

RICERCHE STORICHE



EDIZIONI POLISTAMPA

RICERCHE STORICHE

RIVISTA QUADRIMESTRALE

Anno XLIV - NUMERO 1

GENNAIO-APRILE 2014

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In copertina: Screenshot dal documentario di Alinda Dimitriou, *The Girls of the Rain* [Τα κορίτσια της βροχής] (2011)

IVANO TOGNARINI, IL SALUTO DELLA REDAZIONE

La redazione di «Ricerche Storiche» annuncia con dolore la scomparsa del fondatore e direttore della rivista, Ivano Tognarini. La redazione rende noto che sta sviluppando un programma di iniziative di studio per ricordarne la figura di studioso. Qui di seguito viene pubblicato il saluto che Luigi Tomassini ha pronunciato in occasione della Cerimonia di Commemorazione tenuta a Fiesole il 17 marzo 2014.

Sono passati più di 40 anni da quando Ivano mi parlò per la prima volta della sua idea di realizzare una rivista, che si sarebbe chiamata «Ricerche Storiche».

Accolsi con entusiasmo la proposta, che mi fece subito dopo, di esserne il segretario di redazione, con lui Direttore. Da allora iniziò un sodalizio che si è interrotto solo ora. Per me, non ancora laureato, Ivano, allievo di Ragonieri e collaboratore in quel momento di Procacci, già impegnato e attivo culturalmente e politicamente, è stato un punto di riferimento e un maestro; ho maturato un grande debito personale e professionale, che però non ho mai sentito come tale, perché nel contempo si era instaurato un vincolo molto forte di simpatia e amicizia che si è prolungato senza nessuna incrinatura per tutto questo tempo.

Detto questo, vorrei che questo sentimento di amicizia non mi facesse velo, per ricordarlo qui, come merita, nel modo più spassionato e oggettivo possibile, soprattutto come organizzatore di cultura. Seguirò naturalmente, fra le molte attività e i molti campi in cui ha lasciato una traccia profonda e duratura, soprattutto la sua attività come Direttore di «Ricerche Storiche», anche se ovviamente è difficile stabilire confini troppo netti con gli altri campi in cui era impegnato, dall'insegnamento universitario all'impegno politico e civile.

È stato senza dubbio prima di tutto uno studioso di grande valore, fine, attento, rigoroso, formato ad una scuola in cui la filologia era la base necessaria e fondamentale; però anche aperto, capace di muoversi fra approcci, punti di vista e anche epoche storiche diverse, come lo erano gli studiosi nostri maestri, i vari Conti, Sestan, Ragonieri e Procacci; mentre la mia generazione, di solo pochi anni più giovane e anche diversi studiosi della sua stessa età, già si stava formando in maniera molto più specializzata tematicamente e cronologicamente.

Questo carattere lo trasmise quasi naturalmente alla rivista: fin dalla nascita «Ricerche Storiche» tratta un ampio arco cronologico che va dal medioevo alla contempo-

raneità e affronta temi di storia economica, sociale, politica e culturale, anche a costo di pagare un prezzo alle barriere ormai rigide e ristrette che oggi caratterizzano le specializzazioni disciplinari accademiche.

Un altro tratto caratteristico di Ivano, che allora percepivo come diverso da quello della mia generazione, stava nella sua concezione della storia come impegno civile e politico.

Per la nostra generazione, che era entrata all'università nel 1968, il rapporto con la dimensione politica era immediato, esplicito, quasi inevitabile e naturale, ma anche un po' teorico e astratto. Per lui le cose erano diverse: in parte quel rapporto veniva dalla tradizione dei maestri, di impegno civile della ricerca, in parte dal contesto politico del momento, in parte consistente dalla tradizione resistenziale. La Resistenza era molto presente nella nostra cultura politica, come riferimento politico e simbolico; ma per lui era in qualche modo esperienza personale, attraverso la figura di suo padre Federigo, comandante partigiano in val di Cornia, personaggio di straordinario spessore e qualità umane, capace di far vivere nella normalità della vita quotidiana, nelle discussioni, nei pourparler, la memoria di quella esperienza non come ricordo personale o episodico, ma come testimonianza di una svolta, della creazione di un nuovo tipo di società democratica che andava criticata nelle sue insufficienze, ma anche apprezzata per quello che era in confronto al passato sotto la dittatura che lui aveva dovuto vivere, e quindi rivissuta e difesa tutti i giorni.

Un elemento importante della impostazione culturale che Ivano portò fin dall'inizio nella rivista fu il rapporto con il territorio, cosa che all'epoca significava anche una opzione in direzione della storia sociale ed economica. L'ambito toscano, e in particolare l'ambito della Toscana meridionale e costiera, con un'accentuazione particolare per Piombino e per l'Elba, furono i territori privilegiati per il lavoro di Ivano ma anche per «Ricerche Storiche», che nacque come rivista del Centro Piombinese di Studi Storici.

Per quanto strettamente legato nel caso specifico alla vicenda biografica personale di Ivano, in realtà questo tipo di rapporto con il territorio era caratteristico di diverse altre riviste nate in quel periodo, alcune delle quali poi arrivate ad affermarsi a livello nazionale, come ad esempio «Quaderni Storici delle Marche» o «Movimento operaio e socialista in Liguria». Il forte radicamento locale iniziale della rivista, e dell'opera di Ivano, voleva dire possibilità di azione culturale in un rapporto dialettico non solo con gli attori politici, culturali e sociali locali, ma anche e soprattutto fra la dimensione propriamente scientifica e accademica della ricerca, e quella più propriamente culturale dell'intellettuale e organizzatore di cultura.

Voglio dire che mentre la rivista apriva le sue pagine, nella edizione elegante e rigorosa di Olschki, a una serie di giovani autori attivi in ambito universitario, alcuni dei quali destinati a brillanti carriere accademiche, su una gamma assai ampia di temi, nel contempo ospitava anche gli atti di alcuni convegni, come i due sul sindacalismo rivoluzionario e quello sulla storia della siderurgia italiana, che traducevano sul piano dello studio storico serio e rigoroso, e del confronto sul piano nazionale e internazionale, alcune delle questioni e dei caratteri fondamentali della realtà sociale di riferimento.

Questo tratto della biografia intellettuale di Ivano, che si rifletteva nell'impostazione iniziale della rivista, è importante da sottolineare perché costituisce una sorta di

fil rouge che percorre tutta la sua vicenda di studioso e ne fornisce, alla fine, il tratto forse più significativo.

Ad esempio, la sua preoccupazione di congiungere insieme il rigore dello studioso con l'intervento nella discussione storiografica e ancora oltre con la riflessione sul senso culturale e sull'impatto della propria attività intellettuale sul contesto culturale in cui si svolgeva, assunsero nella prima fase le forme di uno studio rigoroso delle fonti, in particolare di quelle sulla Resistenza; ma parallelamente non si può non menzionare la sua attività intensa e il suo impegno personale e fondamentale non solo sul piano scientifico, per recuperare e valorizzare la documentazione e le testimonianze che avrebbero portato Piombino prima ad avere il riconoscimento della medaglia d'argento (1979) e poi della medaglia d'oro al valore della Resistenza (2000). In quest'ultima occasione egli, che aveva raccolto e curato i volumi di documentazione in appoggio alla proposta, tenne la relazione ufficiale alla cerimonia di conferimento, alla presenza del Presidente della Repubblica Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

Ancora a questo primo periodo risale anche l'abitudine al rapporto con il tessuto locale di studiosi e appassionati di storia, che in Toscana ha un insediamento di lunga tradizione, e con il mondo della scuola, visto come un interlocutore importante per il lavoro dello storico professionale. Nel caso specifico fu la figura di Luciano Di Gregorio, Presidente del Centro Piombinese, docente di storia e filosofia nel liceo classico di Piombino, ad impersonare questa duplice realtà, mantenendo con Ivano un rapporto strettissimo nel corso dei decenni; ma Ivano da questo punto di partenza sviluppò nel corso degli anni '80 e '90, utilizzando anche il prestigio che stava acquisendo «Ricerche Storiche», alcuni tentativi interessanti di allargamento in questi settori. Dapprima promosse la pubblicazione sulle pagine della rivista degli elenchi delle tesi in storia discusse negli atenei toscani, un utilissimo strumento di informazione ma anche un modo per interessare e coinvolgere giovani studiosi e docenti di scuola; in seguito sviluppò il tentativo di svecchiare e aggiornare il vecchio tessuto degli studi locali di storia, attraverso un'associazione fra le società storiche toscane. Si trattò in realtà in entrambi i casi di tentativi che non ebbero tutto il successo desiderato; ma rimangono a mio parere uno dei pochi interessanti casi di intervento in una direzione, quella del collegamento fra gli studi di storia a livello universitario e alcuni interlocutori esterni, come gli insegnanti di storia nelle scuole medie superiori e i cultori e gli appassionati di storia a livello locale, che costituisce uno dei problemi più sentiti e più attuali per quanto riguarda l'impatto del lavoro dello storico oggi. Si può dire anzi che questa dimensione si è collegata direttamente, con alcune iniziative concrete, agli ultimi filoni imboccati da «Ricerche Storiche», come quello della *Public History* o dello studio delle conseguenze della diffusione dei nuovi media in campo storiografico. Credo si debba riconoscere ad Ivano il fatto di essere stato uno dei maggiori promotori in Italia, di quella che oggi chiameremmo una *Public History* di grande qualità, coinvolgendo in questo «Ricerche Storiche», ma anche università, non solo toscane (come mostra la collaborazione con molti docenti e studiosi dell'Istituto Universitario Europeo), e altri centri di ricerca dando origine in vario modo a una serie di studi nel complesso molto importante, e non solo in ambito toscano.

In questo contesto rientra anche il suo impegno come Presidente dell'Istituto Storico della Resistenza in Toscana, che lui visse senza dubbio come un modo per affermare il valore etico e civile degli studi di storia. Non sta a me ricordare questa parte del suo impegno che occupò molta parte delle sue energie nell'ultimo ventennio della sua vita, ma certamente vi è un parallelo possibile con la sua attività di fondatore e Direttore di «Ricerche Storiche».

Sotto questo aspetto Ivano non era solo uno studioso, ma anche un intellettuale impegnato, un "costruttore" che non si è sottratto né alle fatiche della ricerca negli archivi e sulle fonti, né all'attività faticosa, e poco gratificante sul piano accademico, di dialogo con una serie di interlocutori che rappresentavano nei vari tempi e contesti una istanza importante di diffusione e di propagazione dell'attività di ricerca dello studioso.

È tanto più apprezzabile questa parte della sua biografia intellettuale, in quanto per carattere Ivano era un combattente. Avendolo conosciuto molto bene personalmente, io che ero invece molto più distaccato e "diplomatico" nei miei rapporti interpersonali, rimanevo stupito di come riuscisse a coniugare questo carattere vivace e appassionato con una grande capacità di ascolto e di mediazione, che si fondavano su un punto essenziale, che cioè, come vedevo bene nelle nostre discussioni sui vari interlocutori della rivista e del nostro lavoro, lui cercava sempre in primo luogo di capire le ragioni degli altri.

Ma non vorrei insistere troppo su questi tratti del suo carattere e del suo impegno, che spiegano l'affetto da cui era circondato, la partecipazione con cui oggi viene qui ricordato, ma non rendono conto di un altro aspetto fondamentale, cioè la qualità e l'originalità della sua opera di studioso.

Non è questa la sede per parlarne in maniera approfondita, e la nostra rivista si impegna fin da ora a promuovere una o più occasioni di riflessione adeguata su questo punto; ma almeno alcuni brevi cenni penso vadano fatti, nell'ottica, che qui mi è stata affidata, di ricordare la sua attività di direzione di «Ricerche Storiche».

Ivano ha trasposto nella rivista alcuni dei nuclei più importanti e originali della sua attività di studioso, in particolare con gli studi sulla Toscana e l'Italia nel periodo rivoluzionario e napoleonico, con gli studi sull'archeologia industriale e con gli studi sull'antifascismo e la Resistenza.

Al periodo rivoluzionario e napoleonico ha dedicato una attenzione molto intensa come studioso, ma anche una fondamentale attività di impulso e di promozione degli studi, concretatasi in una serie di iniziative (convegni, esposizioni, dibattiti) e di pubblicazioni (studi monografici e atti di convegni, sulla rivista e soprattutto sulle collane ad essa collegate) che hanno permesso di cambiare radicalmente lo stato degli studi sull'età rivoluzionaria e napoleonica in Toscana. Per quanto le radici di questa attenzione, rispetto al suo percorso biografico di studioso, siano complesse e da approfondire, è abbastanza evidente che si inseriscono in un contesto in cui l'istituzione delle Regioni, a partire dal 1970, aveva indotto a riflettere sulla storia del formarsi di una identità regionale, sul rapporto fra dimensione regionale e dimensione nazionale. Nella storiografia dell'epoca tali questioni – di cui oggi siamo in grado di apprezzare tutta la por-

tata e l'incidenza anche attuale – erano in certo modo occultate dalla forza della tradizione, dal vero e proprio “mito” delle riforme leopoldine. Il filone storiografico aperto da Ivano per la Toscana permetteva non solo di riportare all'attenzione un periodo di trasformazioni radicali e di intensa dialettica politica e sociale, ma metteva a fuoco il problema della modernizzazione del paese e, in prospettiva, del processo di unificazione, in stretto rapporto fra fattori politici, ma anche sociali e culturali: anche in questo caso con una attenzione assai forte al territorio, ma anche al contesto nazionale e internazionale. Uno dei tratti più interessanti dal punto di vista storiografico delle ricerche da lui condotte o coordinate è che l'analisi del territorio toscano veniva condotta con una indagine serrata non solo sulle fonti locali, ma anche e con grande profondità su fonti nazionali e internazionali, in particolare sugli archivi francesi, spagnoli, da lui indagati con ricerche di grande spessore e qualità. L'ambito un po' ristretto della storiografia della Toscanina granducale veniva quindi ad allargarsi grazie non solo a lui, ma in parte considerevole grazie a lui.

Un discorso analogo può essere fatto per il secondo filone che ho citato, quello dell'archeologia industriale. Anche in questo caso il saldo radicamento e la conoscenza dei problemi del territorio hanno dato luogo ad una visione originale e a un nuovo modo di impostare storiograficamente un campo di studi per molti aspetti nuovo. Quando cominciò a profilarsi, con la fine del ciclo fordista, il problema della dismissione di intere aree industriali (molto evidente in una città fabbrica come Piombino, ma presente in tutti i centri industriali italiani), Ivano si dedicò ad operare sul terreno di una disciplina allora allo stato nascente, l'archeologia industriale. Un approccio il suo che si basava su una conoscenza approfondita della siderurgia, nonché su un lavoro di studio, di ricerca e di confronto compiuto svolgendo ricerche e coltivando contatti con gli ambienti più qualificati a livello internazionale. Rispetto alla situazione italiana, Ivano portò un contributo innovatore e pionieristico in una disciplina allora attenta soprattutto agli aspetti architettonici e ai problemi della riqualificazione e del riuso delle strutture, intendendo l'archeologia industriale anche come recupero e valorizzazione dei resti degli apparati produttivi, come “beni culturali”, come sedimentazioni di una cultura e di una storia la cui memoria era importante conservare. Ancora più che per altri settori, impegnò su questo terreno «Ricerche Storiche», che tuttora è la rivista italiana sicuramente più interessata a questo ambito di studi.

Anche sul tema della Resistenza, un altro dei temi di ricerca particolarmente a lui cari, l'investimento sulla rivista fu precoce e innovativo. Ricordo bene quando lo seguii nella preparazione, nel 1974, del primo numero della rivista dedicato agli studi sulla Resistenza. Nonostante si trattasse di un numero che presentava contributi autorevoli dei maggiori specialisti, alcune fonti del tutto nuove per l'epoca provenienti dagli archivi tedeschi, e alcune rassegne storiografiche molto aggiornate, cioè un successo indubbio e importante per una rivista al suo secondo anno effettivo di vita, Ivano già auspicava sviluppi ulteriori. In particolare avvertiva il pericolo di una deriva erudita o eccessivamente specialistica degli studi, e poneva il problema di riflettere non solo sul fenomeno della Resistenza in sé, ma anche sul modo in cui veniva commemorata pub-

blicamente, sull'evoluzione e sul cambiamento di quella che oggi chiameremmo la "memoria culturale" della Resistenza. Anche in questo caso lo spunto e lo stimolo per il suo orientamento di ricerca venivano dalla particolare sensibilità che aveva potuto maturare dal territorio, dal contesto in cui era vissuto e in cui operava attivamente. La sua prolungata attività di studio e di raccolta di fonti per la concessione dalla medaglia d'oro alla città di Piombino, la sua consuetudine locale e addirittura familiare con le memorie della Resistenza furono per lui lo spunto per cogliere con grande sensibilità e notevole anticipo alcune tematiche che poi sarebbero state centrali nel discorso pubblico sulla Resistenza. Un caso evidente è il suo impegno di ricerca e di promozione di ricerche sul tema delle stragi naziste, con tutte le implicazioni sul tema della memoria, che vennero in luce al convegno di Arezzo del 1987, mentre cioè in Germania stava emergendo il dibattito sul revisionismo e molto prima che una analoga riflessione venisse affrontata da altri studiosi in Italia.

Infine, vorrei ricordare un ultimo aspetto che non si lega propriamente alla sua attività di studioso, ma che rivela molto del suo modo di essere. «Ricerche Storiche» è sempre stata infatti, grazie a lui, una rivista aperta a giovani ricercatori, al di là delle strette osservanze accademiche e anche al di là degli orientamenti storiografici di "scuola". Ivano ha svolto questa attività così impegnativa e prolungata nel tempo, nel caso di «Ricerche Storiche», ma non solo, non per sostenere e sviluppare una "scuola", non per una forma, sia pure scientificamente qualificata, di egoismo, ma con il massimo disinteresse personale. Non vorrei che queste parole sembrassero retoriche e d'occasione. Intendo solo dire che Ivano ha speso un impegno rilevante nella promozione di rapporti umani e scientifici che tendevano a conseguire risultati culturalmente rilevanti e significativi dal lato dell'impegno politico e civile. In questo campo non lesinava energie e dimostrava capacità di mediazione, di dialogo, di realizzazione di obiettivi. Ad esempio, posso testimoniare il suo impegno nel cercare un dialogo e una collaborazione con l'Istituto Universitario Europeo, che portò a «Ricerche Storiche» un capitale importante di energie di ricercatori giovani e motivati di ottimo livello; oppure il suo impegno nella promozione di una rete di ricercatori di varie università italiane nel campo dell'archeologia industriale; mentre posso testimoniare che non mostrava il minimo impegno nel sostenere relazioni e nel tessere reti a fini di vantaggio accademico personale.

Si trattava in realtà di atteggiamenti e di scelte che rivelavano una grande coscienza ma per niente ostentata e vissuta in modo semplice e naturale.

Questa miscela di grande rigore intellettuale e morale, di intelligenza e di sensibilità culturale, di generosità e disponibilità sul piano umano, questa miscela e questo intreccio che gli erano caratteristici, sono del resto i tratti che emergono con forza dai numerosi messaggi e commenti che sono arrivati da amici e collaboratori di «Ricerche Storiche», che io qui volevo rappresentare.

In questo modo soprattutto lo vogliamo ricordare, cercando, per quanto possiamo, di continuare la sua opera.

HISTORY AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE
IN CONTEMPORARY GREECE

(a cura di Giorgos Antoniou)

INTRODUCTION:
HISTORY IN PUBLIC OR PUBLIC HISTORY?
GREEK HISTORICAL CULTURE TODAY

In April 2014 the city of Thessaloniki mayoral candidate for *SYRIZA* (radical left party), Tryantafyllos Mitafidis, entered the municipality and removed the pictures of two past mayors of the city. They were mayors that served under the Nazi occupation. The reaction to this gesture was mixed. Some historians warned that such a gesture was ill-conceived as the two mayors did not necessarily have typical collaborators' profiles; the available evidence is not sufficient to prove their allegiance with the Nazis. Other commentators applauded the gesture, whilst a Holocaust survivor publicly thanked Mitafidis for finally taking the initiative to dishonor those who assisted/participated in the deportation of the Jewish population of the city.

Such public challenges to the dominant historical narratives are not rare in the Greek public sphere. They are partly a response to the excess of many kinds of official memories and commemoration of the past in Greek society. Desecration of civil war monuments, military graveyards or Jewish sites is more or less common. A new iconoclastic trend has recently appeared in the shape of intense protests during school and military parades celebrating the two most significant moments of the Greek nation: the war of independence (celebrated on 25th march) and Greece's entry into the second world war (28th October). These parades were extremely popular in the past. Thousands of people attended in celebration of the moments the nation fought as one against its enemies. Recent disruptive protests began during the economic crisis and involved harassing the authorities and politicians attending the ceremonies or even flash mob parading of the unemployed or trade unionists in front of the authorities. Such tensions undermined the unilateral meaning of the ceremonies and their symbolism of a united nation; the government decided to control crowd participation and members of the police who could attend. As one of the authors in this volume claims, the recent economic crisis has motivated people to move beyond the heroic hegemonic narrative of the last decades and to invent other narratives in order to explain their current situation.

This form of 'negative' or inversed reading of the past in public, however, is one of the past's few uses in the present encountered in Greek society. During the last ten years public history has increased in significance as a historical field. This is especially true in the United States, where it first flourished and continues to rapidly grow and to a lesser extent in Europe. Public history, widely construed, is history outside academia.

As history reduced to its minimal meaning can be two things, a) past events and b) the genre of writing about these events, public history can be two different things: a) the commercial, cultural, instrumental, symbolical, experiential diffusion and presence of the past around us and b) the study of this phenomenon within and outside academia, certainly with a self-reflective method and approach.

In this respect, countries such as Greece find themselves in a peculiar position. While history has played and continues to play an immense role in Greek political life and society in general – few would disagree that Greece is a past oriented society – there is little elaboration or processing of this past in terms of its public uses. In other words, there is a discrepancy between the public uses of the past in the Greek context and the need to elaborate on the perceptions of this past in contemporary Greek society. To put it simply, Greece is an extremely rich soil for the study of the presence of the past in today's life. But, outside academia, there is no culture of reflection and self-reflection on this role of the past. Even within academia, there is a relative lack of interest in the fields that comprise important aspects of public history study.

As a working hypothesis, one might argue that the less important the past is for a specific society the most elaborate and academic the relation of this society is with her past. Vice versa, the most vital and repressive the mix of past and present is in a society, the less this society is aware of the tropes in which this relationship emerges and continues to influence people's everyday reality. With few notable exceptions, public uses of history in historically overloaded countries with troubled histories become a burden and not an opportunity to tackle such issues as the formation of national identity, the deconstruction of historical myths, the recognition of otherness or the subaltern subjects of history in general.

One explanation about this contradiction may lie in the role that agents of history play in these societies. Where reconciliation has not emerged, or the state fails to address past wounds and traumas, the role of agents of historical memory becomes vital. Despite this trend being partly based in what one would today name as civic society, this role can frequently be negative in the public dealing with the past since some groups of memory and history activists impose a narrow framework of interpretation of the past and a personalized agenda that favors individualistic interpretations. In other words, such pressure groups and agents of history privatize the public historical space and ostracize versions of the past that cannot fit into their individual narrative. As a result, the lack of trained practitioners and professionals of public history is replaced by a surplus of amateur 'historians' writing their own ego history in their own terms. This means that highly motivated – and quite often highly biased – amateur narratives of the past dominate whole areas of research and historical fields. That trend has also been exacerbated through the new social media and the democratization of narratives about the past. Are these observations bad news for the public role of history in present society?

It is true that many times the issue of public history and the past is linked to a number of social, cultural and political elements that interrelate with and influence each

other. For instance, beyond historical accounts, monuments and public celebrations, representations of the past in genres like cinema, the internet, oral tradition, theatrical plays, textbooks, art, comics, memoirs, literature and photography show the fragmentation and 'democratization' of the flow of memories in current societies; a fragmentation that is reflected in the emergence of new categorizations of memory makers, mediators, agents and consumers. In other words, historians have lost a large part of their primacy over the past, especially in the public sphere. Their right to be considered as the centre of historical representation, the 'normality' from which all attempts to deal with the past should emerge and to which they should return is seriously challenged by these new trends in these new fields of public history. However, not surprisingly, these kinds of public memories and public pasts are very hard to articulate, therefore a new kind of historian, outside university campuses needs to develop.

The present volume emerges from a conference that took place in Volos in August 2013 organized by the International Federation of Public History and the *Civil Wars Study Group*, an active group of Greek scholars who study conflicts both at Greek as well as at European level. The conference title was 'uses and abuses of history; public history in Greece'. One thing became apparent from the start: the organizational committee, the participants and the audience all had a very different perception of what constitutes public history. From the very beginning the committee had to overcome a heated internal debate on whether history could be 'abused' in the public sphere (Dirk Moses, giving the key note lecture claimed openly it could not) or who the 'abusers' might be. The conference was almost cancelled on account of these serious disagreements on what history and public history may encompass today. Other points in a passionate exchange of emails and discussion before and during the conference included the critical approaches to memory studies as a genre, the fight against postmodern interpretations of the past, the responsibility of historians to contribute to the public sphere and what that may mean for the profession. The audience on the other hand was anything but passive. By picking upon the title of the conference, teachers of history in secondary level education protested openly about the distance between academia and the public and pointed out that professional historians should be able to simplify and disseminate more successfully the products of their research: otherwise, as one of them asked, what was the point of writing history?

The eight articles this volume contains differ significantly but elucidate the current trends and concerns of Greek academia on the diffusion of historical knowledge in the public sphere. The present volume's contributions are representative of major public history issues that stir up much debate and controversy. The articles analyses a) moments of major national identity issues that re-emerged and needed to be resolved, b) dealing with the past's taboo issues and, c) current trends in public history.

The articles of Andreou-Kasvikis and Katsanos deal with what is called "the Macedonian question" in Greece, since the end of 19th century aspiration to annex the Macedonian territory. According to the great idea of the 1800s, the Greek nation and the leading nationalist spirit of the era, Macedonia was the ancestral land of Alexander the

Great and therefore (since ancient Macedonians were nothing but a Greek people) belonged to the territory of the Greek State. This dream came true following the Balkan wars, when more than fifty percent of the geographical territory of the Macedonian land was annexed by the triumphant Greek state. Since then, the Macedonian question became a territorial integrity issue for Greeks; Greece was practically a status quo country that wanted to preserve the gains of the Balkan Wars, and believed that the term “Macedonia” was equal to the Greek Macedonian territory. Such views deliberately ignored the resentment and territorial revisionism by her neighbors throughout the 20th century. It was only in the 1990s that a surprised public opinion in Greece discovered that in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), a strong Macedonian identity and (to a lesser extent) language were raising a new Macedonian issue that had to do both with current ethnic and national identities, the ownership of the Macedonian logo as well as with the claim to the heritage of ancient Macedon in the present. Andreou and Kasvikis examine the commemorative practices of the two rival mnemonic legacies of Thessaloniki and Bitola through a comparison of two statues of the same ancient Macedonian king. Therefore public sculpture becomes one of the battlefields of the war on symbols over the past. History on the other hand, as Katsanos’ article shows, played a similar role. The official state narrative, Katsanos claims, about the history and the past of Macedonia was not so much an outcome of state intervention; it was rather the outcome of the historical and political agenda local and state agents imposed on the state. These agents demanded and succeeded to transmit their version of history in public and continued a war of history throughout the entire postwar period. When this history war (of words) transformed to a diplomatic one, each state had its (historical) nuclear arms and no hesitation to use them, only to further poison diplomatic relations and possible solutions.

The dealing with the past of taboo issues is another complex process that takes place right now, fourteen years into the 21st century, in Greece. While the economic crisis overshadowed many aspects of the historical past, it has renewed certain of its aspects that were either ignored or misinterpreted. This has not always been a fruitful experience. Public uses of a precarious past led many times to conspiracy theories or simplistic, populist approaches to complex phenomena. For instance, the matter of Nazi war retributions was one of the most discussed issues in the public sphere in recent years for many reasons, one of which was an attempt to regain self-esteem and national pride vis-a-vis the unpopular Germans who are perceived to have imposed on Greece a new type of – economic – occupation. Many of the mainstream political parties made direct comparisons between the two Occupations and Chancellor Merkel with Hitler; while the most common derogatory term to describe the supporters of the current government is that of ‘collaborators’. In such cases one can easily trace the ingredients of current historical misconceptions both about the past and the present in relation to anti-German sentiments of a large part of the Greek population.

Civil War memories have remained unspoken for many decades, in spite of being deeply impressed in individual and family memories. This anti-representational nature

of Civil Wars explains the discrepancies and similarities between some forms of testimonies to other forms (for instance the tensions between oral interviews and written memoirs) and the discrepancies between historical narrative and the subject's experience. In such cases silence perhaps plays the most crucial role in the memory and the representation of the events. The Greek Civil War that followed Axis Occupation is typical in that respect since the anticommunist regime of the years 1949-1974 muted alternate versions of the past.

It is not surprising that the advent of democracy in Greece in 1974 revealed, hitherto silenced versions of an officially uncontested but essentially precarious past. It took more than twenty-five years for Greek society to admit the intra-national, civil character of the conflict of the years 1946-1949. Still, a considerable part of Greek society reacted to this novel point of view with extreme passion and consistency. A first significant change was the long delayed incorporation of the legacy of the resistance into the Greek political system. The article of Paschaloudi and Antoniou shows how complex and slow this process was in the period where anticommunism was prevalent. But also, how difficult it remained to compensate the resistance veterans both symbolically and economically in a fair way. In many respects, the Resistance legacy was doomed to be linked with that of the Civil War, a taboo that was not broken even with the establishment of a democratic regime in Greece in 1974. The memory preservation, formulation, negotiation, oppression, and suppression of the civil war, contributed to the political manipulation of this ambiguous past in contemporary politics. Memory and history became a favorite battleground for politics and supplied the different strategies, concepts, narratives each side adopted in securing optimal exploitation of the civil war heritage.

Dordanas' article compares the German *Historikerstreit* with the revisionist 'new wave' in Greek 1940s historiography, Dordanas shows the difficulty professional historians faced when they were read by the wider Public. As it seems, quite often the winner in a historiographical battle can be the loser in the public sphere. This brings back the question of how to disseminate the outcome of historical research into the public sphere; to put it simply, how one can prevail over fiction or Hollywood with Jstor (the famous database of scholarly works). However, as Dordanas shows, such debates refer to wider social and national identity questions, they do not, therefore, only belong to historians. What also becomes clear is that at the end of the debate nothing remains the same; the field changes, public awareness of the past increases, polarization appears, history once more gains relevance for everybody.

The article of Kornetis deals with another great taboo of the recent past. The issue of torture during the seven-year-long dictatorship (1967-1974) and the public discussion about it reveal a wide range of reactions that signify the limits or representation in public for a society that had to reinvent itself. Successive or parallel – but significantly different – memorial strategies of institutional organizations such as the state (or political parties) and the individual involved a) memory repression, b) silence as a medium for superficial and temporary consensus, c) amnesia as a proposal for per-

manent reconciliation in society, and d) contestation which inevitably arose as a result of the long term political, cultural, social distortion the civil war and the dictatorship produced in Greek society.

The last set of articles deals with aspects of contemporary public historical culture in Greece. The article by Athanasiades studies the most significant public debate of the last two decades, about the notorious 6th grade primary school history textbook. The textbook was criticized from many different directions, while historians were divided. Some considered its modernizing, anti-nationalist point of view a much needed contribution. Others focused on its obvious historical errors and simplifications. It was the mobilization of the extra-academic community that was decisive in the bitter end of that debacle (the textbook was withdrawn). Large groups of internet activists denounced the book and attacked personally the author; as a result of this wave of negative publicity, public opinion very soon turned against it. In that sense, this case study is indicative of the power that civic society, or pressure groups, have in setting the agenda over the past and its uses.

Mitsos Bilalis theorizes on this power by analyzing the ways the internet influences current historical culture. The author shows how the new social media not only disseminate various opinions and facts about the past but also create new types of mnemonic subjects and new types of historical cyberspaces. These cyberspaces exist in parallel with traditional historiographical space and quite often are an inverse image of it. The rather dire conclusion is that the role of multiplier is much more significant than the role of the historian in cyberhistory. The theoretical question Bilalis might ask is how could historians find a role in this new parallel universe.

The last article by Vervenioti shows that in this new historical ecosystem of the public sphere, grassroots initiatives and activism do not only lead to polarization or the hijacking of history by internet activists. Vervenioti describes and analyzes the reasons behind the flourishing of oral history groups in Athens and elsewhere. A mixture of dedicated professionals of oral history and amateur researchers proved that the model of individual research, in social sciences, has serious disadvantages compared to collective projects open to wider audiences. This new type of 'open source' research reminds the major advantage of history: to provide a meaningful past for subjects and to fill in the gap between academia and the public, with terms and conditions positive and not hostile to academic standards and research. This in-between space is where the future of history and historiography in public will be decided and projects of this nature will become crucial for establishing new bonds between history and the general public. As it becomes apparent with this volume, this is not optional anymore.

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THESSALONIKI-BITOLA: PUBLIC VERSIONS OF MACEDONIAN HISTORY IN TWO STATUES OF KING PHILIP II

1. *On public monuments and usages of history*

We are living in an era of a memory boom, and as a result of that the past has been rendered a part of the present, through processes that would have been previously unfathomable. The mechanisms and policies of remembrance have contributed significantly, from the end of the 20th century onwards, to the ways in which we perceive the past and the temporality of social and cultural life. According to Andreas Huyssen this is a memory hypertrophy, which is counterbalanced against history and makes its presence known through the exaltation of “memory cultures”, which in contemporary societies acquire diverse and exceptionally interesting forms¹. The museums of all kinds that are multiplying steadily, the historical exhibitions, the remembrance parks and the memorial cemeteries, the memorial rituals (anniversaries, memorial services, parades, national holidays) and the public monuments (statues, busts, war memorial monuments, sculpture compositions) are the most common versions of perpetuating the collective historical memory of a community within the public space.

Public monuments are a particular case of memory *loci*. The fact that they constitute hybridic convergences of art, history and politics transforms them from human constructs, depicting specific representations of the past, into important tools of social cohesion². Hence, by their nature, public monuments are subjected to political usages and service social needs. As carriers of the collective memory of a society they fulfill a series of functions pertaining to the reinforcement or even the formation of identity, the projection of historical memory and the reproduction of important social values and principles³. Both the production of particular monuments and their reception by the public are determined by three different historical moments. Firstly, by the moment of the historical event itself or the person that is depicted or implied through the artis-

¹ A. HUYSEN, *Present pasts. Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003, pp. 1-4.

² P. CARRIER, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989*, New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2005, p. 35.

³ S. TSIARA, *Topia tis ethnikis mnimis. Istories tis Makedonias grammenes se marmaro* (Landscapes of national memory. Histories of Macedonia written on marble), Thessaloniki, Kleidarithmos, 2004, p. 20.

tic representation. Secondly, by the time period in which the work of art is conceived (as an idea) and created. Thirdly, by the moment or moments of the perception of the monument, when it is subjected to processes of interpretation and public discourse, due to its renewed political importance, a decision for its renovation or demolition, or even vandalism. Hence, monuments can also function as prisms for understanding the successive historical and political frameworks through which memory cultures are developed. On the other hand, the meanings inferred by their audience may vary, and are formed based on a pre-existing knowledge of history, the history of the monuments themselves and also the level of personal and emotional involvement of people with them, which arises from their possible participation as witnesses to events related to the monuments⁴. For these reasons, research and analysis on the significance and the popular appeal of public monuments fall into the domains of public history. It is true that one of the definitions of public history is that is developed independently of academic and scientific research. Nevertheless one of the many public transformations of academic history occurs through its visual representation in the public space taking the form of historic sculpture, memorial monuments and national parks. In other words public monuments transform history and diffuse historical meanings and memory throughout wider sections of the community by deriving their content and inspiration from the academic history.

This paper focuses on two public monuments depicting King Philip II which were erected in Thessaloniki in 1993 and in Bitola of FYROM between 2009 until 2011, respectively. Despite the time lapse between their erection, these two public sculptures are linked to the history of ancient Macedonia and its political usages in the context of the emergence of the “Macedonian issue” from the 1990s onwards, which is directly connected to the dispute between Greece and FYROM on the name and national identity of the nation that arose in the region after the dissolution of Yugoslavia⁵.

2. *The ideological context of the appearance of “Macedonian” public sculpture*

Now we will try to discuss the rough political, historiographical and ideological framework in which the memorial monuments which inspired from the history of ancient Macedonia in Greece and FYROM appear. We should note first of all that the presence of monumental Greek antiquity in the public sphere is related to several

⁴ CARRIER, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989*, cit., pp. 32-33.

⁵ L.M. DANFORTH, *The Macedonia Conflict. Ethnic nationalism in a transnational world*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1995; J. PETTIFER (ed.), *The New Macedonian Question*, New York, Palgrave, 1999; J. SHEA, *Macedonia and Greece. The Struggle to define a new Balkan nation*, London, Jefferson NC, 1997.

aspects of the usage of history through time. A prominent role in these procedures is held by the romantic perception of Classical Greek antiquity, mostly a creation of German neoclassicism of the 19th century, and disseminated on both sides of the Atlantic⁶. In the case of Greece, the aforementioned perception functioned as the principal tool for linking the nascent Greek state with the Classical past, initially undervaluing, in a conscious and deliberately formulated manner, all the other historical periods⁷.

Beginning with F.Y.R.O.M., our research endeavour was prompted by the conscious public turn towards “antiquization” and “ancient macedonianism”, mostly by the Gruevski government, starting from 2008 and the rejection of the country’s inclusion in NATO at the Bucharest Summit, with Greece as the principal “perpetrator”. The bruised ego of the Macedonians, according to the stance of those in political power, would be soothed through a colossal programme, “Project Skopje 2014”, which includes:

- a) the creation of public monuments focusing on Macedonian antiquity, where the past of Macedonia is wholly integrated, without gaps, with the identities of the incipient state (as visualized, for example, by the efforts in Skopje’s central square),
- b) renaming of airports, stadiums and highways with names of Macedonian kings,
- c) funding of archaeological excavations by controversial archaeologists such as Pasko Kuzman, who was appointed head of the Cultural Heritage Protection Office and whose fundamental stance on the definitive solution to the naming dispute with Greece is that the modern Macedonians are the direct descendants of the ancient Macedonians,
- d) the linguistic re-interpretation of the “Rosetta Stone”⁸,
- e) invention of ancient Macedonian celebrations for the youth – such as “Ksantica” – which are linked to the equivalent ancient Macedonian performances, where the

⁶ D. LOWENTHAL, *Classical antiquities as national and global heritage*, in: “Antiquity” 62, 1988; S.L. MARCHAND, *Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1996; E. CHRYSOS (ed.): *Enas neos kosmos gennietai. H eikona tou ellinikou politismou sti germaniki epistimi kata ton 19^o aiona* (A new world is born. The image of Greek culture in German science in the 19th century), Athens, Akritas, 1996.

⁷ K. KOTSAKIS, *The powerful past: Theoretical trends in Greek archaeology*, in I. Hodder (ed.), *Archaeological theory in Europe*, London, Routledge, 1991, pp. 65-90; E. SKOPETEA, *To protipo vaseleio kai I megali idea: opseis tou ethnikou provlimatos stin Ellada (1830-1880)* (The model Kingdom and the Great Idea: aspects of the national problem in Greece (1830-1880)), Athens, Polytypo, 1988, pp. 175-189.

⁸ The Rosetta Stone is an inscribed stele of the Ptolemaic period discovered during the Napoleonic expedition to Egypt (1799). The stele included the same text of a decree written in three scripts: Ancient Egypt hieroglyphs, Demotic Egyptian and Ancient Greek. This fact enabled the transliteration of the Egyptian hieroglyphs by Jean-François Champollion in 1822. The authors of the linguistic project “Tracing the Script and the Language of the Ancient Macedonians” in FYROM concluded that one of the scripts of the Rosetta Stone was written in the ancient Macedonian language using a Demotic Macedonian script, despite the fact that linguists identify the text as Demotic Egyptian, see A. VANGELI, *Nation-building ancient Macedonian style: the origins and the effects of the so-called antiquization in Macedonia*, in “Nationalities Papers” vol. 39, n. 1 (2011), p. 20.

19th century mounted warrior with Balkan costume in the Ilinden parade is replaced by a mounted ancient Macedonian⁹.

Of course at the level of historiography, the move towards a new myth of descent which incorporates ancient Macedonia as the historical starting point of the nation is a lot older and had already acquired solid characteristics by the beginning of the 1990s, with the refusal of Greece to recognize the name and the symbols of the new country¹⁰ while since 2005 it had been seeping into the school history books. This move towards “antiquization” and “ancient Macedonianism” found support both with members of the academic community, resulting in its transfer to formal education, as well as with pseudo-scientists from the public sphere. For example, the most important differentiation noted in the new school books used from 2005 onwards, apart from the repeated principle of the perennial character of location and nation, is the connection of the Slavomacedonians with the ancient Macedonians and the imparting of the sense to students that they are the heirs and descendants of that culture¹¹. According to this particular historical narrative, found both in education and in public history, when the Slavs reached the region they adopted the name Macedonia and called themselves Macedonians, while the native Macedonians (*starosedelci*) accepted the Slavic language and script. From then onwards Macedonia and Macedonians are established and extant through the Middle Ages, the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and the modern era, always defending their highly-prized state from constant attack by others¹².

At a governmental level, the book that circulated in 2009 under the title “History of the Macedonian people” (also in English) by the Institute of National History, with Mitko Panov as the main author, shifts from the term “Hellenismus” – introduced by the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen¹³ to describe the culture that arises from Alexander onwards with the two way influences from the Oriental world – noting that this term was not used historically but politically, mainly by the first king of Greece, Otto, to homogenize the “dangerous mixture of Albanians, Macedonians, Vlachs and Turks in Greece”. So, instead of the term “Hellenismus” the aforementioned author

⁹ See *ivi*.

¹⁰ U. BRUNNBAUER, *Serving the nation: Historiography in the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) after socialism*, in “Historein” 4, 2003-2004, pp. 167-168.

¹¹ For example: K. ADŽIEVSKI, D. PETRESKA, V. AČKOSKA, N. DIMOVSKI, V. GJORGJIEV, *Istorija za V oddelenie*, Skopje, 2005, p. 4. See ST. MAVROGENI, *Makedoniki sarissa kai dikefalos aetos: ta nea sxolika egxeiridia tis p.G.D.M.* (Macedonian sarissa and double-headed eagle: The new textbooks F.Y.R.O.M.), in I. Stefanidis, Vl. Vlasidis, E. Kofos (eds.): *Makedonikes taftotites sto xrono. Diepistimonikes proseggiseis* (Macedonian Identities in time. Interdisciplinary approaches), Athens, Patakis, 2008, pp. 437-461.

¹² The victimization of the nation overtime constitutes the other characteristic historical myth of modern historiography in FYROM, according to U. BRUNNBAUER, *Serving the nation: Historiography in the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) after socialism*, in “Historein” 4, 2003-2004, pp. 168-169.

¹³ J.G. DROYSEN, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, Hamburg, 1836-1843.

proposes the term “Macedonianism” and “Alexandrianism”, and proceeds to stretch the limit of the connections of modern and ancient Macedonians. In this way, for the first time a conscious shift of the Institute’s stances can be observed, which up until recently had accepted the Slavic descent of the Macedonians of the region. This new stance of the Institute is recorded by Mitko Panov in the chapters about antiquity, the Slavic migration and the Byzantine Empire, where it is openly stated that the ancient Macedonians of the region continued to exist as a group which preserved its ethnic characteristics and traditions, even during the period of the great Slavic colonization and through the entire course of the Byzantine Empire. The departure from the previous stance of the Yugoslavian Institute is substantiated with the argument that the old historical stance was based on the desire of Belgrade and Athens to maintain cordial interstate relationships between the two respective countries. Thus we find ourselves faced with a similar process to the one that had taken place in Greece a few decades earlier in the region of Macedonia, through the attempt to homogenize the non-Greek speaking population groups (mainly the Slavic speaking ones), which was implemented through specific institutional interventions, prohibitions and practices¹⁴. Likewise in the case of FYROM over the last few years there has been implemented a conscious and formulated connection of the modern citizens of FYROM to the ancient Macedonian past.

On the other side of the border, the perception of Macedonian antiquity by modern Greece has the early 19th century as a starting point and follows a comparable yet different course. In the first decades after the foundation of the Greek state, ancient Macedonia constituted for Greek historians and intellectuals, a historical and ethnic “otherness”, and the Macedonian kings were thought to be the first of a long line of foreign conquerors of Greece (Romans, Franks, Ottomans)¹⁵, in the context, of course, of the formation of a national programme which exclusively sought a direct connection with the classical past, such as was the demand of contemporary European mind-

¹⁴ PH. CARABOTT, *The politics of integration and assimilation vis-à-vis the Slavo-Macedonian minority of inter-war Greece: From parliamentary inertia to Metaxist repression*, in P. Mackridge, E. Yannakakis (eds.): *Ourselves and others: The development of a Greek Macedonian culture identity since 1912*, Oxford-New York, Berg, 1997, pp. 59-78; J.K. COWAN, K.S. BROWN, *Introduction: Macedonian inflections*, in J.K. Cowan (ed.), *Macedonia. The politics of identity and difference*, London, Pluto Press, 2000, pp. 1-27; V. GOUNARIS, *Oi slavophonoi tis Makedonias* (The Slavophones of Macedonia), in K. Tsitselikis, D. Christopoulos (eds.), *To meionotiko fainomeno stin Ellada: Mia simvoli ton koinonikon epistimon* (The phenomenon of minorities in Greece: A contribution of social sciences), Athens, Kritiki, 1997, pp. 73-118; A. KARAKASIDOU, *Cultural illegitimacy in Greece: the Slavo-Macedonian «non-minority»*, in R. Clogg (ed.), *Minorities in Greece. Aspects of a plural society*, London, Hurst and Company, 2002, pp. 122-164.

¹⁵ A. POLITIS, *Romantika xronia: ideologies kai nootropies stin Ellada tou 1830-1880* (Romantic Years: ideologies and mentalities in Greece in 1830-1880), Athens, Etairia Meletis Neou Ellinismou - Mnimon, pp. 40-43; P. STATHIS, *Opseis tis diamorfofis tis ethnikis istoriografias stin Ellada ton 19^o aiona: I simvoli ton kathigiton tis istorias tou Panepistimiou Athinon* (Aspects of the formation of national historiography in Greece in the 19th century: the contribution of the professors of History of the University of Athens), in “Seminario” 17 - P.E.F., pp. 100-117.

sets¹⁶. In the second half of the 19th century Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos' enterprising unification, in his historiographical work on the historical course of the Greek nation from antiquity until the 19th century, through a tripartite scheme of historical continuity (antiquity, Byzantine/Medieval period, modern era), for the first time incorporated ancient Macedonia into the Greek cultural horizon at a time when in Europe as well ancient Macedonia was emerging from the academic wilderness, mainly through the historiographical work of Johann Gustav Droysen¹⁷. It is noteworthy that during the same period Greece also acquired a political interest in Macedonia through the ideological imperative of the "Great Idea" for the liberation of the unredeemed territories.

The greater part of Macedonia was finally incorporated into the Greek state in 1913. At that time however the contemporary political and ideological priorities were more focused on the management of the ethnic and linguistic multiformity of the area rather than further study of the ethnological and cultural relationship of ancient Greeks and ancient Macedonians. This latter process was accepted to a great extent to have already been covered by K. Paparrigopoulos and his successors. Also because of the political and military instability in the region during the first decades of its incorporation into the Greek state (the Balkan wars, 2nd World War, and subsequent Civil War), "Ancient Macedonia" as a research topic would be established much later when compared to the already formed research tradition for southern Greece. This mainly came about after the creation of the neighbouring Socialist Republic of Macedonia as an element of the formed Yugoslavian state (29th of November 1943, through the declaration of Jajce by Tito). In reality the research emphasis passed from the field of history to that of archaeology. There had been certain archaeological research projects, most of which were concerned with Byzantine heritage as a historical bridge of cohesion between northern and southern Greece. However it was the discovery of the royal tombs of Vergina by Manolis Andronikos in 1977 that was to prove the decisive turning point with regard to the perception of ancient Macedonia by the Greek side. The impressive findings at Vergina were immediately endowed with particular political, symbolic and ideological value, especially after 1991, when the state of FYROM was created. This would trigger an explosion of archaeological research oriented mostly towards antiquity. In this way, Greek archaeology in Macedonia has sought, over the past three decades, to provide the appropriate material evidence that would confirm the ethnic identity of the ancient Macedonians and the Greek character of their culture, adopting, as would be expected, the archaeological paradigm of the culture-historical approach, which – although theoretically outdated – is the most appropriate for these kinds of interpretations¹⁸.

¹⁶ K. KOTSAKIS, *The powerful past: Theoretical trends in Greek archaeology*, in I. Hodder (ed.), *Archaeological theory in Europe*, London, Routledge, 1991, pp. 66-67.

¹⁷ D. KIRTATAS, *Kataktonas tin arxaiotita* (Conquering antiquity), Athens, Polis, 2002, pp. 116-119.

¹⁸ K. KOTSAKIS, *The past is ours: images of Greek Macedonia*, in L. Meskell (ed.), *Archaeology under fire*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 44-67.

The collective volume “Macedonia. 4000 years of History and Civilization”¹⁹, came to function as a condensed geographical scale of the historical continuity of Hellenism, following the model that had been established a few years previously in the multi-volume work “History of the Greek Nation”. Lastly, a boom in the publishing of historical and archaeological studies (for example the proceedings of the yearly conference: Archaeological Work in Macedonia and Thrace), and also numerous exhibitions with historical-archaeological content in Greece and abroad (with the most recent being the archaeological exhibition in the Louvre: “Ancient Macedonia: In the Kingdom of Alexander the Great”) summarize the Greek response – both on an academic level as much as in the public sphere – to the arguments of the other side on the Greekness of the culture of Macedonia, and hence also on its ethnological composition in the past and in the present.

