

TRACING THE TRAJECTORIES OF MEMORY:
THE NIKE OF SAMOTHRACE

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ABSTRACT

TRACING THE TRAJECTORIES OF MEMORY: THE NIKE OF SAMOTHRACE

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How is it possible to trace the accumulation and flow of memory through ancient objects? Hence, how does the transformation of memory proceed in time? This thesis aims to reconstruct the roots of memory from the ancient era to the present by following the trajectories of a “masterpiece”, the Nike of Samothrace; and intends to observe the changes in memory by the means of historiography, museums, representation techniques and narrative through the sculpture.

Keywords: Collective Memory, Narrative, Representation, Ancient Greece, Historiography

ÖZ

BELLEK YÖRÜNGELERİ: SEMADİREKLİ NİKE HEYKELİ

COŞKUN, Semiha Deniz
Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık Tarihi Bölümü
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Antik objeler üzerinden, bellek birikimini ve aktarımını nasıl gözlemleyebiliriz? Buradan yola çıkarak, belleğin zaman içindeki değişimi/dönüşümü nasıl izlenebilir? Bu çalışma, antik dönemden günümüze uzanan süreçte, belleğin köklerinden gelişimini bir başyapıtın —Semadirekli Nike Heykeli — hikayesi üzerinden takip ederken; tarih yazımı, müzecilik, sergilenme teknikleri ve anlatıların toplumsal belleğin değiştirilme/dönüştürülmesi üzerine etkilerini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal Bellek, Anlatı, Sergileme, Antik Yunan, Tarih yazımı

... for the ones who passed away, for the sake of freedom.

Özgürlüğün geldiği gün,
O gün ölmek yasak!

C. Süreya

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The power of Greek art over Rome, and then of Greek and Roman art over later generations, resided less in the multiplicity or complexity of that art than in its embodiment of a limited number of traits, traits such as the hardness, mathematical regularity, lifelikeness, uniformity, physical energy and emotional expressiveness of Greek art, or the memorability, monumentality, personality, material and formal richness, flexibility and simplicity of that of Rome.

Onians, 1999 ¹

Grand works (*magnum opus*) of the Western civilization are often rooted in the ancient era; hence the roots of Western civilization may be followed through ‘Roman eyes’², or through Greek ruins. However, a curiosity rests there: How does the admiration of Greek and Roman art characterize the means of understanding? Does art become precious because of its complexity, or is it precious because that art reflects the

¹ Onians, J. (1999). Preface. *Classical Art and the Cultures of Greece and Rome*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

² The phrase attracted my attention when I saw the title of a comprehensive and influential book about ‘viewing’ in Roman art by Jas Elsner. For more information on the topic, see: Elsner, J. (2007). *Roman Eyes: Visuality & Subjectivity in Art & Text*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

way of seeing through ‘Roman eyes’? As Onians remarked above, what captivates us may reside mostly in the ability of the “Greek” to reflect emotions or of the “Roman” that triggers memory. The main focus of this thesis is rooted from the question ‘which memory or emotions could be strong enough to reach us?’ Besides, how is the memory of those roots transformed into the language of humanity without losing the base, even gaining new meanings for later generations?

In this thesis, the topic will be problematized in the light of a particular object — a Greek sculpture, that ancient Greeks had seen as the representation of a goddess encapsulated by abstract entities and virtues in addition to physical ‘ideal’ beauty; and at present, the admiration of the statue not just owing to her beauty as an art object, but also owing to the memory she accumulated that flows over periods of time. Tracing the continuities and changes in the perception of an ancient Greek sculpture (or other ancient objects) will be the secondary objective of this thesis. How is memory constructed, even invented? This thesis will cover the journey of the well-known Greek statue — Nike of Samothrace or The Winged Victory of Samothrace — step by step from its inception, and delineate the memory it has accumulated in different nodes of its existence; from an island in the Aegean Sea to Paris, from an ancient Greek sanctuary to the Louvre Museum, from a sea battle to lasting peace, and overall, from the distant past to the present.

The first chapter ‘Prologue of the Saga’ will pave the way for the memorial journey of the Winged Victory and the historical process through the inception of the statue in ancient times up to its collapse. It will then cover the Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Samothrace and its

mysterious rites of pre-Greek origin, the context of the statue within the island, and her relationship with the era and religion. Why is this Nike statue standing on the prow of a ship and what is the relationship between her and the context in the island? In parallel, what did the island look like at the times of glory?

In the second chapter 'Tracing the Path: The Story Begins,' Champoiseau, who was the man of action in the discovery of the Winged Victory, will be the focus. With the help of the archival documents provided by Hamiaux (2001), the circumstances of the era and the people involved in the process of discovery will be documented and clarified.

The main concern in the third chapter 'Afterlife: Reconstruction of Memory', is the invention of history through stories, and the recreation of social memory by means of reconstitutions and restorations within the narratives of present. The medium in this discussion of cultural memory will be the statue, the Winged Victory of Samothrace. The personification of Victory is a stylistically elaborate figure that appeared widely in Greek art from the Archaic period (sixth century BC) onwards. She is usually female and found in a multiplicity of forms – statues, reliefs, vessels, coins, and terracotta or bronze figurines. Such figures followed the stylistic evolution of Greek art. As the Victory of Samothrace shows, the figure still featured in spectacular works of art in the Hellenistic period. Examining the process with another question: How do the transformations of the meaning that the Nike of Samothrace accumulated proceed from the Hellenistic period to present times? History continues with the Romans who discovered the goddess

of Victory when they conquered the Greek world. They immediately adopted and adapted her as a symbol of Rome's domination of the known world, an incarnation of imperial power, and an emblem of the virtue of the Roman people.³ Victory is shown standing on a globe, crowning the emperor and holding a shield inscribed with the glory of Rome. Yet her appearance was still that most commonly found in Greek art —she was depicted standing, wearing a woman's *chiton* belted under the breasts, with a fold hanging down to the hips.

As the representation of Victory changed physically within different regimes/politics, meanings accumulated in her also multiplied and underwent transformation. It is not surprising to see the goddess of Victory even in the Christian World, with shifted gender —from a female to a male one— and function —as a messenger of God's will— in mosaics. Afterwards, it is possible to trace her in the Italian Quattrocento while reclaiming respect as a female Victory with the help of the artistic popularity of antique models during the period, which could be seen in the works of Botticelli or Fra Angelico.⁴

To render this study more comprehensive, a comparison between two of the most beautiful and most controversial statues in the Louvre Museum is also included: the Winged Victory of Samothrace and Venus de Milo. While comparing these two statues, the main focus will be the

³ The Context: Provenance and dating. (n.d.). A closer look at the Victory of Samothrace. Retrieved December 2, 2013, from: http://musee.louvre.fr/oal/victoiredesamothrace/victoiredesamothrace_acc_en.html. For the important role of images in the Roman world see: Zanker, P. (1992). *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. (A. Shapiro, Trans.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

⁴ As an example, see Botticelli's Annunciation.

storytelling behind nineteenth century historiography and re-creation of concepts like 'ideal beauty' to recreate the 'meaning' in social memory. How did the concept of 'ideal beauty' come into existence and how was it portrayed to the present spectator —or us? More specifically, what kinds of images create collective memory and why are important questions in this chapter.

The last chapter, 'Resurrection: Memory on Display' comprises present cultural memory and representation techniques that recreate the flow of social memory. With the physical traces the Winged Victory has left behind, and the fragmented leads shaping a process in the minds in every period of her existence, multiple narratives are formed. An examination of this structures the last section of the thesis: A search for a shared past and an attempt to re-think the visual experiences of a collective/social memory at present. Interpreting the 'mystical' past with the 'modern' times needs another context which turns its face to the 'experience' we live: The experience of seeing objects in 'newly created contexts'. Modern times bring the museum concept forward and introduce a new type of experience, which sever original ties with the past and isolate art objects from their context. However, this new setting inevitably helps the flow of memory acquired by art objects by making them visible to a wider group of people. But how accurate is this flow if we consider the lack of context?

Experiencing art objects in newly created contexts might have the ability to create the suitable aura for visitors; however when it comes to the 'particular' art objects that have accumulated different meanings through years of their existence, it becomes harder to design. After the

passage of the extended period of time, meaning is not a simple thing to narrate with basic touches. The last section attempts to scrutinize how museums in modern times represent and exhibit the meaning of 'particular' art objects, and transfer the meaning and experience accumulated on them, focusing especially on the Louvre case.

CHAPTER 2

PROLOGUE OF THE SAGA

2.1. The Island of Mysteries

Samothrace Island is located in the Aegean Sea, off the coast of Thrace, in northeastern Greece, (Fig. 1) like a tall rocky mountain that rises above the waves. There was a very ancient sanctuary dedicated to the Great Gods on the northern side of the island, in a valley carved by a flood at the foot of the mountain. The Sanctuary was close to the *polis*, in which cultural mixture and overlapping characterize the crystallization of Samothracian colonial 'Greekness'.⁵ Because of the mutual assimilation of customs, traditions and artifacts originating in Thrace, Aeolia, and Ionia, hybrid cultures shaped the identity of the Samothracian *polis*.⁶ Consequently, religion was also affected from this hybridity in the island, and the mixture of traditions created one of the most famous mystery sanctuaries of the Hellenistic world. The Sanctuary of the Great Gods is believed to have had mysterious nocturnal rites; the admission policy was as liberal in Samothrace as it was in Eleusis.⁷ The inscriptions and the buildings suggest that men as

⁵ Ilieva, P. (2010). Samothrace: Samo- or Thrace? In S. Hales (Ed.) *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World*. (p. 159) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁶ A comprehensive study on the origins of the island, and the identity discussions may be found in: Ilieva, P. (2010), p. 138-70.

⁷ The Eleusinian Mysteries is believed to be the most renowned kind in the ancient world, see: Stillwell, R., & MacDonald, W. L. (1976). S.3. Samothrace. *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*. Princeton: University Press.

well as women, slaves and freedmen as well as high officials and royalty were admitted.⁸

In searching for the Mystery, the gods and the rites in Samothrace, we first come across the terms *kabeiroi* and *theoi*, and then the discussion continues about which one is used for the gods of Samothrace. While scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries tried to establish the etymology of the word *kabeiroi*, which is often associated with the Samothracian Gods by ancient writers of non-Samothracian origin, in general, scholars believe that the Samothracian gods constituted a triad whose nature prefigured the Christian trinity. One may be skeptical about the pre-conditioned understanding of the nineteenth century scholars that is able to imply Christianity even from the etymology of the word; yet the triad of gods seems to lie in the background of the myth of Samothrace; ancient literature too does not help to specify their names.⁹ However, the term *kabeiroi* never appears on inscriptions at Samothrace where the gods are either called *Theoi* —gods, or *Theoi Megaloi* —great gods. In addition, when the Samothracian gods are mentioned in other sites, they are usually called *Theoi Samothrakes*.¹⁰

The concrete literary evidence is limited, and not always trustworthy. Most of the ancient writers had probably just heard about the Mystery,

⁸ Bremmer, J. (2014). Mysteries at the Interface of Greece and Anatolia: Samothracian Gods, Kabeiroi and Korybantes. In *Initiation Into the Mysteries of the Ancient World* (p. 22-23). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

⁹ This triad of one female and two males were named as Axiokersa, Axieros, and Axiokersos within an Anatolian background; then as Demeter, Persephone, and Hades influenced by Eleusinian Mysteries. For further information, see: Bremmer, J. (2014), p. 35-36.

¹⁰ Cole, S. G. (1984). *Theoi Megaloi: The Cult of the Great Gods at Samothrace*. (p.1-4). Leiden: E. J. Brill.

the gods and rites at Samothrace, but never actually saw what was happening there with their own eyes.¹¹ Or simply, because of the secrecy of the rites, even the names of the gods were not revealed. Yet, if we consider the first-hand accounts left from known visitors to Samothrace¹² in combination with the archaeological evidence surfaced in ongoing excavations, it is now possible to have an idea about the mysterious rites.

According to the literary evidence, Samothracian Mysteries were well known by the fifth century BC, but archaeological evidence suggests that most of the important buildings of the sanctuary were built after the middle of the fourth century BC.¹³ Cole attributes this to the prosperity that Samothracian mysteries gained in the fourth century BC. Before that, in fifth century BC, the religious activity in Samothrace attracted outsiders, but had not yet achieved a remarkable prosperity.¹⁴ The Hellenistic period was important for the recognition of Samothracian Mysteries. During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Greek initiates came from Macedonia, Thrace, Asia Minor, and the

¹¹ Diodorus Siculus mentions the topic as learned from others: “There came on a great storm [in the north Aegean] and the chieftains [the Argonauts] had given up hope of being saved, when Orpheus, they say, who was the only one on ship-board who had ever been initiated in the Mysteries of the deities of Samothrace [i.e. the Kabeiroi, Cabeiri], offered to these deities prayers for their salvation...” in Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 4. 43. 1 (trans. Oldfather). Meanwhile, Strabo mentions: “(1) Others say that the Korybantes (Corybantes) were sons of Zeus and Kalliope (Calliope) and were identical with the Kabeiroi (Cabeiri), and that these went off to Samothrace, which in earlier times was called Melite, and that their rites were mystical.” in Strabo, *Geography* 10. 3. 19 (trans. Jones). After two centuries, Aelianus was still writing in reference to ‘others’ as: “They say that the pilot-fish is sacred not only to Poseidon but is also beloved of the gods of Samothrace [the Kabeiroi, Cabeiri].” in Aelianus, *On Animals* 15. 23 (trans. Scholfield).

¹² Varro’s visit to Samothrace in 67 BC, who probably was an initiate himself, could be one of these first-hand sources. Bremmer, J. (2014), p. 27.

¹³ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 5.

¹⁴ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 10-11.

Aegean Islands; and also *theoroi* —sacred ambassadors of the state— were sent by the Greek cities to the annual public festivals at Samothrace. Possibly, the geography affected the development of the cult: Samothrace was visible from far away, even from Troy because of its rocky height, and its accessibility from both Thrace and Asia Minor played a role in its recognition. There was a hybrid circulation, coming and going in the sanctuary from a variety of places. Then, what was the ritual of the rites? And what did they offer?

2.1.1. Through *Myesis* and *Epopiteia*

Prospective initiates would have entered the sanctuary from the east, through the Propylon dedicated by Ptolemy II in the early third century BC. (Fig. 2) The latter had the function both as a massive entrance gate and as a frame to the sacred path of initiation.¹⁵ Outside the Propylon, there was a wide ramp reaching a circular space that was surrounded by a hexastyle Doric building, as well as concentrically deployed platforms and an outer grandstand.¹⁶ Known as the Theatral Circle, this was a circular space about nine meters in diameter, paved with stone and consisting of five rows of steps, on which more than forty life-size bronze statues framing the circular central area were supported.¹⁷ Even

¹⁵ Wescoat, B. (2012). Coming and Going in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods, Samothrace. In *Architecture of the Sacred: Space, Ritual, and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium* (p. 77-78). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶ Wescoat, B. (2012), p. 68-69.

¹⁷ According to Wescoat, these statues can best be described as individual dedications erected in groups. For more on this, see: Wescoat, B. (2012), p. 77.

the function of this area is unclear; it must have had a crucial part in ceremonies due to the fact that it is one of the oldest buildings in sanctuary complex. The rows of steps are too narrow to have been seats. Thus, Cole suggests that the worshippers stood on them to face an event performed in the central area.¹⁸ The event might have been an initial sacrificial offering, or the initiation candidates might have received the sacred instructions to be followed through the path.¹⁹ Either way, the Theatral Circle had an important place in *les rites de passage* — the rites which accompanied the passage of the individual from one situation to another, from one cosmic or social world to another.²⁰ As indicated in following quotation:

The mystery cult of the Great Gods focused on safekeeping and transformation. The rites — held in silent trust by the community of initiated — promised not only protection at sea but also the opportunity for initiates to ‘become more pious and more just and better in every respect than they were before.’²¹

On their way to initiation, pilgrims left the Theatral Circle and walked down the path through the main area of the sanctuary in which the initiation stages are supposed to have begun. The rather chaotic layout

¹⁸ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 26.

¹⁹ Wescoat, B. (2012), p. 69.

²⁰ Bianchi mentions the concept of ‘rites de passage’ in relation with Samothrace in Bianchi, U. (1976). *The Greek Mysteries*. Brill, Leiden. Also, a short review about the main book of the concept is available in: Starr, F. (1910). Book Review: *Les Rites de Passage*. Arnold Van Gennep. In *American Journal of Sociology*, 15(5), 707-709.

²¹ Wescoat, B. (2012), p. 67.

of the buildings and the lack of inscriptions make it harder to specifically decide in which building the initiation started. Also, compared to the Eleusinian mysteries, there are more cult buildings in number than the cult actions seem to require.²² There is a possibility that because of the hybrid tradition in the island, the mysteries were shaped differently; and the unusual forms of the buildings could bring unusual functions for them through the rituals. In the main area of the sanctuary, two buildings seem satisfactory for the initiation stages to happen: Anaktoron and Hieron. These two buildings are the largest buildings in the central area, and both had interior seats and interior altars that suggest them as the locations of initiation ceremonies.²³

The initiation ceremony in Samothrace is supposed to have had two stages: *myesis* — the first stage of initiation — and *epopteia* — for ‘those who have seen’. It seems possible to follow the path through both in one night; yet according to the list of initiates in inscriptions, there are very few names who achieved *epopteia*.²⁴ Archaeological evidence suggests Anaktoron as the next stop in the central area, where the *myesis* took place. There are two chambers in the Anaktoron: 1) the small chamber on the southern end of the building which was only accessible from outside and not connected with the large central chamber; 2) the large central chamber with benches along the southern and eastern walls, possibly had a circular platform for one person at the center.²⁵ Lehmann suggests that the prospective initiates went to the first chamber to

²² Bremmer, J. (2014), p. 26.

²³ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 26-27.

²⁴ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 27.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 28.

change clothes and get a lamp; then continued to the second room for ceremony, in which the sacred objects were reserved, or a secret was revealed.²⁶ Then the rites probably followed in the Arsinoeion, yet the function of that building is still unknown.

Leaving the Arsinoeion, the initiate possibly came to the Temenos — also known as the Hall of Choral Dancers which was used for public sacrifices and the display of cult statues.²⁷ At the wall of its eastern side, there was an Ionic propylon with a frieze of dancing maidens suggesting that the building was used for dancing ceremonies, too.²⁸ The last stop for *epopteia* was identified as Hieron. The first things to consider about the Hieron are the two stepping stones along the eastern side of the building which Cole interprets as the steps for the oath of secrecy: Before going inside for the final stage of the initiation, it makes sense to suggest that each prospective initiate took an oath to keep the secret he/she would witness inside.²⁹ The nature of the mystery prevents scholars to provide more specific details about what exactly happened inside the Hieron, yet archaeological evidence of the drains inside suggests some kind of lustration in that final stage.

