From Literary Criticism to Propaganda: Intellectuals, Culture, and Politics during the Metaxas Dictatorship (1936-1940)

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses official discourse in conjunction with discourses produced by pro-regime intellectuals involved in cultural affairs and particularly literary criticism during the Metaxas dictatorship. Its primary sources consist chiefly of periodicals that supported the dictatorship or were published by it. The thesis attempts to place these discourses in a wider context by comparing them with those produced by far-right intellectual and political circles in other European countries in the first half of the twentieth century and by pinpointing their pre-1936 indigenous sources. It is argued that the level of erudition displayed by critics and cultural operators along with the regime's self-styling as a *Kulturstaat* enabled such intellectuals to play a significant political (legitimising and propagandistic) role. The structure is thematic and revolves around these four themes: past, nation, authority and hierarchy, and future. The first topic is analysed through the discussion of specific historical periods that were the focus of Metaxist discourse and the modes of historical understanding that characterised it. The second theme is examined based on questions regarding the representation of the essence of Hellenism and the cultural definition of the nation, the emphasis on the homeland and its aesthetic or metaphysical attributes, the promotion of vernacular culture and language, and notions of national unity. The third topic encompasses propaganda related to order, discipline, and absolutism, as well as hierarchy, elitism, and the doctrine of charismatic leadership. The analysis of the fourth topic is pursued by means of discussing propaganda related to new chronotopes, the Third Hellenic Civilisation, and the youth.

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Introduction

There is a tendency in Modern Greek Studies to discuss writers and literary critics as set in a closed system with interaction taking place only within the cultural sphere. Whereas tracing elective affinities amongst writers is generally considered good practice, interactions between cultural production and political thought or objectives is often –if tacitly– shunned.[1] Yet, already my MRes research revolving around Greek literary criticism in the first half of the twentieth century had given me a picture of anything but a closed system. Discussions on literary and cultural affairs were intimately related to political, ideological, social, economic or even technological developments within and outside Greece.

Having dealt in my MRes with Aristos Kambanis, a literary critic, journalist, and public intellectual who was widely recognised in the interwar years but was largely cast to oblivion in the post-WWII era due to his role in the Metaxas dictatorship and especially the Axis occupation, I found an interesting line of investigation in the topic of engagement of critics and literati with far-right regimes. Thus, I focused on the Fourth-of-August regime and examined essays, articles, and book or art reviews written mainly by critics during the period 1936-1940 in order to bring to light the oft-ignored legitimising role that intellectuals involved in cultural and literary affairs had played during the dictatorship. What emerged from my research is a complex web of interaction encompassing several members of the intelligentsia, the Metaxas dictatorship, fascist regimes or ultranationalist movements in western Europe, both Greek and foreign writers and intellectuals of that period or previous years, as well as various pre-existing ideas and discursive formations.

[1] Publications such as Tziovas 1989, Van Dyck 1998, Van Steen 2015, Dimadis 2016, and Voutouris 2017 are rather the exceptions that prove the rule. It is also worth noting that none of these scholars works in Greece.

Aim

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate the intertwinement of cultural and political issues in the discourse of many intellectuals under Metaxas. It also seeks to show how the intellectual class and particularly its members that engaged in literary criticism contributed to the dictatorship's efforts to procure legitimacy and manufacture consent. The thesis examines the discourse produced largely within the domain of what was perceived as 'criticism' in interwar Greece, whose trappings will be discussed below. To this end, it analyses the ideological elements embedded into the essays, reviews, and articles of Greek men (and women) of letters from 1936 to 1940 which render manifest their interaction with the regime. The analysis of these elements shows that several critics on the one hand reproduced, popularised or refined dictatorial propaganda and on the other hand attempted to co-shape both the regime's ideology and praxis. The latter was pursued by means of providing their own readings of crucial components of official propaganda or making public proposals in the direction of both day-to-day policymaking relevant to cultural production (e.g. regarding the price of printing paper) and the advancement of much broader, long-term or illusory objectives (e.g. the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation').[2]

A subsidiary aim is to present the ideology and propaganda of the Fourth-August regime. This thesis assumes that the ideology of the regime remained a work-in-progress until the end, without this meaning, however, that it was utterly inconsistent or ramshackle.[3] I argue that, faced with the crisis of authority and legitimacy that plagued Greece in the 1930s, Metaxas

[2] A proposal for the state to regulate the price of printing paper was pitched by the newspaper *Εστία* and supported by *Πνευματική Ζωή* in early 1938 (see [Anon.] 1938i). Nikolaidis's periodical even combined the request with a mild antiplutocratic rhetoric. On proposals regarding the Third Hellenic Civilisation see the discussion in chapter 10.

[3] Something along these lines was argued by regime ideologues themselves, such as Koumaros and Mantzoufas, who claimed that 'αι ιδέαι όμως της Μεταβολής … είναι ακόμη ρευσταί και ελαστικαί· κατ' ακολουθίαν δε και το θεωρητικόν σύστημα, εις το οποίον αι ιδέαι αύται θα ηδύναντο να υπαχθώσι, βαίνει βαθμηδόν και κατ' ολίγον διαμορφούμενον, αναλόγως της εκ των πραγμάτων ανάγκης, μη επιδεχόμενον εισέτι ακριβή και οριστικήν διατύπωσιν' (Koumaros & Mantzoufas 1938: 818).

aspired to form a new ideological hegemony. This belief system was to rely significantly on pre-existing ethnocentric ideas, while borrowing selectively from contemporaneous authoritarian and fascist regimes. In other words, I consider the regime's ideology as an open project and, for that reason, I attempt both to delineate a Greek genealogy and to point to possible foreign models for the dictator's discourse and policies, as well as for the intellectuals' contribution to this project. In addition, this thesis is based on the premise that the Metaxas dictatorship was part of a broader shift to the Right in interwar Europe and a constituent of the New Right universe that emerged after the Great War.[4] As such, it shared several ideas and approaches with other regimes and movements without necessarily having borrowed them. Accordingly, the discussion of several topics, beliefs, and propaganda motifs is rendered more fruitful through comparison with similar issues and discourses in other European countries.

As suggested above, this thesis aims to provide the provenance or parallels useful for the understanding not only of official dictatorial discourse but also of that produced by pro-regime intellectuals. The general interests of the latter would often mean their reliance –conscious or not– on long-standing ideological currents and traditions in Greece. On top of that, many of them had studied in Central or Western Europe (mostly in Germany, like the dictator himself) and had travelled abroad more than their average countryman, participating in international cultural events, reporting for Greek newspapers and journals or writing travel accounts. Most of them also had very good to perfect knowledge of at least one or two foreign languages and would often produce translations of literary or other texts. All these provided materials that could potentially be added to the mosaic of the new official ideology, which was not pre-set and complete in all its aspects but under (permanent) construction.

While the familiarity of Greek intellectuals with cultural developments and ideas that were in currency under Italian Fascism seems to have been rather marginal and usually based

[4] See Roberts 2016.

on pre-existent links to Italy (as in the cases of Marietta Minotou, Rita Boumi-Pappa, and Yiorgos Sarandaris) or second-hand sources, most displayed a fascination with German and French models. Concepts circulated and works produced within the framework of German romantic nationalism, the Conservative Revolution or even National Socialism were far from unknown for many of them. The same applies to French nationalist, anti-Semitic, neo-royalist and 'proto-fascist' circles and writers, mostly those connected to the Action Française.

The role of critics and culture under Metaxas

It should be stressed that the absence of the type of 'criticus purus' in Greece means that in reality most of the people discussed in this thesis were not solely literary or art critics, but were also involved in other activities, usually of an intellectual or cultural kind.[5] The predominant type of critic in interwar Greece is what could be called a 'cultural operator':

> Perhaps the overriding characteristic of the cultural operator is to move eclectically between various spaces, cobbling together an income and prestige through, say, occasional seminars at a university, commissioned journalism and book reviewing or opinion pieces for the cultural pages of a newspaper, perhaps writing a screenplay, as well as acting as a consultant to a publisher on a list of modern poetry, translating some of the poets herself, or editing an anthology of travel writing, and sitting on the jury of a prestigious literary prize. In between all of these, our imaginary writer might be finishing her latest novel and corresponding with a close-knit circle of fellow writers about the future of literature.[6]

The authors discussed in this thesis wrote book or exhibition reviews, aesthetic essays, and articles on cultural matters, but most of them combined this activity, at some point of or throughout their career, with the role of the poet, novelist, artist, journalist and so on.

[5] See Tziovas 1987: 332. Tziovas tentatively associates this absence with the continuation of humanism, most likely alluding to the Renaissance model of 'homo universalis'. The emergence of pure critics is correlated to trends of specialisation in and professionalisation of literary criticism as a result of increased division of labour and a thriving literary market that can sustain such critics and has thus been witnessed in developed capitalist countries such as Britain unlike Greece whose interwar literary market could usually not sustain writers let alone critics. About the emergence of literary criticism in Britain and its interrelation with questions of economics and division of labour see Zionkowski 1990 and Domsch 2014.
[6] Gordon 2005: 34.

Book reviews and other texts pertinent to the genre of literary criticism are examined alongside articles and essays on political and ideological issues written and published mainly by literary critics during the dictatorship. Lest the scope of the thesis straddles too far from criticism due to the discussion of writings that do not typically pertain to it, this thesis privileges authors that were primarily recognised as critics in their own time or intellectuals who dealt extensively with cultural matters in their articles. One could also speak of a superimposition of an author's identity as a literary critic on his oeuvre but mostly of a rather wide definition of criticism in the interwar years. It is indicative that the first state award for criticism (1938) was shared between the critics Kleon Paraschos and Petros Orologas, even though the latter's prize-winning book (*Ion Dragoumis*) was far from related to literary criticism in today's sense.[7] Moreover, when the state literary awards were reconstituted in 1956, the category 'criticism' was actually replaced with that of 'essay' (δοκίμιο), which points through its very name to the broader scope of Greek literary criticism. The first and second essay awards that year were in fact given for books of literary criticism in the modern sense of the term, and indeed to two literary critics that had also won an award for literary criticism in Metaxas's years, namely Kleon Paraschos (1938) and Yiannis Chatzinis (1939).[8]

The choice of texts to be discussed in this thesis was dictated by the objective to lay bare the fact that both the medium of literary criticism and many intellectuals that performed the role of the critic had a legitimising effect for the regime. This way, the complementarity of literary criticism to politics and propaganda is brought to the fore both in terms of criticism's institutional status and in terms of the critic as a title and signifier of intellectual status and prestige. Seen either from an institutional or an individual perspective, a considerable segment

[7] It is also worth noting that Kleon Paraschos too had published a book on Ion Dragoumis two years earlier; see Paraschos 1936a.

[8] See Niaros 2017: 332 (footnotes 263, 265) on Paraschos's and Chatzinis's pre-war awards. About post-WWII awards, see the list compiled by the National Book Centre: http://www.ekebi.gr/frontoffice/portal.asp?cpage=RESOURCE&cresrc=3695&cnode=573. It is also worth noting that the jury for the first post-war awards included Kostis Bastias and Yeoryios Zoras, who had been ardent supporters of the Metaxas regime.

of Greek criticism employed its accumulated symbolic capital in support of the dictatorship and its ideology. Some of the most significant characteristics of critics were their breadth of knowledge and interests, writing and argumentation skills, social prestige or influence amongst educated strata of the population, and specialisation on cultural matters. All these constituted an ideal background for participation in the project of control and transformation of Greek society inaugurated by Ioannis Metaxas with the 4 August 1936 coup.[9] It is no coincidence then that some critics –most prominently Tellos Agras, who was working at the propaganda office of EON– were selected to staff propaganda mechanisms.[10] Censorship services were also staffed with literary critics, such as Kleon Paraschos, who, along with Eirini Athinea, was responsible for the censorship of magazines and periodicals.[11] More importantly, however, several other critics promoted the regime's ideological positions through immiscibly political-propagandistic texts.

Through its texts, part of the intelligentsia of the time emerges as a mediator no longer between literary texts (or writers, depending on the perspective) and readers, but between an authoritarian regime and some sections of the population.[12] Quite crucially, with the exception of *I Neolea*'s readership, these sections seem to belong by and large to a well-educated minority, probably ranging from the middle class to some of the most affluent members of Greek society.[13] Parts of this public could thus act as propagandists and ideological evangelists themselves, both due to their educational background and due to their social prestige. Thus, the role

[9] There was no military coup on 4 August 1936 nor a change of government (although the cabinet was reshuffled); there was, however, a regime change, and what is often called a 'royal coup' in secondary literature.
[10] See Kayialis 2007: 176.
[11] See Kayialis 2007: 19 (footnote 8), 175.
[12] Tziovas repeatedly emphasises the mediating role of literary criticism in Greece, where its focus lay on 'communication rather than scholarly interpretation and analysis' (Tziovas 1987: 329; see also ibid. 338, 339, 342, 343; cf. Moullas 1993: 141 and Pesketzi 2003: 22).
[13] See also the discussion here below in the section on primary sources.

of these intellectuals as cultural operators and mediators facilitated their transition to the role of 'organic intellectuals' or what Alexander De Grand calls 'intermediary elites'.[14]

Another relevant concept put forward by De Grand with regard to Italian Fascism that I consider useful for the understanding of the Fourth-August phenomenon is that of 'feudalism'.[15] Similarly to Mussolini's regime, the Greek dictatorship allowed substantial leeway to interest groups so long as they endorsed or did not challenge the political and ideological limits set by the government. Pre-existing intermediary elites and organised interests were largely co-opted by or formed a symbiotic relationship with the regime, while new intermediary elites emerged along with the new political conditions. Both old and new intermediary elites or 'fiefdoms' that moved within the wider ideological coordinates of nationalist palingenesis were usually allowed some relative autonomy, even as they often had to accept a degree of co-operation with or oversight from the New State apparatus. Specifically in the domain of cultural and intellectual production, various groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds coexisted. Sometimes the agendas or positions of different actors with regard to key issues such as aesthetic modernism were clearly discordant and would ultimately lead to conflicts. Players in cultural affairs would in cases struggle amongst themselves, each aspiring to have their own proposal for national art or literature sanctioned by the state and/or the Greek intelligentsia under Metaxas.

As art historian Evyenios Matthiopoulos has pointed out, Metaxas's artistic policy resembled that of Mussolini rather than Hitler.[16] Mussolini's policy in the domain of art has been described by historian Roger Griffin in this way:

> Not only was there no officially prescribed Fascist style, but no proscribed style either. Mussolini resisted the pressure from individual factions to have certain aesthetics banned as un-Fascist or make theirs the official state aesthetic. As a result[,] variants of ruralist realism (e.g. Ottone Rosai), and abstraction (e.g. Carlo Belli), all

[14] See De Grand 2000: 3, 7-9; De Grand (2000: 7) views his term as synonymous to Gramsci's 'organic intellectuals'.
[15] See De Grand 2000: x, xv-xvi, 46-49.
[16] See Matthiopoulos 1996: 703, 704, 718-722 and Matthiopoulos 2003: 436.

