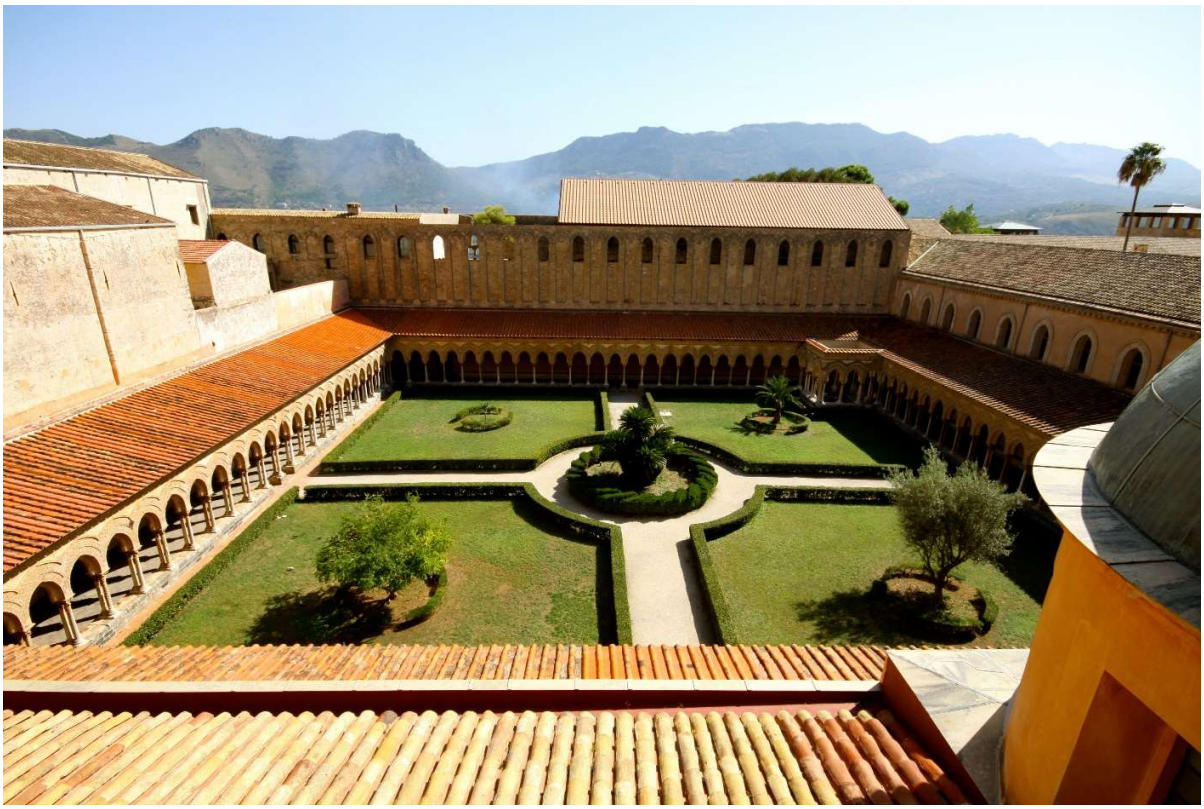
EDITH WHARTON

OSPREY NOTES



INTRODUCTION BY ÁGNES ZSÓFIA KOVÁCS

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Acknowledgements

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University has provided the time, space, and support for me to be able to peruse chunks of its enormous Wharton Collection. In person, I am to thank Elizabeth Frengel, especially on account of the company and discussions and Allison Van Rhee, for helping with practical issues. I am grateful to the Watkins and Loomis Agency and Julia Masnik for the seamless flow of information and assistance with publishing the manuscripts. I am also very grateful for William Potter's advice on how to revise the final draft of my introduction. The editors of Americana eBooks, my colleagues Réka Mónika Cristian and Zoltán Dragon, have encouraged me with the project, waited for the manuscript patiently and provided invaluable help with the practical details of the publication process.

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Preface

The primary aim of this collection is to publish the text of Edith Wharton's manuscript travel notebook titled *Osprey Notes* written in 1926. The body of Wharton's travel writing consists of five separate volumes: *Italian Villas* (1904), *Italian Backgrounds* (1905), *A Motor-Flight Through France* (1908), *In Morocco* (1920), and *The Cruise of the Vanadis* (2004). Related texts include her *The Decoration of Houses* (1899), *Fighting France* (1915), and *French Ways and Their Meaning* (1919). Additionally, an article about Morocco, an essay on France, and two fragments about her travels in Spain have also been published lately (see the "Introduction"). The *Osprey Notes* belongs to the list of recently published short archival fragments related to Wharton that should expand our knowledge of Wharton's professional output as a travel author. The introduction to the volume positions the *Notes* at the intersection of Wharton's other travel writing and her ideas about visual art. Apart from the *Notes*, two more short manuscript texts related to it thematically and located at the Beinecke are included in this collection. First to follow the *Osprey Notes* is the early poem "Penelope" which reflects Wharton's early concern with Odysseus' journey, rendered from the perspective of the domestic wife. The poem was not dated but assigned "Cannes," and the subsequent folder of the Wharton Collection, a similar early poem titled "Treasure," is written on Cannes hotel stationary from 1881, so the two are probably contemporaneous. The second piece is another early text, an essay from the young Wharton's time at Newport as a married society lady who helps the community with decorating the local school titled "Education Through the Eyes" from cc. 1890. The essay charts basic principles about the visual education of a child's eye, which presupposes a commitment to the moral and social values of visual beauty.

Introduction: Edith Wharton's quest for historical continuity in the Aegean

The notebook titled *Osprey Notes* has been lying quietly in a box of the Wharton Collection at the Beinecke Library of Yale University since 1939. It contains ten handwritten entries about Edith Wharton's trip to the Aegean in 1926. Wharton chartered the yacht Osprey and cruised the Mediterranean in the company of her friends Daisy Chanler, Robert Norton and two more gentlemen, Logan Pearsall Smith and Henry Lawrence in April and May 1926. The notes document the first part of the cruise, from the Gulf of Aegina to Athens, ending *in medias res* with a caption on the Parthenon at moonlight. The cursory and highly revised notes have been acknowledged by Wharton scholars-biographers but so far have remained unpublished.

Part of the reason why the notes have remained in obscurity for so long is due to their fragmentary nature. The descriptive passages offer little in the way of personal commentary and one needs to familiarize oneself with the details of the trip to actually see what places and scenes they are about. Another, and perhaps more fundamental, reason

is that the notes are encoded in Wharton's implicit language of architecture she adopted from John Ruskin's observations on visual art, especially *The Stones of Venice*. Also, the text may seem repetitive as Wharton wrote an extensive journal during her 1888 trip to the Aegean, part of which overlaps with the Osprey fragments and provides reference points for reading the latter. This essay places the *Notes* in the context of what I would like to call Wharton's "architectural vision" of writing travel, and of her published Aegean travel account. This context highlights the place of the *Osprey Notes* in relation to Wharton's other travel texts and also in relation to her theories about visual art and architecture.

Edith Wharton is usually thought of as the author of early twentieth-century novels of manners although her reception has been challenging this view from many directions for the past thirty-plus years. Carol Singley (1995) argued persuasively for the need to see Wharton as a reflective thinker interested in questions of her time's scientific, philosophical, religious, and ethical thinking. For Singley, Wharton's metaphysical and religious concerns are echoed in her fiction. Singley's reading paints a new image of Wharton as someone whose novelistic production was of a much larger scope than that of a turn-of-the-century female novelist of social mores. Using resonant spatial metaphors much loved by Wharton, Singley argues that "[w]e have looked for Edit Wharton in the drawing room; we must also seek her in the library" (xi). The phrase is resonant as it taps into the question of female space versus male space which is an important theme for Wharton, and also into the question of architectural vision Wharton applied repeatedly in her novels, where the spaces characters occupy serve to characterize them socially. Explaining the opposition between drawing room and library further, Singley notes that the little information generally known about Wharton's non-literary aspirations includes

her interest in travel, gardening, interior decoration, characteristically female gentile themes, "but few realize how deeply she was drawn to metaphysical questions, and that her library contained more books on religion than on any other subject" (ix). In this formulation, travel and the study of architecture, gardens and interior design appear as surface-level phenomena against the backdrop of serious philosophical and religious thought. Branching out from this compelling multidisciplinary framework, I will argue that in Wharton's case, the opposition of the two spaces is not always easy to maintain. To develop one aspect of the work on Wharton the reflexive thinker, I will investigate how her travel writing is infused with contemporary theoretical ideas about architecture and its cultural significance.

Several key studies have been published on Wharton and her work focusing on its ethical, scientific, artistic, and feminine aspects as part of the interdisciplinary contextualizing approach since the 1990s. In addition to essays by Singley, some trends relevant from the perspective of travel writing and the criticism of culture include the analysis of Wharton's philanthropic and literary work during the Great War by Alan Price (1995) and Julie Olin-Ammentorp (2004). Concerning scientific thinking about human culture, Paul Ohler discussed the role of evolutionary theory in her fictional work and her critique of social Darwinism (Ohler 2006). Concerning theories of art, Sarah Bird Wright surveyed Wharton as a cultured amateur in her travel writing (Wright 1997)—Wright's book is the only book-size publication on Wharton's travel texts so far.—In addition, Emily Orlando (2007) has revealed the role contemporary visual culture played in the way she portrayed her heroines. Extending the scope of texts for analysis, Laura Rattray (2020) has examined her not only as a novelist but as a playwright and a poet as well. Related to these new approaches, different sections of her texts have been analysed,

especially her short stories and her work from the thirties, as well as archival material (Ohler 2019).

Wharton's travel writing offers another area of her texts to generate critical interest from an interdisciplinary perspective that involves theories of visual art and architectural space. During her lifetime, she published five travel books and two related volumes about her Italian, French, and Moroccan trips and themes, and her diary of an 1888 Aegean cruise (Lesage 2004) and her fragments about travels in Spain (Gómez 2011) were published posthumously. These volumes document not only her actual trips and impressions but also the way she makes sense of and experiences visual art, especially architecture. They also contain comments about art history and the art of writing art history. As Wright (1997) argued, these texts place Wharton the travel author and art historian at the meeting point of different traditions of writing about art: the picturesque tradition, Ruskin's moral theory of art, and move away from morals into an aestheticizing or, conversely, into a scientific, direction (37-8).

Wharton made two trips to the Aegean, the first one on the chartered yacht the Vanadis in 1888 as a young married woman and the second one on the Osprey in 1926 as an elderly divorced lady. Her account of her first trip, titled *The Cruise of the Vanadis,* was published in 1994 after Claudine Lesage recovered it by chance at the library of Hyères, the location of Wharton's Riviera home after the war. Wharton made her second cruise in 1926 and her notebook on this voyage, titled *Osprey Notes,* forms part of the Beinecke Wharton Collection at Yale.