Were there any further steps of the ceremonies after the *epopteia*? Excavation of the terraces in the hill, below the stoa, has revealed some small rooms; and their proximity to the initiation halls presents strong

²⁶ Ibid, p. 28-29.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 48.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 8.

²⁹ Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 32.

evidence for the practice of ritual eating related to the mysteries.³⁰ Then, as a closure, Wescoat suggests that the Theatral Circle played a key role in the ritual experience before initiates left the sanctuary: Their whole experience in the process was completed, and their final transformation was shaped in here.³¹

At the end, we can follow the path in which the initiation ceremony was completed, and the transformation of a soul from a lower condition to the higher one was established. Yet, the mysteries still continue to bear their misty atmosphere. Let us now try to interpret the legends and the mysteries of the island with Nike herself, and to reconstruct her settlement in the island through ancient times.

2.2. Nike and Authenticity

According to legend, during a great ancient storm, Samothrace was the only place to be saved; hence, the survivors set up great stone altars to express their gratitude towards the gods of the island.³² The belief about the divinities of the island having powers over the wind, the storm, and the sea was fed from the legend. Probably, geography also effected the character and development of the cult: The island of Samothrace was visible from far away, even from Troy because of its rocky height, and it was accessible from both Thrace and Asia Minor. Its grandeur blended

³⁰ Ibid, p. 36.

³¹ Wescoat, B. (2012), p. 67.

³² Cole, S. G. (1984), p. 6.

both with the legends and environmental factors, hence ended up in a belief that the Gods of Samothrace were the protectors of the sea, and storms.

Under these circumstances, the authenticity of Nike in her original setting makes more sense. Lehmann explains:

The monument stood on a hillside in the background of the Sanctuary, overlooking it from a position high above the curved auditorium of a Greek theatre and facing the not far distant deep blue sea, beyond which the shores of Thrace are visible.³³

The fact is there: Nike was the protector of the island, looking from above, and in such a way controlling the whole island. Excavations conducted on the island have revealed valuable information about the setting of Nike in the island:

...the monument, although undoubtedly commemorating naval battle, was actually part of a fountain. An aqueduct led water into a shallow basin in which the rippled surface of the base slabs lay beneath the surface of the water. Various holes in these slabs suggest that marine creatures such as dolphins, in bronze, may have played around the ship, which was surrounded by water. In front of this basin in which the prow stood, there was a lower basin of equal

³³ Lehmann, K. (1973). The Ship-Fountain. In *Samothracian Reflections: Aspects of the Revival of the Antique* (p. 181-82). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

width from which two huge boulders emerged.³⁴

The evidence suggesting a ship-fountain settlement for Nike would probably fit the geographical development of the cult “protectors of the sea.” If the ship-fountain setting was accurate (p. 74), this could be another Hellenistic allegory that guides the spectator to imagine Nike on the rocky shores of the island. In this way, the elements of the fountain reflected the geographical peculiarities of the island.

Lehmann suggests that after several centuries from the end of antiquity, even after the pagan cult, the statue remained standing. Since Nikostratos of the early Christian era mentioned a figure of a goddess on the island, and described it as rushing forward to defend the sanctuary, it was later interpreted as Nike by Lehmann.³⁵ From this point of view, the statue stood and maintained its importance, even in the Christian era. There is no certain evidence when the statue collapsed. Generally accepted views place its collapse around mid sixth century AD in the time of Justinian, in a severe earthquake, together with all the buildings of the Sanctuary.³⁶ After that earthquake, Nike lost her visibility, and remained unknown for long centuries, until her discovery in the nineteenth century.

³⁴ Lehmann, K. (1973), p. 187-88.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 182.

³⁶ Lehmann, K. (1951). Samothrace: Fourth Preliminary Report. In *Hesperia*, 20, (p. 12).

CHAPTER 3

TRACING THE PATH: THE STORY BEGINS

Nike of Samothrace, or the Winged Victory of Samothrace now well known, is an early 2nd-century BC³⁷ marble sculpture of the Greek goddess Nike that was discovered in the island of Samothrace in 1863 by the French vice-consul, Charles Champoiseau. (Fig. 3) Charles Champoiseau, a novice in the consular career, was a curious young man at the age of twenty-seven when he was sent to Plovdiv, Bulgaria in 1857.³⁸ Politics of the era were also involved in the story, since the discovery and also the smuggling of Greek sculptures was intensive in the early 19th-century, taking advantage of the liberation struggle of Greece from the Ottoman Empire. What we have up to now is a beautifully sculpted Hellenistic statue of the Greek goddess Nike that was found on an island of glorious ancient rituals, and which was discovered by a French consul who was sent to regain political power in

³⁷ There are several opinions about the date of the statue. It is possible to date it soon after the war that broke out in 323 BC -a.k.a. Lamian War- between Athenians and Macedonians, which resulted in Athens losing the command of the sea. For more information, see: Lawrence, A. W. (1926). The Date of Nike of Samothrace. In *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. 46, Part 2, p. 215. However, the position of Louvre Museum suggests that many battles occurred between rival fleets following the accession of Philip V of Macedonia in 221 BC. Philip's defeat in 197 BC and the capture of Antioch in 189 BC led to the end of such naval battles, which should be commemorated with the Victory. From this point, the statue could have been made between 220 and 185 BC. For more information, see: The Context: Provenance and Dating. *A closer look at the Victory of Samothrace*. Retrieved from: http://musee.louvre.fr/oal/victoiredesamothrace/victoiredesamothrace_acc_en.html

³⁸ Translation from French is my own work through this source. For more information, see: Hamiaux M. (2001). La Victoire de Samothrace: Découverte et Restauration. In *Journal des Savants*. 2001, N°1. (p. 153-54.)

the Balkans and Black Sea territory. The statue turned out to become one of the most renowned sculptures of the Hellenistic period, and hitherto on display in the Louvre. This chapter will follow the steps of the Nike of Samothrace through her discovery and will focus on the integration of the intriguing, and even mysterious pieces of her story.

In the aftermath of the Crimean War in which France and Britain were allied with the declining Ottoman Empire against Russia, Napoleon III wanted to increase French presence in the Balkans and Black Sea to prevent Russian invasion through Europe. His political agenda resulted in the establishment of several consulates and vice-consulates on this territory, including the one in Plovdiv, where Champoiseau was first sent. Champoiseau was a zealous and curious young man admired by his military superiors for these characteristics. When he was sent to Adrianople (Edirne today) as a vice-consul later, his admiration and curiosity for the Thracian plains and mounds were ready to come forward. Visiting Ainos to install a consulate, he heard of a rumour about 'the antiquities of Samothrace', which rang a bell, through his desire for archaeological research. After a brief visit to the island of Samothrace, he wrote:

...everywhere, hundreds of broken columns, drums, marble capitals indicate that the area covered by temples is today invaded by the plane trees and the oleanders. Some reliefs or metopes still exist, recumbent or recessed in the construction of a castle with machicolation dating from the middle ages...were brought to light by the peasants, which in their ignorance, have all been shattered. No doubt that

serious excavations would make us discover rare and precious objects...³⁹

Champoiseau was enthusiastic about what he saw in the island, and in September 15, 1862, he sent an official letter to the *ministre d'État de la maison de l'Empereur*,⁴⁰ in which he requested an allocation of 2.000 francs in order to start excavations. He was granted the sum to conduct field research on the site and started a new era in Samothrace. However, he never published the complete results of his excavations; but left an account of his first two missions. This might be related to his lack of academical training, which sometimes drove him to the irrelevant conclusions that will become visible in following pages. Still, it is possible to trace his excavations with the path Hamiaux (2001) mentioned, through the official letters that were sent in that period.

3.1. Champoiseau on the Way to Discovery

Excerpts from the letters of Champoiseau elucidate the process of discovery of the Winged Victory. Marquis⁴¹ de Moustier, the Ambassador of France in Constantinople at that time, was the first

³⁹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p.153.

⁴⁰ Ministry of State of the House of Emperor. In the Imperial Bonapartist regime of Napoleon III, the letter was sent to the highest authority of the State, just below Napoleon III in the hierarchy. For more information, see: Lonchampt, E. (1793). Bulletin des Lois n.129. In *Bulletin des Lois de la Republique Francaise* (Google eBook ed., Vol. 11, pp. 869-877). Impr. Nationale des Lois.

⁴¹ Marquis is a title of nobility in France, between Duke and Count.

official witness to Champoiseau's discovery. Providing the precise date of the incident, the letter below also reveals the very first condition of the Winged Victory and some related problems:

Samotraki, April 15, 1863

Monsieur Marquis,

While searching today, I just found a statue of the Winged Victory (according to its appearance), in marble and with colossal proportions. Unfortunately I have neither head nor arms, unless I can find pieces by rummaging in the surrounding area. The rest, that is to say the part between the bottom of the breasts and feet (2.10m) is almost intact and treated with an art that I have never seen surpassed in any of the beautiful Greek works that I know; even by the reliefs of the Wingless Victory or Caryatids of the Erechtheion at Parthenon.⁴² The draperies are just what one can dream of more than beautiful: it is the marble chiffon stuck by the wind on living flesh; all without the shadow of a hyperbole.

The downside of the discovery is that the statue, even in mutilated state, weighs 1,200 to 1,500 kilograms, and that I shall not be able to carry her to the shore off the steep heights where she is located, without extreme troubles and huge expenses. The boarding process will introduce some more difficulties if not impossibilities.⁴³

Champoiseau suggested to the handle transportation of the statue with the help of the crew of Marquis de Moustier who willingly accepted. At

⁴² The Erechtheion is obviously not in the Parthenon. Either Champoiseau really had a lack of knowledge about the topic, or he had stumbled upon the Parthenon instead of the Acropolis.

⁴³ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 155.

the end, they managed to load the Victory statue on the ship:

The Ajaccio⁴⁴ arrived at Samothrace May 2, 1863, ...and in four days we had loaded the Victory.⁴⁵

The journey of the Winged Victory to France had started so smoothly which brings a question: How could it be that easy to take an antique statue out of the country without any authorization? Considering the circumstances of the era, within the territory of the declining Ottoman Empire, fueled by the rise of nationalism in France and England, it reminds the story of the Elgin Marbles (or Parthenon Marbles as Greeks prefer to call them) and rationalized the process of acquisition. However, in the case of the Elgin Marbles, British and French authorities were both aware of the marbles and were the buyers, so there was a kind of power struggle.⁴⁶ In the case of the Winged Victory, its departure from the island premises had been smooth because of the fact that no one knew about the statue, at least then.

Apart from the four days of loading, the transportation of the Winged Victory to Paris was the real challenge at that time and took more than a year. Before embarking upon how that challenge proceeded, it is useful

⁴⁴ Ajaccio was the name of the ship that was sent by Marquis de Moustier to transport the statue.

⁴⁵ Written by Champoiseau in his report submitted to the Ministry of Public Instruction. For the original source, see: Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 155.

⁴⁶ Merryman, J. (2000). Thinking About the Elgin Marbles. In *Thinking about the Elgin marbles: Critical Essays on Cultural Property, Art, and Law* (p. 24-63). The Hague: Kluwer Law International.

to scrutinize the bureaucratic process while the statue was on its way, to get a more integrated idea of the parties involved. As mentioned before in the text, Champoiseau never published the complete results of his missions. However, he wrote a very detailed report, addressed to the Ministry of Public Instruction, on his first excavation between March 6 and May 7, 1863, in which he demanded an additional 15.000 francs to explore the site fully.⁴⁷ But, his talents, or rather, qualifications came under question for the future of the research. Considering the aura of the era, exploration of Macedonia by Heuzey and Daumet between 1861-1862, or Miller's journey to Mount Athos and Thasos accompanied by a photographer, inevitably created a severe competition that Champoiseau had to face.⁴⁸ Longpérier, then curator of the Department of Antiquities in the Louvre, served as an expert who was close to the Ministry which wanted to know what follow-up action should be taken in this case, because the objective of the report, as stated already, is clear: allocation of funds.⁴⁹ Understandably, the Ministry needed a proof of proficiency before investing on Champoiseau, which was the assignment of Longpérier. After analyzing the report, Longpérier was faced with the situation: Champoiseau, as an amateur archaeologist, was certainly a good observer, and described the objects accurately. But as an employee of the state, Longpérier could not render a whole report based on this. Champoiseau's rare interpretations or his dating trials based on stylistic elements, it must be admitted, were often tenuous; these revealed gaps in his education, and his conclusions were sometimes hair-raising, such as his attribution of

⁴⁷ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 161.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

the “tomb of a general of Alexander” found in the building of Victory.⁵⁰ The report also highlights the limits of the exploration methods of Champoiseau. Thus his small sketches and plans, although perfectly preserved and neat, were misleading because they were made freehand and without any measurements. Longpérier was not convinced. He clearly stated this in a letter addressed to Count Nieuwerkerke⁵¹ on December 29, 1863:

... I have all confidence in the good faith of Mr. Champoiseau, but I have to say that his report to the Ministry of Public Instruction has left me with considerable doubts about his archaeological expertise. You know by experience to what extent travelers are prompt to exaggerate the value of the antique objects that they discover.⁵²

The following comments of Longpérier on the report of Champoiseau that he sent to the Ministry were not much different from the letter above. He seemed to be interested in the results of the first excavation, however, and suggested that before allocating a new amount, it would

⁵⁰ Apart from these arguments, he took notes in the margins of that report and corrected errors of philology or epigraphy in the text with a tone often unfriendly. See: Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 161-62.

⁵¹ Count Nieuwerkerke was a sculptor and a high-level civil servant in the Second French Empire. In 1849, Louis-Napoleon appointed him as a general director of French Museums and in 1863, superintendent of Académie des Beaux-Arts. See: Brown, F. (2007). Imperial Society. In *Flaubert: A Life* (pp. 397-398). London: Pimlico.

⁵² Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 162.

be good to completely examine the objects that were already collected.⁵³

3.2. The Saga of Transportation

In fact, the main problem was evident: Nobody had yet had the chance to actually see the items sent by Champoiseau. Let us now return to the main challenge of the transportation here: The boxes, since the Ajaccio left Samothrace, always travelled. The Ajaccio arrived in Constantinople, on May 13, 1863, where the boxes were immediately shipped by the maritime services of imperial couriers to Piraeus, and then they were transferred to the steam corvette of the Imperial Navy, which docked in Toulon on August 24, 1863. A major problem then arose: which ministry should be engaged in transportation and defray the expenses of transport to Paris? The administration, in fact, did not want to engage in such great expenses for objects that Longpérier had seemed to be so reluctant. The solution was found after a long exchange of administrative letters between the Department of Public Instruction, the supervisors of Académie des Beaux-Arts and the Marine Department, which lasted for eight months. On April 26, 1864, the crates were finally re-directed from Toulon “at the expense of the Department of the House of the Emperor” up to Paris, where they arrived on May 11, 1864.⁵⁴ Hence, the hardest part of the challenge was now completed and it was time to see the results: Was it worth it? As

⁵³ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 163.

⁵⁴ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 163.

major sources here, official letters about the first impressions of the transported objects make this clearer to understand.

In a letter written by Longpérier, to Count Nieuwerkerke, supervisor of the Beaux-Arts on May 11, the day when the boxes finally reached Paris; it is possible to see the change from his reluctant tone to a more excited one just after seeing the statue:

Mr. Supervisor,

The crates of Mr. Champoiseau announced for so long have finally arrived. They contain, as you know, antiques collected in the island of Samothrace. The packaging was done with a deplorable neglect, the pieces of marble were huddled together in the crates, without any binding... This statue, whose entire upper part is broken, is extremely beautiful and will be able to justify the expenses of the Samothrace mission of Champoiseau caused to your administration....⁵⁵

The challenge was over, and the result seemed worth the effort made in progress. However, compared with the description of Champoiseau as "...the part between the bottom of the breasts and feet (2.10m) is almost intact..." there was an important difference in the statue: just the torso was broken into one hundred and eighteen pieces.⁵⁶ Is it possible that

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.164.

⁵⁶ In a letter written by Froehner, assistant curator at the Antiquities Department in the Louvre Museum, it was stated that the condition of statue was a 'great concern' for him. For more information, see: Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 164.

Champoiseau, on his first serious mission on archaeology, was that careless while packing the statue for which he requested help from the ambassador of France in Constantinople and transport it to the coast in four days? This does not seem likely. To make a more accurate evaluation about the condition of the statue, a look at the first restoration of it is in order.

3.3. First Steps of Restoration

The statue, then, apart from its condition, should have had that 'beauty' accumulated on her according to the impressions we have witnessed up to the present point. Therefore, it was the time to make the statue presentable to the public. First restorations started immediately after the arrival of the statue in 1864 and were carried on for two years, until 1866.⁵⁷ There is no detailed record of the operations of restoration then undertaken on the statue in the archives of the Louvre. Yet looking through secondary sources, fairly good assumptions may be made.

In 1869, W. Froehner⁵⁸ came up with the first published description of the statue with this comment:

⁵⁷ The Context: Discovery and Restoration. In *A closer look at the Victory of Samothrace*. Retrieved from: http://musee.louvre.fr/oal/victoiredesamothrace/victoiredesamothrace_acc_en.html

⁵⁸ Froehner was the assistant curator at the Antiquities Department in Louvre Museum, most probably the one responsible for the first restoration operations at the time.

It lacks the head, arms, feet, part of the bust, many folds of the drapery, parts of the wing feathers, etc. The torso was reconstructed in the Louvre, from one hundred and eighteen fragments.⁵⁹

Less known, though much more detailed, is the testimony of Froehner in his memoirs:

I was concerned so much in the Louvre about the reconstitution of the Victory of Samothrace. Found on the island in 1863, by Champoiseau, consul of France in Thessaloniki; she had arrived at us in a dozen of bags, broken into more than two hundred shapeless pieces - one hundred and eighteen fragments for only the torso. I made them display on boards in the Denon gallery, which was then closed to the public. Eight workers, from the Department of Sculpture, tried to put them together. One of them noticed the debris of the hair, but could not find anything of the cheek, nothing of the mouth, no nose. How to readjust the hair, the missing face? We put them back in their bag, where they are perhaps still. Both of the wings also gave us a lot of trouble: did feathers belong to that of right or to that of left? Reconstitution was very slow and difficult. The Emperor has never come to see the statue, that exceptional quality of which was not first admitted. However, in my catalogue of 1869, I could describe her and signal the remarkable value.⁶⁰

It is surprising however that Froehner never mentioned the main, intact part of the statue, from breasts to the feet that measured almost 2,10 m;

⁵⁹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 164.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 165.

which Champoiseau mentioned again and again in his writings during his mission in Samothrace. Should we think that this block was broken during transport, because of the deplorable conditions Longpérier had denounced earlier?

Two documents preserved in the archives of the Louvre give us valuable information on this point. The first is the letter from Mr. Geslin, Inspector of the Imperial Museum, to Count of Nieuwerkerke, Supervisor of the Beaux-Arts:

Palais du Louvre, July 16, 1864,

Mr. Supervisor,

To proceed with the readjustment of the numerous pieces that belong to the beautiful fragment of the Victory brought back from Samothrace, it is necessary to establish firmly the main section on a plinth in which it will be embedded by the bottom and supported by means of an iron cross foot anchor. The acquisition of a block of marble of 97 cm long on 77 cm broad and 20 high would go up to 130 francs...As soon as I receive your orders in this regard I will hurry to have them executed.⁶¹

The second one is a note from 8 September 1864, addressed to Mr. Longpérier, curator of the Antiquities Department:

⁶¹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 166.