> vied to the bitter end with the many permutations of Novecento's modernized neo-classicism (e.g. Mario Sironi) to encapsulate the essence of the Fascist revolution.[17]

On the contrary, the German regime eventually condemned all modernist art as 'degenerate' and spoke of 'cultural Bolshevism'. Up to the mid-1930s, however, National Socialism appeared open to some modernist artistic movements, particularly expressionism, which was promoted by some National Socialists or pro-Nazi expressionist artists and writers as a form of 'Germanic' or 'Aryan art'.[18] While Hitler had lashed out against modernist art at a party congress in late 1935, 'a significant omission from the Führer's hate-list of degenerate "isms" is Expressionism, whose Aryan credentials … were still the subject of a bitter dispute among loyal Nazis'.[19] The propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels was an ardent supporter of expressionism and had even written a novel in the mid-1920s (*Michael: A German Destiny*, 1926) which was markedly influenced by that movement, whereas in 1933 he had publicly spoken in favour of expressionism and New Objectivity.[20] The periodical *Nea Politiki* registered these internecine fights over artistic styles within the National Socialist movement as late as 1937. Rather interestingly, the periodical showed a positive stance towards expressionism, looking forward to an overturning of the official line on art issues by the 'more progressive' NSDAP members.[21]

It is in this light that the dispute between advocates and enemies of aesthetic modernism should be seen, far from any conceptions of artistic modernism as inherently incompatible with fascistic politics.[22] Fascism and similar political departures on the Right during the interwar period represented a form of political modernism which engaged in a complex set of

[17] Griffin 2007: 227-228.
[18] See Griffin 2007: 18, 250, 252.
[19] Griffin 2007: 28; this dispute within the Nazi movement is further discussed in Griffin 2007: 250-253, 286. See also Petropoulos 1996: 19-35.
[20] See Griffin 2007: 30, 252.
[21] See [Anon.] 1937b. The employment of the term 'progressive' by *Νέα Πολιτική* in this connection could be associated with the claim that Goebbels's pro-modernist stance and his 'resistance to *völkisch* ideas might also be explained by his roots in the socialist wing of the Nazi Party (the Strasser faction). There was indeed a link between the revolutionary branch of the NSDAP and those with promodernist sympathies' (Petropoulos 1996: 26).
[22] See Griffin 2007, particularly 15-42. Cf. Kayialis 1997.

interactions with various brands of cultural or aesthetic modernism. In all its manifestations, fascism or para-fascism allied with, relied on, remained open to, fostered or opposed different variants of such modernism. Several cultural and artistic movements were associated with the pursuit of a 'national path to fascism' and a new national art or culture that would express a 'recalibrated', 'modernised' national identity. Their diversity is showcased through the examples of futurism and the Florentine Circle in Italy, expressionism in Germany, and demoticism in Greece.[23]

Two characteristic examples of such disputes under Metaxas are those between the critics Petros Orologas and Petros Spandonidis with regard to modernist fiction and between Achillefs Kyrou and Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas with regard to modernist painting. Despite taking stock (and advantage) of the fact that the Fourth-of-August dictatorship gave more leeway to intellectuals and cultural operators than National Socialism, Petros Orologas and Achillefs Kyrou paradoxically seemed to serve an agenda of Nazification.[24] Both of them and particularly Kyrou sought to influence public opinion, the stance of intellectuals or state policy in the direction of a socio-political system that could theoretically turn them into mere cogs in a totalitarian apparatus or deprive them of the right to express themselves openly and intervene in cultural matters.[25]

The dispute on fiction is overt: Orologas criticised Spandonidis in his book *Writers and their Time* (1938) for his interest in foreign modernist sources rather than Greek tradition and racial character as the basis for modern Greek prose writing.[26] Spandonidis wrote the essay *The Life that Loves Itself* that same year, noting that it was a response to Orologas's book and

[23] See Ben-Ghiat 2001, Griffin 2007, Antliff 2007. About demoticism as a modernist movement see Kokkinos & Boyiatzis 2017. See also the discussion here in chapter 5.
[24] See Chamalidi 2002: 96, 368-369, 371 for a discussion of Kyrou's first contribution to *Το Νέον Κράτος* that touches upon his influence from National Socialist blueprints. About Kyrou's and Orologas' attraction to National Socialism and totalitarianism more generally, see Appendix.
[25] Cf. Matthiopoulos 1996: 690 about Kyrou's personal ideological agenda.
[26] See Orologas 1938: 25. Dinos Christianopoulos (2009: 23) calls *Οι συγγραφείς και η εποχή τους* along with Orologas's 1940 book *Ένα κίνημα μεταξύ δύο πολέμων* 'δυναμίτη που κόντεψε να ανατινάξει όλο το μοντέρνο κατεστημένο της ομάδας Σπανδωνίδη'.

attempting to deconstruct his accusations while legitimising modernist prose.[27] The other dispute is more covert, as neither Kyrou nor Chatzikyriakos-Gikas mentioned each other in their texts, but the latter's 1938 contribution to *To Neon Kratos* should be understood as a response to the former's first contribution to the same periodical a few months earlier.[28] Despite the common denominator of Greekness and tradition, Kyrou condemned modernist art as anti-national while Gikas undertook quite the opposite. When Chatzikyriakos-Gikas began his article about Greek art with a praise of the dictator, it was not because his 'modernist tendencies had been suppressed', but because he was trying to promote modernist experimentation –which he personally did not cease to practice– as a prerequisite for the creation of a distinctly Modern Greek art.[29] He therefore engaged in a triple legitimisation attempt: of modernist art, of his own intermediary status in the new status quo, and of the dictatorial regime.[30]

Thus, alongside propaganda and ideology, the issue of legitimacy is one that runs through this thesis and is related to the general concept of 'politics' that is mentioned in the title. In fact, pro-Metaxas critics and essayists lent credence to the official rhetoric while legitimising both the dictatorship and their own privileged collective position as a 'trade' or 'class' in the new political and cultural field that was in the making.[31] Some of them simultaneously furthered their own, very distinct cultural, political or even career agendas within a regime that has been labelled as the 'golden age' of state-sponsored art.[32] Moreover, while literary and art

[27] See Siola 2010: 417-418. Spandonidis's essay was first published as an article in *Μακεδονικές Ημέρες* 5-7 (May-Jul 1938), 160-185, and was then published as a book within the same year. See also Zacharopoulou 2011: 131-132. Zacharopoulou (2011: 132), however, wrongly dismisses the allegations of chauvinism made against Orologas and argues that he was simply 'motivated by pure and sincere patriotic feelings'.
[28] Chamalidi (2002: 370-371) even seems to consider likely that Kyrou's critique of exponents of modern art was alluding to Chatzikyriakos-Gikas.
[29] This fallacious association of Chatzikyriakos-Gikas's support for Metaxas with the supposed suspension of his aesthetic modernism was postulated in Tziovas 1989: 145. For a discussion and several reproductions of Chatzikyriakos-Gikas's paintings during the Metaxas years see Valkana 2011: 87-121. A look at his work of that period reveals that his pursuit of 'Greekness' in painting was placed within a distinctly modernist framework.
[30] Cf. Chamalidi 2002: 96.
[31] Cf. Barbian 2013 with regard to Nazi Germany.
[32] Matthiopoulos 1996: 683.

criticism was banned in Nazi Germany in November 1936,[33] Metaxas bestowed upon criticism an important 'gardening' role, essential for the 'blossoming' of modern national literature and art.[34]

The regime's ideological coordinates to which I referred above included order and hierarchy. Along with 'anti-national' ideas and actions, they were set against 'provocative' and 'quarrelsome' public behaviour. Those who crossed outside these coordinates were reprimanded or silenced. This also applied in academia, where, for instance, the professor of Latin, Christos Kapnoukayias, was suspended for six months in 1939 due to his anti-demoticist libel against Ioannis Kakridis who had given his inaugural lecture at the University of Athens in demotic.[35] As in many other respects discussed in this thesis, the preoccupation with order was not unique to the Metaxas dictatorship, as indicated for instance by the Venizelist law of *Idionymon*. It was the ways in which objectives such as that of public order were pursued and the other ideological topoi and political goals with which they combined that produced the singular politico-ideological phenomenon of the Fourth-of-August regime and of what I shall be calling 'Metaxism'.

A very interesting case of the preoccupation with order that manifested in the domain of culture is that of Yiannis Skarimbas, as it also demonstrates how literary criticism could function as a mechanism for retrospective censorship. Skarimbas was forced by the Deputy Minister of Press and Tourism himself, Theologos Nikoloudis, to cease publication of his periodical *Neoellinika Simeiomata* that was published in Chalkida in 1937. The order followed several negative critiques by renowned intellectuals, such as the critics Petros Charis, Andreas Karandonis, and Emilios Chourmouzios, as well as the writers Stratis Myrivilis and M.

[33] See Zimmermann 1988: 369.
[34] See Metaxas 1969a: 346, 434.
[35] See [Anon.] 1939ae. In the obituary written for Kapnoukayias by Yeoryios Ath. Tourlidis it is claimed that 'Κατά την διάρκειαν την Τακτικής του Καθηγεσίας είχεν απομακρυνθή εκ του Πανεπιστημίου, επί τι χρονικόν διάστημα, δια λόγους πολιτικούς [Κυβέρνησις Ι. Μεταξά 1871-1941]' (Tourlidis 1995: 511).

Karagatsis, who were also actively involved in literary criticism. Their negative response stemmed mainly from the ironic character of Skarimbas's texts that were attacking the Athenian intellectual establishment and were described by his rivals as a manifestation of 'philological gangsterism'. Skarimbas's periodical was presented as a threat to the cultural unity of Greece –since it was leading a struggle against the intellectual supremacy of Athens– and as a sign of moral erosion. On these grounds the aforementioned critics not only inveighed against Skarimbas, but they also overtly asked that the State intervene and halt the publication of his periodical.[36]

Nonetheless, one could speak of a relative autonomy of the cultural field under Metaxas. On the one hand the control of the regime over the cultural sphere followed an upward trajectory, with the emblem of its centralising efforts being the Directorate of Letters and Fine Arts (1937; Directorate-General since 1939) and particularly the person at its helm, Kostis Bastias, who 'also assumed the duties of Government Commissioner for the Cultural Centre' (Στέγη Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών).[37] Bastias was moreover appointed general director of the Royal Theatre in 1937, government commissioner for the Kotopouli Theatre, and general director of state theatres in 1939, as well as head of the department of 'Laology' that was established that year as part of the Ministry of Education.[38] According to the Directorate's own annual reports, periodicals, theatre companies, and cultural associations were supported financially (and thus co-opted and controlled indirectly).[39]

[36] See Varelas 1997: 78-81, 196-202, Varelas 2003: 95-100, Kayialis 2007: 22, 178-180 and Vogiatzoglou 2008.
[37] See Dimadis 2016: 59, 71-79.
[38] See Dimadis 2016: 89, 95 and Kalerande 2016: 145. Laology was a term proposed in the 1930s to substitute the term Laographia and denote the discipline's scholarly credentials, similarly to all other academic branches with the same suffix such as biology, sociology, criminology, and especially ethnology. The term was promoted by the laographist Kostas Marinis (1897-1968) who also published the short-lived journal *Ελληνική Λαολογία* in 1936. Marinis seems to have mostly advertised the term during the Metaxas dictatorship by means of his contributions to publications with ultranationalist credentials such as the newspaper *Πρωία* and the periodical *Ο Ήλιος* (see Alexiadis 2010: 44-45).
[39] See [Anon.] 1939q: 166 and 1940k: 166.

On the other hand, the dictatorship allowed artists and writers to create and work within a context of relative artistic freedom, so long as they did not turn against the regime or its principal values. While art relying on folk sources and the Greek 'soul' or past was recommended and bandit fiction was banned, surrealists and followers of Anglo-Saxon modernism were not prohibited from producing and publishing.[40] Even requests like that of academic painters to exhibit their works separately from the modernist works of the 'Free Artists' group were plainly rejected by the dictator, who proclaimed that art has to be independent and the state is not going to interfere in such matters: 'The State … will support art, not a specific artistic style'.[41] This stance allowed the dictatorship to win most artists over rather than force them to act as it wished.

In essence, the dictator had recognised that his regime apparatus did not have the expertise to effectively develop cultural policy, so he pursued some form of partnership with Greek cultural operators. The cultural field of the Metaxas dictatorship emerges thus as relatively autonomous, while the relationship that parts of the press and the book market had to the state approximated a sort of corporatism. It is also worth noting that, in the cultural domain, the regime did ensure the backing of several conservatives, but, more strikingly, of many (former) liberals as well.[42] This was not just due to the special treatment that intellectuals, artists, and writers received from Metaxas. The discourse window was gradually moving towards more authoritarian paradigms in the interwar years, not just in Greece but throughout Europe. While more authoritarian solutions were being widely legitimised and increasingly normalised, and

[40] The ban on bandit fiction was imposed with article 41 of the Emergency Law 1092/1938 (FEK 68/22.2.1938; see also [Anon.] 1938l). This ban could be seen as a symbolic banishment of the parasitic surplus that had been plaguing Hellenism due to its contamination with practices that did not conform to 'ethnic truth', since brigandage had been posited as 'foreign to the Greek national character' at least since the 1870s (see Herzfeld 1982: 68 and Koliopoulos 1994: 242-259). However, crime fiction and products of 'popular/low culture' continued to be in circulation. In fact, Metaxas himself was an avid reader of crime novels, as evinced in his diaries. As for literary modernism, one should bear in mind that some of its most representative early manifestations in Greece saw the light during the dictatorship, e.g. Melpo Axioti's *Δύσκολες Νύχτες* (1938), Yiannis Skarimbas's *Το σόλο του Φίγκαρο* (1939), Nikos Engonopoulos's *Μην ομιλείτε εις τον οδηγόν* (1938) and *Κλειδοκύμβαλα της σιωπής* (1939).
[41] See [Anon.] 1938b.
[42] See Matthiopoulos 1996: 678-679, Dimadis 2004 and Kayialis 2007.

the centre of political gravity was moving more and more to the Right, liberalism was moving along a similar trajectory, transforming itself both as theory and as praxis.[43]

Interwar Greece and the Metaxas Regime: Political and Intellectual Context

Even though some minor fascist and National Socialist organisations made their appearance, no mass fascist movement developed in interwar Greece.[44] However, what is often not taken into account in scholarly attempts to explain this absence is that both major camps of Greek politics from the mid-1910s to the mid-1930s, that is Venizelists and anti-Venizelists, flirted with fascism. On the one hand, both camps were involved in a growing turn towards authoritarianism and reinforcement of the executive branch.[45] On the other hand, there was the attraction from and promotion of 'proto-fascism' and fascism. This attraction characterised the anti-Venizelist camp in the first phase of the National Schism and can be discerned in the ideas and practices of military officers, politicians, and intellectuals such as Ioannis Metaxas, Dimitrios Gounaris, Ion Dragoumis, and Aristos Kambanis.[46] Yet in the second phase, the appeal of fascism and the pursuit of fascistoid political departures was more intense within the Venizelist camp, as the examples of Nikolaos Plastiras and several Venizelist politicians and intellectuals indicate.[47]

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[43] 'Η δημοκρατική/αστικοφιλελεύθερη ιδεολογία και ουτοπία φαινόταν να βρίσκεται στην εξής κατάσταση: αφενός συντηρητικοποιείτο …, αφετέρου επιχειρούσε να δώσει "μοντέρνες" απαντήσεις στη διαμορφούμενη κατάσταση μεθερμηνευόμενη επί το κοινωνικότερο και αυταρχικότερο συνάμα' (Boyiatzis 2012: 124).

[44] Some of these organisations are discussed in Papadimitriou 2006: 86-103 and Dordanas 2013.

[45] See Alivizatos 1983. See also Veremis 1997 about the increased interference of the military in Greek politics from the turn of the twentieth century onwards.

[46] About the fascist or 'proto-fascist' tendencies of Metaxas in this period see here below, note 70; about Gounaris see Marketos 2006: 59, 132, 136, 141-143; about Dragoumis see Tsakonas 1988: 340, Sarandis 1993: 147, Marketos 2006: 77-79, 82-89; about Kambanis see the Appendix.

[47] For instance, Sarandis (1993: 147) maintains that 'acclaim for fascism, and in particular Mussolini's Italy, came from such staunch republicans as the Liberal leader Venizelos, as well as the head of the 1922 Revolutionary Committee General Plastiras' (cf. Linardatos 1988: 11-12). On that same page, Sarandis presents Yeoryios Kondylis, who used to be an avid Venizelist in the 1920s before he switched to the royalist camp out of political opportunism, as 'the chief admirer of fascist methods'. See also Andreas Michalakopoulos's early 1934 interview to *I Kathimerini* quoted in Boyiatzis 2010: 668-669, in which the leading Venizelist politician extolled deviations from parliamentarianism and particularly the example of Italy. See here below about Venizelist intellectuals who flirted with fascism in the interwar years. Moreover, it is worth noting that the Greek politicians who were praised

Thus, despite the lack of a novel mass movement of an explicitly fascist orientation, interwar Greece remained anything but untouched by the New Right departures that were taking place throughout Europe at the time. This observation is corroborated if one takes into consideration that two of the most significant interwar intellectuals, Fotos Politis and Ioannis Sykoutris, had also shown a very positive stance if not inclination towards Fascism and National Socialism.[48] Nonetheless, the political vicissitudes of many intellectuals and the 'ideological fluidity' that is often remarked in relation to the Greek interwar period is symptomatic of the radical anomie that ensued following the unprecedented circumstances of the decade 1912-1922.[49] These included nearly constant military mobilisation, a civil conflict that split the country in two states for a while and turned it into a theatre of international warfare, the devastating events in Asia Minor, and the terminal demise of the Great Idea. This debilitating situation amounted for several intellectuals to the collapse of all certainties, of widely accepted fictions which –albeit themselves in flux and semantically shifting to an extent– had held the nation together for almost a century.

Yet, what might appear as ideological fluctuation on the part of intellectuals who switched their allegiance to different political camps or leaders, was at times based on constant underrunning ideological strands. It is not necessarily intellectuals who changed their fundamental views; sometimes it was political actors that changed their public discourse or policies in ways that could accommodate previously hostile or indifferent intellectuals. Political vicissitudes and ideological fluidity thus have to be seen as embedded within the wider

by the newspaper of the Greek National Socialist Party of Yeoryios Merkouris were Dimitrios Gounaris and Yeoryios Kondylis (see Papadimitriou 2006: 86).

[48] See Tsakonas 1988: 125-144, Sarandis 1993: 147, Matthiopoulos 1996: 675. Tsakonas (1988: 141, note 1) also claims that Metaxas wanted to appoint Sykoutris General Secretary of the Ministry of Education when he first became prime minister (before the August coup) but doubled down due to Nikolaos Louvaris's reaction, who was in charge of that ministry at the time. For an interesting discussion of the national implications of Sykoutris's philological project and his intellectual background see Güthenke 2010.

[49] Some indicative examples of the consensus in various fields of modern Greek scholarship that the Greek interwar was marked by ideological volatility are Papadimitriou 2006: 16, Ziras 2009: 73, Tziovas 2011: 231. The term 'anomie' is employed here in the sociological sense, as analysed by Émile Durkheim, particularly in his 1897 study *Suicide*.

reconfigurations of the Greek political field in the interwar years. For this dissertation, it is particularly relevant that bourgeois political forces at the time underwent a process of 'hybridisation' in an authoritarian and often 'fascistising' direction. Developments in Greece were in dialogue with the broader course of European politics. It is for example indicative that the period 1933-1936 witnessed both repeated calls for collaboration of 'national-minded' Greeks of all camps and accusations hurled from each bourgeois camp against the other that it intended to impose a one-party regime. One should bear in mind that single-party states were at the time becoming the norm in continental Europe, established by political forces both on the Right (Italy, Portugal, Germany, Austria etc.) and the Left (Soviet Union).