The preceding evidence possibly explains why the public monumentalization of Macedonian history was so delayed in Greece. The monumental presence of Macedonian antiquity in Greece can be conventionally categorized into three periods: a *first* one, which aims at homogenization (Alexander on the Seafront of Thessaloniki, busts of Alexander in all the schools in Macedonia and other regions, even in Crete), a *second* one which is related to the independence of FYROM and finally a *third* one which functions as an answer to the recent Macedonianism of the neighbouring state and is not confined within the narrow boundaries of Macedonia but extends to other areas too, such as Athens, Ioannina, Corinth and elsewhere.

3. *The statue of King Philip II in Thessaloniki*

The statue (Image 1), a work by the sculptor Georgios Nikolaidis, was erected in 1993 in the centre of Thessaloniki, at the junction of Nikolaos Germanos St. and Nikis Av., between the White Tower and the Society for Macedonian Studies. It is a bronze life-size statue of King Philip II of Macedonia set upon a granite pedestal approximately 1.5 metres high, facing towards the junction of the two streets. The pedestal bears an upper case inscription “Philip II King of the Macedonians” and below it the sixteen-ray “Macedonian star”²⁰. The king is depicted front facing, with a short tunic, sandals and a military cuirass, which typologically resembles the well-known finding from the excavation of the intact royal tomb of Vergina, which the excavator attributed to King Philip II²¹. In his right hand he holds a helmet (of Corinthian type) though he does not bear any other kind of weaponry. The sculptor seems to draw elements of the

¹⁹ M. SAKELLARIOU (ed.), *Makedonia. 4000 xronia istorias kai politismou* (Macedonia. 4000 years of history and culture), Athens, Ekdotiki Athinon, 1982.

²⁰ The “Macedonian star”, also known as “Vergina’s Star” or “Sun”, was a decoration motif commonly found in the material culture of ancient Macedonia.

²¹ M. ANDRONIKOS, *Vergina. Oi vasilikoi tafoi* (Vergina. The royal tombs), Athens, Ekdotiki Athinon, pp. 137-140.



Fig. 1. *The Statue of King Philip II in Thessaloniki, Greece*

individual facial characteristics from the ivory statuette found in the same tomb²². The blindness of his right eye is vividly portrayed, and also his limp leg, with the left knee having a different shape and size from the right, is especially noticeable in this particular statue of Philip as he does not wear greaves.

King Philip's statue in Thessaloniki was the first one devoted to him in Greece. But in the past 5 years a series of Philip's statues were placed in the municipality of Papaogos-Cholargos in Athens and the towns of Giannitsa and Methoni. It was erected during a particularly charged period, both politically and ideologically, with the "Macedonian issue" reaching fever pitch due to the issue of the founding and naming of the new neighbouring country. During the same period rallies were held affirming the Greekness of Macedonia and Manolis Andronikos – the excavator of the royal

tombs of Vergina – died and his funeral in 1992 assumed the characteristics of national mourning²³. It should be noted that the statue was made in the period 1988-1991 and there is a possibility that it was not initially designed for the uses that were essentially thrust upon it at the dawn of the 1990s. Nonetheless we know that the intention for the creation of a statue of Philip was extant since at least the 1960s, as is revealed by the correspondence of the combatant of the Macedonian Struggle and politician Georgios Modis, who, between 1965-1972, was the president of the fund raising committee for the construction and erection in Thessaloniki of the statues of Alexander the Great, Philip and Aristotle²⁴.

The statue enjoys a rather neutral and silent acceptance by the inhabitants of Thessaloniki. The only public discussion it initiated was a critique by professor Panagiotis Faklaris of the A.U.Th., a member of the research team at the University excavation of Vergina, about the location of placement for the statue, the use and rendition of the particular facial characteristics of Philip by the artist, the anti-heroic artis-

²² M. ANDRONIKOS, *Vergina. Oi vasilikoi tafoi* (Vergina. The royal tombs), Athens, Ekdotiki Athinon, pp. 126-129.

²³ Y. HAMILAKIS, *The Nation and its Ruins: Archaeology, Antiquity and National Imagination in Modern Greece*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 125-127.

²⁴ G.P. ARGYRIADIS, *Georgios Modis. O afigitis tou makedonikou agona* (Georgios Modis, The narrator of the Macedonian Struggle), Thessaloniki, 1991, p. 19.

tic depiction (on foot, not in war dress and in life-size), and also concerning the anachronisms and distortion of the archaeological evidence (the helmet type, the absence of straps for fastening the cuirass). In fact he believed that because of these problems the statue fails to serve either the obvious national goals of its erection or the reinforcement of historical memory²⁵. The artist himself also participated in this debate with an article in the newspaper “To Vima” and also the ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites) with a letter to the Municipality of Thessaloniki and the Technical Chamber of Greece. This letter reproduced Faklaris’ arguments and completely repudiated the concept of freedom in artistic creation, simplistically connecting the manner of depiction of a specific historical character to the memorial potential of an artwork.

Finally, due to the recent activity of the neighbouring country in the erection of their own sculptures of Philip and Alexander the Great, on websites of a nationalistic slant there is a lot of criticism on the slackness of Greece in this domain, contrasting the example of “modest” and pacifistic Philip of Thessaloniki with the monumental scale statue of the same historical figure in Bitola and the more recent and immense one in Skopje close to that of Alexander.

4. *The public monument of King Philip II in Bitola*²⁶

Philip’s public monument in Bitola was inaugurated on the 8th of September 2011 along with two other statues (in Skopje and Prilep), on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the incipient democracy. This programmatic public projection of historical memory included many highly interesting aspects and important characteristics which would be impossible to individually highlight and thoroughly analyze within the limited boundaries of this paper. They mainly relate to the colossal statue of Alexander the Great and the overall retrospection on the history of the identity of the Macedonians that takes place in Skopje’s central square. The choice of location for the statue in Bitola is quite deliberate. It is located at the end of the main pedestrian zone of the city which culminates at the main square (Magnolia), where also lie other important monuments such as two Muslim mosques and the clock tower, while 50 metres behind the square lies the cathedral of St. Demetrius, built by the Greek community of Bitola in 1830.

The public monument consists of a pedestal, an equestrian statue of Philip and a rest area with a fountain that in total cover 600 sq.m. The entire monument – pedestal and statue – stands 8.5 m high (Image 3). In front of it lies the city’s coat of arms, in

²⁵ P. FAKLARIS, *H thlipsi tou vasilia Filippou tou B'* (The sorrow of King Philip II), in “To Vima”, 23/7/2000.

²⁶ The first research at the location and recording of the monument where the pedestal was in place and the surrounding area was prepared, but without the equestrian statue, took place in June 2009.



Fig. 2. *The public monument of King Philip II in Bitola, FYROM*

the shape of a horse-shoe with meanders and three rows of triangles. The granite pedestal, with the steps, a short inclined base and the main base of the statue, bear ancient Greek decorative elements (tripartite molding, indented molding) and provides important information through an inscription on the rear side of the inclined base: it was erected during the mayoralty of Vladimir Taleski, the sculptor was Angel Korunovski and the architect Zlatko Tomski.

The inclined base bears on its other sides 8 inscriptions with the same text in 8 different languages: on its front side in Slavomacedonian and English²⁷ (these have been vandalized), on its left side in Albanian, Greek and Turkish, while on its right side in French, German and Italian. The text includes biographical information and praises not only Philip's political, diplomatic and military virtues but also his personality. The façade of the main part of the pedestal also bore a golden wreath, with a stylistic reference to the Wreath of Vergina and at some point had been vandalized, and in its final form the pedestal was covered with a slab of black granite. The two lateral sides each bear a helmet as an ornament, while the rear side remains undecorated.

²⁷ «Philip II Macedon, 382-336 BC. 18th Macedonian king from Argeads dynasty, born in Pella, son of Amyntas The III, father of Alexander III the Great. Ruled with Macedonia from 359 to 336 BC. Wise strategist, skilful diplomat, capable statesman, conquer, great army leader, reformer and unifier of Macedonian state, founder of its economic, political and especial military power, by creating a professional army, structuring, reorganizing and improving the Macedonian phalanx into main hit formation of infantry in tactical cooperation with cavalry. Founder of ancient city Heraeklea Lyncestis. "Europe never had a man like Philip, son of Amyntas" (Theopompus of Chios)».

The bronze of Philip is equestrian, following the famous example of Marcus Aurelius mounted on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, with his right arm extended towards the South and his gaze not corresponding to his arm but instead turned downwards to either the spectators or the earth of the homeland. He is without a helmet, but rather adorned with the royal diadem, he wears a military cuirass, a short tunic and a cloak. His sword is in its scabbard and his left hand is holding the reins of the frenzied horse, which appears to be halting abruptly with its front legs raised. A rock lies under the horse's belly, obviously for stabilization reasons. The four corners of the saddle cloth are decorated with rosettes that bear the "Vergina Sun".

Behind the monument lies a circular plaza with a fountain (Image 2). It is covered by a huge bronze Macedonian shield with eight rays, in which there are two rows of orifices from which the water springs in jets. The fountain is surrounded by benches for resting, painted in a bronze colour. Heraldically placed are four spears of the type used by ancient Macedonian (sarissas) with four shields decorated with the eight-ray star. The entire area of the monument with the fountain is framed by six huge spotlights also in a bronze colour, which contain sound systems that play symbolic music every night at nine o'clock for fifteen minutes accompanied by multiple lighting systems placed high and on the ground.

The monument – as became apparent from our research visits to the site – is accepted by the citizens and attracts visitors, but, as we have already mentioned, it also bears heavy marks of vandalism. It is a fact that the monument in question engenders many contradictions, as is the case with "Project Skopje 2014" the programme currently being undertaken in general. The multicultural society of FYROM, (with Slavomacedonians, Albanians, Turks, Roma, Serbians and possibly other very small minorities²⁸) appears to be searching for its roots in a uni-national ancient past, that of the ancient Macedonians, ignoring all the other minority groups, however, it does inform the two larger ones, the Albanian and the Turkish, through the translated texts in their respective languages.

The European orientation of the state is evident both by the choice of the English, French and German languages, into which the text has been translated, and by the fact that this concludes with a passage from the historian Theopompus from Chios with the phrase "Europe never had a man like Philip, son of Amyntas". The notorious uni-



Fig. 3. *The public monument of King Philip II in Bitola, FYROM*

²⁸ See chapters in J. PETTIFER (ed.), *The New Macedonian Question*, New York, Palgrave, 1999.

fictionation of the entire course of Macedonian history (something that has reached almost a Hollywood level of stage management in Skopje) occurs through the placing of Macedonian antiquity, as suggested by this particular monument, in the centre of the square between the two Muslim mosques and the Christian clock tower. At the same time, the choice of Philip is intrinsically linked to the fact that he is considered the founder of the neighbouring ancient city of Heraclea Lyncestis (3 km away from Bitola), a historical detail that is also noted in the multilingual inscriptions on the pedestal, thus bringing forth the local dimension of history through the monument under discussion.

5. *Discussion*

With this paper we sought to demonstrate the multiple and in general contradictory methods of reading the past in terms of the present and the political manipulation of history, either by the Slavomacedonians or the modern Greeks, through two cases of public monuments that express specific policies of memory. Undoubtedly it is a symbolic battle for history which began with the political confrontation over the name and identity of FYROM. This battle is engaged through modes of monumental expression and the political management of a past which engenders a particular symbolic value and carries an international resonance, such as the history of ancient Macedonia, although the two countries do not participate in this on the same terms.

A first general observation for both cases (Greece-FYROM) concerning the antiquization – monumentalization of public space, is related to the official administrative agencies who are in management of the past. In Greece, with very few exceptions during the dictatorship (Alexander's busts in schools) or some decisions on a municipal or community level, the manipulation of Macedonian antiquity was exercised by private agencies, associations (of retired military officers) or even individual political personas, and almost never by the state or the respective governments. In precise opposition to this lies the case of FYROM, where the monumentalization of the past and the management of collective memory constitute a conscious and programmatic part of the governmental policy of identities, which has as a core objective the direct connection of present day "ethnic Macedonians to the ancient Macedonians".

The revival of antiquity and the glorious past through the invention of national myths along with the unification of the entire timeline of Macedonia's past right up to its current historically unrecognized and degraded present by national leaders such as Nikola Gruevski and Georgi Ivanov seems to rouse the masses. This is especially clear when considering the two sweeping victories won by the nationalistic VMRO-DPMN party, the most recent being in 2011, while the hugely expensive "Project Skopje 2014" programme was in progress. However there are objections by esteemed members of society, who deem the term "antiquization" offensive and demeaning. So, for example, Professor Ljubomir Frčkoski, a candidate in the presidential election of 2009, described

“antiquization” as a highly toxic ideology and its supporters as vultures, while the activist for human rights Žarko Trajanoski characterized the entire aforementioned process as a gutter into which society is sinking. The same is true for the opposition, the SDMS party, which insists on a Slavic Macedonian version of identity²⁹. On the same issue interesting data has been provided from recent research by the Institute for Social Sciences and Humanities of Skopje regarding the government programme “Project Skopje 2014”, on the perception of the official narrative of history produced by it and its contribution to the perception or review of the national identity of the country’s citizens that are self-defined as ethnically Macedonians³⁰. According to the results of this research, there is a fundamental disagreement between the views on the national identity that the citizens of the country embrace and the version of “Macedonian identity” which is propagated by the state and the government through specific actions (statues, architecture, events). Moreover, unanimity has been observed among the different target research groups as to the distrust towards the attempt to incorporate ancient Macedonian history into the historical narrative of the “Project Skopje 2014” programme and also towards the overall aesthetic of the final result. Besides, as has already been noted in the case of Philip’s monument in Bitola, the attempt towards the monumentalization of Macedonian history is guilty of several contradictions regarding how it may be perceived by the country’s minority groups.

In Greece on the other hand, based on what we broached upon earlier, the matter of the Greekness of Macedonia enjoys almost universal acceptance and constitutes a non-negotiable historical reality for the modern Greeks, which is based on a consolidated historiographic proposition which traces its roots to the 19th century and is definitively confirmed by the archaeological finds of Vergina and other archaeological sites in the Greek part of Macedonia (Pella, Dion, Amphipolis and elsewhere). Behind this perception of course hides a solid belief in the genealogical and indissoluble relationship of the Greek past with the present. Considering the high importance which the past and especially classical antiquity hold in the conscience of the Greeks, one can see how it has decisively contributed to a one-dimensional approach revealed in phrases such as the “theft of our history” or the “counterfeiting of all that is sacred and holy” which has, to a great extent dominated the public discourse, especially in the 1990s. By comparison, FYROM’s efforts at the creation of an equivalent genealogical relationship between the present and the remote past are still in their incipient stages.

The preceding analysis of these particular public monuments, from the angle of history of art (choice of formal elements and style), politics (objective of erection) and also the social aspect (the public acceptance or rejection of the particular sculptures), sug-

²⁹ A. VANGELI, *Nation-building ancient Macedonian style: the origins and the effects of the so-called antiquization in Macedonia*, in “Nationalities Papers” vol. 39, n. 1 (January 2011), passim.

³⁰ K. KOLOZOVA, K. LECEVSKA, V. BOROVSKA, A. BLAZEVA, *Skopje 2014 Project and its Effects on the Perception of Macedonian Identity Among the Citizens of Skopje*, Skopje, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, 2013.

gests that the two statues of Philip II constitute loci of historical memory that have been invested with special commemorative and symbolic value. Further still that these are being utilized both as public events of celebration and reconstruction or affirmation, depending on the case, of national memory and identity just as much as being tools for the political manipulation of history. As is already noted the statue of Philip II in Bitola is part of the wider – in equal parts ambitious and controversial – political programme (“Project Skopje 2014”), accompanied by a number of memorial ceremonies that seek to highlight the ancient Macedonian origin of the modern country’s inhabitants. On the other hand, the statue of King Philip II in Thessaloniki was erected in a period when a series of demonstrations all over the country intended to manifest the unquestionable Greekness of the ancient Macedonia against the “current external threats” coming from abroad (FYROM). At the same time both monuments also constitute fields of conflict between different groups on the form and manners of representation of the symbolic value of the past, either concerning aspects of the accuracy of King Philip’s depiction (Thessaloniki) or the aesthetics of the statue in Bitola and its disharmony with the varied views on national identity shared by the citizens of FYROM.

Lastly, while both statues to a great extent draw stylistic elements from the archaeological finds of the “royal” tombs of Vergina, i.e. from the ancient Macedonian past itself, both the statues themselves and also the category of wider attempts at monumental appropriation of ancient Macedonia in which they belong demarcate two different versions of nationalism. Philip’s statue in Thessaloniki is part of an attempt in Greece to preserve the extant national culture against emerging challenges to national sovereignty. In the same context belongs the sudden boom of erecting statues of Philip and Alexander in the Greek occupied part of Macedonia and further afield within the country, all of them on a notably smaller scale than their “opponents” in FYROM. The respective statue in Bitola – as well as the wider programme “Project Skopje 2014” – is related to an emerging “extravert” nationalism of the nascent national state, which, as happened with many other states that arose from the dramatic changes following the collapse of the U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia, is seeking, through various means, to connote historically its territorial and political national sovereignty in a rapidly transforming world³¹. Both cases prove once again that the emphatic usage and exploitation of memory has serious consequences for the past and for history itself.

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³¹ P. CARRIER, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989*, New York, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2005, p. 179.

THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION IN THE 1950'S:
PUBLIC HISTORY, POLITICS AND HISTORIANS IN GREECE
AND PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

According to the traditional definition, the Macedonian Question, as an integral part of the Eastern Question, is associated with the political control of the geographical area of Macedonia. In the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, when the question first appeared and this region was part of the Ottoman Empire, the boundaries of this territory were the Nestos River on the east, the Shar Mountains on the north, the Lakes Ochrid and Prespa on the west and the Aliakmon River on the south. Three neighbouring states, Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece claimed this region in whole or in part using territorial, ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural arguments. In the end of the 19th century arguments were replaced by guns. Greek Macedonian fighters (Makedonomachoi), Bulgarian Comitadjis and Serbian Chetniks invaded Macedonia and organised various armed actions, the most notorious one being the uprising of Ilinden (St. Elias day, 1903). Gradually, the conflict evolved into an irregular war (1904-1908) which in Greece became known as 'The Macedonian Struggle'. In 1912, these States put aside their differences and formed the Balkan League in an attempt to take control of the region from the Ottomans. Bulgaria hoped to acquire all of geographical Macedonia. It attacked its former allies but was defeated in the Second Balkan War. After the Balkan Wars and the liberation of Macedonian territories, the ensuing Treaty of Bucharest in 1913 allocated the southern half of the region to Greece (Greek Macedonia), most of the northern half to Serbia, (later to Yugoslavia-Yugoslav Macedonia) and a much smaller portion to Bulgaria (Bulgarian Macedonia)¹.

As in WW I, in WW II Bulgaria occupied most of the territories of Yugoslav Macedonia and Eastern Greek Macedonia which had already been captured by the German forces. In the second session of the *Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia* (AVNOJ) in 1943, Yugoslav communists decided to create a federal Yugoslavia with six constituent republics. The same Council recognized the existence of a separate 'Macedonian Nation'. On August 1944, a similar body created by the communist partisans known as the *Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Macedonia* (ASNOM), proclaimed Yugoslav Macedonia as the Nation-State of 'Mace-

¹ E. KOFOS, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, New York, Caratzas Publisher, 1993²; B.C. GOUNARIS, *Macedonian Questions*, "Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies", 2/3(2002), 63-94.

donians' within Yugoslavia. The ASNOM adopted a manifesto according to which the new State, the People's Republic of Macedonia (PRM), would also incorporate Greek and Bulgarian Macedonia. After the rise of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to power, Belgrade was involved in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) supporting communist rebels and the secessionist Slavomacedonian movement in Northern Greece².

When the Greek Civil war was over, Yugoslavia moved on to normalise its relationship with Greece. Soon, the two countries joined an alliance in the framework of the Balkan Pact and, in 1959, they signed 12 bilateral agreements which resolved the major part of the issues existing between Greece and Yugoslavia. Soon the relationship between the two countries evolved to a crisis deriving from the Macedonian Question. The two countries did not manage to overcome the said crisis even after the December 1962 *Gentlemen Agreement* where they decided to «avoid any activity or action that could disrupt their relationship»³.

There is no doubt that the crisis was sparked by the different priorities set by the political leaderships of the two countries. Nevertheless, this kind of policy was not in 'vain'. The political leaders ought to have taken into consideration the domestic correlations formed. Various internal factors had taken it upon themselves to set the scene during the preceding period so that the reactions of the political leaders at the end of the decade were in full harmony with the common sentiment both in Greece and in Yugoslavia. The Media and various patriotic groups, either for ideological and political reasons, for communication or even for personal reasons, exerted pressure upon the two governments to adopt a different, usually stricter, policy on the Macedonian Question⁴.

What must, initially, be stressed is that each side attributed a different meaning to the Macedonian Question. Yugoslavia, in recognizing the 'Macedonians' as a separate Nation and creating a national State, changed the traditional definition of the Macedonian Question. In PRM, *Macedonianism* started to flourish, meaning the perception of the historicity of the Slavomacedonian Nation and a particular 'Macedonian' national identity. In this way, the Macedonian Question was no longer related to the political control of the Macedonian region but rather to questions of national identity⁵.

² J. LAMPE, *Yugoslavia as History. Twice there was a country*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 218-239; D. LIVANIOS, *The Macedonian Question. Britain and the Southern Balkans, 1939-1949*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2008; N. MARANTZIDIS, *Dimokratikos Stratos Elladas, 1946-1949* (Democratic Army of Greece, 1946-1949), Athens, Alexandria, 2010, p. 29-51.

³ K. KATSANOS, *To "anyparkto" zitima. I ellinoyugoslavikes sheseis kai to Makedoniko, 1950-1967* (The "Non Issue". The Greek-Yugoslav relations and the Macedonian Question, 1950-1967), Thessaloniki, Epikentro, 2013.

⁴ I. STEFANIDIS, *Pressure groups and Greek foreign policy, 1945-67*, Discussion Paper No. 6, Hellenic Observatory, London, London School of Economics & Political Sciences, 2001.

⁵ V. ROUDOMENTOF (ed.), *The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics*, Boulder: East European Monographs, 2000; R. PALMER, S. KING, *Yugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question*, Hamden, Archon Books, 1971; U. BRUNNBAUER, *Drevna nacionalnost i vjekovna borba za drzhavnost: Historiografski mitovi u Republici Makedoniji (BJRM)*, in H. KAMBEROVICH (ed.), *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu* (Historical myths in the Balkans), Sarajevo, Institut za istoriju, 2003, p. 291-328.

In this framework, Yugoslavia was asking Greece, as well as Bulgaria, to accept the solution imposed on the PRM. As far as the Slavic-speaking populations of Greece and Bulgaria were concerned, they were considered by Yugoslavia as ethnic minorities and, as such, Belgrade asked for them to be recognised as 'Macedonians'. The above activities were developed in the framework of the communist ideology as well as the perception enhanced during the civil war, that Greece was governed by 'monarch-fascists' and in any case opposing governments⁶.

For Greece, on the contrary, the Macedonian Question was considered as solved in 1913 with the Treaty of Bucharest and the marking of the borders in the area. Greek governments, which were faced with the revisionist policy of Bulgaria in the Interwar period and the separatist movements of the 1940s, regarded the Macedonian Question as a *security issue* of the Greek borders. This enhanced the slavophobic and anti-communist trend that reigned in Greece after the end of the Civil War. Athens, thus, regarded any request for recognition of a 'Macedonian minority' in the Greek State as a future loss of its territory. In addition, it supported the fact that those speaking the Slav language and had accepted the national identity cultivated in PRM, had already departed from the Greek territory in the 1940s. It must additionally be noted that in the identity issues of the population of Macedonian areas put forward by Yugoslavia, Greece called forth the *historical heritage* of the ancient Macedonian State and the timeless presence of Hellenism in the area⁷.

The main characteristic of the Greek-Yugoslavian relations in the 1950s was the secret diplomacy exerted on the Macedonian Question. Talks between the representatives of both countries took place away from publicity lights and, whenever the governments deemed necessary, the content of the negotiations leaked out into the Greek and Yugoslavian press and provoked the relevant reactions. Consequently, the public rebuttal of the arguments of the opposing side concerning the *historic background* of the 'Macedonian' Nation and the *historic heritage* of Hellenism in the area were undertaken by particular pressure groups and various patriotic organisations⁸.

In the PRM defence of the Slavomacedonian positions on the Macedonian Question was allotted to the *Institute of National History* (Институт за Национална Историја) which was founded on the 1st of August 1948 by decision of the government. Its purpose was «the discovery, collection and preservation of material, documentation and all other records that concerned the history of the Macedonian people, minorities and ethnic groups that live alongside it»⁹. Nevertheless, for nearly a decade

⁶ K. KATSANOS, *To Makedoniko Zitima, 1950-1967: I giougkoslaviki optiki*, I. KOLIOPOULOS, M. IAKOVOS (ed.), *To Makedoniko zitima sta ksena arxeia* (The Macedonian Question in foreign archives), Athens, Militos, 2008, p. 23-120; Tc. MARINOV, *La question macédonienne de 1944 á nos jours*, Paris, Edition L'Harmattan, 2010 (Slavomacedonian version: Id, *Makedonskoto prashanie od 1944 do denes. Komunizmot i nachionalizmot na Balkanot*, Skopje, Foundation Open Society, 2013).

⁷ KATSANOS, *To "anyparkto" zitima...*, *op. cit.*

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *Godishno Sobranie na Institutot za Natsionalna Istorija* (The Annual Assembly fo the Institute of National History), "Glasnik na INI", 1 (1957), 315.

the Institute faced a series of problems and its work was of no significance. Up to 1952 it did not employ a historian, in 1956 the number of historians employed was six and the number escalated to thirteen at the end of the decade¹⁰. As a result of this, the refutation of the Greek position on the Macedonian Question was taken on by the *Union of Refugees from Aegean Macedonia* (Здружение на Бегалците од Егејска Македонија). The Union had been founded in the summer of 1950 from refugees who had left Greece during the 1940s. Its aim was to organise the twenty thousand refugees who had taken refuge in Yugoslav Macedonia and to work towards the conservation of their culture and the resolution of their economic and social problems¹¹.

Several such organisations in Greek Macedonia had preceded the founding of the Union of Refugees. These Organisations, like the *Associations of the Refugees from Manastir* (today Bitola), *Strumnitsa and Krushevo*, were founded in the Interwar period and were reinforced during the German-Bulgarian Occupation period and the Civil War. Their members, many of whose predecessors had taken part in the armed conflicts in the beginning of the 20th century in Macedonia, relived once again actively the role of the Macedonian fighter due to the danger of Macedonian territorial loss. Simultaneously, they undertook the role of the guard of the social status quo of Greece due to the rise of the communist movement in the same period¹². The most important of these organisations was the *Society for Macedonian Studies* (Εταιρεία Μακεδονικών Σπουδών) which was founded in 1939. According to its constitutional charter, its purpose was the «research of all and any matter concerning the Macedonian People and, in particular, the collection, recording, conservation, studying and publication of linguistic, folkloric, historical, archaeological and popular art material in the Macedonian Country»¹³.

Both Greek and Slavomacedonian patriotic organisations had common characteristics. The Society for Macedonian Studies and other such organizations were manned by refugees who originated from regions of North Macedonia and had settled in Greece during the Interwar period when their birth places had been integrated in Yugoslavia. Amongst them was Alexandros Letsas, whose origin was from Vogatsiko, today Greece, and had studied in Manastir as well as Christoforos Naltsas from Krushevo, for them the «defending the history of Macedonia was the only field wherein they could find the justification and the moral satisfaction that war and diplomacy had

¹⁰ *Glasnik na INI*, 2 (1958), 263.

¹¹ I. MICHAILIDIS, *Slavomakedones politikoï prosfyges sti Yugoslaviki Makedonia*, in B. GOUNARIS, I. MICHAILIDIS (ed.), *Prosfyges sta Valkania: Mnimi kai ensomatosi* (Refugees in the Balkans: Memory and integration), Athens, Patakis, 2004, p. 52-69.

¹² B. GOUNARIS, *Egnosmenon Koinonikon Fronimaton. Koinonikes kai alles opseis tou antikommounismou sti Makedonia tou Emfyliou Polemou* (Social and other Aspects of Anticommunism in Macedonia during the Greek Civil War), Thessaloniki, Epikentro, 2002.

¹³ N. MERTZOS, K. PLASTIRAS, *Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon. Hroniko 1939-2007* (The Society for Macedonian Studies: Chronicle 1939-2007), Thessaloniki, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 2007, p. 16.

denied them»¹⁴. Respectively, the Union of Refugees and a large number of the employees of the National History Institute were constituted from Slavomacedonian refugees who had established separatist action in Greece during the Occupation and Civil War period. Such old well-known members of the autonomist movement in Greece were Naum Peyov and Todor Simovski, first and second, respectively, president the Union of Refugees. Other such well-known members of the Slavomacedonian National Liberation Front (Slovenomakedonski Narodno Osloboditelen Front) from the period of the Civil War were those Mihail Keramidzhiev, Vangel Ajanovski-Oche and Paschal Mitrovski as well as the teacher Christo Antonovski. Defeated and uprooted from their birth land, refugees from Greek Macedonia tried to achieve in the PRM, by manipulating history, the justification of their fight¹⁵.

The second common element regarded their dedication to the National State and the existing ideology. The staff of Greek patriotic organisations had an unquestionably Greek conscience and had fought for the integration of their homelands into the Greek National State. Parallely, they had developed an anti-communist activity during the 1940s. The Society for Macedonian Studies took part in the manifestations for of the Greek territorial claims like the *Panhellenic Conference of National Claims*, which took place in Thessaloniki from the 25th to the 28th of October 1945. The speeches of Spilpon Kyriakidis, Vassilios Vogiatzis, Dimitris Kakkavos, and Ioannis Vogiatzidis at the conference inaugurated serial edition entitled “National Library” published by the Society for Macedonian Studies. The members of the Society for Macedonian Studies requested the accession to Greece of the southern areas of Yugoslav Macedonia¹⁶. The same views were later on expressed by Naltsas, characterising these areas as an «unforgettable» and «very Greek part of Hellenism»¹⁷. Respectively, the leadership of the PRM patriotic organisations had aligned themselves in favour of the Slavomacedonian National Idea during the same decade and had fought for the incorporation of their homelands in the ‘Macedonian’ National State. Their pursuit thrived in the framework of the Communist Party in Énterwar and Civil War period in Greece. The Union of Refugees supported that «in the Balkans there are no three different States with the name of Macedonia and three different Macedonian peoples, but, rather, only one country with the name of Macedonia which

¹⁴ B. GOUNARIS, *‘EAMovoulgaroi kai Makedonomachoi’: Ideologikes kai alles ventetes sti Makedonia tou Emfyliou Polemou*, in I. NIKOLAKOPOULOS, A. RIGOS, G. PSALIDAS (ed.), *O Emfylios Polemos: Apo ti Varkiza sto Grammo, Fevrouarios 1945-Avgoustos 1949* (Greek Civil War: From Varkiza to Grammos, Februar 1945-August 1949), Athens, Themelio, 2002, pp. 233-245.

¹⁵ I. MICHAILIDIS, *“Monarhofasistes” kai Slavomakedones agonistes: Ideologikes kai alles vendetes sti Makedonia tou Emfyliou Polemou*, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-232; E. KOFOΣ, *The Impact of the Macedonian Question on Civil Conflict in Greece (1943-1949)*, Athens, Hellenic Foundation for Defense and Foreign Policy, 1989; S. SFETAS, *Autonomist Movements of the Slavophones in 1944: The Attitude of the Communist Party of Greece and the Protection of the Greek-Yugoslav Border*, “Balkan Studies”, 36/2 (1995), pp. 297-317.

¹⁶ L. HASIOTIS, *Prosfygikes omades kai eksoteriki politiki: I periptosi ton Boreiomakedonon*, GOUNARIS, MICHAILIDIS (ed.), *op. cit.*, 232-252.

¹⁷ C. NALTSAS, *I sovietiki politiki kai o ellinismos* (The Soviet Policy and Hellenism), Thessaloniki, 1954, p. 16.

compiles ethnic, economic and historic unity and one Macedonian people which was partitioned due to the power of the Balkan bourgeoisie»¹⁸. In this context, the geographical part Macedonia which had been incorporated to Greece in 1913 was referred to as 'Aegean part of Macedonia' or 'Aegean Macedonia' and was seen upon as an unredeemed part of 'Macedonian Homeland'. Peyov supported that «we Macedonians from the Aegean and Pirin [Bulgarian] part of Macedonia confront Socialist Yugoslavia as our country»¹⁹. The same point of view was voiced by the editors of the magazine published by the Union of Refugees. In an article on the "Republic Day" it was concluded that the 29th of November, which was socialist Yugoslavia's national holiday, «is connected to the establishment of the PRM. Thus, it is also the [national] day of the Macedonians from the Aegean Macedonia, since in one part of our country the Macedonian Nation, which constitutes a guarantee for our unification, exists and is developing»²⁰.

A third common element was the constitution of these organisations as a local elite. The members of the Society for Macedonian Studies and even those of other organisations «constituted a wealthy, upper class social group of civil officers, instructors and merchants, [...] which established themselves at the top of the social pyramid of Thessaloniki and other such cities of Greek Macedonia». Honorary member of the Society for Macedonian Studies was the Greek King who often took part in its activities. Its members were also Konstantinos Karamanlis, Prime Minister of Greece (1956-1963), Georgios Modis, Florina Parliamentary Member from Manastir, the academician and president of the Athens Academy Antonios Keramopoulos, the Dean of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Antonios Sigalas, professors of the Aristotle University Stilpon Kyriakidis, Apostolos Vakalopoulos and others²¹. Respectively, the members of the Union of Refugees and the Institute of National History had developed their own cliental network in PRM. They set up a team which controlled the resources designated for the relief of the refugees in PRM and took care of their ideological and patriotic education as well as for their incorporation in the Organisations of the Communist Party of Macedonia. The leadership of the Union of Refugees acted as a mediator between the refugees and the government of the PRM. Simultaneously, it was responsible for the allocation of houses which had began to be built in various cities of the PRM since 1951. Peyov and Keramidzhiev held governmental positions in the local government of the PRM, Antonovski and Simovski initially worked in the Union of Refugees and later in the Institute of National History. The politician Lazar Mojsov and University professor Ljuban Lape, as well as others, worked in the same Institute, which constituted the main source of nationalistic ideology production²².

¹⁸ In "Glas na Egejcite", 8 December 1951.

¹⁹ In "Glas na Egejcite", Novembar 1953.

²⁰ In "Glas na Egejcite", Novembar 1953

²¹ GOUNARIS, *op. cit.*, p. 234-236, 241-242, MERTZOS, PLASTIRAS, *op. cit.*, p. 13-14.

²² MICHAILIDIS, "Monarhofasistes" kai Slavomakedones agonistes: Ideologikes kai alles vendetes sti Macedonia tou Emfiliou Polemou, *op. cit.* pp. 222-232.

The fourth common element had to do with the strong relations that had been contracted by the managers of the patriotic organisations with the authorities. The power of the Greek Organisations exceeded the narrow boundaries of Thessaloniki since they offered access to different centres of power in the Capital, including the Palace, the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Respectively, the members of the Union of Refugees and the Institute of National History were simultaneously members of the Communist Party of Macedonia and occupied important positions in the State mechanism and the Government of PRM²³. Exactly this connection to the centres of power, established in the particular organisations both the political support and the necessary economic resources of their activities. The Greek government provided the resources for the erection of the buildings of the Society of Macedonian Studies which, even today, dominates the centre of Thessaloniki. It also provided the economic means for the realisation of its aims. In addition, it instituted a special tax, the so called 'Macedonian tax' (*Makedonosimo*) so that it could support economically the Society's work and well as other Greek-Macedonian organisations. The above support established the then Prime Minister Karamanlis as a great benefactor of the Society. The Union of Refugees also had the economic support of the government of the PRM. Its offices and travel expenses of its staff to various cities of Yugoslavia were covered by the State budget. The newspaper *The Voice of the Aegeans* (Глас на Егејците) published by the Union of Refugees which dealt with various editions concerning Greek Macedonia was printed in the State printing house and, thus, the State budget provided the necessary economic resources for the salaries of the staff and, in general, the functioning of the Institute of National History²⁴.

Finally, the distinction of the members of patriotic organisations in the local elite ensured them with unimpeded access to the media of both countries. Their views on various historical issues were hosted in the pages of local newspapers of *Thessaloniki* (Θεσσαλονίκη) and *Macedonia* (Μακεδονία) in Greek Macedonia and in the Party newspaper *Nova Makedonija* (Нова Македонија) and other publications in PRM. Namely, research studies on the historical evolution of the area circulated through the daily press and had multiple effects. Also, the constitutions of these organisations provided for the creation of branches in various cities that were inaugurated ceremoniously. These branches organised the local elite of various cities of Greek and Yugoslav Macedonia respectively and promoted, on a local level, the ideas and work of patriotic organisations.

The above mentioned patriotic organisations organised the popularisation of national narrative through the leaflets they published. The Society for Macedonian Studies had started to publish, since 1940, the magazine entitled *Makedonika* (Μακεδονικά). Its intention was the promotion of the «Greek character and civilisa-

²³ KATSANOS, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-301, 332-344.

²⁴ K. KATSANOS, *Veligradi-Skopje, Athina-Thessaloniki gia ti Makedonia* (Belgrade-Skopje, Athens-Thessaloniki for Macedonia), Thessaloniki, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 2009.

tion» of Macedonia. It referred to the «truly great contribution of the Macedonians in the liberation of the Nation», which «for years has not been sufficiently exalted by our historians». For this reason, the need «for total commitment in the research work for Macedonia must be made so that it may take, scientifically, the place it befits it in the history of the Nation» was accentuated. In the framework of this effort the publication of the *Makedonika*, which hosted articles that were associated «directly or indirectly with the life and history of Macedonia and the Macedonian people» was enhanced²⁵.

On the other side of the boundaries there was significant delay. It wasn't until September 1950 that the Union of Refugees published a magazine entitled "The voice of the Aegeans" which circulated until May 1954. The aim of this magazine was to denote the fight of «the Macedonian people of the Aegean part of Macedonia» and, in particular, «its active participation in the Ilinden Uprising for the liberation of Macedonia», a fight against «the dismemberment of Macedonia» after the Balkan wars, but also their fight on the side of «the Communist Party of Greece against fascism and, later, against the Greek bourgeoisie»²⁶. A little later, in 1958, the "Messenger of the National History Institute" ("Гласник на ИНИ") was added to the publications that popularised the official version of the history. The introductory text of the edition stated that the magazine's aim was the unification of the attempts of the Slavomacedonian historiography for the «revelation of a past that had been forged for decades from different sides». The editorship considered the "Messenger" as «a multiple guide for the historic truth of the fate of our people with all their adventures and fights»²⁷. It's characteristic that both magazines were published in their local language. They tried, in this way, to teach their new history to the residents of both countries.

The aim of the Society for Macedonian Studies which was the promotion of the Greek character and civilisation of Macedonia seemed feasible. At the time, the Ancient Macedonians were considered a Greek tribe both internationally and in the PRM. In this early period of Slavomacedonian nationalism, the Slavomacedonians accepted their Slavic identity and did not try to embody the history of Ancient Macedonia into their own history. Also, the Slavomacedonian historiography, influence by Marxism, considered the Nation a produce of capitalism. As a result, the history of Macedonia, and the Medieval Period to a point, remained outside the framework of the conflict. Anyhow, in the 1950's, the only congruent narration on the History of the 'Macedonian' Nation was that of Lazar Kolishevski in the first congress of the Communist Party of Macedonia, in December 1948, entitled "The Unity of the Labour and the National-liberating Movement in the historical evolution of the Macedonian people"²⁸. In as opposed to Ancient and Medieval history, the history of the Macedonian

²⁵ *Prolegomena*, in "Makedonika", 1 (1940), pp. IV-VII.

²⁶ In "Glas na Egejcite", 1 September 1950.

²⁷ "Glasnik na INI", 1 (1958), 5-6.

²⁸ L. KOLISHEVSKI, *Aspekti na makedonskoto prashanje* (Aspects of the Macedonian Question), Skopje, Kultura, 1962, pp. 9-106. The three volumes *History of the Macedonian Nation* circulated a few years later, in 1969.

Question was, from the beginning, in the centre of all patriotic organisation's activities, because was closely connected both with the private and public history of those people. It was necessary for the fights which had convulsed Macedonia at the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th to be recorded and exhibited. The portraits of the heroes of these fights had to be painted and added to the list of people who had lost their lives for the national idea.

In the case of Greece, the fight for remembrance was but another aspect of the anti-communist and anti-slavic struggle of Hellenism which continued despite the political developments and the allied relations which had been established between Greece and Yugoslavia. An important member of the Society of Macedonian Studies, Naltsas, had supported that «every Greek [...] must not forget that the fight of the Slavs against Hellenism goes on until today»²⁹. The same opinion was expressed by the academician Keramopoulos. He had accused the 'southern' Greeks who determined Greece's politics and «easily accepted Greece as a debtor to the insatiable Slavs rather than as creditor». A while later, in 1962, Basil Laourdas supported that the Macedonian Struggle had terminated

temporarily, because in other forms and other means the Macedonian Struggle still continues and will continue for a long time, with the same aim which is the Slav's desire to pass through Macedonia to the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean and with the same always heroic resistance and defense of the entire Hellenism.

The message was clear: the Greek 'North' ought to «be aware», as it had done in former times, to the «insatiable Slavs», the ranges of which included, naturally, the Yugoslavs³⁰.

In the PRM, respectively, this struggle had anti-Greek characteristics and was connected to the communist ideology. The meaning of bourgeoisie and the working class, of Socialism and Marxism, were prominent in the phraseology of the "Voice of the Aegeans" and later of the "Messenger". In the inaugurating assembly of the Union of Refugees in the summer of 1950, the refugees conveyed their «revolutionary regards» to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and comrade Tito³¹. A few years later, when Greece and Yugoslavia were ally countries, the "Voice of the Aegeans" supported that the Greek government was made up of «the most reactive and bought elements» and that it «came to power due to armed violence». It believed that «Greek bourgeoisie could not continue living at the cost of its people. At the time when it should have given up its place to its people so they could become masters of their fate, it (the bourgeoisie) accepted to become the servant of the great imperialistic powers

²⁹ H. NALTSAS, *I sinthiki tou Aghiou Stefanou kai o Ellinismos* (Treaty of San Stefano and Hellenism), Thessaloniki, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1953, p. 3 and 91.

³⁰ In "Nea Alitheia", 20 and 21 Septembar 1954; V. LAOURDAS, *Makedonika analekta* (Macedonian Analekta), Thessaloniki, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1980, pp. 44-45.

³¹ In "Glas na Egejcite", 1 September 1950.

against its people»³². The perceptions for the future of the ‘Homeland’ were respective. The aim of the Union of Refugees was «to work for a wider and a more massive participation of all its members in the socialist reconstruction of our [Yugoslavia] country»³³. Simultaneously, viewpoints of «unliberated parts of the Homeland» were cultivated. According to the “Voice of the Aegeans”, Greece «was afraid of the unsubdued Macedonians and it reminded people that history had taught that a liberating war could destroy the artificial borders of a State»³⁴.

Beyond the cultivation of anti-Slav or anti-Hellenic and anti-communistic or pro-communistic climate, the patriotic organisations worked towards the promotion of the history of their fight and towards the incorporation of this fight in the national history. In Greece various popularised editions had already been published during the Civil War, where they set, among other matters, the issue of border change at the expense of Yugoslavia³⁵. Respective activity had been developed on the other side of the borders, mainly through the newspaper “Nova Makedonija”. Additionally, the “Voice of the Aegeans” started to publish articles in every edition concerning the «Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia» which proved to be the base for the first books on the ‘Aegean Macedonia’³⁶. A few years later, in 1954, the Institute of National History printed Mojsov’s study, *On the Question of the Macedonian national minority in Greece*. The author supported that the ‘Macedonians’ had refused to be absorbed by its neighbouring countries. As regards Greece specifically, despite any demographic changes, «a few thousand Macedonian populations» remained in the «Aegean Macedonia» when it came into Greek jurisdiction. It described the politics of Athens as «a politics of prosecutions and denationalisation» with confined results since, on Greek ground, ‘Macedonian’ populations remained compact. Mojsov did not believe these populations to be «an isolated ethnic islet» but rather a «part of the Macedonian people», with which there was a connection, both historically and geographically³⁷.

The question of continuity has acquired a crucial importance in the construction of history. The patriotic organisations undertook to coordinate the fragmentary compilation of proof and historic testimonies by which they activated the mechanisms they had. Greek organisations had, since 1950, tried to exhibit the continuation of the history of Macedonia from antiquity until the current era, mainly, though, the recent past

³² In “Glas na Egejcite”, January 1954.

³³ In “Glas na Egejcite”, 1 September 1950.

³⁴ In “Glas na Egejcite”, January 1954.

³⁵ B. GOUNARIS, *To Makedoniko zhitima apo ton 19^o eos ton 21^o aiona: Istoriografikes proseggiseis* (The Macedonian Question from the 19th to the 20th century: Historiographical Approaches), Athens, Alexandria, 2010, pp. 66-88.

³⁶ H. ANDONOVSKI, *Egejska Makedonija* (Aegean Macedonia), Skopje, Institut za natsionalna istorija, 1951; D. ZOGRAFSKI, *Egejska Makedonija vo nashata natsionalna istorija* (Aegean Macedonia in our National History), Institut za natsionalna istorija, Skopje, 1951.

³⁷ L. MOJSOV, *Okoly prashanieto na makedonskoto nachionalno malchinstvo vo Grecija* (On the Question of the Macedonian national minority in Greece), Skopje, Institut za natsionalna istorija, 1954.

which involved the struggle Hellenism had given during the period 1904-1908. In its announcement on New Year's Day in 1950, the Society of Macedonian Studies had underlined that

forty years will soon be completed since Macedonia was freed and still no concern has been taken so that busts and statues have been placed of those men who glorified Macedonia and whose names are on the rolls of World history. Primarily, we are referring to the great Macedonians Philip II and Alexander the Great and the philosopher Aristotle³⁸.

In the same year Modis, in his book *The Macedonian Struggle and Macedonian leaders* published by the Society of Macedonian Studies, noted that «Macedonian history is unknown in general and unacknowledged. It is *terra incognita*, particularly the last years of the Ottoman empire, when the so called 'Macedonian Struggle' took place». For Modis the Macedonian Struggle had to do with «Bulgarian treachery and greediness» with an aim to Macedonia and the Aegean. Meanwhile, he noted the «undisguised Yugoslavian megalomania to claim with a lion's appetite and amazing conjurer the same heritage and spoils»³⁹. The history was considered as the most appropriate method for the confrontation of these claims. Those attempts had already started at the beginning of the decade when the Minister of Northern Greece Leonidas Iasonidis asked all the Prefectures of Macedonia to collect and register documentation of the Macedonian Struggle and to send it to the Society for Macedonian Studies⁴⁰. The compilation of this material though, with an aim of the writing of an official history of the struggle delayed and in 1953 the professor Vakalopoulos ascertained that it was «truly sad» that, contrary to the Bulgarians, the Greeks had scarcely written anything on the Macedonian Struggle⁴¹.

The same 'void' in bringing the Struggle of the 'Aegean Macedonians' to the forefront was noted in the PRM. According to the leader of the organisation Naum Peyov «we do not have a full view of the victims and the material damage that our people suffered and this is one part of our national history with which our youngsters must be acquainted [...]. Memoirs must be written, victims registered and, in a professional manner, brochures and books must be written»⁴². So that the historic evidence may be collected, the leadership of the organisation prepared a special questionnaire and distributed it through the branches of the Union all over the country. The aim was to write a book which would substantiate and popularise the fight of the 'Macedonians' in

³⁸ MERTZOS, PLASTIRAS, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

³⁹ G. MODIS, *Makedonikos agon kai makedones archigoi* (Macedonian Struggle and Macedonian Leaders), Thessaloniki, 1950, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, p. a, 140.

⁴⁰ GOUNARIS, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁴¹ A. VAKALOPOULOS, *Georgios Modis, Makedonikos Agon kai Makedones arhigoi*, in "Makedonika" 2 (1953), pp. 784-785.

⁴² In "Glas na Egejcite", 17 June 1951.

Greece during the period 1940-1951. A year later, the leaders of the Union noted a great delay in the compilation of the material. Notifying the committees of the branches, the Union asked for their immediate and conscientious response in this «highly patriotic obligation»⁴³. Simultaneously, it requested the compilation of historical evidence which could be exhibited in the museum of the National Liberation Struggle which would be founded in Skopje and which would be about the 'Aegean Macedonia'⁴⁴.

Thus, the inauguration of the Museum took place in the context of the 50th jubilee festivities from the Uprising of Ilinden (1903). The manifestations which took place in the summer of 1953 in the country were organised by the official authorities of the PRM. The newspaper "Nova Makedonija" compared the uprising to the French Revolution, the Commune of Paris and the October Revolution in Russia. It also noted that the ideals of the Uprising of Ilinden were fulfilled 40 years later, when the «Macedonian people succeeded in acquiring its national freedom, the organisation of its national State and, today, the building of socialism»⁴⁵. In the Museum of History the exhibits were propaganda of the ideology of 'unified Macedonia'. Amongst other exhibits there was a map of 'Greater Macedonia', the boundaries of which included Greek Macedonia which was referred to as the 'Aegean Macedonia'⁴⁶.

From their part, the 'Aegeans' took care to display their contribution in the Uprising of Ilinden. Evidence from the history of the 'Aegean Macedonia' was hosted in the Museum of History while the incorporation of the region in the wider area of the 'united Macedonia' reflected in a symbolic manner the official integration of the area to the 'National Macedonian areas'. Articles in various newspapers recorded the revolutionary actions which had been displayed in the areas of Greek Macedonia in 1903. *Nova Makedonija* wrote about the conflicts which had taken place in the area of Kastoria. The *Voice of the Aegeans*, from its side, noted that «Aegean Macedonia ardently paid its taxes in the Uprising of Ilinden. It sacrificed its best sons, the messengers of the idea for a free Macedonia». The Uprising of Ilinden was combined to National Liberation Struggle during the World War II and the creation of the PRM. «This People's Republic of Macedonia is the biggest hope and guarantee for the fulfilling of the ideals and the Macedonians from the other two parts of Macedonia [Greek and Bulgarian]», supported the "Voice of the Aegeans"⁴⁷.