The problem in the Aegean texts is that they only articulate part of the actual significance of the cruises for Wharton. As Claudine Lesage (2004) wisely pointed out in

her “Introduction” to *The Cruise of the Vanadis,* a large portion of Wharton’s experience remains unsaid: “what matters most is not what she says or even alludes to but what is missing. And, as if to counterbalance what she did not wish to reveal, she accumulates historical details and descriptions, using for this purpose her diary as if it was a camera and taking photos of the most striking views she encounters” (23). Similarly, Louis Auchincloss’ “Preface” to the 2004 edition of the volume sees the value of the script not so much in what it says but rather in what its trained eye foreshadows from the art of the later novelist: how she will grasp “overstuffed” Victorian scenes and interiors (17). The *Osprey Notes* from 1926 do not curb this tendency. Although they supplement the earlier text through overlaps and extensions, the fragmented nature of the entries does little to actually provide a more complete picture of the cruises as one would expect them to. If anything, they prove to be even more fragmentary than the longer earlier piece.

Wharton critics have addressed this problem of “encoding” implicitly by looking at the Aegean travel texts as an element of Wharton’s literary Odyssey. Lesage (2004) referred to this possible subtext in her introduction to *Vanadis* (24) and Sarah Bird Wright (1997) discussed it in the conclusion to her *Wharton’s Travel Writing* (156). It was Myrto Drizou (2019), however, who explicated the Odyssey motif in both Wharton’s literary and travel writing to argue that Wharton’s aestheticizing vision comes to the fore even more remarkably in the *Osprey Notes* than in the 1888 travel diary (75).

Simultaneously, the Aegean travel text from 1926 can also be read in the context of Wharton’s other travel writings. One promising direction within the analysis of Wharton’s travel writings is linked to the story of her professionalization and her ongoing argument with contemporary theories of art (Wright 1997, 3). As part of this enterprise, Ruskin’s

practice of "observation," along with his idea of "watchful wandering" exerted a profound influence on the young Wharton and remained issues for debate in her later travel writing, as the essay will show. Stephen Kite's argument about Ruskin's observations on architecture, in Kite's terms his "watching architecture," proves to be a fruitful way to approach the potential meaning architecture carries for Wharton, too. Kite explains that for Ruskin, architecture bore the story of the past that was to be read by the observant visitor sensitive to history (Kite 2009, 106-7). The surfaces, materials, patterns and even colours of buildings carry stories whose sense is made by the actual onlooker (Kite 2012, 11).

Wharton's concern with Ruskin began in her father's library. In her autobiographical fragment "Life and I" she reflects on Ruskin as a powerful influence. She also devotes a chapter of *Italian Backgrounds* (1905) to her practical criticism of Ruskin's ideas (Wharton 1905, 173-200). In her first French travel book *A Motor-Flight Through France* (1908), she elaborates on a Ruskinian cathedral tour that she also relies on in her wartime piece *Fighting France* (1915). However, there are no direct references to Ruskin in the Aegean texts. In Wharton's criticism, Sarah Bird Wright (1997) acknowledges Wharton's divided relation to Ruskin but does not pursue this relation in detail, while William Blazek (2016) points out direct links from Ruskin to Norton and then to Wharton in their thinking about visual arts. Others consider this connection a dead end instead. Emily Orlando (2007) claims Wharton was through with Ruskin after *The Decoration of Houses* (175) and explains Wharton's critical engagement with the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood Ruskin championed. Robert Burden (2015) also emphasizes Wharton's ambiguous shift from Ruskin and Matthew Arnold in the direction of Pater's aestheticism in the course of her writing career (213). Analysis of the textual descriptions of architecture

and scenery in Wharton's Aegean texts, I argue, reveals a connection between Wharton and Ruskin early on and again much later in her professional career.

The specific question addressed in this essay is how the fragmentary *Osprey Notes* of 1926 can be explicated at the intersection of Wharton's earlier text about the Aegean, her other travel writing, and Ruskin's method of "watching architecture" and his rhetoric thereof. I claim that there is an implied Ruskin-related model of observing architecture in Wharton's late travel account that provides a matrix for understanding the fragmentary notes. To present this argument, the essay surveys Ruskin's ideas on architecture and their relation to Wharton first. Then it proceeds to the analysis of Wharton's architectural vision in *The Cruise of the Vanadis* and her *Osprey Notes*. Eventually, in a gesture inspired by Wharton's comments, it attempts at reconstructing missing parts of the archival text as a hypothetical extension of the research. In general, the reconstruction aims at forging a reading of the fragments that positions them as part of Wharton's quest for continuity by "watching architecture."

1. Edith Wharton's Argument with Ruskin

John Ruskin's work represents a complex symbolic understanding of the visual world for Wharton's generation of Anglo-American writers. Ruskin is an influential painter, critic of art and architecture and social thinker. For Wharton, his aesthetic theories and methods were an early inspiration that she kept referring to throughout her travel writing.

Ruskin on reading architecture

Ruskin uses the analytical skills of the natural scientist in his readings of painting and architecture, and in both areas, he tries to go beyond the superficial aspect of the picturesque towards seeing a symbolic aspect (Ruskin 1903a, 48). His accounts of architecture from the 1850s-80s describe layers of stone, eventually telling the life story of a building. He saw edifices as representations or stories of the communities that have constructed them (Ruskin 1903b, 233-4). Buildings of the Gothic and the early Renaissance present the most organic examples of such architectural stories.

Ruskin's descriptions not only focus on the visual and tactile accounts of visual art but also the emotional effect and the moral or religious values a work carries. Robert Hewison (1975) claims that "in Ruskin's visual imagination each fact finds its place in three orders of truth: truth of fact, truth of thought, and finally truth of symbol" (ch 8).[1] These orders are manifest in the same work of visual art, their understanding or reading depends on the work of the observer, in other words, how the observer relates to the object. This observation is a process that starts with facts.

[1] These three orders of truth can be related to Pascal's three orders: the order of the body, the mind, and the heart (Pavlovits 1999, 286).

After his groundbreaking *Modern Painters*, Ruskin applied his threefold approach to material qualities of visual beauty expressive of a higher order to studying architecture. Ruskin (1903b) formulates his threefold method of watching and reading architecture elaborately in his *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. He presupposes a harmony between divine and human work, nature and culture: "there is no branch of human work" he writes, "whose constant laws have not close analogy with those which govern every other mode of man's exertion" (22). This is valid for practical work, art, and intellectual activity in the same way, because "the truth, decision, and temperance, which we reverently regard as honourable conditions of the spiritual being, have a representative or derivative influence over the works of the hand, the movements of the frame, and the action of the intellect" (23). All human things, therefore, can be recommended and judged in two ways: by their inherent virtue and by their relation to "higher orders of human virtue" (23). In the rest of the volume, architecture is shown to be related to a basic set of seven virtues that connect it to orders of thought and spirituality.

As one of these, Ruskin (1903b) explains a special relation between architecture and memory in the chapter on "The Lamp of Memory." He explains that a serious study of architecture reveals architecture's role in our remembrance of the past: "we cannot remember without her (architecture). How cold is all history how lifeless all imagery, compared to that which the living nation writes, and the uncorrupted marble bears!" (224), he exclaims. The sensory input architecture provides results in an experience related to the men and the cultures of the past "against forgetfulness" by subsequent generations (224).

Ruskin develops his argument about the spiritual value of architecture in the three volumes of his subsequent *The Stones of Venice*, volumes 2 and 3 of which provide actual

examples of virtues in the architecture of Venice. For the Ruskin of *The Stones of Venice*, architectural forms are related to moral life the same way as other human constructs are. Ruskin (1903c) finds the arch the key element of architecture, which metaphorically represents human morals (157) as it fights against gravity and weight as humans fight against each other and sin, and even the history of the arch in architecture reflects this fight against sin. Volume 2 discusses various orders of Byzantine and Gothic arches in Venice, documenting a local preference for the Byzantine even at the time when the Gothic had become mainstream on the mainland (Ruskin 1904a, 13). Ruskin's account of early Renaissance classicism is titled "The Fall" in volume 3, a fall of ornament, first through reverting to Byzantine examples, then to Roman ones. The early Renaissance represents a corruption of the Gothic variety of arches, a poorer architecture (Ruskin 1904b, 5-6). The high Renaissance is portrayed as a tired version of its original examples, whose immoral elements are pride and infidelity (Ruskin 1904b, 45). Finally, he despises the last phase, the Grotesque Renaissance, for being totally without moral character, seeking only pleasure (Ruskin 1904b, 135-6). This is the phase normally called the Baroque today, the style that will come under scrutiny by Wharton, too.

Stephen Kite's *Building Ruskin's Italy: Watching Architecture* surveys Ruskin's practice of "visual thinking as related to architecture" (Kite 2017, 2) based on his books and archival material. Kite starts with the statement that Ruskin inherited the idea that architecture is to be read like literature from de Quincy (1803) and Victor Hugo (1831-2) (Kite 2017, 10), whose idea was that the vision of architecture provides the story of the nation. This model implies that if buildings are to be read, then similarly, texts are to be built as buildings; indeed, Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*, for instance, is constructed like an edifice, from foundation to roof, from stone to structure. Kite connects the impulse to

read architecture to a theological aim, a reading of God's meaning in the surface of the cities (10), which means that the layered meanings of reading art in general explained above are valid in the case of architecture as well, for instance when reading facades in cities like pages of a book. In particular, Kite distinguishes four different kinds of symbolic language in Ruskin's writing about architecture: the language of sculpture and pictorial iconography, of the picturesque, of stones, and of theology (10). He links this symbolic arrangement of meaning to previous terms in Ruskin's criticism, on the one hand to Hewison's idea of the coexistence of two discourses, the technical and the rhetorical, in *The Stones* (11), and on the other hand, to J. B. Bullen's term Ruskin's "synecdochic method" which explains how, in Ruskin, a fragment or a part can represent the whole, together with its romantic-imaginative, analytical, and symbolic aspects of meaning (Kite 2008, 106).

Kite adds that the different aspects that construct the meaning of visions of architecture work together in experience. As he puts it, "Ruskin's complex way of reading things can only be understood in their phenomenological actuality," (Kite 2008, 107 and Kite 2017, 11) in the watching or strolling on the part of the observer of architecture. The experience of the watcher is modelled on Ruskin's example both in his books and in his Notebooks that combine words and pictures to make up "*his* language of architecture" (Smith 2016, 557). In this way, Ruskin's complex idiosyncratic language of architecture seems to have an intermedial aspect when it represents the observer's experience. Kite argues that Ruskinian scenes of imaginative observation are not only actual but also contemplative and rely on the sense of colour (Kite 2012, 16). The cathedrals of France and the palaces of Venice are watched and written about in this manner, aiming to represent the experience of the observer.

