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RICHARD MACGILLIVRAY DAWKINS, 1936

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1871-1955

RICHARD MACGILLIVRAY DAWKINS was born on 20 October 1871, at Kingston-on-Thames. His father, Richard Dawkins (1828-96), was an officer in the Royal Navy, who had entered the service in 1841, campaigned in the Baltic and the Crimea and distinguished himself at the storming of Canton (1857). His mother, to whom he was fondly attached, was a lady of great charm and cultivation. Her maiden name was MacGillivray. She was the daughter of Simon MacGillivray and Anne Easthope. Anne's father was Sir John Easthope, proprietor during many years of the Liberal newspaper *Morning Chronicle*, who between 1833 and 1837 had employed Charles Dickens as parliamentary correspondent. Easthope's third daughter, Dawkins's great-aunt, married Andrew Doyle, who later became proprietor of the same newspaper.

In 1878 Richard Dawkins retired from the service with the rank of Rear-Admiral. He took up his residence in the village of Stoke Gabriel near Totnes, and became a Justice of the Peace for the county of Devon. His son received his early schooling (1881-4) at Totnes Grammar School, an establishment which much resembled that Crichton House depicted with grim fidelity in the pages of F. Anstey's *Vice Versa*. He graduated thence to Marlborough College, which he entered in the Michaelmas Term of 1884. He spent six years at this school, and left it at midsummer 1890. His career at Marlborough was neither prosperous nor happy. He found sympathy in none of the boys and only in very few of the masters. He neither showed nor was encouraged to show any conspicuous ability in the field of classical learning; and in after life he was fond of saying that his low standard of performance put him in danger of superannuation. His short sight and awkward figure militated against success in athletics. Throughout his life he retained a prejudice against organized games, which he professed to regard as servitude in the guise of amusement. He much preferred such games as children could invent for themselves without external resource or dictation; and he mentioned with approval an improvised form of cricket known to his contemporaries as 'snob', which was played with a soft ball and a wicket, and was, not unnaturally, discouraged by the authorities. Almost his sole happiness was found on

occasional days spent in the countryside. He early developed an interest in wild flowers and plants. It is significant that in 1888 he was awarded the Stanton Prize for Natural History, and in 1890 the Clarke Prize for Geography: for travel and botany were among his chief interests throughout his life.

On leaving Marlborough Dawkins had to think of a trade by which he could earn his bread. Admiral Dawkins, a sensible parent, was rightly convinced that electricity was to play a most important part in the future of our civilization. He therefore proposed to have his son trained as an electrical engineer, and with this purpose enrolled him as a student in the Engineering Faculty of King's College, London. Dawkins entered this college in the Michaelmas Term of 1890. But at King's he was no happier than he had been at Marlborough. His lodgings in Kennington were mean; and his diffidence, which resulted from the strain and the unnerving experiences of his school career, gave him many occasions of uneasiness and mortification. Yet his academic performance was far from contemptible. Though his record in Practical Engineering was not above average, he was consistently of Very Good standard in Mathematics. For Mathematics, though he realized from the first that its higher flights were beyond him, he always cherished a fondness, which was in keeping with his love of precise and accurate statement. There was in Dawkins a striking contrast between the apparently deliberate untidiness of his surroundings and the care which he took, both in his studies and in his conversation, to ascertain facts and to state them correctly. Nor was his study of Practical Engineering, distasteful though he found it, without influence on his later work as an excavator in Greek lands.

Dawkins kept six terms at King's Collegē. He went down in July 1892, when still a year short of completing the course. He next became apprenticed at Crompton's, a firm of electrical engineers at Chelmsford, so that he might obtain a thorough knowledge of the practical side of the business. Here he remained during five years (1892-7); and although the profession chosen for him still failed to attract his sympathy, he achieved at this time a more settled content than he had hitherto known. His solace lay in his private studies, which were assiduous and, if we consider that his formal education was poor and that he had absolutely no guidance, surprisingly systematic. His interest at school had tended towards languages, and he had already taught himself a good deal of Italian and some German. He now, as the result of a temporary interest in Theosophy, lighted upon

Sanskrit, in which he made considerable progress; and he later embarked upon Icelandic, Irish, and even Finnish. He moreover continued to read the Greek and Latin classics, and began to discern the unity of the Indo-European family of tongues by comparison of Sanskrit with Greek.