The beautiful figure of Victory, brought back from Samothrace by Mr. Champoiseau, rose on a plinth and is in the state of being restored. The wings and some portions of the body are broken into two hundred pieces which are possible to reconcile and to unite with the aid of a few remade parts. A practitioner is needed for this job. Pennelli⁶² will help to find the place of each piece; but to complete the restoration precisely there is a necessity of a man who is able to shape the marble.⁶³

We are reassured here on one key point: The main piece of the statue was not broken during its transport; it reached the Louvre well, in entirety, where it could quickly be elevated. This radically changes the idea that we had on the current state of the statue: whose body, carved out from beneath the breasts to the bottom of the drapery in a single huge block of marble, remained whole. So, it was much more solid and homogeneous than the ambiguous sentence of Froehner suggested. It is possible to assume that as this is normal, in the letter above to Longperier, curator of the Department, who was responsible for and who directed the restoration of the work; Froehner, at the end of his life, attributed himself a much more prominent role in this operation than he actually had.

Going back to one hundred and eighteen fragments, the reports of Villefosse, who entered the Louvre in 1869, and who also is known as one of the direct witnesses of this restoration, seems to be more reliable:

⁶² In following pages, detailed information may be found about Panelli and his mission.

⁶³ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p.166.

Unfortunately the packaging had been done with deplorable neglect. The pieces of marble, already very mutilated, huddled together without any binding, had become broken again on the road, and some fragments of the drapery arrived in crumbs. The research and the reconstitution of all these fragments was the longest and most meticulous work. It was not discouraging in the workshops of the Louvre. It took a lot of trial and error and a lot of patience to recognize the pieces that were fitting to the main block. It was succeeded in reconstructing part of the drapery inflated by the wind and most of the folds of the garment, treated by the artist with so much skill and boldness. One hundred and eighteen fragments thus found their place. On the contrary, a very important fragment, the one that had so providentially brought the discovery of the statue, the right breast with the shoulder and the indicator of the arm, was not used. An intermediary piece was missing between the belt and the breast; we did not attempt to reconstitute it in fear of discarding the expression of movement in the original work. The wings, one of which was almost entirely restored, could not be adapted into the void, were also left aside.⁶⁴

Thanks to the archival document quoted above, the name of the ‘restaurateur,’ who was entrusted in this job of reconstruction, becomes evident: it was about Pennelli, the Italian restorer who, in the service of the Marquis Campana, had followed the famous collection in the Louvre, where he had exercised his talents since 1863, especially on vases. Being called as “a specialist of the jigsaw puzzle of shards” says something about the state of the small fragments that were then placed back on the body of the Victory.

⁶⁴ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 166-67.

Once the main fragment was completed, there was the problem of reconstructing the missing parts of the statue. With the exception of the Venus de Milo, this was an era when the rule was to present the 'complete' works in the halls of a museum. Yet, how to relocate the right side of the bust reported by Champoiseau? How, in the absence of the other part of the torso, to fix the almost completed left wing? How, above all, to overcome the absence of the head and arms? The traditional method of remaking the missing parts of the marble was still being considered, according to the above-mentioned archival note: "...to complete the restoration strictly there is necessity of a person who is able to shape the marble." But this restoration technique, commonly practiced since the sixteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth, becomes, with the high cost of fine marble and the influx of material from excavations in the museums, more and more rare in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ In addition, how should one complete this statue of Victory, of which we do not know another more complete version to serve as a model? It would take another decade to make the approximation with monetary representations, so the situation seems to bring the beginning of a new solution.

In brief, either due to the absence of the heaven-sent sculptor able to shape the marble, or the scientific complexity of the task, the reconstruction was postponed. The piece of torso was put in storage, as well as a number of fragments of drapery that had not found their place on the statue, an arm fragment, the partially reconstructed wing and other smaller fragments of feathers. Yet, Longpérier made the

⁶⁵ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 166.

courageous decision to display such an incomplete statue.

According to Villefosse, the body of the Victory was first exhibited to the public in 1866, two years after the arrival of the statue in the Louvre. She was placed in the Room of the Caryatids⁶⁶, on the side of the fireplace, and, as Villefosse specified, “not, as has been said, in one of the darkest parts of the Museum of Sculpture, but in front of a window where the daylight spread widely on the statue. At the time when the sun was on the horizon, the Victory was flooded with bright light, and took an extraordinary color and presence.”⁶⁷

The Winged Victory was exhibited in the Room of the Caryatids for over a dozen years. This was the time when Longpérier, even independent of context and without a head and the wings, claimed that the three quarterly view of the statue towards the left is the best angle for the viewer.⁶⁸ Later on, the Winged Victory took her place in the room of the Tiber (the present hall of the Parthenon), where she enjoyed the times of her brief stay with the light from the South.⁶⁹ Seeking a permanent place to exhibit the Victory continued in earnest. However, we will examine those arguments with the grand restoration of the statue, in the following pages. Here, it is time to continue

⁶⁶ Probably, choosing this room was not arbitrary for the first presentation of Victory. There were Caryatids, sculpted by Jean Goujon in 1550, with a mannerist style, for the decoration of the room that was actually ‘the grand hall’ in the palace which contains Roman and Greek sculptures found in that period. Kruft, H. (1994). *Vitruvian Tradition in the Renaissance*. In *A History of Architectural Theory: From Vitruvius to the present* (p. 70). London: Zwemmer.

⁶⁷ Here, instead of using the word ‘presence’, one can more accurately say the ‘rhythm of the draperies in the movement of light’. However, I chose the word ‘presence’ to make it shorter and more imaginable.

⁶⁸ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 171.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

following the story of our leading character Champoiseau, who always insisted on the value of the statue.

3.4. On the Way to the Second Mission

After his first mission to Samothrace in 1863, Champoiseau insistently worked hard to get the allocation of funds to continue his explorations in the island. In a long letter he wrote to Count Nieuwerkerke, supervisor of Fine Arts, two years after that first mission, it is possible to trace his devotion to the issue:

After asking for funds several times in vain to the Department of State and Public Instruction to continue the archaeological excavations that I had started earlier in Samothrace Island with a sum of 2,000 francs that I had been allocated for that purpose by Count Waleswski in 1862, I decided to carry out the work at my expense and on my behalf.

The outcome has met my expectations. A complete funerary monument related, I think, to the time of the successors of Alexander the Great has been fully uncovered... As much as I have been allowed to judge, all consisted of a white marble platform, still intact from 3.30m to 2.75m, high above the ground by two degrees tufa on which rested a full sarcophagus, from white and gray marble, in three pieces. Behind the platform... it seems, more pylons (I see no other name for them) also in white and gray marble of a Greco-Egyptian style as the sarcophagus itself.

... I'd be happy that a similar monument was acquired by the imperial museums, and if you consider it worthy of

being included in the Louvre or elsewhere, to relinquish jurisdiction in favour of France: the reimbursement of expenses which I have made for the discovery, those which I have to do to get down the marbles that compose it until the sea level, and to transport them to Piraeus and the Dardanelles. These expenses will come to 9000 or 9500 francs and I dare to say, without fear of being denied by facts, that sum would have never been spent more happily and more economically by any Supervisor of Beaux-Arts.

My very modest resources have all been employed in the work of excavations; finally, in case you would agree, Mister Count, to the offer which I come to make you, it would be necessary that you should definitely want to put 6000 francs from now on... The rest of the sum which would come to 3000 or 3500 francs, would be conveyed to me only after these marbles have arrived in France...

Please accept ...⁷⁰

Submitting a drawing of the Greco-Egyptian style sarcophagus (Fig. 3), this letter was kept in the archives of the Louvre; and a little red annotation on it would probably seal Champoiseau's fate for a while: "to Longpérier, who will give us his opinion". It is clear so far that Longpérier was not in favour of Champoiseau, yet he admired some of his characteristics like curiosity and being a good observer. However, there were too many discrepancies and a problematic vision according to Longpérier, as I believe. First, Champoiseau was still suggesting a Greco-Egyptian style mausoleum with pylons at the same spot where he discovered the Winged Victory statue. How could it be possible? If there was a tomb, where could Champoiseau imagine putting the statue within? He made poor interpretations with the remains from the

⁷⁰ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 172-73.

building of the Victory. Secondly, his lack of method had become an issue. Although two years had passed and he claimed in this letter that he would continue the mission by himself, there was no actual in-situ drawing available showing the positions and measurements of the remains. The third reason, and maybe the most important considering the era, was his “Louvre or elsewhere” position. His reference to representation in other museums in case of refusal by the supervisor of the Beaux-Arts may seem unpleasant, even if, at the time, this practice was maintained by the fierce competition between the great European museums in order to enrich their collections.⁷¹ Whatever the real reasons were for Longpérier, Champoiseau again seems to have failed to convince him. Champoiseau was appointed to Janina as a vice-consul and turned his interest to Epirus, which would occupy him from 1867 to 1872, when he excavated and found two *kouroi* in Actium, and then sent them to the Louvre in 1872.

Still, the idea of ‘scientific exploration of France in Samothrace’ made its way to the Department of Public Instruction. At the end of 1865, Champoiseau learned that an official mission was entrusted to two archaeologists, G. Deville, a former member of the School of Athens and E. Coquart, former resident of the School of Rome, responsible for checking, clarifying or correcting his report of 1863. He wrote quite disappointedly:

In defiance of the acquired rights, taking advantage of the reports I sent, 24000 francs were entrusted last year to Mr. Deville and Mr. Coquart to search these temples of

⁷¹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 175.

Samothrace more completely that were discovered and reported by me.⁷²

His complaints were followed by his application for leave, which he sent to his administration. His request to be able to accompany Deville and Coquart failed. Yet, he was involved in the process at the beginning as a consultant because of his discovery. It is visible in an extract from the report of Deville on a mission to Samothrace:

In accordance with your instructions, we first went to Preveza, in Epirus, in order to consult Mr. Champoiseau, vice-consul of France in Janina, about the antiquities of Samothrace, he had explored previously... This island had already been the subject of two explorations: that of A. Conze in 1858, which was reflected in an excellent thesis entitled 'Reise auf den Inseln Thrakischen Meeres', and that of Mr. Champoiseau in 1863, who began excavations and sent the Victory to the Louvre with various marbles from this island. The reports by Mr. Champoiseau are the ones which determined the mission for which we were responsible. These reports were much too presuming⁷³ in results. The truth in this respect needs to be restored...

The truth was that Deville and Coquart, both in very poor health, probably no longer had the enthusiasm for such a mission. However, during the two summer months of 1866, they resumed exploration of the site; they set out a general map and a detailed map of the

⁷² Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 176.

⁷³ Ibid.

monuments in the sanctuary, yet still quite incomplete. Their interest was mainly focused on the Arsinoeion in which they recognized the dedication and whose extraordinary architecture deserved all their care. But on other issues, particularly the identification of the stoa as the main temple, they repeated the same mistakes as Champoiseau had done. Then, at the end each briefly gave their opinion on the building where the Victory was found:

Deville:

Before leaving this hill, I would point out the monument from which the Victory in the Louvre came from. This monument is behind the great Doric temple in the southeast. It is a kind of square chamber, carved in the open air into the hill. We did not find any inscription. Several big blocks of marble, overturned and even buried partly formed the building above which rose the statue. These marbles are of a poor execution; the Victory is itself only a mediocre decorative figure. The whole appears to be from a low epoch.⁷⁴

Coquart:

The monument, in which the decorative figure of the Victory in the Louvre was found, belonged to a rather low epoch. We wanted to determine which building she belonged to. Four walls, arranged in a square, formed a room divided in two by a fifth wall. There remain only the two walls supported on the hill and the base of others. Constructed in small regular size, they are obviously more modern than the other buildings of the sanctuary. Several large blocks of marble, adorned with moldings of a brutal taste, with major depredation that were tied to the coronation of the building where the Victory was found, small debris of red and blue stucco, a few small

⁷⁴ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 177.

insignificant fragments in terracotta, are all the information that we have been able to obtain on this monument; and elsewhere irrelevant.⁷⁵

And here, the magnificent tomb for 9,000 francs was declared “irrelevant”, where not much was found! The two archaeologists neither took measurements nor the *in-situ* locations of the blocks that were left behind, which was the basis of their divergent interpretations: ‘the building above which rose the statue’ for one, ‘the coronation of the building where the Victory was found’ for the other. And on the overall plan of the sanctuary, Coquart continued to use the name “tomb” for the building, probably influenced by the theories previously developed by Champoiseau.

This mission, in which some interesting pieces of architecture were still being collected for the Louvre, sadly ended with the death of Deville, shortly after his return to France. This seems to have put an end to the French adventure in Samothrace for a while. In 1869, the first description of the statue of Victory appeared in the catalogue of Greek sculpture of the Louvre written by W. Froehner. As a known specialist of Greek sculpture at the time, Froehner vigorously objected to the derogatory judgment of the two archaeologists, and his opinion would subsequently become authoritative:

Beautiful colossal statue of a winged Victory draped, which probably was a trophy. The sculptor has represented the moment, coming from heaven, when it touches the ground.

⁷⁵ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 177.

The upper part of her body was thus leaning forward, and wings formed the counterweight. The drapery of the goddess is almost transparent.

Although it dates from the time of Alexander's successors, this wonderful sculpture is quite close to the grand style of the school of Phidias. Nothing more bold than the movement of the chiton, whipped by the wind, and the disposition of which has almost no analogy in ancient art. Cannot compare this marble statue with the ones of the Parthenon or the torso of the second daughter of Niobe, in the Vatican Museum.⁷⁶

After the restoration stage mentioned above, Froehner quickly described the context of the discovery of the statue, according to the reports of Deville and Coquart. However, it was, it seems, followed by a meteoric intuition that he added this sentence: 'several large blocks of marble, overturned and even partly buried, had formed the basis for the statue.'⁷⁷ For the first time someone who had never seen these blocks, identified the truth regarding the latter! At least for then this was an awareness concerning the 'Greco-Egyptian tomb' theories of Champoiseau in the first place.⁷⁸

The mission was interrupted for seven years after Deville and Coquart. Then, a team of Austrian archeologists, led by A. Conze, then professor of archaeology in the University of Vienna, resumed the exploration of

⁷⁶ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 178.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ For the sake of the following parts, one should keep in mind that Champoiseau was not the man who suggested the remains as 'the base of the statue in the shape of a prow of a ship'. He repeatedly supported his idea of a Greco-Egyptian Tomb on several occasions.

the island and the sanctuary.⁷⁹ His team consisted of two architects, A. Hauser and G. Niemann, as well as one photographer, who would then become attached to the specialist of sculpture, O. Benndorf. Besides, the task was carried out in the best possible material and technical conditions. The first mission took place in 1873, devoted to the Hieron and Arsinoeion; the results were published as early as 1875. The second mission, which took place in 1875, concerned the Propylaea of Ptolemy II, the temenos, and finally the Stoa and the Victory Monument; the publication appeared in 1880.⁸⁰ Although the results of the first mission of the Austrian team were published in two years, the results of the second mission took five years to publish. What could be the reason behind, if any? Examining the process in detail might enlighten us at one point: The second mission of Champoiseau that covered the transportation of the remaining stones took place in the summer of 1879. Then, what happened to enable Champoiseau to get the allocation of funds he had requested for a long time?

3.4.1. On the Prow of a Ship

In fact in the mission of 1875, after the exploration of the stoa, Hauser decided to look at the remains of the building of the Victory. For the first time, an exact drawing of what remained at the site of the monument was published: the marble base of the boat and two levels of

⁷⁹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 178.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 181.

limestone. Then, Hauser measured and drew eight famous blocks left in place from multiple angles of sight. Returning to Vienna, he thought further on his drawings, brought the blocks of similar form together, and matched the mortises. Three blocks of the stem, drawn in the proper direction, not tumbled as they were drawn by Champoiseau to incline the sarcophagus, ended up imposing on him the idea that this was the representation of a ship's prow. He communicated with a specialist in ancient marine, B. Graser, about these findings, who confirmed in a report that these formed the head of a galley; within it, he identified, located and named the blocks in December 1878.⁸¹

The reconciliation that Hauser achieved immediately using the coins of Demetrius Poliorcetes (Fig. 4), was mentioned on page 31 as 'monetary representations'; the coin containing a representation of the statue of Victory resting on a base in the shape of a ship's prow, allowed him to reconstruct the overall look of the colossal ex-voto of Samothrace without hesitation.

3.5. Second Mission of Champoiseau

This was when Champoiseau was appointed as Consul of France in Messina in March 1878, reappearing in the history of the Victory of Samothrace:

⁸¹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 181.

Family interests in 1879 made my presence necessary in Adrianople. I asked for a long leave and at the same time requested a grant by means of which I could go back to Samothrace, and commit myself, with the help of a warship, to bring down and board the marbles left in site in 1863.⁸²

At this point, the timing seems a bit too coincidental. Is it possible that the enthusiastic explorer Champoiseau somehow followed up the process and behaved accordingly? Considering the self-contradictory statements in his previous letters, his later comments might seem unreliable. Let us scrutinize that reliability in the light of some archival documents.

Indeed, as early as October 1878, Champoiseau had submitted an application for the allocation of 25,000 francs to the Ministry of Public Instruction, which he renewed in March 1879. But it was to ‘explore and excavate the ruins of ancient Greek city-colonies of the Thracian coast (Imbros, Samothrace, Maronia, Abdera)’ without any specific reference to the base blocks of the Victory.⁸³ In any case, his request was rejected on April 12, 1879 by the commission of missions, due to the fact that “credits of the missions are completely depleted.” It certainly did not prevent Champoiseau from going on leave on May 26, 1879 to Adrianople where his wife's family was established.

The anecdote of Benndorf, in the last few lines of his analysis on the

⁸² Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 182.

⁸³ Ibid.