Illustrative is the case of an extremist intellectual and literary critic of the anti-Venizelist camp, Aristos Kambanis, who jumped on the Venizelist bandwagon during the late years of Venizelos's rule. Apparently, this was mostly due to the political, national, and modernising character he attributed to demoticism, as Kambanis even envisioned a fascist national revolution for the dissemination and consolidation of demotic. Despite the general impression that demoticism had lost its radical political impetus by the interwar period, one finds in these years, mostly in the early 1930s, examples of an even more radicalised nationalist instrumentalisation of demoticism. Kambanis's proposals seem to rely on Spyros Melas, who had lent his support to the Venizelist camp much earlier and much more vocally than Kambanis and who also championed a fascist-cum-demoticist revolution on the basis of an anticommunist coalition of Venizelists and anti-Venizelists.[50]

On the other hand, one often wonders at the transformation of former Venizelists into ardent supporters of the Fourth-of-August regime. One such example is Kostis Bastias, who went from Venizelos enthusiast to Metaxas's first man for cultural affairs. However, the preconditions for a 'conversion' to Metaxas's cause were present already within Venizelism.

[50] See the discussion in chapter 5.

Support for Venizelos had not been predicated so much on rational liberalism as on the charismatic and Messianic qualities attributed to Venizelos along with the utopian dynamic of his platform to 'make Greece unrecognisable'.[51] It was such a conceptualisation of Venizelos that probably led to his endorsement by intellectuals influenced by Carlylean notions of leadership, such as the circle around Bastias's periodical *Ellinika Grammata* (1927-1930). The ideology of this publication has been identified with 'anticommunism, demoticism, the Greek literary tradition as expressed through the example of Papadiamandis, the aesthetic views of Y. Apostolakis and F. Politis, [and] folk art'.[52] More specifically, Kostis Bastias's contributions have been seen as an 'alloy of Christianism and anticapitalism' which results in the admiration for 'Mussolini's experiment'.[53]

I therefore argue that our understanding of the cordial cooperation of former Venizelists with the Metaxas regime would be enhanced if we went back to what it meant for these intellectuals to be Venizelists, especially from 1928 onwards. Most of them, including the 'Heidelberg circle' around the *Archeion Filosofias ke Theorias ton Epistimon* (1929-1940), or the circle around the periodical *Idea* (1933-1934), premised their Venizelism not on liberal convictions but on a longing for strong leaders and on 'mysticist nationalism'. What is more, the ideological composure of the 'Neo-Kantians' Panayiotis Kanellopoulos and Konstandinos Tsatsos or of the three editors of *Idea*, Spyros Melas, Yiorgos Theotokas, and Yiannis

[51] See Boyiatzis 2012: 101-194. See also Mazower 1992 about the perception of Venizelos in Messianic terms upon his entrance into Greek politics in the late 1900s. Bastias openly supported Venizelos before the 1928 elections, which led to the latter's triumphant return to power, in the following terms: 'Ο κ. Βενιζέλος έχει παίξει στη χώρα μας έναν μεγάλον ιστορικό ρόλο. ... Ο κ. Βενιζέλος είναι η ισχυροτέρα πολιτική φυσιογνωμία που έχει να παρουσιάση η σύγχρονη Ελλάδα. Όσοι λοιπόν έχουν συνείδηση της πραγματικότητας θα ήθελαν στο λόγο του να μη σταθεί σ' ένα πρόσχημα αλλά πιο έντονα και κατά συνέπεια πιο αληθινά να διακηρύξει την βαθύτερη πραγματικότητα. Ο κ. Βενιζέλος δεν συγκινεί κανέναν πνευματικόν άνθρωπο όταν λέγει: "αναλαμβάνω για να μην αφήσω ακέφαλον ένα μεγάλο κόμμα". Ο κ. Βενιζέλος θα έπρεπε καθαρά και χωρίς ενδοιασμό να πει ότι αναλαμβάνει γιατί διεπίστωσε … πως ο ιστορικός του ρόλος δεν ετελείωσε. … Ακόμη θα έπρεπε να πει πως αισθάνεται ότι η ζωτικότητά του δεν εξαντλήθηκε και ότι για να περισώσει ακριβώς την ιδανική μορφή του κυβερνήτη επεμβαίνει σε μια στιγμή που από όλες τις μεριές φανερώνεται μια επικίνδυνη ανυποληψία προς τους ανθρώπους που διαχειρίζονται τα κοινά' (Β… 1928: 475). In other words, Bastias even urged Venizelos to distance himself from a rhetoric of party politics and adopt one of national, historical, and leader mysticism.
[52] Varelas 1995: 17.
[53] Argyriou 1981: 220. Cf. Kayialis 2007: 124-125.

Oikonomidis, was punctuated by signs of attraction towards authoritarianism, fascism or even National Socialism in the early 1930s.[54]

Ultimately, Venizelos had garnered support from various modernist nationalists, from Kambanis and Melas to Bastias and Politis, at a time when charismatic leadership, radical change, and even authoritarian rule were considered increasingly necessary and no serious contender to the role existed in the anti-Venizelist camp. The major charismatic figures of the previous years, Ion Dragoumis and Dimitrios Gounaris, had been assassinated or executed in the early 1920s. Ioannis Metaxas, who for some time in the early to mid-1920s seemed to have the potential to establish himself and his *Eleftherofrones* party as the dominant force in the anti-Venizelist camp, had been reduced to political insignificance by the late 1920s, not even managing to get himself elected to the Greek parliament in 1928.[55]

It is perhaps not without significance that one of Venizelos's last letters before his death confirmed his acceptance of and respect for the reconstituted monarchy, while endorsing the appointment of Ioannis Metaxas as Minister of Military Affairs.[56] Moreover, in the spirit of putting an end to the National Schism, there were plans for a diarchy with Eleftherios's son, Sofoklis Venizelos, at the beginning of Metaxas's premiership.[57] In addition, Kostis Bastias and other former Venizelos supporters had already established close connections with Metaxas before the latter became prime minister.[58]

[54] See Ladoyianni 1996 and Boyiatzis 2012: 317-381, 391-412, 417-461. It is of particular interest for the discussion here that, occasioned by Theotokas's early writings, Boyiatzis attempts a short discussion of the 'hybridisation' of liberalism in Greece and the West in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, especially in interaction with forms of 'organic nationalism' and fascism (see Boyiatzis 2012: 331-332).
[55] See Benos 2009.
[56] That letter was sent to Loukas Kanakaris Roufos on 9 March 1936. The original handwritten billet has been digitised and can be accessed on the website of the National Research Foundation 'Eleftherios K. Venizelos': http://www.venizelosarchives.gr/rec.asp?id=100195.
[57] See Linardatos 1988: 10, 26 and passim.
[58] See e.g. Bastias 1941.

Against this background, the transition of several intellectuals from Venizelism to Metaxism in the late 1930s may appear less perplexing.[59] At that time, it was Metaxas who assumed the role of the strong leader, getting rid of parliamentary constraints and gradually appropriating and implementing policies that Venizelos had not seen to fruition. In the end, Metaxas had the power to do what Venizelos could not. Thus, the question might not only be why the dictator trusted a former Venizelist like Bastias so much to appoint him as quasi-dictator of the cultural field, but also what it was that Bastias saw in Metaxas and his agenda in order to want to work for his regime in such a crucial and salient position.

Chronological limits and periodisation

Setting the chronological limits of this thesis on the eruption of the Greco-Italian war does not imply that the regime ended on 28 October 1940. However, it went through to a different stage, where its appeal cannot be easily distinguished from the context of the defensive patriotic war that had just started. This change is registered also by Marxist historians, such as Spyros Linardatos who claims that not only Zachariadis but almost all communist deportees had the same reaction.[60] Even more distinctively, Alkis Rigos states that 'this morning there are no opponents of the regime anymore. Prisoners and deportees, bourgeois and communists, well-known politicians and anonymous antifascists request to be voluntarily enlisted'.[61]

The view of the beginning of the war as a fundamentally new phase in the dictatorship's timeline that goes beyond the scope of this thesis is further substantiated by a less noticed development within the regime. The unexpectedly positive progression of the war with Italy did not lead the dictator to augment the fascistisation process that had begun two years earlier, when he neutralised resistance and outmanoeuvred royal circles that stood in his way to

[59] Cf. Vatikiotis 1998: 205 and Carabott 2003: 27, who both regard the transition from Venizelism to Metaxism as 'a political continuum'.
[60] See Linardatos 1988: 389.
[61] Rigos 1995: 186.

absolute power. In December 1940, faced with a war with the European powers he felt closest to ideologically, Metaxas dictated a new constitution draft to Koumaros and Mantzoufas, handing power over to the royal house.[62] The core of Metaxas's fascistising experimentation thus lasted only two years. By December 1940 the dictator had willingly relinquished the authority of deciding the future of his regime to the king, in essence setting the stone on his political experiment.

In a way, the regime did not even end on 29 January 1941, when Ioannis Metaxas died, as the king appointed Alexandros Koryzis prime minister and the Metaxist apparatus remained in place, as well as EON, which continued its function till the occupation of Greece by the Axis troops. Thus, the end of the Fourth-of-August dictatorship can be placed in spring 1941, while some scholars have gone further by presenting the first collaborationist government of Tsolakoglou as a continuity of the Metaxas regime.[63]

The above discussion points to the periodisation of the Metaxas dictatorship that emanates from the research undertaken for this thesis. I argue that the regime's lifespan could be split in three periods: The first one extends from the 1936 coup to the 'turning point' of 1938, which is often pointed out in secondary literature.[64] The second one spans from late 1938 to late 1940, and the third one from there to spring 1941. After two years of relatively unchecked fascistic experimentation, Metaxas basically began the process to hand power back to the monarch, who had appointed him prime minister in the first place.

Finally, it is worth noting that neither the starting date of my main enquiry that is implied by the title of the thesis (namely 4 August 1936) should be understood as an absolute break with what immediately preceded it. As I show throughout the thesis, a more comprehensive account of Metaxist discourse requires comparison with earlier public utterances and

[62] See Alivizatos 1983: 129-134. In that draft, Metaxas stripped the prime minister of many levers of power he had himself managed to control, ceding more power to the court.
[63] See Cliadakis 2014: 133. Cf. here chapter 9, note 31.
[64] See e.g. Cliadakis 2014: 53-54, Ploumidis 2016: 37-53.

practices. Such comparisons can hopefully provide a better grasp of the ways or the extent in which official or fellow travellers' discourse under Metaxas drew on pre-existing discursive formations. Future research aiming at a fuller understanding of the entire Fourth-of-August phenomenon and its ideology could examine more closely the discourse produced during the period since Metaxas was appointed prime minister by the king in spring 1936 or perhaps go back to Kondylis's parliamentary coup and the fraudulent plebiscite that led to the restoration of monarchy.[65]

The character of the Metaxas regime

Most of the early studies on the Fourth-of-August dictatorship were undertaken by Marxist historians, who considered the regime fascist.[66] Later approaches have tended to dissociate the regime from fascism to varying degrees, often characterising it as authoritarian.[67] More recently, it has also been analysed as some sort of 'hybrid', being 'neither fascist nor authoritarian'.[68] Whether defined as 'authoritarian', 'fascist' or 'para-fascist', what appears for certain is that it was part of the New Right universe that emerged in the wake of the Great War.[69] It is rather interesting from this perspective that Metaxas's activities during the Great War are associated with the appearance of the first mass paramilitary organisation in Greece. The *Epistratoi*, which Metaxas admits in his diaries to have been his creation, are often seen as the first

[65] There have been historical studies on the Metaxas dictatorship that explicitly included the 1935 restoration in their scope, the best one being Koliopoulos 1985. However, the focus is on backstage political and diplomatic developments and not on public discourse.
[66] See Linardatos 1988 (first edition, 1966) and Psyroukis 1994 (first edition, 1975).
[67] See e.g. Kofas 1983, Vatikiotis 1998, Petrakis 2006, Ploumidis 2016.
[68] See Kallis 2010. Sarandis had also touched upon the regime's 'hybrid nature' (1993: 166) before Kallis but concluded that it 'might best be considered a paternalistic benevolent dictatorship of the New Right, which never reached the stage of becoming fascist' (1993: 167). Boyiatzis (2012: 269) claims that 'the Fourth-August State contained fascist and conservative elements'.
[69] See for instance the discussion of the Metaxas regime in Roberts 2016, who places it firmly within the New Right universe, without hesitating to pinpoint its 'fascistising' dynamic. As seen in the previous footnote, Sarandis also characterised the regime as part of the New Right, without engaging any of the subtleties brought to the fore by Roberts.

occurrence of 'proto-fascism' in Greece, with some scholars going as far as to present Metaxas as the founder of fascism *avant la lettre*.[70]

This thesis follows the interpretation of the Metaxas dictatorship as a hybrid regime that combined (traditional) elements of conservatism with (radical) elements of fascism. For instance, the regime's emphasis on religion, homeland, and family is a rather conservative characteristic with indigenous roots, albeit with several international parallels.[71] On the contrary, its futural myth of the Third Hellenic Civilisation and the mass organising of the youth are rather fascistic traits.[72] Accordingly, it is held in this thesis that the 1938 'turning point' signifies an intensification of the regime's fascistising and totalitarian endeavours.[73] Following on Roger Griffin's concept of 'maximalist modernism', I consider the Fourth-of-August regime as an instance of political modernism, much like Vasilis Boyiatzis, who also relied on Griffin's work.[74] As Aristotle Kallis put it, 'like almost everywhere else in interwar Europe, the fascist/para-fascist alternative emerged partly in the context of a widespread crisis of modernisation. At the same time, it constituted a partial rejection of the experience of modernity, and a partial attempt to re-align modernity with notions of national specificity'.[75]

Literature review

According to Jan-Pieter Barbian, 'it is striking that most studies on propaganda, and the overviews of the politics, economics, and society of Germany from 1933 to 1945, make almost no mention of literature and the book market'.[76] This observation is even more accurate with

[70] See Mavrogordatos 2017: 87.
[71] See Gazi 2011. Also, more generally, Hering (1996: 315, footnote 130) points to the fact that many ideological constructs of the regime hail from the nineteenth century.
[72] About futural myths in fascism see Osborne 1995 and Griffin 2007. About the fascistic identity of the youth organisation see e.g. Matthiopoulos 1996: 672, Ploumidis 2016: 45.
[73] On the concepts of 'hybridity' and 'fascistisation' see Kallis 2003, 2007, 2010.
[74] On fascism as a modernist movement see Osborne 1995 and Griffin 2007. About the modernist character of the Metaxas regime see Boyiatzis 2012.
[75] Kallis 2007: 240-241.
[76] Barbian 2013: 7.

regard to criticism and it can be applied to Greece as well. All in all, the research related to the propaganda of interwar far-right regimes has focused on the more 'direct' ways of propaganda and to those texts originating from government members and state officials, thus neglecting both the purely propagandistic texts written by critics or literati and their literary reviews that reflect or interact with official positions on literature and culture.

Nonetheless, there have been some studies dealing with cultural politics and the interrelation of cultural and political conditions under Metaxas, without having the same chronological or thematic focus as this thesis. The most significant of them, whose very titles are indicative of their non-exclusive focus on Metaxas's period, are the following: Firstly, Dimitris Tziovas, *Οι μεταμορφώσεις του εθνισμού και το ιδεολόγημα της ελληνικότητας στο Μεσοπόλεμο* (1989), which discusses the circulation of the ideological construct of 'Greekness' throughout the interwar period. Secondly, Konstantinos Dimadis's *Δικτατορία – Πόλεμος και Πεζογραφία 1936-1944* (1991) that extends its scope all the way up to the end of the Axis occupation and deals predominantly with the impact of the dictatorship and the occupation on liberal prose writers. Thirdly, Takis Kayialis's *Η επιθυμία για το Μοντέρνο: Δεσμεύσεις και αξιώσεις της λογοτεχνικής διανόησης στην Ελλάδα του 1930* (2007), which discusses broader issues regarding the literary intelligentsia, literary production and consumption, and intellectual history in the 1930s.

Lastly, there have been two preliminary studies on the cultural politics of the dictatorship, which are to be understood as the basis for further research rather than comprehensive analyses. The first is Gunnar Hering, 'Aspekte der Kulturpolitik des Metaxas-Regimes (1936-1940)' (1996), which is very well-documented for a text of its length and includes some stimulating analytical attempts. The second is Konstantinos Dimadis's 'Στοιχεία για την ανάλυση της πολιτιστικής πολιτικής του μεταξικού καθεστώτος (1936-1941)' (2013), which provides

useful information based mostly on the periodical *Pnevmatiki Zoi* but does not engage much in interpretation.[77]

The present thesis is the only study that both incorporates a comparative approach and deals extensively with literary criticism. Any attempts at placing the Metaxas regime in a broader European context have dealt almost exclusively with political and ideological questions, without usually even touching upon the sphere of literature, let alone of literary criticism. Some scholars have examined Metaxas's regime in comparison with that of Mussolini and/or Hitler, but they focused on politics, diplomacy, and ideology as nearly autonomous fields without really probing into their interaction with culture and literature (e.g. Pelt 2002, Velliadis 2003, Kallis 2010, Velliadis 2016).