Admiral Dawkins died on 19 March 1896, and his wife in the following January. Dawkins thus inherited a small legacy in 1897; and this legacy at length freed him from a profession for which he had no love, and allowed him at the age of 26 to go up to Cambridge University. Despite his love of learning he was largely self-taught, and his knowledge, though extensive, was sketchy. He arrived in Cambridge still uncertain what course he should follow; and it was at the instance of a clergyman, tutor to an old family friend, that he finally decided on the classical curriculum. Cambridge was at that time in its golden age of classical scholarship. The wealth and variety of talent among both teachers and students were truly astonishing. Among the younger contemporaries of Dawkins may be mentioned F. W. Hasluck and A. J. B. Wace, both of whom became his lifelong friends. Dawkins entered Emmanuel College in the Michaelmas Term of 1898. He chose this college on the advice of a friend, Jimmy Hamilton, who was at that time himself a Cambridge undergraduate. Emmanuel was then distinguished for its classical teaching even among its rivals: for its teaching was in the hands of James Adam and Peter Giles. Giles already enjoyed an international repute as a philologist; and since philology was the branch of classical study which Dawkins wished principally to follow, it was natural that the two men should have formed a close friendship, which was severed only by Giles's death in 1935. Dawkins also owed much to the admirable teaching of Arthur Bernard Cook; and was fortunate in being able to continue his Sanskrit studies under E. B. Cowell, shortly before the latter's death.

In these congenial surroundings the untidy, red-haired, myopic student threw himself into his work and made progress, which, even if we allow for his advantage in years over his fellows, must be regarded as quite exceptional. He had entered the college with a stock of orthodox classical learning so slender that Adam had tried seriously to dissuade him from reading for honours. But Dawkins, though deficient in the schoolboy's accomplishment of composition, had already a firm grasp of both Greek and Latin languages, which he could turn into English with ease and accuracy. His ability and industry were soon

manifest. After a single year of residence the college gave him a scholarship (1899). In 1901 he was placed in the Third Division of the First Class in Part I of the Classical Tripos, and would have been placed higher still but for the handicap of an almost illegible handwriting. He took his bachelor's degree in the same year. In 1902 he was placed in the First Class in Part II of the same Tripos, and obtained a mark of distinction in Division *e* (Language). In the same year he was honourably mentioned in the examination for the Chancellor's Medals, and was awarded a Craven Studentship. In 1904 he became a Fellow of Emmanuel College.

As soon as his classical course was concluded, Dawkins lost no time in taking up the linguistic researches for which he had been trained. In the autumn of 1902 he entered the British School of Archaeology at Athens, and at once set about acquiring a thorough mastery of the Greek demotic as a preliminary to his work in his chosen field of dialectology. But in those days the School had few students, and those who came were all required to take an active part in the archaeological researches which it had been founded to promote. During the next ten years Dawkins had therefore to divide his time between excavation, in Crete, in Sparta, or in Melos, and his own particular interest. In 1903 the School's Director, R. C. Bosanquet, was excavating the Minoan city of Palaikastro in eastern Crete. Dawkins took from the first a prominent part in this work, and during the following two years, 1904-5, he directed it. The site was of considerable interest, since, besides providing much new material on pre-historic town and house planning, it supplemented in a minor but important degree the splendid discoveries which were being made simultaneously by Arthur Evans in the Palace of Knossos. In 1904 Dawkins was able to use the newly devised classification of Minoan pottery as an improved chronological criterion. But the advances which he made personally were in the sphere of technique. The site presented many problems of stratification, which Dawkins, aided by his training as an engineer and draughtsman and by his love of precision, was able to solve. The experience gained as an excavator at Palaikastro stood him in good stead when he came to direct the excavation of the far more important site of Artemis Orthia at Sparta, which was for those times a masterpiece of technical skill.