Ruskin's three orders of art create a symbolic way of thinking that remains adaptable in other walks of life apart from architecture, too. Raymond Williams explained the significance of Ruskin's framework concerning the keyword culture: "Ruskin is best understood, and necessarily read, as a major contributor to the development of our complex ideas of Culture," Williams (1960) wrote in *Culture and Society* (144). Williams was interested in Ruskin's theory of art from the perspective of his theory of society: Ruskin the social thinker related to the well-known art critic because he thought Ruskin's social criticism of industrialization can be understood "from his kind of thinking about the purposes of art" (Williams 1960, 145). The conditions for perfection that a well-designed social order should provide for man are present in art, the two areas being different "applications" (146) of the same divine principle of Beauty. Williams widens the relevance of Ruskin's model and helps us gauge the stakes of his enterprise. The questions which emerge from this reach well beyond meticulous descriptions of stone arches into the directions of metaphysics, but also into the direction of the study of culture as a way of life. In Hungary, Ruskin's model of art has been analyzed from the perspective of contemporary German idealism on art (Gyenge 2018, 29-33), focusing on how, instead of creating a philosophical model, his work sustained a culture of "applied art" (34). For Wharton, it was Ruskin the art critic whose point of view remained influential.

Wharton's travel writing and Ruskin's eye

Wharton's published travel pieces constitute what I propose calling "the Wharton map." Wharton's published travel texts cover three European areas. First, she wrote about Italy and the presence of the Renaissance and Baroque past in Italian scenes in her *Italian Villas and Their Gardens* (1904) and its companion piece *Italian Backgrounds* (1905).

Secondly, she concentrated on France, exploring historical continuity in French landscapes and architecture, especially cathedrals in her *A Motor-Flight Through France* (1908) and *Fighting France* (1915). Her *French Ways and Their Meaning* (1919) is not a travel text but an ethnographically oriented account of French national traits as such. Thirdly, she wrote about her trip to Morocco, a French protectorate at the time, producing the first tourist book of the country in English *In Morocco* (1920) to report on "the strange survival of mediaeval life" (Wharton 1996, x) in the country before tourists and modernization erased it. This map is to be extended by her Aegean writing, the way her late interest in Spain was documented by Fra López in 2011.

Academic research has added further travel pieces to this set of five, expanding the Wharton map with previously unknown texts. In 1992, Wharton's diary of her 1888 Aegean titled *The Cruise of the Vanadis* was published (Lesage 2004). Frederick Wegener republished Wharton's celebratory essay on French colonial administration in a piece linked to Wharton's accounts of Morocco (Wharton 1998). In 2011 Patricia Fra López published Wharton's 1925 diary of her trip to Compostela with Walter Berry and an unfinished essay titled "Back to Compostela" with an introduction about Wharton's visits to and notions of Spain (see López 2011 and Gómez 2012). Also, a translated section of Wharton's article in French titled "America at War" which eventually became part of her *French Ways and Their Meaning* was published in the *TLS* in 2018 (Wharton 2018). As the list shows, new items from the archive continue to shape and sharpen our knowledge of Wharton as an author and a person (Ohler 2019, 28).

At present, the *Osprey Notes* exists as a notebook in a folder of the Beinecke Library at Yale. It contains fifteen handwritten pages of description about sites Wharton visited in

1926. There are ten entries altogether but only nine descriptive passages of visits to the Ionian Sea and in and around Athens, ten pages of typescript altogether. The fragments capture visual impressions of a specific landscape or architectural sight and catalogue the presence or lack of beauty, peace, and mystery experienced during the visit. The last entry titled "Moonlight on the Parthenon" remains only a caption, as it was never completed. A fragment itself, the *Osprey Notes* cannot function as a full-fledged travel book, nor does it develop a sustained argument about classical Greece or its retrieval in the present. However, the passages highlight certain sites and share a language of admiration that hint at the wider importance of the Greek impressions for Wharton the traveller. Also, in subsequent commentaries, Wharton always speaks highly of the trip. Despite the scant amount of actual text, the later significance of the *Osprey Notes* gives a reason to reconstruct the context of the fragment and try to relate its entries to Wharton's earlier travel output and also speculate its possible place in Wharton's relation to traditions of writing about art and travel.

Placing the *Osprey Notes* on the Wharton map indicates the importance of classical Greece in Wharton's quest for cultural continuity. In particular, an overview of the actual contexts of the trip suggests it is related to Wharton's effort to grapple with her devastating experience of the Great War. Wharton's non-fiction war writings have spurred a debate on her relation to cultural loss and modernism in general, and, as part of this, on what kind of feminine vision of the war behind the lines she represented (Kovács 2017, 545). If the *Osprey Notes* is considered from this perspective, I argue, then the fragments of the notebook may reflect Wharton's way of securing a sense of cultural and historical continuity after the cataclysm of WWI. The role of Ruskin's "way of seeing" within this enterprise, quite popular in recent articles, is in focus now.

The way Wharton and her travel books are related to Ruskin's writings on watching architecture seems a somewhat obscure area of Wharton's criticism. One reason for this may be that Wharton herself remains vague on the issue. In her official autobiography *A Backward Glance* from 1934, she writes that by the time she was seventeen, Ruskin "fed me visions of Italy for which I have never ceased to pine" (Wharton 1990a, 838), and that before Ruskin "the average well-educated tourist of any country was prepared to observe and enjoy" very little (832). Then she mentions that as a young woman, she followed Ruskin's itineraries in *Stones of Venice* and *Walks in Florence* with her ailing father (851). Later on, Wharton situates writing *Villas* and *Backgrounds* as part of a discussion in the 1870s on whether travel writing and art criticism belonged to the domain of the cultured amateur or the technically educated expert but here she makes no explicit reference to John Ruskin:

> In the 'seventies and the 'eighties there had appeared a series of agreeable volumes of travel and art criticism of the cultured dilettante type, which have found thousands of eager readers. From Pater's "Renaissance', and Symonds' "Sketches in Italy and Greece", to the deliciously desultory volumes of Vernon Lee, and Bourget's delicate "Sensations d'Italie", though ranging through varying degrees of erudition, they all represented a high but unspecialized standard of culture; all were in a sense the work of amateurs, and based on the assumption that it is mainly to the cultured amateur that the creative artist must look for appreciation, and that such appreciation ought to be, and often is, worth recording.
> But while the cultivated reader continued to enjoy these books, and to ask for more, the voice of the trained scholar was sounding the note of resistance. Literary "appreciations" of works of art were being smiled away by experts trained in Bertillon-Morelli methods, and my deep contempt for picturesque books about architecture naturally made me side with those who wished to banish sentiment from the study of painting and sculpture. Then, with the publication of Berenson's first volumes on Italian painting, lovers of Italy learned that aesthetic sensibility may be combined with the sternest scientific accuracy. (Wharton 199a, 889-90)

Wharton defines herself as the exponent of the scientific method in travel writing as opposed to writers of subjective impression, yet she has a nostalgia for earlier sentiments

(890). In her "Life and I", her personal autobiography published posthumously, she writes about Ruskin with admiration: "His wonderful cloudy pages gave me back the image of the beautiful Europe I had lost, & woke in me the habit of precise visual observation. The ethical and aesthetical *fatras* were easily enough got rid of later, & as an interpreter of visual impressions he did me incomparable service" (Wharton 1990b, 1084). There seems to have been an early engagement with Ruskin's views on Wharton's part that she was not so willing to provide details about in her official autobiography as if she wanted to play down his influence on her work.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the only monograph on Wharton's travel writing so far by Sarah Bird Wright (1997) identifies Wharton as a connoisseur according to Ruskin's idea of the amateur. Wright emphasizes Wharton's resistance to American travel authors of the picturesque and highlights Ruskin as the influence that triggered Wharton's criticism of the belletristic tradition (ix). She argues that Ruskin helped Wharton to move toward a more scientific register of travel writing expected by US journals in the 1880s (37). Robin Peel (2012) also asserts that Wharton's enthusiasm for Italy was enhanced by Ruskin, so much so that Italy became a "place of enchantment" for her (287). William Blazek (2016) implies the view that the relationship between Wharton and Ruskin was influential when he discusses Wharton's friendship with Charles Eliot Norton who mediated Ruskin's ideas in the US (68).

Somewhat differently, Robert Burden's *Travel, Modernism and Modernity* stresses the different examples Ruskin and later Walter Pater presented for Wharton. Burden (2015) identifies Ruskin's (and Matthew Arnold's) theories as an insistence on the moral function of art (209-10). In contrast, he identifies Pater as the representative of on art for art's sake (210). In Wharton's travel writing, Burden claims, the two different

influences create an ambiguity: her need for balance and harmony is in contrast with her enjoyment of the emotional and ornamental Baroque (211). He argues that Wharton develops modernist themes and styles of presentation both in her fiction and her travel writing, and her developing penchant for Pater and the Baroque in her travelogues is a sign of this change (213). When Emily Orlando (2007) writes that Wharton "challenged Ruskin's views "in her *The Decoration of Houses*" (175) published in 1899, she seems to suggest that Wharton was through with Ruskin by 1900s and that her critique of the Pre-Raphaelites' rhetoric and repertoire of imaging women, inspired by Gothic and late medieval art (13) was connected to that critical breach as well.

In contrast to Burden and possibly Orlando, who distance Wharton from Ruskin, Alexandra Peat's *Travel and Modernist Literature* interprets modernist travel fiction in terms of a secular pilgrimage. Her account would position Wharton closer to a theological tradition as well. When Peat (2011) considers the possible reasons for the recurring theme of travel in various modernist texts, she finds that making a journey usually comes with an ethical dimension for the protagonist in the face of a lost sacred reason (12), as movement in space results in reflection and questioning one's values. Although Peat never mentions Wharton's books, yet, an investigation into how Wharton processes Ruskin's spiritually loaded method of watching and reading architecture may position Wharton's Aegean travel pieces in Peat's framework of modernist travel writing.

The question to explore further is the extent of Ruskin's implicit influence in Wharton's Aegean texts, where the presence and extent of the "architectural vision" she learnt from Ruskin is under investigation. Her representation of Antique ruins and scenes, her comments on the coexistence of styles forms a part of this problematic. In particular, the question is: is it possible to read Wharton's Aegean text and fragments as passages as

constructed along the lines of Ruskin's idea of watchful wandering in the field, an experience ripe with imaginative and moral implications? Would such a framework make one comprehend the fragments better? What difference would such an understanding make in the way travel texts are seen within Wharton's oeuvre?

2. Experiencing Homer's Greece in Wharton's Aegean travel texts

Travelling to Greece has a long history of associations as the journey offers glimpses into the legacy of classical Greek culture, which is visible both in the ruins and through the stories connected to the sites. Most importantly, the mythical settings of stories of Olympian gods and goddesses and heroes are interposed on peaceful sceneries of crumbling ruins, olive groves, cliffs, islands and bays, offering possibilities to reflect on a tradition passed on and lost while watching a perfectly composed natural scenery or a set of ruins. Ancient Greek learning and culture as the cradle of Western civilization have created countless nostalgic journeys and accounts, the historical bent of Romantic authors spurring further interest, a trend that eventually resulted in English, German, French, and American traditions of writing about the return to ancient Greece.