In addition, the history of Greek literary criticism in general has not been studied sufficiently, as there is only one book that attempts to present it in its entirety. Yet this book, published by Kambanis in 1935, is not only outdated but it did not really fulfil this purpose in the first place, since it is more a history of the Greek language question than of criticism.[78] Nonetheless, it is not only the history of criticism that calls for further research. Specific aspects of literary criticism require perhaps more attention and might be proven more useful than a historical overview of criticism. Questions such as criticism's contribution to the formation of the literary canon, its intermediary position between literature and society, between writers and audience, or its utilisation by political circles and/or for ideological purposes might provide more elaborate answers on the nature of criticism and its diachronic role. My study does not contend of course that it can give complete and definite answers to these questions, let alone that it is a history of criticism in Greece. It aspires, however, to constitute the basis for the

[77] Now available in English as 'The Cultural Policy of the Metaxas Regime (1936-1941)' in Dimadis 2016: 51-128.

[78] Kambanis 1935. On the contrary, the history of German and Italian literary criticism has been studied more thoroughly and was the subject of significant editions in the last few decades. See e.g. Hohendal 1985 and Malato & Orvieto 2003.

reappraisal and better understanding of literary criticism within a more comprehensive context that includes its dependence on and interaction with political agents.

Primary sources

This thesis revolves primarily around texts that appeared in the main periodical publications which in one way or another supported the regime, namely *Pnevmatiki Zoi*, *Nea Politiki*, *To Neon Kratos*, and *I Neolea*. These publications assisted the dictatorship in its quest for legitimacy while at times reproducing and other times attempting to co-shape official ideology. They can be seen as a network of interconnected cultural agents that were involved in the project of establishing both a new discursive and normative horizon in the socio-political domain and a new cultural and literary field. The intellectuals who participated in this project had diverse backgrounds. Apart from those who were associated with conservatism or the Far Right before 1936 (e.g. Achillefs Kyrou, Sitsa Karaiskaki, Aristos Kambanis), many had in fact been vocal Venizelists (e.g. Kostis Bastias, Spyros Melas). Amongst them were both members of an older generation, born in the second half of the nineteenth century (e.g. Nikolaos Laskaris, Grigorios Xenopoulos) and relatively young and aspiring intellectuals (e.g. Nikos Pappas, I.M. Panayiotopoulos).

Similar themes and views to the ones discussed in the thesis, embedded in texts written by the same or different intellectuals can be found in other periodicals of the time. In fact, texts published in other periodicals or even newspapers and books of the period are sporadically discussed in this thesis. Nonetheless, the focus is on periodicals, as they have been proven *loci* of cultural production which can more efficiently function as ideological laboratories or 'collective organs' that express the intellectual horizon of their time.[79] In addition, periodicals served as a channel of communication of official or pro-regime discourses to the educated

[79] See Argyriou 1981: 204. Cf. Andreiomenos 2012: 11.

middle and upper classes that constituted their usual audience. Indeed, many of these publications hosted bank or big business advertisements, which is an indication of the audience they were appealing to with their content as well. Given that the banks advertised were controlled or supervised by the state, the presence of these ads is not only an index of the (intended) readership but also an indication of dictatorial endorsement and funding.

Despite their relatively small number, these specialised periodicals exhibited a remarkable range of interests and aimed at diverse audiences: youth, literati, teachers and professors, intellectuals of all sorts, and so on. The special weight of these publications lies in the fact that those were precisely the people that either due to their connections and knowledge or due to their naivety and passion could contribute to the dissemination of the new hegemonic ideology. Therefore, the discourse produced in these periodicals was not just aimed at their direct readership (the readers that purchased a copy), but at others *through* them. Making sure that these potentially subversive groups would be brought to passively consent to the dictatorship was as much of the essence as having them actively agitate in favour of the new regime. Therein lies arguably the reason that literary periodicals as a nearly distinct medium were used as a further means of propaganda, that literary criticism as a genre was 'hijacked' with discursive material covertly or overtly befitting a propaganda text, and that the critic as a role endowing someone with the aura of the 'intellectual' was easily distorted into the role of the propagandist. In addition, the regime's cultural policy involved investing funds in the arts and literature by buying paintings and establishing literary awards, but also by prompting civil services to subscribe to such periodical publications.[80] All these facts support the understanding of criticism and its operators as intermediary elites and institutional agents.

[80] See for instance Matthiopoulos 1996: 752 that deals with a late 1936 painting exhibition that was visited by several bank executives, ministers, and mayors, who had been enjoined by Metaxas to purchase paintings for their premises, which many of them did.

The significance of the periodicals under consideration is also correlated to the fact that the Fourth-of-August regime lacked widely circulated official newspapers. Strict oversight had been imposed on the Press, which was not allowed to refer to the regime and the dictator in anything but positive and laudatory or at least non-critical terms.[81] The regime also enjoyed the backing of publishers or chief editors of major newspapers, such as Yeoryios Vlachos of *I Kathimerini* and Achillefs Kyrou of *Estia*. Aside from expressing their support for the regime in their own editorials as well as through many texts by other authors that they published in their newspapers, Vlachos and Kyrou contributed to the periodical *To Neon Kratos*.[82] Moreover, Spyros Linardatos has pointed out that these very newspapers had advocated the imposition of dictatorship even prior to the coup, with Vlachos going as far as to proclaim a few days after 4 August 1936 that his newspaper did not only endorse the 'new order' but was 'in part responsible for it'.[83] Nonetheless, the dictatorship did not have its own official daily organ.

According to Spyridon Ploumidis, this lack was made up for through the periodicals *To Neon Kratos* and *Nea Politiki*.[84] However, these periodicals were not so much simplifying and popularising the official ideology as they were providing nationalist and far-right intellectuals with a platform for ideological discussion and refinement. Their target audience was not the large mass of newspaper readers, but the rather limited educated readership of literary and scholarly periodicals. I would thus argue that it is mostly *I Neolea* that compensated for the absence of an official newspaper.[85] Unlike the two aforementioned periodicals, the publication of *I Neolea* had not been the result of private initiative but was orchestrated by the apparatus of the dictatorship's youth organisation. Moreover, it was published on a weekly basis, had a

[81] See Petrakis 2006: 9.
[82] See Vlachos 1937, Kyrou 1937a, Kyrou 1937b, Kyrou 1938a, 1938b, 1938c.
[83] Linardatos 1988: 75.
[84] Ploumidis 2016: 32. Cf. Petrakis 2006: 17.
[85] See also Andreiomenos 2012: 55, 61.

more varied and usually less technical or theoretical content, and it entered thousands of Greek households, public services and organisations, as well as private businesses.

Nevertheless, all periodicals that constitute the main primary sources of this thesis reached a wider audience than, for instance, the periodical of the 'Generation of the '30s', *Nea Grammata*. The latter was only published in 1000 copies, most of which were actually sponsored by Yiorgos Katsimbalis and other backers and partners of the periodical rather than sold.[86] On the contrary, an examination of *Pnevmatiki Zoi*'s correspondence column reveals that its subscribers did not only include a sizeable number of individuals and nearly every member of the country's cultural elites, but also schools and other public institutions such as libraries, where the potential readership multiplied.[87] Even more characteristically, *I Neolea* circulated in thousands of copies: according to EON's internal records, the journal was published in approximately 50,000 copies in 1939 and was planned to reach six-digit circulation figures by mid-1940.[88] Below I will provide some further background information on the four major pro-dictatorship periodicals in chronological order, based on the date they commenced publication.

Pnevmatiki Zoi (October 1936-April 1941)

This literary and bibliographical periodical was published by Melis Nikolaidis, a Cypriot journalist, writer, and critic, who owned the Office of Intellectual Services. The Office was in essence a private business established in early 1936 and making its first steps into the publishing sector with one of the few periodical publications of the interwar years to focus on the bibliographical presentation of literary and academic books as well as serial publications, the

[86] Peri 1989: 68. See also Karambelas 2009: 39-50 and the tables he appends at the end of his thesis (499-512). See particularly tables 10c and 11c, which demonstrate that the periodical always sold less than 500 issues in the years 1935-1936, in most cases actually selling only around half of that.
[87] In spring 1938 *Πνευματική Ζωή* reported 2650 regular subscriptions on top of the variable number of copies sold at press distribution points ([Anon.] 1938r).
[88] Balta 1986: 636, Panopoulou & Tsiknakis 1992: 26.

Vivliografiko Deltio (March-August 1936). The latter ceased publication in August 1936, after it had announced its imminent conversion into a full-scale cultural periodical.[89] Shortly afterwards, in October of that same year, Nikolaidis started publishing *Pnevmatiki Zoi*.

Moreover, from 1936 to April 1937 Nikolaidis's Office appears as Athens surrogate for the periodical *Makedonikes Imeres*, responsible for distribution and subscriptions.[90] The Office had also engaged in book publications, such as that of I. M. Panayiotopoulos's book *Greek Horizons* (1937), and book advertising. Nikolaidis's publishing activities during the Metaxas dictatorship are amongst the most indicative of a process of gradual establishment of networks within the new cultural and intellectual field that was emerging at the time. For instance, *Pnevmatiki Zoi* cooperated with and promoted new paedagogical publications, such as the periodical *Pedagoyiki* (1938-1940).[91] From late 1939 onward, Nikolaidis held a regular column in *I Neolea* and eventually turned out to be the periodical's second most regular contributor amongst those who dealt with cultural matters apart from purely political and ideological issues.[92]

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[89] See Karaoglou 2007: 354-356. Apart from *Βιβλιογραφικό Δελτίο*, the only interwar bibliographical bulletins amongst the periodicals that were traced and presented by Karaoglou and his research team are *Βιβλία* (1934-1935; see Karaoglou et al. 2007: 118-119) and *Το Χρονικόν του Βιβλίου* (1935-1936; see Karaoglou et al. 2007: 346-349). Karaoglou et al. (2007: 324) also register *Βιβλιοθήκη* (1935) as a probable bibliographical periodical. However, the latter was published by the Kakoulidis bookshop and no copies were found, which leaves open the possibility that it merely contained the bookshop's catalogue.

[90] Siola 2010: 102.

[91] Contributions to *Παιδαγωγική* conversed with Nikolaidis's texts in *Πνευματική Ζωή* and in some cases were reproduced by Nikolaidis's periodical (see e.g. Valkyras 1938; reproduction from *Pedagoyiki*'s first (double) issue of January 1938). What is more, both periodicals advertised each other. Up to the double issue 14-15 (15-25 June 1937), there is no ad from other serial publications in *Παιδαγωγική* apart from *Παιδικός Κόσμος* (the eponymous journal of the association that was also publishing *Παιδαγωγική*) and *Πνευματική Ζωή* (see for instance issue 2, p. 32). In fact, in issue 13 there is a contribution by Melis Nikolaidis himself delineating his book-promoting activities. In a footnote inserted by the editorial board of *Παιδαγωγική*, Nikolaidis's periodical is advertised quite openly, since the address of its offices, which was also its main selling point, and the fee for annual subscriptions is given (see Nikolaidis 1937c). The same issue hosts an advertisement of Nikolaidis's 1937 short story collection *Άσμα ασμάτων και άλλα διηγήματα* (p. 190). [Anon.] 1938n constitutes an example of promotion of *Παιδαγωγική* by Nikolaidis's periodical.

[92] The most regular such contributor was Sitsa Karaiskaki, who also started contributing critical essays to *Πνευματική Ζωή* following Nikolaidis's cooperation with *Η Νεολαία*. See also here below the discussion about the latter periodical and chapter 11. It is also noteworthy that Nikolaidis started contributing to EON's official weekly publication two months after it was announced in the same periodical that he had been appointed rapporteur of the jury for EON's drama contest. The announcement was made in [Anon.] 1939y and Nikolaidis's first contribution to the periodical was Nikolaidis 1939g.

Despite Nikolaidis's frequent assurances that his periodical had nothing to do with politics, the texts themselves point to an increasingly politicised publication, albeit due to a conflation of the political with the cultural and the spiritual. Much like the substitution of 'mystique' for 'politique' in the thought of some French precursors of fascism, the support of the Metaxas regime or of the unification of Cyprus with Greece in the periodical's second period of publication (1952-1954) were not framed as political acts by Nikolaidis but as pursuits of cultural or spiritual causes.[93] In addition, Konstandinos Dimadis has noted –citing a private conversation with the literary critic and historian Alexandros Argyriou– that the periodical was funded by the dictatorship.[94] According to the annual reports of the Directorate of Letters and Fine Arts, several periodicals were indeed subsidised by the state, but it is not clarified which ones these were.[95]

In the *Encyclopaedia of Greek Press,* the ideological position of the periodical throughout its publication is even characterised as 'national socialist'.[96] Although there are several elective affinities between the ideology of Nikolaidis and National Socialism, anti-Semitic sentiment is absent and the ideological position of the editor appears much nearer to that of conservative revolutionaries or sometimes simply traditional conservatives like the nineteenth-century British cultural critic Matthew Arnold.[97] His ardent promotion of the *Führerprinzip* was probably Nikolaidis's most characteristic kinship with Nazism, but this was in all

[93] About the pair 'mystique' and 'politique' in the thought of Charles Péguy and Georges Sorel see Antliff 2007: 67, 283.
[94] Dimadis 2016: 63.
[95] See above, note 39. At any rate, the periodical seems to have been endorsed by the dictatorship from 1938 onwards as an appropriate reading for secondary education teachers and pupils (see Kalerande 2016: 267, footnote 110).
[96] *ΛΝΛ*: 507.
[97] Nikolaidis in fact did not hesitate to employ the Jewish legend of the Golem in a 1939 contribution to *I Neolea* in order to illustrate a speech by Metaxas for his young readers (Nik. 1939). It is, however, interesting that, despite explicitly talking about rabbis, the legacy of Moses etc., he denoted Golem as a 'Polish myth'. This contribution appears in December 1939, that is after the invasion and partition of Poland by the Nazi and the Soviet regimes. In an earlier editorial in *Πνευματική Ζωή*, just after the conquest of Poland, Nikolaidis had also praised the bravery and idealism of the Polish troops who resisted the two-sided invasion despite the utter hopelessness of their predicament (Nikolaidis 1939h). Again, there was no justification of the Nazi attack, which serves to show that Nikolaidis was not a convinced National Socialist, even if, like many other right-wing intellectuals of his time, he admired or espoused to some extent the achievements of the NSDAP in its fight for the 'regeneration' of Germany.

likelihood due to the policy and rhetoric of the Metaxas regime and not due to Nikolaidis's prior direct influence from Nazism. It is true, however, that Nikolaidis followed a trajectory of 'fascistisation' in parallel with the regime itself, embracing ever more totalitarian and mystical conceptions of nationalism and culture. This trajectory is particularly substantiated by his shifting views on the regulation of the book market, his extravagant pro-regime propaganda in many of his contributions to *I Neolea*, the steady increase of eulogies for the dictator and the state in his periodical, and its opening to contributions from extremists like Sitsa Karaiskaki following the beginning of Nikolaidis's cooperation with *I Neolea*.[98]

Nea Politiki (January 1937-December 1940)

The periodical had first been published in 1923 by Kostas Tournakis in the immediate aftermath of and as a reaction to the Asia Minor catastrophe.[99] Despite its political and technical orientation, it displayed particular interest in culture already in that first period of publication, even securing contributions by major literary figures, such as Angelos Sikelianos.[100] Moreover, *Nea Politiki* had advocated authoritarian palingenetic nationalism and demonstrated sympathy for Italian Fascism and dictatorial solutions, while its critique of the 1922 Venizelist 'Revolution' and its insistence to declare that it had been censored by printing several blank paragraphs with the note 'censorship' led to its shutdown after a few months.

The periodical's second period of publication started shortly after the establishment of the Metaxas dictatorship and it is to be understood against this backdrop of authoritarian, fascist, and palingenetic tendencies that manifested in the first period. This time it was Kostas Tournakis's brother, Ioannis, that assumed the role of the chief editor, with Kostas contributing

[98] For more information on *Πνευματική Ζωή* see Varelas 1997: 49, 184-187, 189-191, Karaoglou et al. 2007: 365-379, *ΛΝΛ*: 1821, *EET* 3:507-508, Dimadis 2016: 51-128. About Melis Nikolaidis see also here, Appendix.
[99] See I diefthynsis 1938.
[100] A text by Sikelianos from this first period is even republished in the second period (Sikelianos 1938b). The periodical also appears to have received permission by Sikelianos to publish his 16 March 1938 speech at the Kotopouli Theatre (Sikelianos 1938a).

mostly translations of cultural essays, presentations of foreign intellectuals and politicians, and original literary works. Ioannis Tournakis was a professor at the Supreme School of Economics and Business (ASOEE) and head of the Tourist Development Directorate in Nikoloudis's Deputy Ministry, which was responsible for tourist advertisement and propaganda.[101] Many of *Nea Politiki*'s contributors were his colleagues from ASOEE and peers from the tourist field. In its second period of publication the periodical hosted numerous translations and contributions by Elli Lambridi until her departure to England in late 1939. In 1940 the literary critic Petros Spandonidis, who had ceased publication of his periodical *Makedonikes Imeres* the previous year, held a regular criticism column, compensating in part for Lambridi's absence.