⁴³ In "Glas na Egejcite", 1 May 1952.

⁴⁴ Archives of the FYROM, Central Committee of the Union of Refugees from Aegean Macedonia, Ê/92, 7 July 1952.

⁴⁵ In "Nova Makedonija", 2 August 1953.

⁴⁶ In "Nova Makedonija", 2 August 1953. This particular map was designed by Bulgarian nationalists and published by the Macedonian Institute in Sofia, in 1933. The same map, showing the «ethnic and geographical boundaries of Macedonia», reproduced in Skopje, E. KOFOS, *The Vision of "Greater Macedonia"*, Thessaloniki, Museum of the Macedonian Struggle, 1993; I. MICHAELIDIS, *Macedonianism: FYROM's Expansionist Designs against Greece, 1944-2006*, Thessaloniki, Ephesus, 2007, pp. 22-25.

⁴⁷ In "Glas na Egejcite", August 1953.

Respectively, activities in Greek Macedonia were much the same. In the festivities for the Uprising of Ilinden, the Greek side projected the festivities for the death of the officer of the Greek Army Pavlos Melas, whose death is regarded in Greece that marked the beginning of the Macedonian Struggle (1904). These festivities brought together the political and intellectual elite of Greek Macedonia. The Municipality of Thessaloniki, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Society for Macedonian Studies and other patriotic organisations played an active role. The Mayor of Thessaloniki Athanassios Kazinaris connected the Macedonian Struggle to the general course of the Greek Nation towards its liberation and paralleled it to the Revolution of 1821 noting, «it is due to it [struggle] that Macedonia was liberated»⁴⁸. The festivities in honour of the Macedonian Struggle were appointed to the 27th October so that they may be celebrated at the same time as the liberation of Thessaloniki (1912). The absence of the Royal Couple from the festivities was, naturally, very annoying although it did not reduce their significance. The stories of Macedonian fighters started to be, once again, published in newspapers since «their actions and their graves constitute an eternal mortgage for the future of Hellenism. The mortgage that Macedonia has been Greek for thousands of years and belongs, and always will belong, to Greece». The festivities for the 50 years since the beginning of the Macedonian Struggle were accompanied by the unveiling of the busts of Macedonian fighters which, in Thessaloniki, were situated near the statue of King Konstantinos for symbolic reasons⁴⁹.

Naturally, these manifestations were confronted aggressively on the other side of the border. In Greece they were regarded as Bulgarian manifestations since the inhabitants of the PRM were thought to be «crypto-Bulgarians»⁵⁰. The militant newspaper of Thessaloniki “Ellinikos Vorras” referred to the «audacious and unrepentant Bulgarians of Skopje». It criticised the celebrations for the anniversary of the «pseudo-Bulgarian revolution» of Ilinden «in the filthy, barbaric villages of southern Yugoslavia» and wondered «why do these Yugoslavians want these things which make a fool out of themselves?»⁵¹. Relevant view as had been expressed by the MP Panagiotis Giokas, who had noted that «the Slavs appeal to their historical achievements in the cultural sector of the Ancient Macedonians, one of the bravest Greek tribe, constitutes a falsification»⁵². Similar to this was “Nova Makedonija”’s reaction. Skopje’s newspaper noted that

through the organisation of the so-called fiftieth anniversary of the Macedonian Struggle the Greek official circles and the Greek Press in particular have shown a lively movement with one aim at hand: to display all those who, with their weapons, have caused destruction to Aegean Macedonia, all those who slaughtered children and killed old people. [...] It was one more occasion where for one more time, who knows which

⁴⁸ In “Nea Alitheia”, 6 July 1954.

⁴⁹ In “Nea Alitheia”, 27 October 1954.

⁵⁰ In “Ellinikos Vorras”, 4 December 1954.

⁵¹ Katsanos, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-32.

⁵² In “Ellinikos Vorras”, 14 October 1960.

one, it tried to show that Aegean Macedonia is more Greek than Athens itself and to have it noted publicly and openly that Macedonians do not have a place in Aegean Macedonia and that it is property of Pavlos Melas, of [Greek diplomat] Ionas Dragoumis and their inheritors in the [newspaper] “Ellinikos Vorras”.

The newspaper ironically noted that the ‘academics’ of the Society for Macedonian Studies «called on Socrates, Aristotle and Alexander the Great for proof that Greece’s boundaries are in the Danube, not to mention Skopje»⁵³.

The historical knowledge which was generated during the festivities for the Uprising of Ilinden and the Macedonian Struggle began to spread in the following period to other cities of the PRM and Greek Macedonia. Through branches of the Society for Macedonian Studies, respective festivities were organised not only in Thessaloniki but also in many other places of Greek Macedonia with the participation of the local elite. At regular intervals talks on the importance of the Macedonian Struggle and festivities for the inauguration of various bust statues of Macedonian heroes in different cities and villages were organised. These festivities were usually accompanied by a variety of other ceremonies such as the re-naming of streets or squares with these hero’s names⁵⁴.

A highlight of these festivities were the tribute paid to the relics of the various protagonists of the Struggle. One such characteristic example of a religious tribute was that paid to one of the protagonists of the Macedonian Struggle. The Germanos Karavaggelis was Bishop of Kastoria (1900-1908) and from this position it supported the Macedonian Struggle by organising armed Greek groups against the Bulgarians. After the end of the 1908, he was transferred from Macedonia and until the end of his life he served as Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Vienna. He died and was buried in the same city in 1935. In the summer of 1959 his relics were transferred from Vienna to Kastoria. The ceremonies that took place in Thessaloniki and other cities of Greek Macedonia were of «festive character with intense national and religious colour» and it were accompanied by parallel festivities⁵⁵. The Institute for Balkan Studies (IMXA) proceeded to the publication of the memoirs of the Bishop Karavaggelis with the objective to «enhance the morale and the national education of the younger generations» and the newspaper *Ellinikos Vorras* published Karavaggelis’s actions in series. During the same period more memoirs of the protagonists of the Macedonian Struggle began to be published⁵⁶.

Similar ritualistic ceremonies had preceded in the PRM. The relics of Gotse Delchev, member of IMRO who had been killed and buried in Karyes village, today Greece, in 1903, were collected in a ceremony during the World War I. From Bulgaria,

⁵³ In “Nova Makedonija”, 14 December 1954.

⁵⁴ A. SKORDOS, *Griechenlands Makedonische Frage. Bürgerkrieg und Geschichtspolitik im Südosten Europas, 1945-1992*, Göttingen, 2012, Wallstein Verlag, pp. 229-242.

⁵⁵ MERTZOS, PLASTIRAS, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-119.

⁵⁶ V. GOUNARIS, I. MICHAELIDIS, *The Pen and the Sword: Reviewing the Historiography of the Macedonian Question*, in V. ROUDOMETOF (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 99-141.

where the relics had been initially transported, a new ceremony took place for the same reason, this time in Skopje in 1946. As far as the establishment of monuments for the heroes of the struggle of 'Macedonians' in the 'Aegean Macedonia' is concerned, there has been quite a delay for political reasons. It was only at the beginning of 1960, when the crisis in Greek-Yugoslav relations had already erupted, that the name 'Mirka Ginova' attributed to a textile factory in Skopje and, a while later, her bust was placed in the courtyard of the factory. The real name of the above mentioned heroine was Irene Gini, a teacher who had been executed as a member of the Greek Communist Party in July 1946, accused of being a «guerrilla» and «an agent of Slavism». She was regarded in the PRM as a hero of the «Liberating struggle in the Aegean Macedonia»⁵⁷.

Relevant delay was also noted in Greece regarding the foundation of the Museum of Macedonian Struggle. The relevant initiative was taken by a member of the Society for Macedonian Studies, Laourdas, in 1959, but was realised years later since it was considered that its foundation would disturb relations between Greece and Yugoslavia⁵⁸. In any case, the relative speculation and the initiative taken at the above mentioned time served as an entrustment for the future. In the decades that followed, the relevant authorities of both countries saw to it that the 'void' was filled with the establishment of *The Museum of the Macedonian Struggle* in Thessaloniki (1982) and *The Museum of the Macedonian Struggle for Sovereignty and Independence - Museum of VMRO - Museum of the Victims of the Communist Regime* in Skopje (2011) and the placing of statues of Alexander the Great and Phillip II of Macedonia firstly in Thessaloniki (1973, 1993) and, later on, in Skopje and Bitola (2011).

In the 1950's the use of history in the literature and the cinema was occasional. In Greece, even since the interwar period Penelope Delta's books had been published. However, in the period after the Civil War «the use of the Macedonian Struggle as a topic in literature seemed to many authors as an outdated recording of cold war syndrome». Exception to this was Modis who continued in the 1950's his *Macedonian Stories* which he had started to write in the 1930s⁵⁹. The picture in the PRM was more or less the same. The first texts which could be considered as literature were those of Andonovski, since a variety of revolutionary poems of the 1940s such as that of Acho Shopov *In the mountains of Grammos* which were published occasionally in the "Voice of the Aegeans" and other popular magazines⁶⁰. The use of history in the cinema was done in much the same occasional manner. The movie *Mother Katina* which was based on Oskar Davicho's book, *With the General Markos' Partisans* (1948), was never presented to the public. The Greek Macedonian fighters (Makedonomachoi) and the

⁵⁷ K. ZDRAVKOVSKI, *Da ne se zaboravi* (Do not be forgotten), Skopje, Arhiv na Skopje, 1982, pp. 146-147.

⁵⁸ In "Makedonia", 3 May 1959 and 14 August 1960; SKORDOS, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-244.

⁵⁹ V. HADJIGEORGIOU-HASSIOTI, *Apotyposeis tou Makedonikou Agona sti neolliniki pezografia* (Surveys of the Macedonian Struggle in Modern Greek prose), Thessaloniki, University Studio Press, 2004, pp. 49-61.

⁶⁰ ANDONOVSKI, *op. cit.*; A. SHOPOV, *Na Gramosu* (In the mountains of Grammos), Skopje, Nopok, 1950.

“Aegeans” began to appear in the big screen in the 1970’s, through the movies *Pavlos Melas* (1974) and *Baskavski Izvori* (Baska’s sources) (1972)⁶¹.

Concluding, the patriotic organisations of Northern Greece and PRM evolved in the 1950s to local political, economic and intellectual elites. With political, economic and moral support from the centres of power they cultivated the ideology of a ‘lost homeland’ and continued to reproduce the negative stereotypes that had developed in the 1940s. Simultaneously, they emerged as a main institution, warding off the arguments put forward by the ‘other’ regarding the Macedonian Question both on a popular and on a scientific level. These notions were slowly dispersed into both countries. The organisations integrated the history of the Slavomacedonian movement in Greece to the history of the Slavomacedonian Nation and the history of the Macedonian Struggle to the history of the Greek Nation. Thus, when the crisis of 1959-1962 broke out, the Macedonian Question was no longer only of interest to the political, intellectual and scientific circles of northern Greece and PRM. It now also preoccupied the central political scene and contributed to the polarisation of the climate between Yugoslavia and Greece.

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⁶¹ M. RISTOVICH, *Majka Katina medju Markosovim Partizanima ili film koji nije postojao*, in “Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju”, 17/2 (2010), pp. 7-21. It should be noted, however, that the *General Markos’ Partisans* presented in the film as Greeks.

REMEMBERING THE GREEK RESISTANCE: POLITICS OF MEMORY, RECONCILIATION AND OBLIVION

Following the Second World War, the Resistance constituted a unifying myth of patriotism in European societies, serving primarily as a legitimising reference point for the first post-war governments. By invoking and recognising Resistance activity, governments drew much needed prestige in the early post-war era to restore social cohesion and order, which had been disrupted in so many ways during the German Occupation but also during the first instance of liberation¹. Moreover, the vision of a united Europe itself was largely based on the myth of populations across Europe resisting the Axis.

In France, for example, the internal crisis of 1940-1944 left greater scars than had either defeat or foreign occupation. The essentially political resistance movement was constituted with the aim not only of liberating the country, but chiefly that of defeating the government of Vichy and its collaborators. During Liberation, this dual purpose came close to dealing an irreversible blow to France's unity and constitution². Already during the War, De Gaulle, as CNR leader³, sought to establish the Conseil rather than the Vichy Government as the legal representatives of France with the cooperation or consent of all the resistance organisations (within France and abroad). Following Liberation, omitting to discuss this division secured the unity necessary for the resurgence of the French Republic⁴.

Following Liberation, the French people's Resistance past was stripped bare of any political or social distinctions with the fundamental intention of achieving national

¹ P. LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation. Patriotic Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965*, Cambridge (Mass), Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 30-31; T. JUDT, *The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe*, in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe. World War II and its Aftermath*, I. DEAK, J.T. GROSS & T. JUDT (ed.), Princeton (N.J.), Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 299.

² H. ROUSSO, *The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France since 1944*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 1991, p. 297; T. JUDT, "We Have Discovered History": Defeat, Resistance, and the Intellectuals in France, "The Journal of Modern History" Vol. 64 (1992), monographic supplement, pp. s147-s172.

³ For De Gaulle and Conseil National de la Résistance see: J. TOUCHARD, *Le gaullisme 1940-1969*, Seuil, Paris, 1978; O. WIEWIORKA, *Une certaine idée de la Résistance: Défense de la France 1940-1949*, Paris, Seuil, 1995; J.-P. AZEMA, F. BEDARIDA (ed.), *La France des années noires*, Paris, Seuil, 1993.

⁴ LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*, cit., pp. 30-31; JUDT, "We Have Discovered History"... , cit. pp. s147-s172.

unity. References to armed resistance groups or specific patterns of political activity aiming for social reform were avoided, and *La Resistance* acquired an unspecified nationalist content. In this manner, an identity of Resistance, which was useful in the post-war reality of the time, could be claimed not only by those that had actively taken part, but almost anyone who did not defend Nazi Germany during Liberation. Achieving this breadth of definition, *La Resistance* was incorporated in the rhetoric of all political forces, constituting a necessary attribute of the political legitimisation both of contemporary and future French politics⁵.

Commensurate examples can be drawn from Belgium and the Netherlands, despite the fact that political conditions within these countries were diametrically opposed to those of France. In both cases, during the German occupation the governments fled overseas while the administrative body remained in place operating under the guidance of the invaders⁶. In the Netherlands, the returned Queen was acknowledged as the embodiment of the Nation by all civic parties, the pre-war political system was restored and civic life continued almost as if the German occupation had not taken place. Something similar occurred within Belgium following a period of intense political disputes. During the first parliamentary elections, there was controversy between supporters of the monarchy and the representatives of socialists and communist resistance groups. The elections proved to be more favourable to the latter by a small margin, and the main issue that emerged was the choice of governmental system. Finally, the matter was settled a few years later, when Leopold abdicated in favour of his son and heir, who returned to Belgium to succeed him⁷.

In both states, despite the brief period of political tension in Belgium's case, the German occupation did not ultimately disrupt the pre-war political and social order. The system of government remained the same, political elites maintained their legitimacy and power while, following the emergence of the Cold War, those few that were communists were removed from government and were ultimately marginalised. The resilience of institutions during the Occupation did not allow for either the creation of a strong resistance movement nor the development of viable alternative political resolutions⁸.

Consequently, which past was to be legitimised in a present that appeared to return to the pre-war lull: the actions of the few, a tiny minority in the case of the Netherlands, who, through their participation in resistance groups, were declaring their

⁵ P. LAGROU, *Victims of Genocide and National Memory: Belgium, France and the Netherlands 1945-1965*, "Past and Present", Vol. 154 (1997), n. 1, pp. 181-222; JUDT, "We Have Discovered History"... , cit. pp. s147-s172. ROUSSO, *op. cit.*, p. 16; R. GILDEA, *Myth, Memory, and Policy in France Since 1945*, in *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe. Studies in the Presence of the Past*, J. WERNER-MULLER (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 59-75.

⁶ LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*, cit., pp. 34-35; G. HIRSCHFELD, *Collaboration and Attentism in the Netherlands*, "Journal of Contemporary History", Vol. 16 (1981), pp. 467-486.

⁷ LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*, cit., pp. 34-35.

⁸ HIRSCHFELD, *op. cit.*, pp. 467-486.

parallel intention to promote changes in post-war society or, rather, the choice of the majority, which mostly adapted to the conditions imposed by German occupation? Here the answer was also to be found within the establishment of a narrative that incorporated any resistance activity into national history. According to this, the nation was attacked from abroad, suffered in its entirety and resisted to the best of its abilities. This was also the case at citizen level: each individual resisted according to his position and as much as circumstances allowed⁹.

In this process of incorporating any resistance activity within national history, the example of the Netherlands was particularly impressive as the resistance movement there was distinguished solely by its weakness and lack of vigor. Despite this, governmental interventions and legal adjustments established anniversary celebrations in which there has been a systematic cultivation of the conviction in public opinion that the country had attained considerable resistance activity¹⁰.

Yet in both the cases of Belgium and France, where such rhetorical exaggerations did not occur, the criteria with which a historical narration of the Second World War was ultimately assembled, as well as the final structure of such a narrative, were similar: the past was adapted under the weight of exceptionally critical political circumstances, history was re-written to serve the continuation of the nation as well as the need to restore the status quo. On the other hand, however, the ease with which such narratives were established, as well as their favorable reception in all three countries, exposes the weakness of the respective resistance movements. In different ways and for diverse reasons political groupings and individuals in the three countries that had genuinely taken part in resistance activity, especially armed action, had not managed to make political capital of it in post-war society. They were not able to utilise it to legislative effect and, of far greater importance, neither did they manage to defend their social and political imperatives. This resulted in the term *Resistance* attaining a purely national or nationalistic content in the narratives of the three countries, which signified – to the exclusion of practically all else – resisting the Axis Powers and being aligned with the Allied Forces¹¹.

As is well known, the exact opposite occurred in Greece. Precisely because the resistance movement was so vigorous (within which KKE¹², and the Left were dominant), as to have concrete claims for intervention in post-war political affairs, it became part of a problematic past that in the Cold-War climate of the time could not augur well for the future. Hence, while in other European countries the title of “resistance fighter” conferred honour, in post-Civil-War Greece the invocation of EAM’s¹³ past not only did not

⁹ LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*, cit., p. 35.

¹⁰ LAGROU, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*, cit., pp. 60-65.

¹¹ LAGROU, *Victims of Genocide and National Memory*, cit., pp. 181-222.

¹² The Greek Communist Party.

¹³ The National Liberation Front (EAM) was established by the communists in September 1941. This had two principal aims: the organisation of resistance and a free choice as to the form of government and the question of monarchy on the eventual liberation of the country. The leaders of the old political par-

have the same resonance, but would trigger persecutions and political marginalisation for many years to come¹⁴. Recognition of the activities of individuals who fought the Axis alongside left-wing resistance organisations proved to be one of the thorniest problems of Greek political life during the second half of the 20th century.

This article proposes to study the memory and legacy of the Greek Resistance within the Greek political system. Despite much intense discussion having taken place around the relevant legislation of 1982 about the law on the recognition of the leftwing resistance as well as the Law of 1989 regarding the removal of Civil War consequences, there has not been a systematic assessment of either the political climate within which these bodies of legislation were passed nor of their effect upon the operability of the political system itself.

In post-Civil-War Greece, the Second World War was signified, along the lines of Civil War and Cold War divisions. Such an interpretation influenced the representation of the War in collective memory, political discourse and, naturally, historiography as well¹⁵. In this way, the Civil War became the filter through which the collective memory of the Second World War was formed. The official narrative of the 1940s in Greece is not established at the end of the War but at the end of the Civil War, naturally seen from the point of view of the victors. In this respect, the priorities of the Greek political leadership at the end of the Civil War were very different to those of western European countries in 1944. Certainly during the early post-war years, resistance activity could have been “embellished”, stripped of its political imperatives, but such a feat was hardly achievable after a bloody and traumatizing Civil War. The resulting divisions that emerged, combined with the Cold War climate of the times, created very powerful political and ideological polarised identities in Greece. Following the Civil War, the political cleavage between the defeated Left (deemed unpatriotic) and the victorious Right and Centre (posed as nationalist and patriotic) became a benchmark for the political life of the country in the years following the civil conflict. Labelling EAM's resistance as unpatriotic did not only deny it recognition of its achievements but also rendered it repudiated from Greek society as a whole.

The activities of EAM during 1941-1944 were perceived by the post-war Right wing not as resistance but rather as treasonable offences. More specifically, the Greek

ties rejected the communists' call for co-operation and stood largely aloof from the resistance struggle. Some small and insignificant agrarian and socialist groups were also parties to the establishment of EAM. This was created as the political wing of a mass-based resistance movement while the National People's Liberation Army (whose Greek acronym ELAS sounded like the Greek word for Greece/Hellas) was established as its military arm. See: R. CLOGG, *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 129.

¹⁴ An exception was made for the very few non-communist resistance organizations, which were officially recognized almost immediately after the Liberation. The most important of these groups was the National Republican Greek League (EDES), whose power base was in northwestern Greece.

¹⁵ N. MARANTZIDIS, G. ANTONIOU, *The Axis Occupation and Civil War: Changing Trends in Greek Historiography, 1941-2002*, “Journal of Peace Research”, Vol. 41 (2004), n. 2, pp. 223-31.

Communist Party (KKE) was accused to have, from the start, taken advantage of the Greek people's love of freedom during the Occupation¹⁶, in order to accomplish the founding of EAM and later that of ELAS, which only served as masks for the Party itself, and that they adopted false patriotic slogans purporting the liberation of Greece from the foreign yoke, only to deceive the nationally-minded upright citizenry¹⁷. In the end, however, rather than freeing Greece from the Germans¹⁸, it turned one of the greatest resistance movements of Europe into instigators of a bloody Civil War. Accordingly, the ulterior motive had not been the national struggle for freedom but the establishment of a communist regime in Greece at the end of the War¹⁹.

This narrative dominated the entire era 1950-1967. The political climate turned in favour of the Resistance only during the two brief periods when Centre-party governments came into power. The political region of the Centre extended across both sides of the divisive breach of Right-wing patriotic thinking. Many supporters of the Centre parties had affiliated with EAM/ELAS during the years of the Occupation. On the other hand the Centre had helped the Right to beat the communists during the Civil War. This is why the complete identification of their ranks with either Left or Right was avoided, with the intention to maintain the Centre's ability to distinguish itself from either extreme, maintaining an equal distance and gathering supporters from both Left and Right.

From this perspective, making a clear distinction of the resistance against Axis forces, from communism and the KKE's political activity represented high stakes for governments originating from the Centre; both for the EPEK-led²⁰ governments (1950-1952) as much as for the Centre Union (EK)²¹ governments 1963-1965.

In the first case above, the endeavour to give credit to members of resistance organizations had started long before the founding of EPEK. As can be seen from his personal archives, General Nikolaos Plastiras, had been in contact with representatives of resistance organisations of the Centre. Such contacts progressed and were utilized later as EPEK was founded. General Nikolaos Plastiras, a distinguished officer boldly outspoken against monarchy during the interwar period, he employed an array of resistance organisation members within the party's structures thus achieving their political representation. In the party's vocabulary, the term "National Resistance" came to have a positive, patriotic meaning. It was used to declare the struggle of the Greek peo-

¹⁶ In "Akropolis" [Ακρόπολις], 20.4.1958.

¹⁷ In "Akropolis" [Ακρόπολις], 11.2.1964; I Kathimerini [Η Καθημερινή], 6.5.1958.

¹⁸ In "Akropolis" [Ακρόπολις], 3.5.1958.

¹⁹ In "Akropolis" [Ακρόπολις], 28.10.1961; "Akropolis" [Ακρόπολις], 5.10.1961.

²⁰ The National Progressive Centre Union (EPEK). It appeared in Greek politics before the elections of 1950 under the leadership of General Nikolaos Plastiras, veteran of the Venizelist coups of 1922 and 1933 and short-lived Prime Minister in the aftermath of the December 1944 insurgency.

²¹ Centre parties' alignment. It appeared before the 1960 elections under the leadership of the veteran liberal politician Georgios Papandreou.

ple against the conquerors independently of political affiliation and grouping within which framework this struggle took place. Based on this awareness, and once the patriotism of those who had participated in resistance organisations had been recognized, EAM's past was acquitted of any guilt²².

Precisely therein lies the originality of EPEK's endeavor. Whilst all political parties invested in identifying with the divisions of the Civil War, General Plastiras approached the events of the 1940s through a unifying version and, by cultivating it, he promoted it to a significant component of the identity of his party. In this way, in conjunction with a significant section of those defeated in the Civil War, he was claiming and securing the acquittal of resistance action and its elevation to a service of patriotism of the utmost importance.

Attacked by both the conservative wing of the Centre as well as the Right, EPEK's attempts at reconciliation were brought to an end with the electoral defeat of 1952. Nevertheless, what is most significant in the context of the present analysis is that the discourse and political agenda of EPEK would constitute a noteworthy precedent for the Centre during the EK era and its "Unyielding Struggle" (Anedotos)²³, when circumstances matured to form a strong counter-right-wing movement²⁴.

Approximately ten years hence, on the eve of the 1961 elections, the newly-founded Centre Union – faced with the vicious circle of polarisation between Greeks subscribing to a patriotic ethos and those who did not – put forward an alternative manner of addressing the communist threat. Arguing that the Left was nurtured by the Right's authoritarianism, the Centre Union was promising the harmonious operation of the democratic polity, political and social equality amongst citizens, to guarantee personal and civil rights, as well as the repeal of emergency state measures, the requirement for certificates of "appropriate" social ethos, and the cessation of the police state²⁵.

²² In "Proodeutikos Fileleutheros", [*Προοδευτικός Φιλελεύθερος*], 16.8.1951; E. PASCHALOUDI, *I Dekatita tou 1940 ston Politiko Logo, 1950-1967*, [A War Without an End. The 1940s in the Discourse of the Greek Political Parties, 1950-1967], Thessaloniki, Epikentro Publications, 2010, pp.172-194.

²³ After the 1961 election, the opposition parties denounced the plebiscite as fraudulent, the result of manipulation and improper pressures by the army, the gendarmerie and the rural security battalions. The opposition claimed that the army had implemented a NATO plan, code-named Pericles and designed to deal with threats to internal security to preserve the Right's hold to power. Georgios Papan-dreou, a brilliant orator, promptly launched what he termed an "Unyielding Struggle" to nullify the results of the elections. This proved an effective rallying cry that helped give greater coherence to his newly founded Centre Union. It also helped him to gain the support of the Left in order to form an anti-right political alliance. See: I. NICOLAKOPOULOS, *I kachektiki dimokratia. Kommata kai ekloges, 1956-1967*, [Parties and Election in Greece, 1946-1967], Athens, Patakis, 2001.

²⁴ S. LINARDATOS, *Apo ton emfylio sti chounta*, [From the Civil War to the Junta], vol. 1, Athens, Papazisis, 1977, pp. 399-408.

²⁵ In "To Vima" [*Το Βήμα*], 10.10.1961.

In this manner the Centre Union attempted to appeal to the non-communist Left, which had been mostly of EAM origin during the Occupation, and to sever it from the United Democratic Left (EDA), the legal version of the KKE²⁶ in Greece.

With its election to government, the Centre Union ventured to institute the two official anniversaries which were up to that point invoked almost exclusively only by EDA²⁷. Blowing up the Gorgopotamos Bridge and the anniversary of the Liberation of Athens from German Occupation. The first official celebration of the detonation of the Gorgopotamos Bridge was held in 1962, but on that occasion participation was limited. The following year, 1963, participation was wider as EDA managed to gather 4,500 to 5,500 people²⁸. In 1964, a few days prior to the official celebration, there came an unexpected announcement that the organization of the event would be undertaken by the government itself thus placing the Gorgopotamos²⁹ commemoration in the official national calendar. Making these celebrations official whilst at the same time marginalising leftist resistance groups, announced the Centre's intention to conquer and eventually appropriate the past of the resistance, which the Left had already claimed a lot earlier.

During the same period, the anniversary of the Liberation of Athens was also instituted. This came to have great symbolic significance for both the Centre and Georgios Papandreou himself. The anniversary of 12th October as well as the participation of members of government in the celebrations of the Gorgopotamos anniversary that followed in the same year, constituted very important steps towards the official recognition of the National Resistance by the State. These actions progressively loosened the association of EDA with its resistance past and correspondingly reduced the political benefits that EAM's resistance brought the Left. On the contrary, the fact that Georgios Papandreou attempted to give the past the recognition and prestige the Left had been claiming for itself, further stabilised the Centre Union (EK) and naturally Papandreou himself, as the rallying point for the anti-Right-wing constituency. The Left was the side that consistently referred to the National Resistance and claimed its heritage in the time frame studied here. Already since the autumn of 1945 and before the spread

²⁶ United Democratic Left was founded in 1951. It represented the Greek Left. During the Greek Civil War and after the defeat of the Greek Democratic Army approximately 80,000 refugees fled Greece in order to seek refuge in socialist countries. Most of these refugees were communists, or communist party supporters, ex fighters of the Greek Democratic Army (men and women), and the majority of political cadres of the communist party.

²⁷ United Democratic Left (EDA) was founded in 1951. It represented the Greek Left.

²⁸ K. ANTONIOU, *Opseis tis mnimis tis Katochis kai tou emfyliou in 1963-1965*, [The memory of Occupation and Civil War in the 1963-1965 the Centre Union era], Unpublished postgraduate paper, Athens, National Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2008.

²⁹ Armed bands both communist and anti-communist seized the mountains in the spring and summer of 1942 and the military potential of resistance was demonstrated by the destruction in November 1942 of the Gorgopotamos viaduct, which carried the Salonica-Athens railway line. This is one of the most spectacular achievements of the resistance anywhere in occupied Europe. It was achieved by saboteurs parachuted into Greece by the British Special Operations Executive, together with guerillas drawn both from ELAS and EDES. Among others see: Clogg, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133.

of the civil conflict, the Left demanded that the Government recognize the National Resistance in exactly the same manner as occurred in other European states³⁰. According to related published material, such a recognition could have staved off national division, facilitated the punishment of collaborators and, most importantly, would have limited acts of violence against the Left in the countryside in particular³¹.

At a later time, following the end of Civil War and most significantly the founding of EDA, the Resistance constituted the linchpin around which the legal party standing in for the Left structured the identity of its line-up, with the main aim of gathering round all former participants of the EAM campaign. «It embodies», as was argued in many party texts, «the tradition of the heroic battles of the Greek peoples against foreign intruders in our Land. It is the visceral leap of the grandiose campaign of National Resistance»³².

From the start of the 1960s, the Left began to undertake a publishing effort in parallel with politics in an attempt to etch the history of the National Resistance hitherto silenced by the official national historiography. The systematic mapping of Greek Resistance history was embarked upon, both within Greece but mainly abroad, by the publishing machinery of Greek communists in socialist countries.

A conference of National Resistance participants consisting of ELAS, EDES and other resistance organisations, took place towards the end of 1959, by initiative of EDA's political office. In this meeting, it was decided to launch a concerted bid for the recognition of the National Resistance. That is the recognition of both left and right wing resistance groups³³.

Within this framework, the Committee for the Initiative of Restoration of the National Resistance was created in 1960. A corresponding declaration was issued signed by approximately 700 well-known personalities. At the same time, various events were organised and the Committee was affiliated to FIR, the International Resistance Federation, which, despite the Cold War climate, had extended its membership and activities to all countries where resistance movements had developed. Thus, from 1960 onwards one of EDA's main goals was the recognition of the National Resistance and the establishment of its anniversaries³⁴. Not only were the founding of EAM and the Gorgopotamos feat to be "celebrated", but commemoration dates were instituted at a local level, in every county of Greece, in order to honour the dead, popularise the role of the resistance movement, promote the demand for national recognition and, mostly, re-activate the former fighters, once again³⁵.

³⁰ In "Rizospastis" [*Ριζοσπάστης*], 25.12.1945.

³¹ In "Rizospastis" [*Ριζοσπάστης*], 25.12.1945 and 30.12.1945.

³² The political agenda of EDA. It was published on 29th and 30th of October 1952, two weeks before the general election. In "Avgi", [*Η Αυγή*], 29.10.1952.

³³ Contemporary Social History Archives (from now on CSHA), EDA Archive, Resistance Bureau, Box 213, Report to the Executive Committee of the Party on the subject: Activation of the Resistance Issue, 1959.

³⁴ CSHA, EDA Archive, Resistance Bureau, box 213, Proposal to the Executive Committee, 1960.

³⁵ CSHA, EDA Archive, Resistance Bureau, box 217, Event Schedule 1964-1965.

This effort on the part of EDA was promoted by the Centre Union's rise to power and the change in political climate after 1963. Following the formation of a Centre government, divisions fostered by the political cleft (between victors and the vanquished) imposed by the Civil War were beginning to wane. The divisions of the 1940s had started to temper and public opinion seemed to seek a new form of political expression. The Right was left alone in its support of the political heritage of nationalist righteousness resulting in a new division emerging that would set new rules in the political landscape: Right-wing and Anti-right-wing. The Right remained bound to the past and to the traumatic divisions of the Civil War, while the Anti-Right-wing (the Left and Centre) were leading public opinion to a new era in which politics would no longer be defined by the Civil War. This was to be an era where the defeated of the Civil War would be able to gradually return to the political and social life of the country.

This situation was, on the one hand advantageous to the Left, as it carried the promise of a form of legitimisation and afforded it new organisational possibilities, especially after 1963³⁶. On the other hand, however, a new kind of marginalisation was taking shape for the Left as the leadership of the Anti-Right-wing constituency was being assumed by the Centre Union. This resulted in antagonism developing between EDA and Centre Union. Nevertheless, antagonism between the Left and Centre, as well as any form of discussion of the past, or any kind of political mobilisation, were very quickly frozen over by the establishment of the colonels' dictatorship (1967-1974).

The dictatorship was rhetorically but also politically an extreme version of the right-wing state. The paroxysm of anticommunism and nationalistic righteousness very quickly earned the disdain of public opinion. After the fall of the dictatorship, in 1974, the Greek Republic needed a new legitimising footing, as the Civil War could not provide one any more.

In this way, nationalist righteousness gave way to a progressive democratic culture and the Civil War ceded its place to the National Resistance. Nationalist righteousness and anticommunism were replaced by anti-fascism, resulting in the de-legitimization of right-wing extremism in the political system³⁷. Thus the Grammos³⁸ debacle ceded its place to Gorgopotamos³⁹. In short, the change of a legitimising basis

³⁶ I. PAPATHANASIOU, *Oria kai Dynamiki tis Entaxis stin Prodiktatoriki EDA. Apopeira Katagnafis tis Arithmitikis, tis Geografikis Katanomis kai tis Kinonikis Synthesis tou Aristerou Plithismou*, [Supporting EDA. An attempt to map the Left wing populace in Greece], "The Greek Review of Social Research" 86, pp. 21-82.

³⁷ J. VOULGARIS, *I Ellada apo ti Metapoliteusi stin Pagosmiopoiisi* [Greece from Transition to Democracry to Globalisation], Athens, Polis, 2008, pp. 76-77.

³⁸ The National Democratic Army, the communist army of the Civil War was defeated on 29th August 1949 in Grammos and Vitsi (mountains in Western Greece). After 1949 the name Grammos or Vitsi signified the communist defeat by the regular army and General Papagos.

³⁹ The destruction of the Gorgopotamos bridge (the 25th of November 1942) was one of the most spectacular achievements of resistance in occupied Europe. It was the result of cooperation between the two major resistance organizations, ELAS and EDES, under the guidance of British commandos. In 1982 the Andreas Papandreou government established the anniversary of Gorgopotamos as the official celebration of National Resistance. This particular act was chosen not only because of its significance but because it symbolized the cooperation of the resistance groups of the right and the left against the Axis Occupation.

of the political system enabled the gradual shift from the division between the extremes of nationalist righteousness and its opponents, dominant up to 1974, to the Right versus Anti-Right-wing polarization, which had already started taking shape during the 1960s⁴⁰.

During the early post-dictatorship era, the discussion of subjects that could bring back to mind the 1940s and its divisions were avoided. Despite the obvious differences in the political climate any mention of the divisions of the 1940s was still highly problematic. The past, replete with civil conflict, continued to create problems in the political system, especially at a point in time when all political forces were aiming to stabilise democracy. The recent experience of dictatorship served as a bad example, which correspondingly shaped the demeanour of social elites especially during the first years of the return to democracy. At that early stage of the re-establishment of Greek parliamentary democracy, political forces utilised experiences gleaned during the seven-year dictatorship⁴¹. Political vehemence not only benefitted no one but could also poison the political atmosphere and ultimately undermine consensus. Consequently any discussion of the Civil War was essentially postponed.

Such a postponement was not specific to Greece. In Spain the transition to democracy was underpinned by a consensus of oblivion and silence, so that the Civil War should never be repeated “ever again” as per the slogan of the era⁴². The qualitative difference with Greece was that the change of political governance was not accompanied by a consensus of silence around the divisive past but rather a surreptitious dispute. Under the guise of an above-board discussion concerning the National Resistance, the accountability of the Civil War was being simultaneously resolved without being explicitly brought to the foreground. In Spain, the bad example, the absolute evil, which all political forces agreed should never be repeated was the Civil War of 1936-1939 and not Franco’s dictatorship. In Greece the corresponding consensus was achieved about recent dictatorship and not the Civil War. Inevitably, therefore, the fall of the dictatorship swept all the related cultural and historical context alongside it, the

⁴⁰ J. VOULGARIS, *I Ellada tis Metapoliteusis 1974-1990. Statheri Dimokratia Simademeni apo tin Metapoliteutiki Istoría* [Greece in Political Transition, 1974-1990. Stabilized Democracy Influenced by the Civil War Legacy], Athens, Themelio, 2001, pp. 28-31.

⁴¹ According to Nancy Bermeo, re-democratization involves three phases: the breakdown of a dictatorship, the creation or reconstruction of a democracy, and the consolidation of a new regime. Political learning is most important during the second phase of the re-democratization process – at the critical moment between the crisis of the old order and the consolidation of the new one – for it helps explain why a new regime becomes democratic in the first place. It helps explain why, in essence, a dictatorship in crisis is replaced by a democracy rather than another dictatorial regime. Whether political learning affects the other phases of the re-democratization process remains an open question. Nevertheless, political learning is key to the reconstruction of democracy, and how the concept adds to our current understandings of empirical democratic theory. N. BERMEO, *Democracy and the Lessons of Dictatorship*, “Comparative Politics”, Vol. 24, n. 3 (1992), pp. 273-291.

⁴² P. AGUILAR FERNANDEZ, *Memory and Amnesia. The Role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2002 (1996), pp. 210-264.

most fundamental of which was the appraisal of the Civil War as no more than «a bandits' war»⁴³.

For the Right Wing, now renamed New Democracy (ND), the main priority of this early post-dictatorship era was to fashion a new political identity, which would most crucially differentiate it from the previous regimes of dictatorship and monarchy. It, therefore, abandoned the past and concentrated on the desire of a large section within the party and of Konstantinos Karamanlis himself: that ND should represent a large liberal constituency, which could guarantee the consolidation of a modern parliamentary democracy. Within this context, he tried to place the party to the center, assimilated members of the Centre as it was before the dictatorship and promoted within the party structures individuals that had been unsullied by the dictatorial regime. He ventured to reassemble ND as a centre political entity, so that «both enemies of Democracy, communism and fascism, should be rendered morally isolated»⁴⁴. Immediately upon the fall of the dictatorship, Karamanlis adopted a policy of oblivion, which was mainly expressed in the lifting of Law 509 of 1947⁴⁵ and legalising the Communist Party. At the same time, he strived for a mild political atmosphere, aiming steadfastly to shift from excessive ideologization to political pragmatism⁴⁶.

PASOK maintained the same careful stance in its public rhetoric up to 1981 in regard to events of the 1940s⁴⁷. All mention of what happened during the 1940s is absent in the founding document of 3rd September. The emphasis is placed on the then very recent dictatorship and catastrophic occupation of Cyprus⁴⁸.

At that time the immediate goal of PASOK was to establish itself as a new party with its own distinct identity, without strong links to any past⁴⁹. In this context, elements of the past invoked by cadres and leader of the PASOK, which called itself a

⁴³ G. ANTONIOU, *Oi Giortes Misous kai oi Polemoi tis Dimosias Mnimis* [Civil War Commemoration and Public Memory], in *Emfylis Politismiko Trauma* [Civil War Cultural Trauma], N. DEMERTZIS, E. PASCHALOUDI, G. ANTONIOU (ed.), Athens, Alexandria, 2013, pp. 215-250.

⁴⁴ In «Kathimerini» [*Η Καθημερινή*], 29.10.1974.

⁴⁵ This Civil War law, which was preserved until 1974, criminalized the Communist Party and provided severe penalties for advocating the overthrow of the existing social order, while the security police armed with mountainous files on the real or imagined views of the populace, maintained a close watch on those suspected of left-wing sympathies.

⁴⁶ T. PAPPAS, *Tō Charismatiko Komma. PASOK, Papandreou Exousia*. [PASOK Charismatic Party, Charismatic Leader], Athens, Patakis, 2008, pp. 173-174.

⁴⁷ M. SPOURDALAKIS (ed.), *PASOK - Komma - Kratos - Koinonia*, [PASOK - Party - State - Society], Athens, Patakis, 1998, pp. 87-88; M. SPOURDALAKIS, *The Rise of the Greek of the Greek Socialist Party*, London, Routledge, 1988.

⁴⁸ *Declaration of Basic Principles and Aims of PASOK. September 3rd 1974*, in *Apo to PAK sto PASOK. Logoi Arthra, synentefxeis diloseis tou Andrea Papandreou* [From PAK to PASOK. Interviews, articles and statements of Andreas Papandreou], Athens, Ladia Publications, 1976, pp. 78-84.

⁴⁹ G. MOSCHONAS, *I Diaretiki Tomi Dexias-Antidexias sti Metapoliteusi (1974-1990). Periechomeno tis Tomis kai Opseis tis Stratigikis ton Kommaton tou Dexiou Yposustimatos* [The political cleavage between the Right and Anti-Right in Greece (1974-1990)], in N. DEMERTZIS, *I Elliniki politiki Kouloura simera*, [Greek Political Culture Today], Athens, Odysseas, p. 172.

‘movement’ rather than a ‘party’, were firstly the resistance against the recent dictatorship and at the same time the Centre Union⁵⁰ and the renewal it had brought into politics during the 1960s. In the anti-dictatorship past one could trace the roots of the ‘movement’, its identity but also the ideological linchpin around which congregated its potential voters. In this way, the Resistance against the dictatorship⁵¹ and its deceased, rendered discernible PASOK’s still new and fluid political ideology. PASOK became known by its radical identity, which although failing to impress the electorate in the 1974 elections, was destined to become one of the strongest and longest-lasting characteristics of this new political entity.

As between 1950 and 1967, the Left was the only political force that would consistently invoke the 1940s. In most political rallies and talks, especially since 1977, KKE appeared as the «organiser and guide of our National Resistance» during the Second World War and as the «pioneer of the struggles to assert the rights of the working class and all workers»⁵². This was, however, also replicated on the other left bank. KKE (of the Interior) claimed exactly the same past as the mainstream KKE⁵³. The Resistance constituted the only path through which the Left could mitigate its traumatic experience of defeat and the multiple divisions the party had undergone during the 1940s⁵⁴.

Certainly, the invocation of the 1940s presented the Left with problems, too. Remembering the Resistance against the forces of the Axis immediately brought back memories of the Civil War that followed. The Left had by now abandoned all intentions to turn against the formal State. It desired to re-enrol in political life as a parliamentary party. Bringing up the Civil War in no way served this aim. On the contrary, it was a spanner in the works of complete legitimisation of both Communist parties in political life⁵⁵. In addition, almost thirty years on, the Left and its voters needed to put their catastrophic defeat behind them⁵⁶. The consequences for those who found

⁵⁰ The leader of the Centre Union was the father of PASOK’s leader and founder, Andreas Papandreou.

⁵¹ In February 1968 Andreas Papandreou who had fled in Sweden after the interruption of his detention by the military junta, founded the National Liberation Movement (PAK). The purpose of establishing the PAK was the overthrow of the dictatorship, while proclaiming release the country from “foreign dependence” and drastic changes, with the ultimate aim of the socialist transformation of Greek society. After the fall of the dictatorship the PAK was transformed into PASOK and entered the Greek political arena.

⁵² In “Rizospastis” [*Ριζοσπάστης*], 21.10.1977.

⁵³ In “Avgi” [*Η Αυγή*], 26.10.1977.

⁵⁴ The Greek Communist Party (outlawed since 1947) maintained both a precarious underground presence in Greece within EDA and a factionalized existence among political refugees living in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The conflict between a Stalinist old Guard and reformists had in the wake of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 erupted to an open split. The dissident reformists styled themselves the Communist Party of the Interior. The mainstream KKE retained the loyalties of the great bulk of those on the far left of the political spectrum. Among others see: Clogg, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-171.

⁵⁵ P. VOGLIS, *The Greek Civil War and the Politics of Memory*, unpublished paper in Colloque International, Les sociétés européennes du XXI siècle face à leur passé, Reims, 5-7 May 2008.

⁵⁶ A. ELEFANTIS, *Ston Asterismo tou Laikismou* [In the era of populism], Athens, Politis, 1991, p. 49.

themselves in the ranks of DSE⁵⁷ were tragic: immigration, or for those who remained in the country, executions, imprisonment, political exile, marginalization. Faced with the new opportunity that the new Democratic Republic offered all this should be forgotten in order to reconstitute the political entity of the Left and carve a new political path⁵⁸.

Even so, the legacy of that era retained the desire to reverse the consequences of police crackdowns and oppression, which constituted the lowest common denominator in the political realm as far as consequences of the traumatic past were concerned. The transition from dictatorship to parliamentary democracy triggered the desire for political, moral and material restitution in the Left, defeated in the Civil War and banished from political life. Thus, the actions of left-wing resistance organisations during 1941-1944 (mainly those of EAM and ELAS) were mustered to serve the apparently inextricable demands for the recognition of the National Resistance and the return of political exiles. Especially from 1977 onwards, the twin demands were presented by PASOK and both Communist parties as a prerequisite for the completion of the process of democratisation and transition to normality, as all indications following the elections of that year were that the republic was stabilizing. The political attitudes of the time, portents of the change in political climate, laid the path to the recognition and restoration of EAM's Resistance⁵⁹.

As was to be expected, the right-wing governments gave a negative response. In their eyes the National Resistance could never be recognised as such, because as Evangelos Averof⁶⁰ declared in Parliament in 1978, it was not National⁶¹. On the contrary, as he mentions in a different conversation, on 18th April 1978, the groupings of the Left had commenced activities resisting the Occupation but then developed in a different direction. According to this point of view, these groupings had two different goals: firstly, to counter the occupation armies, as was the Soviet Union struggling to do at the time, and secondly to seize power. Gradually, the first goal was abandoned, as the Soviet Union did not require any assistance and only the second goal remained: the demise of nationalists and seizing power in Greece⁶².

The historical and political restoration of the Resistance could not be made acceptable by the Right, because on the one hand such an act would absolve – through silence

⁵⁷ The National Democratic Army formed by the KKE during the Civil War.

⁵⁸ See N. MARANTZIDIS, *To Triplo Trauma: I Mnimi tou Emfyliou Poleμου stin Kommounistiki Aristera* [The Triple Trauma: Civil War Memory in Communist Left], in N. DEMERTZIS, E. PASCHALOU, G. ANTONIOU (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 161-186; N. MARANTZIDIS, L. RORI, *Metavallomeni stohoi, metavallomenes symmachies: to KKE kai o kommatikos antagonismos sti metapoliteusi* [Changing Objectives, Shifting Alliances: the Greek Communist Party and Party Antagonism in the Greek 3rd Republic], "Science and Society", n. 25, Autumn 2010, pp. 95-121.

⁵⁹ In "Rizospastis", [Ριζοσπάστης], 22.9.1981 and 12.11.1974. See also PASCHALOU, *I Dekatia tou 1940 ston politico logo...*, cit., pp. 113-160.

⁶⁰ Political Leader of New Democracy at the time. He had fought in the Civil War.

⁶¹ E. AVEROF, Hellenic Parliament, *Parliamentary Archives*, vol. 1, 10.2.1978, p. 1033.

⁶² E. AVEROF, Hellenic Parliament, *Parliamentary Archives*, vol. 3, 18.4.1978, p. 2246.

and oblivion – the Left of blame for the Civil War, while on the other hand it would allow them to become impeccable heirs of the “nation-liberating” Resistance, thus handing moral and political pre-eminence to them as representatives of the Nation, which until then had been the exclusive privilege of the Right. Furthermore, the Occupation era had been – in the right-wing historical narrative – anything but glorious. On the contrary, it constituted a trauma, because of the bloody clashes with the forces of EAM/ELAS, which the anti-communists portrayed as the first round of communist insurrection, and in which clashes the anti-EAM forces were met with a crushing defeat⁶³. In addition, one must bear in mind that the old political elite went into voluntary exile in Egypt leaving the field open for the Communist Party to appropriate the resistance movement. Despite ND’s moderation of policy and public rhetoric, the Government remained constant in its views, which had their origins in the nationalistic righteousness of the pre-dictatorship era. But the basis of the regime’s legitimization after 1974 had altered. This brought about changes in the strategy of the Right, as already mentioned, but it was not possible for it to readily adjust its political reflexes. Indeed, the anti-communist reactions of ND cadres intensified with the change in rhetoric of the opposition and as it was becoming increasingly apparent that PASOK was marching to power.

In November 1981, almost immediately following its election, the PASOK government by joint motion of its Interior and Public Order Ministers, abolished all anniversary celebrations pertaining to the Civil War. Religious memorial services were allowed to be held by relatives in places of worship, although without the presence of the authorities. The same ministerial motion expressly mentioned the Government’s commitment to propose to the Greek Parliament a symbolic action of reconciliation⁶⁴.