As early as 1902 the British School had begun a systematic exploration of the archaeological remains of Laconia. But it was not until the spring of 1906 that the discovery was made of the

archaic shrine and temenos of Artemis Orthia. The initial reconnaissance was made by Bosanquet. But he was in his last year as Director; and Dawkins, who succeeded him as Director of the School in the autumn of 1906, soon took charge of the operations, which employed him almost continuously during the next four years. The temple deposit of this now celebrated site proved to be one of the richest and most various ever discovered. The inexhaustible supply of Laconian pottery, bronzes, ivories, terracottas, and lead figurines revolutionized all previous conceptions of Sparta's place in the art-history of Greece during the archaic period. Among archaic sites explored in Greek lands perhaps only those in Rhodes and at Perachora could compare with Orthia for wealth of material. Much of this material was at that time quite fresh; and it was recovered with an intelligence and a care for the minutiae of stratigraphical detail which would have done honour to excavators of far more recent times. Dawkins was especially fortunate in his collaborators, among whom were Guy Dickins, J. P. Droop, A. J. B. Wace, and A. M. Woodward.

It would have been well if the final publication of the site could have been brought out shortly after the excavation terminated, in 1910. The dig would then have been universally recognized for what it was, a first-class piece of pioneering research on a most important and complicated site. This was not to be. The first European war intervened, and the excavators dispersed. The work of publication could not be resumed for many years. It was not until 1929 that *Artemis Orthia* was published by the Hellenic Society. By this time improved standards of production and photography were in vogue, and the drawings and photographs of 1910 appeared old-fashioned and amateurish. But more important was the fact that by 1929 the discovery of Greek archaic art had progressed so rapidly that a large part of Greek artistic production from the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. could now be studied in unbroken series. Stylistic criteria thus already allowed a much closer and more accurate dating of individual objects than any which could be gained from stratigraphical evidence, however skilfully observed. Such evidence, therefore, while continuing to be essential for the chronology of pre-archaic sites where the series of finds was uncertain and the periods of time were incomparably less definite, had lost much of its fundamental importance for the history of Greek art in the post-geometric age. The chronology proposed by the publication for the series of vases, ivories, and terra-cottas, which was based

on stratigraphical evidence, was therefore assailed on the ground that it was partly indefinite and partly inaccurate.

The validity of these strictures in 1929 should, however, not blind us to the merit of the excavation twenty years before, when most of the independent, external evidence was still lacking. The ablest critique of the book, written by Dr. Emil Kunze, which reflected very unfavourably on the publication of many of the objects themselves, yet contained this passage, which it is common justice to quote:

Die Ausgrabung selbst bedeutet methodisch einen Wendepunkt in der Entwicklung der Bodenforschung in Griechenland . . . Die Größe dieser noch nach 25 Jahren vorbildlichen Leistung wird man nach Gebühr schätzen, wenn man sich überlegt, wie wenig wir bei den ungünstigen Umständen seiner Erhaltung von dem Heiligtum der Orthia und seiner Geschichte wüßten, wenn es ohne eine solche verfeinerte Technik, ohne eine so gewissenhafte Auseinandersetzung mit dem Befund ausgegraben worden wäre—ein Schicksal, das nur zu viele antike Kultplätze betroffen hat und leider teilweise immer noch trifft.

That is well said; and the credit goes to the excavators in general, but most of all to Dawkins.

Free at last of the Orthia site, Dawkins returned in 1911 to the sphere of prehistoric archaeology. The ancient city near Phylakopi, on the island of Melos, had been excavated by the School during the years 1896 to 1899, and had been comprehensively published by D. G. Hogarth and others in 1904. But this excavation had been carried out before Evans had begun to dig at Knossos. And although Duncan Mackenzie had added to the publication a chapter which related some of the new material from Crete to what had earlier been found on Melos, it was felt that a short supplementary campaign at Phylakopi might clear up some problems concerning native and imported wares of the Middle and Late Cycladic periods. This campaign was undertaken; and the results were published by Dawkins and Droop in Volume XVII of the *British School Annual*. Two short campaigns in Crete during 1913 and 1914, at the Kamares cave and at Plati in Lasithi, concluded Dawkins's work as a field archaeologist.

