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Review of *Fauvel. The First Archaeologist in Athens and his Philhellenic Correspondents*, by C. W. Clairmont

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CLAIRMONT (C.W.) (V. von Gonzenbach *Ed.*)
**Fauvel. The First Archaeologist in Athens
 and his Philhellenic Correspondents.** Zürich:
 Akanthus, Verlag für Archäologie, 2007. Pp.
 295, illus. €45. 9783905083256.
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Clairmont's book is a selection of letters addressed to Louis-François-Sébastien Fauvel, the French Consul and antiquarian, who lived in Athens from 1803 to 1822. Fauvel came to Greece for the first time in 1780. He was sent to the Orient by Count Choiseul-Gouffier in order to study, draw and acquire antiquities for Choiseul's collection. In 1784 Choiseul-Gouffier was appointed Ambassador in Constantinople and Fauvel continued his activities as a member of Choiseul's retinue until 1792. Subsequently, Fauvel held the position of French Consul in Athens from 1802 until 1833. With the outbreak of the War of Independence, Fauvel left Athens and moved to Smyrna, where he lived until his death in 1839. In Athens, Fauvel stayed at the Convent of the Capuchins and, after 1804, at the French Consulate, located near the gate of the Roman Agora. In 1810 he built a new, elaborate house, in the vicinity of the ancient Agora. His collection of antiquities was displayed at this house, which was depicted by Dupré in 1819. His residence,

considered as the first Athenian museum, became a meeting place for European artists, architects, archaeologists, historians, philologists and topographers. Fauvel provided hospitality and information to many visitors from France, Britain, Germany and Denmark, as his correspondence attests.

The correspondence covers the period from 1786 to 1837 and is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. These letters are addressed to Fauvel; very few are written by him. As the editor explains, the letters selected for publication are of intrinsic interest to archaeologists and classical scholars. They form only a small part of 'the vast amount of Fauvel's unpublished letters in the Bibliothèque Nationale'. Earlier works, such as Fauvel's biography, published by Legrand in 1897, included excerpts of Fauvel's correspondence. However, this is the first comprehensive publication dedicated to this important archival material. The editorial work of Clairmont and von Gonzenbach is excellent. The letters are presented in chronological order and grouped by correspondent; biographical information is provided for each correspondent and extensive footnotes identify the individuals, places and events mentioned in each letter.

The first and lengthiest section is dedicated to the letters of Choiseul-Gouffier. Another regular correspondent was Louis Allier de Hauteroche, who shared Fauvel's interest in Greek coins. A third was the geographer Barbié Du Bocage with whom Fauvel corresponded on matters of ancient topography. There are letters by well-known figures, such as Edward Dodwell, Haller von Hallerstein, O.M von Stackelberg, Charles Cockerell, John Hobhouse and many others. They wrote to Fauvel while travelling in Greece and in later years from their home countries. Overall, the letters discuss the interests, experiences, archaeological discoveries and adventures of the European scholars. Some of the letters refer to well-known events such as the excavation of the frieze of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae. They also provide information about political developments and the rapidly changing situation in Greece with the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1821. Of particular interest here is the correspondence of Georg Gropius. Gropius held the position of Russian vice-consul and later Austrian consul. He was a long-term resident of Athens and a close friend of Fauvel. His 13 letters cover the period from 1812–1837. After the departure of Fauvel from Athens in 1822, Gropius looked after

Fauvel's interests and updated him on the unfolding events. For example, in 1825, Fauvel's house was destroyed by a bomb. In 1828 Gropius dug in the ruins of the house and sent some of the antiquities he recovered to Fauvel in Smyrna (Letter 70). In 1826 Gropius discussed improvements and changes taking place in Athens, while it was controlled by the Temporary Government of Greece (Letter 67). Equally important for the last decade of Fauvel's life is Pierre Gaspar's correspondence (nine letters, 1826–1836). Gaspar, as *agent consulaire*, helped Fauvel with his affairs in Athens. Like Gropius, he was an eyewitness to the destruction of Athens during the War of Independence and to post-liberation plans for its rebuilding.

Fauvel is an important figure in the history of Greek archaeology. He dedicated his career to archaeological and topographic research; he introduced new methods, such as the use of casts and relief-maps. Like many of his contemporaries he engaged in the acquisition and sale of antiquities. For Fauvel, however, these activities were not the goal; rather, they provided the means to finance excavations and continue his study of Classical material culture. He was knowledgeable, respected, hospitable and a great resource for the Europeans who visited Greece in the first two decades of the 19th century. His correspondence is a rich source for the study of this period. Clairmont's publication makes a significant contribution to the fields of archaeology, classical studies and modern Greek history. Hopefully, this book will also inspire other scholars to delve into the Fauvel archives which, in the words of Clairmont, contain 'a stupendous amount of information'.

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