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Abstract

Nowadays the northeastern Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Lemnos, Samos and Ikaria experience during the late Ottoman period (1876-1912) their capitalist transformation and gradual entry into modernity, a process ongoing throughout the "long" 19th century. Profound changes in the economy and society of the islands are also observed during the first decades of the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Greek state (1912-1940). In this study, the world of the above islands is examined during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, in relation to the changes that took place during this period in the wider Mediterranean and European area. In particular, the subject of

this study is the transition processes of the islands from the Ottoman Empire to the Greek state and the reception of the changing historical conditions of the period 1876-1940 by the historical subjects themselves, the inhabitants of the islands, who are not treated as passive receivers of influences from the West, but as participants in shaping historical becoming. Relatively to the issues that are examined here, which certainly go beyond the narrow framework of local history, we approach historical searches which are connected not only to the concept of insularity, approaching every aspect of communication and interconnection, but also to isolation that stamp these insular places.