Victory, might help us to relate that coincidental timing we previously suspected:

...by the greatest coincidences, Champoiseau on the way to Adrianople, would have found himself on a ship in which Conze was also traveling. In there, Conze would put the French abreast of ongoing research of the Austrian team, their discovery about the base of the Victory and the general appearance of the monument.⁸⁴

Meeting with Conze should have changed the awareness of Champoiseau about the ongoing process. This incredible coincidence somehow got Champoiseau involved in the story, once again. In these circumstances, only in fact, the story of the meeting with Conze could explain how Champoiseau suddenly found himself in the position of being able to assert quite persuading arguments to deflect the Department of Public Instruction. Three months later, on July 9, 1879, he obtained an allocation of funds without any difficulty, however modest, 2,000 francs in order to “remove and ship the pedestal components of the marble statue of the Victory discovered by him in, 1863 in island of Samothrace”.⁸⁵

In mid-August of 1879, Champoiseau was already at work in Samothrace. The narrative of the removal of the pedestal blocks was at the heart of the article that was published the following year in *Revue Archéologique* (Journal of Archaeology).⁸⁶ Let us have a brief look at the

⁸⁴ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 182.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 183.

article. Referring to the text published in 1880 in the *Revue Archéologique* by Champoiseau, in contrast to the exchange of letters examined in the previous section, the latter was simple: it was just a question of transporting the blocks left during the search of 1863 to France. Champoiseau wrote:

These weirdly cut blocks, that basement, was obviously the pedestal of the Victory, but it was impossible to guess then what should represent their assembly. Also, my funds were depleted, knowing also that the Ajaccio would remain available to me during a very short time, I decided to remove the statue alone, reserving, through formal act, the right of property of France on the pedestal marbles... From 1864 to 1878, I was successively called to various consular positions distant to Samothrace; hence I could not think of continuing the work begun in this island in 1863.

During this, my thoughts reverted constantly to the marbles that I had left behind, and I came to the conclusion that the pedestal of the Victory should represent a ship, then the transportation of the remains to the Louvre could not have been more desirable.⁸⁷

In the rest of the article, as he told us, Champoiseau made an application for credit in 1879, got a vessel, went to Samothrace, and boarded the blocks of the pedestal in fifteen days. However, as mentioned previously, we are now aware of the fact that Champoiseau had applied for the allocation of funds and was rejected many times. Besides, he had failed to convince the authorities, mostly of course Longpérier, for his subsequent acts/missions.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p.171.

Here, there is something different in the article published in 1880, in *Revue Archéologique*⁸⁸ which was a credible academic source of the era. Champoiseau wrote about the huge remaining stones of the pedestal left on the site as “...was obviously the pedestal of the Victory...” and “...and I came to the conclusion that the pedestal of the Victory should represent a ship...” in 1880. What had happened to the “Greco-Egyptian style mausoleum” he had mentioned several times to the ministry before and counted as “...complete funerary monument related, I think, to the time of the successors of Alexander the Great...has been fully uncovered” in 1863 and following years? There is no account of his invention of “the pedestal in the shape of a ship” in the sources from that period. Hence, his bold statements in 1880 seem like he was after the lack of credibility that he experienced for a long time. However, this neat little invention of him was an act of taking all the credit from the research and effort of the Austrian architect Hauser through the ancient marine specialist Graser, was it not? Or did he really think by all himself about the remaining blocks and end up with the conclusion that they represented the prow of a ship? Considering his professional lack of method and interpretations before, for me, his discovery of the ship on his own seems somewhat hard to believe. But, maybe he did. Anyway, we must continue with the story of the Victory, at least for now.

Following his second mission, two letters of Champoiseau addressed to

⁸⁸ *La Revue Archéologique*, based in Paris, is one of the oldest, and longest-running scientific journals on archaeology. First appearing in 1844, it is neither the organ of an institution nor of any school, but has complete independence. *La Revue Archéologique* appears twice annually. For more info and the online opportunity of the archive, see:

<http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/fachinfo/archaeologie/zeitschriften/ra.html>

the Director of the National Museums, M. Barbet de Jouy, are preserved in the archives.⁸⁹ They contain additional details that are noteworthy.

The first, dated August 29, 1879 Samothrace, while the operation of boarding the blocks was in progress, announced the success of the operation:

...It will be sufficient to say that we have removed all the marbles that were at the location of the statue, the composition of which appears to perfectly constitute the galley, although we had not had the opportunity to conduct a provisional assemblage. I have also taken the plates of thick marble from 32 to 34 centimeters, forming the platform on which the keel of the boat rested. In their original setting, they had been numbered with the Greek letters to be used in place easily. The number of blocks and plates is 23, in very diverse sizes. The largest weighs up to 2000 and even 2500 kg; the lightest weighs 100 to 150 kilograms. More than half exceed 1200 kg...⁹⁰

The second letter, written from Adrianople on 7 September 1879, confirms the departure of the blocks to Marseille and addressed the problem of transportation costs, which was still too expensive:

Among the 23 blocks, there are several whose only a

⁸⁹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 183.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

portion is carved, and the others, hardly roughened, are not visible from the outside. So one could, at a pinch, in order to diminish the price of the harbour from Marseilles to Paris, see the raw parties in Marseilles and aim to send to Paris only those that are worked. Nevertheless, it would be necessary to send an employee of your administration for it, from Paris to Marseilles, and pay for sawing, which would, in short, be insignificant economy. Perhaps it would be better to carry all that from Marseille to Paris, trying to get the best possible conditions from the Railroad Company Paris Lyon Mediterranean.

I have left only one block in Samothraki, huge and without any artistic value, whose form and measurements are below. As all its six faces are rough, it is certain that it occupied an insignificant place in the center of the monument either hidden by other marbles or forming part of its all-in-fact posterior; and not visible to the eye. It will be easy to replace it with a stone of the same dimensions, if its presence would seem essential for the reconstruction of the pedestal.

Two small boxes accompany the blocks. One contains detached fragments of gray marble from the pedestal. The other contains fragments, quite a considerable number, of the statue of Victory, found during our work. Plus one marble head, labeled, and that belongs to a group — perhaps at the bottom of the funerary relief— that was placed close to one of the gates of the cyclopean wall...⁹¹

On September 29, 1879, Champoiseau sent a detailed letter to Benndorf on the results of his mission, which is published together with a sketch of the base of the slab in Samothrake II (Fig. 5):

⁹¹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 183-84.

Sir,

...My only goal was to find, remove and transport all the pedestal component marbles of the Victory of Samothrace for France, discovered by me in 1863, which were currently placed in the Louvre Museum.

After a careful examination, I recognized that these marbles were (including the basement), twenty-three in number... The pedestal of the Victory, in gray marble represented, without doubt, the front of a ship, an ancient galley... the pedestal or ahead of the galley consists of two main parts, which are superimposed. The first, constituting the lower body of the building, when cut horizontally to the birth of the keel, consists of three large blocks of marble... These three blocks are intact, except for the far end of the prow, that is unfortunately broken. The second part of the front galley was to be composed of ten or twelve marbles, relying on the three blocks described above, all cut symmetrically in pairs following the normal curves and constituting the borders, the cranes, side decks of the ship...

...As for the statue of Victory, it appears to me to that she had to rise behind cranes on the central party of the front...⁹²

Who should have the credit for discovery about the *idea* of the prow of the ship is not clear to me, as explained previously. In any case, Austrian archaeologists would have been delighted to see that their assumptions about the shape of the ship were confirmed by the explanations of Champoiseau, and the grouping made through the statue and its pedestal by him, would thus provide an opportunity to make a magnificent reconstruction of the entire colossal ex-voto in the Louvre.

⁹² Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 185-87.

CHAPTER 4

AFTERLIFE: RECONSTRUCTION OF MEMORY

The past is not simply “received” by the present. The present is “haunted” by the past and the past is modeled, invented, reinvented, and reconstructed by the present.

Assmann, 1997⁹³

As one of the main concerns of historiography, tracing the trustworthiness of a source and its objectivity deeply affect the trajectory of any story. Multiple narratives may be constructed while telling the history, any history, concerning the political and social conditions of the era and the power struggles related. However, the main duty of the historian is, as Kostof remarked, ‘to bring time under control’ by first ‘recapturing the physical reality’ and then ‘going beyond the established reality to understand what they are, how they come to be, and why they are the way they are.’⁹⁴ In this sense, while going beyond the established reality to understand the history, one should consider both the physicality of the past and the reality of the present. Yet, has the present of the past reached us without any changes—that our understanding and the understanding of a nineteenth

⁹³ Assmann, J. (1997). Mnemohistory and the Construction of Egypt. In *Moses the Egyptian the memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*. (p. 9). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

⁹⁴ Kostof, S. (1985). The Study of What We Built. In *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*. (p. 3). New York: Oxford University Press.

century historian remain the same?⁹⁵ What about the disagreements between the historians at the same time period about the same object; are we aware of the multiple histories created by controversies? At the end, usually more generally accepted understanding of the matters reaches people and shapes *their* understanding of the world and consequently *their* memory.

This brings forth the examination of the relationship between memory and history. If we consider memory as life, in a permanent evolution, and vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation; then history becomes the reconstruction, a representation of past.⁹⁶ As Nora remarks, “Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative.”⁹⁷ In that sense, how is the relativity of history operated through the absolution of memory?

Reconstruction of the past and the social or collective memory are definitely in relation with the present, or the present before our time in history, that promoted the understanding of today. Considering the Winged Victory of Samothrace, or any other ancient object of art found in territories of the Hellenistic past, this reinvention of narratives was mainly introduced to claim cultural inheritance of Greek and Roman ancestors, especially between rivals of the time, England, France and Germany, nourished by the enlightenment aura of the nineteenth

⁹⁵ This question is not to ignore the change of thought related to the developments in archaeological techniques or new discoveries of technology. It is simply a question to observe the changes in memory in connection with the disagreements in history.

⁹⁶ Nora, P. (1989). Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire. In *Representations*, (No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989)), (p. 8).

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 9.

century.⁹⁸ An obvious example for this might be the controversial Parthenon marbles —or Elgin marbles as entitled by the British— which provided a close proximity to ancient Greek art allowing that nation to present itself as the “true” inheritor of the culture of classical antiquity.⁹⁹ The actual attempt was to keep the nation’s memory and identity unified by demonstrating the continuity between the Greco-Roman world and us. It is possible to observe similar attitudes in a variety of famed cases, like the Venus de Milo, which probably has a more controversial history interpreted with mostly international relations and politics.

At this point, I believe, the restoration and reconstitution processes of these ancient objects of art were related with the idea of recreating a new social memory, thus to understand what paved the way for the present, we should learn the different perspectives in the past—especially in the nineteenth century. In the specific case of the Winged Victory of Samothrace, let us have a look at the grand restoration of the statue to see how this trajectory evolved and operated.

4.1. Grand Restoration

The grand restoration of the Winged Victory started immediately in

⁹⁸ For a wider and more critical perspective on era, see: Haskell, F., & Penny, N. (1981). In *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

⁹⁹ Jockey, P. (2011). The Venus de Milo. In *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*. (p. 243.) Istanbul: SALT.

1880, just months after the second mission —mostly about transporting the fragments of the base of the statue— of Champoiseau, and lasted over three years. After the fragments arrived, the restoration began in the courtyard of the Sphinx in the Louvre and was handled very precisely. An extract from an official report of the Conservatory of the National Museums, dated from December 4, 1879, explains the process and careful studies of the reconstruction:

The curator of Antiquities announced that the pedestal of the Winged Victory arrived in the Museum a few weeks ago. This marble pedestal shows the front of a galley and 2 meters 50 centimeters in height. One can find the complete image on the medals/coins of Samothrace and obtain evidence... The Victory will be replaced on its original pedestal and be promoted as the most important piece of sculpture in Antiquities Department, and one of the first regarding the beauty. The marble blocks that compose this colossal base were assembled in the courtyard of the Sphinx, waiting for a place worthy of this sculpture in the museum, on a floor strong enough to support a weight of 25 to 30.000 kg. The restitution of the full monument will be studied on the plaster, before being applied to the original. ...with the pedestal, there are various fragments of the statue, part of the left breast, strips of cloth etc...¹⁰⁰

Even though the restoration seems to have progressed well, this excerpt introduces a new problem: Where would the statue be placed after this process, considering its weight and monumental size? Apart from this problem, missing fragments of the statue were available then, and the care taken in this process was clear. Near the end of the reconstruction,

¹⁰⁰ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 187-90.

a scene occurred in the courtyard of the Sphinx (Fig. 6) on November 1879, which Heron de Villefosse recalled as:

I will never forget the feeling that I experienced when I saw, for the first time, the provisional arrangement and the Victory standing proudly on her pedestal whom she was separated for centuries.¹⁰¹

Upon this first trial, the effect that the monument would foster was ensured. The silhouette of the galley was already very close to its final state, its piled block structure was explained very well, except for obviously the most crucial point: the reconstruction of the statue. One might have thought of, with respect to the spirit of Longpérier, leaving the statue in its incomplete state and displaying it that way, but several new factors would very rapidly outweigh the decision to complete it.

Hauser, an architect from the Austrian team, with his patient and careful study on the descriptions and examinations of the base blocks, had proven that according to the interpretation of the available evidence, the base of the Victory was most probably in the shape of a ship's prow. Then, Hauser immediately made the connection between his theory and the coins of Demetrios Poliorcetes, on which there was a representation of a memorial, involving the figure of Victory on a ship's prow. According to all this visual evidence, he had become convinced

¹⁰¹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 190.

that the Victory of Samothrace had the same type of components.¹⁰²

The approach of Benndorf, the Austrian archaeologist responsible for studying the statue, started from that proposition. His primary objective was to reconstruct the statue as a whole, since monetary representations facilitated seizing the general pattern. For this task, he contacted a renowned Viennese sculptor, Professor Zumbusch, who was trying to reinvent the missing parts with respect to the rules of art and anatomy on a one-third scaled model moulding of the statue that the Louvre had sent to Vienna.¹⁰³ However, the problems were too many: clues from the lower body were insufficient to materialize the movement of the torso, the position of the head, or the attitude of the arms.

The case seems to be as desperate as it appeared with Longpérier in 1865, until a colleague of Benndorf, W. Bode¹⁰⁴, learned from the curators of the Louvre about the existence of large fragments in reserve.¹⁰⁵ Bode then studied these fragments with the same method that Hauser had applied to the base blocks: producing the detailed description of each of them, with many technical details, dimensions, and sketches. The publication of his observations in *Samothrake II* is the only archaeological documentation available on the statue of Victory

¹⁰² Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 191-93.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 190.

¹⁰⁴ Wilhelm von Bode was the most successful museum curator in Berlin. He became the director of the Department of Paintings of the Berlin Royal Collections in 1890. Apart from that, his international reputation as a 'connoisseur' affected the museum administration systems and a step towards freeing the museums from the dictatorship of the academical chairs. See: Joachimides, A. (2000). *The Museum's Discourse on Art*. In S. Crane (Ed.), *Museums and Memory* (p. 202-4). Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

¹⁰⁵ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 191.

before its grand restoration. The casts of all these fragments were made and sent to Vienna. Then, after several months of hard work, Benndorf and Zumbusch managed to shape a figure of the Victory as a whole.

Understandably, the publication of the results of the research carried out in Vienna by Benndorf in 1880 would serve as the basis for the restoration that the Louvre wanted to undertake.

There was another variable here that played a key role in the grand restoration: the persona of Felix Ravaisson-Mollien, the new head of the Antiquities Department who had been appointed in replacement of Longpérier in 1870. As a former officer in the Department of Public Instruction, he had given lectures on art, especially on ancient art, which was one of his favorite themes, but more important, another favorite theme of Ravaisson was plaster casts, which also played a key role in this operation. He was travelling to create a museum of casts in Paris in the 1860s and struggling for the creation of the museum in the Louvre, where he had already gathered more than three hundred casts of works from the Louvre or foreign museums.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, he believed that casts constitute a great way of scientific study: one can subtract their modern parts that affect the reading of ancient works, or otherwise complete.

Ravaisson then decided to undertake the restoration of the Winged Victory of Samothrace by using plaster, a lightweight and flexible

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 193.

material that does not alter the original marble.¹⁰⁷ He was assisted by his son and the workers of the workshops in the Museum on which apparently they had perfectly mastered the job.

Unfortunately, it is unclear who made the drawing of the missing parts of the bust, or who created the right wing. There are no extant documents concerning this creative and grand reconstitution process led mainly by Ravaisson and his son. Nevertheless, the scale of the restoration might be understood by looking and examining two photos of the statue side by side: the first one was taken in the Room of Caryatids in 1866 (Fig. 7), and the second one was after grand restoration in 1884. (Fig. 8)

The grand restoration was completed under the supervision of Ravaisson and seemed to end well. According to Villefosse, Ravaisson deserved to take the praises because:

...he had aimed at the difficult work with an enthusiasm that always evolved. He had known the exact place of the most important fragment that remained unemployed during the first restoration: he had resurfaced the missing fragment in plaster below the right breast as well as the entire left side of the chest. Consequently, the statue was thus completed from the waist up to the neck, then it became easy to adjust the wings, one of which, the left is mostly composed of found antique pieces, while other, the right is moulded according to the left one. Few small fragments collected by Champoiseau during his second

¹⁰⁷ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 194.

expedition also found their place.¹⁰⁸

Since the beginning of these operations, the main problem still remained unsolved: Where to install such a monumental sculpture in the Louvre? Several solutions were considered, as reported by Villefosse, who was a direct witness of the debates:

No place in the museum seemed satisfactory. Everything was cluttered; there was no space found for this installation, with the required conditions. One thought was to remove the Melpomene and the mosaics exposed before it. In this combination, it was necessary to eliminate the entire line of masterpieces that form the backbone of this long gallery. Otherwise, the Victory would be crushed and would have been lessened herself, then it would become impossible to see and contemplate her at ease. In this place, she should really have been the rival of Venus de Milo from whom a simple curtain would have separated her...

Another idea put forward was to establish the Victory and its pedestal on a hill, open to the sky, at the centre of one of the small gardens of the Carrousel. This idea was not only devoid of originality or greatness, but it also lacked the sky and the climate of Greece, not to mention the external dangers which the marble, that had already suffered, could still be exposed to.¹⁰⁹

The name behind the idea of the present place of the statue in the Louvre is unclear. Some names are credited for this decision, but they

¹⁰⁸ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 193-96.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 197.

are inconsistent with the timeline. Anyway, on January 17, 1880, Champoiseau wrote:

And shortly this monument, completed and restored, will form a whole grandiosity at the top of the grand staircase, very probably unique in the world.¹¹⁰

This choice was not insignificant for the adjustment —and hence, the restoration— of the monument: rigorously, the front view in the axis of the stairs was preferred to any other, while its obliquity to the viewer, as evidenced by the archaeological context, was already well known. As another mystery, the exact date of the establishment of the Victory is not known. Reinach and Villefosse mention the spring of 1884.¹¹¹ However, in its issue of August 18, 1883, *la Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité*¹¹², which appeared weekly, announced to its readers: “The colossal statue of Victory, which comes from the island of Samothrace, has just been put in the staircase of the museum of Louvre.” and represents the statue on its pedestal, then concluding “The monument, as a whole, reconstructed by the care of the curator of Antiquities, Mr. Ravaisson, is today the most remarkable piece that the museum of Louvre has.”¹¹³ This means that the great restoration of the Winged

¹¹⁰ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 197.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.198.

¹¹² The Chronicle of Arts and Curiosity, supplement to the Gazette des Beaux-Arts, published between 1861-1922. For more information, see: La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité: Supplément à la Gazette des beaux-arts. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb34421972m/date>

¹¹³ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 198.

Victory of Samothrace in whole lasted less than four years under the supervision of Ravaisson when it was ready to be displayed to the public.