As Roderick Beaton (2016) writes in *The Oxford Handbook of Romanticism*: "[t]he projection of the *contemporary* Greek nation back through three thousand years of history is an essentially Romantic endeavour. In literature, the effects of Romanticism are slow to fade" (2). In particular, David E. Roessel's *In Byron's Shadow* shows how Byron's image of Greece as an ancient concept whose rebirth in the present literary men should fight for influenced English and American writing about Greece until WWII, when Henry Miller in the *The Colossus of Maroussi* "constructed a new concept of modern Greece in writing in English where one went to escape from" having to fight (Roessel 2001, 4). Roessel's model contrasts Byron's Greece to Homer's Greece, as defined by Victor Hugo.

In Wharton, the influence of Homer's Greece is palpable through her references and visits to key scenes of Odysseus' journey in her two travel accounts of the Aegean from 1888 and 1926, while she disparages scenes of Modern Greece.

2.1. Picturesque scenes and observing architecture in *The Cruise of the Vanadis*

Wharton comments on her cruise with the Vanadis as the "crowning wonder of my life" (Lee 2008, 81). The cruise between Feb 17 and May 7 on the Aegean is documented by a full volume of descriptive notes about all the stops of the journey that also allows for rhetorical analysis. The notes were recovered by Claudine Lesage and published by a French university press in 1992, then republished in 2004. Welcoming the new edition in *The Guardian*, Hermione Lee described the volume as Wharton's first text as a mature artist, and Wharton's perspectives as "steeped in Ruskin and Homer and Goethe" (Lee 2004).

Claudine Lesage states in her introduction to the 2004 edition that Wharton's text is a "camera diary" (Lesage 2004, 24). This means not only the obvious idea that the account enumerates descriptions of spectacular scenes as if it was a camera taking pictures, but also that the text leaves out the personal commentary (Lesage 2004, 23), the part Lesage would consider most important in a travel account. Similarly, Louis Auchincloss points out that "beauties of nature and ancient civilization speak for themselves" (Auchincloss 2004, 16) in Wharton's prose. In addition, a closer look at the actual scenes both Lesage and Auchincloss highlight reveals recurring themes and rhetorical patterns connected to a pilgrimage in the land of the past.

The aim of the book is referred to as providing personal impressions of specific sites, and also as an escape from modern life. The purpose of writing is explained as: "to note as exactly as possible the impressions which I myself received" (Wharton 2004, 67) even if they clash with impressions formed by others. Wharton mentions three important specific sites the trip targeted to elicit her impressions: the Cathedral of Monreale in Sicily, the monasteries of Mount Athos, and the Campanile and the ancient ruins in Spalato (65). In more general terms, she is interested in ruins and sceneries connected to the past, not the achievement of modern life and technology (105, 41), as she hopes "to leave practical realities of life behind" (105). Additional zest is given to travel to unchartered territory, which for her means the lack of travel books about the place (106).

In her journal, Wharton (2004) takes account of basic oppositions like Western and Oriental, the everyday and the picturesque, and civilization versus modernization to establish seemingly simple sets of values. Primarily, she seems drawn to Oriental scenes and markets and their difference from colonial (French) scenes (in Algiers, Tunis, Smyrna). She records picturesque scenes with lively groups of people wearing colourful local costumes or striking sceneries with varied forms and colors (be it in Tunis, Palermo, Amorgos or Rhodes). However, she does not always equate picturesque scenes with Oriental impressions or stereotypes: in Smyrna she comments that the "bazaars are *less* Oriental than those of Tunis" (148, emphasis mine) but she finds them and the people bright and picturesque (149), and she finds some scenes *simply* picturesque too, like in Palermo (65). In Tunis she wonders at the Oriental scene unchanged by modern French innovations, and here she labels the Oriental scene uncivilized: "and the step through the Bab-el-Bahr to the Boulevard de la Marine, brought us back to civilization as abruptly as we had left it" (41).

Yet, the lack of "civilization", that is of Western civilization, and the presence of an Oriental past seems not to vex Wharton too much. This comes to the fore when the presence of the past is contrasted to modern Western technological achievements like industrial plants of newly engineered cities which she dislikes immensely (Wharton 2004, 105). Her notion of civilized life comes to the fore in Montenegro, as she describes a desolate Cettinje: the town "which does not boast a single shop, café, garden, a place of amusement" (207), the houses are not fit for civilized people: no walks, rides or drives, no books or papers, no social possibility" (208). Wharton is enchanted by Oriental scenes and impressions the way she is drawn to picturesque scenes, which goes against the grain of modern technological advancement and the lack of cultural and social activity which she sees as more opposed to values of Western civilization than Oriental culture.

Throughout the cruise, Wharton's interest lies in finding traces of the past in the present, a continuity of past forms of life that withstand time in forms as various as costume, ritual, and architecture. Her interest in costumes intensifies when she describes them as part of a festival or rite, as in Corfu and Tenos (Wharton 2004, 198 and 138), in detail. One of her major destinations, the monasteries of Mount Athos, "have existed as we now see them since the tenth century" (117) she writes with admiration.

Historical continuity in architecture presents an ongoing fascination for her both in its material form and as an intellectual challenge. Wharton (2004) is quick to point out diverse ways in which old stones have been captured in subsequent constructions, as at Girgenti the temple of Concord preserves in its walls "the complete skeleton of a Doric temple" (71) or also at Mitylene where slabs of marble are "encrusted in the walls with bas-reliefs on them" (153). At Lindos, a more metaphorical inclusion is described. The church

is supposed to be Byzantine, but Wharton traces its Eastern lines to have arrived on a more complicated route: "[it] is evident that the pointed tunnel-vaulting of this church must have traveled from the East to the West and back again, instead of being taken direct from the Saracen, like the pointed arches of Monreale and Lazisa" (129). She attributes the vaulting to the Provençal grand masters, the pointed arch of Lindos having done a "double journey" from the East to Provence and back to Rhodes. Similarly, actual and metaphorical continuity meet in the case of the Cathedral of Syracuse as well:

> Whose ugly Renaissance façade is placed like a mask before the cella and peristyle of the Doric temple of Athene. It is interesting to see how much of the temple is preserved – the columns of the peristyle embedded in the outer wall of the church, and the cella cut through to form the piers of the nave – and sad to note how cruelly the Christian adapter handled his materials. (Wharton 2004, 53)

Continuity here is achieved through a brutal handling of the original Greek structure. Of course, the (late) Renaissance façade referred to in the passage is one we today identify as Baroque, described as ugly by the young Wharton. In Malta, she finds the cathedral in Valetta ugly in a similar way, as it is from the end of the seventeenth century, and she misses the traces of the cathedral by Norman kings from the twelfth century (48). She prefers the church of St. John from the end of the sixteenth century with is "sculptured stone" and delicate coloring and carvings (49). In Spalato, she spots "the survival of Renaissance forms in Dalmatia long after they have fallen into disuse elsewhere" (217) and then in Zara she is quick to find another example for the survival of an earlier style: the Romanesque arches of the Doumo from the thirteenth century repeated in the forms of the façade of the Church St. Chrysogonus nearby, built 200 years later (200). So both

materially and metaphorically, Wharton is on the lookout for the coexistence and continuity of stones and styles in architecture as marks of the past.

Wharton is ready to question previous written opinions about famous architectural monuments not only through reimagining their history but also through her impressions. She defies the general high opinion of the Cathedral of Monreale, as she finds it "a disappointment from the outside," while its magnificent inside "lacks variety and colour" (65), she writes. At Milo, the island where the Venus of Milo was found, she is disappointed again: "I have read so much of the beauties of Milo that my first impression was disappointment" (100) she confesses, like in Monreale. However, she is quick to discover new locations of interest. Instead of the cathedral of Monreale, she finds reason to spend time in the Benedictine monastery next door which conveys a sense of "shadow and mystery in the blaze of colour" (67). Her reference to the "zest" of travel on land not reported as discovery (Santorini) (106) explains her eagerness to communicate new opinions.

Although she tries to argue against the opinion of some of her travelling predecessors, her writing is framed by several references to art and literature that find their way into her commentary. She recognizes the Campanile at Ragusa based on Freeman's sketch (213). She recalls a chapter from Lady Brassey's *Sunshine and Storm* when its character, Captain Mansell appears in person (182). She is aware of her predecessors writing about the Aegean, Curzon (179) and Hare (70). The most influential reference, however, is to the *Odyssey*. The travellers drink sweet wine like Ulysses and his crew (103), they view the shores of the Gulf of Molo as "under these trees Ulysses is to have lain" (194). The whole

trip is referred to as her maiden Odyssey (Lesage 2004, 24) because the itinerary follows stops of the great wanderer.

The culminating experience of the cruise for Wharton comes from scenes of "mystery" and "beauty" she records regularly. She writes as if she were on the lookout for memorable scenes with contemplative potential. As Herimone Lee puts it: "Wharton's appetite for scenery was insatiable" (Lee 2008, 94), and Lee draws attention to Wharton's keen eye for gardens and plants in particular. But this appetite also involved monuments, historic towns, lookout posts, and views to be remembered. One notes that her impressions of Sicily, the Ionian and Aegean islands, Athens, and Dalmatia are all strewn by descriptive scenes of pleasurable scenery which, in turn, show remarkable similarities. It is worth lingering on them, as they are the most spectacular items of Wharton's "photo diary" (Lesage 2004, 23) that show not only the scenery but indicate patterns of Wharton's emerging architectural vision as well.

In Sicily, Wharton was both disappointed and enchanted by the scenery several times. The Cathedrale of Monreale did not live up to her expectations but she was impressed by the perfect scene at the Benedictine monastery beside it, and her impression takes the form of a detailed visual report of the site and the building. Wharton starts out by describing the layout of the building, then adds details about plants and finally, she writes about the arches and the columns of the structure. An appreciation of the view crowns the passage with an exclamation: "And what a view the monks had from their marble seats along the parapet!" and the passage ends with an appreciation of the view (Wharton 2004, 65-7). At Taormina a visit to the ruins of the Greek theatre is introduced by the view of ascending to the site and the vegetation, then the description of the actual ruins and the

rosy colour of the arches are, and of the local plants gilded by the golden color of the oranges in the nearby groves. This leads to a brief emotional exclamation that punctuates the account: “No words of mine can give any idea of the beauty of it all” (62), where Wharton seems to sigh perhaps not so much in resignation but rather in admiration about this “concentrated beauty” (63). In the Royal Palace of Palermo, the Capella Palatina is described as an interior scene by itself. First, the light is shown, then the walls stone by stone to explain this “tiny epitome of the mystery and splendor of St. Mark’s” with the golden light varying with shade, and different colours of marble that resemble Monreale (67-8). Here the scene does not include the emotional commentary but an estimation of its effect, the “cool brilliance” of colourful stone.