Throughout its publication the periodical showed a predilection for Greek antiquity, even including vocal condemnations of 'Byzantinism' and the contamination of Greek spirit from Christianity. This was perhaps the reason that it never obtained the full support of Metaxas, who in fact seems to have reacted angrily to the demands of Tournakis and his circle, as a 1939 entry in his diary indicates.[102] At any rate, *Nea Politiki* constitutes an illustrative example of how different groups strived to establish themselves and gain concessions or privileges within the new status quo using their propagandistic role as a leverage.[103]

To Neon Kratos (September 1937-April 1941)

The periodical was named after the appellation that was often employed in official discourse in order to designate the Metaxas regime. It was founded by the leading interwar right-wing critic, journalist, and intellectual Aristos Kambanis, who had been involved in fascistic and authoritarian schemes already since the first phase of the National Schism and had published

[101] Ioannis Tournakis (1892-1941) was also a member of the Greek delegation in the International Labour Bureau in the 1920s and had briefly served as general director of the National Tourism Organisation (EOT) from 1934 to 1935. For more information on Tournakis and his activities see Liakos 1993: 215, 216, 232-233, 263, 270, 480, 527, Andoniou 2006: 365 and Vlachos 2016: 120, 203-204, 209, 216-217.
[102] See Metaxas 1960: 385.
[103] For further information about *Νέα Πολιτική* see Tsakonas 1988: 410-412.

newspaper articles in support of the Fourth-of-August dictatorship since its establishment.[104] A letter announcing the publication of *To Neon Kratos* was circulated by Kambanis in August 1937 and was published in the periodical slightly over two years later, in September 1939. The letter constitutes both a programmatic statement of the periodical's politico-ideological position along with its correlated aims –all closely and explicitly connected to the Metaxas dictatorship– and a call for papers.[105] Contributions were invited granted that their authors shared the same ideological framework with the editor, that they espoused the maxims laid out by him.[106]

This serial publication has often been labelled as the official instrument of Metaxas's dictatorship, but some scholars have more accurately called it 'semi-official' (mainly due to the fact that its publication was neither a result of the government's initiatives nor was it funded openly by it).[107] There is some value in dissociating the periodical to an extent from the dictatorial apparatus, as its contents were not confined to the defence of official ideology. As it happened, there was not really any such thing as a concrete ideology to be transmitted, as a new hegemony was in the making under Metaxas. The periodical's role as an ideological

[104] For further information about Kambanis, see the Appendix.

[105] '"Το Νέον Κράτος" θα έχη πρόγραμμά του την ερμηνείαν των αρχών, από τας οποίας ενεπνεύσθη η περυσινή πολιτειακή και κοινωνική Μεταβολή. Η Μεταβολή της 4ης Αυγούστου. … Η εθνικοφροσύνη, την οποίαν εκήρυξεν ο κ. Ι. Μεταξάς την 4ην Αυγούστου, πρέπει να πρυτανεύση εις τας σκέψεις και τα αισθήματά μας' (I Syntaxis 1939: 5); 'Το Ελληνικόν Έθνος, επανευρόν την ενότητά του, απαλλάσσεται των πλανών, από τας οποίας ετροφοδοτήθη η μακρά εσωτερική διαίρεσις. Ο διαφωτισμός των αφωτίστων συνειδήσεων, η πνευματική χειραγώγησις της νεότητος είναι ο κυριώτερος σκοπός μας. … "Το Νέον Κράτος" θα υπηρετήση τας ιδέας, από τας οποίας εκινήθη η εθνική ανάνηψις του Αυγούστου 1936. Δια την πνευματικήν καλλιέργειαν' (ibid. 6); 'Θα εργασθώμεν δια την ενίσχυσιν των δυνάμεων, που ενώνουν τα μέλη του Έθνους, δια την επικράτησιν του πνεύματος της θυσίας, της ανιδιοτελούς αφοσιώσεως, της ενδοελληνικής αλληλεγγύης. Θα εργασθώμεν δια την θεμελίωσιν ενός νέου Ελληνικού πολιτισμού πνευματικού. … Ιδού το πρόγραμμα, με το οποίον κατέρχεται εις τον αγώνα "Το Νέον Κράτος", αγώνα εις τον οποίον πιστεύομεν, κύριε, ότι θα σας εύρωμεν πρόθυμον και ειλικρινή συναγωνιστήν' (ibid. 7).

[106] 'Ζητούμεν όθεν, την συνεργασίαν παντός δυναμένου να συμβάλη εις την καλυτέραν έρευναν της σημερινής Ελληνικής πραγματικότητος, εις την μελέτην των Ελληνικών προβλημάτων. Ζητούμεν το ενδιαφέρον όλων των πιστευόντων … ότι … τίποτε δεν δύναται ν' αντικαταστήση τας ιδέας του Έθνους, της οικογενείας, της ιεραρχημένης οργανώσεως. Ζητούμεν το ενδιαφέρον εκείνων που πιστεύουν, ότι ο κομμουνισμός είναι η σύνθεσις όλων των πλανών της διανοίας, και το σύμπλεγμα όλων των από καταβολής κόσμου επαναστάσεων της ύλης κατά του πνεύματος. … Εκείνων που δεν ταυτίζουν την ελευθερίαν προς την αναρχίαν, που δεν ταυτίζουν την έννοιαν του κυβερνάν, με την έννοια του κολακεύειν τα χυδαία ένστικτα των μαζών, αλλά πιστεύουν, ότι κυβερνάν, είναι το εργάζεσθαι μεθοδικώς, δια την εναρμόνισιν των συγκρουομένων προς άλληλα συμφερόντων και δια την υποταγήν των εις το υπέρτερον συμφέρον του συνόλου' (I syntaxis 1939: 6-7).

107 See e.g. Kokkinos n.d.: 13-14.

factory comes especially to the fore through the observation that its issues regularly hosted personal proposals and contributions to an ideological debate of far-right or nationalist orientation rather than a mere reproduction of governmental positions. Moreover, no explicit statement on the part of either the regime or the periodical that it was the official organ of the dictatorship has been traced.

Nonetheless, Marxist historian Yianis Kordatos's claims to the contrary more than half a century ago could also be of use for a better understanding of the publication's character and role, despite the obvious deficiencies of his statement. For Kordatos, 'the periodical "New State" (1937-1939) [sic] was the scientific-theoretical organ of the dictatorial regime of the "Fourth of August", which was published with state subsidisation by Aristos Kambanis'.[108] While I have analysed why the periodical should not be seen as the official organ of the regime, it is not to be ruled out that on some levels it could have functioned or been perceived as such. Most importantly, though, some sort of state funding was almost certainly at play, even if not openly declared.[109] One could usefully but cautiously compare here Alexandros Argyriou's oral account on the subsidisation of *Pnevmatiki Zoi*. In addition, while the periodical began as a private initiative and seems to have initially been managed exclusively by Kambanis, the regime's foremost constitutional expert, Nikolaos Koumaros, and Metaxas's son-in-law, Yeoryios Mantzoufas, appear on the front cover verso of all issues starting with January 1939 as 'editorial committee'.

It is perhaps relevant that the last issue before the appearance of the editorial board closed with a note about a series of ten lectures organised by the periodical and hosted by the

[108] Kordatos 1962: 644 (footnote 1). The inaccurate date of publication noted in this very sentence by Kordatos casts some doubt on the accuracy of the information he had about the periodical, all the more so since he does not provide any sources for the claim that *Το Νέον Κράτος* was funded by the state.
[109] The periodical included several advertisements from companies, banks, and print media controlled by or working in close cooperation with the state (Agricultural Bank, Bank of Greece, Hellenic Postbank, newspaper *Κοινότης* etc.).

'Literary Society Parnassos'.[110] According to the note, the first lecture was given by Yeoryios A. Mantzoufas, in the presence of Metaxas, and the second one was scheduled to be given by Aristos Kambanis on 23 December 1938. It is to be assumed that this, along with the first joint contribution of Mantzoufas and Koumaros some months earlier (July 1938) and the ever more regular contributions of Mantzoufas in late 1938 reflect the fermentations that occurred prior to the official change of the status of Kambanis as the sole editor of the publication. When the new board suddenly made its appearance in the first 1939 issue there was no text explaining this transition.

It is also worth noting here that 'Parnassos' too was co-opted by the regime around that time, through the initiative of the Minister for the Capital District, Konstandinos Kotzias. However, Kotzias's decision to fund and (albeit unofficially) turn Parnassos into a semi-state cultural organisation was met with scepticism by parts of the literary press, since Parnassos had long been associated with a backward and sterile approach to culture.[111] These instances of co-option and increased state surveillance indicate that Metaxas's breakthrough of late 1938 and the attendant intensification of the regime's totalitarian and fascistising drive was also reflected in the realm of culture and publications.[112]

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[110] See [Anon.] 1938ag.

[111] A characteristic expression of this sentiment is found in an early 1939 note by the editor of *Νέα Εστία*: 'Όταν ο Υπουργός-Διοικητής Πρωτευούσης κ. Κ. Κοτζιάς, με τη γνωστή αποφασιστικότητά του, ενίσχυσε τον "Παρνασσό" και του έδωσε τα υλικά μέσα για να οργανώση διαλέξεις, να κινηθή περισσότερο και να δράση ζωηρότερα, δεν έκαμε παρά να ξαφνιάση όσους ξέρουν και το χαρακτήρα του, και τις προτιμήσεις του, και την απόλυτη εμπιστοσύνη του στα νειάτα, στις νέες ψυχές, στις νέες οργανώσεις. Πώς θυμήθηκε τον "Παρνασσό", τι ελπίδες βάσισε στη συγκρότηση και στον τρόπο λειτουργίας του, πώς φαντάστηκε ότι μπορεί να γίνη σήμερα κίνητρο πνευματικής ζωής, ο άνθρωπος αυτός που στέκεται κι' ενδιαφέρεται μόνο όπου υπάρχουν δυνατοί παλμοί, που βρίσκεται τις περισσότερες ώρες της ημέρας του κοντά στην ελληνική νεότητα, που έχει δείξει καθαρή και θετική συμπάθεια για ό,τι αντιπροσωπεύει την ανανέωση στα γράμματα, στο θέατρο, στις τέχνες; Αν ζητούσατε να σας δείξουν σε ποια νεοελληνική εκδήλωση ή οργάνωση μπορείτε να δήτε την παράδοση που δεν ανανεώνεται, με όλα τα θλιβερά της αποτελέσματα και με όλη την παραφωνία της στη γύρω πραγματικότητα, οι ενήμεροι και οι φωτισμένοι θα σας έστελναν στην αίθουσα του "Παρνασσού", στις περισσότερες διαλέξεις του, σε όλους σχεδόν τους διαγωνισμούς του, σε κάθε ανάμιξή του στην πνευματική μας κίνηση. … Η τολμηρή απόφαση του κ. Κοτζιά έχω λόγους να πιστεύω ότι δεν περιορίστηκε στην υλική ενίσχυση του "Παρνασσού". Προχώρησε και έδωσε κατευθύνσεις, ζήτησε ν' αφυπνίση τη γηραιά οργάνωση και να τη φέρη πιο κοντά στη σημερινή ελληνική ζωή' (Charis 1939a: 203). Cf. [Anon.] 1939f.

[112] For further information about the periodical, see Kokkinos n.d., Panaretou 1993, Alisandratos 2001: 320-325, Argyriou 2002: 1049-1051 & 2003: 19, *ΛΝΛ*: 1564-1565, Andreiomenos 2010.

I Neolea (October 1938-April 1941)

Following months of fermentations and failed attempts to establish an official publication for EON, the weekly magazine *I Neolea* was published in mid-October 1938. The periodical was controlled by a committee headed by Metaxas himself and was printed by the publishing house Pyrsos. *I Neolea* was significantly subsidised from state coffers, as its contributors were getting paid while its price was quite low in order to ensure its widest possible circulation. Much more openly and intensely than in the case of the other periodicals presented above, public entities were forced to subscribe to *I Neolea* while businesses and banks were urged to provide additional funding through ad placements.[113]

It should be noted here that authors or publishers had to send three copies of a book in order for it to be reviewed in *I Neolea*. This can be taken as an indication of both sides promoting and endorsing each other. On the one hand, the periodical usually acknowledged the usefulness of the editions under review, associating them implicitly or explicitly with its own objectives and at times suggesting that they should be amongst the holdings of every library. On the other hand, authors must have realised the potential market and the space for ideological influence that had opened up within the ranks of EON. At the same time, by sending their work to the periodical for review they indirectly approved its content and aim, while sometimes they may be said to have lent the periodical their own prestige as intellectuals. For this reason, some of the books reviewed in *I Neolea* are to be taken as parts of the same cultural and political endeavours as those underpinning the periodical's publication.[114]

In addition to *I Neolea*, the National Youth Organisation started publishing a quarterly intended for its officers and older members in spring 1940, entitled *Falangitiki Epitheorisis*. The critic

[113] See Andreiomenos 2012: 55-59.
[114] For further information about *I Neolea* see Balta 1986, Machera 1987, Balta 1989, Panopoulou & Tsiknakis 1992: 24-27, 166-175, Angelis 2006, Andreiomenos 2012.

Tellos Agras, who as we saw above was working at EON's propaganda office, was appointed chief editor of the periodical. Apart from these periodicals, I discuss a few texts published in other well-established serial publications of the time such as *Nea Estia* and the newspapers *I Kathimerini* and *Ethnos*. Finally, I examine a handful of texts published in three periodicals that supported the dictatorship to varying degrees. One was *Neoi Dromoi* (1938-1945), which was published by the National Conservative Organisation (Εθνική Συντηρητική Οργάνωσις) that had been established in May 1936. Amongst the founding members of the organisation were Andreas Chatzikyriakos, who served as minister of National Economy under Metaxas (1936-1937), and Yeoryios Nikolaidis, who served as minister of Railways and Cars (1938-1941). The support of the National Conservative Organisation is to be understood in light of the regime's hybrid character that included both fascist and conservative elements.[115] Another one was *Ionios Antholoyia* (1927-1940), published by Spyros Minotos (1898-1988), a royalist intellectual who had established relations with Ioannis Metaxas already decades before the dictatorship.[116] A third one is the Italian periodical *Olimpo* (1936-1940), which was published in Thessaloniki and included some texts in Greek. This periodical is presented as part of the discussion in chapter nine.

[115] About *Νέοι Δρόμοι* see Papadimitriou 2006: 166-167, Kalerande 2016: 248 (where it is even claimed that the periodical 'seems to have constituted the blueprint for EON's periodical "Neolea"'), and here, chapter 9. It should be noted that the appointment of Yeoryios Nikolaidis was part of Metaxas's late-1938 reshuffling of his cabinet, when the dictator removed the conservatives he saw as undermining his position and agenda. Metaxas, highly satisfied, noted in his diary that the government was under his absolute control (Metaxas 1960: 318). This is an indication that while some conservative circles covertly compromised the dictator's fascistising experimentation and were ultimately ousted and kept at a distance from power, other conservative groups fully embraced Metaxas's agenda and were incorporated in the new state apparatus.

[116] The pro-Metaxas stance of *Ιόνιος Ανθολογία* during the dictatorship is even noted in *ΛΝΛ*, where such issues are usually steered clear of: 'Προς τα τελευταία τεύχη, συχνή είναι και η δημοσίευση λόγων του Ι. Μεταξά, με εγκωμιαστικά σχόλια από πλευράς διεύθυνσης (Σπ. Μινώτος)' (*ΛΝΛ*: 919). Compare for instance the entry on *Πνευματική Ζωή*, where no mention of its support for Metaxas is made (*ΛΝΛ*: 1821).

Outline

The main part of the thesis is divided into four parts which respectively deal with discourse on the past, the nation, authority and hierarchy, and the future. The chapter breakdown is not chronological, and it does not represent some steps taken consecutively by the Fourth-August ruling elites or topics discussed in this order by pro-regime intellectuals. I attempted to identify some key themes to which several issues might be linked. These key themes constitute the chapters of the thesis and they revolve around the four aforementioned central axes.

In part 1, which consists of two chapters, I attempt to show that the past was appropriated selectively and at times reinterpreted or distorted in a way that turned it into a screen on which the regime's own self-fashioning and values were projected. In chapter 1 I discuss particular segments of national history that were the focus of Metaxist discourse and the way they were presented. The discussion here is in chronological order and it seeks to demonstrate the relevance of those representations for the regime's own ideology and praxis or for the personal ideological agenda of cultural essayists. Chapter 2 tackles questions related to the philosophy of history that underlay the representations of the past in Metaxist discourse, focusing on cyclical and linear patterns of history as well as on the 'Great Man' theory.

Part 2 is divided into four chapters, each discussing different aspects of discourse on the nation. Chapter 3 handles the definition of the nation and its identification with culture while exploring the features attributed to Hellenism and the Greek people. Homeland is the focal point of chapter 4, which examines the way the Greek countryside, landscape, and nature were enshrined and linked to national identity and culture. Chapter 5 concerns the promotion of vernacular culture and language under Metaxas. In chapter 6 I deal with propaganda related to national solidarity and class collaboration as well as with organicism as a thought pattern that often underpinned both notions of national unity and corporatism.

Part 3 consists of two chapters that deal with discourse on power and structure. In chapter 7 I tackle the propagation of order, discipline, and coordination, as well as the legitimisation of absolutism and state violence, focusing especially on the fusion of political and aesthetic standards. In chapter 8 I treat the organisational model that Metaxist discourse promoted, emphasising quasi-military hierarchy, the belief in charismatic personalities and the extraordinary abilities of elites, as well as the leader principle.

Part 4 discusses the regime's futural visions, which revolved around a few distinct axes, the main one being the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Dealing with discourse related to a New Order, the temporality of the new, the Third Hellenic Civilisation, and EON, this part is the one that most markedly discusses the dictatorship's fascist tendencies. Chapter 9 constitutes an analysis of the representations of new spatial and temporal arrangements that had allegedly been opened up following the establishment of the dictatorship, paying special attention to their contamination with (pseudo)religious discourse. Chapter 10 attempts to analyse the ideological construct of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, while chapter 11 deals with youth-related propaganda.