Not long after, in August 1982, the decree, which was passed recognising the National Resistance and awarding pensions to veterans of EAM/ELAS established the history of the Resistance as the official narrative of the 1940s, which is also used as a means of cohesion of the unity of the nation promised by PASOK before the elections.

This new narrative, that of national reconciliation aimed to supersede the multiple traumatic divisions of the past. The Civil War was de-politicised, as the causes of the descent to conflict were sought either amongst the meddling of foreign powers or within the irrationality of leadership and the two rival factions. Victors and vanquished were no more as «in a Civil War the whole nation loses». The new narrative was not only conciliatory, but also multi-selective. It utilised elements from the Left’s rhetoric as well as that of the Centre Union. Only one division remained: that of resistance versus collaboration. The Resistance was de-coupled from Communism and the Communist Party and finally belonged to all factions, to all the populace that fought as one against the conquerors. The exceptions were the small number of collaborators who were iso-

⁶³ ANTONIOU, *Oi Giortes Misous*, cit., pp. 215-250.

⁶⁴ “Efimeris tis Kyverniseos” [Official Greek Gazette], n. A 328, 23.11.1981; see also ANTONIOU, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-250.

lated, morally and politically stigmatised. This division also largely constituted the foundation of Right versus Anti-Right-wing polarisation, which dominated PASOK's rhetoric and policies in the election campaigns that were to follow. The invocation of this polarisation offered an easily grasped and functional interpretative framework of the political state of affairs. It was easy to distinguish between "goodies" and "baddies". Much can be blamed on the *evil* Right: collaboration, executions, exile, marginalisation of the fighters of the National Resistance. The *good* Anti-right-wing on the other hand, gathers all those who fought for the liberation of the country, the defence of democracy and who now strive for the prosperity of the people and progress.

PASOK, at the head of this political coalition, utilised this new narrative as a common cause around which to join forces. Superseding the old divisions, their lineup could extend towards the centre-right stopping short of sympathy for collaborators, but mainly towards the Left stopping only at KKE's dogmatism. National reconciliation gave the Left the moral justification and recognition it desired. At the same time, however, despite being attractive to many of its supporters, it weakened its own political appeal as it lost its exclusive claim on resistance.

On the other hand, the demotion of nationalist righteousness engendered a strong reaction from the conservative factions. The parliamentary grouping within ND led by Evangelos Averof walked out during the process of voting for the Law that recognised the National Resistance, in order not to hand «an absolution to KKE for its anti-national activities during the Occupation». This gesture granted PASOK the initiative of national reconciliation, as well as all the political gain that could be earned from it and abandoned the Right in its lonely and futile struggle to rescue the notion of nationalist righteousness already regarded with disdain by the majority of the population⁶⁵.

Despite opting for a conciliatory approach during the early post-dictatorship era, a faction within ND continued to define itself along the lines of nationalist righteousness. This faction came once again to the foreground with PASOK's rise to power especially at the time of the passing of the relevant decree. Faced with the glorification of the Resistance the Right countered with KKE's criminal activities and attempted to rescue the memory of nationalist righteousness from contempt. Consequently they reverted to a demonstration, which had been abandoned in recent years: the memorial service in honour of the victims of the Police force during the December 1944 battles (Dekemvriana), which took place in Athens between ELAS on the one side and the Greek Police supported by British troops on the other side. This had withered away by 1982 and chief officers were not allowed to participate in the festivities. After 1981, and in effect from the moment that Civil War commemorations were abolished by the PASOK government, this memorial service was revived. Leading members of ND took

⁶⁵ E. PASCHALOU, *I Dekatia tou 1940 ston Politiko Logo: Apo tin Amichania ton Nikiton sti Dikaiosi ton Itimenon*, [The decade of the 1940s in Political Discourse: From the Quandary of the "Victors" to the Moral Victory of the "Vanquished"], in N. DEMERTZIS, E. PASCHALOU, G. ANTONIOU (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 113-160.

part alongside the leader of the party, whilst the event was publicised in the Press as an anniversary linked with the party's identity⁶⁶.

However, this narrative of national reconciliation was now not only official but also dominant. Despite the conservatives' reaction no one would at this time boast that either they themselves or their father had defended Greece during the Civil War. The Civil War had been permanently etched in collective memory as a clash that slaughtered brother against brother and was catastrophic for the nation. Therefore, oblivion was incumbent and furthermore any substantial discussion on the civil conflict was avoided. No party dared to interpret, comprehend or heal wounds. On the contrary, from that point onwards, civil conflict served to incriminate the Right, which was gradually assuming the position of the defendant.

In the middle of the electoral period of 1985 the *Avriani* newspaper published a photograph of K. Mitsotakis (who had taken over from E. Averof as leader of ND) between two Nazi soldiers⁶⁷. The picture was plastered on walls in the streets by local PASOK organisations across Greece, and was re-published daily by the *Avriani*. Slogans such as «The chap will perish tonight» or «the SS poodle» dominated in electoral rallies underlining the links between the Anti-right-wing with the Resistance on the one hand and those of the Right with Collaboration on the other⁶⁸.

The reaction of K. Mitsotakis who succeeded E. Averof in the leadership of ND, was to point to his own participation in the resistance. In the following days, relevant supporting evidence was brought to the Press: accounts of compatriots and witnesses who fought alongside him, British officers' testimonies, etc. Mitsotakis himself reported upon his resistance activities at every electoral speech. In this way, the style of ND's electoral rhetoric inevitably changed. His party was gradually subsumed in the narrative and political climate of national reconciliation. Essentially, it submitted⁶⁹ to the dominance of this new view of the past⁷⁰.

At the moment, though, that the Anti-right-wing reached the zenith of its political and rhetorical power, there also started to appear the first signs of its weakening. The dynamism of the Anti-right-wing largely emanated from the need of the defeated Left for recognition and moral restitution. It was also nourished by the fear of those persecuted in the past, that a repetition of Civil War, further persecutions and marginalisation were possible, should the Right attain power once again. The dominant slogan of the electoral campaigns of 1985 and 1989 «the people don't forget what the Right stands for»⁷¹ aimed at keeping precisely this fear alight. The Left, however, without forgetting «what the Right stands for», gradually stopped fearing the repetition of the past.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ In «Avriani» [Αυριανή], 10.5.1985.

⁶⁸ «Avriani» [Αυριανή], 10.5.1985.

⁶⁹ «Avriani» [Αυριανή], 10.5.1985.

⁷⁰ «Avriani» [Αυριανή], 10.5.1985.

⁷¹ Political slogan from PASOK's electoral rallies.

It had by then become obvious that cultivating this fearful perception had led left-leaning voters in the arms of PASOK, an awareness that caused Ch. Florakis⁷² to exclaim during an electoral rally in Athens in 1985: «Enough with the Left watering others' flower pots». Faced with the cultivation of fear that the divisions of the past would make a comeback, the KKE of the Interior suggested to rise above it. «The Right today», said L. Kyrkos⁷³ at an electoral rally in Athens, «is not Makronisos⁷⁴ and prisons. These were phenomena of the Civil War and of defeat». In this way, the Right was de-mythologised and, instead of being seen as a threatening historical enemy, it was reduced to a serious political opponent, who should be confronted by political rather than emotional means. In this manner, the Left could now be freed of the past and progress towards a different future⁷⁵.

The next parliamentary elections would carve out a completely novel and groundbreaking political landscape. PASOK, exhausted by political and financial scandals and weakened by A. Papandreou's health problems, had lost its appeal in public opinion. No single party succeeded in forming a free-standing government so, on 1st July 1989, a government led by Tzanetakis was sworn in supported by the thus far unheard of – deemed by many as «unholy» – political coalition between New Democracy and Synaspismos tis Aristeras kai tis Proodou (SYN)⁷⁶. A short while later, on 29th August 1989, forty years after the cessation of armed clashes, the law was passed that would repeal Civil War consequences and incinerate the files the State Security Service had held on all dissident citizens. This act held great symbolic and political value for both parties: for ND, the past of nationalistic righteousness had always stood in the way of the party's expansion towards the Centre. Cooperation with SYN and the confirmation by law of a repeal of Civil War consequences decimated the political strength of the Anti-Right-wing and promised the advent of a new political landscape, in which ND could once and for all be rid of the nationalistic past that weighed heavily upon the party. The Left on its part, forty years after the cessation of armed conflict, not only found itself in government but also had the opportunity to walk away from the defeat of the past, which had proved a constant hindrance to its political development. PASOK, politically isolated, found itself in an awkward position, as it could not but vote for a decree, which would, nevertheless, weaken its electoral base and the power of its rhetoric.

Following the passing of this law, a new outlook on the past was made possible. In it, the Civil War was neither suppressed nor invoked as a reproach against the Left, as used to happen before. It became a part of history, which even if it might not be cited in the same way as the Resistance, could be discussed without the degree of embar-

⁷² Political leader of the Greek Communist Party.

⁷³ The political Leader of the KKE (of the Interior).

⁷⁴ An island of exile.

⁷⁵ PASCHALOU, *Apo tin Amichania ton Nikiton sti Dikaiosi ton Itimenon*, cit., pp. 145-158.

⁷⁶ Political alliance between the two communist parties before the 1989 election.

rassment caused in the past. Both protagonists abandoned the politics of memory and made the transition to a politics of oblivion. The 1940s became a distant past. One could draw positive models (the National Resistance) and conclusions as well as examples to avoid (Civil War). However, it was the ambition of both the Left and the Right for the past to cease to predetermine their political identities.

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GOLDHAGEN, THE “NEW WAVE” AND “DEBATES ON HISTORY”:
ASPECTS AND TERMS OF PUBLIC HISTORY
IN GERMANY AND GREECE

1. *Introduction*

Writing about the European twentieth century, Mark Mazower has included – in what can only be termed ‘the dark pages of civilization’ – the gradual departure from the principles of parliamentary democracy that were the legacy of the Enlightenment and whose act ultimately led to Hitler’s empire and from there on to disaster. Obviously, the author did not only describe the continent as ‘dark’ because of the terror of National Socialism but it was certainly a milestone that marked the 20th century for many decades¹. The Second World War and its horrific effects, which radically changed the way the past was perceived, constructed new collective identities and inspired equally new ideologies in the postwar world that was built on the ruins of the old, as well as around the experiences of war. Basically, this involved traumatic experiences and as such these were accompanied by selective recall, silence, and a dark side, by formal and informal, as well as individual and collective memories, and by new wars that were started in regards to the interpretations of what had happened during the War. In fact, after the fall of the communist regimes in 1989-90, the wars on the memory of WWII, on the one hand, acquired new momentum, and on the other, those that were the keepers and shapers of historical knowledge gradually shifted from having academic bearings to being figures in the public sphere.

Today, Public History clearly concerns a much wider audience than that of academic history, through the use of new technologies, of which the social media hold the first place, as do the more traditional mass media. Public History is not merely interested in informing, sensitizing and raising the awareness of the public about important historical issues, but is also intent on mobilizing the public and encouraging it to participate in the public debate, focusing attention on information and facts, as well as emotion and sentiment. The Second World War – which produced traumatic and divisive memories, certain taboos (such as collaboration with the occupiers that divides European society even today), or the Holocaust not having found its place in the his-

¹ M. MAZOWER, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century*, New Haven/London, The Penguin Press, 1998.

toriography of some countries – automatically constitutes a focal point for all who are involved in the public domain.

On the Public History agenda are included the historical controversies that at times have surrounded the traumatic past and the new questions and explanatory models of viewing the past are put before the society itself. No longer is history limited to the university lecture halls and it is no longer a subject exclusive to professional historians. On this point the two sides converge. Public History acts as mediator between public opinion and historians, but however mutually beneficial this relationship appears to be, it does not mean that both sides have shared goals or aspirations, every time. From this perspective, there are two additional reasons which Germany and Greece being interesting examples, help us to better understand the terms under which Public History and historians have a ‘discourse’: a) in both countries for many years there has been a tradition of dissension between historians about the interpretation of the war and its aftermath; of course each from a different starting point, and b) clearly, the culture of public debate differs in each country, which as such, shows the degree of historical knowledge of the society of each under different circumstances.

In postwar Germany, the course that was followed in dealing with the guilt took many directions and went through many stages, while observing the general developments during the Cold War. Initially, the attempt to forget the past and to heal the wounds within a general climate of national shame for the war crimes and the crimes against humanity was gradually converted into a process where the wrongdoers became the victims of a paranoid and criminal regime. A handful of people and some elite sections, such as the (SS) were blamed as the perpetrators of most if not all the crimes committed. This situation was reversed in the late 1960s, with the protest movements of ’68, followed by German television broadcasting the American mini-series “Holocaust”.

In particular, 1968 may well be considered as the year that characterised modern German history, with protesting youth openly defying their parents’ legacy of memory. This, of course, was preceded by the 1961 Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem and the 1963-65 Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials, which provided ample material to fuel public opinion on the crimes committed during the war. The youth of ’68 looked back to the past and with the slogan “Väter sind Täter” drew attention to the actual responsibility that lay with the perpetrators. In place of the role of victim, they wanted to have this responsibility firmly embedded in the collective memory. Despite this, however, up until the late ’70s, German society continued to waver between the need for further investigation of the past and its final burial.

From the 1980s with the well-known ‘historians dispute’, *Historikerstreit*, the discussion was expanded. Taking on public characteristics it placed the Holocaust in first place in both scientific and social interest. It is within this context that Daniel Goldhagen’s work came to enhance the debate – this time in terms of Public History – implicating the mechanisms of the Holocaust and interpreting the phenomenon of

German anti-Semitism. Despite the controversy, today in Germany there is consensus on how the Holocaust is broached. It has been given a central place in the collective memory as a unique event and any attempt to challenge it is rejected. Acceptance, study and memory of the Holocaust have been inextricably linked to the respect of achieving democracy itself².

In Greece, the academic and public debate was late in including the decade of the '40s for reasons associated with the then internal political developments. The end of the German occupation (1941-44) was followed by a bloody and painful Civil War (1946-49) and the subsequent building of an anti-communist state in the context of the Cold War. The dictatorship of April 21, 1967 – until democracy was restored in 1974 – imposed on the society, once again, silence, persecution of citizens for their political beliefs, and a selective memory of the past, especially that of the period of the Civil War as an example of a constant reminder of the danger of communism. It was not until the decade of the 1980s that Greece actually hosted conferences on the foreign occupation and the civil war. New archives emerged which complemented what was already known about these events and shed light on aspects which up to then were either not known or allowed more hypotheses to be formulated but did not reach any firm conclusions.

From the late 1990s, there was lively debate among scientists at conferences about what had happened in Greece in the '40s, which if anything, encapsulates the country's intense developments in research and historiography. Soon two distinct sides emerged – two groups of thought and research. On the one hand, were the so-called 'revisionists' and on the other, the representatives of the 'traditional school' or the defenders of the historical heritage and memory of the Left of the 40s. At the same time, this dispute which spread to the public domain, utilizing Public History as the means, was a result of the constant and incessant interest in public opinion that the Greeks had. The resulting development was certainly of interest in terms of communication, however, it was not really so fruitful in scientific terms. Whether it was from the side of the 'troublemakers' of history or those that held traditional historiographical positions, the conflict for an interpretation of the traumatic past was no longer limited to university auditoriums but using Public History as a mean, it became a part of the historical and ideological ferment of Greek public opinion³.

² G. KOKKINOS, *I skouria kai to pyr. Proseggizontas ti shesh istorias, travmatos kai mnimis (Rust and Fire. Approaching the relationship history, trauma and memory)*, Athens, Gutenberg Publishers, 2012, pp. 235-255.

³ G. ANTONIOU, *The memory and historiography of the Greek forties, 1943-1949*, Department of History and Civilization, European University Institute, Florence 2007, pp. 220-264. For more about the rewriting history process in Europe and the interrelation between the academic history and the public spheres see ID, *The lost Atlantis of objectivity: The revisionist struggles between the academic and public spheres*, in "History and Theory", 46 (December 2007), pp. 92-112.

2. The “Goldhagen Controversy” and Mass Media in Germany

In September 1996, a few months after Daniel Jonah Goldhagen’s book *Hitler’s Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*⁴, was published in German, ARD Network, Germany’s first and biggest public broadcaster, organised yet another public debate based on the book’s content, pitting the author against his critics. The way the TV channel chose to set up the discussion is telling of the terms under which History is served in the public sphere, namely, obedience to the dictates of sensationalism and the controversy that the book had aroused after its reception by the academic community and German public opinion. The scene in the studio was more like a courtroom. Goldhagen was ‘put on the stand’ while four critics of his work were literally arrayed across from him like members of a jury, which included the renowned historian Hans Mommsen and the then President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Ignatz Bubis. The role of judge-chair was taken on by the show’s host, who started off by making a mistake with the book’s title, which may have caused some viewers to perhaps justifiably wonder whether he had in fact read the book. Quickly overcoming this hitch by stealing a glance at the book’s cover, he thanked the author for his daring, on the one hand, to come all the way to Germany from the U.S. and on the other, to face head-on some of those who had criticized his work⁵.

Things did not improve for the ARD journalist. In his first question to the author, rather than actually posing a question, he stated his own personal view that from the outset the book was written to provoke. Goldhagen’s reply was as follows: that his objective had been to write a scientific study that would revive the hitherto rich discussion about the Holocaust; to reflect on the traumatic past by posing new questions or attempting to approach already known ones from a new perspective; to place in the spotlight all those who until then had fallen into the grey areas of research and to finally show the actual proportion of their heinous crimes. In his second question, the ARD journalist quoted a much higher number of Germans who had actively, willingly and voluntarily participated in the Holocaust, stating the figure to be one million when the book actually claims that there may have been more than one hundred thousand people involved, although in any case, it is extremely difficult if at all possible to determine the exact section or number of that society that was comprised of German executioners⁶.

The show continued with the guests taking up the baton to state their positions and ask the questions, attempting – in a calm and serious manner – to critically discuss the book’s central arguments. These were as follows: the Germans and not only some Ger-

⁴ D.J. GOLDHAGEN, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf Publishers, 1996.

⁵ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAox0NiDDok> in six parts.

⁶ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAox0NiDDok>

mans had the responsibility for participating in the Holocaust; the personalization and historization of the perpetrators' profiles, which also included the wider German society that was willing to not only accept but also to adopt anti-Semitism and at an appropriate time to use it in various ways as a sword against the Jews; the close relationship that the German society developed with the phenomenon of anti-Semitism and the annihilation of the Jews which even before the outbreak of the war, had cut itself off from civilization and which had paved the way for the Holocaust⁷.

Viewers participated by phoning in questions and the agitation was evident in the way some sectors of the German public had understood the book, such as the remarks that were made about Vietnam and the war crimes of the U.S. military against civilians. This debate that was broadcast nationwide ended on basically two focal points: firstly, since the book affected all of society, it was therefore, inevitable that there would be strong reactions, and secondly that these reactions were an integral component of the constructive dialogue on what had happened in World War II, as now all citizens were given the opportunity to partake and not only the members of the academic community in the closed environment of their university auditoriums⁸.

A short while later, the Second German Television ZDF likewise broadcast a debate in Aschaffenburg, taking particular care to transform the coverage into a show that bordered on a Hollywood production. The camera focuses on Goldhagen coming out of his hotel and – like a film star – getting into a car, which is followed by a security vehicle. Once at the studio police dogs are shown searching the area in preparation for all eventualities. When, however, the camera turns back to the author making his way to the arena of confrontation, we see him expressing incredulity at the commotion the book has caused, even months before its release, as well as his astonishment at being accompanied by body guards at every public appearance. The American author, this time, was on the panel or as Goldhagen put it he 'found' himself 'in amongst the Germans' for the sake of the discussion. Meanwhile a large studio audience of all ages was following with keen interest the positions taken to the burning questions on the debate agenda: Had the Germans always been anti-Semites, who under the National Socialist regime participated consciously in the genocide? Was separating the crimes from the sum of German society a convenient alibi for the society itself and its post-war survival? Did the collective responsibility reflect historical reality thus making 'The Germans' accountable? Did they know about the genocide and the extent of the crimes committed in the eastern territories or quite simply did they not want to know? Was the regular army involved and if so what was the nature of that involvement or was it 'preferable' for the Wehrmacht to remain beyond reproach? Finally, was this published thesis a generalised approach that had been written deliberately to provoke, while at the same time satisfying the author's penchant for self promotion, or in this day and age could new, younger researchers see the

⁷ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAox0NiDDok>

⁸ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAox0NiDDok>

impact of the Holocaust in a different light, such as apportioning the responsibility to every German family⁹?

The ‘Goldhagen controversy’, as it has come to be known, has been added to the list of the most serious internal conflicts on the traumatic war in Germany. It has primarily been the media (newspapers and television) which have disseminated it to such an extent that they were soon accused of committing a number of transgressions, such as the following: exploiting and politicizing history, putting on phantasmagorical performances in public, claiming a monopoly on providing an interpretation and broadcasting or disseminating the results in the public space. As Hagen Fleischer has very rightly put it in his latest book, *WWII and its many consequences* is once again being represented in contemporary European society as a result of these conflicts, not, however, in university lecture halls but as Public History. The latter – as opposed to academic History – “narrates, recalls, interprets something about the past, in relation to crucial national, historical and political issues, which problematize public opinion” and from this angle it is “able to establish or destroy collective identities”¹⁰.

Therefore, regardless of their scientific outcome, both the *Historians’ dispute* and the ‘Goldhagen controversy’ have contributed to challenging established opinion. By examining historical compromises, facts that have been conveniently ‘rounded at the edges’, and the hitherto dominant official memory, they have chosen to present the past to society in another way. And as happens in most countries – again regardless of the rules of conduct that have been defined – every time the dialogue on memory and the interpretation of the recent past has been opened, it quickly shifted from the microcosm of the experts and their in-fighting to the macrocosm of Public History, which by extension encompasses broader sectors of the population and the expression of mass public opinion¹¹.

Returning to the ARD journalist’s opening phrase of clarification to the viewers “that the debate concerned murders and millions of victims” as such it could only be incorporated in the wars of memory, which in recent years – especially after the ‘cosmogony’ of 1990 – has erupted wherever the fire of the last world war had reached. Undeniably, the mass media now play a leading role in the wars of memory as dominant mechanisms of influence in the field of Public History, at the same time imposing their own rules on the “Debates on History”, as demonstrated by the Goldhagen controversy. In the case under discussion, the mass media and the historians found the right conditions to ‘co-habitat’ in the public domain for several months, which had hitherto been unprecedented in Germany.

⁹ See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79vsRoAO6QE> in six different parts.

¹⁰ H. FLEISCHER, *I dhmosia istoria proballi tora ta thimata kai oxi tous thites* (Public History now promotes the victims and not the perpetrators), in: http://www.archive.enet.gr/online/online_issues?pid=51&dt=20/02/2009&id=92886052

¹¹ *Id*, *Oi polemoi ths mnimis. O B’ Pagkosmios Polemos sth Dhmosia Istoría* (The wars of memory. The Second World War in Public History), Athens, Nefeli Publishers, 2008², p. 378.

It was the newspapers – before television – that had unleashed the fierce attacks on Goldhagen's book, even prior to its release on the German market. Many of these newspapers, *Zeit* being foremost among them, invited eminent historians and well-known journalists to state their views in articles that were published under attention-grabbing and all-too-often scathing headlines, aimed at attracting readers. Indicatively, applying polemics with no lack of blows that were below the belt, they expressed their disagreement with the collective responsibility that the American 'sociologist' had yet again brought to the foreground. In this context, it appears that for a period of time *Sisyphus* had abandoned Greek mythology to become a German citizen. While quoting the work of Christopher Browning on everyday-ordinary men and the Holocaust, Omer Bartov noted the book's striking weaknesses and in short under the headline "Everyday monsters" [Ganz normale Männer-Ganz normale Monster] he proclaimed that a gap in the approach to the past had been created between traditional and the 'new wave of Goldhagen-type' historiography¹².

Ian Kershaw, one of the world's leading historians on Nazi Germany, associated the turmoil caused by Goldhagen's book to "the trauma of the German nation's involvement in the Holocaust" and generally "the longterm turbulent relationship the Germans have with their past." In essence, Kershaw along with the majority of the scientific community, took the view that Goldhagen's interpretation of the Holocaust was simplistic and misleading, based largely on coarse generalizations which ultimately contributed little to the historical understanding of the phenomenon. According to Kershaw, this oversimplification was one of the aspects that made the book so accessible and comprehensible to readers, and a second aspect was the fact that it touched at an emotional and moral level a large part of society, particularly the younger generation. It was mainly the young people who sought more satisfactory explanations about the past, perhaps because they were more ready and willing to accept the worst about their grandparents. Kershaw emphasizes the need for the historization of the Nazi era in an approach that is calm and sober, seen as a «historical period like any other.»¹³

Apart from the book's clever promotional mechanism that led to it becoming a best-seller, most historians point to the striking weaknesses of Goldhagen's work, without, however, always being able to discern what it is that has made this particular book so attractive as to make readers not only want to buy it, but also take part in mass public debates about it. On the one hand, it seems that in general terms many historians tend to agree either with their distinguished German colleague Eberhard Jäckel that it was "simply a bad book"¹⁴ or with those who considered it as being blatantly provoca-

¹² For only a few of the critiques that were published in the particular German newspaper, indicatively see: <http://www.zeit.de/1996/25/golda.txt.19960614.xml> (article by Ulrich Herbert) and <http://www.zeit.de/1997/12/historie.txt.19970314.xml> (article by Jürgen Habermas).

¹³ I. KERSHAW, *Hitler, the Germans and the final solution*, New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 2008 (in greek translation; Athens, Patakis Publishers, 2011), pp. 399-411.

¹⁴ A. BARKAI, *German Historians versus Goldhagen* (trans. Jerzy Michalowicz), in "Yad Vashem Studien", 26 (Jerusalem, 1998), 295-328, in: http://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20202309.pdf

tive¹⁵. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that this ‘bad book’ did again bring to the forefront important questions in a simple and understandable way, and on the level of Public Memory, it struck a chord with readers¹⁶.

Michael Schneider, in a study funded by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, has gathered and assessed all the basic parameters of the Goldhagen controversy as a historians’ dispute in the media. Chapter three entitled “The importance of the case for scientific research and political culture” is of particular interest. Here an attempt was made to interpret the reasons that the majority of the scientific community and Goldhagen parted ways, however, it was the strengths and weaknesses of the work that naturally constituted the common ground of the two opposing sides. The interpretation given was consistent with the German tradition for teaching the past and how the past is used in the present, as well as with the gap between Public and Academic History. The former is of course closer to public opinion, listening to it and mobilizing it emotionally, while the latter having little or no connection with society and lacking the ability to exert influence on it, is obviously far removed from the media. From this perspective, Goldhagen’s book showed that “a scientific work, and a thesis at that, may not only interest a wide sector of the general public but also mobilize it politically and ethically, at least for a period of time.” In addition, the controversy surrounding the book can in practice be interpreted as yet another test of endurance and tolerance for the liberal federal society, whose critical confrontation with its Nazi past comprises each time an exercise in courage, demonstrating the contemporary political system’s maturity as well as reaffirming its democratic identity¹⁷.

The formation of public opinion through the wide active participation of large audiences at the public debates signifies that Goldhagen had managed to touch the public in a distinctly direct way. He was aware that in order to achieve this, both media coverage and the use of a more familiar, more comprehensible language, were essential. These were two details that offered him the competitive edge over his fellow historians of the traditional German school, as it could perhaps be characterized. The latter, in their attempt to deal with the situation, put forward a number of arguments, claiming that the work offered nothing new to research, that the data were well known long before the author entered the academic arena, that the author was not even a historian but a political scientist and therefore his handling of the National Socialist period did not comply with the rules or the tools of *Κλειώ* (Clio), and finally, that turning history into a performance subjugated the science to the rules of the Mass Media. The traditionalists argued that the only outcome was that Goldhagen’s book

¹⁵ F. STERN, *The Goldhagen Controversy. One Nation, One People, One Theory?*, in “Foreign Affairs”, 75/6 (1996), pp. 128-138.

¹⁶ G. ELEY, *Ordinary Germans, Nazism, and Judeocide*, in *The “Goldhagen Effect”. History, Memory, Nazism-Facing the German Past*, G. Eley (ed.), Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2000, pp. 24-31.

¹⁷ M. SCHNEIDER, *Die ‘Goldhagen-Debatte: ein Historikerstreit in der Mediengesellschaft’*, Bonn, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1997, in <http://www.fes.de/fulltext/historiker/00144.htm>

having become the most sought after book in recent years was promptly placed on the bestseller list¹⁸. In any case, judging from the hundreds of letters spilling out of his letterbox, the battered-from-all-sides Goldhagen had spurred the public's interest, be that positively or negatively. Incidentally, some of the correspondence he published in a separate book as a general response on his behalf, just one year after the publication of his thesis¹⁹.

3. "The Debates on History" in Greece

In 1981 there was a political change in Greece, where the Socialists (the Panhellenic Socialist Movement Party-PASOK) came to power, thus, putting an end to the hitherto monopoly of the right-wing ruling parties. The effect was to gradually bring to predominance another memory of the 1940s, which is rightly referred to as the "memory of the defeated". What this meant in practice was that the up until then political organisation that had been persecuted and excluded from power, now had the opportunity to impact public opinion through the promotion of their own agenda and their particular collective image for the period of the Axis occupation (1941-1944) and the Civil War (1946-1949). Subsequently, they were able to gradually make their interpretation of events prevail over the narrative of the right. In this decade, an attempt was made to reach a political settlement to the traumatic recent past with two major legislative changes, which not only altered the way events were conceived but also narrated. The first was in 1982 when the PASOK government introduced legislation granting official recognition to the various National Resistance organisations and by so doing re-established the role that the Left had played; the reasons for this were obviously related to the political reality of the times. The second initiative was in 1989 when the short-term coalition government, comprising the right-wing New Democracy Party (ND) and the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), passed a Bill to obliterate the division of the Civil War through a process of reconciliation between the left and the right; thereby formally closing a long period of ongoing suffering which had been re-ignited by the military dictatorship of the Colonels' Junta in 1967-1974²⁰.

At the same time, a substantial number of conferences, mainly focusing on the Civil War, were organised at international, national and local levels. This started in 1999, which was the year that marked the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Civil War. It is interesting to note that the issue of the Greek Civil War had until then been discussed at conventions organised outside Greece, as the events were too close to home so to speak -both in terms of time period and ideological convictions- for it to be interpreted

¹⁸ T. BENNER, C.R. KÖSTER, *Auf ewig Sisyphos? Die Goldhagen-Debatte und die politische Kultur der Berliner Republik*, in <http://www.gppi.net/fileadmin/gppi/ThorstenGoldhagen.pdf>.

¹⁹ D.J. GOLDHAGEN (ed.), *Briefe an Goldhagen*, Berlin, Siedler Verlag, 1997.

²⁰ ANTONIOU, *The memory and historiography of the Greek forties, 1943-1949*, cit. pp. 182-194.

in a dispassionate or objective manner within the country itself. In fact, only since 2000 has there been a need for an interdisciplinary, systematic and renewed approach to research for the period of 1941-1949. Further research based on new archival material that has come to light has led to the establishment of the Network for the Study of the Civil War, whose main objectives, apart from organizing an annual conference, is to promote unhindered communication between new and older generation scholars. The conferences that have been held to date have had a significant contribution in the development of scientific dialogue and debate both in and out of the university auditoriums. It appears that finally in Greece, the controversial decade of the 1940s has become an accepted and established issue for discussion not only in academic circles but also in the public sphere²¹.

These conferences have highlighted a number of key issues in the areas of domestic policy, social reality and scientific research for which often there were very different approaches. As mentioned in the introduction, two schools of historiographical thought gradually formed, which despite sharing the common outlook that the earlier dominant interpretations of the past needed to be seen from a modern historiographical perspective taking into account both the latest trends and the array of methodological tools, went their separate ways convinced that that the scientific paradigm would be given a political slant by the other side. This discussion, which began with the decade of the '40s, took a public dimension and many other sectors of society other than the scientific community became involved when it was realized that the issue at stake was not only the meaning of the past but also of the present. Thus in post-modern Greek society, a new conflict concerning the past arose between the Left and the Right, which was of a social and political nature²².

The stormy debate among the scientists about the decade of the '40s in Greece was triggered by the article written by two political scientists, Stathis Kalyvas and Nikos Marantzidis, entitled "New trends in the study of the Civil War". In this they highlighted ten points for the study of the Civil War (1946-1949) that offered new data to the research, raised new questions with regard to interdisciplinarity and approached the past dispassionately, without the political and ideological tensions of the post-war and the Cold War Era: a) moving the chronological beginning of the Civil War (1946-1949) to the years during the German occupation (1943-1944), b) ideological distance,

²¹ S.N. DORDANAS, I.D. MICHAILIDIS, *Kritiki theorisi ths bibliografias gia ton Emfilio Polemo* (A Critical Review of the Literature on the Civil War (1990-2006), in I. MOURELOS, I.D. MICHAILIDIS (ed.), *O ellhnikos Emfilios Polemos. Mia apotimisi* (*The Greek Civil War. An Evaluation*), Athens, IMXA/Ellhnika Grammata Publishers, 2007, pp. 183-194.

²² V. TZOUKAS, *'O Emfilios' mesa tous. Sygxrones ermhnies gia th dekaetia 1940-1950 kai politikes diamaxes sthn ellhnikh metaneoterikothta* (The Civil War within them. Contemporary interpretations on the decade of 1940-1950 and political conflicts in Greek postmodernity), in *Afghhseis gia th dekaetia tou 1940. Apo to logo tou katoxikou kratous sth metaneoterikh istoriografia* (*Narratives for the decade of the 1940s. From the Occupied State to the postmodern historiography*), V. DALKAVOUKIS, E. PASCHALOUDI, H. SKOULIDAS, K. TSEKOU (ed.), Thessaloniki, Epikentro Publishers, 2012, pp. 399-416.

c) refraining from herorization or demonization, d) bringing up issues that are taboo, as was violence and collaboration with the occupational authorities, e) shifting from dealing with the huge bulk of work to smaller, more collective work that is complementary and which feeds into and fuels one another, f) taking the focus from general to local history, i.e., from centralised history to micro-history, g) critiquing entrenched interpretations (e.g., the major factors of foreign intervention in the outbreak of the Greek civil war), h) highlighting the complexity of the Civil War as a social phenomenon, i) shifting attention to the masses and studying people at the grassroots level under abnormal conditions, and k) integrating the Greek situation within a broader comparative context²³.

In Greece, in the last thirteen years or so a seemingly endless conflict has been started about the decade of the 1940s and its traumatic consequences on society. The following are just some of the points which the 'new wave' of historians have been criticised by the 'old' for: self-promotion through research; producing provocative and politically oriented work for the insatiable appetite of the public of the Mass Media and the sensationalisation of historical public opinion. They claim that only a small contribution has been made to research through finding new factual data and presenting interpretive models that had hitherto not emerged. The present paper does not attempt to give a review of the dialogue that was carried out initially in the newspaper *Ta Nea* [The News] and then in the other print media – it must be noted here, however, that the lion's share of this debate belongs to the newspapers and the Internet, while television was involved only to a very small extent. The main point of interest is the level of the dialogue that was presented between the scientists with the mass media as a channel of communication, which revolved around the outbreak of the Civil War, the different interpretations given to the phenomenon of violence, as well as the focus on local history²⁴.

As Polymeris Voglis notes in his historical text on the war, "The harshness of some articles published and the stabs in the arguments, give the impression that the civil war has moved from the battlefields of the 1940s to those historians whose field is the Civil War". He, himself does not recognize two 'camps' but rather "a wide range of arguments, scientific positions and methodological approaches" which needed to be built on an interactive relationship on which different fertile views and interpretations developed²⁵.

This issue was also taken up by Antonis Liakos in his article with the original title *Guerrillas and Bandits in Academic Auditoriums*. Having presented a historiographical

²³ They concluded: «These recent studies represent research trends that in other European countries have already occurred, either earlier (e.g., in France, Italy, the Netherlands) or more recently (e.g., in Spain). It is worth noting that initially in these countries there were similar reactions and debates as is now happening in Greece. In all the cases, however, these reactions subsided, discussions expanded and new research findings eventually became part of the public domain», see: http://ta-nea.dolnet.gr/neaweb/neafle.pf?entypo=A&my_fyllo=17895.

²⁴ http://ta-nea.dolnet.gr/neaweb/neafle.pf?entypo=A&my_fyllo=17895

²⁵ For Vogli's text see: <http://spot.gr/politics/ideogramms/1921-Opolemostvnisto.html>

review and periodization of scientific interest in the '40s in association with the internal political developments, he talks about challenge, reminding us of the respective arguments that were put forward in the Goldhagen controversy: “[...] these points of view provoked reactions in the academic auditoriums, often turning unjustifiably acrimonious. However, these views were in themselves provocations because they were presented as a revision of the leftist version that exists in the academic world, as well as in the tradition of history since the return to democracy onwards. Pluralism is not bad, so long as interactivity is guaranteed²⁶.

It is not certain that the much-desired interactivity can be guaranteed through what were essentially monologues as these appeared in the newspapers under sharp-witted headlines to connect the bipolar relationship of modernization for example with the popularized images of ‘leftist barbarity’; History with gossip; contemporary research about the Nazi collaborators with the issue of their non-punishment in post-war Greece; and criticism with the fear of returning to the period of terror and Civil War²⁷. Both schools of thought refer to dialogue and its contribution. In actual fact, this dialogue has found more fertile ground at scientific conferences where agreements and disagreements are expressed in sober but at times forceful tones.

The public was not a mere passive observer in the Greek version of the “Debates on History” and the ongoing war of the historians about the recent past. It followed close on the heels of academic history as it turned its interest to the 1940s. Only that in this opportunity to participate in the public debate about history, it failed to disengage itself from either the ideological or emotional load in order to be able to contribute productively to dealing with the memory of the social consequences of the Civil War. This happened because in modern Greece the postwar political environment perpetuated the repercussions of the Civil War for several decades after its official end. This thus, did not allow for a dispassionate view of events, and only in recent years have academics become more receptive to having a discussion with the public on issues concerning the memory of the traumatic past and the process of understanding it. However, neither has the state been eager to contribute its share in restoring public discussion by ensuring that the right conditions exist for the promotion of research. In essence, it has opted instead for amnesia, alluding yet again to the wounds of the past

²⁶ A. LIAKOS, *Antartes kai symmorites sta akadimaika amfitheatra* (Guerrillas and Bandits in Academic Auditoriums), *I Ellada '36-'49. Apo th diktatoria ston Emfilio: Tomes kai synexeies* (Greece '36-'49. From Dictatorship to Civil War: cross-sections and continuation), 4th edition, H. FLEISCHER (ed.), Athens, Kastaniotis Publishers, 2003, p. 35.

²⁷ For example, the headlines of the articles published in the newspaper “Ta Nea”, which held the “Dialogue on History”, is typical of the accusations/criticism launched by the so called traditional (or left) historiography against the “new right-wing movement” of historical revisionism, attempts to restore the reputation of the German collaborators, falsification of history, anticommunism, and so on. This reaction was interpreted by Marantzidis and Kalyvas as the inability to understand new research data and the tenacious clinging on to established positions, as a result of the return to democracy (*Μεταπολίτευση*) (1974) and since then the predominant historiography of the losing side in the Greek civil war.

and their need to be healed²⁸, which at times, can result in acts of national mnemonic-suicide²⁹.

4. Conclusion

Now, the thematic and interpretative agenda on the Second World War and the Civil War in Greece has been well and truly expanded to include all of the following: the availability of new archival material; the breaking of historical taboos; highlighting the local dimension while also taking into account the more central or ideological issues; the addition of new scientific work to that already existing; reflecting by returning to the past with new questions; and the inclusion of Public History as a distinct scientific field. As can be seen in the cases of both Germany and Greece, the ‘new wave’ of historiography, often corresponding to the new generation of scientists, may from their inception appear to create a lot of ‘noise’, but at the same time they are also good receptors of the new research tools, and with increasing participation in the process of interpreting the past in a dynamic public space.

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²⁸ For the integration of the 1940s decade into the political parties’ public discourse on the post-civil war as well as how the past was dealt with within the dictates of the political and social context see: E. PASCHALOUDI, *Enas polemos xoris telos. I dekaetia tou 1940 ston politiko logo, 1950-1967 (A War without End. The 1940s political discourse, 1950-1967)*, Thessaloniki, Epikentro Publishers, 2010. Also, TZOUKAS, “O Emfilios’ mesa tous”.(The Civil War within them), cit. p. 411.

²⁹ It is well-known that within the spirit of the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Civil War and under the law to eliminate its consequences, the Right - Left coalition in 1989 took the decision to destroy the individual files held at the departments of the Ministry of Public Order of those Greek citizens who had held strong political convictions. Despite the strong opposition by the united community of historians, they were burnt on August 29, 1989, the same day as the official end of the Civil War (08/29/1949). On that day, Filippou Eliou ended his article of protest against the political decision as follows: “[...] Certain of her splendor and gumption, pyromaniac and uneducated, insular and rural, Greece is heading, headlong, to ‘meet’ the world of the technological revolution and the new arithmetic horizons (1992, 2000). With horse-carts and wooden clogs. But with a clear conscience [...]” see F. ELIOU, *Psifides istorias kai politikis tou eikostou aiona* (Pieces of history and politics of the twentieth century), Athens, Polis Publishers, 2007, p. 44.

PUBLIC HISTORY AND THE ISSUE OF TORTURE UNDER THE COLONELS' REGIME IN GREECE

Τα ελληνικά αινίγματα
- Τι είναι αυτό που ανεβαίνει με τα πόδια και το κατεβάζουν με κουβέρτα;
The Greek Enigmas
- What goes up on foot and is taken down inside a blanket?

Rena Hatzidaki (Marina), Κατάσταση Πολιορκίας [State of Siege]

Torture studies is a distinct field of analysis and representation of the coercive experience of authoritarianism. Such is the case of the seven years of the Colonels' dictatorship of 1967-74, a period initiated by the *coup d'état* of a group of junior officers in the Greek military which rapidly became infamous for its repressive tactics¹. The officers, colonels mostly, took control of the country on April 21, 1967, declaring that they were instruments of a National Resurrection and a National Purification, whereby Greece would be allegedly purged of corruption, mismanagement, and, most importantly, the Communist menace. Part of their methods was the use of systematic acts of violence, with torture holding a privileged position. Not surprisingly, the intense interest in the experience of torture, the most odious instrument of repression exercised by the regime, sparked a publishing boom of testimonies in Greece, right after the Cyprus debacle that precipitated the regime's demise in the summer of 1974². Testimonies of torture victims became immensely popular in the years of the democratic transition. This interest in the experience of the victims of torture, which was invested with heroism, reached its climax in the early 1980s but atrophied relatively quickly. The issue of torture in Greece attracted wide public attention abroad as well, and in particular in Italy France and West Germany³.

¹ These tactics, however, were based on previous experience of institutionalized torture, from the inter-war period and the civil-war and post civil-war years in Greece. See N. PANOURGIA, *Dangerous Citizens. The Greek Left and the Terror of the State*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2009.

² M. DARAKI-MALLET, *Οι Εσατζήδες* [The ESA Men], Athens, Kedros, 1975. A. MINIS, *111 μέρες στην ΕΣΑ* [111 days at ESA], Athens, Fytrakis, 1979. Ο. FALLACI, *Ένας Άντρας* [A Man], Athens, Exantas, 1980 (1979).

³ Periklis Korovesis's acclaimed book *Οι ανθρωποφύλακες* [The Method] on his ruthless treatment once arrested was translated into many languages, including French in 1969 (Paris, Seuil), Swedish (Stockholm: Rubén et Sjörgen, 1970) and English (Alison and Busby, London, 1970), while Alekos Panagoulis's

Interestingly, when this interest receded new forms of representation of the Greek Junta emerged – especially from the 1990s onwards. A more nostalgic and bittersweet depiction of the Greek *Long Sixties* became a dominant trope of mainly filmic representations that acquired a hegemonic role in public history, mostly owed to the fact that a number of film directors idealized their adolescent years. In literature as well the issue of torture became marginal, with a few notable exceptions⁴. Things seemed to change with the unprecedented riots of 2008 and the onset of the economic crisis, which not only politicized a new generation of Greeks but also put in doubt some of the fundamental premises of the country's transition to democracy. What is more, a renewed interest in the Junta was boosted as the period of the Colonels' rule became a point of reference, both in negative and positive terms. In the summer of 2011, for instance a grassroots social movement emerged in Greece, rallying against the unprecedented austerity measures adopted by the government. Their slogan «Bread, Education, Freedom. The Junta did not end in 1973», brought the past even more to the fore by adopting the most famous catchphrase of the Polytechnic uprising of November 1973 and by implying continuity in terms of the Greek state's brutal tactics. On the opposite side of the spectrum, and with the Neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn becoming increasingly popular, a revisionism regarding the Junta years simultaneously emerged, involving scepticism about the existence of torture or casualties during those years. These events had an inevitable impact on the public history of the Junta as they placed the emphasis back to politics. This is therefore a typical case in which the past haunts the present and the present haunts the past.

Forty-six years after the imposition of the Greek *coup d'état*, torture, one of the main tools for the consolidation of the Colonels' power, is seen as a distinct field for the analysis and representation of the experience of the Junta years. Seriously complementing the scarce historiography on the matter, the present article sets out to analyse the complex ways in which five artefacts managed to shift attention to torture, by focusing on a novella, a novel, a graphic novel, a documentary film, and a published memoir. As torture is a case par excellence whereby the tension between the private and the public is accentuated, it is worth analysing how this *public history* – in the Habermasian notion of the *public sphere*⁵ – opened up the way for a more nuanced analysis of the

detailed descriptions of his protracted physical and psychological abuse after his abortive attempt to assassinate dictator Georgios Papadopoulos in August 1968 had a powerful impact on both the Italian (*Altri seguiranno: poesie e documenti dal carcere di Boyati*, Palermo, S.F. Flaccovio, 1972) and the French public (D. LANGLOIS, *Panagoulis, la sang de la Grèce*, Paris, Maspéro, 1969). France was equally stirred by Jean Starakis's chilling account (*Dans les prisons des colonels*, Paris, B. Grasset, 1971), while West Germany was particularly shocked when Günther Walraff, a German journalist, who tied himself to a pole in protest in the spring of 1974, was arrested, beaten and tortured by the Greek police (*Unser Faschismus nebenan. Griechenland gestern – ein Lehrstück für morgen*, Cologne, Kiepenheuer & Witsch Verlag, 1975.)

⁴ See T. VALTINOS, *Πιπεριές στη γλάστρα* [Peppers in the Flowerpot], in *Θα βρείτε τα οστά μου υπό βροχήν* [You will find my bones under the rain], Athens, Agra, 1992 and M. ΔΟΥΚΑ, *Η Πηγάδα* [The Well], Athens, Kedros, 1997.

⁵ See in this respect J. LIDINGTON, *What Is Public History? Publics and Their Pasts, Meanings and Practices*, in "Oral History", 30: 1 (Spring, 2002), pp. 83-93.

private history of suffering. It is, I argue, primarily this new cultural output that placed the emphasis of public history not only back on the politics of 1967-74 and the repressive tactics of the regime, but also on the personalized stories and the individual traumas.

1. *The 'Greek Case'*

During the years of the dictatorial regime, the human body became, to quote Michel Foucault, the site of «political investment»: the political investment of an entire repressive system⁶: an authoritarian regime that resorted to coercion and terrorization to assert its authority. Torture under the Colonels was mostly applied by carefully trained interrogators, namely torturers who served in the civilian and army police forces: the Security Police (*Asfaleia*) and the Greek Military Police, the notorious ESA, with EAT, its Special Interrogation Unit. Apart from the deliberate infliction of pain, torture served the dual purpose of extracting information from political prisoners and of intimidating the public in general. Hannah Arendt's point on the communicative effect of terror is particularly pertinent here, as it affects a subject with the objective of terrorizing a third party: society as a whole⁷.

Both *Asfaleia* and ESA were notorious for combining complete isolation and interrogation with ruthless torture⁸. They relied heavily on the *falanga*, which entailed the beating of prisoners with iron rods on the soles of their feet with their hands tied – a practice that almost always was the initial form of torture⁹. In many cases, however, torturers resorted to even more extreme practices, ranging from fake executions to sexual torture and electroshock. Moreover, the use of deliberately and stereotypically sexist and offensive language was a standard means of humiliation and dehumanization. Most of the time, interrogation served as nothing more than an opportunity to perform acts of domination. To paraphrase literary theorist Patricia Felisa Barbeito «the body served as the stage of historical power struggles»¹⁰. Memories of these acts are often so poignant that narration at present becomes extremely difficult and sometimes impossible for the individuals who experienced them, a fact that I myself witnessed when interviewing people whose life stories were marked by such traumatic events¹¹.

⁶ M. FOUCAULT, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, New York, Vintage Books, 1995 (1977), p. 25.

⁷ See H. ARENDT, *On Violence*, Fort Washington, Harvest Book, 1970.

⁸ The torturers of the ESA were often young recruits completing their military service, while the officers in the *Asfaleia* were usually high-ranking officials.

⁹ *Torture in Greece. The First Torturers' Trial 1975*, London, Amnesty International, 1977, p. 11.

¹⁰ From Patricia Barbeito's unpublished presentation of the English translation of Elias Maglinis' novella at Brown University, 2 November 2010.

¹¹ See K. KORNETIS, *Children of the Dictatorship. Student Resistance, Cultural Politics and the "Long 1960s"*, New York and Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2013.