When the Winged Victory was placed in her new spot in 1883, the monument stood out against a dark wall of Pompeian red, decorated by a weave of golden blossoms and framed by a band of foliate scrolls of the same color.¹¹⁴ (Fig. 9) In addition, the decoration of the walls and domes of the Daru staircase gave rise to many debates at the time. Later on, it was renovated in its present Art-Deco style condition in 1934.¹¹⁵ (Fig. 10)

The Daru Staircase has been her permanent place since then, except for the Nazi invasion during the Second World War, when the statue was safely transported from the Louvre under great difficulties caused by her weight and fragile nature.¹¹⁶ Actually, this was an opportunity to see the Winged Victory brought down from her pedestal with unprecedented closeness (Fig. 11). She was hidden in the Chateau de Valencay, embedded in crates. Eventually, her return to the Louvre in 1945 was a symbol of the liberation of France and the Allied victory, which again reconstructed the meaning of the statue within a different social, political and historical context for later generations: She was now announcing the victory of France above the grand staircase of the Louvre, as she had done in her Ancient Greek past.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 200.

¹¹⁵ See the Press Pack released by the Louvre Museum for the conservation treatment held between Sept. 2013 - Mar. 2015, titled as "Conservation treatment of the Winged Victory of Samothrace" p. 18.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 16.

4.2. Restitution of Memory

The finally restored state of the Victory seriously affected the archaeological world, which triggered the specialists of the Greek sculpture to engage in their favourite exercise: designating the sculptor of such a masterpiece and dating it properly. The reconciliation with the coins of Demetrios Poliorcetes, which no doubt represented the monument of Samothrace itself on the prow of a ship and dated between 306 and 294 BC, oriented the specialists to search for a sculptor from the end of the fourth or the very beginning of the third century BC. However, the interpretation based on a representation of a naval battle was not the only way of seeing the statue in the proper context. Several arguments were developed concerning both the style and the historical circumstances related to provide the most suitable date, and here, these will be examined.

4.2.1. Through Style and Dating

The Winged Victory is widely accepted as a Hellenistic sculpture depending both on her style and historical circumstances and attempts to associate her with a victorious naval battle. Then, how was her style designated to be Hellenistic and related with the historical scene? Furthermore, how did these hypotheses affect the process of dating the statue?

One of the major problems for scholars studying Hellenistic art is probably deciding the most possible date for the sculptures. The gradual

development of naturalistic representations for both anatomy and drapery served as reliable criteria for the Archaic period, then followed by the literary evidence and inscriptions from the Classical period, which created the possibility to determine fixed points in the timeline.¹¹⁷ Though, it was harder to depend on a single stylistic criterion in designating an object to the Hellenistic period due to the fact that there were many styles —baroque, rococo, neoclassical, realistic— in use at the same time.

In the fourth century BC, the naturalistic style of Classical Greek Art went through a stage of stylistic evolution, which was fundamentally explained as a return to earlier formalism with a new way of envisaging its aesthetic possibilities. Since the perfected technique of naturalism in the era seemed to prohibit further development on the century-old path of mimetic realism and imagining a whole new style was improbable, the shift from naturalistic form to a more dramatic and detailed one that still bears the classical proportions had generated the new style.¹¹⁸ All the fifth century formal attributes were there, but within the combination of Hellenistic traits like naturalistic rendering of textural surfaces, torsion and other spatially complex poses, exaggeratedly modeled muscular anatomy, arbitrary drapery patterns, and purely ornamental diversions of details.¹¹⁹

Concerning the Winged Victory of Samothrace, the dramatic effect of

¹¹⁷ Pollitt, J. J. (1986). *Art in the Hellenistic Age*. (p. 265). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹¹⁸ Carpenter, R. (1960). The Renaissance of Classic Form. In *Greek Sculpture: A Critical Review* (p. 198). Chicago, Illinois: Chicago University Press.

¹¹⁹ Carpenter, R. (1960), p. 199.

the sculpture was ensured by the sense of almost alive movement in her pose. Apparent artistic skills of the sculptor at naturalism made the Winged Victory a dramatic study of counter-forces and counter-torsion of the body against the invisible force of the wind with a complex, carefully calculated pattern in the drapery to produce a spatial structure of extreme diversity.¹²⁰ The unfamiliar style of torsion destroyed the frontality of profile: Instead of spiraling in continuous revolution about a vertical axis, the turning movement is checked at the waist, to be resumed in reverse direction in the upper body, thereby returning the shoulders and head to the same orientation as the lower limbs.¹²¹ Furthermore, this dramatic effect of the Winged Victory, especially when imagined in her setting at Samothrace as it is discussed in second chapter, (p. 15) with rippling water reflecting on deeply carved, fluctuating lines of her drapery and the massive feathers of her wings, could only have been created in the period of '*Hellenistic Baroque*'.¹²² The theatrical style of the Winged Victory was regarded as very similar to the Gigantomachy frieze of the Pergamon Altar¹²³. The feather details of the wings of the Nike are close to those of Zeus's eagle; the swirl of her *chiton* and the deep folds of her *himation* are akin to those of several of the goddesses in the Gigantomachy.¹²⁴ Consequently, the most concrete dating attempt among scholars is based on this.

In tandem with the stylistic dating attempts discussed above, the

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 201.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Pollitt, J. J. (1986), p. 114.

¹²³ Ridgway, B. (2001). *Hellenistic Sculpture II: The Styles of ca. 200-100 BC*. (p. 150-51). Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.

¹²⁴ Pollitt, J. J. (1986), p. 116.

chronology needed a historical scene to associate with the form of the Winged Victory. There are several arguments in discussion to construct the timeline. One depends on the idea of Rhodian dedication to celebrate naval victories over the forces of Antiochos III.¹²⁵ After being driven from Greece in 191 BC by allied Greeks and Romans, Antiochos raised a new fleet to prevent Romans from pursuing him into Asia, yet he was defeated in 190 BC in battles off Side and Myonnesos. Following the return of Eudamos —the commander of the allied army— to his home island, bearing the glory of the victory, and he commissioned a gifted artist to create a monument that was to be set up in the sanctuary of Samothrace, where the deities were the protectors of sailors.¹²⁶ However, even the scholars who accept the similarity with the Pergamene work generally assigned a later date to the Winged Victory, because of the stylistic evolution in her towards a ‘free emotive’ use of classic idiom.¹²⁷ Another argument becomes evident from here: if the period between 180 and 160 BC was reasonable, then there was no evidence for a remarkable Rhodian naval success, but the flight of Perseus, last of the Macedonian kings, from the Roman forces, to the Samothracian sanctuary in 168 BC.¹²⁸ He surrendered, and since it was the Pergamene fleet that prevented Perseus’s further escape by confining him to Samothrace and submitting to the Roman commander, the Winged Victory may have been a memorial of Pergamon.¹²⁹ Another theory based on the inscription found with the base of Nike is mostly

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 116-17.

¹²⁷ Carpenter, R. (1960), p. 203-4.

¹²⁸ Carpenter, R. (1960), p. 204.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

concerned with designating the author as Pythokritos¹³⁰ or Hieronymos¹³¹ but not providing more precision about the timeline. On this basis, even these are not provable because of the lack of literary evidence; hence, the most possible date for the Winged Victory seems to be around 190-160 BC.

Regardless of the name or the date, one would dare to say: the Winged Victory of Samothrace is entered into the pantheon of the renowned “masterpieces” of Greek art. No manual on Greek art or civilization in the late nineteenth century could now ignore this monumental addition. With her precise workmanship and proportions, in my opinion, she is perceived as the representation of the ‘*Greek ideal of beauty*.’

At this point, comparison of the two masterpieces, Venus de Milo and Nike of Samothrace, which are the major icons demonstrating the concept of ‘ideal beauty,’ may be useful to unearth the restitution of memory. Although their narratives lodge similarities, these statues had become rivals when we consider the praises they both take as the ‘best masterpiece of sculpture ever.’ Hamiaux claims:

No statues produced anywhere throughout the Greek world during the Hellenistic period bear comparison with the Victory of Samothrace. Only the drapery effects on the goddesses in the Parthenon pediments are comparable, as if, two and a half centuries later, the sculptor wanted to test

¹³⁰ Ridgway, B. (2001), p. 151-52.

¹³¹ Lehmann, K. (1973), p. 192-93.

his skill against the great masters of Attic sculpture from the fifth century BC.¹³²

On the other hand Salomon Reinach, a renown scholar and archaeologist, states “...But not one among the fine female statues of this period presently known to us can stand comparison with the Venus even under the most casual scrutiny!” while defending the idea that another well-known sculpture; Venus de Milo belongs to the Classical period, preferably to the School of Phidias.¹³³

At this juncture, a different type of archaeology seems to emerge. While a basic comparison on workmanship and details for both statues would reveal the formally better one in a factual way, there is yet something else: ‘*emotional archaeology*’ jumps ahead of reasoning as Ravaisson once pointed out. In fact, what probably makes scholars give these sculptures the title ‘greatest’ is not a real, physical —and objective— comparison of workmanship but more like a clash of meanings. This ‘emotional archaeology’ places us in a dilemma: on one hand we have Venus as the symbol of beauty; on the other hand, there is Nike who brings victory. They both have their stories of discovery and the mythological meanings that made them precious in their own time. Then, how do the meanings and stories make us believe we choose the ‘better’ one? Here, leaving aside the discussion of ‘ideal beauty’ for now, let us have a look at how the discovery and dating process of the Venus de Milo proceeded and affected the understanding of this reinvented memory

¹³² Hamiaux, M. (2007). *La Victoire de Samothrace*. (p. 43). Paris : Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

¹³³ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 245.

clash.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the political scene was crowded and complicated. The Greeks were under Ottoman rule; the Ottoman Empire was in the decline and dissolution period, and the powerful European countries like France and England had the legitimacy to operate in Ottoman territories with the promise of some kind of security. At that time, it was not unusual to unearth or transport fragments of ancient Greek art for the European countries, with an authority gained from administrative officials of Ottoman Empire. Later on, in 1830, when the Greeks were freed from Ottoman rule, they reclaimed their territories and lay the foundation of the modern state.

The discovery of Venus de Milo, or *Aphrodite*, came up just at the most appropriate time, in 1820, when Greeks were struggling against Ottoman rule and Ottomans were weak against Europe. Its emergence was like the reflection of the politics of the era, and that might made her renowned and respected considering the power struggle behind her story.

The Aphrodite was found on the Aegean Island of Milos, by a Greek peasant or priest as the story was told¹³⁴, and was won by the French in that competition of taking the possession of the work, against Dutch and British rivals.¹³⁵ It was transported to the Louvre in 1821, and soon after that the exercise of dating the statue and naming the sculptor

¹³⁴ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 240-43.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 241.

began in earnest.

Under the circumstances mentioned above, glorifying the honor of Venus de Milo and proving that she belonged to the classical period was crucial for the French to preserve their place in cultural history as the British did with the Parthenon marbles. Arguments on the date of the sculpture were mostly divided into two sides: First, mostly developed by French scholars, assigned the Venus to an early date, just a little later than Phidias; on the other hand, the second side assigned the statue to a much later date, around 100 BC.¹³⁶ The first argument suggested that the Venus belonged to the Classical period, while the second suggested it was Hellenistic. The eclectic style of the statue, mixing classical features with Hellenistic novelties did not smooth the way for the dating attempts.¹³⁷ Hence, the lack of concrete evidence provided room for that “emotional archaeology”, when people (or nations) tried to link themselves to a higher era in which democracy and freedom were believed to have been discovered.

Let us now turn to physical conditions of the two statues, Venus and the Nike: What could the comparison of workmanships of the two statues reveal? Why was Venus represented as the perfection of ancient art while discussions about its quality were ongoing? As a known fact, Venus de Milo was discussed as depicting Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of beauty and love (which was Venus for Romans). Obviously, she was beautiful and had to be so. The concern here is not simply the beauty that could address senses, but also a more factual beauty,

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 245-46.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 239.

including the workmanship and the details of the sculpture. Even though it was carved from a very fine marble of Paros, the resulting work was of good but not exceptional quality, and of rather ordinary workmanship, especially in details.¹³⁸

The critic Antoine Quatremère de Quincy characterized the workmanship as 'shoddy' while describing the drapery of Venus and remarked that:

...the left cheek and the left side of the face display obvious irregularities, which it is impossible to explain, as M. de Clarac has tried to do, by citing a later degradation of the marble; these defects clearly belong to the same dates as the rest of the sculpture, and they can only be ascribed to negligence.¹³⁹

However, as mentioned previously, the quality of workmanship in the case of the Winged Victory was only comparable with the masterpieces.

At the end, in 1895, after all the discussions about Venus de Milo, Pasquier, the curator of the Antiquities Department, clarified that it probably belonged to 120-80 BC, after a long scientific research he conducted in the Louvre Museum.¹⁴⁰ The dating of Venus de Milo started from the fourth century BC, which was reasonable when it is

¹³⁸ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 239

¹³⁹ Quoted by Felix Ravaisson, in "La Vénus de Milo," *Les Mémoires de l'Institut National de France, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 34 (1892) p. 184.

¹⁴⁰ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 247.

considered in the aura of the era; and resulted in first century BC, much earlier than it was thought at first. When we think about this background of Venus de Milo within an arena of political struggle and cultural supremacy, this emotional archaeology makes more sense. That was probably an attempt to enter the list of “higher” nations which was deemed possible then by just possessing the property of a classical statue able to thoroughly generate the narrative of the classical era.

4.2.2. Through Restitution of the Missing

Another aspect of the research in the years following the dating attempts concerns the restitution of the attitude of arms and the attributes which held the Victory: it sounds like a *déjà vu* of the old controversies about the Venus de Milo, but a less violent one.¹⁴¹

At this point, it is necessary to have a look first at the story behind the lost arms of Venus de Milo and what the latter could tell us. As with the dating attempts, the identity of the statue was also under question at the time. Following the discovery of a large statue of Poseidon in Milos, some scholars claimed that the female statue could belong to a shrine dedicated to the sea god, and represent Amphitrite.¹⁴² This pointed to the possibility that the figure was a part of a group, not isolated.

¹⁴¹ For more information on the varied reconstitutions of Venus de Milo, see: Carus, P. (1916). Restorations. In *The Venus of Milo; an Archeological Study of the Goddess of Womanhood* (pp. 27-41). Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company.

¹⁴² Jockey, P. (2011), p. 247.

Moreover, the fragment of a hand holding an apple was later found near the statue¹⁴³ and the possibilities started to multiply. Thus, the reconstruction of the arms would not only confirm the identity of the goddess, but also demonstrate whether she was an isolated figure or not.¹⁴⁴

In 1897, Reinach published an illustration showing seven attempts for the restoration of the arms and the statue overall (Fig. 12), including Ravaisson, Fürtwängler, Stillman and the latest restoration of Saloman —except the previous restoration of Saloman showing the Venus holding an apple.¹⁴⁵ It is unclear whether the apple in ancient Greek was Melos, which would mean that the island took its name from the apple; there was a wide representation of it in the island; or whether the interpretation was less significant that reasoned in exclusion.¹⁴⁶ In any case, the attempts for each reconstruction trial served a different purpose. As an example, Ravaisson imagined her as part of a group with a male pendant, possibly Mars, which was generally rejected by scholars.¹⁴⁷ It makes sense that the desire was to render Venus alone, which would make the attribution of her as an icon of the classical heritage easier. As Jockey remarked:

¹⁴³ Carus, P. (1916), p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 247-50.

¹⁴⁵ Detailed and larger images of these restorations efforts of Geskel Saloman, a Danish–Swedish portrait and genre painter who also appeared as a writer especially in studies of Venus de Milo, may be consulted in Carus, P. (1916), p. 29-35.

¹⁴⁶ For more on the apple, see Carus, P. (1916), p. 42-48.

¹⁴⁷ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 250.

In this light, we can make sense of why positions were held so fiercely and contested so bitterly in rival reviews. If this feminine Venus was coupled with a missing virile Mars then the icon on which France was basing its claim to the mantle of classical Greece was only half a work, and this was understood as a real threat.¹⁴⁸

Regardless of whether Venus de Milo is deserving of its fame or not, much was certainly done to generate the evidence for that, and to recreate a reference in history which could carry the possibility to give pride to a nation and heighten its value in our memory.

What about the case of Nike, who lacked both the head and the arms? As mentioned above (p. 53-54), the first reconstitution of the statue was the one produced in Vienna by Zumbusch, prior to the grand restoration of the Winged Victory. This was based on the coins of Demetrios Poliorcetes representing Victory blowing a trumpet. (Fig. 13)

A few years after the reconstitution of Zumbusch, a French sculptor, Cordonnier, offered to change the position of the right arm on a scaled model of the Winged Victory. According to him, in the front view of the statue as restored, the present fragmental state of the right shoulder was not suitable for the position of an arm holding a trumpet, as previously proposed.¹⁴⁹ He restored an arm that was raised higher, and the hand holding up the triumph of the crown, he thought as suggested by the

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Hamiaux, M. (2001), p. 202.

shoulder. (Fig. 14)

While the discussions of reconstitution were in progress, a hand fragment was found in the ongoing excavations of Samothrace in 1950¹⁵⁰; that suggested something different. The hand had ‘an open palm and two outstretched fingers, suggesting that she was not holding anything but just simply holding her hand up in a gesture of greeting.’¹⁵¹ (Fig. 15) Both the inference of Cordonnier and the discovery of a hand disproved the old theory, which inevitably dated Nike as a commemoration of Demetrios’s victory at Salamis in 306 BC.

This change in dating did not create a clash-of-powers effect like Venus de Milo, since the Winged Victory was actually never strongly claimed to belong in the Classical period. The Winged Victory was admired for the visual effect she created on the spectator, generally on the modern spectator because of the lack of ancient literary evidence, and with this effect on the spectator, she claimed her own place as belonging to the higher era of sculpture. In her original setting in the island of Samothrace, she most probably created a breathtaking effect on the ancient spectator within her narrative, too.

¹⁵⁰ Lehmann, K. (1973), p. 183-85.

¹⁵¹ The Pose. In *A closer look at the Victory of Samothrace*. Retrieved from: http://musee.louvre.fr/oal/victoiredesamothrace/victoiredesamothrace_acc_en.html

4.2.3. On Narrative

Hypotheses based on specific historical events or stylistic patterns direct us through a determined time period when dealing with issues of dating, yet they are inadequate to give us clues about narrative or context. It is possible to date the Winged Victory to the Hellenistic period — specifically Hellenistic Baroque— but the question, encapsulated with the context and settlement of the statue, “What exactly was she doing there?” still bears mystery. If we consider the statue within the Hellenistic Baroque, in which *rhetorical*¹⁵² position did she stand?

