Henry Miller was born December 26, 1891 in New York, New York. During his first year of life, Miller’s family moved to Brooklyn, where the whole of his childhood was spent. In 1909, Miller graduated from high school and entered City College of New York where he stayed for only two months. While in Greece Miller wrote what many critics believe to be his finest work of “literature,” The Colossus of Maroussi. This is basically a travel book with a bit more. While Miller was traveling the United States he happened upon Big Sur where he settled and lived from 1944 to 1963. When Miller moved to Big Sur he helped establish the area as an artists colony with himself being the “leading prophet,” aside from Robinson Jeffers, who had been in the area since 1914.

Through an examination of Henry Miller’s account of his journey to Greece in 1939, as expressed in his travel book The Colossus of Maroussi, this article examines the image of this country his writing presents. Miller’s description of people, places, and environment is infused with a mystical, spiritual element, as if something magical emanates from the cultural environment of this country and tints the landscape and its inhabitants, adding an atemporal dreamlike quality. The group of literati Miller befriended during his five-month stay in Greece viewed Greek art, culture, and history in an archetypal way, which blends well with Miller’s approach. This analysis of the enchanted world Miller claims to have met and experienced during his journey could thus possibly acquire further significance through tentatively relating it to the way contemporary Greeks may experience aspects of their culture and their Greekness.