Torture under the Greek regime was condemned internationally. In late December 1967, Amnesty International dispatched American lawyer James Becket and British lawyer Anthony Marreco to Greece to investigate the torture allegations. After interviewing a number of victims Becket and Marreco documented twenty-two methods of torture, including sexual abuse, psychological pressure, electric shock and, most commonly, *falanga*¹². In late 1969 the European Commission on Human Rights made use of these reports to take measures to expel Greece from the Council of Europe on the grounds of systematic use of torture¹³. This was the first and only time that an international institutional body condemned the Greek dictatorship. At the same time, the ‘Greek case’, as it became known, debunked the Colonels’ claim that accounts of torture were nothing more than leftist fiction. The then recent memories of the Nazi period, the war in Vietnam and the arrival of a new concept, ‘human rights’, that had not existed prior to that time, were the crucial factors that convinced Scandinavian politicians, in particular, to take a firm stance against the Junta¹⁴. As identical methods of torture had been used in Indochina, Algeria, Vietnam and Latin America, this gave the sense of a «multinational corporation of torture», to quote Italian journalist Giorgio Bocca¹⁵. Many analysts saw this firm stance by the Council as a shift in European foreign policy towards idealism, as opposed to hardcore pragmatism. In spite of such a reaction from abroad in terms of torture, Great Britain, West Germany and France did not cease to procure arms for the Greek dictators¹⁶.

The condemnation of torture by the Greek justice system after the collapse of the dictatorship in the summer of 1974 was not, however, as vocal. Nonetheless, Greek torturers were not amnestied in Greece as in other cases following the collapse of authoritarian regimes – such as Spain, Turkey or Latin American countries – but were put on trial instead. Paloma Aguilar Fernández’s conclusion on the remarkable etymological affinity between the words *amnesty* and *amnesia* fits in perfectly with those other

¹² *Torture in Greece...*, *op. cit.*

¹³ See D. KONSTAS, *Η «ελληνική υπόθεση» στο Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης: θεωρία και πρακτική πολιτικής πιέσεως από διεθνείς οργανισμούς* [The “Greek Case” at the European Council 1967-69: Theory and Practice of Political Pressure by International Organizations], Athens, Papazisis, 1976.

¹⁴ See the Introduction by Takis Kabylis in the published report regarding the use of torture in Greece that was used by the Council of Europe in 1969, first published in Greece in 2009. The volume included a powerful personal testimony from one of the most notorious places of torture, on Bouboulina Street, by one of the co-editors, Kostis Giourgos. Alongside this, there are translated excerpts from the “Torture Files” from the famous “Black Book of the Dictatorship in Greece” that was published in 1969 by Athènes-Presses Libres, a bulletin published in France, co-edited by Aris Fakinos, Kleman Lepidis and Richardos Someritis with horrible details regarding the victims. K. GIORGOS, T. KABYLIS, J. BECKET, *Η τράτασα της Μπουμπουλίνας. Καταστολή και βασανιστήρια στην Ελλάδα του '67-'69* [The Bouboulina Street Terrace: Repression and torture in Greece 1967-69], Athens, Potamos, 2009.

¹⁵ G. BOCCA, *Prefazione all'edizione italiana*, in J. BECKET (ed), *Tortura in Grecia. Racconti-testimonianze e documenti*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1970.

¹⁶ See A. TREHOLT, *Europe and the Greek Dictatorship*, in R. CLOGG and G. YANNOPOULOS (ed.), *Greece Under Military Rule*, New York, Basic Books, 1972, pp. 210-225.

cases¹⁷. Greece, by contrast, is the only country with a dictatorial regime in the 1960s and 1970s, where the ringleaders of the coup, the so-called *protaitioi*, were tried and condemned to death – even if their sentences were immediately commuted to life imprisonment. Moreover, Greece saw the so-called ‘trials of the torturers’; these public trials offered a rare preliminary picture of the ways in which torturers were selected and trained by the Greek military police. The behavior and the jargon used by the torturers for specific types of group torture – such as ‘tea party’, ‘tea party with toast’, ‘horizontally and vertically’ and ‘Motorola’ – were also revealed, causing sensation¹⁸.

The verdicts, however, were far from satisfactory. Apart from the aggressive and provocative stance of many torturers towards their victims during the judicial process, the judges themselves often showed a remarkable lack of sensitivity to the victims’ trauma and their need to talk about the violence inflicted upon them in detail. Perhaps most shocking to a present-day reader of trials are the times when the judges silenced victims on the grounds that the details they were recounting were «too pornographic», a fact that speaks volumes about the moral standards of conservative Greek society at the time regarding sexual torture. Furthermore the most notorious torturers received surprisingly short sentences¹⁹. For many in the extreme Left this was proof that the so-called democratization and de-Juntification processes were a façade and the transition to democracy a fraud: a change of guard. And this is precisely the moment at which terrorist organizations of the Left, such as *17 November* and *Group June ’78*, decided to act as avengers and to execute torturers, namely Evangelos Malios in 1976 and Petros Babalis in 1979 – generating sympathy for their cause and tolerance towards their practices amongst vast segments of the Greek population²⁰.

¹⁷ P. AGUILAR FERNANDEZ, *Memory and Amnesia. The role of the Spanish Civil War in the Transition to Democracy*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2002, p. 17.

¹⁸ P. RODAKIS (ed.), *Οι δίκες της Χούντας. Πλήρη Πρακτικά. Οι δίκες των βασανιστών* [The Junta Trials. Full Minutes. The Trials of the Torturers], 3 vols, Athens, Διμοκρατικοί Καιροί, 1976. The difference between the Military and the Security Police were imprinted on the second ESA Torturers’ Trial in October 1975, where the sentences were considerably heavier in comparison to the Security Police Torturers’ Trial in November 1975. Among the accused in the Security Police Trial were members of the Central Information Agency (KYP) and the Security Police leadership; therefore, the political risk was higher. See K. STEFATOS, *Engendering the Nation: Women, State Oppression and Political Violence in post-war Greece (1946-1974)*, unpublished doctoral thesis, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2012, p. 172, n. 509.

¹⁹ See K. KORNETIS, *Children of the Dictatorship*, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

²⁰ The manifesto of the *17 November* organization gave the following reasoning: «For two entire years the Greek People await to see the punishment of police torturers, people’s criminals who have been torturing thousands of antifascist fighters for 7.5 years with medieval and barbaric torture. And instead of punishment they see the redemption of the torturers. All the police torturers circulate freely. Most of them resumed their positions. And the ones who retired as a façade remain the secret consultants of police while at the same time they relax in luxurious hotels and the villas which they built by torturing the Greek People.» See *17 Νοέμβρη οι προκηρύξεις 1975-2002. Όλα τα κείμενα της οργάνωσης* [17 November the pamphlets 1975-2002. All the texts of the organization], Athens, Kaktos, 2002. Also see G. KASSIMERIS, *Europe’s Last Terrorists. The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York, New York University, 2000, p. 24.

2. *My Father Bleeds History*

Almost thirty years after the torturers' executions, the question of torture as a whole was brought back to the forefront by a number of non-academic works²¹. The most important exponent of the renewed interest in torture was Elias Maglinis with his much acclaimed novella *The Interrogation*²² on a former left-winger who implicitly carries the trauma of his ruthless (sexual) torture during the Junta, almost four decades later. Maglinis' book almost coincided with a period in which the most important memoirs regarding torture were republished²³, and with a number of scholars trying to reawaken interest in the subject²⁴. The novella itself gave a powerful push to both literary and academic works that appeared after 2009²⁵.

The book's main themes revolve around torture and trauma in the specific historical coordinates not only of 1967-74 but also of 2008, thus linking past and present in an intriguing way. Maglinis himself noted:

The truth is that I had always been intrigued by what happened in those cells during the dictatorship. I was too young to remember anything and besides I lived the first three years of my life in the Congo and my family returned to Greece shortly before the fall of the dictatorship, but for me all this was too recent and also from time to time I encountered some people, much older than me, whom as I was told afterwards «he or she was one of those who were tortured». They never talked about that but it so happened sometimes that they would meet by accident their former torturer in the street or in the bus. Some of them fled in horror but others actually talked very casually with them. For me all this was stranger than fiction. So it had to become fiction²⁶.

²¹ The works analyzed in this article are far from being exhaustive in terms of the new tendency and artifacts that deal with torture, in either a direct or a tangential manner. An interesting case study that is not covered here, for example, is Natalie Bakopoulos' intriguing novel *The Green Shore*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 2012, which follows a Greek family throughout the Junta years. It is telling that Eleni, one of the main characters in the novel, operates an underground clinic for torture victims.

²² E. MAGLINIS, *Η ανάκριση* [The Interrogation], Athens, Kedros, 2008. All citations from this book will be indicated within the corpus of the text with the page number in brackets.

²³ See in this respect P. KOROVESIS, *Ανθρωποφύλακες* [Humanwatchers], Athens, Electra, 2007; Kitty Arseni, *Μπουμπουλίνας 18: Μαρτυρία* [18 Bouboulina St.: Testimony], Athens, Kedros, 2005. P. VLASSIS, *Διαδρομές Ζωής, Πολιτική και πολιτικοί* [Life Paths. Politics and politicians] Athens, Epsilon, 2009.

²⁴ M. HARITOS-FATOUROS' study *The Psychological Origins of the Institutionalized Nature of Torture*, London, Routledge, 2003; T. Mitafidis and C. Mouhayier (eds.), *Γυναίκες στον Αντι-δικτατορικό Αγώνα* [Women in the Anti-Dictatorship Struggle], *Conference Proceedings*, Thessaloniki, EDIA, 2006.

²⁵ In terms of the latter see, in particular, K. STEFATOS, "The Female and Political Body in Pain: Sexual torture and Trauma during the Greek Military Dictatorship (1967-1974)" in *Gendered Wars, Gendered Memories*, edited by A. GUL ALTINAY and A. PETO, London, Ashgate, forthcoming, and A. ΠΑΡΑΕΤΙ, "Music, Torture, Testimony: Reopening the Case of the Greek Junta (1967-1974)", *The World of Music*, 2 (2013) 1: 67-89, for two systematic explorations of aspects of the experience of torture, through gender and sound respectively.

²⁶ From Maglinis's unpublished presentation of the *Interrogation* entitled "My Father Bleeds History"- a powerful reference to Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, Brown University, 2 November 2010.

The Interrogation is set in Athens in a present that is shaped by the traumatic past. We are introduced to the sixty-year old Kostis, a journalist-translator and former dissident during the junta period. Kostis was arrested by the military police (the notorious ESA) and suffered torture, including sexual abuse – experiences about which he maintains a voluntarily unflinching silence – in contrast to those real life victims of torture who were forcefully silenced in court²⁷. As the novel progresses we witness his fraught and disturbing relationship with his 30-year old daughter, Marina, who is clearly haunted by her father's experiences, not because she, herself, has lived them or has direct access to them, but because the trauma is, in some sense, inherited.

In Maglinis' book the unspeakable experiences of the past are passed on to the following generations, not because the father-victim talked about them but precisely because of their silencing. Marina literally embodies the traumatic past, using self-mutilation as a vehicle both for memory and art. Taking her cue from her idol, the Serbian conceptual artist Marina Abramoviæ, Marina turns violence on herself as a way to transform her family's history into performance; she «plays out» the repressed trauma by using her own body as a tool for re-telling and a vehicle for understanding and redemption. No longer able to countenance her father's silence, Marina finally goes all-out in an attempt to get her father to talk about a past that he has completely sealed off. Her obsession with her father's well-kept secrets comes to a head when in a sort of provocative meta-interrogation she tries to make him speak out about the taboo issue of sexual torture that was inflicted on him, as well as his retirement from active politics after the fall of the Junta.

“When are you going to tell me your dream, daddy?”

That question – posed somewhere between sleep and wakefulness. That question, hanging over his head now for years. And its many offshoots: Why do your feet swell so, dad?

Why didn't you want a boy, dad? Why do you jump up in your sleep, dad? Why don't you ever talk to me about your nightmares, dad? Dad? Daddy? What did they do to you in there, dad? (18)

In Tatjana Aleksic's words, Marina «seems unable to reflect on the psychological and social consequences of her father's trauma and the circumstances under which it was inflicted. She utilizes published trial proceedings, with which she interrogates her father, to produce an obscene spectacle that in Kostis' opinion prostitute both the memory and the suffering of the victims»²⁸:

²⁷ However, sexual torture was an issue of which real life victims were often reluctant to speak. The case of Kitty Arseni is indicative. On this issue see Stefatos, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁸ T. ALEKSIC, *The Sacrificed Body. Balkan Community Building and the Fear of Freedom*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013, p. 168.

“What was ‘tea party with toast’?”

“It’s a type of torture, I don’t remember what exactly.”

“Don’t pretend you don’t know. It says right here that ‘tea party with toast’ – look, don’t be scared, look at the underlined parts here – was an idea of Spanos’s. Like ‘horizontal and perpendicular,’ what was that?”

“I no longer remember, Marina. In any case, Petrou explains it all in there.”

“I want you to tell me.”

“I don’t remember.”

“You’re lying. You remember, but you won’t tell me. It doesn’t matter – you will eventually. You’ll remember. You’ll see. Look at what this witness says here, ‘The guards wore civilian clothes and flip-flops. They held a Tommy gun in one hand and a radio in the other. My heart bled for what the army had come to.’ What’s the meaning of all that?”

“It’s self-explanatory. I have nothing to add.” (44-45)

The Interrogation came out at a time when various children of activists of the 1968 student movements in Italy and France began to share the experiences of their upbringing in overtly politicized contexts. Surprisingly these *real* figures happen to share similar patterns of anxiety with those of Marina, the young protagonist of the fictional novella²⁹. As Felisa Barbeito – who has translated the novella into English – notes:

[Maglinis] directly engages with a number of important debates in current culture: the legacy of the protest movements and leftist politics of the twentieth century, trauma as both an individual and collective phenomenon, generational and gender perspectives on aesthetics and politics, and the political potentialities of art. Most particularly, the novel focuses on the body as the grounding trope for these debates: a medium of performance and communication that is used to explore the limits of language³⁰.

Real-life artist Marina Abramović herself ties in neatly with all this, since as a performer she tried to act out her own inherited trauma and the limitations of verbal communication: a grandfather, a Serbian patriarch, who was poisoned, and a father, a partisan leader during the war, who was tortured. This ‘transmittable trauma’ could be summarized in the famous verse by Greek poet George Seferis «generations of poison,

²⁹ A common denominator between these cases was the fact that the children were marked by the parental experience – the heritage of which was experienced as a weight. These were children who were traumatized by the sudden “fall” of the revolutionary father figure and his accompanying silence. In particular V. LINEHART, *Le jour ou mon pere c'est tu* (Paris, Seuil, 2008) and A. NEGRI, *Con un piede impigliato nella storia* (Milano, Feltrinelli, 2009) are emblematic examples of the above tendency. It is striking that there was a non-verbal way of transmitting trauma in most of these real-life cases – just like the one described in *The Interrogation*. It was the very silence of the parents regarding past trauma that rendered the children troubled and oppressed. Other striking similarities include the fact that most of these children’s distress was expressed through eating disorders (either anorexia or bulimia) and that the vast majority of them became artists, just like Marina. The resemblance between these stories is remarkable.

³⁰ E. MAGLINIS, P. FELISA BARBEITO, *The Interrogation*, “Journal of Modern Greek Studies”, 31: 2, October 2013, pp. 281-286: 281.

centuries of poison» from his emblematic poem *Cats of St Nicholas*, one of the literary texts with a clear anti-regime orientation that was published, unsurprisingly perhaps, during the Colonels' dictatorship in Greece, in 1970³¹.

Interestingly, the idea that historical trauma is inherited and the legacy of violence can be transmitted across generations, even if in a non-verbal and non-mnemonic way, acquired new impetus in Greece December 2008 during a period of civil unrest and political violence in December 2008 after a 15-year old student was shot dead by a policeman in the city centre of Athens. Alekos Alavanos, a former leader of the left-wing party coalition SY.RI.ZA, elaborated on this idea in an interview almost a year after the events and on the occasion of a recently released film on the Greek Civil War: Pantelis Voulgaris' *Psychi Vatheia* [Deep Soul, 2009]. Alavanos wondered whether or not it was a coincidence that young activists at present used violence in order to bring about political ends, in the same manner in which their 'grandfathers' tried to settle their differences with the Greek state in the late 1940s. His conclusion, that this was part of an ongoing «inter-generational trauma»³², greatly confirms the linkages between past and present, torture and trauma, that Maglinis introduced in his work.

3. *The Banality of Evil*

Shortly after the appearance of *Interrogation*, another controversial book was published about the experience of torture in the dictatorship years, this time through the lens of the torturers. Thodoris Rachiotis' *Torturers*³³, is a gripping novel about how one becomes a torturer, by a writer who was born two years before the imposition of the dictatorship – while Maglinis was born three years after the coup – and has, therefore, only a vague childhood memory of the period he is reconstructing³⁴. Rachiotis mentions his own motivation for embarking on this project:

I was born in 1965 and I have no memories from the junta years. The idea of the *Torturers* came in 2004... Then I wondered for the first time what kind of people were the torturers of EAT-ESA. Having decided to write about the perpetrators instead of the victims I encountered two comfortable explanations: that all this was no longer happening, and that torturers were monsters. Both collapsed. After the recorded testimonies (Korovesis, Vernikos, Panagoulis, K. Arseni et al.) I read anything that was relevant to the junta, the resistance but also the press of the period. I learned about the 'docs' in the

³¹ Published posthumously in *18 Texts*, Athens, Kedros, 1970.

³² See K. KORNETIS, "No More Heroes? Rejection and Reverberation of the Past in the 2008 Events in Greece", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 28:2, October 2010, 173-197.

³³ T. RACHIOTIS, *Βασανιστές* [Torturers], Athens, Kastaniotis, 2009. All citations from this book will be indicated within the corpus of the text with the page number in brackets.

³⁴ See M. THEODOΣΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Πώς γίνεσαι βασανιστής* [How one becomes a torturer], in "Eleftherotypia", 15 January 2010.

boots, the length of the aiguillettes and the duties of the guards. But I had not visited the EAT-ESA, until in the summer of 2006, mobilizing all my nerve and a busy look I asked from the unsuspecting security guard of the Freedom Park the key for the 'other building', which is open to visitors only twice a year. The label on the key read 'torture'. I stayed in the building with the big windows downstairs for hours, walking on tip-toe, as if there were a sick man in every room³⁵.

The two protagonists, Theofilos and Lambros, fellow-villagers from Ilia, are simply brutalized youngsters who are gradually transformed and altered within the system of EAT-ESA, thus learning to 'love pain' as the homonymous slogan of KESA went (Military Police Training Centre). The whole plot brings to mind the research carried out by psychologist Mika Haritos-Fatouros on how certain people, such as the notorious Michalis Petrou, had been tortured to learn how to torture in turn. Haritos-Fatouros demonstrates how communal rituals during the training process can turn 'ordinary' people, with no special circumstances such as a traumatic upbringing, to ruthless interrogators³⁶. During his trial, Petrou famously accused the entire 'system' of turning him into a torturer, claiming that he and his colleagues were victims themselves, thus regretting his violent pedigree, and even pledging to having gone astray because no one taught him 'real democracy'³⁷.

The novel is reminiscent of a Swedish documentary produced in the early 1980s with the title *Your Neighbor's Son. The Making of a Torturer* (Joergen Flint Pedersen and Erik Stephensen, 1982), which featured some of the most notorious and efficient torturers of the Greek Junta, but also some secondary figures, like guards (*desmofylakes*). Those interviews caused uproar as the torturers appeared with long hair and bushy beards, this way adopting the countercultural style of leftists of the time. The documentary embraced the line that anyone, even these youngsters with angelic faces and hippy hairdos, could become torturers if submitted to the inhuman treatment of severe training. The torturers also maintained that they were just doing their job, this way exhibiting a 'bureaucratic' attitude to their notorious acts. This corroborates with Hannah Arendt's basic observation concerning the banality of evil³⁸. Similarly, the strong desire of one of the two heroes to become assimilated into the wider set of the strong and the powerful displays the need for incorporation as an additional reason behind a fascist inclination, reminiscent of Alberto Moravia's *Il Conformista*³⁹, which

³⁵ M. FAIS, "Τυπωθήτω" [To be published], *Eleftherotypia*, 23 October 2009.

³⁶ M. HARITOS-FATOUIROS, *The Official Torturer. A Learning Model for Obedience to the Authority of Violence*, "Journal of Applied Social Psychology", 18, no. 13 (1988): 1107-20. Also see J.T. GIBSON and M. HARITOS-FATOUIROS, *The Education of a Torturer*, in "Psychology Today", 20, no. 13 (November 1986): 10-13 and ALEKSIC, *The Sacrificed Body...*, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

³⁷ Petrou declared: "I personally believe that no young man, coming from the countryside, without any substantial education, could resist the formation given by ESA." P. RODAKIS (ed.), *Οι δίκες της Χούντας...*, *op. cit.*, p. 1126.

³⁸ H. ARENDT, *Eichman in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil*, New York, Viking, 1963.

³⁹ A. MORAVIA, *Il conformista*, Milan, Bompiani, 2002 (1951).

stirred public debate in Italy on everyday people during fascist rule⁴⁰. All these elements are present in Rachiotis's novel.

In the same piece, prospective torturers discover during their training that violence causes sexual arousal, an insight that owes a great deal to Wilhelm Reich's theories on the sexual deviancy of the authoritarian personality, which became a dominant trope in the filmic depiction of fascists in the 1960s and 1970s⁴¹.

With beastly moves, the dwarf, holding the prisoner by the neck, struggled to unbutton his trousers. At the same time, with his short bowed legs, which barely touched the ground, he tried to spread the man's legs.

"C'mon Baolas, man, he's getting away!"

"Stick it in, man!" (274)

The hyper masculinized and homosexualized climate found here is similar to real-life authoritarian torturers who typically displayed deviant sexual behaviour – at least some of them⁴². According to Haritos-Fatouros, a good number of these 'interrogators' sexually tortured other men, without feeling that their sexual identity was under threat, while at the same time many of them also engaged in sex with male prostitutes⁴³. Additionally, the fact that at least one of the main characters in the novel experiences difficulties in engaging in sexual relationships with women who are not prostitutes, while at the same time is involved in the systematic sexual harassment of female prisoners, is a vivid depiction of another typical real life pattern of 'interrogators'⁴⁴.

If the psychologizing view is that anyone can become a torturer provided that he or she is given the 'appropriate' training, the originality of this novel lies in that it also incorporates the convincing portrait of the lumpen proletarian allured by power – a similar portrayal to the one created by Alexandros Kotzias in his pioneering novel *Antipoiisi Archis* (Athens: Kedros, 1979). In that novel Katsantonis, the main charac-

⁴⁰ Studies of social psychology reinforce the theory that in such circumstances people's tendency to adhere to the dominant group becomes dominant. See, for instance, H. KELMAN and V.L. HAMILTON, *Crimes of obedience. Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility*, New Haven (CN), Yale University Press, 1989.

⁴¹ See especially Bernardo Bertolucci's film adaptation of Moravia's novel *The Conformist* (1970) and his later film *1900* (1976), Costa-Gavras's *Z* (1969), and Elio Petri's *Investigation of a Citizen Beyond Suspicion* (1969), whereby homosexual anxiety and sadomasochism rule supreme in the representation of fascist or semi-fascist figures. See, in this respect, J. MELLEN, *Fascism in the Contemporary Film*, in "Film Quarterly", 24:4 (Summer, 1971), pp. 2-19.

⁴² See K. STEFATOS, *Engendering the Nation...*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

⁴³ HARITOS-FATOUROS, *The Psychological Origins of the Institutionalized Nature of Torture...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59. This goes against Aleksic's conclusions at *op. cit.* An interesting element that should be stressed here is that one of the most emblematic arthouse films of the dictatorship years *Evdokia* [Ευδοκία] by Alexis Damianos (1971) investigates the passionate relationship between a young sergeant and a prostitute.

⁴⁴ See HARITOS-FATOUROS, *The Psychological Origins of the Institutionalized Nature of Torture*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

ter, is a low class, immoral, demimonde type who desperately tries to take advantage of the political opportunities offered by the regime in order to ascend socially and, above all, financially. Just like in Kotzias' work, in Rachiotis' novel the descriptions are from the perspective of the ESA people and not their victims: it is through their distortive lens that we look at the verbal and physical abuse of detainees, the sexual stimulation of torturers, the rites of initiation, the torturer's idiolect. It is obvious that the author studied the minutes of the Trials of the Torturers in detail, drawing much of his information from them – just like Maglinis, through the character of Marina.

The second half of the book tackles almost obsessively the details of the 'interrogations', revealing a chilling narrative that lays open the nature of sadomasochistic torture. However, apart from the uncompromising realism of the descriptions, the detainees of ESA are often likened to skinned animals or slaughtered lambs. The choice of words like «bloody carcass», «slain» or «crook» («το ματωμένο σφαχτό», «το τσιγκέλι», p. 258) points to the resemblance between EAT and a slaughterhouse but also diminishes the victims' agency. Looking at them through the eyes of the torturers does not promote sympathy for them to the reader but pity and sometimes even repulsion.

“Contact with the bloody cold flesh repulsed him, it was as if he were touching raw meat.” (223)

The undermining of their subjectivity by the author makes tortured bodies look like bloody masses, as was the intention of the torturers themselves. Especially the animalistic vocabulary is quite disturbing, as it was something that stood out in several torturers' pleas during their trials⁴⁵.

“He imagined the hanging body whirling with every lash, the black and blue turning once again red. Cries. The whistling sound of the rope and the whipping on the flesh.” (295)

“The half-naked man reminded him of a slimy sea creature, an octopus that was palpating the filthy cement trying to figure out where it was. His hands, swollen amorphous balls with bruised fingers”. (297)

The perspective here adopted betrays the fascination that this depiction of violence exercises on the author, rendering its representation almost pornographic. To paraphrase Michael Taussig's the danger here lies with aestheticizing horror and surrendering to the seductive poetics of terror and torture. As he concludes, in reference to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, «the political and artistic problem is to engage with that... while effectively turning it against itself. That would be the true catharsis»⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Nikos Zacharakis' statement that once the imprisoned Alekos Panagoulis wired him up so much that he told him: «Watch out, Panagoulis, I will kill you and will get busted for animal slaughter». In *The Junta Trials...*, *op. cit.*, p. 1089.

⁴⁶ M. TAUSSIG, “Culture of Terror-Space of Death. Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 26 (3): 467-497, 1984, p. 471.

Rachiotis confesses that at a certain point he was himself shocked by the sensational details he was describing in his fictitious work, touching on a key issue regarding the boundaries between real and fictitious, autobiography and invented memoirs: «I got scared by the craziness to touch upon the past of existing people, therefore I navigated with care the line between demonization and alibi»⁴⁷. As he does not, however, succeed to de-sensationalize the torturer's experience, the much-needed catharsis never comes.

4. *Drawing Trauma*

Could catharsis be achieved through a diverse medium, a different genre, other than writing? When Art Spiegelman won a special Pulitzer Prize twenty years ago for his graphic novel *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*, based on the experience of his father in the Nazi extermination camps, he was opening the door to the acceptance of illustration as a means of approaching the darkest pages of recent history. The graphic novel dealt effectively with the different layers of memory and time, dissolving the barriers between 'then' and 'now', indicating a capacity to write and rewrite history. Illustration functioned as an autobiographical compass that meticulously recorded the most obscure aspects of the unconscious, including the imaginary, the dreams and the obsessions of a traumatized individual. As historian Hayden White has argued, *Maus* «manage[d] to raise all of the crucial issues regarding the limits of representation»⁴⁸. Still, the graphic novel resolved the impossibility of relating to the past self through the detailed reconstruction of the wounded subjectivity and memory. This capacity to enhance history's limited representational strategies of the past is precisely underlined in the extremely dark graphic novel *Lena's Song* by the French and Swiss artists Jose-Louis Bocquet (script) and Andreas Gefe (drawings)⁴⁹.

What is of particular interest here – as in the previous cases – is the return to the issue of torture by people who did not have personal experience of the Junta. The graphic novel is based on *Lilly's Story* (2001), the film (and subsequent book) by Roviros Manthoulis⁵⁰. It departs from the former decisively, as it leaves aside all side-stories in order to concentrate on the main issue: the psychological and physical deprivation of dissidents against the Junta, on the one hand, and the impossibility to represent them through artistic mediums, on the other. The story takes place in Paris at the time of the Greek dictatorship and focuses on the ineffective efforts of Manthoulis himself, both on a real and a metaphorical level, to shoot a film about torture in Greece during the regime. Manthoulis tried to film this in collaboration with

⁴⁷ FAIS, “Τυπωθήτω”, *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ H. WHITE, “Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth in Historical Representation,” in *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, 31-2.

⁴⁹ A. GEFE and J.L. BOCQUET, *Το τραγούδι της Λένας* [Lena's Song], Athens, Mamouthcomix, 2009.

⁵⁰ R. MANTHOULIS, *Lilly's Story*, Athens, Exantas, 2002.



Fig. 1-2. Jose-Louis Bocquet and Andreas Gefes's *Lena's Story*: A graphic novel on the graphic details of torture

acclaimed director Jules Dassin and with actress Melina Mercouri in the main role. Their script dealt with the true story of Dora Lelouda, an artist of upper class origins who was arrested and ruthlessly tortured for hiding the leading members of the resistance organization PAM in her home, in particular composer Mikis Theodorakis – here represented as a dissident poet. Lelouda's despair led her to attempt suicide.

Autobiography, literary representation, historical record and visual display were grafted into one in this graphic novel. The designs are often submerged in red background, which gives the impression that the characters are dipped in blood. Such are the scenes of ESA torturers giving lessons on the most effective way to exercise the notorious *falanga*.



Fig. 3. Torture is everywhere: An oriental tapestry in Manthoulis' house in Paris matching Lena's real tortures



Fig. 4. Dark thoughts: Manthoulis despairs when reflecting on the amount of violence exercised on Lena's body

Details matter greatly in the drawing sequences, as in the scene in which Lena is arrested by the police and the strip zooms in on a detail: the narrator's – a surrogate figure for Manthoulis – oriental wall tapestry representing a woman being tormented by devilish figures, which acts as a powerful *prooekonomia* of what was about to happen.

At times, the unimaginable torture suffered by the heroine – including being plunged headlong into the sea from a helicopter – as well as the representation of the Colonels clearly refer to Latin American dictatorships, rather than the Greek one, conflating different experiences of repression under dictatorships into one⁵¹. Loneliness, sadness, alienation and hopelessness dominate this graphic novel, making it a privileged terrain for communicating the trauma of torture and to some – and lesser – extent of exile (as Manthoulis and his collaborators were all political exiles in France). The use of this medium proves both penetrating and potentially therapeutic regarding these dramatic events.

5. *Autobiography as Public History of Torture*

In stark contrast to the above category, which entailed artists outside of Greece who had no direct experience of the events they describe, comes the last category that this article examines: the autobiographical narration of torture. In terms of cinema, Alinda Dimitriou's documentary *The Girls in the Rain* [Τα κορίτσια της βροχής] (2011) is one of the first depictions of the Junta that shifts the focus to violence, and in particular, to torture. The main trope in Greek film until that time – the main exceptions being the early Nikos Koundouros' *The Songs of Fire* [Τα τραγούδια της φωτιάς] (1975) and Nikos Andonakos' *Δεξιότερα της Δεξιάς* [More Right than the Right] (1989) – was the one of nostalgia for a lost, longed-for world and a bittersweet sentiment for the *Sweet Sixties*, regardless of the overtly repressive context. An avalanche of films, ranging from Giorgos Tsemberopoulos' *Back Door* [Πίσω Πόρτα] (2000) to Kostas Kaparakas' *Urania* [Ουρανύα] (2005) and Grigoris Karantinakis' *Chariton's Choir* [Η χορωδία του Χαρίτωνα] (2005) dealt with the dictatorship in a light and caricaturist manner, reminiscent of the *commedia all'italiana*. This contrasts with Turkish filmic depictions of the Evren dictatorship that focus on violence and torture, encouraging reflection in the audience about the recent past⁵².

Dimitriou's documentary is, moreover, a departure from earlier documentaries, such as Rena Theologidou's much acclaimed TV documentary *The cultural crime of the Junta* [Το πολιτιστικό έγκλημα της χούντας] (1997), which focused on cultural politics – shifting the attention to human suffering and gendered trauma. The documentary,

⁵¹ Even though such practices were not widely used in Greece, Stefatos mentions that there existed at least one such case.

⁵² See in this respect K. KORNETIS, *From politics to nostalgia, and back to politics: Tracing the shifts in the filmic depiction of the Greek Sixties over time*, in "Historein", forthcoming 2014.



Fig. 5-6. The Past is Present: Alinda Dimitriou's *The Girls of the Rain* is linking 1973 to the present in terms of state violence

which zooms in exclusively on women, is the third part of a trilogy, of which the other parts deal with women during the Nazi occupation and the Greek civil war (1946-49). The fifty-seven women in the film are presented without names, whereby the individual is submerged within the collective experience. Often the interviews themselves were done in groups of two or three, reinforcing this sense. The accounts are extremely poignant, whereby the female body acts as an archive of oppression, resistance and pain. Despite their length and occasional repetitiveness, they are highly informative regarding the multiple aspects in which female subjectivity was disciplined and punished during the Colonels' regime, but also before – *and after*.

The main reason for this is that the economic crisis and recent political events inform much of the documentary's subtext. Dimitriou made a choice that was a direct political statement on the current state of affairs in Greece. At key moments in the documentary, after some of her interviewees recounted the ways in which they were brutally interrogated, beaten up, and tortured, Dimitriou made jump cuts showing images of present day police brutality, mostly during clashes with protesters in Syntagma Square in Athens. By adopting a current topos – arguing that the repressive mechanism of the state has not democratized since then and that there is a hard anti-democratic structure that has remained intact – Dimitriou makes a powerful, albeit controversial, statement on the supposed continuity of Greek authoritarianism and its brutality. In the words of a critic, Dimitriou's film «addresses the young who are once again forced by current circumstances to 'grow up abruptly' just like the young women of the anti-dictatorship movement grew old from one moment to the next»⁵³. In other words, Dimitriou's film acts as a metonym for the suffering of the female body not only then, but also now, in bio-political terms.

Last, but not least, Yorgos Kotanidis's book *All Together, Now!* [Όλοι Μαζί, Τώρα!]⁵⁴, is yet another example of how the theme of torture has been revived in a dynamic way regarding the public history of the dictatorship. Kotanidis belonged to the most avant-garde theatre group of that period, named *Elefthero Theatre* (Free Theatre), a collective created in 1970 by young actors, actresses and artists. Kotanidis belonged to the collective's leading group as well to that of a Maoist organization named E.K.K.E. (Revolutionary Communist Movement of Greece). As a result of the latter he was arrested, tortured and imprisoned for a protracted period of time. In his memoir, Kotanidis' narrative 'I' becomes blended with the plural 'We' of the 1960s – similar to the way in which Dimitriou's 'rain girls' are subsumed within the group. He gives us a detailed history of the self during the Colonels' dictatorship, whereby the facts of personal life highlight the wider public sphere and vice versa, illustrating how the personal became political, focusing on the role of the individual in the historical process, and the difficult life choices that one has to make in extreme conditions and during dramatic events. The memoirs render a vivid and graphic depiction of the time of fear, censorship, of imprisonment and torture, shedding light on the anthropogeography of avant-garde art groups and underground organizations. Kotanidis' gaze penetrates the past without indulging in its idealization or sanitization or its demonization, primarily by not surrendering to either the distortions of the aforementioned bittersweet nostalgic trope, or to the heroic-epic one.

Torture is not the main focus of the book, but it is one of the primary themes, as Kotanidis' dramatic arrests and tenure in prison mark his entire life narrative, briefly inter-

⁵³ See D. PAVLIDIS, *Η ζωή είναι μια διαρκής μάχη για την ανθρώπινη ελευθερία και αξιοπρέπεια*, <http://olaeinedromos.blogspot.com/2012/01/blog-post.html>, last accessed on 15 January 2014.

⁵⁴ Y. ΚΟΤΑΝΙΔΗΣ, *Όλοι Μαζί, Τώρα!* [All Together, Now!], Athens, Kastaniotis, 2011. All citations from this book will be indicated within the corpus of the text with the page number in brackets.

rupting his brilliant acting career. The most striking aspect of Kotanidis' discourse regarding torture is his directness and honesty vis-à-vis his own self-doubt, whereby he adopts a rather anti-heroic voice. He describes the beginning of his interrogation experience with a reference to the fact that he assumed the main role of the Polish satirical comedy novel *Good Soldier Švejk* by Jaroslav Hašek, pretending he was entirely naïve, as a means to attract the sympathy or indifference of his interrogators and to survive:

“When can we wrap up the interrogation? I have a show tonight, I'm playing with Mme Synodinou and Mr Kotsopoulos.” They looked at each other with a look that said, “What's wrong with this guy?” (327)

More importantly, Kotanidis offers a unique testimony to the weight of the mythical courage of the Greek Communist fighters of the past and how this induced in him a sense of guilt about his own attitude to his torturers:

“As if my sorry state were not enough, I kept on burdening myself with guilt”, he says. At a certain point he even wonders – highlighting the frustration of ideological rigidity: “What should I expect from myself, to be tough like Stalin? Probably.” (475)

The idealized story of resilience among the left-wing inmates of the notorious ‘rehabilitation’ camp on the island of Makronisos in the late 1940s and his reference to Stalin demonstrate an internalization of the Greek communist moral standards of the past, according to which a ‘fighter’ would never yield under duress.

The myths regarding the courageous stance of the inmates vis-à-vis their torturers made me doubt, made me feel guilty that I wasn't brave enough, that I should not only endure the torture, but swear at them on top of it. (379)

Kotanidis' anti-heroic style is also to be found in other examples of autobiographical writings on torture. This is the case with Antonis Liakos's relation to his own experience in his *ego-histoire*⁵⁵, but also with Tasos Darveris⁵⁶, both of who adopt the Quixotic genre in order to relate to their past experience of militancy and detention⁵⁷. In all these cases, the authors become the ‘historians of themselves’, to quote theorist Giannis Papatheodorou's pertinent conclusion, thus testing the boundaries between the ‘historiographic’ discourse with the ‘autobiographic’ one⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ See A. LIAKOS, *History Writing as the Return of the Repressed*, in “Historein”, 3: 2001.

⁵⁶ T. DARVERIS, *Μία ιστορία της νύχτας 1967-74* [A Night's Story. 1967-74], Athens, Vivliopelagos, 2002 (1983), blends autobiographical writing with literature. The same device is also used by novelist M. ΔΟΥΚΑ in *Αρχαία Σκουριά* [Fool's Gold], Athens, Kedros, 1979, which also contain glimpses of torture partly based on her real experience. It is what Giannis Papatheodorou calls ‘literary testimony’: «a genre that is mixed but legitimate». See his *Introduction* in DARVERIS, *A Night's Story*, p. 11.

⁵⁷ See, in this respect, ΚΟΡΝΕΤΙΣ, *Children of the Dictatorship...*, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁵⁸ Papatheodorou in DARVERIS, *A Night's Story...*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

6. *Conclusions*

When in February 2013 a new generation of leftist terrorists was arrested en masse in the Greek countryside, the way in which they appeared to have been (mal)treated by the police in heavily doctored photographs that were leaked to the press caused a sensation in the Greek public. Some analysts likened their treatment to the Junta years, and in particular a rare incident of January 1973 in which students active in the emerging student movement against the Colonels appeared in court with their faces visibly bruised. The interesting chronotopical dimension of this, whereby the past and the present were intricately linked, is visible in most of the abovementioned works. An obscure topic for some time, torture has acquired a renewed impetus thanks to its multifaceted treatment by a number of different media that aspired to analyse it in its complexity.

The case of torture in Greece became a typical case where public history reinforces or even creates a historiographical trend. The pieces of public history that were presented in this paper form an unofficial corpus that can be weighed against the official history of a highly problematic and contested chapter of the Junta years. This new tendency entailed talking about the past by people who did not experience it directly and who often adopt alternative forms of narration by selecting disparate material, narrativizing it in often very intricate ways. The deposition of memories by people who underwent torture themselves came as an interesting complement to the public history aspect of the above works. All this not only informed, but also altered the way in which we tend to look at the dictatorship years and the narratives constructed about them, switching our gaze from grand narratives to private tragedies inflicted on people, either real or fictional. Here, public history not only does not trivialize the historical events in question but, on the contrary, complicates our view of them and poses a series of questions on memory, trauma and re presentation.

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THE “NATION-KILLING” TEXTBOOK
THE POLEMIC OVER THE HISTORY TEXTBOOK
“IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY TIMES” (2006-2007)

«Why the history textbook has as yet to reach schools?» This is how a journalist initiated his interview with Euripides Stylianidis, a conservative politician and rising star of the governing party, on 12th September 2007 – a day after the end of summer school vacations¹. The history textbook in question had been introduced to the sixth grade a year earlier, in September 2006². The context of the question appeared to be the beginning of the new school year. In actual fact, it referred to the electoral confrontation between the two dominant parties that rivaled for power: the center-right New Democracy (thereafter N.D) that held the office and the center-left Panhellenic Socialist Movement (thereafter PA.SO.K) that was trying to regain ground after three years in opposition³. Just four days before the parliamentary elections (16.9.2007) the polls indicated that this particular history textbook had affected negatively the popularity of the government and, particularly, Marietta Giannakou, the Minister of Education. It was to her that the question should have been addressed rather than to Stylianidis and yet it was no secret that the minister was politically marginalized because of the way she had handled the textbook issue. Indeed, Giannakou failed to be reelected despite the fact that N.D won the elections and she was one of the most prominent members of the liberal wing of the party. After the elections, she was replaced by the younger but more conservative Stylianidis. It follows that the question was addressed to the right person. The Government, Stylianidis replied, intended to correct the textbook so as «to vindicate the popular and national feelings [...] the unacceptable controversial points will be corrected before a proper book is released». And after a short pause he added: «if it ever does»⁴. The concluding phrase implies that the die was cast.

¹ TV show “First page” with Thanos Siafakas, NET (National Broadcasting Corporation), 12.9.2007.

² M. REPOUSI, CH. ANDREADOU, A. POUTACHIDIS, A. TSIVAS, *Sta Neotera kai Sygxrona Hronia* (In Modern and Contemporary Times), Athens, OEDB, 2006.

³ Both parties were founded in 1974, after the fall of the colonels’ dictatorship (1967-1974). N.D. was founded by Constantinos Karamanlis – the historical leader of the Right conservative block – who managed to unite the dispersed liberal forces of the center of the political spectrum. Andreas Papandreou – PA.SO.K’s founder – followed the opposite strategy. He first established a socialist party comprising of social-democratic and new left forces and then built bridges with the liberal center. Between 1974 and 2007, when the incident described here occurred, the two parties alternated in office.

⁴ TV show “First page”, *op. cit.*

1. *The chronicle*

The writing of the textbook was commissioned by the Pedagogical Institute -the State Agency in charge of school textbooks- four years earlier, in 2003, as part of an overall project to update the primary school textbooks. At this point, it needs to be stressed that, since 1937, the practice of one textbook per subject had prevailed. Henceforth, the process has been completely controlled by the State. The writers assigned with the task, either through direct commission or public bid, are obliged to abide by the strict guidelines provided by the State Curriculum both in terms of pedagogy and content. Deviations from these officially-set specifications are marginal as the final approval lies with the Pedagogical Institute the staffing of which, in turn, by and large, lies with the government. Consequently, the content of the textbooks and, particularly, those of the social sciences, is overdetermined by the ideological principles of the governing party. After all, it is the Minister of Education who puts the stamp of approval on each and every textbook. At the time the writers' teams for the 56 new primary school textbooks were selected, the center-left PA.SO.K, headed by the Kostas Simitis, was in office. However, by the time this long process reached the final stage, PA.SO.K had given way to the center-right N.D which was then led by Costas Karamanlis, nephew of the founder of the party.

Had such a political change occurred during the 1980's and the 1990's it would have almost certainly led to the cancelation of the project. However, Marietta Giannakou, the new Minister of Education, chose the "path of institutional continuity"⁵. Several technical and political reasons justify such a choice. Prominent amongst the technical ones was that the project was funded by the European Union and as a result the agreed upon timelines had to be met. Decisive amongst the political ones appears to be the blurring of the ideological differences between the center-left and the center-right.

Indeed, since the mid 1990's, the dividing lines between the two adversaries became less and less visible. Their ideological principles and political practices gradually converged and the space between social democracy and conservatism became their meeting ground in a way analogous to the Third Way politics heralded by Tony Blair in UK⁶. As a result, a low-intensity political culture emerged to replace the militant confrontation that had marked the preceding decades. After all, the minister of education herself is a genuine liberal politician particularly acclaimed for her European and cosmopolitan convictions. And yet, in March 2005, before she signed for the release of the textbooks, Giannakou asked to see with her own eyes just one of the 56 new textbooks: the sixth grade history textbook. This may be attributed to the concerns

⁵ In "Imerisia", 15.6.2007.

⁶ This phenomenon is hardly confined to either Greece or the UK. For an analysis and critique see C. MOUFFE, *On the Political*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2005.

voiced by members of the Pedagogical Institute that the textbook in question deviated considerably from the official curriculum guidelines⁷.

The textbook was eventually approved. However, a year and a half later, in September 2006, by the time it was distributed to schools, it had already become the object of a public dispute that escalated in one of the most intense and prolonged controversies over educational affairs Greece has ever experienced. The initial attacks were instigated by several blogs (it was the first public dispute inaugurated over the internet), then the newspapers got involved and, eventually, when the issue attracted wider attention, TV channels followed suit. The controversy engaged hundreds of citizens, experts and lay, as well as the whole range of Hellenic institutions: political parties and the Church of Greece and Cyprus, several university departments, most of the teachers' local branches and the entirety of the associations of Pontians and Minor-Asians⁸.

The dispute lasted for 29 months, from January 2006 to May 2008, but reached its peak between January and September 2007, that is, the pre-elections period. During the dispute, hundreds of texts were released to the press, journals and internet sites whose narrative style and rhetoric ranged from rational argumentation and historical documentation to emotional outburst, scorn and threat. A rather comprehensive albeit not exhaustive record identified 901⁹, most of which published in May 2007 – 256 in totals. At that time, the Academy of Athens – the supreme academic institution in Greece – also released a report to the press¹⁰. The controversy abated during the summer months but reignited in September upon the beginning of the school year and the coming elections (see table 1).

Eventually, the concern about school history exceeded the field of education to become a public issue and, finally, publish history – namely, the “interactive process between the historian, the public, and the historical object”¹¹. In this context, Gian-

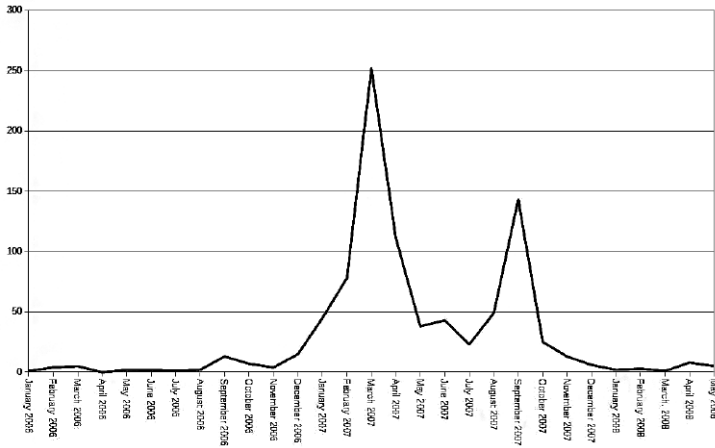
⁷ M. REPOUSHI, “*Embodizoun tin ananeosi sta sholika egziridia*” (They are blocking the school textbooks renewal), in “Ta Nea”, 14.9.2004; H. KALIMERI, “*Ideologikes paremvasis sta nea sholika biblia*” (Ideological interventions to the new school textbooks), in “Imerisia”, 26.9.2004; MICROPOLITIKOS, “*I doxa tou Buttiglione*” (Buttiglione’s glory), in “Ta Nea”, 12.10.2004. Compare with the correspondence between the Pedagogical Institute and the writers’ team released to the press, at the peak of the dispute, in May 2007, [12/13]: <http://palio.antibaro.gr/society/repoush.pdf>.

⁸ Namely, the associations of the refugees’ offspring who were forced to abandon the coast of Minor-Asia and the Black Sea in the population exchange between Greece and Turkey after the so-called Minor-Asia catastrophe, that is, the defeat of the Greek expedition troops by Kemal’s forces in August 1922.

⁹ The record was compiled by Armodios Tsivas, one of the writers of the textbook, and has been corroborated by my own systematic research. As far as the Athenian press is concerned the record is indeed exhaustive – only minor purely journalistic comments are excluded. However, the provincial press is not exhaustively covered while publications in non-Greek or non-Greek speaking papers (i.e. Athens News) are not included. The record does not also include TV shows that addressed the dispute.

¹⁰ Academia Athinon, *Kritikes paratiriseis sto vivlio istorias tis ektis dimotikou* (Critical remarks on the sixth grade history book), 22.3.2007, [12/13]: <http://www.academyofathens.gr/ecportal.asp?id=1002&nt=18&lang=1>. The report was commissioned by the Ministry of Education as part of an overall strategy to deal with the issue through institutional channels.

¹¹ For other definitions of the concept of public history, [11/13]: http://www.publichistory.org/what_is/definition.html.



Tab. 1. Texts released in press, journals and internet sites about the Textbook.

nakou's choice the handle the issue on the basis of legality was praised as sober by the advocates of the textbook and derided as scholasticism by the adversaries. However, the closer the elections got the more the balance of forces was tilting to the adversaries' favour. The shift in balance was not manifested in the number of the publications which was, after all, fairly balanced (out of the 901 publications, 442 were against and 418 were in favour – the remaining 41 were purely journalistic). Neither was this expressed at the level of the intelligentsia. The Academy of Athens may have opposed the book and yet the vast majority of the historians supported it¹². Still, since spring 2007, the shift had become evident at the societal level: a till then unknown internet site – www.Antibaro.gr – after a small mobilization launched a petition and attracted 12,000 signatories demanding the withdrawal of the textbook. A poll conducted in June 2007 found that almost 45% of the electoral constituency agreed with the withdrawal while 36% opinioned that it needed substantive modifications. Only 7% expressed unconditional support for the book¹³.