Finally, the thesis includes an appendix with short biographical entries on critics and intellectuals whose texts are discussed extensively in the main part, listed in alphabetical order. Apart from basic facts regarding their intellectual activities and their involvement in the cultural field, these notes have a special focus on the political leanings of the authors under consideration. Where applicable, they bring to the forefront those intellectuals' links to the Metaxas dictatorship, as well as their sympathy for foreign fascist movements and regimes or their own involvement in far-right groups within Greece prior to the 1936 coup. In some cases, information on their political affiliations during the Axis Occupation and the post-WWII period is also provided.[117]

[117] See also the introductory note to the Appendix.

All titles and passages from the Metaxas years that are quoted throughout the thesis, including the footnotes, were originally published in the polytonic system but are provided here in the monotonic system. I opted for the monotonic, as it does not alter in any substantial way our perception of the texts –as long as it is kept in mind that the original publications were in the polytonic– while it has facilitated and sped up the transcription process. There are actually a few texts that were published in the monotonic system during the dictatorship, but none of them is discussed in this thesis.[118] By contrast, I have retained the original spelling, as I believe it provides a clearer understanding of the 'linguistic disorder' of the time, which kept demoticism alive and nurtured the calls for orthographic reform and language standardisation.[119]

[118] Apart from a few staunch demoticists like Nikos Kazantzakis, Dimosthenis Daniilidis or Eliseos Yiannidis, who published texts using a monotonic system and often a simplified or more phonetic orthography, the Association of Greek Writers had also proposed a monotonic system during the dictatorship, a reform that was advocated by *Πνευματική Ζωή*. The periodical in fact published a note narrating an anecdote about the typist who initially struggled to write the proposal for the new system, which had itself to follow that system, but as she got used to it she recognised how time-saving it is. In that same note, *Πνευματική Ζωή* announced that the regular column on linguistic issues held by Paratiritis [=Kostas Kartheos] would be published as per that new system from that point on. See [Anon.] 1939g.

[119] One interesting case is again that of *Πνευματική Ζωή*, which started its publication with a greater degree of devotion to historical orthography and then adopted the spelling reform proposed by the Association of Greek Writers in 1938, most notably doing away with a different spelling of verbs in the subjunctive. See [Anon.] 1938a.

PART 1 Uses of the past

'The narration of … national time implies the incorporation of temporal units into a coherent scheme. … What is at stake is not simply the appropriation of a part of historical experience, but the construction, in the present, of a discourse that reproduces the past and transforms it into national time'.[1] The Metaxas dictatorship attempted to construct its own scheme of national time, which displayed both continuities and discontinuities with pre-fabricated schemes. The discursive revisiting, veneration, and appropriation of aspects of the past during the Fourth-of-August regime in fact ran parallel to various relevant private and state initiatives on the ground. These initiatives were usually undertaken by regime functionaries with varying amounts of institutional authority (from mayors and prefects to ministers and the dictator himself) as well as by clubs and organisations which operated on cultural or regional premises. In several cases, new associations and groups were formed in order to promote their local past or specific past-related projects.

This part argues that the past was appropriated and partly renegotiated under Metaxas in multiple ways. While reinforcing and reinvigorating established narratives on the 'national past', Metaxist discourse also provided alternative narratives. This can be said both in the sense that it shifted its focus on different eras or polities than the ones usually venerated in pre-1936 Greece and in that it reinterpreted or distorted the past to make it fit its own objectives and ideology. Thus, not only Minoan Crete, Sparta, Macedon, and Byzantium occupied a more central position in treatments of Greek history, but the achievements of classical Athens were attributed predominantly to the charismatic leadership of Pericles. In addition, pro-Metaxas

[1] Liakos 2008: 204.

intellectuals were given the opportunity to propagate their own alternative readings of the past, which sometimes relied on foreign pseudo-historiographical accounts, as in the case of Sitsa Karaiskaki's discussions of prehistory and classical history that replicated German National Socialist views.

The Metaxas years witnessed significant publishing activity regarding Greek antiquity, often with either the implicit or explicit objective to facilitate Metaxas's agenda, particularly in relation to the creation of a 'new civilisation', a topic which I will detail in the last part. Publications of ancient Greek (and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine) texts proliferated according to the cultural press, but scepticism was sometimes expressed by literary critics as to their usefulness, a scepticism linked to the extent and manner of their impact on modern Greeks. The concerns underlying this doubtful attitude could be associated with what will be discussed in chapter ten as a drive towards a 'reconnection forwards'. The desiderata superimposed on this 'publishing spree' were for it to facilitate 'communication between the ancient and the modern spirit' of the nation and act as a force for 'regeneration' and 'balance', rather than a sterile attachment to the letter of the national past.[2]

Another interesting case that falls into this category is that of the philologist and occultist Andonios F. Chalas (1891-1967). Chalas published a series of booklets under the general rubric *Hellenic traditions – Hellenic Civilisation* (1937-1939) with the apparent intention to appropriate the previous Hellenic civilisations for the needs of his own time. The series included studies on the 'Spartan civilisation', the 'supreme ideal' on which the 'ancient Hellenic civilisation' was based, the 'Byzantine civilisation', and 'the means by which modern Greece would realise a civilisation commensurate with that of ancient Greece'. Even Aristophanes was enlisted as the 'first anti-communist', while the fourteenth and final booklet in the series

[2] See e.g. [Anon.] 1939d and Chatzinis 1939a: 189.

deviated from historical themes and was devoted to the 'foremost politician of Modern Greece', namely Metaxas.[3]

Apart from reinterpreting the past or retroactively constructing non-existent genealogies, history, and particularly recent history, can be rewritten by omission, by means of excluding from the representations of the past the facts and events that challenge the ideological coordinates of the new status quo. In this way, a specific narrative about the past is normalised and canonised. One could recall here the post-Restoration ban on teaching the history of the period 1789 to 1815 in Europe.[4] A characteristic example within the frames of the New State can be found in its censorial policy regarding the names of pre-1936 parliamentarian politicians, which constituted a form of *damnatio memoriae*.[5] Texts appearing in the press were to either avoid any mention of these politicians whatsoever or refer to them without using their names. When names were used later on in pro-regime publications, the politicians in question were presented as national rather than political figures, as is the case of Pavlos Koundouriotis.[6] Thus, a new discourse on recent history emerged, which, with its general vagueness and obscurity of agency, actually verged on the mythical. The politicians of the recent past were cast into oblivion, while the monarch and Metaxas could roam freely through the events of the time, so-to-speak, and define their own places in that period's history.

That could not apply as easily to the representation of older historical periods, which were more problematic for the regime for many reasons. Firstly, they had already been significantly researched and discussed by specialised scholars whose findings and conclusions were being introduced to the public (at least the educated one) for decades. Secondly, the study of

[3] See [Anon.] 1938w, [Anon.] 1938ab: 271, [Anon.] 1939h, Foussaras 1940. Van Steen (2000: 182-184) provides a succinct discussion of Chalas's pamphlet on Aristophanes within the wider context of right-wing appropriations of the ancient playwright.
[4] Koselleck 2004: 39-40.
[5] See the instructions given to the press on 4 August 1936 in Petrakis 2006: 9.
[6] Yiofyllis 1939. The focus of the text is on Koundouriotis's role in the Balkan Wars and on his character, which are both idealised. No mention of or even allusion to his involvement in the National Defence Movement in 1917 or his two tenures as President of Democracy is made.

these periods had been integrated into public education and national curricula. Thirdly, nation-based narratives had already been so widely disseminated amongst the general public that they formed the national imaginary regarding the distant past. All that meant that in some cases the regime and its ideologues had to deconstruct established public beliefs and impressions about the past before they could render their own narratives credible.

In general, the treatment of the past in Metaxist discourse could be linked to most of the 'benefits' that David Lowenthal discerned in dealings with the past.[7] Explicitly, the past assumed especially a 'pedagogic function' and a guiding role.[8] Implicitly, however, the past was mostly instrumentalised in order to provide 'affirmation' for the present.[9] Promoting the idolising attitude towards the national past that already characterised the collective imaginary in Greece to a significant degree, the regime and its supporters were engaging in a quasi-circular legitimising process. The less contested the symbolic capital attributed to the national past was, the more its affirmatory function for the ideology and praxis of the present increased. By lionising national history, one merely had to pick the right components of that history and interpret them according to their political needs and objectives in order to endow present actions and discourses with eternal or incontrovertible value. As it has been argued in reference to National Socialism, 'the palimpsest of the past was conscientiously scraped clean to fit the needs of the totalitarian present. All history was contemporary'.[10] In fact, a similar idea is traced in Metaxas's 'notebook of thoughts', noted down in early 1932: 'examining the past has no other value than that given to it by the needs of the present'.[11]

This part is divided into two chapters, which deal with the eras that were appropriated by Metaxist discourse and the modes of historical understanding that it promoted. The first

[7] See Lowenthal 2015: 80-109.
[8] See Lowenthal 2015: 81, 88-90.
[9] See Lowenthal 2015: 92-94.
[10] Chapoutot 2016: 7.
[11] Metaxas 1969b: 433.

chapter discusses the segments of Hellenic history that were venerated under Metaxas and seeks to demonstrate that the characteristics attributed to them reinforced the ideology and practices of the dictatorship as well as of other interwar ultranationalist regimes. The second chapter revolves around three theories of history that underpinned the public discourse of Fourth-of-August functionaries and pro-regime cultural operators. Namely, the representation of history as linear progression, as repetition, or through the lens of the 'Great Man theory'.

- CHAPTER 1 -

National past

This chapter deals with the propagation of existing, emergent or newly formed narratives on the past. It seeks to pinpoint which eras and which of their characteristics the regime and its supporters amongst the intelligentsia focused upon and why. Conversely, it touches upon some aspects of the past that were sidelined, setting such silences within the context of the belief system that was promoted by the dictatorship. I argue that the practice of implicitly or explicitly showing that aspects of the regime's ideology or praxis had purportedly first emerged in previous phases of Hellenism's millennia-long life had a legitimising function: it corroborated the dictatorship's claims that its political experiments did not rely on foreign blueprints but on purely indigenous elements.

In the same category one could classify the reading of venerated epochs through a different prism to the usual pre-1936 one, a prism that befitted the regime's own character and agenda. Especially when the prestige these aspects of the past had acquired in the pre-dictatorial period forbade their complete marginalisation from representations of national history, one comes across new significations of their character. Such is the case of Pericles, for instance, whom Metaxist discourse presented as a strong, charismatic leader, keeping a lid on the democratic framework within which he had acted, or even portraying it as a dictatorship under democratic mantle.

The focus on particular segments of the past was dictated by the didactic and performative function that those could serve, for instance ancient Sparta in the domain of discipline and the Balkan Wars in that of national unity. Applying a degree of emphasis on certain eras that

diverged from their treatment in pre-1936 public discourse could moreover reinforce existing ideological constructs, such as that of continuity, as manifested in the effort to upgrade Byzantium's position in the national imaginary. This chapter also traces the instrumentalisation of the Hellenic past for a covert justification of the shift towards autocracy and fascism that took place in interwar Europe or for an injection of pro-regime propaganda with views on history that circulated in other regimes.

The chapter is divided into three sections, roughly following the periodisation of European history as ancient, mediaeval, and modern, as well as the schema of the 'tripartite continuity of Hellenism'. This schematic periodisation also delineates the contours of both the regime's narrative of the past and the institutionalised account of Greek history as reproduced up to today's schoolbooks.

1.1. ANTIQUITY

State-organised events as well as local initiatives for the celebration of ancient Greek heritage were common under Metaxas. Only in June 1938 two 'archaic festivals' were held on the Aegean islands of Thasos and Samos (the latter was in honour of the philosopher Pythagoras and was intended to take place annually).[1] Moreover, there were efforts during the dictatorship to revive Sikelianos's Delphic festivals, which some pro-regime intellectuals presented as part of a process of communication with pure origins.[2] In addition, the dictatorial years witnessed an increase both in the organisation of exhibitions related to Greek antiquity and in the participation of Greece in foreign expositions with ancient Greek artworks or artworks that thematised ancient Greece. For instance, five original ancient sculptures from five consecutive centuries

[1] [Anon.] 1937c and [Anon.] 1938x.
[2] See e.g. [Anon.] 1938c.

were sent to the New York World's Fair in 1939 on the proposal of the Vice Minister for Press and Tourism Theologos Nikoloudis.[3]

Metaxist discourse on the national past went back millennia. Occasionally it even incorporated the mythical era into antiquity, with heroes such as Hercules or Ulysses being treated as quasi-historical figures. While prehistory represented an era particularly endearing to National Socialist manipulation and fabrication, pro-Metaxas intellectuals rarely dealt with it, except as part of narratives of millennia-long national continuity or when presenting the Minoan civilisation as the first Greek civilisation, as we will see below. Nonetheless, as the German case had shown, the relative lack of evidence and the absence of historical records turned that era into an ideal field for mythicising that could buttress policies and ideological departures in the present.

Sitsa Karaiskaki is the most striking exception, yet her interest in prehistory and the way she presented it stems from her apprenticeship in National Socialism and her knowledge of relevant Nazi debates. In an early-1939 article, she depicted classical Greek art as the culmination of an evolutionary process that had begun in central and northern Europe millennia before the Parthenon was built.[4] Her text echoed the Nazi mythology of ancient Hellas as a Nordic civilisation, fertilised through the migration waves of Germanic peoples coming from the north, settling in Greece, and taking charge by means of their racial superiority.[5] Referring vaguely to 'the latest research in archaeology', 'excavations in approximately the last 30 years', and 'modern scholars', she claimed that these had proven that the Greek people as well as its art and architecture hark back to central and northern Europe, which had an austere but 'communal and total civilisation, based upon agricultural foundations'. In effect, Karaiskaki was

[3] [Anon.] 1939p. See Zacharia 2014.
[4] Kar. 1939a.
[5] On the 'Nordic' identity of the Hellenes according to National Socialist discourse, see Chapoutot 2016: 5-8, 24, 29 and passim.

reproducing the dubious, ideologically filtered and manipulated findings of *völkisch* and National Socialist scholarship as well as the discourse of NSDAP functionaries.

For instance, Nazi ideologues, especially Richard Walther Darré but also to an extent Hitler, stressed the organic link between the Nordic civilisation and agrarianism, even presenting Nazi agrarianism as a continuation of prehistoric Nordic agrarianism.[6] Moreover, the 'Out-of-India theory' regarding the origin of western peoples and languages had been widely circulated amongst German intellectual circles since the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, German scholars and men of letters introduced the terms 'Aryan' and 'Indo-Germanic' to describe the people who had migrated from India to the West, while German soil was seen as 'the chosen land of Europe's Aryan invaders'. Yet, the theory was reversed later in the same century: the Indo-Germanic *Urheimat* was increasingly placed in northern Europe and migration waves were thought as having the opposite direction, a belief that strongly influenced German and Austrian nationalism long before the rise of National Socialism.[7]

Karaiskaki adopted a similar strategy when she asserted first that 'there would have been no Greek people' had it not been for these migrations from the North yet Greeks should be proud that the Parthenon, the acme of that Indo-Germanic civilisation, appeared 'under our own Greek sky'. Furthermore, she maintained that 'at the end of the stone age, the northern peoples began their great migration towards Italy, Persia, India and Greece'. In this connection, Karaiskaki mentioned in particular the Achaeans, 'the blonde heroes of Homer'.[8]

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[6] See Chapoutot 2016: 274, 284. The desire to prove the agrarian and settled life of their real or imagined ancestors was related to their conception of nomadic life as associated in general with destruction and inability to create culture, and more specifically with Jewry.

[7] See Chapoutot 2016: 20-23. The most famous of the previous generation's prehistory archaeological theorists, who influenced later Nazi archaeologists (and undoubtedly influenced such thought elsewhere), was Gustaf Kossinna (see Chapoutot 2016: 37, 38, 70, 150, 406, 413).

[8] About the Achaeans in Nazi mythology, see Chapoutot 2016: 60, 65, 85. See also Chapoutot 2016: 5 and passim about a similar fringe nineteenth-century theory regarding the Dorians, which was then taken up by Hitler and Rosenberg. About the 'blondness' argument in National Socialist discourse on the racial identity of past civilisations see Chapoutot 2016: 24, 56-58. Cf. 'The picture of the Achaeans as a tall, fairskinned people who entered Greece from the north may have more to do with the desires and beliefs of modern lovers of Greek civilization, especially in 19th-century Germany and Great Britain –the desire to have some genealogical connection with the

Another aspect of prehistory that is traced in Metaxist discourse is the Minoan civilisation, which had only recently been incorporated into Greek national history following the excavations of Sir Arthur Evans in Knossos in the early twentieth century.[9] The dictatorship appropriated the Minoan civilisation, effectually positing it as the beginning of the First Hellenic Civilisation and adopting a Minoan symbol as the emblem of its youth organisation. Thus, the main symbol of EON, which, as we will see in the final chapter, represented the national future in Metaxist discourse, was borrowed from the most distant era in the national past. Moreover, the choice of the Minoan double axe (Labrys) was in dialogue with the fasces symbol of Italian Fascism, to which it bore a distinct similarity, while Labrys was framed as a symbol of 'secular and simultaneously divine authority. For the king was then also the High Priest'.[10]

It is perhaps symptomatic of the new national ideal promoted by the regime that EON's flag was essentially the Greek state flag with the crown moved to the upper left and the Labrys taking its place in the centre of the cross. Metaxas's political experiment was under the 'aegis of the king', as Metaxist rhetoric would often repeat, but the character of the experiment was identified with the dictator's own brand of 'civilising nationalism'. The Minoan double-bladed axe could be paralleled to the venerated double-headed eagle that had been associated with Byzantium, Orthodoxy, and the expansive implications of the *Megali Idea*. However, the dictatorship assigned EON, the alleged enactor of the new national ideal, an insignia linked to a civilisation that was often described in public discourse during the dictatorship as the epitome of a strong and dominant but peaceful and culture-loving people.[11]

As a result, the Minoan civilisation played a role in legitimising the dictatorship's present experimentation while indirectly being associated with its futural visions. Apart from its

classical Greeks, however distant, and the racist belief that the glories of Greek civilization could not have been the product of dark-skinned southern Europeans alone' (Waldman & Mason 2006: 3).