Yet, for all his archaeological work, work which has perhaps not received the full appreciation it deserves, Dawkins remained first and foremost a linguist and, through the study of language, a folk-lorist. His very first year in Greece (1903) saw him collecting linguistic and local data from the little-known island of Karpathos. Already in 1904 he published a capital account of the dialect of the island, although he had been scarcely more than

twelve months master of the Greek demotic Koiné. In 1906 he travelled in the Cyclades and Sporades with A. J. B. Wace, and in the island of Kos made the acquaintance of the antiquary Jacob Zarraftis, then engaged in collecting for W. H. D. Rouse the folk-lore material which Dawkins himself was forty years later to publish. In 1909, 1910, and 1911 he visited the Greek-speaking settlements in the interior of Anatolia, collecting the material for what may fairly be called his most outstanding work, *Modern Greek in Asia Minor*.

The settlements in Anatolia which were selected for special study by Dawkins had had a long history. Their inhabitants were the descendants of those Byzantine Greeks who had been isolated from the West by the Seljuk inundation at the end of the eleventh century. Many had continued to live, in Christian villages, quite cut off from contact with the rest of their race. Many lived underground, as did some of the Anatolian peasantry in Xenophon's time. Their way of life was exceedingly primitive. They were almost wholly illiterate. In these circumstances it was natural that their speech should have become fearfully degraded and corrupt. But it was still recognizable as Greek. The attention of philologists had for some time been directed to these interesting survivals of medieval times, and some work had already been done on them both by European scholars and by local antiquaries. There was more than one reason why these dialects and customs required study. In the first place, emigration was at last beginning to reduce the size of the population. Moreover, the Turkish language was year by year encroaching further upon the vocabulary, and even the structure, of a Greek speech which lacked the conservative agent of literature. Haste was therefore necessary: and indeed, had Dawkins known it, very few years were left in which anybody would be able to study these folk in their traditional habitat. Whatever information could be obtained would be of value, not only to the philologist and folk-lorist, but to the historian also: since these corrupt and truncated accents were the faint but authentic echo of the speech of the countryside when Basil the Bulgar-Slayer was on the throne of Byzantium.

Dawkins concentrated his attention upon three of the most isolated of these areas: Silli by Iconium, and two districts respectively south-west and south of Caesareia, which he denominated the Cappadocian area and the Pharasa area. These last two areas together comprised some dozen villages of varying sizes; and these villages Dawkins, between 1909 and 1911,

visited at least twice and often thrice. He gained much interesting information about the people themselves, their habits, traditions, dwellings, and pursuits, which he summarized in the opening pages of his book. But his main task was linguistic. Aided by local schoolmasters and by such assistants as Christos, the blind singer of Malakopi, he collected and wrote down a whole body of folk-stories which preserved a full record of each dialect. In 1911 he was accompanied on his travels by Mr. W. R. (now Sir William) Halliday, who contributed to Dawkins's book a most valuable and interesting chapter on the folk-tales themselves. A final visit to Turkey in 1914, at the outbreak of the European war, provided additional material on the dialects of Pontus. And in 1916 *Modern Greek in Asia Minor* was published by the Cambridge University Press.