At the political level similar developments occurred. Numerous forces across the ideological and political spectrum joined the ranks of the adversaries' camp: they ranged

¹² At the climax of the dispute the editors of five academic journals (three historical and two social sciences) gave a joint press conference to support the textbook (see "To Vima", 6.3.2007), 500 historians and social scientists signed a petition of support (see "Avgi", 8.3.2007), while prominent historians wrote advocacy articles in newspapers, see, inter alia, Ch. KOULOURI, *I istoria stin pyra tou fanatismou* (History in the pyre of fanaticism), in "To Vima". 7.1.2007, E. GAZI, *I pali ton (sbolikou) taxeon* (The (school) class struggle), in "To Vima", 18.3.2007.

¹³ In "Paron", 8.4.2007.

from the small but militant party of the far-Right LA.O.S¹⁴ and the Nazi organization Chrysi Avgi (Golden Dawn), to considerable parts of N.D, the vast majority of PA.SO.K to the entire Greek Communist Party (thereafter G.C.P). The advocates' camp comprised only the small modernization wing of PA.SO.K, the even smaller liberal wing of N.D. and SY.RI.ZA, a small leftish party¹⁵. The closer the parliamentary elections got the more the deriding statements and MP queries from across the political spectrum increased – in fact most came from inside the governing party. During the pre-elections period it had become obvious that the minister of education Marietta Giannakou had lost the support of the PM and eventually failed to be reelected¹⁶. The die is cast. Right after the elections, Giannakou's successor at the Ministry of Education, Stylianidis, gave a press conference that commenced with the following statement: «due to considerable reservations about the appropriateness of the content of the sixth grade history textbook, I decide to withdraw and temporally replace it by the one previously taught»¹⁷. What were, though, exactly these reservations and who voiced them? What, in other words, were the controversial aspects of the book and what the ideological coordinates of the adversaries?¹⁸

Before the release of the textbook, the head of the writers' team, Maria Repousi, Senior Lecturer at the University of Thessaloniki, that specializes in history education, expounded the philosophy of the textbook in interviews and publications emphasizing less the content and more its methodology. Each lesson occupied three pages. The first comprised of a short half-page text, a glossary explaining the relevant terms and concepts and a historiographical line that presented the most important events in chronological order. This aimed to provide the absolutely necessary information that the writers reckoned the students would need in order to reflect on the many and diverse sources which occupied the remaining two pages. On the basis of the resources provided, the students were encouraged to pose questions, engage in activities or

¹⁴ LA.O.S stands for Popular Orthodox Rally.

¹⁵ SY.RI.ZA (Coalition of Radical Left), *after 2010 and as a result of the economic crisis, saw its electoral appeal to skyrocket, is currently in opposition and aspires to lead the next government.*

¹⁶ *Marietta Giannakou: Ena thima tis Istorias* (Marietta Giannakou: A victim of History), in "Imerisia", 22.9.2007.

¹⁷ See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgJYK9TrODE>, for the interview and a comprehensive coverage of the dispute. On the next day (26.9.2007) the withdrawal of the textbook occupied the front page of most newspapers of Athens which either praised or derided the decision. See inter alia: *Epitelous! Aposirhike to vivlio tis dropis* (At last! The book of shame is withdrawn) in "Adesmeftos Tipos", 26.9.2007; *Aposirhike to vivlio tis Istorias* (The book of history is withdrawn), in "Acropoli", 26.9.2007; *Simvivamos me ti... Dexia tis Dexias* (Compromise with the...right wing of the Right), in "To Vima", 26.9.2007; *History book scrapped*, in "Athens News", 28.9.2007; H. SMITH, *Greek government withdraws controversial history textbook*, in "The Guardian", [11/13]: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/sep/26/cyprus.greece>.

¹⁸ As has already been implied, the present article focuses on the standpoint of the adversaries. I will leave the advocates' discourse for another occasion. The cross-examination of the two discourses led to analytical problems since the two sides did not share common ground. On the contrary, they tended to pass one another and to thematize the various aspects of the dispute in a self-referential manner.

attempt synthetic projects. In short, the textbook sought to provide the minimum amount of necessary knowledge, primarily of the national and secondarily of the European past, and, at the same time, aspired to engage students in critical conversations with this very past. These pedagogical innovations were, however, hardly debated during the dispute. Even the mistakes that had slipped through received minimal attention. Right from the outset, it became clear that the bone of contention was neither historical accuracy nor pedagogical appropriateness. These were exposed by the adversaries but only when they strengthened the core of their polemic. What was at stake was the nation-constituting function of the textbook. As the Academy of Athens report underlined the textbook «neither forges national memory and nor heightens Greek self-awareness». In fact, the Academy urged the political authorities to take action: «Ultimately, the judgement about the textbook needs to be premised on the Constitutional imperative – the development, by means of education, of the “national consciousness of the Greeks»¹⁹.

What was primarily challenged was the appropriateness of the textbook to forge the national consciousness of students. This can be accomplished in, at least, three ways: by praising heroic deeds, lamenting the sufferings and historicizing myths²⁰. These are not the only axes around which the dispute revolved. However, they proved decisive for its final outcome²¹.

2. *The glory*

It is truisitic to argue that nation-states are in absolute need of heroes. For, by praising heroic virtues and deeds they can forge feelings of national pride to their subjects. Naturally, more useful than the contemporary heroes are the already dead – the ancestors – and not just because they cannot abnegate the role reserved for them by the nation. As Anthony Smith wrote in 1991,

nationalists rediscovered and often exaggerated the heroism of past ages, the glories of ancestral civilizations (often not “their own”) and the exploits of their great national heroes, even

¹⁹ Academia Athinon, *op. cit.*

²⁰ See A.D. SMITH, *National Identity*, Reno-Nevada, University of Nevada Press, 1991; E. HOBBSAWM, T.O. RANGER, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

²¹ For other dimensions of the dispute see E. KRAFT, *Die Auseinandersetzung um ein neues Geschichtsbuch in Griechenland*, in “Southeast Europe Journal of Politics and Society”, 2-3, 2007, pp. 315-336; A. LIAKOS, *History Wars: Questioning Tolerance*, in G. HALFDANARSON (ed.), *Discrimination and Tolerance in Historical Perspective*, Pisa, Plus-Pisa University Press, 2008, pp. 77-92; M. REPOUSI, *Politics questions history education. Debates on Greek History Textbooks*, in “Annales de la Société Internationale pour la didactique de l’histoire”, *Yearbook 2006/2007*, 2007, pp. 99-110; G. KOKINOS, P. GATZOTIS, *The Deviation from the Norm: Greek History School Textbooks Withdrawal from Use in Classroom since the 1980s*, in “Internationale Schulbuchforschung”, vol. 30, n. 1, 2008, pp. 535-546; L. CAJANI, *L’histoire, les lois, les mémoires. Sur quelques conflits récents en Europe*, in “Revue française de pédagogie”, n. 165, 2008.

when those heroes belonged more to the realm of legend than history and, if they lived, knew nothing of the nation which was so busy reclaiming them from obscurity²².

Greek school history has a long array of heroes and their deeds to display in order to testify the glorious march of the nation: from the legendary kings of the Homeric epic – Agamemnon and Ulysses – to the romanticized figures of the 1821 Revolution warlords. The latter’s times and deeds occupied, since the end of the 19th Century, a considerable part of modern school history. This was all to be expected since the 1821 Revolution is the founding moment of the Greek state. The previous history textbooks detailed the battles waged by Greeks against the Turks during the seven years of the Revolution and praised the strategic genius of Kolokotronis, the bravery of Nikitaras and the self-sacrifice of Diakos.

The adversaries opinioned that, contrary to the established cannon, the events of the Revolution were narrated in a laconic and spiritless manner. Dimitrios Natsios, a teacher who was amongst the first to attack the textbook, writes:

In the unit *The Great Revolution*, the purely military events, where the self-sacrifice and heroism of the 1821 fighters shines forth, are confined to merely 3 chapters. [...] Only the heroes’ names are provided, as if they were a football team, [while] the glorious battles (Gravia, Dervenakia, the Messolonghi exodus, Alamana) are missing²³.

Indeed, the events of the Revolution occupied 26 pages²⁴ in contradiction to the 79 of the previous textbook²⁵ and the 76 of the present one²⁶. But it is not only a matter of degree. Primarily it is a matter of emphasis. “Surprisingly”, Natsios goes on, “a whole chapter is devoted to the civil strives” that took place during the Revolution, to ironically conclude that

the students should not feel particularly prude of their ancestors for that would entail an ethnocentric perspective. [This leads to] degradation of heroism and prioritization of insignificant incidents of the Struggle that undermine the feeling of national unity²⁷.

²² SMITH, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

²³ D. NATSIOS, *Ta neotaxika vivlia istorias tou dimotikou* (The new world order school history textbooks), [11/13]: http://palio.antibarο.gr/society/natsios_biblia.php, 18.06.2006. Compare the letter 173 teachers addressed to the minister of education that reads: “the military expeditions [of the Revolution] occupy two pages, as many as Greek music and cinema”, see *Epistolī daskalon pros tin upoyrgo Paidias* (Teachers’ letter to the minister of education), in: *Giati den Diorthonetai – Neoepohitiko Biblio pou Plastografei tin Istorīa kai proothi tmn Agria Pagkosmiopiisi* (Why it is not corrected – The new order world book that falsifies our history and promotes vicious globalization), Athens, Private Edition, 2007, pp. 161-166.

²⁴ M. REPOUSI et al., *Sta neotera...* (In Modern...), *op. cit.*, pp. 38-64.

²⁵ D. AKTIPIS, A. VELALIDIS, M. KAILA, TH. KATSOUAKOS, Y. PAPAGRIGORIOU, K. XOREANTHIS, *Sta neotera xronia* (In Modern Times), Athens, OEDB, 1997, pp. 87-166.

²⁶ I. KOLIPOULOS, I. MIHAILIDIS, A. KALLIANIOTIS, H. MINAOGLOU, *Istorīa tou neoterou kai sygxronou kosmou* (History of the Modern and Contemporary World), Athens, OEDB, 2012, pp. 71-146.

²⁷ NATSIOS, *op. cit.*

Consequently, it is a matter of historical explanation. The Academy of Athens report felt obliged to stress that the defeat of the Greeks by the Ibrahim Pasha troops in 1825 is left without explanation – without a *correct* explanation:

No mention is made to the fact that the Egyptian army was long-standing, organized and trained according to the European standards by mercenaries, who had served under Napoleon, and, as a result, the Greek forces were confronted by an army and military tactics they were unfamiliar with²⁸.

It follows that the defeat has to be attributed to this fact and not to a deficit of heroism or to civil strife as the textbook implies.

Finally, the narrative language is held to be flat and colorless and thus unsuitable to raise feelings of pride to the young students. As a typical example the adversaries referred to the “Messolonghi exodus”, a famous page from the history of the Revolution that enraptured the Romantics across Europe. In 1825, while the Revolution had in actual fact been defeated by the joint operations of the Ottoman and Egyptian forces, Messolonghi, a fortress city, where Lord Byron had died a year ago, was under siege by both land and sea. The revolutionary forces strenuously resisted for a whole year until, exhausted by hunger and diseases, they attempted a heroic but desperate exodus. The textbook reads: “the situation of the Messolonghi population is deteriorating. Bereft of food and ammunition they eventually resort to a heroic exodus in April 1826”²⁹. “The mice, the mice” a nationalist thinker exclaimed mimicking the Revolution fighters’ idiolect so as his readers recall a well-known narrative of the previous textbooks.

They were eating mice and therefore they were forced [to leave]. And Miaoulis was crying for he could no longer break the siege! And during the exodus women and children were slaughtered along with the heroes. And Kapsalis blew up the powder store so that you scholars can live free and write things you shouldn’t³⁰.

This type of criticism, that attempts to mobilize the patriotic feelings of the people, characterizes the discourse of the conservative Right, which in Greece coexists with the liberal Right in N.D. After all, the five in total parliamentary queries addressed to the Minister of Education to challenge the book came from inside the governing party³¹.

²⁸ Academia Athinon, *op. cit.*

²⁹ M. REPOUSI et al., *Sta neotera...* (In Modern...), *op. cit.*, p. 46.

³⁰ K. ZOURARIS, *Aprosopia kai ragiadikes americanies* (Facelessness and the ninny-minded yesmen), in “Macedonia”, 17.12.2006.

³¹ Parliamentary queries were raised by Constantinos Gioulekas, Giorgos Kontoyiannis, Dimitris Konstantaras, Adam Regouzas and Stelios Papatheamelis who drew upon texts like Natsios *op. cit.* Several members of N.D including the former chairman of the party Miltiadis Evert and the former European MP and current PM Antonis Samaras asked for the book to be withdrawn.

The more radical wing of the Right took a further step and endorsed conspiracy theories. The textbook, they claimed, was part of a broader project orchestrated by the USA to further its own interests in the South-Eastern basin of the Mediterranean. According to this "explanatory" schema, the promotion of the American geostrategic interests presupposes the mitigation of the inter-state tensions that characterize the Greek-Turkish relations. Thus, the omission and/or demotion from school history of the thorny issues that bedevil the Greek-Turkish relations. Therefore, the adversaries concluded, the textbook "was written in collaboration with Turkish historians who corrected it. This explains the total absence of the term "Turcocracy" and its replacement by the term "Ottoman administration"³², which implies that the terms employed seek to legitimate Ottoman rule rather than expose the barbarity of the Turkish occupation.

This "explanation" is premised upon a probably deliberate conflation between the textbook in question and a parallel project by historians from 11 Balkan countries to write a common history book for the nation-states that emerged after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire – the Joint History Project³³. In actual fact, however, this project is reminiscent more of an analogous attempt by a team of French and German historians who wrote a common history book at that time (2006) than to the textbook in question³⁴. The basic concern of the Joint History Project, that comprises four volumes published in seven languages³⁵, was to produce a multi-perspectival and, thus, less ethno-centric history. However, the Greek-speaking version was never published for school use. As its publication coincided with the dispute over the history textbook, the adversaries treated it as a homologous but much broader attempt towards the deconstruction of national identities to the benefit of American hegemony. The Joint History Project unwittingly became part of the dispute and thus the Pedagogical Institute did not approve its school use³⁶.

³² A. GEORGIADIS, in "AlphaENA", 30.6.2007. Georgiadis is the current minister of health. In 2006 he was MP for the small far-Right party LA.O.S. In the 2004 elections, LA.O.S received 2,19% of the votes, below the 3% threshold needed to gain entry to parliament. In the 2007 elections it received 3,80% and elected 10 MPs. The vast majority of political analysts have attributed the almost doubling of LA.O.S' electoral percentage to the "Greek national identity" campaign they pursued including their intervention to the dispute. See the statements of Giorgos Karatzaferis – chairman of the party – in "Kathimerini", 7.6.2007 and for the electoral campaign that focused on the textbook *Kerdi gia ton Karatzaferi* (Karatzaferis capitalizes) in "Ethnos", 8.9.2007.

³³ The Joint History Project was conducted by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe and funded by the State Department and USAID (United States Agency for International Development). This was all the adversaries needed to prove their "theory".

³⁴ See M. SIEGEL, K. HARJES, *Disarming Hatred: History Education, National Memories, and Franco-German Reconciliation from World War I to the Cold War*, in "History of Education Quarterly", vol. 52, no 3, 2012, pp. 370-402.

³⁵ See [11/13]: <http://www.cdsee.org/projects/jhp/publications>.

³⁶ See, inter alia, the TV show "Anihnefsis", 27.6.2007, [12/13]: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HH9qNOKOG_Y.

The criticism raised by the conservative- and far-Right was nothing but unexpected. However, the attack against the “sterile” narration of the glorious moments of the national past was also launched by some leftish quarters. The GCP, from its own standpoint and using its own conceptual armory, reserved a harsh critique of the textbook. The obliteration of the heroic element from history, it claimed, does not seek, as suggested, to mitigate of hatred and tension between the neighboring nations. Actually, the “spiritless and belittled account of emblematically revolutionary events” aims to stigmatize revolutionary violence. At a time when revolutionary violence is presented by the powerful of the planet as terrorism, the textbook effectively denies the oppressed the right to revolt against their oppressors. It is exactly for this reason, the critique concludes, that “the centuries-long mass popular heroism has been eliminated from the book”³⁷.

At that time, the GCP, despite the historically unprecedented shrinkage of its electoral support to single digit percentages, remained the third party in parliament maintaining considerable access to labour unions and a broader appeal to the lower strata. In fact, several analysts attributed the increase in electoral support it enjoyed between 2004 and 2007 (from 5,89% to 8,15%) to the “national-popular” practices including the harsh critique of the history textbook. This assertion, of course, cannot be verified. What is beyond doubt is the fact that the GCP, a party with no appeal amongst the historians, recruited through the dispute an eminent historian: Giorgos Margaritis, professor of Modern Greek history at the University of Thessaloniki. Margaritis refined and modernized the GCP discourse. His key argument is the following: the textbook by obliterating from its pages «the struggles for national and social freedoms»³⁸ serves the needs of contemporary internationalized capitalism. The textbook undermines the modern nation, the only resort left to the lower social strata, that are affected and immiserized under the tutelage of international capital, the only bulwark left against the assault of the market forces and their crushing impact on people’s lives. These developments, Margaritis goes on, objectively create a space where the forces of the Left and the nation can meet³⁹. That is, the Left has to occupy the gap left behind by the Greek political elite, that has become «deeply anti-nationalist, or better, anti-patriotic, and has adhered to doctrines that throughout the world have replaced the values and rules of politics with the values and rules of economics»⁴⁰.

³⁷ *To vivlio istorias tis ST' [ektis] dimotikou kai i andiparathesi ethnikismou-kosmopolitismou* (The sixth grade history textbook and the nationalism-cosmopolitanism confrontation), in “Kiriakatikos Rizospastis”, 22.4.2007. Rizostastis is the newspaper of the GCP.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ G. MARGARITIS, *Apo to polu asteio sto polu, ma polu sovoro* (From the very funny to the very serious), in “Avgi”, 23.4.2007; *To vivlio tis ST' Dimotikou den voitha tin kritiki skepsi* (The sixth-grade book does not encourage critical thinking), interview with Giorgos Margaritis, in “Thessalia”, [11/13]: <http://pontosandaristera.wordpress.com/2007/07/25/17-4-2007>.

⁴⁰ *Ta nea vivlia epixeiroun na empedosoun stin koinonia tous nomous tis agoras* (The new books attempt to impose on society the laws of the market), interview with Giorgos Margaritis, in “Aristera!”, 28.5.2007.

The same line of argumentation was employed by most of the extra-parliamentary far-Left organizations that, however, distanced themselves, or, at least they tried to, from the traditional nationalist ideology and its bearers. Eftihis Bitsakis, an intellectual affiliated with these political forces writes: "we need to distinguish between reactionary nationalism and healthy patriotism, reactionary anti-imperialism and genuine, left anti-imperialism"⁴¹.

However, some far-Left groups sought on the space opened by the dispute to build political alliances with forces that proclaim the nation as the contemporary fundamental political subject. The most prominent of them was a group of intellectuals around the journal *Ardin* (Radically)⁴². Their activity is significant not due to the political weight they carry – it is after all a marginal group – but because their theoretical elaborations modernized and shielded from utter disrepute key elements of the conservative nationalist discourse. More to the point, *Ardin* sought to foreground the heroic element in Greek history both on grounds of historical accuracy and political expediency. The nature of the Greek nation, they argued, has been historically constituted out of the resistance practices against their dominators from which they differed in terms of ethnicity and religion⁴³. According to this perspective, that heavily draws upon the Marxist historian Nikos Svoronos⁴⁴, modern Hellenism emerged in early 13th Century as a response to the fall of Constantinople (1204) in the hands of the crusaders and the long tutelage imposed by westerners (Venetians, Franks et al.) upon the ruins of Byzantine ecumenicity (13th - 15th Centuries). The double alterity – religious and ethnic – that distinguished the dominated from the dominators reached its climax during the four centuries of Turcocracy (15th - 19th centuries). According to this interpretive schema, all pre-modern revolts that broke

⁴¹ E. BITSAKIS, *Metamonterno ivridio to vivlio tis ST' Dimotikou* (Postmodern hybrid – the sixth grade book), in "Prin", 3.6.2007.

⁴² See <http://ardn-rxi.gr>. Heart and soul of the team is Giorgos Karabelias, author of many political books. His last one bears the characteristic title *To 1204 kai I diamorfosi tou neoterou ellinismou* (1204 and modern Hellenism formation), Athens, Enallaktikes Ekdoseis, 2007. The study was written during the debate and its introduction was published in a special issue of *Ardin* that attacked the book.

⁴³ Editorial, *Ta nea vivlia tis istorias: I genoktonia tis mnimis* (the new history textbooks: The genocide of memory), in "Ardin", 62, 2007, [11/13]: <http://www.ardn.gr/?q=node/1874>; G. Karabelias, *Ena egzirima katholikis anatheorisis* (An exercise in radical revisionism), in "Ardin", 62, 2007, [11/13]: <http://www.ardn.gr/?q=node/1881>.

⁴⁴ Nikos Svoronos (1911-1989) was a Marxist historian, who during the 1970's, gave academic credence to the Marxist approach of Greek history when the translation of the concise history of modern Greece he had initially written in 1953 for the needs of the French audience was published (N. SVORONOS, *Histoire de la Grèce Moderne*, Paris, P.U.F, 1953). He spent his most productive years in France as director of studies in Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (IV Section) where he lectured on the history of Byzantine Empire institutions. After the fall of the colonels' dictatorship in 1974, he regained his citizenship rights which he had deprived of due to his leftist convictions. His views on the genesis and trajectory of the Greek nation are mainly contained in the entry he wrote in 1963-65 for the *Encyclopedia of Modern Greece* which was not published. Forty years later, when the "nation" became a public issue, Svoronos' study was published in a book format as N. SVORONOS, *To Elliniko Ethnos: Genesi kai diamorphosi tou Neou Ellinismou* (The Greek nation: genesis and formation of new Hellenism) Athens, Polis, 2004.

out during the Ottoman rule are inscribed in the genealogy of national resistance whose peak is the national Revolution of 1821. Paradigmatic figures of this permanent resistance were the Klephts, the guerilla troops that during the Ottoman era shifted from predation to revolution. The Adrin intellectuals argue that it is immaterial whether the deeds attributed to Klephts are fictitious and their motives ambiguous. For, the perception of an event by the people, as well as the traces it leaves on collective memory, constitutes part of history. The Klephts who were praised in folklore songs for their bravery and unconquered spirit epitomize the spirit of resistance of the Greek nation as a whole⁴⁵.

3. *The trauma*

If glory unites through awakening, trauma cements through mourning. As A.J. Alexander puts it,

Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways⁴⁶.

In case the collectivity is an ethnicity or a nation then we can talk about an ethnic or national trauma. Amongst the national traumas of the Greek nation the most painful is undoubtedly the Minor-Asia Catastrophe. The term is hardly value-free. On the contrary, it is nationally biased and emotionally loaded. It constantly reminds us of the trauma: the width and depth of the national, social and cultural repercussions of the failed expedition of the Greek army at the heart of Minor-Asia. In May 1919, after Greece extorted permission from the Peace Conference in Paris, the Greek army landed troops in Smyrna [Izmir], the most cosmopolitan city of the crumbling Ottoman Empire, the city-port that bridged East and West. This was the core target of Greek nationalism since the Greek community not only outnumbered the rest but overwhelmed them both economically and culturally⁴⁷.

Three years later, in August 1922, when the Greek troops abandoned Minor-Asia, defeated and devastated, the Turkish national army led by Kemal and the Chetes guerilla fighters invaded the city. Few days later (31.8.1922) Smyrna [Izmir] was set on fire

⁴⁵ S. PAULOU, *Kleftes kai kleftopoula* (Klephts and young klephts), in "Ardin", 64, 2007, [12/13] <http://www.ardin.gr/?q=node/993>.

⁴⁶ J.C. ALEXANDER, *Towards a theory of cultural trauma*, in J.C. ALEXANDER, R. EYERMAN, B. GIESEN, N.J. SMELSER, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Population composition of Smyrna [Izmir] during the first decade of the 20th century: total 350,000 approximately; Greeks: 165,000, Turks: 100,000, Jews: 30,000, Armenians: 25,000, Europeans: 20,000; see A. THEMOPOULOU, *O eksastismos tis mikrasiatikis polis: To paradeigma tis Smirnis* (The embourgeoisment of a Minor-Asia city: the case of Smyrna), in *Smirni: I mitropoli tou mikrasiatikou ellinismou* (Smyrna: the metropolis of Minor-Asia Hellenism), Athens, DOL-KMS, 2007.

and a considerable part of the Christian population that had gathered at the waterfront in view to escape was slaughtered. After the Treaty of Lausanne (24.7.1923) a massive population exchange between Greece and Turkey took place. More than a million Christians from Minor-Asia, Pontus and Anatolia were uprooted from their communities to be transferred to the rural areas of northern Greece and, more often than not, the slums at the city outskirts⁴⁸.

During the decades that followed these thousands of painful, personal and family experiences get articulated and acquire meaning by a dominant narrative that revolves around this decisive traumatic event. The burning of Smyrna [Izmir] constitutes the backbone of the collective refugee memory – a memory stamped in dull images, harrowing engravings, sorrow songs and bloodied novels⁴⁹. While the first generation of refugees silently ruminated in sorrow, the second organized cultural centers and study societies, raised claims for material and, primarily, symbolic reparations and, above all, constructed a distinct identity on the basis of the collective trauma of “uprooting”⁵⁰. These centers and societies played a decisive role in the recognition by the Greek Parliament of the persecution of the Greeks from Pontus and Minor-Asia as genocide⁵¹. They played an equally active part in the polemic against the textbook. In July 2006, before the book was introduced to schools, 541 Pontian organizations from around the world protested its publication on the grounds that it «suppresses the persecutions of the Christian population, offends the Pontian Hellenism that suffered genocide and exonerates Turkish nationalism»⁵². Dozens of refugee organization resolutions followed and their reactions culminated in a joint press conference by all refugee federations⁵³. They mainly objected to the elliptical and colorless manner their story was narrated in the textbook, drawing

⁴⁸ For a concise account see, J.S. KOLIOPOULOS, T.M. VEREMIS, *Greece: A Modern Sequel*, London, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, 2002.

⁴⁹ See, inter alia, the music records *Minor-Asia* by Apostolos Kaldaras (1972) and *Rebetiko* by Stavros Xarhakos (1983) that contain multiple references to Minor-Asia; the novels *Farewell Anatolia* by D. SOTIRIOU (translated by Fred A. Reed) Athens, Kedros, 1991, and *Noumero 31328: To Vivlio tis Sklavias* (Number 31328: The Book of Slavery) by I. VENEZIS, Athens, Estia, 2004, 43rd edition); the film “1922” by Nikos Koundouros, based on Venezis’s book. Images and footages of Smyrna [Izmir] before and after the fire can be found in Maria Iliou documentary *Smyrna: the destruction of a cosmopolitan city: 1900-1922*, [11/13]: <http://www.smyrnadocumentary.org/>.

⁵⁰ A. JAMES, *Memories of Anatolia: generating Greek refugee identity*, in “Balkanologie”, Vol. V, n. 1-2, décembre 2001, [11/13]: <http://balkanologie.revues.org/720>.

⁵¹ In 1994, after the refugee organizations mobilization, the Greek parliament officially recognized the persecution of the Pontians between 1916 and 1923 as genocide to be commemorated on May the 19th, see “Efimeris tis Kiverniseos” (Official Government Gazette) [thereafter, FEK], Nr. 32^A, 11.3.1994). In 1998, the Greek parliament instituted September the 14th “as national memory day [to commemorate] the genocide of the Minor-Asia Greeks by the Turkish state”, (FEK, Nr. 234^A, 13.10.1998).

⁵² See *Psifisma 541 Organoseon Pontion* (Resolution by 541 Pontian organizations), July 2006, [12/13] <http://pontosandaristera.wordpress.com/2007/08/11/2-2007>.

⁵³ See, inter alia, *Epistoli tis Enoseos Smirneon [stin Ipourgo Paideias]* (Letter of the Smyrneans’ Association [to the minister of education]), [12/13]: http://palio.antibaro.gr/society/smyrnaioi_istoria.php, December 2006.

particular attention to the following sentence: “thousands of Greeks crowded on the waterfront while trying to embark the ships to Greece”⁵⁴. What exasperated them most was the word “crowded”. As Kostas Fotiadis, a historian of refugee descent, pointed out:

The analogy the book desperately tries to establish is that of the crowding at the ports of modern Greece during summer vacations. [...] the collective memory of the cultural group I come from and of which I am proud of has been stamped by the Turks-inflicted carnage, during crowding⁵⁵.

It follows that the symbolic unity of refugee Hellenism is constituted in the name of the victims. The removal of blood and pain from the picture entails the removal of the foundation stone of the collective memory of refugee Hellenism.

4. *The myths*

It has often been suggested that «nations live and die by their myths»⁵⁶. It would be more correct to say that nations *desire* to live and die by their myths. The two most popular national Greek myths are the “clandestine school” and “Agia Lavra”. According to the oral legend, during the “400 years of slavery” (that is, the era of Ottoman rule), Greeks preserved their language, history and national consciousness because, in dimly-lit churches and hidden from the gaze of the conquerors, priests jeopardized their lives to teach children the Greek language. At the last quarter of the 19th century, this romanticized narrative of the “clandestine school” was depicted in a painting by the conservative and deeply religious Nikolaos Gyzis. During the 20th century, Gyzis’ painting, and through it the “clandestine school”, became a sign of what Billig calls “banal nationalism”⁵⁷: it ornamented school classrooms, was celebrated in school festivals, decorated banknotes and, eventually, became incorporated in school textbooks as a self-evident historical truth, despite the fact that its existence was not corroborated by historical research⁵⁸. In the textbook in question “the clandestine school” shined by absence. Such an absence, of course, could not go unnoticed.

⁵⁴ M. REPOUSI et al., *Sta neotera...* (In Modern...), *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁵⁵ K. FOTIADIS, *To Mikrasiatiko Zitima sto Neo Vivlio tis ST’ Dimotikou* (The Minor-Asia issue in the new sixth-grade book), March 2007, [12/13]: http://palio.antibaro.gr/society/fwtiadhs_istoria.php.

⁵⁶ J. MOREAU, *Schoolbook Nation. Conflicts over American History Textbooks from the Civil War to the Present*, Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 2011, pp. 332.

⁵⁷ M. BILLIG, *Banal Nationalism*, London, SAGE Publications, 1995.

⁵⁸ see A. AGGELOU, *To krifo sxolio: Xroniko enos mithou* (The clandestine school: The chronicle of a myth), Athens, Estia, 1997; P. STATHIS, *To krifo sholio: diadromes tou mithou, diadromes tis istorias* (The clandestine school: trajectories of myth, trajectories of history), in “Historein”, vol. 4, 2003 (cd), who argues that the myth, over the last four decades, feeds upon the «discoveries» of new «clandestine schools» in several monasteries across Greece, Although these “discoveries” obviously serve the needs of the thriving domestic touristic market, they are also signs of an invented tradition «which automatically implies continuity with the past» (HOBSBAWM, RANGER, *op. cit.*, p. 1).

Equally absent was “Agia Lavra” by Georgios Bryzakis, one of the most prominent 19th century Greek romantic painters. One of his oil paintings depicts, in a superbly theatrical and imposing manner, the Archbishop of Patras Germanos to inaugurate the revolution by blessing the banner and guns of the fighters at Agia Lavra monastery in front of the Holy Gate of the Virgin Mary church on 25th March 1821. It is true that this legend is more faithful to the historical facts than the “clandestine school”. The Revolution did break out in Peloponnese in March 1821 – although the dates and places vary. Archbishop Germanos was actually involved in its preparation; yet, the inauguration ritual, the oath taking and the blessing of guns in Agia Lavra has not been corroborated by historical research⁵⁹. The legend that spread since the very first months of the Struggle appears to derive from the French press and to reflect the reception of the Greek Revolution by the European Romantics. The date of the 25th of March is also symbolic. The Greek Revolution was associated with Holy Mary’s Annunciation: Hellenism and Christianity were brought together even after the fact⁶⁰.

Thus, the reaction of the Church to the elimination of the “clandestine school” and “Agia Lavra” legends was nothing but unexpected. After all, for the Church, they were not legends but historical facts that proved that the survival of the nation through the centuries of slavery, its eventual awakening, revolt and independence had to be attributed to the existence and mobilization of the Church⁶¹. At least this is what the Primate of the Greek Church and Archbishop of Athens Christodoulos and an array of priests stated in inflammatory sermons from the pulpit against the “nation-killing” textbook⁶². After all, it was Christodoulos himself who had actually raised the Agia Lavra

⁵⁹ V. KREMIDAS, *Mixanismoï paragogis istorikon mīthōn. Sxetika me mia omilia tou Palaion Patron Germanou* (Mechanisms of historical myths reproduction: On Archbishop Germanos’ speech), in “Mnimon”, 18, 1996, pp. 9-21.

⁶⁰ On the institutionalization and evolution of the national anniversary, see CH. KOULOURI, *Giortazontas to ethnos: Ethnikes epeteioi stin Ellada ton 19^o aiona* (Celebrating the nation: national anniversaries in 19th century Greece), in *Atheates opseis istorias*, (Invisible facets of history), Athens, Asini, 2012, pp. 181-210.

⁶¹ See *To krifo sxolio. I prosfora tis Ekklesias stin elliniki paideia ton xronon tis Tourkokratias* (The clandestine school: the contribution of the Church to Greek education during Turcocracy), in “Ardin”, 64, 2007, pp. 40-44. According to the editors of Ardin the article “was commissioned by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece to a well-known historian”.

⁶² See, inter alia, Archbishop’s interventions: in “Ta Nea”, 18.9.2006 (with particular reference to Agia Lavra); in *Espresso*, 5.4.2007 (asking the PM to withdraw the book); in “Imerisia”, 15.5.2007 (where the book is characterized as “disgraceful”); in “Ta Nea”, 24.5.2007 (where he reproaches the government for not withdrawing the book); in Politis [Cyprus], 3.6.2007 (where he relates the book to the Kofi Annan plan and praises the Cypriot political authorities for opposing both); in “Macedonia”, 14.6.2007 (where he claims that the textbook “exonerates Turkey from the crimes committed against Greeks”). In the same vein, see Archbishop of Thessaloniki Anthimos intervention *Voles apo amvonos gia Skopia kai Istoria* (Shots from the pulpit on Skopje and History), in “Imerisia”, 24.9.2007; the Church of Crete note in *Giati de diorthonetai...* (Why it is not corrected), *op. cit.*, p. 89; and the note signed by 146 priests of the Holy Archdiocese of Larissa asking for the “correction of the “nation-killing” book and the “appreciation of the historical contribution of the Church” in “Eleftheros” 4.5.2007).

banner four years earlier while addressing a massive gathering of believers on the occasion of a previous public dispute over whether the new ID cards should include an entry for religious affiliation⁶³.

However, the official report by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece was more carefully written. It avoided direct reference to the two popular legends, and yet it concisely systematized the criticism that the textbook did not adequately perform its nation-constituting role. Finally, it selectively prioritized the links between Orthodoxy and Hellenism. The Holy Synod argued that the contribution of the Orthodox tradition to the preservation of the Greek national consciousness is suppressed while the role of the Church during the years of slavery and Revolution is completely discredited. Specifically, they underlined the lack of any reference to the sacrifice of Patriarch Gregorios V who was hung by order of Sultan Mahmud II in retaliation for the revolution⁶⁴. The interventions of the Church attracted the support of prominent conservative intellectuals and nationalist politicians. The former vice chancellor of the University of Athens and prominent linguist, Georgios Babiniotis, employed his background in literature to support the interdependence between Orthodoxy and Hellenism: “the priests spearheaded the struggle of our people for enlightenment [...] they publicly taught the Greek-Orthodox tradition and reconciled Greek language with Orthodoxy [...] Christian teaching and Hellenism are not polar opposites”⁶⁵.

And Antonis Samaras, former European MP and current PM, in an analysis more sophisticated than Christodoulos’s crude discourse, argued that national myths deserve a place in school history for they condense, in an emblematic way, the social relations and rebels’ practices during Turcocracy and, in this sense, express deeper historical realities⁶⁶. In any case, from the standpoint of the adversaries, any attempt to belittle the national role of the Church challenges Orthodoxy and to the extent that Orthodoxy has historically been held as one of the pillars of the Greek national identity, it explicitly undermines national identity.

A number of historians by profession perceived Chistodoulos’s interventions as obscurantism and picked up the glove. Vasilis Kremmydas, emeritus professor of his-

⁶³ L. MOLOKOTOS-LIEDERMAN, *The Greek ID Card Controversy: A Case Study of Religion and National Identity in a Changing European Union*, in “Journal of Contemporary Religion”, 22, 2, 2007, pp. 187-203.

⁶⁴ See the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece report reprinted in “Paron”, 1.4.2007.

⁶⁵ See the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece press release: *Iper ton theseon tis ekklesias of pritanis tou panepistimiou Athinon G. Babiniotis* (The vice chancellor of the University of Athens G. Babiniotis sides with the Church), 7.5.2006, [11/13]: <http://www.edra.gr/modules1.php?name=News&file=article&sid=27090>. See also the article of the nationalist politician S. PAPHHEMELIS, *Autoiponomeuetai I ethniki mas autosinidisia* (Our national self-awareness is being self-undermined), in “Macedonia”, 13.5.2007.

⁶⁶ A. SAMARAS, *I mania «apodomisis» ton mithon* (The “deconstruction” of myths mania), in “Metexelixa” (a journal published by N.D.), [11/13]: http://palio.antibarro.gr/society/samaras_istoria.php, May 2007 and the extensive coverage of his article in “Egnatia” [Thessaloniki], 22.9.2007.

tory at the University of Athens, pointed out: “They tell us that priests were sacrificed during the struggle. This is true. And yet, this happened not because they were members of the Church but because, as individuals, they disregarded with contempt the orders of their leadership”⁶⁷.

From this perspective, which reigns supreme amongst Greek historians, the Greek Revolution is indebted to French Enlightenment and its reception by the affluent commercial communities of the 18th century Greeks. Between 1770 and 1820 a network of scholars, publishing houses and schools expanded along the commercial roads of the near East and transformed traditional cultural patterns to modern ones. In the social and economic context of the early 19th century, the intellectual current of Enlightenment culminated into revolutionary turmoil. Opposing the Enlightenment project, Patriarch Gregorios V published a condemnatory decree that threatened to excommunicate not only those involved in the Revolution but also all those “who while aware of the revolutionaries’ moves do not inform the authorities”. He was not hung for encouraging the Revolution but because, and despite his efforts, he did not prevent it⁶⁸. The adversaries protest for the elimination of the incidents that indicate the “decisive contribution of the Greek Orthodox Church to National Regeneration”. And yet such incidents do not exist. And because they do not exist, the Church is in absolute need for the construction of such myths even after the fact. During the last forty years several of the best Greek historians had dispelled some of the most widely held myths. But Greeks are so infatuated with their (romanticized) past that they turned their back to them.

5. Conclusion

From the above it follows that according to the adversaries’ allegations what is included in and excluded from the textbook contributes to the deconstruction of the nation and national identity because:

- a) It neither sufficiently praises national heroes nor it adequately highlights the glorious moments of the national past thus abandoning a critical resource for role-modeling and the forging of national pride.
- b) It eliminates national traumata and removes the scars imprinted by history on the national body. Thus it exploits neither pain – the memory of pain – to constitute the identity of the nation nor bereavement to cement it. At the same time, it effec-

⁶⁷ V. KREMMYDAS, *I sigrousi gia tin Istoría* (The conflict over history), in “Ta Nea”, 26.4.2007.

⁶⁸ See V. KREMMYDAS, *Aktinografia sta pio sizitimena nea biblia Istorias tou dimotikou kai tou gymnasiou* (Analysing the most debated new history textbooks for primary and secondary education) in “Ta Nea”, 7.10.2006. Compare with the reply of the member of the Academy of Athens Despotopoulos who attributed the excommunication of the Revolution by the Patriarch to his intention to protect the Greeks, who lived in other areas, from retaliations, K. DESPOTOPOULOS, *I Ekklesia kai i epanastasi tou '21* (The church and the 1821 revolution) in “Ta Nea” 27.10.2006.

tively exonerates the enemies of their crimes for they are no longer described as barbarians in the manner of the previous textbooks. They even ceased becoming enemies and thus enmity – a critical ingredient for the construction of national unity – is left unexploited.

- c) It also ignores the fine myths such as the “clandestine school” and “Agia Lavra” and the overall contribution of the Church in national awakening thus disentangling Hellenism from Orthodoxy. At the same time, by taking the sting of Romanticism out of national history, it collapses into a spiritless and dull narrative incapable of inspiring patriotism.

The dividing line that separates the adversaries from the advocates cuts across the political and ideological spectrum. The accusations waged against the textbook from both the Left and the Right allowed the advocates to identify the emergence of an unprecedented and paradoxical “black-red” block⁶⁹. However, this convergence is not as paradoxical as it initially appears. To start with, all the adversaries expound a common worldview which revolves around the concept of the “nation”. They all seek to identify the “nation” with the “people” by which they mean the lower and more vulnerable social strata. Finally, they all acknowledge the “West” as their enemy, although what constitutes the “West” is conceptualized differently: The nationalist Right identifies the “West” with globalization which is orchestrated by the USA and seeks to homogenize and, eventually, to obliterate nations; for the popular Right, it signifies the economically powerful European nations that pursue our pauperization; for the Church and Orthodox intellectuals “West” equals Catholicism; for the communists, the patriotic wing of the socialists and the far-Left, “West” means imperialism.

Of the many labels that the advocates employed to stigmatize their adversaries one – “national-populists” – not only did it not seem to bother them but it was actually adopted by them albeit slightly modified: “nation-populars”. This may be attributed to their conviction that the conceptual and ideological osmosis of the “nation” with the “people” holds the potential of producing a cultural identity thick enough to survive neoliberal globalization, namely, to become a bulwark against the insecurities inflicted on the socially and economically marginalized by their exposure to superior, incomprehensible and, thus, threatening forces. It follows that the nation – a nation rebaptized in the soul of the people – needs to be preserved. And since the Greek Nation has been constituted by materials drawn from a centuries-long history and instilled to the youth through school history, what primarily needs to be preserved is a particular mode of teaching school history.

To address such a demand, the Academy of Athens underlined the two critical axes around which the contemporary school history should be organized: “revival of

⁶⁹ R. SOMERITIS, *Istoria kai isteria* (History and hysteria) in “To Vima”, 13.3.2007.

Greek self-awareness" and "survival of Greeks in the midst of dire times". The Ardin intellectuals, on their part, identified the origins of national self-awareness with the fall of Constantinople to the hands not of the Ottomans in 1453 but of the crusaders in 1204. This suggests that the adversaries identify the confrontation of the near East with the West as the founding act of modern Hellenism. The Fall is equally important for the Orthodox Church since it signifies its confrontation with Catholicism: «Better the Sultan's turban than the Pope's miter» as Notaras allegedly cried out⁷⁰. The narratives about the survival of the Greek nation in dire times find a receptive ear in the nationalists and communists alike since they praise the innate spirit of resistance of the nation. Thus, the universal recognition that the authoritative Marxist historian Nikos Svoronos suddenly enjoys can be attributed to the fact that he was one of the first to trace the origin of National Regeneration in the 13th century and, at the same time, to identify "resistance" as an analytical category for the comprehension of Greek history.

To the reactions of the vast majority of the historians who suggested that, despite its occasional historical inaccuracies and narrative failures, the textbook is more compatible with the disciplinary developments of history than the previous ones, the most intelligent and cynical of the adversaries did not even bother to reply. As Chrysanthos Lazaridis, a radical leftist in the 1970's who turned into a radical nationalist in the 1990's and is currently the prime minister's right arm, boldly declared: "University history research seeks to discover the truth. The teaching of history in schools serves a very different purpose: to form historical consciousness and to socialize the children, namely, to instill morale"⁷¹.

In this way, school history is programmatically separated from academic history. The latter is given license to seek historical accuracy, to pursue the disenchantment of the national past or even to approach it from diverse and divergent perspectives. On the contrary, school history's role is to perform the key ideological purpose of the nation. By selecting the rather quaint word "morale" Chrysanthos Lazaridis gives a more moralistic and religious flavor to what is currently called national consciousness. And, in order to stress that any response is redundant, he concludes by quoting the relevant article of the constitution: "Education constitutes a basic mission for the State and shall aim at... the development of national and religious consciousness"⁷². The Academy of Athens report had done the same.

Naturally, neither Chrysanthos Lazaridis nor the Academy of Athens bothered to mention that the relevant article was not included in the initial Greek constitutions. It was inserted for the first time, after the Civil War (1946-1949), in the 1952 con-

⁷⁰ On Loukas Notaras, the last Byzantine Grand Duke, and the remark ascribed to him, see J.L. FENNEL, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*, London, Routledge, 1995, pp. 177.

⁷¹ CH. LAZARIDIS, *Anakaleste to* (Withdraw it), 1.2.2007, [12/13]: <http://www.diktyo21.gr/item.asp?ReportID=386>, emphasis added.

⁷² The Constitution of Greece (article 16 § 2), [12/13]: <http://www.hri.org/docs/syntagma/artcl25.html#A16>.

stitution to signify the trashing of political liberalism and the embracement of “national-mindedness”⁷³ – an intolerant version of nationalism – by the Right⁷⁴. But this is a slightly different albeit not unrelated story that has to do with the mutations of Greek nationalism and their institutional crystallization...

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⁷³ See, inter alia, S. BOURNAZOS, *To kratos ton ethnikofronon: anti-commounistikos logos kai praktikes*, (The National-Minded State: Anti-Communist Discourse and Practices), in: Ch. CHATZIOSIF (ed.), *Istoria tis Elladas tou 20^o Aiona* (History of Greece in the 20th Century), Vol. D1, Athens, Bibliorama, 2009; *Mapping Ultra-Right Extremism, Xenophobia and Racism within the Greek State Apparatus*, D. CHRISTOPOULOS (ed), Brussels, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 2014.

⁷⁴ In the 1952 Constitution (article 16, § 2), the formulation is expectedly less elegant: “schooling aims at the moral and intellectual education and the development of the national consciousness of the youth on the basis of the ideological principles of the Greek-Christian civilization”, *To Neon Syntagma tis Ellados (1952)* (The new constitution of Greece), Athens, To Nomikon, 1952.

VIRAL HISTORIES: HISTORICAL CULTURE IN GREEK DIGITAL NETWORKS

Dealing with the past seems to be turbulent enough as far as it concerns contemporary Greek society: since the early 1990's, passionate "history wars" over the teaching of history in primary schools put an end to the career of Greek politicians and divided Greeks into *ethnomidenistes* (ethno-nihilists) and *ellinorades* (hyper-patriots); mass demonstrations introduced new ethno-romantic attitudes as well as new critiques of Greek nationalism; old-fashioned rituals and banal performances (parades, ceremonies, etc.) turned into battlefields, where novel conceptualizations of the historical past were emerging¹. These tensions and contradictions put difficulties in the way of those attempting to understand contemporary Greek *historical culture*, i.e. the particular ways in which Greek society elaborates historical information, in order to confirm, re-arrange or even deconstruct the available narratives about the historical past². Researchers from different academic fields (sociology, public history, theory of history, social anthropology, etc.) share similar feelings of uneasiness while studying the complex and even contradictory interplay between events, statements, attitudes, gestures and performances through which the past is interpreted in Greece since the early 1990's.

In addition, the uneasiness becomes even stronger when the focus is on the digital arenas of contemporary Greek historical culture. The advent of different networked technologies (personal homepages, weblogs, political and cultural e-forums, information portals, social networks, net games, 3d and VR installations, etc.) has fuelled the intensification of public engagement with the past. Since 1994, when the first Greek webpages were developed, the possibilities for new, even more complex and contradictory, articulations of historical meaning were opened up. Almost two decades

¹ For an overview of the public conflicts concerning history in contemporary Greece, among others see: A. LIAKOS, *History Wars: Notes from the Field*, in *Yearbook of the International Society for the Didactics of History*, S. POPP (ed.), Wochenschau Verlag Schwalbach 2008, pp. 57-74; I. NAKOU, E. APOSTOLIDOU, *Debates in Greece. Textbooks as the Spinal Cord of History Education and the Passionate Maintenance of a Traditional Historical Culture*, in *Contemporary Public Debates over History Education. International Review of History Education Series*, I. NAKOU, I. BARCA (ed.), Information Age Publishing, Charlotte, NC 2010, pp. 115-131; E. SJÖBERG, *Battlefields of Memory: The Macedonian Conflict and Greek Historical Culture* (doctoral dissertation), Umeå universitet, Umeå 2011.

² F.S. MARCOS, *Historical culture*, 2009, available at http://www.culturahistorica.es/historical_culture.html.

later, the Greek cyberspace is filled up with dense, multilayered ‘webs of the past’³, complicating even more the research on contemporary historical culture.

1. *In search of a ‘proper theory’*

Therefore, it is not surprising that the literature on Greek public history is not extensive enough to describe the diverse and dynamic conceptualizations of the past, articulated during the last decades. In addition, it seems that there are more obstacles to be overcome in the process of researching contemporary Greek historical culture than its internal complexity and multivocality. Quite often, for example, the lack of a ‘proper theory’ is also considered responsible for the field’s limitations. No doubt the research conducted on various manifestations of historical consciousness in contemporary Greece is highly empirical and case-oriented. Thus, it could possibly be stated that there are no any comprehensive general explanatory schemes or theoretical models capable of setting the stage for a better understanding of the historical culture in a country like Greece during the post-Cold War era.