[9] See Hamilakis 2006.

[10] Kar. 1940b: 1132. Cf. Machera 1987: 84.

[11] For further analysis of these issues, see below chapters 10 and 11.

association with the National Youth Organisation, it is indicative that the only disagreements with the term 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' during the dictatorship mostly relied on the argument that the Minoan civilisation should be considered as the First Hellenic Civilisation and classical Greece should be seen as a distinct, Second Hellenic Civilisation.[12] Nonetheless, even in EON's weekly, the Minoan civilisation featured only marginally, while Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *At the Palaces of Knossos* did not make it to the pages of *I Neolea* due to the war.[13] As we will see in the next chapter, whether considered as one with classical Hellenism or as its rather distinct precursor, the Minoan civilisation mainly figured in narratives of continuity, representing a chronotope of origins.

Discourses on Greek antiquity under Metaxas remained largely focused on the classical era. One of the most curious treatments of classical Greece in texts written by critics during the dictatorship is found in Aristos Kambanis's sole 1939 contribution to *To Neon Kratos*, which discussed the relation between nation and state starting with a recourse to antiquity.[14] Whatever their political system, Kambanis claimed, ancient Greek cities placed the collective above the individual. Greek states in classical antiquity had a highly interventionist attitude towards the lives of individual citizens. State interventions included extended or life-long military conscription, confiscation of private property in cases of *vis major*, strict pro-marital measures, as well as regulations regarding alcohol or even fashion and public appearance. The apex of state interventionism in the private realm was represented by the duty to uphold the state's religious traditions and the obligation faced by citizens in some polities to kill their own children, if born with disabilities or deformities.[15]

[12] See chapter 10, note 137.
[13] See De Boel 2014 for a recent discussion of the novel.
[14] Kambanis 1939. The text was an excerpt from a speech he had delivered at the 'Parnassos' association on 23 December 1938, which was attended by the dictator himself. See also Introduction about the *Neon Kratos* lecture series at Parnassos.
[15] Kambanis 1939: 126-127.

Besides providing a specific reading of the classical past, the aforementioned examples relate to Kambanis's own time. While the author claimed that he was suggesting 'no kind of replication and no kind of return', the selection of such examples can be seen as an attempt at normalising practices of interwar authoritarian regimes.[16] First of all, the intense militarisation of life was a common denominator in all fascist(ic) regimes and movements of the time, e.g. in their youth branches.[17] Highly interventionist pro-marital measures were also common. Under Fascism, traditional female roles, especially that of maternity, were overemphasised and projected as the ultimate ideals for Italian women. The difference of the Fascist regime to its democratic predecessors lay in the connection of childbearing with militarism, in the sense that children were seen as future soldiers and hence a greater number of them was required by the state war machine.[18] In its efforts to safeguard the institution of marriage, Mussolini's government did not hesitate to introduce specific pro-marital measures.[19] Alongside 'negative' measures, i.e. measures discouraging people from staying unmarried, the Fascists passed several 'positive' measures, encouraging people to get married and have children or assisting mothers in raising their babies.[20] Likewise, the Italian dictatorship went to great lengths to effectively prevent the use of any means of contraception and abortion.[21]

Moreover, Kambanis claimed that, apart from banning drinking for women, the ancient Greek colony of Marseille would also have banned smoking, if tobacco had been known at the time in Europe. On top of imposing gender-specific regulations,[22] the Nazis were the first

[16] Kambanis 1939: 127.
[17] Marxist critiques of the 4th-August state often focused on this aspect of the regime; see below the discussion on Sparta.
[18] See Willson 2010: 61-62.
[19] A characteristic measure was 'the "bachelors' tax", which aimed to promote early marriage by levying a higher rate of tax (graduated according to age and income) on unmarried men aged between 25 and 65' (Willson 2010: 65). The regime did not simply target single men but was particularly ruthless when it came to homosexual men (see Ebner 2004).
[20] As with the 'bachelor tax', those measures were mainly of financial nature, like subsidies, loans and 'maternal welfare' provisions (see Willson 2010: 66, 68-69).
[21] See Willson 2010: 66-67.
[22] These regulations were in line with a misogynistic male subconscious that is appalled by women engaging in excessive enjoyment, and indeed, enjoyment that is not confined within the limits of domestic life and traditional

government in history to launch an official campaign against smoking.[23] An interventionist stance as to how women should dress or present themselves publicly was also evinced in the articles of several Metaxist intellectuals such as Sitsa Karaiskaki's contributions to *I Neolea*. All this was in line with the Fourth-of-August dictatorship's gender politics, that predominantly linked women's role with the private sphere of the family and posited them as 'mothers of the nation', who should be paragons of morality and decency. In a 1938 article, Kambanis encapsulated the New State's stance on the role of women by lashing out against 'the feminism of the cosmopolitan cafe of the West, the feminism of the boulevard' and stressing that 'we want mothers, sisters, spouses'.[24]

Besides, the killing of 'unhealthy' members of the community was in line with Nazi policies, although their 'euthanasia' programmes became widely known later and were implemented more broadly only from 1940 onward, that is after Kambanis's lecture.[25] More conspicuously, though, Kambanis's emphasis on the interconnection of state, nation, and religion calls to mind the approach to fascism as a 'political religion'.[26] As the author characteristically asserted, in ancient Greece 'the State was a religious society, the King was a High Priest, the Ruler was a priest, the law was a religious observance, patriotism was a kind of piety'.[27] Finally, Kambanis indirectly justified the Fourth-of-August regime's own royalism, hierarchical

gender roles but is rather individualist and transgressive. One can compare here Edward Bernays's branding of cigarettes as 'torches of freedom' for women –a clear allusion to the statue of liberty– in the interwar USA (see Brandt 2007: 82-85). The reason why the 'father of public relations' advertised cigarettes as symbols of female emancipation was not because smoking is emancipatory per se but rather because smoking had been strictly associated with men and masculinity. Therefore, taking up what was until then considered an exclusively male habit, and in fact demonstrating this in public, was sold as a symbol of liberation.

[23] Ash 2010. According to Robert N. Proctor, 'The anti-tobacco campaign must be understood against the backdrop of the Nazi quest for racial and bodily purity' (Proctor 1996: 1450). Apart from racial hygiene, the campaign was particularly targeting women due to reproductive (and more general eugenicist) concerns, while 'The consumption of alcohol was also strongly campaigned against' (Smith 2004: 1425). For a more comprehensive study of the anti-smoking policy of the Nazis, see Proctor 1999, esp. 173-247.

[24] Kambanis 1938c: 379.

[25] See Koonz 2003.

[26] See also below, chapter 9, note 38.

[27] Kambanis 1939: 127.

structure, and elitist tendencies, stressing that 'the ancient polis, whether headed by a King or not, was deeply aristocratic'.[28]

However, the overview of practices in ancient Greek states provided by Kambanis in his 1939 contribution to *To Neon Kratos* included only brief or vague references to specific states. It is telling that, when it comes to classical Greek polities that were venerated extensively, the focus of a regime which was attempting to construct a different, 'new Greece', was not placed on the previously revered Athens but on Sparta. This is related to the fact that Athens had been by and large associated, if not identified, with democracy. The New State had to relegate or deconstruct this aspect of the First Hellenic Civilisation and bring to the forefront other aspects that could fit into its self-legitimising narrative. Hence the preference for regimes that were avowedly militarist or even the presentation of Pericles 'as a virtual dictator behind a democratic façade'.[29]

Already in a 1936 speech, Metaxas attempted to diminish the role of ancient Athens by providing the wider context of Hellenism at the time.[30] This perspective was perhaps conditioned by the time and place of its expression. The dictatorship counted merely three months of existence, the transition from democracy –even if a defunct and compromised democracy– was still fresh and the duration of the newfangled state of domestic affairs uncertain. In his speech the dictator both indirectly attacked democracy ('Ancient Athens certainly did not constitute the political ideal of ancient Greece') and delineated the contours of action and the ideological coordinates in his regime, which had to be based on different exemplars from ancient history than the one associated with democracy. He was after all addressing the members of

[28] Kambanis 1939: 127.
[29] Papacosma 2007: 184. This is claimed explicitly in Nikoloudis 1937b: 309.
[30] 'Μεταξύ των φορέων των ιδανικών αυτών, οι νεώτεροι, αποβλέποντες προς τους αρχαίους, στρέφονται διαρκώς προς τας αρχαίας Αθήνας, εκ της λάμψεως των οποίων θαμβώνονται, διότι η αρχαία αθηναϊκή πολιτεία έλαμψεν εις τας καλάς τέχνας κυρίως και παρασύρονται εις την πλάνη ότι αι αρχαίαι Αθήναι ήσαν ο φορεύς των αρχαίων ιδανικών του πολιτισμού, της επιστήμης και της πολιτικής επικρατήσεως. Και εις μεν την επιστήμην προσέφερεν ολόκληρος η αρχαία Ελλάς, από των πόλεων της Μικρασιατικής παραλίας μέχρι της Σικελίας και από τα Στάγειρα της Μακεδονίας μέχρι της Κρήτης και της Δωδεκανήσου. Αι δε αρχαίαι Αθήναι, ασφαλώς δεν απετέλουν το πολιτικόν ιδεώδες της αρχαίας Ελλάδος' (Metaxas 1969a: 126).

the newly established Organisation for National Rebirth, i.e. an audience that could form a new intermediary elite catering for the needs of a regime that lacked a mass movement and a well-established nationwide network of control and ideological dissemination.

In that same speech, Metaxas claimed that 'we should consider ancient Athens as the ultimate form of artistic society, yet we should all turn to ancient Sparta and Macedonia with regard to political national ideals. To Sparta that started the work of political unification and martial domination of ancient Hellenism and to Macedonia that finished this work'.[31] As I will show in the final part, Metaxist discourse involved the explicit rejection of imperialist and irredentist aspirations, the support for friendly relations internationally, and the identification of the Third Hellenic Civilisation with a civilising mission. Nonetheless, the dictator presented not solely political unity but also military supremacy as Greek ideals that were realised by the First Hellenic Civilisation and should be turned into ideals for the contemporary Greeks as well. The assault against the established position of ancient Athens in the national narrative of modern Greece was still quite mild and at the same time indicative of the ideological inconsistencies that afflicted the New State. This was before Nikoloudis's declaration of the slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation that was then picked up in Metaxas's public discourse.[32] The conundrum posed by the fact that the Third Hellenic Civilisation was mostly associated with cultural and intellectual achievements perhaps clarifies further the ideological objectives of Theologos Nikoloudis a few months later when he ascribed the greatness of Classical Athens to its *de facto* transformation into a Periclean dictatorship.[33]

In the short lexicon of symbols that recur in official discourse and texts by pro-regime intellectuals that she compiled, Eleni Machera describes Sparta in the following way: 'the ancient homeland of EON, symbol of (physical and intellectual) action, of glory and grandeur, of

[31] Metaxas 1969: 126-127.
[32] See here chapter 10.
[33] See Nikoloudis 1937b.

correct education, of mastery of oneself and the external world, of respect for one's elders, steely discipline, restraint and love for nature'.[34] Such extravagant representations of ancient Sparta point to the fact that the Greek dictatorship upgraded its status in the new narrative of national history it was constructing. This upgrading should be put down to the dictator's reliance on German blueprints. Metaxas had been sent for training to the Prussian War College around the turn of the century and was significantly influenced by Prussian militarism, which was characterised by high esteem for ancient Sparta.[35] What is more, he kept track of developments in interwar Germany and was certainly aware of National Socialist Laconophilia, which was also displayed upon Goebbels's visit to Greece a few days after the 4 August coup.[36]

It should be taken into account that the period of Spartan history which the regime sought to appropriate was mainly around the middle of the first millennium BCE, when Spartan power was at its peak. In the sixth century the city-state of Sparta began controlling large adjacent territories and forcing populations that were significantly superior in numbers but not as well-trained and disciplined as the Spartan citizen-soldiers into slave labour. This development had in fact been construed by National Socialists as proof of the Spartans' racial superiority and Nordic lineage.[37] At the end of the fifth century Sparta emerged victorious from the three-decade long war with its arch-enemy, Athens, thus purportedly proving itself a politically and militarily superior polity.

Nonetheless, the most venerated achievement of Sparta in the fifth century was not traced in what could be labelled as an intranational conflict but in its decisive role in the Greco-Persian Wars. Not only did these wars provide examples of national unity, but the Spartan participation was particularly laden with symbolic capital due to the sacrifice of Leonidas and

[34] Machera 1987: 84. These are more or less the Spartan ideals as presented in a 1938 text in *I Neolea* ([Anon.] 1938ae: 83) which Machera in another part of her book (p. 37, footnote 4) inaccurately attributes to Metaxas.
[35] See Roche 2013a.
[36] See Roche 2013a, 2013b and Chapoutot 2016.
[37] See Chapoutot 2016.

the 300 at Thermopylae, in obedience to the law of the state. State law was posited by Metaxist discourse as something to be abided by even in cases where it might turn out to be unfair. This was the kind of discipline that F. Th. Konstandinidis, writing about art in ancient Greece, attributed to the ideal citizen.[38] It was this emphasis on absolute obedience to the law of the state that lay at the basis of a discrepancy between the Metaxas regime and National Socialism with regard to a major figure of classical Greece, Socrates. In general, Metaxist discourse would show veneration towards the philosopher, as the loyal citizen who chose death in keeping with the laws of Athens rather than a life in self-exile.[39] On the contrary, several Nazis –including Karaiskaki in the texts where she plagiarised Rosenberg– were markedly negative in their appraisal of Socrates.[40] Often calling attention on the philosopher's visage that contradicted stereotypes of Aryan beauty, they cast him as a representative of Asiatic spirit whose subversive preaching, along with Pericles' disregard for 'racial laws', signalled the decadence of Athens.[41]

Konstandinidis's article that was mentioned above was the second part of a text on art and the 'idea of the 4th of August' that was published in *I Neolea* in three instalments. The author dedicated this second part particularly to examples from Spartan history, especially related to the battle of Thermopylae. On the one hand, he posed Leonidas and the 300 as exemplars of patriotic self-sacrifice. On the other hand, he presented Aristodemus, the sole survivor amongst the 300, as an example of the contempt for cowards shown by Spartans.[42] By omitting that Aristodemus did not flee or evade battle on his own accord but was ordered to return to Sparta due to illness, the author justified the way Spartan society rather unfairly marginalised

[38] Konstandinidis 1939b. I have not been able to find more details about this author, but he is probably the same F. Konstandinidis who had contributed to *Μακεδονικές Ημέρες* during its second year of publication with the text 'Από τα δεδομένα της τέχνης', where he discussed both Renaissance and modernist painting (see Siola 2010). A text on the painter Dimitris Vitsoris that appeared in *Νεοελληνικά Γράμματα* in 1939 and was signed by F. Th. Konstandinidis (see Chamalidi 2002: 110, footnote 567) points to the conclusion that the contributor of *H Νεολαία* was an aspiring art critic specialised in painting.
[39] This is also how Matthiopoulos (2003: 440) reads the painting *Η θανάτωση του Σωκράτη* by Yeoryios Gounaropoulos at the Athens Town Hall, which was commissioned by the dictatorship.
[40] See below, chapters 3 and 11.
[41] See Chapoutot 2016.
[42] Konstandinidis 1939b: 1139.

and humiliated one of its members as a 'coward' –to the point that he committed suicide. Finally, Konstandinidis employed Simonides' famous epigram for the dead Spartans as evidence that ancient Greeks had an anthropocentric worldview. However, the way he rendered it into Modern Greek lays emphasis on the respect for the state and for its law-imposing powers rather than on the collective of Spartan citizens that is suggested by the original.[43]

The legitimising aspirations embedded into the dictatorship's approach to some eras or polities in Greek history and particularly ancient Sparta are also made apparent through the efforts of its contemporaneous adversaries to either deconstruct its resemblance to (or association with) them or to bring to the forefront the negative aspects of those past points of reference. So, in order to deny the regime legitimacy, they sought to undermine either its connection to its alleged Hellenic blueprints or those blueprints themselves. A combination of the two approaches is found in a 1938 illegal pamphlet by the liberal politician Yeoryios Kafandaris, which led to his banishment.[44] The two most known communists at the time, Nikos Zachariadis and Dimitris Glinos, against whom Aristos Kambanis lashed out in his article in the first issue of *To Neon Kratos*, focused exclusively on the deconstruction of the regime's past models.[45] As a matter of fact, they even attempted to turn its propaganda regarding its association with ancient Sparta against its head. Zachariadis claimed that the '4th-August cultivates the psychology of the helot, it transforms the modern Greeks into helots of the plutocrats', while Glinos linked Sparta with the New State's militarism and its efforts for a wholesale militarisation of social life.[46]

[43] Konstandinidis 1939b: 1160.
[44] See Linardatos 1988: 92-93 and Carabott 2003: 34, note 8.
[45] 'Απεκτήσαμεν όλοι την ακριβήν έννοιαν της ελευθερίας. Διότι ο Γληνός δεν είναι ελεύθερος να εγκληματή κατά της Εθνικής Παιδείας. Διότι ο ασύλληπτος Ζαχαριάδης – συνελήφθη – δεν είναι ελεύθερος να φονεύη' (Kambanis 1937b: 16).
[46] See Linardatos 1988: 94, 100-101. Linardatos himself seems to adopt Zachariadis's interpretation (see for instance Linardatos 1988: 88). See also Hamilakis 2007: 191.