Ridgway claimed that:

If, however, Nike of Samothrake is indeed a monument celebrating a decisive naval encounter, it would fall within the tradition of commemorations that convey success through mythological allusions or symbols.¹⁵³

And stressed that the piece should no longer be seen as an isolated figure, but should be accepted in the context. In context, then, what were the allusions and allegories that came along with the Winged Victory and how did they affect dating together with stylistic attitudes? The discussion starts with the investigation of the *‘role of the spectator’* in

¹⁵² Marrou remarked that “...the categories of eloquence were imposed on every form of mental activity -on poetry, history and even philosophy. Hellenistic culture was above all, a rhetorical culture...” in Marrou, H. (1982). Higher Education: Rhetoric. In *A History of Education in Antiquity* (p. 195). Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

¹⁵³ Ridgway, B. (2001), p. 159.

Hellenistic Baroque, which then leads to the development of the narrative through sculpture. To begin with, the characteristics of the Baroque style¹⁵⁴ have been described with concepts like emotionalism, energy, passion, and theatricality for centuries; however the connection of such concepts with the sculpture itself seems more relative. When the Baroque itself as a style is considered within the narrative, it may fail for the critics¹⁵⁵ because even though it strives to heighten the effect of narrative; it destroys its coherence by chaos and rhythms. In fact, after the harmony and the accepted styles of the Classical period, the theatricality and drama of the Baroque was understandably evaluated as 'chaotic,' then what was the message behind this change? What was the purpose of the sculptor? Was it the manifestation of a specific historical consciousness while provoking the spectator to offer a new narrative?

During the renewed excavation in island of Samothrace, after the discovery of the statue and base blocks, an interesting factual information was emerged about the context of the statue on the island: Traces of water channels and pipes were revealed under the floor of the statue through the theater below, suggesting a fountain setting¹⁵⁶ with two basins on different levels (Fig. 16). In one of the basins, fragments of a hand —probably the right hand— were found and further analysis

¹⁵⁴ A comprehensive study about Baroque style in Antiquity may be read in: Lyttelton, M. (1974). *Baroque Architecture in Classical Antiquity*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. In chapters 1 and 3, the study examines the definition of 'Ancient Baroque' and the 'Origins of Baroque' in Greece.

¹⁵⁵ It seems that an ancient prejudice affected the criticism of the Baroque since Neo-Classical critics like Quintilian and Pliny. This prejudice still dominates the modern historians of Greek art. See: Stewart, A. (1993). Narration and Allusion in the Hellenistic Baroque. In P. Holliday (Ed.), *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art* (p. 133-37). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵⁶ Lehmann, K. (1973), p. 184-90.

on the palm and the fingers suggested that the hand was not holding anything as previously discussed, but it just extended forward in some kind of gesture.¹⁵⁷

In the light of these developments, some narratives began to emerge: Charbonneaux suggested a loosely held *taenia*—a ribbon, Robertson mentioned a wreath, and Pollitt saw her arriving on the ship “*in order to crown its victorious commander and crew*”.¹⁵⁸ After all, the conclusion for Lehmann was imagining her as “*extending her arm forward against the enemy in a great gesture of command*”.¹⁵⁹ At this point, one may think about the role of Nike in antiquity and challenge the idea of ‘Nike giving commands’. She was just the messenger delivering the news of victory, not an active figure of the battles like a commander. Then here we may go back to our previous discussion about the role of the spectator: To whom was she gesturing with her hand? It seems possible to claim that the aim of the sculptor was to create a narrative using metaphors with a historical consciousness; and to provoke the spectator by involving her/him in the theatrical scene of the past. Not only to remind them of the history, but also to make them feel it: thus the gesture was for the spectators in order to invite them inside the narrative.

In this sense, if we consider the Winged Victory as a continuous metaphor within the theatricality of Hellenistic Baroque, the literary image of the allegory of “the ship of the state” becomes visible. The purpose of the sculptor might have been to represent the salvation of the

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 183-84.

¹⁵⁸ Stewart, A. (1993), p.141.

¹⁵⁹ Lehmann, K. (1973), p.184.

ship of state from the stormy blasts and breakers of war. In this case, Nike would fit into the development of personification and allegory in Greek art with her blend of sophisticated metaphors.¹⁶⁰ Stewart mentions about the Winged Victory of Samothrace as follows:

The sculptor's Nike is a real daemon, a flesh-and-blood creature of irresistible power, that she is battling the 'blasts of Ares' as she lands on the prow, and that she is specifically a goddess of the sea, whose crisscrossing waves, 'flashing and frolicsome under the sun', are the real gift she brings to the victor from Zeus.¹⁶¹

Such a metaphorical reading of the Winged Victory might also explain the ongoing discussions about the irregularity of the storm-tossed, massive, and overlapping drapery at the back of the sculpture, which is considered discordant with the representations of Hellenistic Baroque Nike.¹⁶² The irregularity of the "massed and twisted"¹⁶³ drapery is interpreted as the representation of 'the departed storm of opposition', and the ancient spectator might be prodded or provoked to remember the 'blasts of Ares'.¹⁶⁴ This kind of evocative use of surface and texture to contextualize a personification has roots in classical and Hellenistic art: The Nike of Paionios's wet and wind-swept drapery might be given as an example, suggesting a victory at sea with that sense of wetness

¹⁶⁰ Stewart, A. (1993), p.150.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.151.

¹⁶² Stewart, A. (1993), p. 145.

¹⁶³ Carpenter, R. (1960), p. 201.

¹⁶⁴ Stewart, A. (1993), p. 149-52.

which could be read from the drapery.¹⁶⁵ Applying a similar principle, then, one can argue that the Nike of Samothrace was a representation of a wild storm at sea, and the irregular massive drapery behind indicated that it was overcome. If we respecify the ship of the state allegory in a wider sense: as the Ship overcame the storm, the State overcome the ‘blasts of Ares.’

In the eyes of the ancient spectators, these kinds of metaphors that we tend to construct were probably actually visible. On the ancient setting of the Nike of Samothrace in the island, above the theater on the hill, where she had just landed, the Nike was looking down towards the sea, in her colorful *chiton*,¹⁶⁶ with sparkling water drops on her drapery¹⁶⁷ and announcing the great victory that was won in the stormy sea to the community. In the ‘true memory’ of that ancient community¹⁶⁸ the response to that grandiose Nike was probably clearer than our present: admiration and respect. Unfortunately, we are not able to know how seeing the sculpture in that sense definitely felt like; not just because of the lack of narrative, but also because of our lack of ‘true memory’ about her.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 149.

¹⁶⁶ Color contrast was used to separate overlapping parts of the *chiton* in antiquity. In the case of Nike of Samothrace, there is a possibility of color use between two garments. See: Ridgway, B. (2001), p. 155. For visual information, see the exhibition book of Vinzenz Brinkmann’s *Gods in Color: Painted Sculpture of Classical Antiquity* (2007). Also, for a survey of polychromy in ancient Greece, see Hagele, H. (2013). *Greek Sculpture: Once Bright and Shiny*. In *Colour in Sculpture: A survey from ancient Mesopotamia to the present* (pp. 65-90). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

¹⁶⁷ Lehmann, K. (1973), p. 184.

¹⁶⁸ The “true” memory is social and unviolated, exemplified in but also retained as the secret of archaic societies; it is collective and plural. Yet we have trained in history which organizes the past by tracing and distancing it, so we are not able to feel it. Nora, P. (1989), p. 8-10.

CHAPTER 5

RESURRECTION: MEMORY ON DISPLAY

In the life of a collective consciousness, the movement from compactness to differentiation is comparable to the birth and growth of an individual human being, who leaves the compactness of life in utero, where child is mother and mother is child, to acquire an increasingly differentiated understanding of the world. In the absolute darkness of the womb the child can, at the most, have only four senses — taste, hearing, smell and touch. Only at birth, with the first and most definitive separation, does the child acquire its fifth sense and begin to *see*.

McEwen, 1993¹⁶⁹

The eye sees what it has the means of seeing, what is familiar becomes more visible and the strange becomes stranger. Our previous perception affects the way we perceive and see the present. Thus, the experience of seeing lies there; as the perception of the past exists in memory, vision or the experience of seeing is dependent on memory,¹⁷⁰ the collective consciousness, and the past.

If one follows the roots of visual experience through ancient Greece, which is generally regarded as a society of oral traditions, it is possible

¹⁶⁹ McEwen, I. K. (1993). Anaximander and the Articulation of Order. In *Socrates' Ancestor: An Essay on Architectural Beginnings* (p. 20). Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

¹⁷⁰ Huxley, A. (1974). Memory and Imagination. In *The Art of Seeing* (pp. 50-51). London: Chatto & Windus.

to find that the ‘experience of seeing’ has an intimate and sometimes sacred association.¹⁷¹ Referring to the ancient Greek theatre as a unique experience of visual culture, Greeks staged the *myth* — stories of gods and heroes to make the absent being present — into the physical reality and experience, directly before the eyes of the spectator. The experience of seeing then suggests an imaginary scene of the past from the collective memory, visualizing and familiarizing it in the experiences of the spectator. Here, the spectator as mentioned in the previous chapter, becomes the distant participant involved in the experience by imagining it by her/himself in the life of a collective consciousness.

Then, it is possible to link the collective memory passing through times and spaces with the help of visions or the images that make us think about the narratives of existence. Visual culture makes sense through other images when they collectively overlap together and tell a story, in which we feel familiar.

On the contrary, the majority of people in our era tend to think of memory as an abstract concept, mostly because of our collective failure to visualize it. The physical form of memory is obviously invisible to a naked eye, yet it becomes visible through imaginative recollection and representation, while we seek to catch that instant moment of the

¹⁷¹ One can object that idea referring to Pausanias. The world Pausanias calls *ta Ellinika* (Greek matters) was mostly based on the stimulation of collective memory through history and oral tradition, not much about visualization of places and objects. Yet, the concern in this chapter is not about visuality, it is about the *experience of seeing* through collective memory. Psarra, S. (2009). The Parthenon and Erechtheion. In *Architecture and Narrative: The Formation of Space and Cultural Meaning* (p. 38). London: Routledge.

meaning behind it for us.¹⁷² Memory is not passive but mortal, it is not static but it can be made to seem so by the creation of forms of representation to solidify the meanings that construct memory.¹⁷³

In brief, the abstract perception of memory is made solid by the representation of objects from the past. This is the place where preservation of the meanings of memory would meet with the physicality of the space, or, more specifically the space of museums. Warnock refers to memory as an act of “thinking of things in their absence” which may be triggered by stimulating objects like the ones in museums. Thus, in order to discuss the interaction between memory and museums, we should be aware of “memory experiences”: individual, collective, shared; based on common experiences, learning, heritage, and tradition.¹⁷⁴

Here one can wonder: What does being aware of memory experiences actually involve? What are the factors that affect ‘memory experiences’? Last but not least, what were/are the reasons behind the constitution of museums?

As previously discussed on “true” memory, the distinction between memory and history is a crucial point to be considered while envisioning the formation of museums and the memory experiences they create. Once suggested by Nora, memory is “a perpetually active phenomenon,

¹⁷² Crane, S. (2000). Introduction: Of Museums and Memory. In *Museums and Memory* (p. 1-2). Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. Also see Warnock, M. (1987). *Memory*. London: Faber and Faber.

a bond tying us to the eternal present,” while history is just “a representation of the past”.¹⁷⁵ Then, we may consider the ‘memory experiences’ within the historical context created in the museums. But, how?

5.1. *Les Lieux de Mémoire*¹⁷⁶

First, we may rethink our previous discussion of ‘historical continuity’ which was tried to be achieved in the (re)writing of history. (p. 50) According to Nora, historical continuity is interrupted at a particular historical moment and the consciousness of a break with the past poses ‘the problem of the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists.’¹⁷⁷ Thus, that interruption in historical continuity is followed by the rupture in collective memory and forms “*les lieux de mémoire*.” Briefly, museums were established because collective memory does not function in its natural way anymore and there occurs an institutional need for the sites of memory.

Furthermore, Harvey links the emergence of museum culture precisely to the significance of the ‘ideological labour of inventing tradition’ in the enlightenment aura of the nineteenth century, which was ‘an era when transformations in spatial and temporal practices implied a loss of

¹⁷⁵ Nora, P. (1989), p. 8.

¹⁷⁶ It is possible to translate this phrase as ‘memory places’ in English, however its translation by its author, Pierre Nora, is the ‘sites of memory’. Nora, P. (1989). Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*. *Representations*, (No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989)), 7-24.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 7.

identity with place and repeated radical breaks with any sense of historical continuity.¹⁷⁸ Hence, it may be assumed that antique artifacts and ruins served to ground our trembling identity in a rapidly transforming world. It then follows that after the break of historical continuity, the emergence of museums provided a place to hold onto the past and to an identity.

5.1.1. Memory vs. Identity

For the attitude of modernity, the high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is.¹⁷⁹

In the search for a relationship between memory, museums and identity, our previous discussion about creating national identity through the reinvention of history may be prolonged here. The museum was the place which preserved art and represented it to the mass of people. Yet in the modern bureaucratic nation-state, it is viewed as a public authority.¹⁸⁰ The criticism of museums based on that public authority

¹⁷⁸ Harvey, D. (1990). The Rise of Postmodernism as a Cultural Force. In *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (p. 272). Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

¹⁷⁹ Foucault, M. (1984). What Is Enlightenment? In *The Foucault Reader* (pp. 32-50). New York: Pantheon Books.

¹⁸⁰ Siapkas, J., & Gren, L. (2014). Conclusion. In *Displaying the Ideals of Antiquity: The Petrified Gaze* (p. 195). New York: Routledge.

was increased because of the museums' inability to represent marginalized groups. If they were unable to represent marginal groups, they could then neutralize them and their culture.¹⁸¹ This means educating the public within pragmatism. Here, education was not only used for simply ideological purposes, but also the behavioral codes found suitable for the public.¹⁸²

Actually, this educational purpose of museums paved the way for the phenomenon of identity. Once the museum was institutionalized from the private collecting practices and 'curiosity cabinets',¹⁸³ it acquired an educational role for the public, in addition to its traditional role of preservation and representation. It became an educational institution controlled by 'professionals', designed to serve cultural, social, or ideological purposes.¹⁸⁴ Consequently, the decision concerning the items to be displayed in the museums was the duty of the academy in which the possibility of subjectiveness is hard to deny. Thus, the choices were made by considering the unity of the public firstly in a national sense, then globally, and resulted in the historically created collective memory. Briefly, in the concept of museums, history was transformed from the

¹⁸¹ Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Arcades Project* (R. Tiedemann, Ed.). Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press. Mentioned in Siapkas, J., & Gren, L. (2014), p. 196.

¹⁸² Shapiro's remarks: "Exhibitions thus became textbooks in public civility, places where the visitors learned to accord their counterparts recognition while avoiding modes of speech and conduct that intruded upon another's experience." and "In a period of social fluidity, most museum directors agreed that the fundamental mission of art institutions was to 'instruct rather than to inform, to impose taste rather than to question its foundations.'" Shapiro, M. (1990). The Public and The Museum. In *The Museum: A Reference Guide* (p. 235-37). New York: Greenwood Press.

¹⁸³ More information on "curiosity cabinets" is available in: Crane, S. (2000). Curious Cabinets and Imaginary Museums. In *Museums and Memory* (p. 60-80). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

¹⁸⁴ Crane, S. (2000), p. 6-7.

tradition of memory, thus ‘what we call memory today is therefore not memory but history.’¹⁸⁵

Accordingly, it is possible to materialize memory and the transformation of history with an analogy: If the Erechtheion is the memory, then Parthenon is the history. The Parthenon was built to idealize democracy and imperial power, yet the Erechtheion embodied diverse cults founded with archaic origins. Parthenon was static, unifying people around a single ideology and making the political propaganda; the Erechtheion honored the changing nature of embodied experience rather than an overall concept.¹⁸⁶ Thus, making propaganda of an identity — national identity or a globally unifying one — through place and narrative is not something new to be discussed.

Actually, if the museum is considered as an ideological tool for manipulation of the public, the definition changes and widens. In sum, in the concluding chapter of ‘The Love of Art,’ Bourdieu writes:

The museum presents to all, as a public heritage, monuments of a past splendor, instruments for the extravagant glorification of the great people of previous times: false generosity, since free entry is also optional entry, reserved for those who, equipped with the ability to appropriate the works of art, have the privilege of making use of this freedom, and who thence find themselves legitimated in their privilege, that is, in their ownership of the means of appropriation of cultural goods, or to paraphrase Max Weber, in their *monopoly* of the

¹⁸⁵ Nora, P. (1989), p. 13.

¹⁸⁶ Detailed analyses of these two buildings could be found in: Psarra, S. (2009), p. 33-36.

manipulation of cultural goods and the institutional signs of cultural salvation.¹⁸⁷

Then, is this presentation of cultural goods which is claimed to be manipulative in the museums visible to the eye? Or how one can observe this kind of representation through objects?

5.2. On Representation

The idea and physical form of museum is not meant to encourage archaeological displays, since the foundation behind it is based on representing the archaeologically detached objects from their original setting both in terms of time and space.¹⁸⁸ The modes of display in the modern museums tended to 'freeze time' while achieving 'a state beyond time' through the permanent display of collections.¹⁸⁹ Permanence of display and separation of the entities from the original context thus make the objects gain new cultural and ideological meanings, mostly post-operated ones. That is why, preservation in the museums has the potential to 'fix the memory' of the cultures through the representative objects. The selectivity behind this gap between real life and exhibited collections then becomes controversial. Who decides what deserves to

¹⁸⁷ Bourdieu, P., & Darbel, A. (1990). Conclusion. In *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public* (p. 113). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

¹⁸⁸ Siapkis, J., & Gren, L. (2014), p. 172.

¹⁸⁹ Crane, S. (2000), p. 3.

be preserved or not?¹⁹⁰ These selected objects representing selected memories then become components of identities of collective memory; there is no other possibility for individuals to feel personally connected with them.

The idea of identifying museums as storehouses or archives of cultural heritage¹⁹¹ is advanced by the premise that, if museums are the storehouses of memory, then each museum might be considered as a fragment of one ideal — global — museum.¹⁹² From this point of view, we might consider the representative objects in museums as the smaller pieces of one collective storehouse which would make the observation of memory in a smaller scale possible for us. Then, we may examine the transmission of memory through representative objects in our specific case of Nike of Samothrace and try to trace the flow of memory.

The following quotation makes this clearer:

Representational entities are entities the imagination seeks to transform not because they represent, but because they do so in a systematic and persistent way, becoming habits of thinking and doing.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Crane, S. (2000), p. 3.

¹⁹¹ Ernst, W. (2000). Archi(ve)textures of Museology. In S. Crane (Ed.), *Museums and Memory* (p. 17-34). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

¹⁹² Mentioned in Crane, S. (2000), p. 4.

¹⁹³ Psarra, S. (2009), p. 249.

Then, where do these representational entities stand in the concept of a museum? Once stated by Kant “the beautiful is that which pleases without concept,” yet without having the concept, how can an object appeal to us, or without the context, is an object of art really able to transmit the memory it has accumulated?