However, this seems to be a half-truth. The absence of theory *within* a relatively young academic discipline like Greek public history does not indicate a general theoretical vacuum. On the contrary, in the same period of time a lot of exciting elaborations were proposed within a variety of fields (theory of history, memory studies, critical and political theory, social anthropology, literary criticism, etc.). Andrew Hoskins, for example introduced the concept of ‘new memory’ in order to describe transformations of historical information within the contemporary mediascapes⁴; Mark Poster identified a ‘culture of underdetermination’, linked to differentiated perceptions of the event within the late twentieth century digital networks⁵; Svetlana Boym’s ‘reflective nostalgia’ introduces new processes of remembering the past at the end of the twentieth century⁶; Arjun Appadurai conceptualized the past as a ‘synchronic warehouse of cultural scenarios’ as far as it concerns contemporary western societies⁷, while Antonis Liakos recognized a ‘lack of futurity’ as the organizing principle of the neo-romantic return to the past in the context of globalization⁸. These theoretical interpretations,

³ M. BILALIS, *To parelthon sto Diktio. Ikona, technologia kai istoriki koultoura sth sIgchroni Ellada, 1994-2005 (Online Pasts: Visuality, Technology and Historical Culture in contemporary Greece, 1994-2005)*, Nefeli, Athens (forthcoming).

⁴ A. HOSKINS, *New Memory: mediating History*, in “Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television”, 21/4, 2001, pp. 333-346.

⁵ M. POSTER, *What’s the Matter with the Internet*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2001, pp. 11-20.

⁶ S. BOYM, *The Future of Nostalgia*, Basic, New York, pp. 49-50.

⁷ A. APPADURAI, *Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy*, in *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*, J. EVANS BRAZIEL, A. MANNUR (ed.), Blackwell, Oxford 2003, p. 29.

⁸ A. LIAKOS, *History Wars*, *op. cit.*

among others, could be of extreme importance for understanding contemporary Greek historical culture within the context even broader, both international and intercultural, changes concerning history as a public claim in the post-1989 era⁹.

Thus, a 'lack of theory' does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation for all the difficulties in researching Greek public history. Another explanation would be based on a supposed '*unavailability of analytical tools*'. This claim follows from the argument about field's theoretical incompetence, this time underscoring the lack of concrete concepts, analytical categories and/or methodological tools suitable for understanding Greek historical culture in the totally new context of globalization, digital networking, economic and demographic mobility, etc. However, this is also quite a problematic assumption. Since 1970's, a wide range of new principles, analytical tools and methodological options have been elaborated (e.g. trauma, communities of memory, divided memories, commemoration, postmemory, heritage, banal nationalism, ideological use of history, pastness, performativity, reenactment, remediation, etc.). These principles could provide a consistent analytical framework for studying the production of history in the public domain.

Yet it could hardly be argued that theoretical or methodological gaps lie behind the uneasiness felt by those conducting research on contemporary Greek historical culture. On the contrary, it could be argued that the more the abovementioned concepts, principles and/or methodological tools inform the study of Greek historical culture, the more explicit the uneasiness becomes. To put it differently, as far as it concerns the study of public interpretations of history in contemporary Greece, it seems that the employment of 'appropriate' theoretical and/or methodological tools – that is, tools specially designed to handle with late twentieth century new realities and tested within different, interdisciplinary contexts – cannot be expanded beyond *their own limitations*.

But where actually these limitations come from? A closer look at notions such diverse as e.g. trauma and remediation or 'communities of memory' and 'banalization of history' reveals a common ground shared by the heterogeneous theoretical and/or methodological concepts currently in use in the study of historical culture: whenever anyone of these concepts contributes to explain how contemporary societies produce meaning about their historical past, a common account of *subjectivity* is presupposed. In other words, the presence of a *particular subject* is the *sine qua non* for the interpretation of contemporary historical culture; a subject free to remember or to forget, to use and/or misuse history, to collect, organize and/or neglect the traces of any past event, a subject able to yearn as well as to over-determine, reenact, perform, or remediate the past, a subject already prepared to take effective action towards narrating the

⁹ For an example of a study of contemporary Greek historical culture at an intercultural level, see: V. KECHRIOTIS, *History as a Public Claim and the Role of the Historian: Two Recent Debates Regarding the Ottoman Past in Greece and Bulgaria*, in *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean The Balkans and the Middle East Compared*, E. GINIO, K. KASER (ed.), The European Forum at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2013, pp. 277-309.

past. Hence, it could be argued that researching contemporary historical culture through the lenses of various theoretical concepts and methodologies elaborated within the interdisciplinary contexts of the post-1989 era, still requires a stable presence: an autonomous, mostly rational, sometimes voluntaristic but always active and dominant, a deeply *modern* and undoubtedly *human* subject, i.e. the subject already defined by the western tradition of anthropocentrism.

However, how possible is such a stable presence to be observed within the digital late twentieth century networks? Let us examine an example concerning the perception of the Greek Civil War. On Tuesday, July 16th, 2013, Evangelos Diamantopoulos, member of the Greek Parliament, closed his speech at the General Assembly by using a catchphrase supposedly dating back to the 1940's¹⁰. The phrase was 'rantevou sta gounaradika' (see you soon at the fur stores) and is attributed to Aris Velouchiotis, the most prominent leader of the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS). By this phrase, Velouchiotis supposedly encourage his comrades to be prepared for the final/lethal battle.

The catchphrase began unfolding over the web, social networks, blogs, YouTube, information portals, news feed applications etc., leading to a relatively significant 'e-media' event¹¹. Bloggers, journalists as well as hundreds of anonymous commenters were debating for weeks on Greek Civil War, adopting different interpretations of the phrase.

Undoubtedly, this was not the first time the Greek public sphere was filled up with information on Greek Civil War. Since the early 1980's, the publication boom (political texts, historiographical and sociological accounts, novels, autobiographies, written and oral testimonies, films and documentaries) concerning *1940's in Greece had already created a vivid discursive space, where different* "social and ideological references ... (and) possibilities of historical self-consciousness» could be realized¹². Yet, what is of great importance was the causal interrelation between these references and the emergence of a new *mnemonic* subject: The figure of the *owner/narrator of valuable memories*, a subject competent enough to 'rewrite' History on the basis of an autobiographical ego, a new subject "actively engaged in the formation of collective memory

¹⁰ For the official video of the speech, see: <http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/ToKtirio/Fotografiko-Archeio/#60e8a4c9-452a-4355-941b-209b5cbfd33e>.

¹¹ For a definition of media events and their relationship to public perceptions of History during the last decades of the twentieth century, see D. DAYAN, E. KATZ, *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1992.

¹² G. VOULGARIS, *I Ellada tis Metapolitefsis: 1974-1990. Statheri Demokratia Simademeni apo ti Metapolemiki Istoria (Greece of Metapolitefsis: 1974-1990. Stable Democracy Marked by Post-War History)*, Themelio, Athens, 2001, p. 387. For an overview of the transformations in conceptualizing the Greek Civil War during the 1980's, see D. CLOSE, *The road to reconciliation? The Greek Civil War and the politics of memory in the 1980s*, in *The Greek Civil War. Essays on a Conflict of Exceptionalism and Silences*, P. CARABOTT, T. SFIKAS (ed.), Ashgate, London, 2004, pp. 257-278. For the overall production of texts regarding the 1940's in Greece, see G. ANTONIOU, N. MARANTZIDIS, *The Greek Civil War historiography, 1945-2001. Toward a new paradigm*, in "The Columbia Journal of Historiography", 1, 2003, available at http://web.archive.org/web/20070515203259/http://www.columbia.edu/cu/history/gha/cjh/2003_4.htm.

and, at the same time, able to indicate the process of interpretation of the lived experience” was highlighted in historiographical accounts dealing with the perception of the Greek Civil War during the last two decades of the twentieth century¹³. According to these accounts, the emergence of that particular subject was the *sine qua non* for the preoccupation with the Greek 1940’s at the end of the twentieth century.

Yet, if we return to Diamantopoulos’ case, we can hardly identify those participated in the digital debate with the ideal mnemonic subject described above. At first, it should be noted that there was not always a *human* subject beyond the digital texts; text feeding mechanisms, sharing applications as well as trolling practices were replicating texts within different webpages, reducing the possibility of identifying a particular ‘author’, ‘commenter’, ‘narrator’ or ‘memory holder’ behind the texts. Furthermore, most of the ‘real’ subjects who wrote a text or a comment, uploaded a video or photographs or simply ‘liked’, ‘forwarded’ or ‘shared’ data concerning the debate, had never heard this particular phrase before, nor were they familiar with any historiographical details, concerning its use during the Greek Civil War¹⁴. The majority of them failed to understand its meaning; even politicians and well-known Greek television personas were eager to criticize the “bloodthirsty descendants of ELAS partisans”, totally misreading the catchphrase¹⁵. Moreover, they were not any ‘direct memories’ of the phrase itself, as it was marginal or rather forgotten within the political discourse¹⁶: even Diamantopoulos who first coined the phrase in order to inscribe the politics of his party within a Greek leftist tradition of resistance, quoted wrongly Velouchiotis’ phrase¹⁷! In

¹³ P. VOGLIS, *I mnimes tis dekaetias tou 1940 os antikeimeno istorikis analisis: Methodologikes protaseis (Memories of the 1940’s as an object of historical analysis: Methodological issues)*, in *Mnimes Ke Lithi Tou Ellinikou Emfiliou Polemou (Memories and oblivion of the Greek Civil War)*, R.V. BOESCHOTEN, T. VERVENIOTI, E. VOUTIRA, V. DALKAOUKIS, K. MPATHA (ed.), Epikentro, Thessaloniki, 2008, p. 75.

¹⁴ The widespread unfamiliarity with the catchphrase as well as with its historical connotations gave rise to numerous lexicographical accounts attempting to restore the “real” content of the phrase on Greek cyberspace, among others see: N. SARANTAKOS, *A few words on gounaradika* (in Greek), 18/07/2013, available at <http://sarantakos.wordpress.com/2013/07/18/gounaradika/>, and *See you at gounaradika* (in Greek), available at http://dramatown-gr.blogspot.gr/2013/07/blog-post_1453.html?spref=fb, 17/07/2013.

¹⁵ Contrary to the initial meaning of the phrase, politicians (mainly from the conservative *Nea Dimokratia* party), journalists and anchormen (among them Giannis Pretenteris, journalist at the newspapers *To Vima* and *Ta Nea* and commentator at the TV station *Mega Channel*) understood it as a menace towards the political opponents. In part the misunderstanding was due to the noun ‘gounaradika’, which could eventually be understood as slaughterhouse. See, i.e., K. VAXEVANIS, *Dear John, see you at Gounaradika. For mink furs* (in Greek), 17/07/2013, available at <http://www.koutipandoras.gr/article/39914/rantevoy-sta-gounaradika-gianni-moy-gia-vizon>, *What does it mean ‘See you at gounaradika’ mr. Pretenteris* (in Greek), 16/07/2013, available at <http://www.avgi.gr/article/631048/ti-simainei-%C2%ABrantebou-sta-gounaradika%C2%BB-kuriepretenteris->, *The most stupid answer to ‘See you at gounaradika’ given by ND deputy* (in Greek), 17/07/2013, available at http://anemosantistasis.blogspot.gr/2013/07/video_996.html.

¹⁶ On direct memory see: T.G. ASHLANT, G. DAWSON, M. ROPER (eds.), *The Politics of War. Memory and Commemoration*, Routledge, London 2000.

¹⁷ The original phrase, used by Aris Velouchiotis, was ‘kali antamosi sta gounaradika’. Instead of this, E. Diamantopoulos concluded his speech by saying ‘rantevou sta gounaradika’.

addition, it would be equally difficult to understand the participants in the ‘Diamantopoulos’ debate on Greek Civil War as *postmnemonic* subjects: What constituted its intensity was exactly the possibility to negotiate the past *beyond* the dialectics of memory and oblivion; to speak about the past without being a mnemonic or even post-mnemonic but rather an *a-mnemonic subject*, i.e. a subject without mnemonic commitment to the material or the narratological traces of the past (memories, catch-phrases, images, archives, documents etc.), trained to interact with text-generating automations¹⁸.

2. *Mutating theory: from viral sharing to viral politics of the past*

The theoretical limitations for the study of historical culture on the Web are not confined to transformations occurred only at the level of subjectivity. As far as digital late modernity is associated with significant mutations not only in subject formation processes, but also in the social, cultural, political and economic sectors¹⁹, it would be rather difficult to explore digital historical culture without ‘*mutating*’ our methodology and theory. By mutating, I don’t have in mind *rejecting* theoretical approaches presupposing the modern tradition of anthropocentrism. On the contrary, I would like to highlight the possibilities of *injecting* into the body of this tradition some more notions in order to deal with the uncanny, posthuman, digital arenas of contemporary historical culture.

Virality could be one of these notions. The term signals the importance which has been given to a metaphor, namely *virus*, originating from biology and other sciences of life. Indeed, since the early 1980’s, besides biology, the notion of virus has been elaborated within different academic discourses (philosophy, critical theory of technology,

¹⁸ According to Marianne Hirsch, who first coined the term ‘postmemory’, a post-mnemonic subject is not an a-mnemonic one but rather a person overdetermined by the superposition of many different layers of memories and narratives about the past: “Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by the stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events...”, M. HIRSCH, *Past lives. Postmemories in exile*, in “Poetics Today”, 17/4, 1996, p. 662. For an example of applying the distinction between ‘direct’ memory and ‘postmemory’ in the study of Greek Civil War, see R.V. BOESCHOTEN, *Mnimes, travmata ke meta-mnimi: to ‘pedomazoma’ ke i epexergasia tou parelthontos (Memories, traumas and ‘postmemory’: “pedomazoma” and the negotiation of the past)*, in *Mnimes Ke Lithi*, R.V. BOESCHOTEN, T. VERVENIOTI, E. VOUTIRA, V. DALKAVOUKIS, K. MPATHA (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 131-147.

¹⁹ On digital late modernity, see: J. SVENSSON, *Negotiating the political self on social media platforms. An in-depth study of image-management in an election-campaign in a multi-party democracy*, in “eJournal of eDemocracy & Open Government”, Vol. 4, n. 2, (2012), p. 185. On conceptualizing digitality as the ‘ongoing history’ of significant transformations of the capitalist mode of production, among others see: M. HARDT, A. NEGRI, *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2000; M. CASTELLS, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd edition, Blackwell, Oxford, 2000, M. POSTER, *What’s the Matter with the Internet?*, *op. cit.*, B. MASSUMI, *Parables for the Virtual. Movement, Affect, Sensation*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2002.

marketing, etc.)²⁰. But, how could this particular metaphor facilitate the investigation of digital historical culture?

In answering the last question, it is necessary to go back to the mid-1990's. At this time the advent of digital technologies, mainly Internet and cell phone, was signifying something more fundamental than the simple presence of new technological appliances²¹. It was the era of the emergence of *small-scale personal cyberspaces*. By the end of the last decade of the twentieth century, a whole new generation has come up with software and applications facilitating the production and circulation of digital content. For example, thousands of internet users could develop a 'personal homepage', publishing their own texts, images and sounds²². They could also upload information produced by them on early social media (bulletin boards, chatrooms, discussion lists, e-forums, applications for profile publishing, re-uniting friends etc.), interconnecting their own digital presence with cyberspaces developed by other users²³. As a consequence, innumerable small-scale, personal cyberspaces emerged during the first phase of Internet integration. Within these spaces, the user could establish senses of ownership, autonomy, self-determination and control over the content developed or hosted by him/her.

Yet, these emerging autonomous cyberspaces were causing hardship and considerable uncertainty among several sectors of economy and information management, like advertising business, commercial management, media development or even political communication and propaganda. Experts in these fields were accustomed to think of content dissemination in terms of one-dimensional processes, concerning passive consumers who could not exercise control over the circulation of that content. This was found to be quite problematic as far as it concerned the newborn cyberspaces. As a result, a reform of well-established professional practices was undertaken in the above-mentioned sectors. Virus has been a key concept in this transition. New technics, imi-

²⁰ On the first attempts to employ the virus metaphor in the 'pre-web' era, among others see: M. SERRES, *The Parasite*, [trans. by L.R. SCHEHR], Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1982; D. LUPTON, *Panic computing: The viral metaphor and computer technology*, in "Cultural Studies", Vol. 8, n. 3, (1994), pp. 556-568, D. RUSHKOFF, *Media Virus: Hidden Agendas in Popular Culture*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1994.

²¹ On the advent of digital technologies in Greece and the cultural attitudes towards them during the 1990's, see: M. BILALIS, *The Internet as a cultural object. Perception of the New and the Technological in Greece during the '90s*, in *New Media in South East Europe*, O. SPASSOV, C. TODOROV (ed.), SOEMZ, Sofia 2003, pp. 185-207.

²² On personal homepages, see: N. DÖRING, *Personal home pages on the web: A review of research*, in "The Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication", Vol. 7, n. 3, (2002), available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2002.tb00152.x/full>. For the emergence of personal homepages within the economic and technological context of the early 1990's, see: T. ERICKSON, *The World Wide Web as social hypertext*, in "Communications of the ACM", Vol. 39, n. 1, (1996), pp. 15-17.

²³ For a brief history of early social media, see: D.M. BOYD, N.B. ELLISON, *Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship*, in "Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication", Vol. 13, n. 1, (2007), pp. 214-215.

tating *virus propagation* were developed firstly in commercial marketing²⁴. Soon, they expanded beyond marketing, becoming the dominant paradigm of content dissemination in the digital domain, currently recognized under the term of ‘viral sharing’.

Viral sharing could be illustrated by the following example. Consider a video, uploaded on YouTube on November 2012, shooting the massive demonstrations against Greek government’s austerity measures²⁵. In order to ‘go viral’, i.e. to be viewed by many other people, it has to intrude into their small-scale personal cyberspaces; it has to be posted in a ‘friends’ page on Facebook, to be tweeted and re-tweeted by people interested in Greek politics, to get lots of comments from individuals interconnected in their own micro-networks, to be eventually uploaded on a political blog developed by another user, to be – hopefully – broadcasted on ‘traditional’ media like television, getting in this way even more ‘likes’, posts, tweets and comments on many other personal webpages.

This particular genre of content distribution is based on effective digital automations imitating, as already mentioned, virus propagation. Indeed, virus is a very interesting biological unit. In terms of biological material it has ‘content’ (DNA and RNA); however it cannot reproduce this biological content, unless it comes into contact with specific other beings/hosts. This contact is realized through a protein coat, which is properly designed to facilitate the injection of the biological material of the virus into the host organism, forcing the later to reproduce *almost unconsciously* the viral content. This is exactly the way the abovementioned video reproduces itself on personal Greek cyberspaces: The contact with its ‘hosts’, i.e. webpages belonging to other users, is realized by properly designed thumbnails, lying in this case under the video²⁶. They are small icons or just a single word (e.g. ‘share’, ‘like’, ‘comment’, ‘embed’, etc.). A simple click on them activates sharing, commenting or embedding options. Thus, functioning like the virus protein coat, they transmit the original video to another personal cyberspace, ‘forcing’ the later to reproduce *almost automatically* the viral content.

Viral sharing was fully developed during the next few years, becoming one of the defining characteristics of the way people share information online. Thus, it could be stated that ‘going viral’ represents a significant change in the way we think about the production, distribution and consumption of meaning. In a more general sense, it alters the *politics of meaning* within the broader cultural arenas of digital capitalism. This mutated ‘digital economy of meaning’ could be called *viral politics*²⁷. By this term, I

²⁴ The original term, coined in mid-1990’s, was ‘viral marketing’, see: N. GUSTAFFSON, *This time it’s personal: Social networks, viral politics and identity management*, in *Emerging Practices in Social Networking and Cybercultures*, D. RIHA, A. MAJ, (eds.), Rodopi, Amsterdam/New York 2010, p. 8; A.M. KAPLAN, M. HAENLEIN, *Two hearts in three-quarter time: How to waltz the social medial/viral marketing dance*, in “Business Horizons”, Vol. 54, n. 3, (2011), p. 255.

²⁵ Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJXq6eccTfI>, 7/11/2012.

²⁶ In a typical YouTube page there are fifteen different options, facilitating the viral transmission of the uploaded video.

²⁷ The term has been already used in a more narrow sense to describe viral practices in the field of political and social activism, see: N. GUSTAFFSON, *This time it’s personal... , op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

refer not only to politics but also to culture and economy as fields where the meaning is intensively being produced, disseminated and perceived in a *viral* manner: it depends on distribution technologies, which transmit and reproduce content from one personal space to another, constituting networked constellations of meaning.

3. *Viral histories: the politics of the past in Greek cyberspace*

Perceiving viral politics as a new set of possibilities, concerning the articulation of meaning in digital late modernity, I will try to further investigate virality as a defining element of contemporary Greek historical culture. And that's because I think that this particular post-anthropocentric analytical tool could provide us with answers, overcoming some of the already discussed limitations of the – mostly anthropocentric – theory of historical culture.

In the rest of the paper, I will focus on two particular cases, trying to discuss different aspects of the *viral politics of the past* in Greek cyberspace. The first case concerns the so-called 'Repoussi's textbook' debate²⁸. On March 2006 a new textbook was published for teaching modern Greek and European History in primary schools²⁹. Its publication was followed by long running and extremely impassioned controversies; a real 'history war' was fought, lasting more than four years. Journalists, professional historians, politicians as well as priests, army officers, representatives of civil and cultural associations participated in the debate, arguing on almost all the fundamental issues related to modern Greek history: the Ottoman period, the role of the Orthodox Church during the War of Independence, the expulsion of the Greek Orthodox population from Asia Minor in 1922, the Second World War, the Greek Civil War, etc. Moreover, the debate became even more animated after the first postings in cyberspace. New topics, e.g. the history of the displaced Greek population from Pontos or the writing of national history at the threshold of globalization, were discussed, increasing the entropy of the controversies. Undoubtedly, the 'e-debate' over the history textbook revealed the chaotic state of dealing online with the past in Greece during the last decade³⁰.

Yet, besides the rich diversity of historical events, arguments, statements, memories and archival materials, posted and commented online during the debate, there was one

²⁸ From the name of the historian Maria Repoussi who was the head of the authors' team. For a brief chronicle of the debate, see: A. LIAKOS, *History Wars: Questioning tolerance, in Discrimination and Tolerance in Historical Perspective*, G. HÁLFEDANARSON (ed.), Pisa University Press, Pisa 2008, pp. 80-81.

²⁹ M. REPOUSSI, C. ANDREADOU, A. POUTAHIDIS, A. TSIVAS, *Istoria Si' Dimotikou. Sta neotera ke sichrona chronia (History for the 6th Grade: The Modern and Contemporary Era)*, OEDV, Athens 2006, available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/948696/Βιβλίο-Ιστορίας-ΣΤ-Δημοτικού>.

³⁰ For an extended list of the reactions against the book as well as the texts published online by its opponents, see: *Antivaro. A special issue on the new history textbook* (in Greek), available at: <http://palio.antibaro.gr/istoria.php>.

word that epitomized the whole of the ‘Repoussi’s book’ case. This was *synostismos* (crowding), a noun supposedly used by the authors of the textbook in describing one of the most traumatic events in modern Greek history, i.e. the last moments of the Greek Orthodox population massed in Izmir’s harbor after the collapse of the Greek army in Asia Minor front in September 1922³¹. It was the first word heard in reference to the new textbook and until the end of the debate, it could hardly be retrieved a single text, comment, video, photo or caricature uploaded online in order to criticize or defend the textbook, without reproducing this particular noun. *Synostismos* was always finding the way to intrude into the debates, even if (a) this word was never written in the original textbook³², (b) the term was also used on webpages debating on historical events other than the expulsion of the Greek Orthodox population from Turkey in 1922 and (c) its perception of this particular word was quite controversial. Jumping from one web page to another, ‘infecting’ like a virus every issue concerning the Greek historical past, this particular word came to become the magic wand which could open the Pandora’s Box, releasing all the possibilities for narrating the past online.

Indeed, no other word used during the debate could be compared to *synostismos*’ competency to represent how dynamic could be the negotiation of the past on Greek cyberspace³³. Following Henry Jenkins et al., this particular word could be perceived as a *spreadable text*. According to them, when meanings are circulating (in our case meanings concerning the interpretation of the past in contemporary Greece) within chaotic digital networks, a certain type of text has to be at disposal; a text which “ha[s] an intent and a set of preferred meanings, but in the end it [is] left ambiguous enough, with enough open – ended details, that it could be interpreted in a number of ways, depending on the contexts into which it [is] spread and the ways it [is] deployed ... within localized conversations”³⁴. This ‘text’ could be a word as well as an “invention, technology, system of thought, musical riff, visual image, scientific theory, sex scandal, clothing style or even a pop hero – as long as it can catch our attention”³⁵. Through its affective form, the spreadable text becomes *viral*³⁶. It becomes the catalyst that facilitates the transformation of a historical event (i.e. the expulsion of the Greek Orthodox population from Turkey in 1922) to an ahistorical ‘protein coat’ (*synostismos*), which “has an open-ended relation to form itself... In its replications, [it] does not

³¹ LIAKOS, *History Wars: Questioning tolerance, op. cit.*, p. 86.

³² See: VASILIKI META TROULOU, Richard Clogg, “refugees crowded” in 1992 – Maria Repoussi, “(thousands of) Greek crowded” in 2006 (in Greek), 3/3/2013, available at: <http://xyzcontagion.wordpress.com/2013/03/03/richard-clogg-maria-repoussi/>.

³³ Almost seven years after the first debates, googling “Repoussi *synostismos*” (in Greek) still returns more than 60.000 web pages.

³⁴ H. JENKINS, L. XIAOCHANGI, A. DOMB KRAUSKOPF, *If It Doesn’t Spread It’s Dead: Creating Value in a Spreadable Marketplace*, Convergence Culture Consortium, Massachusetts 2008, pp. 81-82.

³⁵ D. RUSHKOFF, *Media Virus, op. cit.*, p. 10.

³⁶ Jenkins rejects the virus metaphor, insisting on an dualistic distinction between nature and culture, see: H. JENKINS, *If it doesn’t spread, it’s dead (Part one): Media viruses and memes*, 11/02/2009, available at: <http://henryjenkins.org/2009/02>.

remain the same, nor does that which it confronts and transits through”³⁷. Its endless replication within the personal cyberspaces constitutes a new politics of the past; it highlights the emergence of a *viral* historical culture not based on a “performative ‘repetition with a difference’” but rather on a “replication without reproduction, without fidelity, without durability”³⁸.

In his seminal book *The Parasite*, Michel Serres illuminates further what could be a historical ‘culture of replication without durability’:

*Here the first signal that appears is worth all the money in the world, is worth life itself. The first bolt of lightning that inclines in chaos. The first olive branch in the beak of the dove on the flooded plains. Afterwards follows all the meaning. And history itself is derived from this spark*³⁹. [emphasis is mine]

Considering ‘Repoussi’s textbook’ debate as a viral negotiation of the past, the most important moment proved to be the very first one; it was the “first signal” and not the ‘deep time’ that actually mattered. In other words, during the debate the advantage was not on the side of whoever could be able to restore the multiply temporalities of the disputed events, constructing a historical narrative in a critical matter. On the contrary, it was on the side of whoever could be able to have direct access to the online debates over those past events; to be the first who claims the traces of the Past, enforcing his own interpretation on them; to be the first who transforms these firsts ‘signals’ of the past to spreadable texts, i.e. *synostismos*. Afterwards, if Serres is right, all the meaning *just* follows; in a viral network the production of meaning about the past *just* follows spreadable texts; history *just* derives from such first sparks, totally subjected to the endless replication of predominant spreadable texts.

Thus, the debate over the history textbook could reveal some mutated *temporal priorities*, concerning the perception of the past in contemporary digital culture. This perception is primarily formed when the first affective pieces of information about a past event start flickering on the screen. The first footage concerning a past event, the first still image, comment or criticism becomes the cornerstone on which the perception of the event will be built, provided that all these first ‘signals’ of the event can successfully be transformed into spreadable texts; in cyberspace a mutated *histoire événementielle*, based on instantly spreadable traces of the past, seems competent enough to take revenge on the *longue durée*.

The second case I would like to discuss concerns still images. On August 4, 2013 a set of few photographs was published in the daily *Proto Thema*⁴⁰. They captured Elias

³⁷ P. CLOUGH, J. PUAR, *Introduction*, in “Women’s Studies Quarterly”, Vol. 40, n. 1-2, (2012), p. 14.

³⁸ *Ivi*.

³⁹ M. SERRES, *The Parasite*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁴⁰ See: N. KATAKOUZINOY, *With Miss Tourism on one arm and the swastika on the other* (in Greek), 4/8/2013, available at: <http://www.protothema.gr/politics/article/299985/sto-ena-heri-i-mis-tourismos-sto-allo-i-svastika>.

Kassidiaris, spokesman of Greek far-right party *Chrissi Avgi* (Golden Dawn), in swimming suit, enjoying intimate moments with his partner Elena Konstantinidou, Miss Tourism Greece 2010. The photographs were clear enough to show him having a huge swastika tattoo on his left shoulder. They were posted online and soon they went viral. In the course of the following few weeks, the still images with the Nazi symbol were spread across innumerable Greek web pages⁴¹. At the end of the summer, the digital screens had filled up with statements, critiques, comments, even parodies but primarily with *swastikas*. This particular symbol stemming from Germany's Nazi past, was finding a way to occupy the cyberspace of a country, where the presence of visual manifestations of the Nazi past was extremely marginal during the period from 1950 to 2000⁴².

Yet it could hardly be stated that the intensified circulation of digital images associated to the Nazi past, indicates an increasing turn towards (neo)-Nazism within Greek society. On the contrary, the majority of pages hosted images of the swastika were profoundly critical. Nevertheless, at this time it was quite common to read anti-fascist texts squeezed between two or more photos of the tattooed Kassidiaris' shoulder⁴³. A rather uncanny *visual equilibrium* was gradually emerging: Nazi symbols and arguments deriving from the predominant in Greek historiography anti-Nazi historical narratives co-existed on the same web pages. This online parade of swastikas could be perceived as a symptom of a visual historical culture, which does not presuppose mutual exclusions between controversial aspects of the past. It seemed that after being successfully 'injected' in the small-scale Greek cyberspaces, the ultimate trace of the Nazi past could be in *symbiotic* association with its 'enemies'.

However, it could be interesting to think of this uncanny symbiosis in terms of virality. In that manner, the visual traces of the Nazi past could be perceived as spreadable viruses. Yet, viruses are always looking for *alien Others*; the strangers or the 'enemies' who could be their host; they could exist and replicate themselves only within the territory of the opponent. To put it differently, the swastikas intruded into the Greek digital historical culture not because it was *familiar* to them but because it could become their *desired alien*. In a viral historical culture, the coherence of the past is not an issue; what really matters is to accelerate the circulation of the traces of the past; to turn these traces into intensive flows of spreadable texts, available to contradictory inter-

⁴¹ Googling "Kassidiaris Konstantidou" (in Greek) on January 3, 2013 returned 47 different replications of the original photographs displayed on over 1.000 web pages.

⁴² See: A. VLACHOS, 'Pos ksimeroni e mera?' *Dokimazontas tis anthropines antoxes se sinthikes akreas anafalias: E Chrissi Avgi e via, ke e antidrasis tis kinonias*, in "Chronos", n. 6, (2013), available at: <http://www.chronosmag.eu/index.php/ls-p-x.html>.

⁴³ See e.g.: G. PAPTAEODOROU, *Posa nostra* (in Greek), 5/8/2013, available at: <http://dimartblog.com/2013/08/05/posa-nostra>, *There are some more tattoos on Kassidiaris' body* (in Greek), 13/8/2013, available at: <http://left.gr/news/ehei-ki-alla-tatoyaz-o-kasidiaris>, ANTIM, "Ancient" Greek swastikas, "Greek style" tattoos and other fairytales (in Greek), 9/8/2013, available at: http://exthrostoumalaka.blogspot.gr/2013/08/blog-post_5566.html.

pretations⁴⁴; to interconnect them with other dataflows available online, e.g. academic literature, journalism, life style, infotainment, pornography, etc.; to make, in our case, a visual symbol of the Mid-War period compatible for digital networking; to transmit it in form of gossip, tattoo, comment etc.; to criticize, expose, deconstruct or even ridicule it, making it even more *spreadable*.

Yet, the most striking issue raised during the heated debates on the Kassidiaris' case was the *figural ambiguity* of the spreadable images. After the photos went viral, the most discussions were focusing on whether the tattoo was actually representing a trace of the Nazi past. It was stated – mostly by followers of Kassidiaris and Golden Dawn party – that the tattoo was not depicting a German swastika but some sort of ancient Greek meander. Internet followers of Nazism and racism were emphatically rejecting the accusations for a Nazi genealogy of the tattoo. At the same time, their 'opponents' were accusing them of ideological inconsistency⁴⁵.

Nevertheless, the 'Kassidiaris' photos' case was indeed a matter of inconsistency but rather a *viral* than an ideological one. It was exactly this visual ambiguity which reinforced the replication of these particular traces of the past within the Greek cyberspaces. According to Jenkins et al., in order a video, text or image to be spreadable has to be rhetorically disassociated from its own original connotations. Increasing the level of ambiguity or confusion about the origins of the text "encourages people to seek out further information... This search for authenticity, origins, or purpose can be seen as yet another way of actively constructing the meaning of content, another type of gap that encourages... engagement" with the meaning of the content⁴⁶.

In the viral context of Greek digital historical culture, *denying* the traces of the past could be another way to claim their meanings. In this manner, restoring the morphological as well as the chronologic consistency of these traces does not seem to be a priority anymore. On the contrary, blurring their shapes as well as rejecting already given definitions of their content could be critical for their dissemination.

As in the case of the debate on the history textbook, the 'Kassidiaris' photos' case could also help us to think of digital historical culture as a mutated set of politics concerning the past. Within this culture new imperatives seem to be imposed on the traces of the past: to be open-ended, visually and contextually blurred, transmissible, communicable and spreadable. Additionally, hybrid possibilities seem to be articulated at the level of subjectivity as well: Digital historical culture seems to be not so much a culture of *producers* and *consumers* of meanings concerning the past, as a culture of *multipliers*, i.e. subjects sufficiently familiar with the endless replication of the traces of the

⁴⁴ On flow, virus and digital culture, see: J. PARIKKA, *Digital Monsters, Binary Aliens. Computer viruses, capitalism and the flow of information*, in "The Fibreculture Journal", n. 4, (2005), available at: <http://four.fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-019-digital-monsters-binary-aliens-%e2%80%93-computer-viruses-capitalism-and-the-flow-of-information/>.

⁴⁵ ANTIM, "Ancient" Greek swastikas, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ JENKINS, XIAOCHANGI, DOMB KRAUSKOPF, *If It Doesn't Spread It's Dead*, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

past in the digital domain, “often expanding their potential meanings and opening up ... unanticipated new markets” for them⁴⁷. Digital historical culture seems to favour anyone who could gain a fast access to the traces of the past. In this culture the *par excellence* subject is not anymore the ‘expert’, e.g. the professional historian, the witness or the victim of the past; the expert seems to be replaced by the *multiplier*, a new competitor who knows how to retrieve and replicate the digital traces of the past, how to use these traces in order to intrude into the personal cyberspaces of the innumeros Others, transmitting not only traces but also his *viral presence* as well as his own interpretations of the past.

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⁴⁷ JENKINS, *If it doesn't spread, it's dead (Part one): Media viruses and memes*, *op. cit.*

GRASSROOTS ORAL HISTORY GROUPS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

1. *Introduction*

In Greece, in the current period of crisis, grassroots oral history groups are mushrooming throughout the country, while in Greek universities there is still no academic department of Oral History despite the very recent emerging acknowledgement of the significance of oral history in the overall canon of historical and social studies¹. Those who are actively engaged in oral history groups have turned, then, to an inquiry into their past at a moment when the Greek nation – state is in the eye of the storm of an economic, cultural and political crisis. The main preoccupation of this kind of popular inquiry is a better understanding of the ‘burden’ of history, the structuring impact of past events upon people’s lives; oral historical research has demonstrated in these local experiments its potential to change and broaden the temporal and conceptual frame of reference and to alter the way people cope with everyday life. Historical knowledge, in other words, “can provide the basis for shared re-imagination of how the past connects to the present, and the possibilities this vantage suggests for the future”². The economic crisis has transformed people’s everyday life, and accordingly their identities, through both individual and collective processes.

The need to know history is as old as human beings; but, the way people acquire their historical knowledge differs from era to era. In Greek society, some decades ago, traditional periodic “festive tables” constituted the pre-eminent “memory environment”³; the eldest generation narrated their lived experiences (usually concerning wars) or stories that they had heard from their own grandparents; in this way, the younger generations learned the history of family, locality and the nation-state. In the previous decades as well ethnography and ‘folklore’ have collected oral testimony – mainly concentrating on the preservation of songs and local chronicles. In this new historical conjuncture, the crisis, the collection of oral testimonies is embraced as a basis for charting the future.

¹ See activities of the international Oral History Association [10/01/2014]: <http://www.oralhistory.org/>

² M. FRISCH, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*, New York, SUNNY Press, 1990, p. xxiii.

³ P. NORA, *Between Memory and History. Les Lieux de Mémoire*, in “Representations” 26, 1989.

Moreover, in recent decades, as the traditional ways of keeping memory have faded out, globally, there has been, perhaps predictably, a «memory boom»⁴. Historical memory seems to be omnipresent: in establishing museums and memorials, celebrating anniversaries, creating radio programs, increasing viewership of television programs or online discussions with historical content. As Pierre Nora argues, this phenomenon – paradoxically – is due to the fact that the living memory of our societies has weakened and memory is no longer passed intimately through the family or local groups. Nora notes that we would have no need of so many mnemonic sites/places (*lieux de mémoire*), if we had kept «memory's environments» (*milieux de mémoire*) themselves, the living contexts that in pre modern times shaped an embodied knowledge of the past⁵.

We have made, nonetheless, a transition to a globalized world in which new technology proposes and offers new ways of recording and broadcasting and ultimately conserving memory. In our times, oral history is poised to fulfill the vacuum between the old oral society and the digitalized era. Oral history suits the decentralized informational times: not only experts in the field or academics, but also volunteers – after training in oral history's methodology – are fully able to collect oral testimonies. The high educational level of the younger generations and the digital technological revolution has made it easier to record, disseminate and archive 'memories'; these are the changes that make the project of grass roots oral history feasible.

2. The "Greek" crisis

The 'Greek' crisis was officially inaugurated on May 2010 with the loan the Greek government took from the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the European Central Bank, well known as Troika. Since then, Greek society, under the auspices of Troika and due to compulsory "austerity measures", is changing rapidly. On the political scene, while in the past decades the two ex-major and opposing parties, the right wing and the socialist party, alternated in power, they now co-govern the country. In addition, SYRIZA, a small left wing party, is now the significant Opposition (elections 2009: 4,6%, June 2012: 26,89%) and a neo-Nazi party gain representation in the Greek Parliament (elections June 2012: 6,92%). Everyday life has changed, too. Salaries and pensions have been cut by over 25%; unemployment is more than 27% and nearly 4,000 people (a phenomenal increase over past rates) have committed suicide. The healthcare and the education system have begun to crumble (in 2009, among the 65 OECD member countries, Greece was the 25th in terms of "effi-

⁴ Cf. D. LOWENTHALL, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

⁵ NORA, *op. cit.*

ciency of the educational system” and the 42nd in 2013; below OECD’s average)⁶. The number of homeless is growing daily and it is estimated that 350.000 families could not pay the bills for electricity and most Greeks had no or not enough heating during the winter of 2012 and 2013.

The general popular view is that the crisis is deeply rooted in Greek social and political practice since the creation of the nation state, in particular in its system of patron client relations and in the more recent excessive spending and “life style” of the previous initial EU period, which led the country to the brink, and that these practices must be changed. The impression that the old system has collapsed and it should be replaced is all-pervading in common discourse. An ex minister and former cadre of the Socialist Party (elections 2009: 42,93%, June 2012: 12,28%), Tassos Giannitsis, declared succinctly that “the game is over”. (As a minister, he had tried to make changes in the insurance system which has now imploded and he is widely viewed, as a result, as a politician who can foresee the future.) According to Giannitsis, Greeks need to clarify their accounts with their past in the interest of building of a new sense of collegiality; it is time, he says, to gain self-knowledge, and to choose a new course for the future. He insists that in order to escape from the crisis Greeks will have to develop a new sense of service to the collective, social and national interest or otherwise the stereotypical dogmatism that has haunted Greek society in the past decades is ready to reassert itself⁷.

The past as a social construction is mainly, if not only, shaped by the concerns of the present; the beliefs, interests, and aspirations of the present shape the various views of the past as they are manifested respectively in every historical epoch⁸. In Athens neighborhoods and in other cities, historians are invited to offer lectures in bookstores, cultural halls or informal hang-outs. The emphasis so far has been on the 1940s decade (WWII, occupation, resistance and the Greek Civil War) as a period of crisis instructive for comparison with this new crisis era. Left wing Greeks, in a period of international disorientation of the left, badly need history in order to face the new challenges and to materialize their vision of a ‘better’ society. Since September 2013, the radio station “Sto Kokkino” [In the Red], which is affiliated with SYRIZA, in cooperation with the Contemporary Social History Archives, is broadcasting “History in Red” every Sunday (11:00-12:00); the participants are only historians and the subject matter concerns the crises of the 20th century. As Marx⁹ said, and a Greek proverb also affirms, “The paths of the elder generation are bridges for the younger [generation]”.

⁶ OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

⁷ Newspaper *Ta Nea*, 02/12/2013.

⁸ M. HALBAWACHS, *On Collective Memory*, Edited, Translated, and with an Introduction by Lewis A. Coser, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, p. 25.

⁹ K. MARX, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Athens, Themelio Editions, 1986, p. 15-20.

In general, the outcome of the “Greek” crisis is rapid social change in economics, politics and culture – and perhaps mainly in culture. There is a burgeoning of innovative cultural events, mostly concentrated in Athens, the capital in which nearly half of Greece’s population lives. In this urban environment the crisis is deeper because life is more mobile, nervous, innovative as well as complexly dependent for its subsistence, than in the countryside. There are massive demonstrations and strikes, but there are also at least three oral history groups recently established and functioning in Athens. There are announcements every day of new performances and plays from collectivities that consist mostly by young artists, and some are free to the public. A sense of humor, at least, continues to flourish alongside real desperation: “Merry Crisis and a Happy New Fear” was written in Athenian walls, the end of 2012. Fear, in fact, was the real governor of the city and the country by 2013. No one knows what may happen in 2014, as the social structure is further transformed.

3. The making of oral history groups

Greece is in a transition: something old is disappearing and something new is going to be born. Thus, I argue that the mass response of volunteers in integrating oral history groups as well as the use of oral testimonies by artists and directors in theatre and cinema, as we will see below, is correlated with the historical conjuncture of the crisis. All these initiatives serve the same purpose: to provide Greeks with an alternative narrative of their past and accordingly with a new identity. Neither academic history (too far away, it seems, from the life of common’s people) nor the ‘public’ history offered by the media (and confined to the celebration of Greece’s “glorious” ancient past and victorious recent wars) could offer a productive narrative. Oral history by contrast records the voices of ordinary people, who resist and fight while they feel fear and pain, which, in its transparency, contrasts with the stereotype of a complacent and self-satisfied “life style” of the previous period.

In this time of crisis, oral history has become a “people’s project” through the cropping up of oral history local groups, whose members are all volunteers. The volunteers, after a short training, start collecting oral testimonies. The first such group was created in 2009; it was established in the city of Chania, in the island of Crete. It was a joint program of the University of Thessaloniki and the Prefecture of Chania, which took the initiative; its aim was to produce a local oral history museum. The program was coordinated by a multidisciplinary team of five experts in the field. Forty citizens of Chania applied to attend the seminar but the coordination team chose twenty of them. They functioned in five thematic sub-groups and collected oral histories on the 1940s decade, education, jobs and professions, family and gender and as well as on multiculturalism and migration. In 2010, the group presented its work in a beautiful hall in the old port of the city. In addition, for three days the visitors could listen directly to the interviews and testimonies through computers provided in the hall. One impor-

tant outcome of this project was the publication of the first book on oral history methodology in Greek¹⁰.

In 2011, as the crisis deepened, the Oral History Group of Kypseli (OPIK: Omada Proforikis Istorias Kypselis) was established. Kypseli was once an elegant neighborhood of Athens; its famous café and bars attracted stars of cinema and theatre's actors, until the 1960s. Its main road, Fokionos Negri, is still one of the most beautiful and lively pedestrian roads in Athens. After the 1960s it was for a time a typical middleclass district, but by the 2000s, it had become densely populated, housing the largest number of foreign-born immigrants of all Athens districts, and characterized by increasing poverty and racist violence. It belongs to the 6th Community of Athens Municipality, a part of which operated as the initial 'fortress' of the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn; it forcibly closed down and locked the playground for children located in the square of Saint Panteleimonas, one of the biggest churches in Athens, on the grounds that the children who played there were not of Greek origin. The Mayor of Athens did not dare to oppose them and to reopen the playground. Under these circumstances of municipal impotence and collusion, a Movement of Citizens tried to cope simultaneously with the difficulties of everyday life, the social conditions of new immigrations, and the aggressive actions of the neo-Nazis. At the end of 2010, an architect who worked with the citizens' movement in documenting empty buildings declared in frustration: "we need history". That was the starting point of OPIK's creation.

In the spring of 2011, an 18 hour seminar for training in oral history methodology was attended by more than 20 volunteers. These included citizens of Kypseli as well as MS and PhD students, whose work was linked to oral history, but who lacked such courses in their universities. Both trainers and trainees were volunteers. It was in essence a crowd-sourcing activity, an open call for people to write the history of their neighborhood. OPIK's members were divided into three thematic sub-groups: on the 1940s decade, on everyday life since the 50s and on migration. Each sub-group worked separately, but there were many plenary sessions. Collective action was one of the main principles of OPIK's original intentions. Participants tried to coexist on equal terms, without leaders. The working method was that of a collaborative project. Most of the testimonies were life histories and each interview addressed multiple subjects simultaneously; therefore, members from one sub-group cooperated with other members via e-mails or meetings. Whatever goals and motivations each member brought to the project, they shared a common objective and expected no benefit other than the pleasure that derives from creative work. In 2012, a member of OPIK wrote:

The pursuit of collectivity and equality in undertaking activities and responsibilities did not stumble, when it did, on the impediment of 'technical' issues, but on our-

¹⁰ T. VERVENIOTI, R.V. BOESCHOTEN, M. REPOUSI, G. TSIOLIS, H. ANDREADOU, *Oral Histories. An Oral History Guide for Education and Community*, Chania, Prefecture of Chania and University of Thessaloniki, 2011.

selves. Our culture and education does not encourage us to accept diversity, to develop cooperation, open dialogue and confidence in one another. [...] But, in general, we did it well. We managed to coexist and everybody – more or less – learned to listen to the others, a skill that is absolutely necessary for the collection of oral testimonies¹¹.

OPIK was not an EU program and thus it had no money, but this did not impair or stop its activities. On the contrary, the lack of material funds may have contributed to its social dynamic. Members recruited ‘other’ volunteers, who taught them how to copy and paste audio or video files. OPIK’s creation is, nonetheless, directly linked to the prevailing social conditions beyond Greece as well. In 2011, an international movement had emerged: the “Indignations” at Puerta Del Sol in Madrid and Syntagma [Constitution] Square in Athens, the Occupy Wall Street in the United States – and, even more important, the Occupy Oral History movement centered mainly in Great Britain. These movements were followed by the extraordinary events of the Arab Spring, but they soon faded out in the aftermath of that unsettled period. In Greece, nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of people participated in demonstrations and public meetings in the squares, not only in Athens but also and in other regional cities; to the participants the conventional political parties had proven to be entirely corrupt, and it was the turn of others to take initiatives fighting for equality and direct democracy. The Internet and digital social networks played an important role in this process and rekindled interest in the public representation of these ‘silent’ voices.

Within these social and political conditions OPIK flourished in Athens. The majority of Athens residents are internal or external immigrants, first or second generation. Most of the internal immigrants were settled in Athens after the end of World War II and mainly during and due to the Greek civil war, and they maintain close ties with their ‘beloved’ village; during holidays the city is deserted as its residents are visiting their villages. External immigrants and refugees came in the 1990s from the Soviet Bloc countries, mostly from Albania, and in the last decade from Asia and Africa; many of them had intended to leave the country quickly given the economic conditions of the crisis, but the Dublin II Regulation of the EU prevented them from doing so. Athens now looks like a ‘transit’ station, without memory. Commenting on OPIK’s public presentation in 1912, the journalist Dimitris Psychogios wrote in *Athens Voice* (11/04/2012):

In these difficult days of discord and uncertainty, in which coexistence is difficult, such initiatives are needed in neighborhoods. This kind of initiative could create a common past, common memories and common meanings. Athens must have a ‘persona’ in

¹¹ T. VERVENIOTI, *Oral History Group of Kypseli* in “Proceedings of the International Conference” *Bridging generations: interdisciplinary and life stories in the 21st century. Oral history and life history approaches in the social sciences*, Volos, Greek Oral History Association, 2013, p. 478.

order to survive; it must be something more than the city which discomforts us with its deficiencies and frightens us with its violence.

In April 7, 2012, OPIK's members presented their work at the Cultural Centre of Athens; the one-day event was an unexpected success. It was widely reported in the major newspapers and more than 200 people attended. One hundred and fifty of the attendees gave their addresses for communication: they wanted to give or to collect interviews. During April 2012 OPIK's site¹² received 2,184 visits. It had managed to give voice to at least a sampling of all people of the neighborhood, Greeks and foreigners, and it was perhaps more than anything this fact that contributed to its success. OPIK's collection of oral testimonies gave Athens' inhabitants the opportunity to know each other better and to feel more engaged with the city in which they lived; eventually, perhaps as well, to enable them to love being a part of it. OPIK's success highlights the power of oral history to mobilize people, nurture ideas and brighten the future.

The success of OPIK brought about a domino effect in the evaluation of oral history in Greece.

On May 2012 the University of Thessaly organized the international Conference *Bridging generations: interdisciplinary and life stories in the 21st century. Oral history and life history approaches in the social sciences*, Volos, 25-27 May 2012¹³. It also had an unexpected success. More than 100 people applied to the Call for Papers and half of them were selected to speak. Two oral history groups (Chania and OPIK) participated in panels and their videotaped or recorded testimonies were available to listeners outside the conference hall. The papers of the conference are now published as a book and e-book¹⁴.