A miniature description of the Citadel at Mitylene combines the elements of stone, vegetation, view, and impression that have appeared before. First, Wharton (2004) notes “slabs of marble encrusted in the walls” (153) as marks of continuity, and she goes on to assess the view: gardens, the strait, the sea, the coast as the eye sweeps along it, and eventually she surveys the vegetation. Her evaluation of the scene follows: “Mithylene is the most beautiful island of the Aegean” (153). The effect returns several times in descriptions of monasteries, especially at Amorgos (111-3) and Stavroniketa (175) on Mount Athos.

The crowning experience of visual beauty is staged in the description of the visit to the Acropolis. The passage is introduced by a survey of the colours marble takes, it surveys the scenery and then sums up the effect. The hues and tints of the marble vary as time passes: the new building blocks of the Athens Academy, constructed between 1861-85, seem to offer the colours as they must have been: stone of soft ivory, gold in the

inscriptions, blue as decorating background for the sculptures of the pediment. In contrast, up at the ruins of the Acropolis, the marble "has taken a primrose hue, now fading to ivory, now deepening to russet, and the columns absolutely glow in the sunshine against the blue sky" (Wharton 2004, 198). The stones of the Acropolis exhale beauty with their ripples of colour.

The scenery is surveyed with precision, and each geographical or architectural item is tagged with its name for identification. The wide view of the hills and the bay opens the description: on the left Hymettus, Lycabettus, and the bay of Eleusis, opposite the islands and hills (Psyttaleia, Salamis, Aegina). Then follows the closer view of the plain just under the Acropolis with background and foreground (Wharton 2004, 189), just to be swept further away towards the sea, to the left and the right. The impression of the scene is summarized by yet another image, that of the white Acropolis by moonlight surrounded by the twinkling lights and shadows of Athens and by the dark forms of the surrounding mountains.

The scenes surveyed so far have all compactly communicated actual experiences of beauty. The description of the scenery included views, verdure, stone and colour. Lingering at the spot is one sign of the effect made on her, another was the occasional exclamation about beauty. In general, it is more the exquisite terms of the description that convey the sense of beauty experienced rather than the actual aesthetic judgements, but the experience of beauty is always emphasized.

2.2. Architectural Vision in the *Osprey Notes*

In 1926 Wharton set out for another Aegean cruise, a sunset party to take inventory of many of the sites she saw and experienced in 1888. Between April 1, 1926 and May 30, 1926, the Osprey took five travellers around the Aegean and the Easter Mediterranean. They cruised the Ionian islands, the Aegean islands, Rhodes, the Gulf of Aegina and Athens again, added Crete but left out Mount Athos. The way Wharton reconstructed her visual experience in 1926 shows remarkable similarities to her early text, despite the 38 years between the two journeys and her recent devastating experience of the loss of historical continuity in the Great War.

The itinerary of the Osprey can be traced not so much based on the *Osprey Notes* but rather by relying on extra documentation. First and foremost, Wharton's autobiography *A Backward Glance (*Wharton 1990a, 1058-60) points out the significance of the cruise and its relation to the 1888 visit to the Aegean. Yet, this account articulates the significance of the journey to Wharton rather than its particulars. Various biographies also help to chart the scope, if not the details, of the enterprise. In terms of dates, sites, and impressions, it is Margaret Chanler's (1936) *Autumn in the Valley* that provides the most practical information about the design of the journey and also about the kind of art historical running commentary the connoisseur travellers must have made during their visits to sights. Last but not least, Wharton's diary of the cruise with the Vanadis helps the work of reconstruction in that some of its chapters overlap with the *Notes*. Wharton's letters also provide clues about her experience, if not the details, of the trip.

The ten fragmented notes of the Osprey Notebook cover only a section of Wharton's second journey to the Aegean. The headings are the following: Gulf of Aegina, Cephalonia, Olympia, Delphi, Athens, Aegina, Eleusis, Kaisariani, Mendéli, and Parthenon by moonlight. Fortunately, her travelling companion, Daisy Chanler (1936) wrote a detailed account of the trip in her *Autumn in the Valley*, which provides a full itinerary. Based on Chanler's book it is possible to determine the part of the journey and even the dates the fragments belong to. When you compare the notes to the full itinerary reconstructed above, it becomes obvious that they cover only a small portion of the actual cruise, namely the visits between the island of Cephalonia and the days in and around Athens. Possibly, Wharton wrote the entries after arriving at Athens, as the sea of Aegina is described by reference to sculptures at the Parthenon. Also, the final entry "Parthenon by moonlight" must be either a reference to the evening Daisy Chanler also remembered fondly from April 27 (220) or the day after when they visited again, so the coverage ends before sailing for the Aegean islands.

The ten fragmented passages of the *Osprey Notes* represent different levels of picturesque description. Three entries are practically empty: Cephalonia (1) and Athens (5) are short notes about the itinerary only, while "The Parthenon by moonlight" (10) has no note section at all, only a title. Among the remaining seven entries one can find full descriptions of seascape or landscape, architecture, vegetation and in some cases also the impressions these scenes make. Based on the quantity of reflection, it is the Delphi (4) and the Mendéli (9) segments that stand out as the fullest, while the description of the gulf of Aegina (1) Olympia (3), Kaisariani (8) and Eleusis (7) contain some features of what I would call Wharton's "picturesque scene".

The Delphi (4) note presents a picturesque scene in detail. The passage begins with the travellers watching the land from the yacht, then landing at Itea, in the bay underneath the hills of Delphi, taking in the view of the olive orchards of Apollo, the bay and the mountains with snow caps. Then follows the visual description of the ascent to the shrine, the elevation leading to commentary: "Unimaginable beauty—up and up." (Delphi). Moving closer, the landscape and the ruins are named and described until a quiet sort of verbal ecstasy is reached: "Below the spring we lunched under huge olives on the slope just above the ruins of the Gymnasium, where the great circular swimming-pool is still well-preserved. All was beauty, serenity and awe. A matchless landscape." (Delphi) In other words, the scene is watched, and the visual image is considered and taken in to be measured up in the form of an evaluative impression. The account of an afternoon stroll repeats the elements of the first impression, however, the evaluative part is not repeated, only the visual. Finally, an additional sober sequence breaks the awe of the fragment about items of art at the museum that cannot compare to the Apollo of Olympia.

In a letter addressed to Gaillard Lapsley on April 11, 1926, Wharton described the visit to Delphi in a slightly modified way and the differences between the text of the note and the letter shed light on what a picturesque entry remembers and what an entertaining anecdote retells. Despite the opening that "[n]o words can express Delphi, nor tell you the beauty of the approach by the bay of Itea, with the snowy Acrocoraunian mountains in our rear, across the gulf, & ahead of us, over frowning Delphi, Parnassus all with snow" (Wharton 1989, 489), Wharton is at pains to flesh out the details of the "day of loveliness" (489). She mentions the pie from the luncheon basket consumed among olive trees to create a contrast to the 200 tourists of the (British) Hellenic Association who lunched at a hotel. The travellers of the Osprey tried to hide from the tourists but could not and had to

listen to how they did their Aegean tour in 10 days. Wharton comments on the contrast between tourists and travellers in banter "I told them Americans were the only people left who understood the meaning of Leisure" (490). She exploits the contrast between the British tourists and themselves, the (American) travellers, further. She writes Lapsley (one of Wharton's literary wives as Nicky Mariano put it) about how her companion Robert Norton (British, devout bachelor, another of the literary wives) was shaken by the spectacle of 150 ladies in their travel gear at the monument to declare that "he would foreswear his nationality & take out Greek (or American, I forget which) papers" (490). So not only traditional tourists are made fun of here, but traditional middle-class roles and Norton's lack of interest in the women as well. Wharton implies the good laughs the travellers must have had when she refers to the ladies as "bawny nymphs" and tells how they tried to mockingly console Robert who brooded over the fact that "he might have been married to one of them" (490). In the letter, the approach and visit to Delphi are recorded as an experience of beauty, but the focus of the description is on the fact that this experience belongs to the leisurely traveller not to the tourist hurrying along her scheduled itinerary. The anecdote of the letter accentuates the contrast between tourist and traveller at the shrine, while the note records some of the awe and wonder that only the traveller can experience and that lies at the heart of the distinction.

The Mendéli (9) fragment represents a visit to the Mendéli monastery that also reports about an experience of beauty. In this note, the description of the approach to the monastery begins with the identification of the hills and elevations and is then punctuated by the view of the actual monastery. The complete and prosperous shape of the buildings offers no picturesque quality, yet "there is beauty" in the symmetry of the building, its relation to the vegetation and to the silver water flowing by the building. The valuable

impression of the landscape is collected during a walk above the monastery in the hill, the view of the orchards and forest, hills, plains, sea (all identified by name), a new story at every turn. As a culmination, Wharton reflects: “What a landscape!”. As an addition, she identifies the impression through a literary allusion to Keat’s “Ode on a Grecian Urn”: “As we returned, the air was full of sweet bells, and a flock of black goats with undulating horns came down the hill tended by a tiny boy and girl, and followed by a flock of honey-brown sheep with long hieratic fleeces.—‘O little town??...’ It was all saturated with Keats.” The timeless quality of the picturesque scene is not spelled out explicitly, only the reference to the scene as similar to the one on the urn in Keats, which implies Keats’ sense of timelessness:

> Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
> As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
> When old age shall this generation waste,
> Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
> "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

The Attic shape of the typically Greek picturesque scene evokes an impression of the Romantic notion of timeless imaginative beauty in the observer.

In the companion piece to this fragment, Kaisariani (8), the impression of security and dreams created by the picturesque scene is explicated by the image of the beehive.

> No view, but huge shady plane trees in the outer court, and the usual impression of coolness, meditation, security and dreams. Very picturesque inner courts, wildly irregular with deep archways, overhanging loggias, old crumbling stone stairways, and the low-arched cloister preceding the little church, so honey-brown, domed, embroidered, with comb-like traceries?, that it might have been made by the bees, the celebrated bees of Hymettus—and the monks after all might

> be compared to them, with their patient building-up and their storing of sweetness, in all the wild warring times. (Kaisariani)

The building of the church looks like a beehive, and also functions like a beehive in the image: the monks are identified with bees and are storing the sweet peace of the past during the wild "warring" time of the present.

The fragment about Eleusis further explains the quality of the saturated impression of the peace of the past. The approach, the landscape and ruins are also described here, but, surprisingly, the lack of vegetation and water results in the comment that the effect is useless: "not *mysterious enough*. There are no trees, no waters, to help one to dream back into the past." (Eleusis, Wharton's emphasis). It follows from this that the impression created by the approach through the view, the landscape, the vegetation and the water serves a definite purpose: it is supposed to help the observer "dream back into the past," imagine to be present in the past for a short *mysterious* moment in time. Again, this is an instance where a picturesque scene could mysteriously evoke the timeless harmony of ancient Greece like it did in Keats's poem. Unfortunately, the model is present only in its absence, as Wharton laments the lack of the experience this time, but even this absence helps one assess the expected content of a "picturesque scene."