The results of the linguistic research are embodied in three sections, on the dialects of Silli, Cappadocia, and Pharasa. The phonetics and morphology of these dialects are carefully recorded, and much light is thrown on the breaking down of the language through the invasion of Turkish vocabulary and syntax. Thirty-three paragraphs of general conclusions follow, in which the mutual relationship of the dialects is discussed, and their basic similarity to Pontic in the north and Cypriot in the south is indicated. Halliday's chapter comes next, and is followed by the stories and their English versions. The book ends with Greek and Turkish glossaries. The whole represents a most valuable body of original documentation. It is to be remembered that all this material had to be taken down by hand from dictation in days long before the tape-recorder had been heard of. Children were the principal narrators. Their enunciation was clear and they were word-perfect in their recitation; but they could not be interrupted or interrogated, and obscurities had to be elucidated in later discussions with their elders. Dawkins's delicate discrimination of vocalic sounds was the more remarkable in that he had no love for, or appreciation of, music. The work had often to be done under great difficulties. Many among the Greeks themselves were surprised by the skill and accuracy with which these peculiar idioms had been recorded. It is worth while to mention one tribute from an unexpected source. Mr. E. J. (now Sir John) Forsdyke, who in 1917 was well acquainted with Constantine Cavafy, the greatest poet of twentieth-century Greece, recalls that Cavafy expressed high admiration for the work, which he described as an extraordinary achievement by a foreign scholar.

The years of Dawkins's archaeological and linguistic study in the Near East (1903-14) were the golden years of his life. His leisure was occupied in constant travelling, in south Italy, in Egypt, in the Turkish empire. In 1905 he visited Mount Athos for the first time. His insatiable interest in people, in what they did and said and believed, led him to acquire a knowledge of the folk-mentality of the Near East which few western travellers can ever have rivalled. Above all he was allured by the original, the unusual, or the unorthodox. He had no sympathy with any kind of interference or regimentation in life: let people develop their own philosophies or idioms or amusements, and work out their own salvation. These views attracted him to isolated and self-sufficient communities such as those of Karpathos or Anatolia or Mount Athos; and attracted to him, both in England and the Levant, a host of interesting and original acquaintances. Some of these may have been what more conventional persons would call disreputable; but in his eyes oddity and unorthodoxy were unfailing charms. A notorious acquaintanceship, formed in 1907, was with Frederick William Rolfe, the self-styled Baron Corvo, to whom Dawkins was characteristically drawn 'by his personal intensity and singularity, which roused my curiosity and interest'. Dawkins shared the fate of all who tried to befriend Rolfe. His kindness was rewarded by the vilest insults and misrepresentation from that malignant spirit, who died as he had lived, like Caliban, cursing his benefactors.

An acquaintance of a very different description was Norman Douglas, whose books Dawkins had read and admired long before he became personally known to their author. Douglas, the inquiring traveller, the botanist, the pagan humanist, the folklorist, was a man after his own heart. Dawkins wrote a penetrating little study of Douglas, which was privately printed by Orioli in Florence in 1933, and republished with additions in England in 1952. The essay reveals a close identity of views on many important matters between the two men, and the reader often feels he is reading about Dawkins rather than about Douglas. All Dawkins's love of the free development of the individual in a free society, where talent is the sole means to success, all his hatred of dictation, whether it comes from a military code, a public school, or a paternal government, find here very vigorous and felicitous expression. This is by no means to say that he was at all points in agreement with Douglas, whose thorough-going hedonism found no counterpart in the essentially moderate and abstemious nature of Dawkins.

Moreover, Dawkins had a far juster appreciation of the historical achievement and value of the Christian religion. But he saw in Douglas's approach to life much with which he was in sympathy; and his own familiarity with Mediterranean life and modes of thought enhanced his appreciation of Douglas's artistry.

Nor should we omit to make special mention of his friendship with F. W. Hasluck, Assistant Director of the School at Athens and a leading authority on Greek and Turkish folk-lore. It was Hasluck who aroused in Dawkins an interest in folk-lore as an independent study. His series of letters to Dawkins when the latter was marooned in Crete during the years 1916 to 1919 was a great help and comfort; and Dawkins was among the many who were deeply shocked when Hasluck, as a result of over-work in the Intelligence Service during the war, died of tuberculosis in 1920 at the age of 40.