The last day of the conference, participants established a Greek Oral History Association (EPI: Enosi Proforikis Istorias). But, the founding assembly, whose members were largely drawn from the academic community, did not agree to give formal status to oral history groups as part of the organization. Greek academics wanted the conference to provide the impetus for creating the conditions for a stable partnership of researchers, and also for the establishment of a scientific association¹⁵. Thus, EPI's members would be only individuals engaged in oral history and not local groups consisting of 'ordinary' people. By contrast, in a different spirit, the Oral History Society (1973) of the United Kingdom maintains a commitment to inclusiveness and rejects narrow

¹² OPIK has two sites; one public and one only for its members [10/12/2013]: <https://sites.google.com/site/opikdomain/>

¹³ See the program of the Conference [10/12/2013]: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/oralhistory/el/programme.asp>

¹⁴ R.V. BOESCHOTEN, T. VERVENIOTI, K. BADA, E. NAKOU, P. PANTAZIS, P. HANTZAROULA, *Bridging generations: interdisciplinary and life stories in the 21st century. Oral history and life history approaches in the social sciences*, Volos, Greek Oral History Association, 2013. See also [10/12/2013]: <http://www.epi.uth.gr/index.php?page=publications1>

¹⁵ G. TSIOLIS, newspaper *Avgi*, 20/05/2012.

professionalization; it involves a wide spectrum of individuals and encourages people to engage in making histories through the use of oral history. A key structure of that organization is the Regional Network of Oral Historians (1993)¹⁶. Nevertheless, oral history groups' exclusion from the Association did not stop OPIK from organizing its own new seminar on oral history methodology and practice, in November 2012. More than 100 persons applied to attend it and 50 were accepted as participants; to the thematic sub-groups that had pre-existed OPIK added one more as members made the important decision to gather oral testimonies on the current crisis.

In any case the creation of Oral History Association differentiated the landscape of oral history in Greece, providing impetus to courses, seminars and further conferences. But the Association did not feel enough 'strong' to take the initiative to make an open call for establishing oral history groups in Greece; on March 2013 it organized a seminar in Athens, on the methodology of oral history. It trained 32 people, mainly teachers of secondary education, who used or wanted to use oral history in school projects. It is worth noting the potential importance of the two sessions on oral history and education for Greek educational practice, during the Conference held in Volos (May 2012). The papers concerned projects that enabled pupils to come into contact with their local past or with specific historical issues, such as the Holocaust, through the voices of people who lived the events and had experienced the ambient conditions. Teachers who used oral history as an educational tool observed that students who did not like to learn history from school text books are very willing to work on such projects and so they learn more history. A volume is slated to be published on oral history and education¹⁷.

In 2013 additional grassroots oral history groups were created. In May 2013 an oral history group on the island of Ikaria was initiated by a man from Ikaria, who lived in Kypseli – and whose wife was a member of OPIK. In Ikaria the archivist of the Local Island's archives undertook the effort to organize the seminar and this was supported by the General State Archives to which it belongs. The municipality of Ikaria contributed the hall for the seminar and some citizens of Ikaria donated the microphones, cameras and other useful material for interviews. The members of the oral history group decided that the oral testimonies would belong both to the group and to the local archive. They also created a blog only for members.

Another oral history group was created in the spring of 2013 in the Municipal Library of Athens. It began as part of a project entitled "Actions in the Neighborhoods". At the end of June, when the project was finished, almost fifteen volunteers decided to continue collecting oral testimonies. The personnel of the Library was very willing to cooperate with them and the Organization of Culture, Sports and Youth of Athens Municipality (ΟΠΙΑΝΔΑ: Organismos Politismou Athlisis kai Noelias tou Dimou

¹⁶ G. SMITH, *The Making of Oral History*, [2/12/2013]: http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/oral_history.html#early_history

¹⁷ See [05/04/2014]: <http://www.epi.uth.gr/index.php?page=publications1>

Athinaion), which supervises the Library, purchased six professional tape recorders, microphones and hard discs for the project. Officially, for first time, a formal authority recognized and reinforced the existence of an oral history group. Now named the Oral History Group of Athens, or OPIA (Omada Proforikis Istorias Athinas); it does not work via thematic sub-groups, but it organizes monthly meetings and maintains a website for members.

In 2013, as well, an oral history group was created in Volos; it functions within the framework of three-year project that aims to establish a Museum of the city. It is a joint project of the University of Thessaly (architects, historians and anthropologists), the Municipal Centre of History and Documentation (DHKI: DHmotiko Kentro Istorias kai Tekmiriosis Volou) and the municipality of Volos, which has donated a magnificent building for the Museum. The group consists of researchers and volunteers, and their collection of oral testimonies will be placed in the Museum. The actions organized by the project, such as audio walks in the oldest neighborhood of the city, are extremely innovative for Greece.

In November of 2013 a movement of citizens in Kolonaki, the most elite neighborhood of Athens, asked me to organize a training seminar on collecting oral testimonies. The seminar started in January and by early March 2014 the Oral History Group of Kolonaki (OPIKO: Omada Proforikis Istorias KOLonakiou) was established. It has more than thirty members divided into five sub-groups. Currently in Athens, then, there are three designated oral history groups; in addition, three left wing autonomous groups from the east neighborhoods of Athens (Byronas, Kaisariani, Pagrati¹⁸) as well as citizens from Galatzi and the island of Aigina, (situated near Athens), also intend to organize seminars on oral history methodology in order to learn more about the history of their districts. All these collectivities (not only the oral history groups, but the movements of citizens as well), in the prestigious or the popular neighborhoods of Athens, were created during the crisis.

The objective of these seminars is to train people to collect life histories. Its follow up is the creation of an oral history group. The trainers are usually members of the academic community or experts in the field as well as old members of existing groups who help the newcomers in oral history techniques. Some seminars are enriched with directors or editors from documentary film who help trainees in using video camera or microphones; they also involve architects who give lectures on the architectural styles of neighborhood and metropolitan buildings in order to sensitizing participants in seeing the city with 'different eyes'. The seminars are free to the public, but the volunteers undertake the obligation to make at least one interview according to the international standards, so that it can be included in an organized archive. The support of Rob Perks,

¹⁸ See their websites: [02/12/2013]: "The Meeting of Residents at Byron, Kaisariani and Pagrati" <http://syneleysikatoikwnvkv.squat.gr/>, "The Initiative of Kaisarianis' Residents" <http://protovouliaka.toikwnkaisarianis.blogspot.gr/> and "The Assembly of Pagratis' Grove" <http://alsospagkratiou.wordpress.com/>

director of the Sound Archive of the British Library, has been crucial in organizing data of oral history groups in Greece. The interviews are based on a guide that varies according to the topic or the city; the members of the group or the sub-group shape its content based on Paul Thomson's seminal book¹⁹. They are given a bibliography of articles, books, and websites useful for entry level practice. The website of the Oral History Association also includes very helpful resources²⁰.

Most people who are involved in these projects have close connections with both the academic world and the public: they have university diplomas and are active citizens in their local communities. The volunteers, who are trained in oral history methodology, are adults, more women than men, many of them teachers in secondary education with a vision for a 'better' school and high qualifications, architects – planners, freelancers, as well as PhD students from the departments of history or architecture. There are some retirees and some young people: the ages range from twenty five up to sixty five years old. But most of all they are people who, in the pre-crisis era, opposed the patron client system, and who during the current crisis try to resist the austerity measures that affect not only the economy but also cultural life. We argue then that the creation of oral history groups in the times of crisis could be considered part of a broader spectrum of initiatives undertaken by 'ordinary' people, outside the old institutional and political frameworks. These initiatives cover a wide spectrum of domains from culture to economy. During the crisis, for example, novel forms of exchange such as "the movement without middlemen" have emerged: farmers and other kinds of producers sell their products (cheese, honey, rice, olive oil, etc) in street markets at less cost than in super markets. These markets are organized by local collective structures of solidarity, which have undertaken the effort to give food to those in need. The aim of both producers and consumers is actively to face the humanitarian crisis in Greece. We could say that they have created another kind of market outside the official one, in the same way that oral history groups have undertaken the effort to write history outside academia and the Greek media's public history.

Despite the great success of grassroots oral history groups, it is difficult to make a diagnosis for their future (although, given current conditions, that is true of all areas of Greek life). Their construction is fragile. The adults involved face multiple practical problems of daily life due to the crisis and their dedication of time and effort to a voluntary collective organization cannot be taken for granted. In addition, the necessary infrastructure for storing their audio and video files is lacking. For the groups established in Athens the Municipality Library has offered space, but there are only two employees, who are not trained in oral history archiving and storage and who are overburdened already. Just before the beginning of the crisis the state had established the National Audio-Visual Archive, but it was among the first institutions that were abol-

¹⁹ P. THOMPSON, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford, 1978), Greek Edition: Athens, Plethron, 2002.

²⁰ See [15/12/2013]: <http://www.epi.uth.gr/index.php?page=practice5>

ished, due to lack of public funds. The volunteers also lack money to buy external hard disks, CDs or DVDs for storage. Until June 2013 there was a prospect of donating interviews to the Audio-Visual Archive of the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT = Elliniki Radiofonia Tileorasi), but the government has shut down all of ERT's television and radio stations; some of the ERT's employees continued broadcasting through web, but in November 2013 the government used police special forces to occupy its central radio-television building. Austerity measures and media democracy are evidently not compatible.

Furthermore, during the "Greek" crisis, the collection of oral testimonies took on another perhaps more urgent and utopian dimension. A group of young artists and researchers called "The Caravan Project. Another World is Here", (established in 2011) started collecting oral testimonies. The project's guiding concept is that the crisis has greatly affected the lives, psyche and mind of Greek citizens and the members of the Caravan Project thus tried, through a creative tour in mainland, islands and remote places of Greece to illuminate the "other" Greece, which has no voice in the official media, but continues to dream and resist. The outcome of this project was more than ten documentaries on people who fight through difficulties, such as *Communal Conservatory* (free music lessons to students who have no money), the *Blind Fisherman* (who is still fishing) or *Man at Home*, on a homeless man²¹. This group has subsequently connected with established oral history groups, and its new project aims to train people in six different Greek cities to make their own stories through oral testimonies, photos or video.

In 2013, too, three theatrical productions, based on oral testimonies, had great public success. One of them could be called underground theatre: the actors were Greeks and immigrants and each one was telling his/her personal story or stories; together they composed the play *That's life*²². The director and actors were volunteers, although some were also professionals, and their performances were free to the public. The group declared that "Our performances have no show bills, because what we do is valuable. Our group is a form of resistance, a political act against fascism and xenophobia in Greek society"²³. The other two plays were concerned with the historical past in the context of the present. The testimonies in *The Common Discourse*, were collected by Elli Papadimitriou the 1960s²⁴, but in 2013 the director – by including in the play the Greek civil war and its trauma – attempted to provide a more contemporary perspective. The third play, *Sons and Daughters. A performance for the pursuit of happiness* consisted of oral testimonies gathered, all over Greece, by the director and the actors, who asked 'grandfathers and grandmothers' to narrate a story that had marked their life. These 85 stories cover almost one century Greek history: from Asia Minor catastrophe

²¹ See its site: [05/12/2013]: <http://www.anotherworldishere.com/the-caravan-project-2/>

²² See [05/12/2013]: <http://viceversatheater.gr/>

²³ See [04/04/2014]: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/oralhistory2/el/paper.asp?paper=671>

²⁴ E. PAPANIMITRIOU, *Common Discourse*, v. I-III, Athens, Ermis, 2003.

(1922) until the Athens Olympics in August 2004²⁵. The performance had no props and costumes and yet it played in crowded halls; the group continued its performances and in 2014.

Last but not least, in Athens, 6-9 March 2014, the 2nd International Conference of Oral History, *Memory narrates the city... Oral testimonies about the past and the present of urban space*, (organized by the University of Athens - Department of History and Archaeology and the Greek Oral History Association) took place. The three day scientific conference took place in the central building of the University of Athens, but on Sunday March 9, activities took place in the Michalis Kakogianis Foundation cultural center. The title of the event was *Oral history around the city. Performance and participation*. The three theatre groups discussed above spoke about their work on oral history, and two groups of architects / planners who used oral testimonies also participated; the conference closed with a presentation (“Living in Crisis and Collecting Oral Testimonies on it”) by OPIK’s thematic group on the Crisis, consisting of five members²⁶.

4. *Oral history’s dynamic*

It is striking that oral history has become a ‘people’s project’ in the moment of a deep social, political and economic crisis, through the grassroots action of oral history groups and artists. It is worth noting that neither the Oral History Association nor academic historians were responsible for the surge. The obvious reason for this non-participation is that the curricula of the Greek universities have begun to integrate oral history and biographical research only in the past decade. Currently it is not taught as core curriculum, but mainly as a non-compulsory course or as a component of general courses on qualitative research. There are some exceptions in peripheral universities, and there is also a real danger of oral history disappearing, due to the general state attack on universities and more precisely on the humanities²⁷. Moreover, Greek academics have not in the past embraced the project of collecting oral testimonies – even on historical issues of great importance such as the 1940s.

The use of oral testimonies in documentaries and plays, and indeed the creation of oral history groups cannot in itself be considered radically new or revolutionary. What makes the phenomenon significant is that all these initiatives took place at the same time, in diverse places and by different people. We are witnessing extensive use of oral history in cultural production (by architects/ planners and directors); a tremendous response of volunteers involved in collecting oral testimonies; and a large and enthusiastic audience flocking to hear testimonies and to engage with history. Most impor-

²⁵ See [04/04/2014]: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/oralhistory2/el/paper.asp?paper=675>

²⁶ See the Program of the Conference [04/04/2014]: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/oralhistory2/el/programme.asp>

²⁷ BOESCHOTEN, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

tant, all of these efforts were initiated from bottom up, from people who galvanized by the crisis tried to find explanations, first for themselves, and then to offer to 'others' on what has happened in and to Greece, why it has happened (who is to blame is one of the most frequent questions) and what might come next.

It was clearly not enough for these participants to attend academic historical lectures as passive listeners; in most cases academics spoke a different language, not familiar to them. In oral history groups, volunteers are not passive subjects but active participants in making history. The oral history interview is a three way conversation in which each interlocutor influences the other: the interviewee engages in a conversation with him – or herself, with the interviewer, and also with the cultural/ and political background of both the researcher and the narrator. The interviewer as well as the narrator is present in the creation of the oral history story²⁸. As oral history deals with life histories of ordinary people, its process has a performative character, as people display their historical and emotional baggage before others. This process of performance through memory and history changes people, creates new identities forged in reflection. On a collective scale it also has a transformative result; changing both the interviewee and the interviewer and ultimately the popular audience, it creates new forms of historical consciousness.

It is not surprising that teachers of secondary education are among the first who joined the oral history groups. They are confronted by young people who have not yet been assimilated by the existing system and openly express their dislike for history textbooks. Every year, the eve of the National Anniversaries, newspapers and TV declare that high school students do not know history: they confuse the 25th of March (1821: the beginning of the struggle for Independence) and the 28th of October (1941: Greece enter into WWII). The media blame the teachers. But, the older generation of teachers was never taught the history of World War II at university; and in secondary education, the period receives little curricular attention. The role of oral history is then of great significance in an educational system that reproduces nationalistic narratives, encourages memorizing and discourages critical thinking. Youth who are enrolled in the Neo-Nazi party know nothing about the Nazi occupation in Greece or Greece's massive Resistance movement. Recognizing the urgent need for change in the educational system, teachers join local groups collecting oral histories and encourage their pupils (and themselves) to create their own narratives about the past, present and future through a new pedagogy that encourages student's participation in learning process, while sociologists call them "the lost generation".

Oral historians frequently argue that oral history empowers people who had been doubly marginalized – in history *and* then in historiography²⁹. The members of oral history groups record the voices of the less powerful majority, and try to provide a voice for those who have been "hidden from history" – to use the memorable phrase of Sheila

²⁸ L. ABRAMS, *Oral History Theory*, London and New York, Routledge, 2010, pp. 56, 76.

²⁹ SMITH, *op. cit.*

Rowbotham³⁰ – and also to record instances of both resistance and acquiescence. Those who interview and who testify feel themselves “hidden from history” while the bankers and the markets control their lives. Thus, they aim to uncover the lives of ordinary people (like themselves) and want to record both successful and unsuccessful attempts to make change by the less powerful in society. The democratizing potential and critical slant of oral history methodology has been, and continues to be, one of the central reasons why non-academic researchers are attracted to using the methodology; they become oral historians, “*agents of social change*” through their oral history projects and related activities; they can be ‘intellectual activists’ recording oral histories not only for the purposes of conservation, but to contribute to forms of social change³¹. Volunteers of the oral history groups do not just record the stories of interviewees but craft deeply ‘collaborative’ relationship with informants. Members of groups often interview one another. This contributes another dimension to the inter-subjectivity and the egalitarian power relations between interviewers and interviewees, researchers and researched.

Grassroots oral historians who interview living witnesses provoke historical consciousness and self-awareness; they establish a different relationship with their own past, community and collectivity. In seeing the ‘myths’ that others “live by”, they recognize, and reconsider, their own ‘personal myth’. A member of OPIK wrote in the site only for members: “An interview constitutes a journey through the lives of others that offers to the interviewer knowledge about the past but also a reflection on his own life and/or on the meaning of life itself, something absolutely necessary in times of crisis like this”. At the beginning, members of oral history groups had to confront and uncouple themselves and their interlocutors from the myth of an ideal past, myths of everyday life, of nice families and neighborhoods full of gardens, where there were pleasant relations among family members or neighbors. They were also compelled to dismantle national myths; and this was the more difficult challenge.

Consciously or unconsciously members of oral history groups use oral history as a tool, as oral history is not just about describing a dead past. It is about using that past to shape the present and accordingly the future; is about ‘doing history’ and offers an accessible and sociable method of finding out about the recent past³². As Alessandro Portelli argues, oral histories can provide historians (and by extension non-professional historians, people who are involved in oral history groups) with new ways of understanding the past, not just in what is recalled, but also with regard to continuity and change in the *meaning* given to even well-known events³³.

³⁰ S. ROWBOTHAM, *Hidden from History: 300 years of Women's Oppression and the Fight against it*, London, Pluto 1973.

³¹ S. FIELD, *From stepchild to elder: Has oral history become 'respectable'?* [8.12.2012]: http://www.iohanet.org/debate/#_ftn1

³² SMITH, *op. cit.*

³³ A. PORTELLI, *What makes oral history different*, in: R. PERKS, A. THOMSON (ed.): *The Oral History Reader*, London, New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 63-74.

The work of oral history groups is in between academic and public history and contributes to both of them. Although oral history is considered to be a part of public history – and to some extent this is true – oral history groups are not, in part because they educate themselves in the techniques of academic data collection and theory. Secondly, most of their interviews bring to light new evidence in primary archival sources. And last, their ‘final product’ contributes to dismantling of dominant social myths, as academic history also does.

5. *The paradigm of the 1940s and the current crisis*

In contemporary Greek oral history groups usually there is at least one sub-group that collects oral testimonies on the 1940s decade, which carries intense national historical baggage. During the 1940s three major wars took place: the so called ‘Albanian Front’ (1940-41), the triple Axis occupation (German, Italian, Bulgarian) and the massive resistance movement (1941-44), as well as the Greek civil war (1946-1949); they had a critical impact on the construction of post war Greek society. In the Greek imaginary there is a close connection between the memory of the 1940s and the experience of the current economic crisis; Greek people feel shocked, insecure, burdened with uncertainty for their future and, more woundingly, as a result of high youth unemployment (60%), uncertainty for the future of their children. The middle class cannot live as they were accustomed to live before, and the poorest only barely survive: they cannot satisfy their basic needs for food, health and nutrition. The current situation, then, is compared because of its fragility and severity with the 1940s period of occupation and resistance. Popular initiatives to establishing solidarity structures are compared to the resistance organization “National Solidarity” (Ethiniki Allilegyi); the camps for “illegal” immigrants evoke memories of camps for resistance fighters and Jews; famine and starvation during the 1940s are compared to the nowadays humanitarian crisis. For Greek nationalists, Greece is now under German occupation³⁴.

The 1940s is past and present at the same time. In public history, the triple Axis occupation is called ‘German occupation’, because the Germans were deemed more fearsome than the Italians who surrendered and the Bulgarians had occupied a small part of the country. And during the crisis the Troika is not represented – let’s say – by Christine Lagarde (I.M.F), but by the Chancellor Merkel (and Wolfgang Schäuble is very hateful, too). Cartoons depicted A. Merkel as Hitler. According to Greek national imagery Germans soldiers were not men, but creatures made of iron. In an oral history interview however, picture different and more complex image emerges: they were human beings. They broke their regimental lines to eat sour oranges. A woman, born in 1930, narrates:

³⁴ See also D.M. KNIGHT, *Your money or your life: misunderstandings of Greek austerity*, in “American Anthropological Association, Anthropology News”, Blog Entry: 04/06/2013.

Hitler defeated us, not without bloodshed for us; and came down [to Athens] and his army was passing through Patission Street, step by step, without music, without anything. And at some point a soldier turned his head and saw that in front of our house there were sour orange trees, bitter oranges that had begun to soften, and at the end of the parade the line breaks and the Germans hurdle to cut them, thinking that the sour oranges were eating oranges, and took them down from the wall garden and bit into them. Who knows now... were they hungry or did they like fruit...

And of course, a historian would say, German soldiers were hungry and yes, they liked oranges. But for ordinary people the myth of the undefeated German army collapsed in this image; Germans did what Greek soldiers would have done. On a similar topic, another member of an oral history group discovered that an elderly woman in the Nursing Home of Andros, almost 90 years old, had, during Occupation, loved and married the German commander of the island. He had in fact saved a lot of people during occupation, and the locals eventually smuggled this man out, after liberation. The issue of the relations between Germans and Greeks (and especially relations with Greek women) is a taboo subject for public history and there is very insufficient research in historiography. Oral history, as anthropocentric history, differentiates the picture people have of their enemies; the narratives help members of oral history groups to understand that not all of the Germans were “thugs”.

Interviewing people you know well – friends, neighbors or relatives –, poses key questions concerning individual and social remembering. Individual narratives help create a sense of belonging to a community – not only local. Members of oral history groups, through exposure to oral testimonies, have realized the difficulties that previous generations faced during the 1940s and in post war society. They have also understood the challenges faced by immigrants from Asia and Africa. And this knowledge of the problems of ‘others’ or of past troubles contributes to have an improved understanding of the current crisis and contributes to coping with personal difficulties effectively through the awareness of collective suffering and response. In this process, the history of everyday life is rendered more accurately and fully. Everybody in Greece knows about the famine during the awful winter 1941–42, when people were dying in the streets of Athens. Public history insists that all Greeks and, most of all, Athenians were starving. But oral interviews put this fact in its social environment: the famine did not affect all people equally, but, like the current crisis, disproportionately the poor. Some families had to give food to the kid next door, who was in need, while others simply heard rumors of famine, distantly. And in the current humanitarian crisis solidarity collectivities have emerged in many neighborhoods, but there are many people who look after only themselves.

The most widespread myth of Greek public history is the participation of all Greeks and especially youth in the organization of the WWII Resistance. But this fact is not consistent with the existence of a neo-Nazi party in a country where almost 3,000 villages out of 9,000 were destroyed by the occupation forces, partially or totally. Dur-

ing the current crisis Greek people have ‘learned’ that there were many Greek collaborators, who took up arms with Nazi Germans against their compatriots who resisted. They ‘learned’ also that there was a “grey zone”, as Primo Levi taught us. In an interview a girl who was then in high school responded to the question «Was there any resistance in your school?» as follows: «Most of them were enrolled in EPON. Resistance, I cannot remember [...] These things, I cannot remember well. I was one of the girls who had no desire to deal with it and neither did my female friends». Another woman, who had not attended High school, was also asked, «Had you heard about EAM, about EPON?»³⁵ She answered: «I had heard and indeed my father said to my brothers, (not to me): ‘I do not want to hear that you are mixed up in organizations; none of you.’ And none joined any organizations. Do you understand?» The oral stories of these two women make quite clear that not all young people were enrolled in the resistance. Perhaps volunteers can better understand that in the current crisis many young people also do nothing against the austerity measures. Among other reasons for their passivity, they may still expect that their family, through patron client relations, can secure them a “good” position in life.

Oral history has enabled the members of grassroots oral history groups to engage in the collection of new historical evidence; the most exciting are those events which refer to well-known places or people. In Athens, the most traumatic historical event of the 1940s was the so called Battle of Athens, in December 1944, just two months after Greece’s liberation. The National Liberation Front (EAM) and its armed branch, Greek People’s Liberation Army (ELAS: Ellinikos Laikos Apeleftherotikos Stratos) as well as EPON, fought against the government which was supported by the British troops. An interview with Manos Zaharias, a famous director, on the December 1944 events that took place at the school building of the main road of Kypseli, Fokionos Negri, added new knowledge and evidence that had not previously appeared in history textbooks. The narrative concerned establishing the Student’s Platoon of EPON, named “Lord Byron”.

And we announced, using loudspeakers, two days before, [that there would be] a meeting at the school in Fokionos Negri: all the students of the university should collect up there and so on and so forth. We blared it across Athens. So, we gathered at this school, in Kypseli, in Fokionos Negri and just as we gathered and we got into the room and distributed something, some pants, some jackets and so on, because most of us were naked, to become soldiers, to – let say the Platoon – began to bombard us from Lycabettus hill, because they knew, we had informed them that we would gather all the students, so to speak, organizations, there. And they started bombarding us. Seven students were killed there and several injured. Inside the school was Axelos, Georges Sari who injured too seriously...

³⁵ Resistance’s organizations: National Liberation Front (EAM: Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo), a coalition of many parties, in which the Communist Party of Greece played a major role; the most massive resistance organization. The youth organization of EAM was EPON (Eniaia Panelladiki Organosi Neon).

This school still exists in the same place, where seven young students of the university died in December 1944, and Kostas Axelos, a philosopher, as well as George Sari, a well-known actress, were injured by bombing from Lycabettus hill that still overlooks the city (it is taller than the Acropolis). Thus, this part of the road became a 'site of memory' and the whole district became more familiar to the OPIK's members and fellows who heard this new evidence.

But this is not the end of the story. Another informant, Mrs. Nina, described how much she, her sister, her mother and her neighbors suffered – not exactly from the fighters of this Platoon-but from left wing fighters, in December 1944. The left wing volunteers of the oral history group were compelled to hear the opposite side – not a common experience until then. When the nation is polarized between left wing and right wing parties, memory is divided, too. The armed conflict of December 1944 was followed by the Greek civil war (1946-1949). It was a taboo subject for almost half of a century, as a civil war is a total war. Because it is a war between soldiers and among civilians, no one can be neutral – everybody is forced to choose sides. A civil war is executed through raw violence, because the opponent is demonized. In Greece, although the armed conflict lasted three years, the political conflict, this divided memory, was dominant almost until the end of the Cold War. It was in 1989 that a broad coalition of parliamentary parties decided to burn the police files, to wipe out its documentary memory. The research on the social history of the Civil War started in the mid – 1990s and the first conference in Greece was held in 1999. Historians have no access to many archives, even now; they too were sharply divided into two opposing camps, until the crisis. Public history is at least equally divided³⁶. Oral history, nonetheless, has contributed to some gradual opening, to the beginnings of reconciliation with the 'black' pages of a history that nobody wants to remember. And this is very useful in the current crisis.

If the "memory boom" serves as an antidote to the disappearance of communities' living memory, as Pierre Nora argues, then it could be assumed that this antidote has particular weight in a society in which painful memories are "hidden from history", where the past – most obviously Greece's civil war trauma – continues to divide and injure. The current crisis has functioned as a means, too, towards reconciliation with Greece's traumatic past. An oral history archive on the 1940s is still crucially missing. The existence of such a record could contribute to the alleviation of the trauma of the Greek civil war and a more complete historical recognition of the realities of political and personal history might have limited the current popularity of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party.

³⁶ G. ANTONIOU, *Oi giortes misous kai oi polemoi tis dimosias mnimis (1950-2000)* (The ceremonies of hatred and the wars of public memory), in: N. DEMERTZIS, E. PASCHALOU, G. ANTONIOU (ed.) *Civil War. Cultural Trauma*, Athens, Alexandria, 2013, pp. 215-250.

6. Conclusion

This labyrinthine crisis that has touched and changed dramatically all aspects of people's lives in Greece has overturned expectations and conventional frames of reference. Ordinary people in their oral testimonies say that "everything has collapsed", "the situation is hopeless", "the system has gone into complete annihilation" and that there is no prospect for the future. Ms. Nina, who has lived and during Axis occupation believes that now "it's worse because there is no horizon, no light". All narrators insist that "the crisis is too deep" and the answer to this can only be "something very massive and very dynamic", "completely new things" and "a framework of new values??" "It is a broad-spectrum crisis; we are at a point that we cannot say that we will do some modifications. Either we should make big turns or we sink in the swamp»³⁷. The political system has lost its credibility; mistrust of traditional political institutions and social anger has released the voices of ordinary citizens and recreated social ties that were weakened or had disappeared during the past decades. More and more people understand that they have to fight by their own means; some of them have established collectivities to cope with the current difficulties.

During the economic crisis oral history became a "people's project", because people felt they had to do something, to think about the current situation and to act, as they were no longer following usual routines. The social body tries to form a new identity and therefore needs a new narrative. This makes more visible the value of individual life narratives as a privileged tool for the analysis of rapid social changes that restructure the foundations of society. The counter-hegemony is both the recuperation of lived experience against political-media-official historiography grounded in dogmatic rhetoric and the breaking up of the dualism of Greek history ever since the WWI (the country was divided, too) and the Greek civil war (after WWII), by exposing both the complexity and the "grey zone" character of actual experience as conveyed through oral testimony of all parties. The threatening dualism of the current situation provokes the need for reevaluation to counter the threat of renewed violence and also to figure out how to deal in the current crisis with Greece's crypto-colonial status since the founding of the nation – state (1830) by the Great Powers (Russia, France and Great Britain).

The development of oral history groups is rooted in the specific historical conjuncture. Oral history groups as well as the directors or artists who collect oral testimonies are critical voices on what happens in Greece now; their critique not only concerns the Greek government and the way it copes with the crisis (extracting money from the people to 'save' the banks) but it has to do with our global world (EU, IMF, US, China etc) and even more with ourselves as participants and agents ("we are the 99%," was the main slogan of Occupy Wall Street). The evolution of oral history

³⁷ See the groups presentation on the 2nd Oral History Conference [04/04/2014]: <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/oralhistory2/el/paper.asp?paper=706>

groups in Greece during the crisis is a privileged site of field research on the new social dynamics created by the crisis in a society which is changing rapidly and which crisis furthermore constitutes a flagship event for such transformation elsewhere. We do not know how oral history groups will fare in the future. These groups are returning a voice to communities, but we do not know how or whether or not they can “insert” their projects into the public sphere, or more generally what will be the impact of their project on public history. We could say that it is a work in progress. It is quite early to offer examples of the real social *effects* of these groups apart from the gathering of testimonies, the willingness of people to create oral history groups, and their enthusiastic audience. I cannot flesh out all of the particular effects, especially as these are still emerging slowly.

Finally, there is another aspect of this movement I would like to emphasize. Personal testimonies constitute a kind of resistance against the impersonal markets of a globalized economy which controls so much of our everyday life. Banks, companies and financial funds, as we know, are renamed, transformed, transported, merged and resold, without carrying any historical responsibility for their actions. Instrumentally, they have no memory. Men and women, to the contrary, do. Therefore they produce mnemonic places, and through them they move towards the future. The way we represent the past, the way history is written, is directly connected with social change; representation and change have parallel lives. And, in times of crisis, in spite of impersonal markets without history and memory, ordinary people feel the need to construct their own history and memory. That kind of history which tells the story of those “hidden from history”, those “invisible” people, who were almost absent from the historical scene, oral history can bring to light. It provides us profusely the tools for such an approach. And as Paul Thompson said “*All history depends ultimately upon its social purpose*”³⁸.

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³⁸ THOMPSON, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

Abstracts

Thessaloniki-Bitola: Public versions of the Macedonian History in two statues of King Philip II, di Andreas P. Andreou e Kostas Kasvikis

One of the many public transformations of academic history occurs through its visual representation in the public space taking the form of historic sculpture, memorial monuments and national parks. Public monuments, by deriving their content and inspiration from academic history, transform and diffuse historical meanings and memory to wider sections of the community. This paper focuses on two public monuments of King Philip II (the father of Alexander the Great) that were erected in Thessaloniki (Greece) in 1993 and Bitola (FYROM) between 2009-2011 and are related to the public uses of the history of ancient Macedonia in the context of the emergence of the Macedonian issue during the '90s. The two statues of King Philip II are examined as places of historical memory with specific commemorative and symbolic values, as public manifestations and reconstructions of national memory, as attempts at political manipulation and as fields of conflict between different groups concerning the form and the modes of representing the symbolic value of the past.

Keywords: public monuments, public history, ancient Macedonia, King Philip II, nationalism

Salonicco-Bitola: le versioni "pubbliche" della Storia Macedone attraverso due statue di Re Filippo II

Una delle tante trasformazioni in forma pubblica della storia accademica avviene attraverso la sua rappresentazione visiva nello spazio pubblico sotto forma di scultura storica, monumenti commemorativi e parchi nazionali. I monumenti pubblici, derivando il loro contenuto e la loro ispirazione dalla storia accademica, trasformano e diffondono significati storici e la loro memoria a fasce più ampie della popolazione. Questo saggio si concentra su due monumenti pubblici dedicati al re Filippo II (padre di Alessandro Magno) che sono stati eretti a Salonicco (Grecia) nel 1993 e a Bitola (Macedonia) tra il 2009 e il 2011. I due monumenti sono legati all'uso pubblico della storia dell'antica Macedonia con l'emergere della questione macedone durante gli anni '90 del XX secolo. Le due statue di re Filippo II sono esaminate come luoghi di memoria storica con specifici valori commemorativi e simbolici, come manifestazioni pubbliche e ricostruzioni di memoria nazionale, come tentativi di manipolazione politica e come campi di con-

flitto tra i diversi gruppi riguardanti la forma e le modalità di che rappresenta il valore simbolico del passato.

Parole chiave: public history, monumenti, Antica Macedonia, Re Filippo II, nazionalismo

The Macedonian Question in the 1950s: Public History, Politics and Historians in Greece and People's Republic of Macedonia, di Konstantinos Katsanos

The establishment of the People's Republic of Macedonia signalled a new phase in the development of the Macedonian Question. Here, in this particular Yugoslavian Republic, the procedure of the structuring of the Slav-Macedonian National Identity started. Public History played an important role in this procedure. The patriotic organisations, the scientific institutions and the Press popularised the history of the new Nation. In much the same manner, the Macedonian Question constituted a preferred area of engagement for similar institutions and organisations of Northern Greece. With the active solidarity of the Palace, the central Government and the northern Greek political and intellectual elite, these organisations contradicted the Bulgarian and Slav-Macedonian arguments concerning the Macedonian Question. The individuals who starred in this procedure were, in their majority, refugees who had resided in both countries in the previous periods. For these refugees, the defense of the history of Macedonia was the only field where they could find the justification and ethical satisfaction that war and diplomacy had deprived them of.

Keywords: Macedonian Question, Greek-Yugoslav Relations, Public History, Politics

La questione macedone negli anni Cinquanta: public history, politici e storici in Grecia e nella Repubblica Popolare di Macedonia

La nascita della Repubblica Popolare di Macedonia ha segnato una nuova fase nello sviluppo della questione macedone. È proprio in questa Repubblica Jugoslava che si è avviato il processo di strutturazione dell'identità nazionale slavo-macedone. Ed è in questo processo stesso che la *Public History* ha svolto un ruolo importante. Le organizzazioni patriottiche, le istituzioni scientifiche e la stampa hanno divulgato la storia della nuova nazione. Più o meno allo stesso modo, la questione macedone è stata fra gli oggetti preferiti di dibattito per le istituzioni e le organizzazioni affini della Grecia settentrionale. Con la complicità del "Palazzo" (il governo centrale e le élites politiche e intellettuali del nord) questi diversi soggetti ribattevano agli argomenti bulgari e slavo-macedoni in merito alla questione macedone stessa. Coloro che hanno avuto un ruolo in questo "copione" sono stati, soprattutto, i rifugiati che avevano vissuto in entrambi i paesi nei periodi precedenti. Per questi persone, la difesa della storia della Macedonia ha rappresentato l'unico ambito in cui avrebbero potuto trovare quella giustificazione o soddisfazione etica che la guerra e la diplomazia aveva loro negato.

Parole chiave: questione macedone, relazioni greco-jugoslave, Public History, politica

Remembering the Greek Resistance: Politics of Memory, Reconciliation and Oblivion, di Eleni Paschaloudi e Giorgos Antoniou

For most European countries, immediately following the end of World War II Resistance against the Axis became a unifying and patriotic past. Governments in Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, France – even Austria – referred to this past in order to enhance national unity and avoid civil strife. This never occurred in Greece. Rather than glorifying or celebrating the contribution of Resistance movement to defeat the Nazi occupation, as happened in the rest of Europe, Greek Resistance was conflated with the left wing forces that were defeated in the brutal civil war that ensued. The Greek Resistance, in fact, was officially recognized by the socialist government only in 1982. This paper examines the various forms the discussion on the Resistance took into the Greek Parliament and the clientelistic networks that emerged from the process of war reparations and pensions given to the Resistance veterans. What kind of resistance memory this process produced? How was the subsequent civil war narrated within and outside the parliament? What was the relation between memory oblivion and historical truth in the Greek Forties?

Keywords: Greek Resistance, War Reparations, Resistance Veterans, Political discourse, Public discourse,

Ricordare la Resistenza Greca: politiche della memoria, della pacificazione e dell'oblio

Per la maggior parte dei paesi europei, subito dopo la fine della Seconda Guerra Mondiale, la Resistenza contro l'Asse simbolizzò un passato unificante e patriottico. I governi di Italia, Belgio, Paesi Bassi, Francia – persino dell'Austria – si riferivano a questo passato per rafforzare l'unità nazionale e di evitare conflitti civili. Al contrario, in Grecia, questo non è mai avvenuto: invece di onorare o celebrare il contributo del movimento resistenziale per sconfiggere l'occupazione nazista, la Resistenza greca fu sommariamente confusa con le forze della sinistra che uscirono sconfitte nella brutale guerra civile che ne seguì. A testimonianza di ciò basti ricordare che la Resistenza greca è stata ufficialmente "riconosciuta" dal governo socialista solo nel 1982. Questo articolo, esaminando le varie forme che il dibattito sulla Resistenza assunse nel parlamento greco e le reti clientelari emerse dal processo delle riparazioni di guerra e delle pensioni concesse ai veterani della Resistenza, si interroga su quale tipo di memoria della Resistenza, abbia prodotto questo processo. su quale sia stata la narrazione della successiva guerra civile sia dentro che fuori il parlamento. Su quale sia stato il rapporto tra l'oblio della memoria e la verità storica negli anni Quaranta greci?

Parole chiave: Resistenza Greca, riparazioni di guerra, veterani della Resistenza, discorso politico, discorso pubblico

Goldhagen, the "New Wave" and "Debates on History": Aspects and Terms of Public History in Germany and Greece, di Stratos Dordanas

When in 1996 Goldhagen's book (Hitler's Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust) was also published in German it provoked heated discussion that soon turned into an intense controversy. A leading role in creating the conditions under which the discussion

would take place on Goldhagen and all that he supported in his book was taken on by the newspapers and television. In turn, major research centres collected and evaluated this experience of how a historical controversy was mediated by the mass media and transferred to the public. The paper attempts to take a comparative approach to the 'traditions' that are being consolidated in Germany and in Greece around the "Debates on History" and their public dimension. The Greek case is used as a comparison to the corresponding dialogue between the "old" and the "new wave" conducted through the channels of Public History, with WWII and its traumatic memories as background.

Keywords: "Goldhagen Controversy", Holocaust, Public History, Academic History

Goldhagen, la "New Wave" e il "Dibattito sulla Storia": aspetti e limiti della Public History in Germania e in Grecia

Quando nel 1996 il libro di Goldhagen (*I volonterosi carnefici di Hitler. I tedeschi comuni e l'Olocausto*, Milano, Mondadori, 1997) fu tradotto e pubblicato in lingua tedesca provocò un'accesa discussione che presto si trasformò in una polemica scatenata. Giornali e la televisione ricoprirono un ruolo di primo piano nel creare le condizioni in cui si svolse la *querelle* su Goldhagen e tutto quanto sostenuto nel suo libro. A sua volta, i principali centri di ricerca analizzarono questa esperienza: come una polemica di carattere storico veniva mediata e trasferita al pubblico dagli stessi *mass media*. L'articolo adotta un approccio comparativo nei confronti delle "tradizioni" consolidate in Germania e in Grecia sui "Dibatti sulla Storia" e la loro dimensione pubblica. Il caso greco è usato come confronto con il corrispondente dialogo tra il "vecchio" e il "new wave", condotto attraverso i canali della *Public History*, con la Seconda Guerra Mondiale e i suoi ricordi traumatici come sfondo.

Parole chiave: "Polemica Goldhagen", Olocausto, Public History, Storia Accademica

Public History and the Issue of Torture Under the Colonels' Regime in Greece, di Kostis Kornetis

Torture studies is a distinct field of analysis and representation of the coercive experience of the seven years of the Colonels' dictatorship of 1967-74. Not surprisingly, the intense interest in the experience of torture sparked a publishing boom of testimonies in Greece proper in the early years of Metapolitefsi. This intense interest in the experience of both perpetrators and victims was relatively quickly atrophied in the dictatorship's immediate aftermath. Forty years after the *coup*, the question came back to the forefront by a number of published or republished memoirs, scholarly studies, but also fictional novels and documentaries. The latter category will be the focus of this article as an exponent of public history of torture. It is primarily this new cultural output that put the emphasis back to trauma, in lieu of the more nostalgic and bittersweet aspects of the Greek Sixties that had dominated public history until the late 2000s. The present article focuses on a novel, a novella, a graphic novel, a documentary film and an autobiographic memoir that managed to stir the waters of historiography and boost the public interest in this controversial issue.

Keywords: Torture, Public History, Representation, Trauma, Interrogation, Memory

La Public History e la questione della tortura durante il Regime dei Colonnelli

Gli studi sulla tortura rappresentano un campo distinto di analisi e rappresentazione dell'esperienza coercitiva dei sette anni di dittatura dei Colonnelli (1967-1974).

Non sorprende che il forte interesse per le esperienze di questo tipo di violenza abbia scatenato un *boom* editoriale di testimonianze nella Grecia dei primi anni della "Metapolitefsi". Questo intenso interesse per il vissuto sia dei carnefici che delle vittime però si consumò in maniera rapida all'indomani della dittatura. Quarant'anni dopo il colpo di stato, la questione è tornata alla ribalta grazie a una serie di memorie pubblicate o ripubblicate, studi accademici, ma anche a romanzi e documentari. Quest'ultima categoria sarà al centro di questo articolo come elemento rappresentativo della *Public History* sulla tortura. È soprattutto questa nuova produzione culturale che è tornata a mettere l'accento su questo trauma, in luogo degli aspetti più nostalgici e agrodolci degli anni Sessanta greci che avevano dominato la storia pubblica fino alla fine degli anni 2000. Il presente articolo si concentra su un romanzo, una novella, un fumetto, un film documentario e un libro di memorie autobiografiche che sono riusciti a smuovere le acque della storiografia e aumentare l'interesse pubblico su una questione assai controversa come quella delle torture.

"National-populists" vs "Nation-nihilists": the public controversy over the 6th grade history textbook In the Modern and Contemporary Times (2006-7), di Harris Athanasiades

The paper offers an account of the public debate that broke out upon the introduction of the 6th grade history textbook *In the Modern and Contemporary Times* in 2006. This particular textbook – a collective project led by the historian Maria Repousi – became the object of a fierce political and ideological conflict that reached its climax in 2007. The yearlong confrontation was marked from the outset not only by the typical interventions of intellectuals and the official announcements of institutional agencies, but also by vulgar, albeit highly influential, skirmishes between journalists on TV and citizens over the internet. Following the parliamentary elections of September 2007, the textbook was withdrawn by governmental decree in clear violation of the established procedures. I point out that (a) the problem was neither the pedagogical appropriateness nor the historical accuracy of the textbook, but its capacity to forge national consciousness and (b) the opponents' front cut across the whole spectrum of the political forces and ideological affiliations. I argue that unless our point of view shift from the left/right to the western/anti-western perspective, the debate becomes unintelligible.

Keywords: Public History, History of Education, textbook, Public debate

"Populisti nazionalisti" contro "Nichilisti della Nazione": la polemica sul libro di testo per le scuole medie inferiori Tempi Moderni e Contemporanei

L'articolo offre un resoconto sulle polemiche scoppiate nel 2006 in concomitanza con l'adozione nelle scuole medie inferiori del libro di testo di storia *Tempi moderni e contemporanei*. Questo manuale – un progetto collettivo guidato dalla storica Maria Repousi – è diventato oggetto di una pazzesca polemica politica e ideologica che ha raggiunto il suo culmine nel 2007. Lo scon-

tro, durato un anno, è stato segnato, sin dall'inizio, non solo dai consueti interventi di intellettuali e le prese di posizione ufficiali delle Istituzioni, ma anche da grossolane schermaglie tra giornalisti in tv e tra cittadini su internet. In seguito alle elezioni parlamentari del settembre 2007, il libro di testo è stato ritirato con un decreto governativo in palese violazione delle procedure stabilite. Faccio notare che (a) il problema non era né l'adeguatezza pedagogica né l'accuratezza storica del libro di testo, ma la sua capacità di forgiare la coscienza nazionale e (b) il fronte di coloro che ritenevano il libro inadeguato, divideva trasversalmente l'intero arco delle forze politiche a prescindere dalle diverse affiliazioni ideologiche. Io sostengo che il dibattito risulti incomprensibile, a meno che il nostro punto di vista non passi da una prospettiva sinistra/destra a quella occidentale/anti-occidentale.

Viral histories: Historical culture on Greek digital networks, di Mitsos Bilalis

The paper focuses on the study of contemporary Greek historical culture, attempting to investigate the particular ways in which Greek society deals with the Past in order to confirm, re-arrange or even deconstruct the available historical narratives about this Past. To that end, specific digital mechanisms (social networks, information portals, blogs...), developed on Greek cyberspace during the last decade, are researched. This choice is not an arbitrary one, given the fact that some of the most critical mutations of contemporary Greek historical culture could be traced within the aforementioned digital structures. More specifically, this paper argues that Greek 'e-Public History' is organized on the basis of new politics of the Past, emerged within the broader cultural arenas of "digital capitalism". It also suggests *virality* as a critical aspect of this kind of politics: perceiving contemporary Greek historical culture as a viral one, the paper is trying to revisit some of the most important issues in contemporary Greek public history.

Keywords: Public History, Internet, contemporary Greece, viral politics.

Storie virali: cultura storica sulle reti digitali greche

Questo contributo si concentra sullo studio della cultura storica greca contemporanea, cercando di indagare le forme con cui la società greca affronta il proprio passato al fine di confermare, riorganizzare o anche decostruire le narrazioni storiche disponibili sullo stesso. A tal fine, sono stati analizzati *social network*, portali di informazione, blog sviluppati nel cyberspazio greco nel corso dell'ultimo decennio. Questa scelta non è stata arbitraria, dato che alcune delle mutazioni più critiche della cultura storica greca contemporanea può essere rintracciata all'interno delle suddette strutture digitali. In particolare si ipotizza che la *e-Public History* greca è organizzata sulla base di nuove politiche del passato emerse all'interno delle vaste arene culturali proprie del "capitalismo digitale". Considerando la cultura storica greca contemporanea come virale, vengono analizzate alcune delle questioni più importanti della sua storia pubblica contemporanea, suggerendo come il concetto di *virilità* rappresenti un aspetto critico di questo tipo di politica.

Parole chiave: Public History, internet, Grecia contemporanea, politiche virali.

Grassroots Oral History groups in times of crisis, di Tasoula Vervenioti

In the midst of the “Greek” crisis grassroots oral history groups are mushrooming throughout the country, while in Greek universities there is still no academic department of Oral History. All members of these groups are volunteers, most of them with post-secondary education. After a short training they begin to collect oral testimonies. Oral history groups function in a domain interstitial between academic and public history. In 2012 the Oral History Association was established that provides a forum for their activities. This paper will demonstrate that many Greeks during the economic, political, social and cultural crisis felt the need to turn to, and indeed to come to terms with, their past; they tried to move beyond the heroic hegemonic narrative of the last decades and to invent another in order to cope with their everyday life, which becomes increasingly frightening to vulnerable citizens. The evolution of oral history groups in Greece is at this moment a privileged site for field research on the new social dynamics created by the crisis in a society which is changing rapidly.

Keywords: Oral History, Public History, Grassroot, economic crisis, Greece

I gruppi di base di storia orale

Nel bel mezzo della crisi “greca”, gruppi di base di storia orale si sono moltiplicati in tutto il paese, mentre nelle università greche non c’è ancora un dipartimento di Storia Orale. Tutti i membri di questi gruppi sono volontari e la maggior parte di loro ha un’istruzione universitaria. Dopo un breve formazione cominciano a raccogliere testimonianze orali. I gruppi di storia orale operano in un dominio interstiziale tra la storia accademica e quella pubblica. Nel 2012 si è costituita un’Associazione di Storia Orale che fornisce un forum per le loro attività. Questo articolo dimostra come molti greci, durante la crisi politica, sociale e culturale, abbiano provato il bisogno di rivolgersi, e anzi di venire a patti con il loro passato; come abbiano tentato di andare oltre l’egemonica narrazione eroica degli ultimi decenni per inventarne un’altra che permettesse loro di far fronte al quotidiano, diventato sempre più incerto e scoraggiante per i cittadini più indifesi. L’evoluzione dei gruppi di Storia Orale in Grecia in questo momento offre un punto di vista privilegiato per la ricerca sul campo di nuove dinamiche sociali create dalla crisi in una società in rapido cambiamento.

Parole chiave: storia orale, public history, gruppi di base, crisi economica, Grecia

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Finito di stampare in Firenze
presso la tipografia editrice Polistampa
Aprile 2014

