravage Asia Minor as far as Syria. Alaric invades Greece
 398. Alaric named governor of Eastern Illyricum.
 408. Theodosius II.
 428. Genseric enters Africa with the Vandals.
 438. Publication of Theodosian Code.
 439. Genseric takes Carthage. Eudocia (Athenais) visits Jerusalem.
 441. Theodosius sends a fleet against Genseric.

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A. D.

442. Attila invades Thrace and Macedonia.
 447. Attila again ravages Thrace, and takes seventy cities.
 450. Marcian.
 457. Leo, called by the Greeks the Great, the Elder, and the Butcher.
 458. Great earthquake felt at Antioch and Cnidus, and in Cos, the Cyclades, Isauria, Ionia, and Thrace.
 460. Earthquake at Cyzicus.
 462. Marcellinus, who had defended Sicily against the Vandals, seizes Dalmatia, and holds it independent of the two empires.
 465. Fire, which destroyed eight of the sixteen quarters of Constantinople.
 468. Leo sends an expedition against Genseric.
 469. Excessive rains at Constantinople and in Bithynia.
 474. Leo II. Zeno the Isaurian.
 480. Earthquakes felt for forty days successively at Constantinople. The statue of Theodosius the Great thrown down from the column on which it stood.
 485. Bulgarians appear beyond the Danube.
 491. Anastasius, (Flavius,) called Dicorus.
 499. Bulgarians invade the empire.
 507. Anastasius constructs the long wall to protect Constantinople.
 518. Terrible earthquake in Dardania and Illyria. Justin.
 527. Justinian ascends the throne.

CHAPTER III.

527. Accession of Justinian. Gertes, King of the Heruls, receives baptism at Constantinople. The Tzans submit to the Roman empire.
 528. Gordas, king of the Huns on the Cimmerian Bosphorus, receives baptism at Constantinople, but is murdered by his subjects on his return. Germanus defeats the Antes on the banks of the Danube. Justinian commences his lavish expenditure on fortifications and public buildings over the whole empire.
 529. First edition of the Code published. Rebellion of the Samaritans. Romans defeated by Persians at Mindon.

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- A. D.
530. Persians defeated at Dara. Hilbudius defeats the Slavonians.
531. Battle at Callinicum. Death of Cobad. Negotiations for peace with Persia. Dreadful plague commenced, which ravaged the empire fifty years.
532. Great sedition of the Nika at Constantinople, suppressed by Belisarius. War declared against the Vandals. The Abbot Dionysius Exiguus, by his tables of the Easter festivals, fixed the date of the Christian era.
533. Peace with Persia. Hilbudius defeated and slain by the Slavonians. Conquest of Africa. Institutions and Pandects published.
534. Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic Island occupied by the Romans. Belisarius returns to Constantinople with Gelimer. Second edition of Code.
535. Conquest of Sicily. Dalmatia conquered and reconquered.
536. Revolt of Roman troops in Africa. Belisarius invades Italy, and takes Rome. A very cold year, the sun shining dimly.
537. Siege of Rome by Witiges. Exile and death of Pope Silverester. Dedication of St Sophias at Constantinople.
538. Bulgarians invade the empire. Milan destroyed by Goths. Famine in the north of Italy.
539. Witiges sends ambassadors to the Lombards and Persians to demand assistance. Surrender of Ravenna, and capture of Witiges. Romans defeated by Gepids. A plundering incursion of the Huns extended over Thrace and Greece, to the Isthmus of Corinth. *Proc. Pers.* ii. 4.
540. Chosroes invades Syria. Capture and sack of Antioch. Totila king of the Goths.
541. Consulate abolished by Justinian after existing 1049 years.
542. Belisarius employed against Chosroes in person. Earthquake and plague at Constantinople, 10,000 persons perished in one day.
543. Solomon, the governor of Africa, defeated and killed by the Moors.
544. Belisarius sent to oppose Totila in Italy.
546. Rome taken by Totila. John the Patrician takes the command in Africa.
548. Belisarius quits Italy.

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A. D.

549. Rome retaken by Totila. Sicily conquered, but recovered by Artaban.
550. Sclavonians and Huns invade the empire. Persian war in Lazica. Earthquakes in Phœnicia, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia.
551. Introduction of silk worm. Narses sent to Italy. Earthquake in Greece.
552. Totila defeated, and Rome retaken by Narses.
553. Goths under Teras again defeated. Conquests in Spain.
554. Franks and Germans defeated by Narses. Earthquakes at Constantinople, Nicomedia, Berytus, and Cos, and church at Cyzicus fell during service.
556. Terrible earthquake at Constantinople. The emperor did not wear his crown for forty days. AGATHIAS, v. 145.
558. Zabergan, king of the Cutigour Huns, defeated before the walls of Constantinople by Belisarius. Embassy of the Avars.
563. Treaty of peace with Persia. Belisarius accused of being privy to a conspiracy, falls into disgrace, and his property is confiscated.
564. Embassy of the Turks. Justinian favours the Eutychians.
565. Death of Justinian.

CHAPTER IV.

565. November. Justin the Second ascended the throne.
567. Kingdom of Gepids destroyed by Lombards.
568. Italy invaded by Lombards.
570. Mohammed born.
571. Justin sends an embassy to the khan of the Turks.
572. War commenced between the Roman empire and Persia.
573. War with the Avars.
574. Infirm health of Justin induces him to name Tiberius Cæsar.
576. Battle of Melitene. Romans penetrate to Caspian Sea.
578. Death of Justin. Tiberius emperor.
579. Death of Chosroes.
580. Battle of Callinicum. Avars take Sirmium.