Since the year 1907 Dawkins had found himself in easy circumstances through the death of his mother's first cousin John Doyle, a Fellow of All Souls. Doyle left him a considerable property which included Plas Dulas, a large Victorian house in Denbighshire, built by a great-aunt, which contained many interesting documents of the early nineteenth century, including holograph letters of Tom Moore and Charles Dickens. This house became his home until his death, and he continued to spend there the vacations not employed in foreign travel. Here he kept many of the treasures which he had acquired in the Levant: ikons, embroideries, and other relics, as well as a fine library of general literature. Here, in a section of the garden appropriated to Greek flora, he raised and cultivated the plants which he and his friends had brought from Greece.

In 1914 Dawkins resigned the Directorship of the British School, and spent the ensuing months in England, busy with the preparation of *Modern Greek in Asia Minor*. But in 1915 the situation in the east Mediterranean offered scope for him to serve his country. The year 1915 ended sadly for the Allied cause in the east of Europe. Serbia was overwhelmed, Gallipoli evacuated and the U-boat offensive against Allied shipping in the eastern Mediterranean intensified. Greece, divided between the pro-Allied policy of Eleutherios Venizelos and the ostensibly neutral but in fact pro-German policy of King Constantine, became a hotbed of espionage and counter-espionage. Dawkins was employed for six months in the cipher department of the British Legation in Athens. But early in 1916 he was introduced by J. L. (later Sir John) Myres to Captain Douglas Dent, the Senior

British Naval Officer at Stampalia. Naval Intelligence was in need of officers with a knowledge of the Greek language and of the local terrain, and Dawkins was at once enrolled, first as a civilian, then as a temporary lieutenant in the R.N.V.R. He began by making several trips by trawler or drifter between Crete and the Dodecanese; but most of his time during the next three years was spent in Crete, where the Naval Intelligence, operating from Suda Bay, employed also Myres, J. C. Lawson, and Halliday. The work called for the collection of information about contraband, espionage, and the movements of enemy submarines as well as the dissemination of Allied propaganda; and entailed ceaseless patrolling of the island by sea and land. Dawkins partitioned the island with his old friend Halliday, who patrolled the west while Dawkins took charge of the eastern section. But later in 1916 Halliday became intelligence officer at Suda Bay and the travelling was left to Dawkins, who is believed to have visited every inhabited place in the island. He was often accompanied on land by his faithful servant and one-time foreman Yanni Katzarakis, of whom generations of students at the British School retain affectionate memories. Among his naval colleagues Dawkins became, inevitably, a figure of myth and fable; but stories that he kept officers waiting for news of submarines while he explored the dialectical peculiarities of his informant, and the like, should be received with caution. What he had to do he did well, and his knowledge of Greek was invaluable both for intelligence work and for propaganda. At the same time he gained a profound knowledge of the topography and dialects of Crete, as a scholar of such experience and training could not fail to do. It is strange that he never published the material he then amassed, although in his *Monks of Athos* he makes many references to his Cretan travels and to the friends he made during them. Much unpublished material dating from this time is believed to be among Dawkins's papers at Plas Dulas.

Dawkins returned to England in April 1919, and in the following December became the first holder of the Bywater and Sotheby Chair of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature in the University of Oxford. He was at once elected to membership of the Exeter and All Souls Common Rooms, and in 1922 became a Fellow of Exeter College. At Oxford, and at Exeter, he remained until his death. It was here that his vast knowledge of Near Eastern life and culture could be shared among countless friends and pupils. His charm, his inexhaustible store of interesting and curious information, and his sprightly wit

combined to make him the most engaging of companions. He received as much as he gave; and the impression which his friends derived was of a man who acutely enjoyed life and was almost ideally happy. He continued loyally to serve the interests of the School at Athens, as a member of its Managing Committee and later as a Vice-President; while during the years 1933-5 he admirably discharged the duties of President of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies. In addition to his Fellowship of the British Academy he held honorary doctorates of the Universities of Oxford, Athens, and Salonica.