The picturesque scene *à la* Wharton consists of basic identifiable parts whose mixture can result in an impression. The description begins with an approach: how the traveller, arriving, takes in the whole scenery and what view s/he sees. The description of different elements of the landscape complete with names and shapes is normally followed by a catalogue of the vegetation, trees and especially flowers are identified. If applicable, the main contours of a building or some ruins are added. A stream or brook on the premises is always highlighted as part of the landscape and view. Finally, the spectator/s reflection

is enabled by looking at the view at length, sitting on a bench or drinking coffee or having a picnic. It is this final point of reflection that results in a personal impression about the picturesque scene. The impression can be general (timeless beauty) or architectural, even literary. The present and the past meet in an experience of timeless beauty that is both mysterious and dreamlike and enables the traveller to visit the past imaginatively. In some passages, the picturesque scene is coupled with the story of the visit to the Museum on the site.

3. Absence and presence of the past in Athens and Crete

Unfortunately, the entry on the Parthenon is missing from the *Notes* although it would undoubtedly be an ideal site for a picturesque scene and an experience of continuity between past and present. Therefore, it comes as a disappointment that there is only the promising heading *"~~The Parthenon by moonlight~~Moonlight on the Parthenon.*" that ends the notebook. It makes one ask how moonlight at the scene might enhance the mystery of the presence of past harmony at the Parthenon, as Wharton observed it. Regrettably, the Parthenon is only referred to earlier, via its horses and other sculptures when the waves of the gulf of Aegina are described in the first entry. However, there is some external evidence at hand to consider a possible impression the travellers experienced at the Parthenon.

Firstly, we know that Daisy Chanler's account contains a passage about April 27, when the Acropolis was open at night because of the full moon and the friends visited it. Interestingly, Chanler describes the event in a passage that bears some features of Wharton's picturesque scenes. She writes:

> That evening, after dinner, three of us went ashore to see the Acropolis by moonlight; it was indescribably beautiful. The Propilaea have a magical whiteness, a sort of unearthly light. The Parthenon glows more warmly in the moonlight. Its marble has weathered to pinky-brown which seems alive, especially the western end. It was all transporting; one seemed to be in Eternity. On the three nights of the full moon the Acropolis is thrown open to the public and the temples come to life with Athenians of all classes wandering in and out of them. On ordinary days, when one pays for admission, the place is full of tourists with their Baedekkers and no Athenian goes near it. We got back to the ship near twelve o'clock but could not get to sleep for a long time, thinking or rather feeling the beauty of it. (Chanler 1936, 220)

The account describes an experience of beauty in full that shows remarkable similarities to Wharton's scenes. It starts out with a view of the temples, then charts the colours and the light that trigger an emotional response, which brings an impression of the dead ruin coming back to life, especially as Greek people wander around in it. The term "Eternity" indicates that the experience seems to transport travellers beyond everyday time. This experience is contrasted to the ordinary view tourists can get of the same site for a fee by daylight, seeing it as a dead place of the past. Chanler's passage contains a brief description of the approach to the Acropolis, a view of the temples, an impression of beauty and of the continuity between past and present together with the hint that this rare experience belongs only to the traveller. It does not draw on Wharton's sometimes flamboyant language, but all the important themes of a picturesque scene can be identified in it.

Secondly, Wharton's Vanadis diary also has a passage about the Acropolis (Wharton 2004, 189), the rhetoric of which is similar. This passage begins with an approach from the direction of the Academy of Sciences, a reproduced Greek building of Ionic order (188). Then the building is compared to those of the Acropolis: the marble of the buildings at the Acropolis has lost its original tints, and "has taken a primrose hue,

now fading to ivory, now deepening to russet, and the columns absolutely glowing the sunshine against the blue sky" (189). The view is surveyed all around, with all the places of interest identified. Then comes the description of the view on the night of a full-moon: "the temples seem made of ivory, and far beneath lies Athens, twinkling with hundreds of lights, with shadowy clumps of trees rising between the house-roofs, and a misty wall of mountains all around" (189). The passage closes with an account of the Museums and Athens the travellers had no time to see because they concentrate on the Acropolis. The passage in *The Vanadis* has the elements of a picturesque scene, without the crowning impression of timeless beauty that would summarize the significance of experience.

In addition to the passage about the Acropolis, Wharton's *Vanadis* includes several passages of picturesque views with detailed descriptions of the landscape. For instance, a scene at Rhodes nature is described in a manner similar to the later notes:

> Then we went on by more leafy lanes, and at last reached the little café of Simbulli, built on a terrace shaded by great plane-trees. Nothing can be imagined more deliciously cool and green than this place, nor more picturesque than the little stream close by, shaded by overleaning trees and spanned by the arch of a Roman aqueduct. We sat there for a long time on a stone bench against the wall of the house, drinking Turkish coffee, and listening to the tinkle of water into a square tank under the plane-trees; then we returned to Rhodes by a lower road, and stopped on our way at the English Consulate to see some more Lindos plates. (Wharton 2004, 128)

There is an approach to the scene that prepares the event, the picturesque site is shady, with leafy vegetation, water and a view that enables reflection. Yet, again, the scene is not crowned by the representation of an experience of beauty; instead, as in the case of the Acropolis, a piece of travel related information gives the passage a businesslike ending.

The idea of a descriptive picturesque scene that comes with the experience of timeless beauty helps one contextualize one more absence in the *Osprey Notes*. The scene in question is Wharton's visit to Hagia Triada in Crete. The visit is of course described by Daisy Chanler (1936) and is also mentioned by Wharton in her last letter to Bernard Berenson in 1937. The two references, together with the notion of Wharton's picturesque scene developed above, add a further clue to the possible significance of the emotional experience the Aegean cruise provided Wharton with.

On the way to Hagia Triada, Daisy Chanler describes a natural scene with measured enthusiasm. She saw a "heavenly place" with a view, vegetation, color, and water perfectly fit for a pause, but moved on easily:

> It took us a little over two hours to reach a heavenly valley where we sat in the shade of large olive trees and listened to a chorus of nightingales; each tree seemed to have its oven singer. A brook, the first we have seen in Greece, ran babbling by, bordered by pink oleanders that grew in great profusion along its meandering banks as far as the eye could reach. There we lunched, and then went on to Hagia Triada. (Chanler 1936, 236)

At this point, Daisy was probably more interested in comparing Sir Evan's methods of reconstructing Minos's palace at Knossos with the Italian excavators' different practice than the scene itself (236). Nevertheless, her description helps one locate Wharton's reference to this scene in 1937.

Wharton's reference to Crete opens up links to emotional experience, Emerson, and pilgrimage. In April 1937, four months before her death, Wharton had to cancel her trip to the Berensons due to illness. In her letter of April 9, she gives her reasons and wishes Berenson all the best for their travels later. Then she adds:

> But by all means see Crete too – &don't fail, on the way from Candia to the Italian excavations, on the other side of the island, to stop & picnic beside a stream smothered in blossoming oleander, with snow-covered Ida soaring in the blue above.
>
> Oh me, how thankful I am to remember that, whether as to people or as to places & occasions, I've *always* known the gods the moment I met them. Oh how clearly I remember saying to myself that day by the stream, as I looked up at the snow through the pink oleanders: "Old girls, this is one of the pinnacles—" as I did the last time I was at Compostela. (Wharton 1989, 604-5)

Wharton is referring to the site mentioned in Daisy Chanler's account: she gives the bare minimum of visual input about it but adds an explicit explanation about its significance: "I've *always* known the gods the moment I met them," a pinnacle, like a pilgrimage to Compostela. In their introduction to the last section of Wharton's letters, the Lewises write that this "was a far-echoing remark, and one that connected up half a lifetime: revoking a passage from Emerson she had first drawn upon, in late February 1908, to tell Morton Fullerton of the nature of her love for him" (Lewis and Lewis 1989, 512). Wharton's letter implies that there is a site in nature where a powerful emotional experience can be attained just by going there and looking, like at a pilgrimage.

Wharton's reference to Compostela is also linked to the element of pilgrimage and emotional experience. Fra López has written about Wharton's two trips to Compostela, the first with Walter Berry in 1925, the second in 1928 and published Wharton's "Spain Diary" of the 1925 journey and her essay of the second trip "Back to Compostela" written around 1930. López writes that Compostela moved the agnostic Wharton emotionally, and Gómez Reus argues that "there is little in the "Spain Diary" and in "Back to Compostela" that suggests that Wharton's interest in the Way of St. James went any deeper than the historical and the artistic" (Gómez 2012, 216). As for contextualizing the *Osprey Notes*,

the element of pilgrimage results in an emotional experience that links it to the "Spain Diary" and "Back to Compostela", the three texts written in 1926, 1925, and 1930, respectively.

Our imaginative reconstruction of the Hagia Triada scene of Wharton's 1926 Aegean cruise that she never actually wrote down in the form of a notebook entry teaches us several lessons. The reconstruction makes it evident that the *Osprey Notes* is a fragment in several senses. First of all, it does not cover the whole of the cruise and key scenes are absent from it, not only the "Acropolis by moonlight" the title of which is there, but also "Hagia Triada" which does not even appear as a title but is known from other sources. Secondly, the notes that we have are not fully elaborate renderings of the visits but simply notes, i.e. reminders for a fuller later version. It is only the visit to Dephi that is documented in a way that gives a hint of the value of the emotional experience there. Thirdly, one needs a philological background to be able to locate the *Notes* as far as themes and style of presentation go. A familiarity with Wharton's *The Cruise of the Vanadis*, her letters, her autobiography, and other travel writings are inevitably needed for contextualizing the remarks and to assess their value for the map of Wharton studies.

Conclusion

Edith Wharton the travel author, if she is known at all in this capacity, is recognized for her work on Italy, France, and Morocco based on her five published travel books. She wrote these between 1905 and 1920, and her travel-related output remains limited to her fiction afterwards. Prompted by Susan Schriber (1999), Wharton scholars know that the romance of travel was lost for Wharton after the Great War, so despite the fact that she continued to travel frequently, she did not publish travel related texts after *In Morocco*.

This view was not challenged when Lesage recovered the typescript of Wharton's detailed journal about her cruise in the Mediterranean and published it under the title *The Cruise of the Vanadis*. The account showed how well prepared the young Wharton was for writing the romance of travel in the early years of her marriage already at the age of 26, well before she began publishing her fiction in earnest.

However, researchers in the archives have long known about Wharton's short travel texts after 1920, and one volume was published with her two Spanish fragments by Patrician Fra López in 2011. That volume, *Back to Compostela,* put Spain on the map of Wharton's travel writing, and its introductory essay provided a detailed account of Wharton's connection to Spain in general and to the Pilgrimage of Compostela in particular and documented Wharton's interests in Spanish locations using a wide array of materials. The essay did not argue for an explicit religious interest in the sites, but it definitely showed a renewed interest in the romance of travel for Wharton in the 1920s.