As a result of the alienation of the objects from their original context and function, these objects of art have different technique of display. In the case of architectural sculptures like metopes or pediments, the general tendency is to create an architectural contextualization.¹⁹⁴ It is possible to take the display of the Pergamon Altar in Berlin as an example: The attempt is to partly recreate the architectural set-up that would make it easier for the visitor to visualize. Thus, the ancient setting becomes imaginable and may be understandable to the modern spectator’s eye.¹⁹⁵ Yet, it still loses its function and authenticity that it had in its original setting which fueled the discussions on aesthetically created narratives in museums. Especially for displaying statuary, art historical narratives are very common in museum contexts: they are often characterized by the arrangement of objects in well-defined categories like sculpture, pottery, or bronzes, following a clear chronological route which turns object decontextualized entities, just objects for aesthetic admiration.

Most museums create new visual scenarios that try to make up for the loss of the original context by constructing a new contingency between

¹⁹⁴ Siapkis, J., & Gren, L. (2014), p. 173-75.

¹⁹⁵ More on the Pergamon Altar is available in a comprehensive study; see Bilsel, C. (2012). *Antiquity on Display: Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin's Pergamon Museum*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

art and ‘the arts’ in the gallery: either by locating the artwork within an iconographic series, or in a period style. Or, as in the case of the modernist gallery, formal and aesthetic correspondences are nurtured among otherwise unrelated works.¹⁹⁶ Generally, this involves framing the object within a created context —either it tries to somehow simulate the past framing or it frames the object while considering the overall representation of it in the museum. Yet, these techniques of display are not applicable for the *masterpieces*; which are generally singled out, placed in a glass cabinet or at the end of a long corridor, and decontextualized for emphasizing their unique aesthetic qualities.¹⁹⁷ Then, turning back to our specific case, let us now examine the representation of our “masterpiece,” the Winged Victory of Samothrace, in comparison with Venus de Milo and how that representation affects the way we visualize them.

5.2.1. On ‘The Masterpiece’

Definitions matter. Yet, without the authenticity in original setting, little descriptive cards prepared for the objects in the museum are not sufficient to tell the story of a masterpiece. Our discussion in the previous chapter sheds light on the importance of narrative and context, but what could be the alternative of decontextualization? Is it possible to recreate the meaning that a statuary embodied in its authenticity, even when the conditions are not suitable for that kind of contextual

¹⁹⁶ Bilsel, C. (2012), p. 15-20.

¹⁹⁷ Siapkis, J., & Gren, L. (2014), p. 176.

recreation in the museum?

We have seen that the Winged Victory was first displayed in the Caryatids Hall in her incomplete state —consisting of just the lower torso and legs, then in the Tiber Hall for a short time where she enjoyed the south light, and at the end she found her final place —or at least it seems final for now: the Daru Staircase. At that time, the Daru staircase was just completed, and the Winged Victory was renovated in the grand restoration in which she became united with her base and completed as much as possible. In this regard, her placement in Daru staircase was like painting a *tableau* waiting to be completed.

To start with, what was significant about the selection of the Daru Staircase? That monumental staircase is the Louvre's stairway of honour: it formed the central artery between two of the major wings in the museum, spreading in a great expanse of twenty meters wide and thirty-four meters long that reached twenty-two meters above the ground floor.¹⁹⁸ The Winged Victory of Samothrace is placed at the top level of the Daru, on its great central landing. Apart from its monumentality, one of the most important reasons for that selection was its suitability to the requirements: It is possible to create a *stage* just for Winged Victory which would both dignify and amplify her existence and somehow create a context to display such a masterpiece. For this purpose, the windows facing the flights were closed and the domes

¹⁹⁸ See the Press Pack released by Louvre Museum for the conservation treatment held between Sept. 2013 - Mar. 2015, titled as "Conservation treatment of the Winged Victory of Samothrace" p.19.

became the primary source of light.¹⁹⁹ Stained glasses used in the domes were replaced with blurred ones that shifted the focus more on the Winged Victory. Windows at the lower levels of the landings were closed which made those parts darker, in order to make sure that the light would glide on Winged Victory and create a sacred feeling or aura. Also, arrangements were made in the setting to make the Winged Victory visible from the bottom of the staircase.

The final setting of the statue was more likely designed to create scenery with a flow of meanings. Despite the loss of authenticity in setting, the new scenery constructs its own authenticity: a narrower one, but it still attempts to reflect the meaning behind the original. Then, how is it experienced in the modern era?

In the eyes of a modern spectator, while climbing up the stairs, the Winged Victory becomes more and more visible by every step; just like the ancient spectator while climbing the steps of the ancient theatre in Samothrace. She is standing at the top, as she did before, greeting the spectator. When the spectator reaches the landing at the top of the stairs, he/she has the possibility to see the statue as a whole, yet her heroic and godly stand on the prow of a ship would not have let the spectator to fully grasp her movement at first glance. In order to understand the sense of movement, one should circle around the statue and observe the motion in the drapery, wings and so on. There is no protection around the statue, no rails and no glass cabinets; just the Winged Victory on the top of the ship. One can just stand next to her,

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

yet her monumentality keeps the organic distance with the spectator. (Fig. 17) Considering all these, we can make an inference: The decontextualization of the Winged Victory in the Louvre attempts to recreate the image of the Winged Victory with a reference to her previous memory accumulation, and in one way or another, this is achieved.

As another masterpiece of the Louvre, Venus de Milo was the part of the renovation process of the rooms devoted to Classical and Hellenistic Greek Art, which was completed in 2010.²⁰⁰ After the restoration, she was placed in her new setting: Standing alone in the middle of a reserved space walled with pink marble and occupying more gallery space than any other statue —renders the choice significant and extraordinary. The space was at the end of a gallery, offering a kind of privacy for the statue. The modern spectator entering the room is supposed to see the statue, get closer to her, yet not allowed to cross the line. The line is drawn by the low railing, and the statue stands on a base that is a modern cube of equally colored marble. (Fig. 18) The choice of pink marble for the room and the base both isolates and emphasizes her: Her white and perfect skin appears more and more desirable to the eye as she appears in contrast with dark pink. One can say that, in the decontextualization of Venus de Milo, the objective is to glorify her and celebrate her privacy with isolation from the rest. It is hard to observe the reconstruction of a previous meaning in her new context, yet it is possible to link that lack to the controversies and mysteries surrounding Venus de Milo. It makes more sense to evaluate

²⁰⁰ Jockey, P. (2011), p. 237-38.

her current position within the art historical narratives of representation. She is an art object embodying aesthetics of the past for the modern eye.

Comparing the present displays of these two “masterpieces” brings the possibility to observe collective memory through the personifications associated with them for ages. As we know, the Nike was the messenger spreading the news and announcing the victor. She was the incarnation of success —a “masculine” concept, thus has to be seen by everyone as symbolizing the victory. On the other hand, Venus was the beauty. She was fragile, feminine —that needs privacy for common perception, and needs to be protected.

Both these personifications of the statues are surprisingly observable in the displays. The Winged Victory is placed in a central location, visible to everyone from many angles and many levels, open to public circulation around and it is hard to avoid her while visiting the Greek Art sections of the Museum. Not only because of her place in Greek reflection, but also her meaning in French history paved the way for her visibility. Yet, Venus de Milo is placed at the end of a long gallery, standing alone but enticingly cool. If you want to see her, you should go to her and visit her place. She is visible to the eyes that can see her beauty; we might place her in a somehow *elite* concept. Venus is private and sacred, thus her fragility ended her in a room alone. We do not know her place in Milos exactly, but we do know the controversies of Venus and the related elevation efforts. In this sense, her extraordinary occupation of the room alone might be designed to elevate her for present public thinking: If she is that precious to be put alone in a

private room designed specially, then she had to be deserving it.

Both these statues are decontextualized in the Louvre according to the meaning they accumulated and the symbols they represented. Yet, even their meanings are uncovered, the authenticity they had in their original settings is gone for good. All those display attempts to recreate that meaning cannot bring the narrative back, but can only serve to reconstruct our memory appropriately.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

People derive identity from shared remembrance —from social memory— which in turn provides them with an image of their past and a design for their future. What people remember of the past fashions their sense of community and determines their allies, enemies and actions; they will argue over it and kill for it, Social memory is manifestly a powerful force, but a fugitive one. Memories overlap and compete, over time they change or are eradicated; people forget.

Alcock, 2012²⁰¹

The transformation of the memory that the Winged Victory holds can be recontextualized into three layers of narrative: The first layer involves the period starting with the inception of the statue, and ends with the collapse of it. In this layer, the statue has acquired the meaning of “victory” probably from a naval battle; she stood exposed on the hill facing the not distant deep sea, saluting both the inhabitants and the visitors of the island. Both the geographical peculiarities and the mythical components of the island of Samothrace affected the way the statue has been perceived: the protector of the island, holding powers over wind, storm, and sea.

²⁰¹ Alcock, S. (2002). Old Greece within the Empire, in *Archaeologies of the Greek Past Landscape, Monuments and Memories* (p. 36-98). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The second layer covers the period, which could be properly characterized as the 'renaissance' of the statue in the nineteenth century. Following the discovery of the Winged Victory by Champoiseau, *sui generis* peculiarities of the period played a key role in the re-invention of meaning and memory accumulated in the statue. The nineteenth century was the era of innovations, industrial revolution, museum building, rising interest in archaeological sites; which all affected the search for a national and global identity. The curiosity and anxiety towards ancient ruins led the way to the identity, yet the peculiarities of the era changed and reinvented that identity through the interferences of collective memory.

The last but not least layer encapsulates the period between 1860s and the present. After sailing a year in crates, the Winged Victory welcomed visitors in her new house in the Louvre Museum, hence the flow of memory is affected by the means and techniques of representation. The modern spectator has learned his/her identity from the museum, and tied him/herself to the past with the imagination prompted in the museal consciousness.

At the end, the Winged Victory of Samothrace is capable of holding the visual record of both the past and the present simultaneously. Despite interventions to the collective memory through the historical process, the Winged Victory is still standing in her spot in the Louvre Museum, and waiting for the next generations to narrate the lost parts of our collective memory about the past. As a last word,

Unlike the physical world of the city where the same space cannot have different contents, nothing is allowed to perish

in the transparencies of the mind, and everything may be preserved simultaneously and brought back under the right conditions.

Yegül, 2000²⁰²

²⁰² Yegül, F. (2000) Memory, Metaphor and Meaning in the Cities of Asia Minor in Romanization and the City: Creation, Transformations and Failures, in *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series* no.38, Elizabeth Fentress, ed. (p. 133-153) Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

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APPENDICES

A. FIGURES

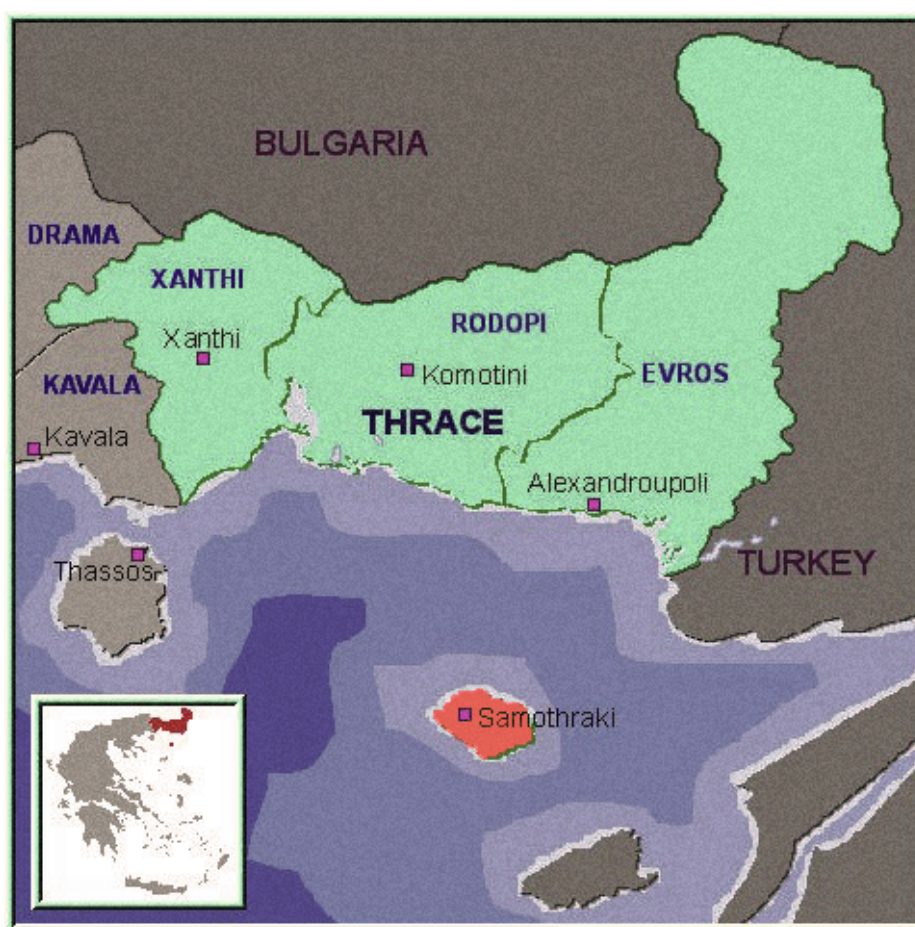


Figure 1: Map showing the location of Samothrace Island

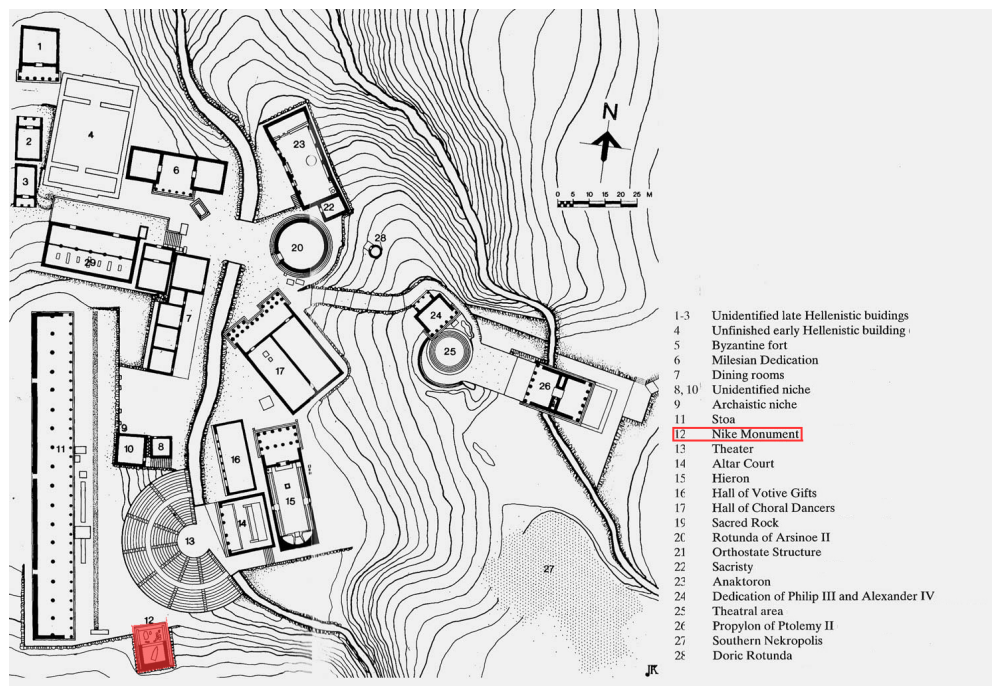


Figure 2: The Sanctuary of the Great Gods in Samothrace, Site Plan (drawn by John Kurtich, 1978)



Figure 3: Photo of Charles Champoiseau, 1863

Retrieved from:
<http://ebox.nbu.bg/profesorgenov/nst/nst.jpg>

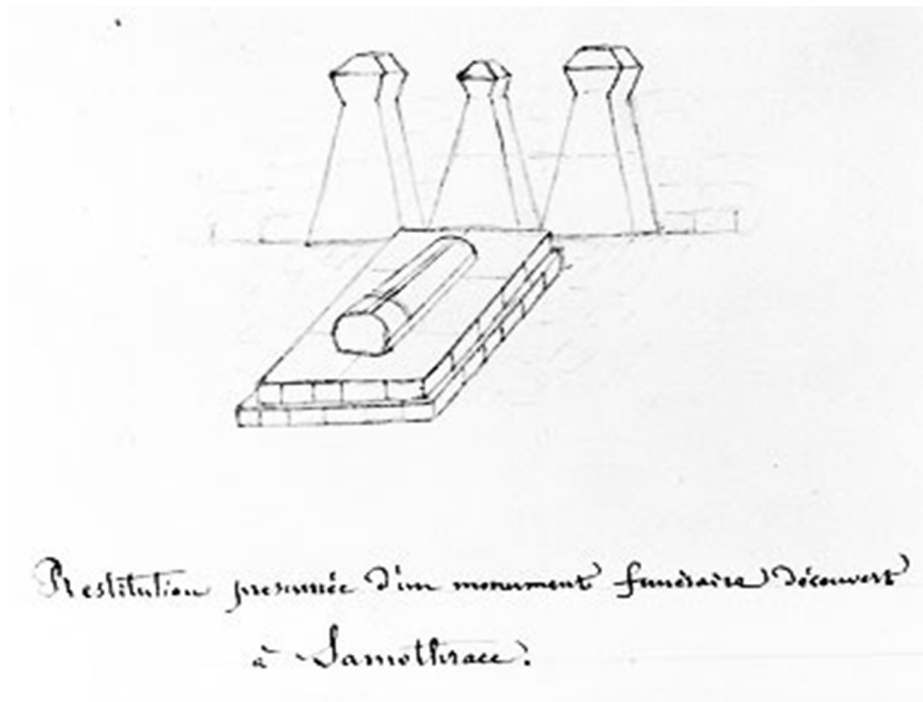


Figure 4: The 'funerary monument', drawings of Champoiseau (Archives of the National Museums)



Figure 5: Tetradrachm (four drachma coin) of Demetrius Poliorcetes, 301-292 BC, Silver, Paris, BNF, Cabinet des Médailles, copyright by Photo Bibliothèque Nationale de France

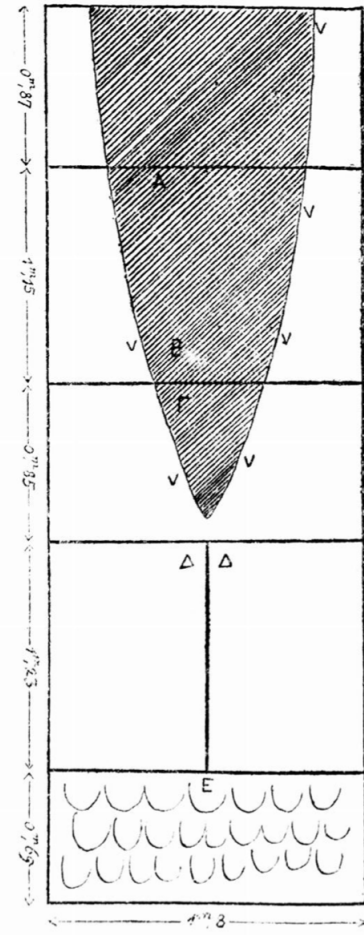


Figure 6: Drawing of the base of the monument of Victory, by Champoiseau, 1879, published in *Samothrake II*.