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- A. D.
581. Persian army defeated by Maurice at Constantine.
582. Tiberius names Maurice his successor. Dies.
John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, uses the title
Œcumenic, granted to the patriarchs by Justinian.
583. Avars recommence war.
586. Battle of Solacon.
587. Roman army defeated by Avars.
588. Sedition of the army employed against Persia.
590. Rebellion in Persia. Chosroes, son of Hormisdas, flies to
Maurice.
591. Chosroes II. restored by Maurice. Maurice quits the capital
to march against the Avars.
593. Priscus defeats the Selavonians.
600. Maurice concludes a peace with the Avars without ransoming
the prisoners.
601. War recommenced.
602. Sedition of the Roman army. Maurice dethroned. Phocas
emperor.
603. Chosroes declares war.
604. Phocas concludes a peace with the Avars.
609. Persians advance to Chalcedon.
610. Phocas slain. Heraclius emperor.
613. Sedition of the Jews.
614. Sisebut, king of the Visigoths, conquers the greater part of
the Roman possessions in Spain.
615. Heraclius sends Niketas the Patrician to seize the wealth of
John, the charitable patriarch of Alexandria.
616. Persians invade Egypt.
618. Abolition of public distribution of grain at Constantinople.
619. Avars attempt to seize Heraclius by treachery.
620. Peace with Avars.
622. First campaign of Heraclius against the Persians.
16th July. Era of the Hegira of Mohammed.
623. Second campaign against Persians. Roman possessions in
Spain lost.
624. Third campaign.
625. Fourth campaign.
626. Constantinople besieged by Persians and Avars.
627. Fifth campaign.

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A. D.

628. Sixth campaign. Death of Chosroes. Peace with Siroes.
 629. Heraclius carries the Holy Cross to Jerusalem.
 630. Heraclius occupied with ecclesiastical reforms.
 632. Death of Mohammed. Era of Jezdedjerd reckoned from
 16th June.
 633. Invasion of Syria by Arabs. Bozra taken.
 634. Battle of Adjnadin. Abubekr's death. Heraclius leaves
 Syria.
 635. Arabs take Emesa, Alhadir, and Kinnesrin.
 636. Baalbec pays tribute. Battle of Yermouk.
 637. Caliph Omer takes possession of Jerusalem. Capture of
 Aleppo.
 638. Constantine, son of Heraclius, defeated, and Antioch taken.
 Battle of Cæsarea.
 639. Arabs conquer Mesopotamia. Ecthesis of Heraclius.
 640. Arabs conquer Egypt, and capture Alexandria.
 641. Death of Heraclius.

CHAPTER V.

641. Constantine the Third and Heracleonas emperors. Constans
 the Second. Taking of Alexandria by the Saracens.
 645. Persia conquered by the Arabs.
 646. Alexandria retaken by the Romans, and recovered by
 Arabs.
 647. Arabs invade Africa.
 648. Arabs invade Cyprus. Type of Constans the Second.
 651. Cos and Rhodes invaded by the Arabs. The colossus
 destroyed.
 654. Pope Martin brought to Constantinople for trial.
 655. Battle between the Roman and Arab fleets off Mount
 Phœnix.
 658. Expedition of Constans against the Slavonians. Peace
 with the Caliph Moawyah.
 660. Constans orders his brother Theodore the Deacon to be
 executed.
 662. Constans quits Constantinople, and passes the winter at
 Athens.

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A. D.

663. Visits Italy, and is defeated before Beneventum. Visits Rome. Retires to Sicily.
665. Wars of the Romans and Saracens in Africa.
668. Assassination of Constans. Constantine IV. Pogonatus.
669. Constantine visits Sicily to avenge his father's death.
670. Cairowan founded, and taken by the Romans.
672. Invention of Greek fire by Callinicus. Saracens besiege Constantinople, and continue the attack every summer for seven years.
672. Saracens form a winter camp at Cyzicus.
679. Defeat of the Saracen armament. Peace with Moawyah. Constantine defeated by the Bulgarians.
680. General council of the church at Constantinople against the Monothelites.
681. Constantine deprives his brothers of the title of Augustus, and cuts off their noses.
685. Death of Constantine Pogonatus. Justinian the Second called Rhinometus.
688. Bulgarian war.
692. War with the Saracens, and desertion of the Selavonian troops. Establishment of Haratch. General council of the church *in Trullo*.
695. Revolution at Constantinople, Justinian dethroned, his nose cut off, and sent into exile at Cherson. Leontius emperor.
697. First doge of Venice elected. Carthage taken by the Saracens, retaken, and lost by the Romans.
698. Leontius dethroned, and Tiberius Apsimar emperor.
703. Successful campaign of Heraclius, the brother of the Emperor Tiberius, against the Saracens.
705. Justinian returns to Constantinople, with a Bulgarian army, and dethrones Tiberius Apsimar.
710. Cruelties of Justinian against Ravenna and Cherson.
711. Army at Cherson rebels, and places Philippicus on the throne. Death of Justinian.
712. Philippicus emperor.
713. Philippicus dethroned. Anastasius the Second emperor.
715. Fleet sent against the Saracens, under John the Deacon, rebels, and returns, having appointed Theodosius emperor.

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A. D.

- 716. Anastasius dethroned, and Theodosius the Third emperor.
Leo the Isaurian declared emperor at Amorium.
- 717. Constantinople besieged by the Saracens.
- 718. Saracen armament defeated.
- 723. Sardinia conquered by the Saracens.
- 726. Edict of Leo against picture-worship.
- 727. The Greek expedition, to restore image-worship, defeated before Constantinople.