This essay has tried to document Wharton's interest in travel in the Aegean after 1920 by incorporating her fragment *Osprey Notes* from 1926 into the body of Wharton's travel writing. The *Osprey Notes* provides the elderly Wharton's representations of sites of her youth in a string of flamboyant descriptive passages. The *Osprey Notes* are fragments in several senses of the term: they only cover part of the journey, they are obviously not finished, and they need a context in which they can be attributed a significance. In order to be able to position the fragments in the body of Wharton's travel writing, the essay argued, scholars need to be aware of the contexts of both her other travel pieces and her method I have called architectural vision she adopted from Ruskin. The

main question was how earlier methods and inspirations for travel familiar from *Vanadis* and the other travel books possibly recur in the *Osprey Notes*.

The concern with architectural vision abounds in Wharton's published travel texts. In general, the term refers to a way of looking at architectural space and space constructed architecturally that is connected to John Ruskin's ideas about observing architecture. Ruskin proposed a synecdochic reading of visual art in general. This model presupposes a that each "thing" seen has three areas of significance related to it: a specific material observation is connected to an aesthetic experience Ruskin thought symbolized a theological message. Ruskin used the same three aspects for analyzing architecture, he not only studied the actual stones of a building but also the effect it made on the viewer and the general connection it had to what he called God's order. Robert Hewison and Stephen Kite analysed how this model represented a turn away from the early nineteenth-century picturesque tradition to a morally invested view of beauty in painting and in the study of architecture, respectively. The distinction between the notions "surface picturesque" and "deep picturesque" in the rendering of a scene or in the construction of a building indicates Ruskin's shift of interest from a sight itself to the extra implications a picturesque visual impression carries, both materially and spiritually.

Wharton's early and late Aegean texts contain many picturesque scenes. *The Cruise of the Vanadis* lists verbal picture after verbal picture about spectacular well-known sites and also little-known impressive sceneries. The descriptions share a specific textual construction: the approach and the scenery are described beside a ruin, very often together with a detailed account of the vegetation. The term "picturesque" is used quite often, but specific references to the quality of the beauty experienced remain sparse. In

the *Osprey Notes* from 1926, the construction of the descriptive passages shows a remarkable similarity to those in the earlier text, with the addition that the approach becomes more enhanced. The most important addition, however, is the heightened sense of the aesthetic experience that is indicated both by the dramatic vocabulary and the references to beauty and not to the picturesque. The most acute impression, that of the Parthenon by moonlight, is there only as a caption, a fragmented ruin, and the experience at Hagia Triada Crete Wharton referred to several times later is absent altogether.

The scenes of the two Aegean travel journals offer picturesque views that shift from the surface to deep senses of the term. When in the early account the picturesque is an epithet, when a picturesque scene is shown but not commented on from the perspective of experience, its extra implications are not referred to. I think these are the instances Lesage referred to, saying the important elements of *Vanadis* were left unsaid (Lesage 2004, 23). Yet, there is a tendency to find such scenes and also a tendency to indicate the importance of such events by mentioning the extra time spent at these locations. In the *Osprey Notes* the fragments all target impressions of scenes of beauty and experiences of beauty. I think Robert Burden would identify these passages as written in a Pateresque manner (Burden 2015, 209-10). Yet the structural similarities between the passages of the earlier journal and the later one suggest to me that what is at stake here is the rendering of a deep sense of the picturesque, the physical, the aesthetic and the implied moral significances of a given scene represented together. The aim of the journey is to collect sceneries to remember and enjoy again, or, as the roughly contemporary fragment, “Back to Italy,” would have it: “retrospection in enjoyment” (Wharton 1934).

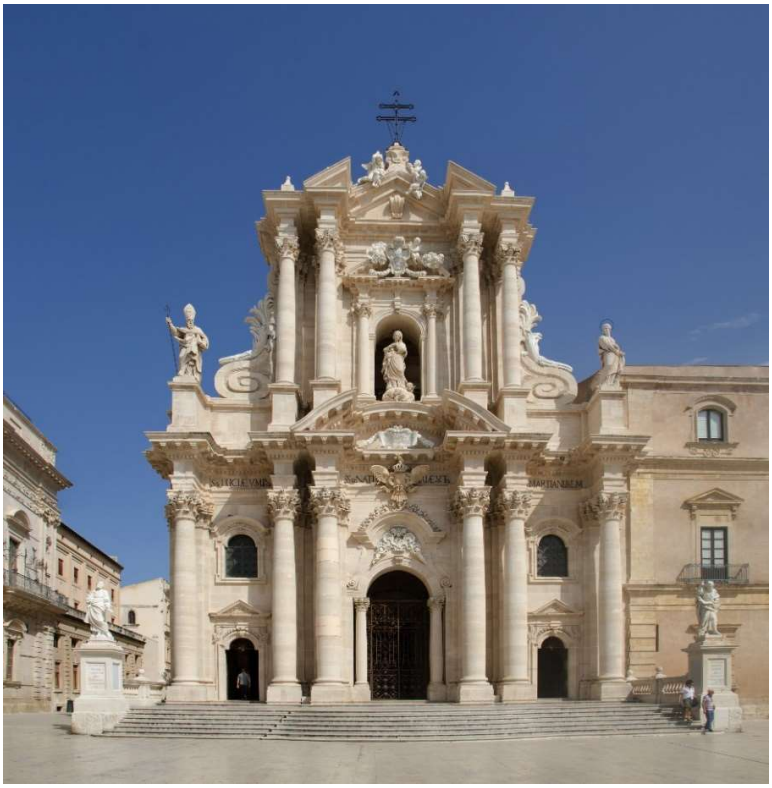
Besides the theoretical and the textual contexts of the *Osprey Notes*, it can also be considered in relation to other travel-related texts from the Wharton Collection at Beinecke or other archives, opening up further vistas of academic research. The most obvious texts to include would be the Spanish fragments "Back to Compostela" (1925) and Wharton's diary of her first trip to Spain with Walter Berry published by Fra López in 2011. Also, with its Spanish scenes, the text of the fragment "A Motor-Flight through Spain" belongs to this field. From 1934, Wharton's "Back to Italy" is a short essay on methods of travel writing similar to Wharton's summary of traditions of writing travel in *A Backward Glance*. No wonder that Hermione Lee (2008) dates it to October 1934 (732). The question to explore is whether the late fragments can be read in the framework of a secular pilgrimage.

In this volume, besides the *Osprey Notes* you will find the early essay "Education Through the Eyes" comes from Wharton's time as a married woman at Newport, in which she puts forward her idea about how one can learn to see order and values of the past, an argument that helps place the intellectual position of the young Wharton among different schools of architectural thinking in the late nineteenth-century US. Her poem from the 1880s, "Penelope," reflects her early concern with Ulysses's from a feminine perspective.

Yet another area of further research is the relevance of the notion of architectural vision in Wharton's other nonfiction or fiction. It would seem that the interest in the experience of visual culture and within it, the implied significance of architecture, is a basic theme Wharton liked to make use of and explore. At present, the short pieces from the archive offer only glimpses of the visual interest in Wharton's travel and related texts in order to enter them into the arena of scholarly discussion.