Figure 7: December 1879: first reassemblage of the base in the courtyard of the Sphinx, front view (photo by P. Dujardin, family archives)



Figure 8: The Victory of Samothrace in the Room of the Caryatids, between 1866 and 1880; front view (photo by A. H. and F., documentation of the department of AGER).



Figure 9: The Winged Victory of Samothrace, between 1884 and 1892 (Documentation Department of the AGER).



Figure 10: Winged Victory above the Daru staircase 1932 © Musée du Louvre



Figure 11: Winged Victory above the Daru staircase 1934 © Musée du Louvre



Figure 12: Winged Victory ready for transportation from the Louvre during World War II, taken from “The Louvre During the War Photographs 1938-1947” exhibition photos

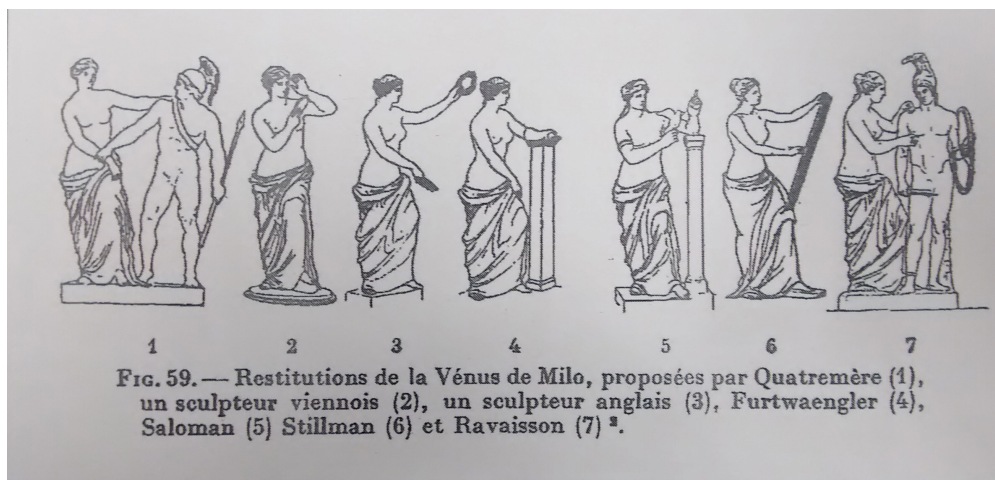


Figure 13: Reconstruction of Venus de Milo in Reinach (1897)



Figure 14: Reconstruction of the statue by Zumbusch, model in plaster (photo by Frankenstein & Co, Vienna, drawing from Winckelmann Institute at the University of Berlin)



Figure 15: Bronze reconstruction of the Victory of Samothrace by Cordonnier, 1891. Copyright by ARR.



Figure 16: Reconstruction of the complete monument Drawing by Valérie FORET, D.E.S.A. architect

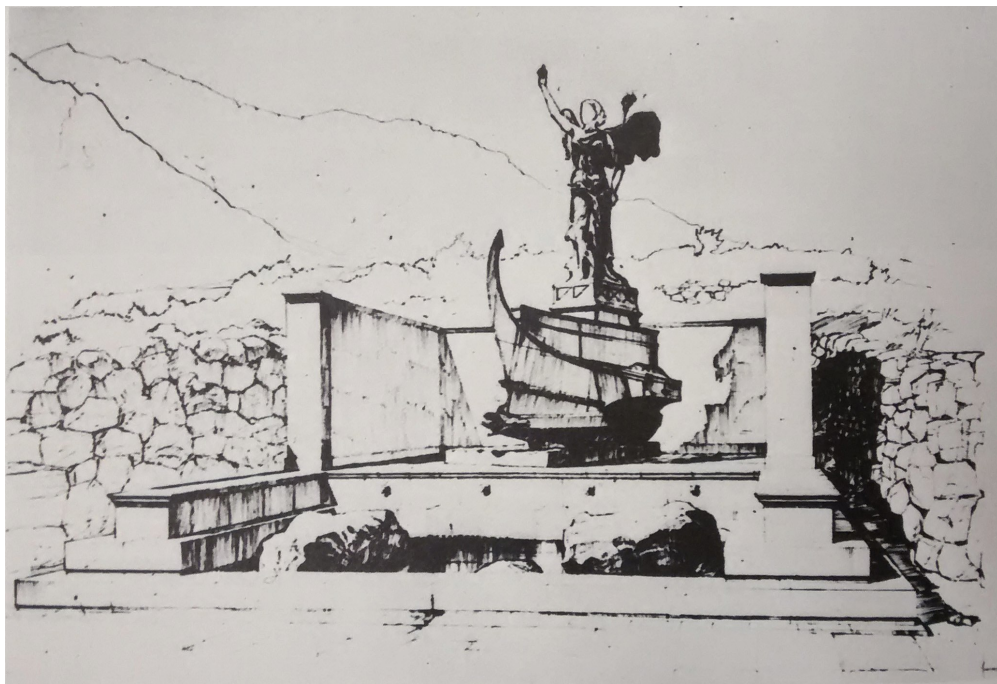


Figure 17: Fountain setting reconstruction of Nike of Samothrace, in Lehmann (1973)



Figure 18: Winged Victory of Samothrace in Louvre, after restoration finished in 2015. Retrieved from: https://mustapaa.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/goddess_soili-mustapc3a4c3a4.jpg



Figure 19: Venus de Milo in Louvre, after the restoration of 2010, in Jockey (2001).

B. TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Batı uygarlığının büyük işleri (latincesi: *magnum opus*) sıklıkla antik çağdan köklenir; dolayısıyla Batı uygarlığının kökenleri 'Roma gözleri' aracılığıyla ya da Yunan kalıntıları üzerinden takip edilebilir. Ancak, burada merak uyandıran bir noktadan bahsedebiliriz: Yunan ve Roma sanatına duyulan takdir, varolan anlayış biçimlerini nasıl karakterize ediyor? Sanat karmaşıklığından dolayı mı değerli hale geliyor, yoksa 'Roma gözleri' ile görme tarzını bizlere yansıttığı için mi? Yukarıda Onians'ın da söylediği gibi, bizde asıl takdir uyandıran taraf, "Antik Yunan"ın duyguları yansıtma kabiliyeti, ya da "Roma"nın bellek tetikleyici yanı olabilir. Bu tezin ana odağı "Hangi bellek ya da duygular bize ulaşacak kadar güçlü olabilir?" sorusundan ortaya çıkmıştır. İlaveten, bu antik köklerden gelen hafıza, nasıl anlamını kaybetmeden insanlığın diline dönüştü? Ve hatta, nasıl gelecek kuşaklar için yeni anlamlar kazandı?

Bu tezde, konu belirli bir nesne ışığında sorunsallaştırılacaktır: Antik Yunanlıların fiziksel 'ideal' güzelliğinin yanı sıra, soyut varlıklar ve erdemleri ile özdeşleşmiş bir tanrıça temsili olarak gördüğü, günümüzdeyse sadece estetik görünüşü sebebiyle değil dönemler boyunca üzerinde biriken toplumsal bellek sebebiyle de takdir edilen bir Yunan heykeli.

Bir Antik Yunan heykelinin (ya da diğer antik objelerin) algısındaki süreklilikleri ve değişimleri izlemek bu tezin ikincil hedefi olacaktır. Bellek nasıl oluştu, ve hatta nasıl icat edildi? Bu tez meşhur bir Yunan

heykelinin –Semadirekli Nike heykeli, ya da Samothrakinin Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası – geçmişten günümüze olan yolculuğunu ve onun varlığının farklı düğümlerinde biriken belleği izleyerek; Ege denizindeki bir adadan Paris’e, antik bir Yunan tapınağından Louvre müzesine, bir deniz savaşından süregelen bir barışa, ve en sonunda uzak geçmişten günümüze uzanan süreçteki değişimlere tanıklık etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

İlk bölüm 'Gizemin Önsözü' Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası'nın bellek yolculuğuna bir girizgah yaparak heykelin inşasından çöküşüne kadar olan tarihsel süreci incelemektedir. Daha sonra Samothraki adasındaki Büyük Tanrıların Tapınağını ve orada gerçekleşen Yunan öncesi dönemde başlamış olan gizemli ayinler, heykelin ada içindeki bağlamını ve o dönemle ve din ile olan ilişkisini kapsayacaktır. Neden bu Nike heykeli, bir geminin pruvası üzerinde durmakta ve onun adadaki bağlamda arasındaki ilişki nedir? Buna paralel olarak, ada gizemli ayinlerin yapıldığı Yunan öncesi dönemdeki ihtişamlı zamanlarda nasıldı?

İkinci bölümde Champoiseau, yani Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçasının keşifindeki başrol oyuncusu, odak noktası olacaktır. Hamiaux (2001) tarafından sağlanan arşiv belgelerinin yardımıyla, dönemin koşulları ve keşif sürecine dahil olmuş kişiler açıklığa kavuşturulacaktır. Bu bölümde kullanılan ana kaynak Hamiaux (2001) orijinali olan Fransızcadan, bu tezin yazarı tarafından çevirilmiştir.

'Yaşamötesi: Belleğin İnşası' başlıklı üçüncü bölümdeki ana tartışma konusu, tarihin hikayeler aracılığıyla yeniden inşası ve sosyal belleğin

şimdiki zamanın anlatılarının etkisindeki restorasyon ve yeniden düzenlemeler yoluyla yeniden yaratımıdır. Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası, bu kültürel bellek tartışmasındaki ana araç olacaktır. Bir kavram olarak 'zafer'in kişileştirilmesi, Arkaik Dönem'den (milattan önce altıncı yüzyıl) itibaren Yunan sanatında yaygın olarak ve detaylıca işlenmiş bir üslupta ortaya çıkmaktadır. Genelde kadın suretinde yansıtılan 'zafer' imgesine çokça formda rastlamak mümkündür: Heykellerde, kabartmalarda, kaplarda, sikkelerde, pişmiş toprak ve bronz figürlerde. Bu tür figürler Yunan sanatının üslup gelişimini takip eder. Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası örneğinde de görüldüğü gibi, 'zafer' figürü Helenistik dönemde de muhteşem sanat eserleri ile öne çıkmaktadır. Başka bir soru ile süreci incelersek: Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası'nın Helenistik dönemden günümüze kadar biriktirmiş olduğu anlamların dönüşümü nasıl gerçekleşmiştir?

Tarihsel süreç Yunan dünyasını fethettikleri zaman Zafer tanrıçasını keşfeden Romalılar ile devam ediyor. 'Zafer' imgesini hızlıca kabul eden Romalılar, onu Roma'nın bilinen dünyadaki egemenliğinin bir sembolü, emperyal bir güç olmasının cisimleşmiş hali ve Roma halkının erdeminin bir simgesi olacak şekilde uyarladı. Bu uyarlamada 'Zafer' imgesi, dünya kürenin üzerinde ayakta durmakta, imparatoru taçlandırmakta ve Roma'nın görkemiyle süslenmiş bir kalkan kuşanmaktaydı. Yine de, 'Zafer' imgesinin görünüşü hala Yunan sanatındaki en yaygın tasvirle uyumluydu: ayakta duran, göğüs altından kuşaklı ve kalçalardan aşağı inen katmanlarıyla bir *chiton* giyen.

'Zafer' temsili farklı rejimler ve politikalar altında fiziksel olarak farklılaşıp değişirken, bu temsilde biriken anlamlar da çoğalarak

değişim geçirmiştir. Hatta 'Zafer' tanrıçasını Hristiyan dünyasında görmek de işte bu sebeple şaşırtıcı değildir; mozaiklerde farklı bir cinsiyette –kadın yerine erkek- ve farklı bir görevde –tanrının buyruklarını ileten- de olsa. Daha sonrasında, 'Zafer' tanrıçasının izini İtalyan rönesansında, dönemin antik kökenlere olan sanatsal ilgisinden faydalanarak kadın olarak saygınlığını geri kazanırken sürebiliriz, bu durumu Botticelli ya da Fra Angelico'nun eserlerinde gözlemlemek mümkün görünüyor.

Bu çalışmayı daha kapsamlı ve anlaşılabilir hale getirebilmek için, Louvre Müzesi'nin en beğenilen ve en tartışmalı heykellerinden ikisi arasında bir karşılaştırma eklendi: Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası ve Milo Venüsü. Bu iki heykel karşılaştırılırken, ana odak noktası ondokuzuncu yüzyıl tarih yazımının ardındaki hikaye anlatımı ve sosyal belleğimizde yer alan 'anlam', 'ideal güzellik' gibi kavramların yeniden yaratılması olacak. 'İdeal güzellik' kavramı nasıl varoldu ve nasıl bize -ya mevcut izleyiciye- tasvir edildi? Daha spesifik olarak, ne tür görseller kolektif belleğimizi oluşturmakta ve neden sorularına bu bölümde cevap verilmeye çalışılmaktadır.

Son bölüm, yani 'Diriliş: Sergilenen Bellek', bugünkü kültürel bellek tanımımızı ve günümüz temsil tekniklerinin, sosyal bellek akışının yeniden yaratabilmesi üzerine etkisini içermektedir. Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçasının geride bıraktığı fiziksel izleri ve varlığının her döneminden zihinlerde bir süreç yaratma olanağı sunan parça ipuçlarını ele alırsak, birden fazla anlatı oluşturmak mümkün. Bu çoklu anlatıların incelenmesi tezin son bölümünü biçimlendirmektedir: Paylaşılan geçmiş için bir arayış ve şu anda içinde yaşadığımız kolektif / toplumsal belleği

görsel deneyimler üzerinden yeniden düşünmek için bir girişim. 'Modern' zamanları 'mistik' geçmiş ile birlikte yorumlamak, içinde yaşadığımız 'deneyim'e sırtını dayayan farklı bir bağlam ihtiyacı doğurur: 'Yeni oluşturulan bağlamlarda' nesneleri görme deneyimi. Modern zamanlar müze kavramını ileri taşıyarak yeni bir deneyim sunma eğiliminde, fakat bu deneyim objelerin geçmişle kurduğu bağları koparan ve onları orijinal bağlamlarından izole eden bir sunum öneriyor. Ancak bu yeni deneyim, daha geniş kitlelere ulaşma imkanı sunduğu için kaçınılmaz olarak sanat objeleri üzerinde oluşan belleğin akışına yardım ediyor. Bu durumda, bağlam eksikliğini de hesaba kattığımızda, daha geniş kitlelere ulaşabilen bu yeni kültürel bellek akışı ne kadar gerçek?

Sanat eserlerini yeni oluşturulan bağlamlarda deneyimlemek, ziyaretçiler için daha anlaşılabilir ve uygun bir ortam oluşturabilse de; sıra 'özellikli' ya da 'seçilmiş' sanat objelerine geldiğinde bu yeni bağlamların tasarımı bir soruna dönüşme riski taşımakta. Bunun sebebini bir cümleyle özetlersek: Farklı zamanlar boyunca varolmuş objelerde anlam, basit tasarım dokunuşlarıyla ile anlatılacak kadar basit bir şey olmaktan çıkabiliyor. Son bölüm, modern zamanlarda müzelerin 'seçilmiş' sanat eserlerini nasıl sergilediğini, onlarda biriken anlamı nasıl görsel olarak yansıttığını, ve ziyaretçilere nasıl aktardığını sorgularken, özellikle Louvre Müzesi örneğinde bu sorulara cevap aramayı amaçlar.

Tüm bu sorgulamalar sonucunda, Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası'nın taşıdığı belleğin zaman içerisindeki dönüşümü, üç katmanda ele alınabilir: İlk katman heykelin yapılışıyla başlayan ve çöküşü ile sona eren dönemi kapsar. Bu katmanda heykel muhtemelen

bir deniz savařının etkisiyle 'zafer' anlamını üzerine almıřtır; bunu da grsel olarak adadaki tepenin zerinde tm heybetiyle ayakta duran, ok da uzakta olmayan derin denize bakarak hem ada sakinlerini hem de civardan geenleri selamlayan baęlamından gzlemlemek mmkn. Gerek adanın coęrafi zellikleri, gerekse adadaki gizemli ayınlar ve efsane bileřenleri heykelin algılanıřını etkilemiřtir: Adanın koruyucusu, rzgar, fırtına ve deniz zerinde doęast glere sahip bir tanrıa.

İkinci katman ondokuzuncu yzyılda Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıası'nın 'rnesansı' olarak da nitelendirebileceęimiz dnemi kapsar. Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıası'nın Champoiseau tarafından bulunmasının ardından, dnemin kendine zg zellikleri bu heykelde biriken anlam ve belleęin yeniden yorumlanmasında nemli bir rol oynadı. Ondokuzuncu yzyılı icatların, sanayi devriminin, mze fikrinin yapılařmasının, ve ykselen arkeolojik ilginin dnemi olarak okuduęumuzda; tm bunların ulusal ve kresel bir kimlik arayıřına olan etkisi kolaylıkla izlenebilir. Antik kalıntılara duyulan merak ve anksiyete bu kimlik arayıřının kaynaęı olsa da, dnemin kendine zg zellikleri bu yeni kimlięi deęiřtirip politik kaygılara gre yeniden yaratarak toplumsal belleęe mdehalelerde bulunmuřtur.

Son katmanı 1860'lı yıllardan gnmze uzanan dnem oluřturmaktadır. Bir yılı ařkın, ahřap kutular iinde geen deniz seyahatinden sonra, Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıası Louvre Mzesi'ndeki yeni evinde ziyaretileri selamlıyorken; heykelin yeni yerindeki anlamı, sergileme araları ve teknikleri tarafından yeniden yaratılmaktadır. Modern ziyareti nasıl kendi kimlięini mzelerden ęrenir olmuřsa, kendisini gemiřle iliřkisini de ancak mzede ęretilen

bilinçle kurabilmeye koşullanmıştır.

Sonuç olarak, Samothraki Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası bir heykel olarak geçmişin ve aynı zamanda da günümüzün görsel belleğini taşıyabilme kapasitesindedir. Tarihsel süreç boyunca kolektif belleğe yapılan müdahalelere rağmen Kanatlı Zafer Tanrıçası hala Louvre Müzesi'ndeki yerinde duruyor ve gelecek nesillere geçmişten taşıdığı ve biriktirdiği kolektif hafızanın kayıp parçalarını anlatmak için bekliyor. Fikret Yegül'den bir alıntıyla bitirirsek,

Aynı uzamın farklı içeriklere sahip olamadığı kentin fiziki dünyasının tersine, ruhun (aklın) saydamlığında hiçbir şey yok olmaya bırakılamaz, her şey aynı anda muhafaza edilebilir ve doğru koşullar altında yeniden yüzeye çıkarılabilir.

C. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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YAZARIN

Soyadı : COŞKUN
Adı : Semiha Deniz
Bölümü : Mimarlık Tarihi

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Tracing the Trajectories of Memory:
The Nike of Samothrace

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

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