The trend of his studies during the last thirty years of his life made no striking divergence from that which had showed itself in Karpathos in 1903. His interest was and remained in the language and beliefs, the poetry and stories of Modern Greece. In medieval and modern history, in the sequence of events and even in the lives of historical personalities, he took comparatively little interest. He was out of sympathy with the Byzantine conception of autocratic government. Even by the history of the Orthodox Church he was not greatly attracted, and he was outspoken in his dislike of the mortifications of asceticism. He loved the more frankly pagan outlook of the Modern Greek folk-tradition, which, surviving so many centuries of political and religious repression, still today preserves its sane and classical view of human life and bursts into flowers of simple and touching poetry.

Dawkins's work during the 1920's might seem at first sight inconsistent with what has been said: for during these years he worked on two subjects which were wholly or mainly historical in the accepted sense of the word, that is, on the Varangian Guard at Constantinople and on the Cypriot *Chronicle* of Leontios Makhairas. But the first of these studies, despite several interesting articles which arose from it, he never brought to fruition: nor is it easy to see how, without a knowledge of Russian (which he never acquired), he could have done so, since the most fundamental works on the subject are written in that language. What drew him to the Varangians was rather the legendary and folk-tale character of their adventures, which is reflected in the story-telling of both Byzantium and Scandinavia. His edition of the medieval *Chronicle* of Makhairas, published in two volumes by the Oxford University Press in 1932, is certainly a major work of historical research. Yet even here it was the individual character of the dialect, with its mixture of Greek and Frankish elements, which first attracted his attention; and a learned study

of the vocabulary of Makhairas was published before the edition itself. Moreover, in his Taylorian Lecture on the 'Nature of the Cypriot Chronicle of Makhairas', delivered in 1945, he lays characteristic emphasis on the important elements in the *Chronicle* which derive from oral tradition, from 'stories of the past as they are now told'. In this, as in his language, Makhairas lies far from the main stream of Byzantine historiography, and shows closer links with the popular tradition of story-telling.

The *Recital concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus entitled Chronicle* tells the history of the Lusignan dynasty of the island between the years 1359 and 1432. It survives in two sixteenth-century manuscript versions, at Venice and Oxford (a third version has recently been identified at Ravenna). The Venice version is undoubtedly based on the version of Makhairas himself. The Oxford version differs widely from it in language and matter. None the less, Dawkins believed that both were versions of the original of Makhairas, and he printed the Venice text with insertions from the Oxford. The justification of this method of course depends on whether the editor is right in believing in a common original, or at least a common author. However this may be, the text as Dawkins provided it is excellently produced, the translation most accurate and lively and the historical notes always adequate and often fascinating. His edition will not soon be superseded, and will remain of permanent value to historians of the later Middle Ages.

While engaged on this work, Dawkins continued to travel widely. He had visited Mount Athos in 1905, and it had impressed him as an undisturbed repository of legend and folktales. He returned to it in 1931, 1933, and 1935; and spent his time travelling from monastery to monastery, endlessly inquiring of the monks about their habits and beliefs and the motives which had induced them to resign the world. Many English travellers had written books on the Holy Mountain, among whom Athelstan Riley and Hasluck were the most recent; but Riley's account is a traveller's book, and Hasluck's is mainly concerned with historical and archaeological detail. Dawkins, in his *Monks of Athos* (1936), followed neither of these examples. There is indeed in the book much personal reminiscence and some excellent description of scenery and flora. But the main concern is with local legends of the Virgin or of the Saints, of miraculous ikons or of the rare persecutions carried out by heretical invaders. The book therefore follows the method so dear to its author of reciting tales as they are alive in the mouths

of contemporary folk. There is little historical criticism; and little interest is shown in the priceless documents treasured in the monasteries. But we see the monks as they live today, as they attend their devotions or cultivate their properties; and we hear their quaint tales of heavenly intervention from the mouths of an abbot or a brother, of a stripling or a drink-sodden muleteer. This is history in the sense that Dawkins best understood it. In a singularly beautiful passage at the end of the book he explains that 'what we find here [on Mount Athos] is one aspect at least of the Christianized Greece of the Byzantine age . . . no lover of Byzantine Greece can leave it on one side'. Once again, as in *Modern Greek in Asia Minor*, Dawkins approached Byzantium, not through direct historical evidence, but through a side-entrance into the thought and speech of the Middle Ages.