APPENDIX

1. Cathedral of Syracuse

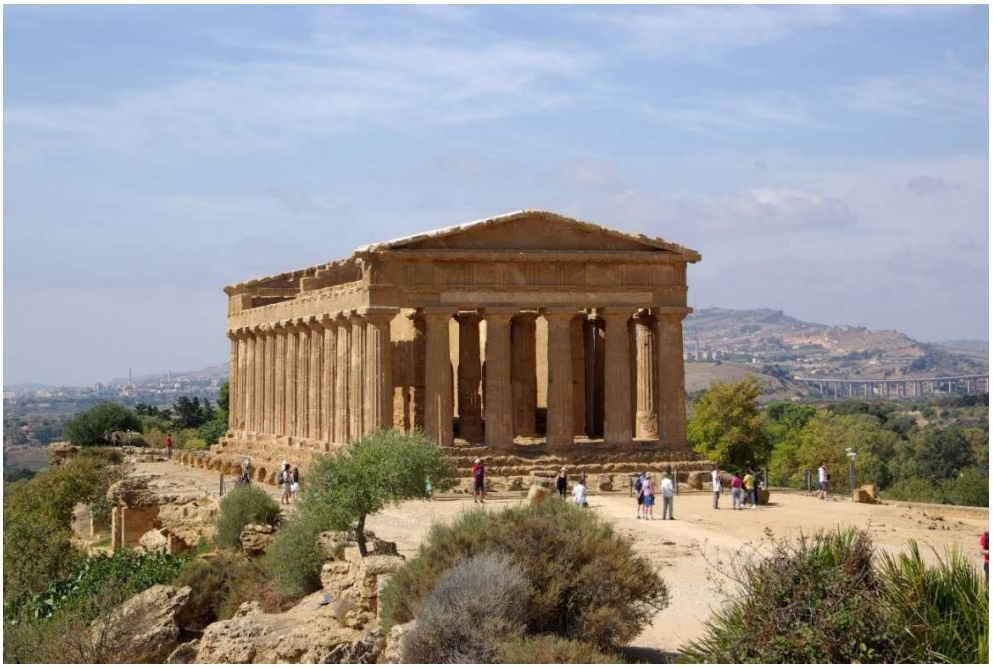


2. The cloister of the Cathedral of Monreale

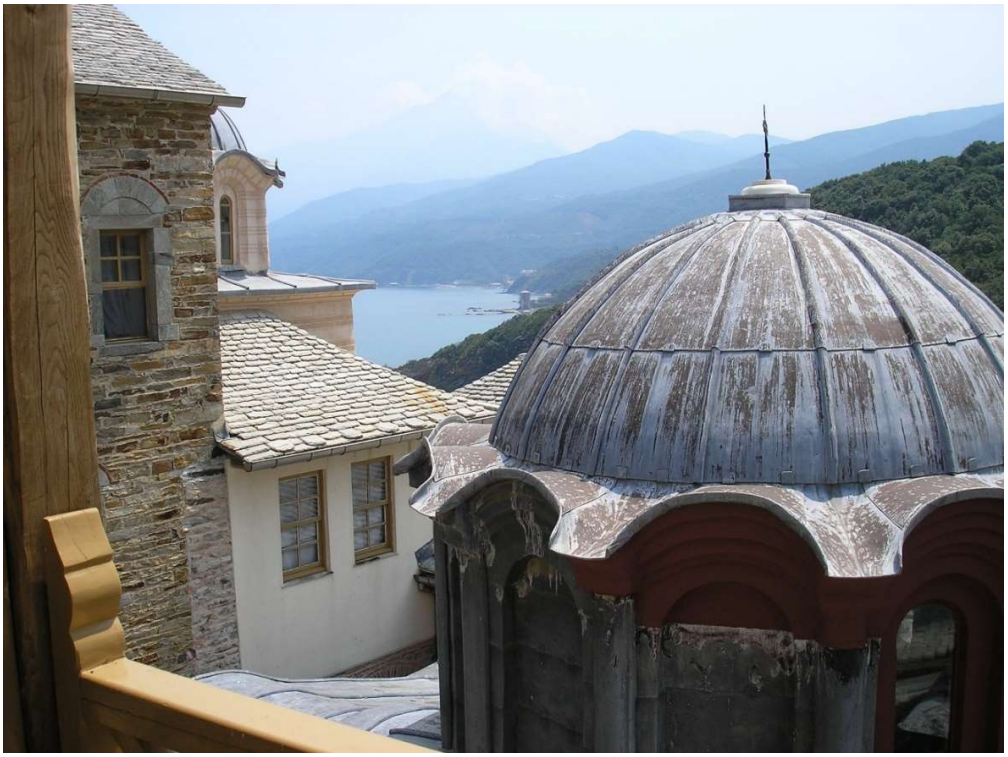
3. Ruins of the Greek Theatre, Taormina

4. Capella Palatina, Palermo

5. Concordia, Agrigento

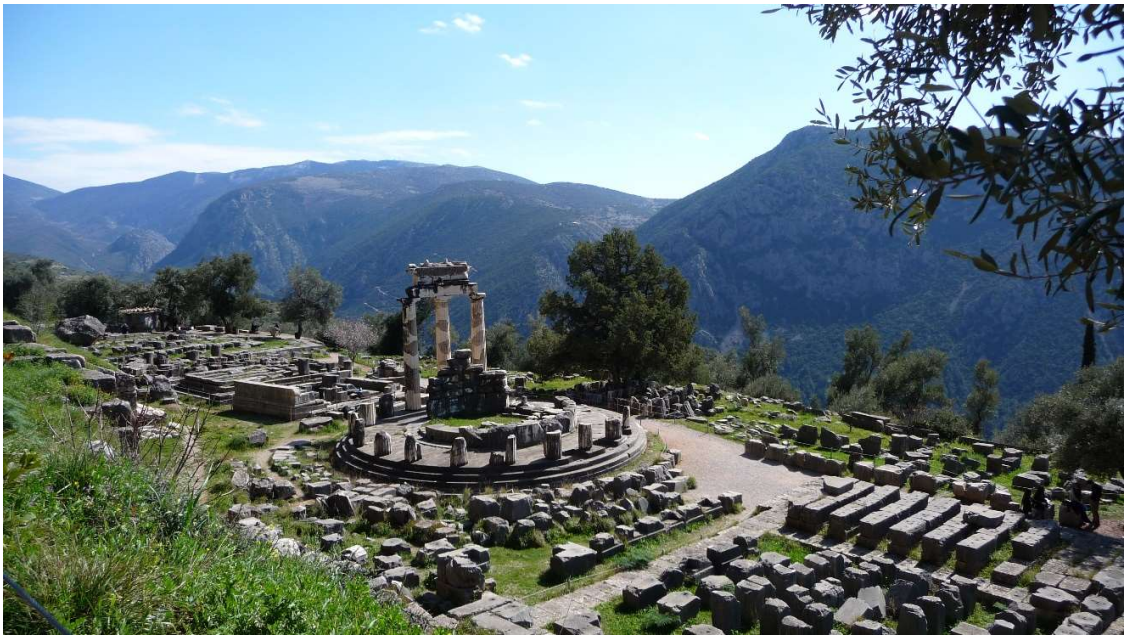


6. Monastery Stavroniketa, Mount Athos

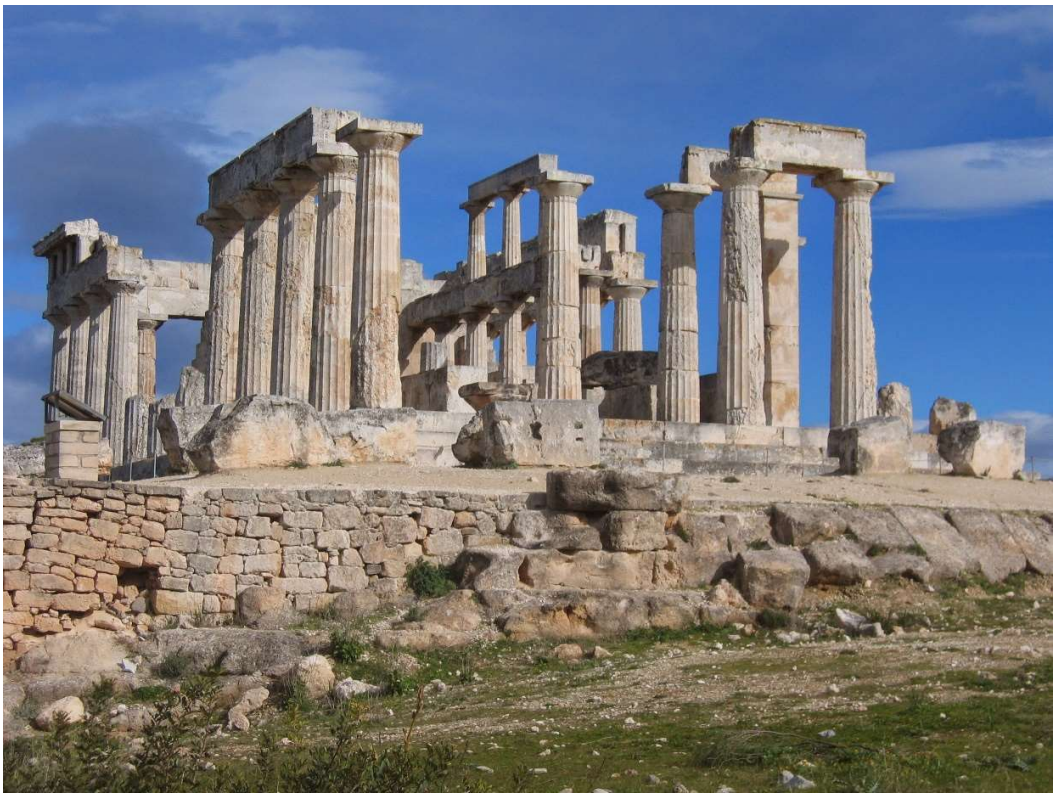


7. Gulf of Aegina

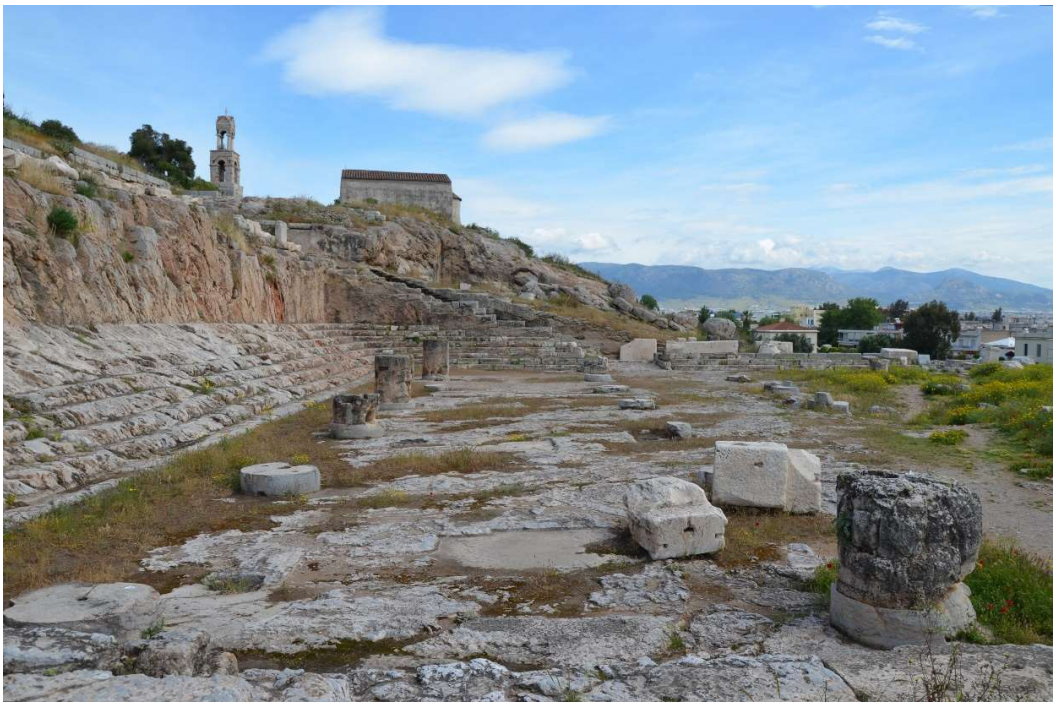
8. Thoros, Delphi



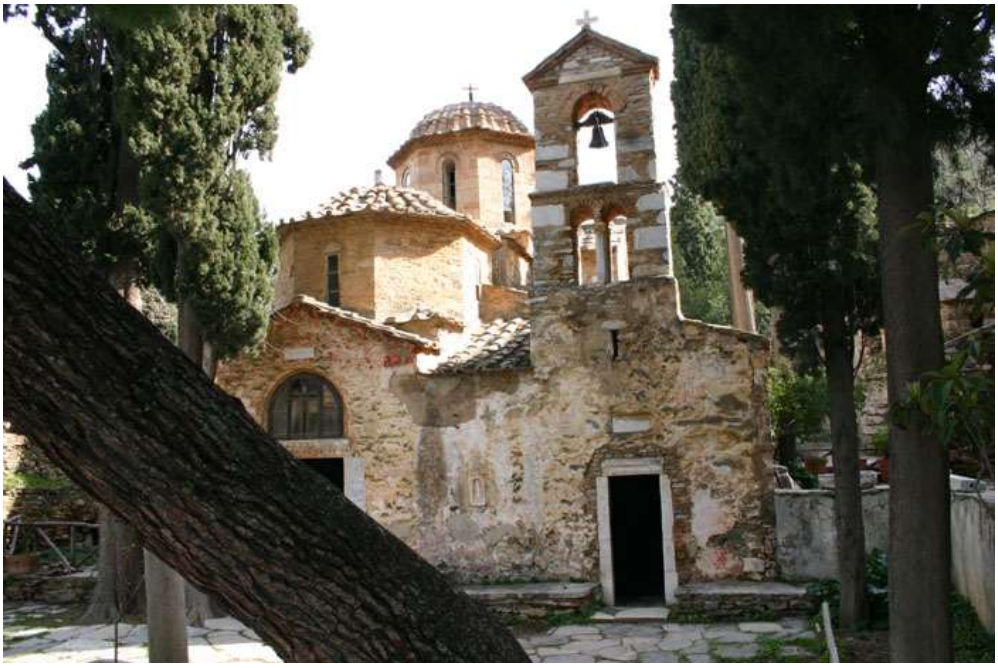
9. Temple of Apollo or Aphaea, Aegina



10. Telestherion, Eleusis



11. Kaisariani Monastery



12. Acropolis

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