The remaining years of his life were devoted almost wholly to the collection and study of Modern Greek folk-tales. In 1937 the late W. H. D. Rouse presented to the Classical Faculty Library of Cambridge University a large manuscript collection of tales from the Dodekanese, which had been made for him in the early years of the century by a local antiquary named Jacob Zarráftis. The Classical Faculty Board wisely put this collection at the disposal of Dawkins, for his study and, if he should see fit, for his publication. Dawkins accepted their offer with delight. The stories turned out to be of great interest, not only from the linguistic point of view but especially for the opportunity which they provided for study of the origins and types of the tales themselves. Dawkins worked on this material during the war years, and his *45 Stories from the Dodekanese* were published in 1950 by the Cambridge University Press, with introduction, philological notes, and glossary. His study of the Zarráftis material had turned his attention more to the question of Greek folk-story motives; and in 1953 the Oxford University Press published his *Modern Greek Folk-Tales*, which distinguished eighty-four separate types to be found in the whole Greek corpus and printed in translation the best specimen to be found of each type. Dawkins was developing this study right up to the end, and *More Modern Greek Folk-Tales* appeared early in the year in which he died. This book formed a pendant to its predecessor in that it contained a series of less common folk-tales which did not conform to the types catalogued in *Modern Greek Folk-Tales*; and the choice of these tales owed much to the advice and criticism of Halliday.

There can be no doubt that Dawkins's chief contribution to learning was in the study of the Modern Greek language and

folk-lore. In addition to the books already mentioned he published a very large number of articles and pamphlets on folk-lore subjects, some of the most memorable of which describe festivals or ceremonies which he had himself observed and interpreted. Worthy of special mention is his important article on 'The Modern Carnival in Thrace', printed in Volume XXVI of the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, where he records his own observation of a ritual drama which was undoubtedly a survivor from the remotest antiquity. He was one of the chief of that gifted company, which includes the honoured names of Politis and Kyriakidis, who have recorded and preserved to us a rural culture which had remained static for centuries but is now very rapidly disintegrating and passing away. Among innumerable lesser contributions, *Modern Greek in Asia Minor* will remain a permanent memorial to the skill, the energy, and the fidelity of its compiler.

No memoir of Dawkins can be concluded without some reference to the personality of the man. He was the very reverse of a lonely scholar. His friends were counted in troops, and to them his life was as valuable as his writings. His conversation was unfailingly delightful. He always seemed to be at the top of his form, even when, at the age of 76, he was crippled by a broken thigh which would not mend. Awkward and ungainly in stature, harsh featured and sandy-haired, endlessly fidgeting so that his friends put aside at his approach whatever could be fingered and smashed, he possessed much of the charm so eloquently ascribed to Socrates by Alcibiades. An original he certainly was; but he was far from being an original of that tiresome kind which cultivates a reputation for originality: he was absolutely without affectation. He was the sworn foe of any kind of humbug. His likes and dislikes were pronounced, and he seldom forbore to speak his mind. Yet his stings, though sharp, never rankled, and I do not think that he ever made an enduring enemy. He was a punctual and tireless correspondent; and his lively letters, chaotically typed and annotated in a handwriting yet more cryptic, were a constant source of delight. His tumultuous outpouring of anecdote and criticism, interrupted by bursts of highly pitched laughter, as he shuffled to and fro across his room, will not soon be forgotten. Above all he was invariably kind and considerate to the young, perhaps out of regard to his own unhappiness in youth. Many applied to him for help; and none applied in vain.

Dawkins retired from the Bywater and Sotheby Chair in 1939, but he continued to reside at Exeter College. He collapsed and

died in the street at Oxford on 4 May 1955, in his eighty-fourth year. It is fitting to mark his passing with the one word which, in the library of the British School at Athens, records the loss of his friend Hasluck: *DESIDERATVS*.

R. J. H. JENKINS

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