After Sparta, dictatorial discourse depicted the Kingdom of Macedon as the next major landmark in national history. The interest in ancient Macedonia was also manifested in state-sponsored excavations in the area of Greek Macedonia. For example, *Pnevmatiki Zoi* reported on the discovery of several Macedonian tombs around Thessaloniki in 1938 as well as of a Hellenistic graveyard in Veria in 1939.[47] Moreover, one of the main literary pieces in *I Neolea* was Kazantzakis's serialised novel *In the Years of Alexander the Great*, published pseudonymously from early February 1940 to the last issue of the periodical in late April 1941.[48] In general, Macedon was presented in Metaxist discourse as the unifier of Hellenism and disseminator of its first civilisation. However, it does not seem to have preoccupied critics extensively outside of reviews of books that thematised its history. This was the case for instance with the rave review of Vasileios Laourdas's edition of Isocrates' *Philip*. Angelomatis quoted long passages from Laourdas's introduction, laying emphasis on the Panhellenic attitude of Isocrates and the significance of Macedon's leadership as a force for national unification.[49]

All in all, Metaxist discourse appropriated to varying degrees past civilisations and states that had flourished in the south-eastern Mediterranean and particularly in areas within the borders of the modern Greek state. The political appropriation of Minoan Crete and the Kingdom of Macedon were rather novel ideological features that the Fourth-of-August regime introduced and could be understood as a continuation of Venizelist integration policies, given that both Crete and Macedonia had rather recently been annexed by the Greek state. Nonetheless, it was mainly the model of Sparta that was promoted, a model which paradoxically was mediated through foreign Laconophilia. That said, this section has demonstrated that pro-regime cultural operators instrumentalised ancient history or even prehistory for the covert

[47] [Anon.] 1938s, [Anon.] 1938y, [Anon.] 1939z.
[48] See Andreiomenos 2012.
[49] Angel. 1940c.

propagation and indirect legitimisation of the practices and ideas not only of the Greek dictatorship but also of other far-right regimes of the time.

1.2. MIDDLE AGES

Byzantium had been incorporated into Greek national history from the 1850s onward, after its treatment as the missing link in the chain of Hellenic continuity by Spyridon Zambelios and Konstandinos Paparrigopoulos.[50] Its integration in the national imaginary thus occurs at a time 'when the continuity of the Greek race is called into question and the interest in the Middle Ages and in Byzantine Studies rebounds in Europe after 1830'.[51] The early twentieth century witnessed a rekindling of preoccupation with Byzantium in connection to nationalist aspirations for the annexation of 'historically Greek' territories to the North and particularly in association with the Macedonian Struggle and the political context that eventually led to the Balkan Wars. One could include here Palamas's grand poetic syntheses of the first decade of the century and particularly *The King's Flute* (1910), as well as Pinelopi Delta's children's novels *For the Homeland* (1909) and *In the Time of the Bulgar-Slayer* (1911).[52] All these works and the interest in Byzantium that they showcased have additionally been linked to demoticism.[53]

The connection of Byzantium with the modern language and culture and its presentation as a time and a civilisation of both origin (for modern Greek vernacular) and continuity (the link between ancient and modern Greece) was still prevalent amongst literary critics that supported the New State or staffed its apparatus, who were almost exclusively demoticists. Kleon Paraschos would claim in his 'Introduction to Modern Greek lyrical poetry', published in the first issue of *Pnevmatiki Zoi*, that 'in almost the entire Byzantine period of their life, and afterwards, in all the years of slavery, the Greeks create poetry' which 'always remains … the same,

[50] See Politis 1998: 1, Huxley 1998: 17-19, Kitromilidis 1998: 27-31.
[51] Tziovas 1989: 47.
[52] See Spanaki 1998: 119.
[53] See Tziovas 1986.

in its essential features, in the people's mouth'.[54] Following on the demoticist critical tradition that had crystallised in Aristos Kambanis's *History of Modern Greek Literature*, Paraschos promoted a discourse of survivalism and continuity in his treatment of Byzantium. Moreover, his overview of past poetry seems to agree with some of the main points of Kambanis's history.[55]

This observation renders another text by Paraschos in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* that reiterated claims of continuity and origins with regard to Byzantium all the more interesting. It was a late 1938 letter to the periodical's editor that addressed the reheated question of the establishment of a separate chair of Modern Greek Literature at the University of Athens. That represented a recurring demand by Hellenocentric critics and intellectuals that would gain traction every time the political setting raised modernising hopes. In this connection, it is worth noting that the letter, which was meant to counter an earlier article by Michail Desyllas in *Nea Estia*, was published around two weeks after Metaxas had assumed the Ministry of Education. In his letter Paraschos declared that 'nobody denies that the ultimate roots of our contemporary national life are located in Byzantium and that modern Greek literature is intricately related to Byzantine, and even more so, to post-Byzantine literature'. He further asserted that the person to hold the chair of Modern Greek Literature should have adequate knowledge of Byzantine and even ancient Greek literature, 'as well as of the entire history of our nation and our entire cultural trajectory throughout the centuries'. He went on to propose Aristos Kambanis or I. M. Panayiotopoulos as fit to assume the chair of Modern Greek Literature at the University.[56] As

[54] Paraschos 1936b: 5.
[55] Those points were for instance that several old poems can only be seen as documents, historical and linguistic testimonials of their time, and that language was the most important critical tool for the approach to nineteenth-century poetry and the major distinguishing factor between the Heptanesian and the Athenian 'school'.
[56] Paraschos, 1938b: 340.

mentioned, Paraschos was working for the regime at the time as a censor of literary periodicals, while both Kambanis and Panayiotopoulos were vocal supporters of the dictatorship.[57]

Aside from language and literature, the most outspoken pro-regime intellectuals mainly brought up Byzantium as part of a chain of continuity in Greek history that was used to substantiate national essence. All the links of the chain were different but recurring manifestations of inherent traits. Karaiskaki would claim that 'it was not just the arrows of the Spartans, the javelins of the Macedonians, the swords of the Byzantines of Constantine Palaeologus, the spears of the sacred battalion, the flintlocks and scimitars of the armatoli and the klefts. … They were all set in motion by the Greek soul, a soul full of pride for its land and love for its freedom'.[58] Angelomatis employed the same pattern as evidence that the Greek youth of his time had the 'soul of the children of Sparta, of Byzantium, of 1821, of 1912, of 1922'.[59]

A key component of Metaxist discourse on Byzantium was the emphasis on its Hellenicity, something that appears in all kinds of texts. For instance Yiorgos N. Kalamatianos asserted in his 'Aesthetic analysis of Palamas's poems' that 'Byzantium in its most perfect expression is Greece'.[60] In an article revolving around the endurance of the Greek soul, Angelomatis spoke of the 'Hellenic Byzantium' that liberated Rome from the Goths, and in keeping with the eternal trait of justness that characterised Greece, returned it to its 'lawful authorities'.[61] The discussion in the sole contribution to *To Neon Kratos* about the Byzantine era

[57] For Kambanis, that was not the first time a literary critic or intellectual had proposed that he assume the chair of Modern Greek Studies, as Kostis Bastias for instance had nominated him for the post over the columns of *Ελληνικά Γράμματα* in 1929 (Bastias 1929).
[58] K. 1940.
[59] 'Στην αρχαιότητα, στην βυζαντινή περίοδο της ιστορίας μας, στα χρόνια της σκλαβιάς, στον Άγιο Αγώνα του 21, στα ελεύθερα χρόνια της Νέας Ελλάδος, σε κάθε στιγμή το Ελληνόπουλο έδειξε πως βρίσκεται στο ίδιο μαχητικό επίπεδο με τους μεγάλους, ότι έχει ικανότητες που το καθιστούν σε ωρισμένους τομείς μαχητή και πολύτιμο σύμμαχο. … τα Ελληνόπουλα του 1940 έχουν την ψυχήν των παιδιών της Σπάρτης, του Βυζαντίου, του 1821, του 1912, του 1922' (Angelomatis 1940h).
[60] Kalamatianos 1937. Yiorgos N. Kalamatianos studied philology at the university of Athens and was a regular contributor to *Pnevmatiki Zoi*. He submitted his doctoral thesis on the ancient sources of Palamas in 1939, which was not accepted by the conservative, purist academic establishment based on the flimsy excuse that Palamas was still alive. He was a member of the five-member jury for the literary competition of EON in 1940, along with the established critics and writers Kostis Bastias, Tellos Agras, Sotiris Skipis, and Yiannis Oikonomidis (see Kalerande 2016: 255, footnote 46).
[61] Angelomatis 1940c: 784.

proceeds with an analysis of the consolidation of the Greek nation and culture during the Hellenistic era in the regions of Africa and Asia that came to be parts of the Eastern Roman Empire, thus pointing to a line of continuity. By additionally delving into the compatibility of Hellenism and Christianity and the process of consolidation of the Greek language in the Byzantine Empire, the contribution ultimately revolves around demonstrating the Greek identity of Byzantium.[62]

As already suggested, Byzantium had undergone a process of appropriation akin to that of ancient Greece prior to the dictatorship, albeit to a lesser extent.[63] Under Metaxas, the Byzantine era was sometimes instrumentalised in a similar way as antiquity, in order to paint a picture of Greece as a land of civilisation surrounded by barbarians.[64] While Byzantium could not surpass the nonpareil status of classical Greece in the modern imaginary, its conceptualisation as a mix of Christian religiosity and Hellenic spirit along with the claims to its legacy made by the Greek Orthodox Church had ameliorated its otherwise subordinate position long before Metaxas. This way, the Eastern Roman Empire could be presented as the continuator of ancient Greek civilisation, the protector of national identity, and the true interpreter of Christian faith. Moreover, the identification of Byzantium with Orthodox Christianity was bolstering Greek exceptionalism. Much like the entitlement to the 'unsurpassable' heritage of ancient Greek civilisation constituted a key component of modern Greek exceptionalism, the Orthodox Church retained for itself the laurels of the 'only' true interpreter of the Christian faith, as evinced by its very name. Based both on notions of superiority, such approaches to ancient Greece and Byzantium fused into the copestone of Greek nationalism, known by the name *Ellinochristianismos*.

[62] Zakythinos 1939.
[63] See also Dimaras 1985: 323-480.
[64] See e.g. 'Αν αποκαλέσουμε τον μεσαίωνα της Δύσεως "εφιαλτική εποχή της μαύρης αμορφωσιάς και βαρβαρότητος", δεν μπορούμε να μην ειπούμε τα αντίθετα λόγια για τον μεσαίωνα τον ελληνικό, που αποτελεί –αυτός κυρίως– την εποχή μέσα στην οποία μεγαλούργησε για δεύτερη φορά το ελληνικό πνεύμα, δημιουργώντας τον δεύτερο μεγάλο πολιτισμό της Φυλής μας, με το Βυζαντινό θαύμα' (Siatopoulos 1939).

Grigorios Xenopoulos portrayed the Hagia Sophia as the wonder of medieval Hellenism that was on a par with the Parthenon, arguing that Constantinople should be called the 'New Athens' rather than the 'New Rome': 'For another Hellenic, Helleno-Christian civilisation, tantamount to the ancient one, was meant to be created there'.[65] Andonis Yialouris, in his brief essay on Cavafy and Byzantium, published in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* in late May 1938, referred to that 'so glorious civilisation of ours', stressing that 'Byzantium is indissolubly linked to Christianity and Christianity roofs over it'.[66] Conversely, Vasos Vasileiou argued that 'Orthodoxy is not internationalist, it hails from Byzantium and the Hellenic Empire, it constitutes one of the organic components of our civilisation'.[67]

It should be noted at this point that virtually all restorations of Byzantine monuments during the dictatorship concerned Orthodox churches. It seems that restorations were much more controlled by the Greek state than excavations, where the role of foreign archaeological institutes was very significant, as they had jurisdiction over some of the most important excavating sites. Therefore, restorations might reflect the regime's politics of the past more clearly. Already under Yeorgakopoulos's charge, the Ministry of Education initiated and funded several Byzantium-related projects of restoration. For example, Fotis Kondoglou was hired to work on Byzantine church restorations in Mystras every summer throughout Metaxas's premiership (1936-1940), while plans for the preservation and restoration of Byzantine monuments in Kastoria under the guidance of architect and archaeologist Anastasios Orlandos were set in motion in mid-1938.[68] Konstandinos Kotzias, who was very active in cultural policy, even pursued relevant initiatives outside the capital district. Most notably, in spring 1939 he announced

[65] '"Νέα Ρώμη" την είπαν … . Αλλά καλύτερα θα τη λέγαμε "Νέα Αθήνα". Γιατί εκεί έμελλε να δημιουργηθή ένας άλλος ελληνικός, ελληνοχριστιανικός πολιτισμός, εφάμιλλος του αρχαίου, και αντίστοιχα με τον αθάνατο Παρθενώνα της Αττικής Ακρόπολης να υψωθή εν άλλο αθάνατο μνημείο, η Αγία Σοφία' (Xenopoulos 1939: 791).
[66] Yialouris 1938c.
[67] Vasileiou 1939: 912-913.
[68] [Anon.] 1938y.

a three-year project for the restoration of Saint Demetrius church in Thessaloniki.[69] A few months later Orlandos visited and inspected the church in order to take charge of the restoration.[70]

In general, Byzantium was associated with spirituality in Metaxist discourse. According to F. Konstandinidis, the value of Byzantium consisted in the fact that 'people truly believed in God who is spirit and not matter'. That was also the base of 'the spiritual art of the Byzantines, where we see weak and unshapely bodies, which express their faith that all of nature's creatures, from the ant to the man, are imperfect, perishable and weak'.[71] Similarly, Poulianos maintained that Byzantine art was 'a reaction of spirit against matter' and that it 'reached the peak of spirituality more than any other art'.[72]

As mentioned at the beginning of this part, the proliferation of modern editions of ancient Greek works under Metaxas was coupled with publishing projects regarding Byzantine works. Publications related to Byzantium also extended to fiction, while several critics made calls for a more large-scale literary 'colonisation' of Byzantium. For instance, Yialouris would highlight that 'Byzantium, this extremely rich Greek civilisation in every respect, has not yet become the object of the appropriate literary exploitation'.[73] Aside from Yialouris himself, who had published *Χαίρε Πόλις του Παμβασιλέως (Βυζαντινό Μυθιστόρημα)* in 1935, the latter half of the 1930s and particularly the period after 1936, witnessed the publication of several Byzantine-themed works.

Nearly in every issue of *I Neolea* there was an instalment of such a novel. Michail Anastasiou was the author of the serialised novels *Nicephorus Phocas* and *The Three Friends*,

[69] [Anon.] 1939o; see also the cultural news column at the end of that same issue, p. 144.
[70] [Anon.] 1939x.
[71] 'Απ' αυτή τη στέρησι και την ταπεινοφροσύνη κι' απ' αυτή τη θερμή λατρεία για τον Θεό τον φιλεύσπλαγχνο [sic], βγήκε η πνευματική τέχνη των Βυζαντινών, όπου βλέπουμε τα κορμιά αδύνατα και κακοκαμωμένα που εκφράζουν την πίστι που είχαν οι Βυζαντινοί πως όλα τα πλάσματα της φύσεως, απ' το μυρμήγκι μέχρι τον άνθρωπο, όλα είναι ατελή, φθαρτά κι' αδύνατα' (Konstandinidis 1939b: 1139).
[72] Poulianos 1940a: 7.
[73] Yialouris 1938b: 57. Cf. Pratsikas 1936b.

published from December 1938 to early March 1940 and from mid-March 1940 until the last issue of the periodical in April 1941 respectively.[74] An anonymous note in the issue that hosted the second instalment of *Nicephorus Phocas* characteristically stated that 'our Byzantine era that remained almost unknown until the recent years, relives on the pages of the novel with all its splendour and glory'.[75] More conspicuously, Angelos Terzakis published two dramas set in Byzantium, namely *Emperor Michael* (1936) and *Cross and Sword* (1939), which were performed by the Royal Theatre or even in front of EON formations. In a speech Terzakis delivered for the members of EON that attended the last performance of his 1939 play, he emphasised Byzantium's position as a chronotope of national origin, the starting point of linguistic and religious continuity, while associating the turn to Byzantine themes with the quest for a national art.[76]

It is rather interesting that the treatment of Byzantium by pro-regime intellectuals rarely indulged in references to specific historical figures or events. One notable exception is an article by Angelomatis in June 1940, which bemoaned the excessive focus on the developments of the war in Europe that resulted in the general indifference towards the anniversary of the fall of Constantinople. He went on to juxtapose this to his own childhood, when the 29th of May was treated by the press and the church as a day of national mourning.[77] While the fall of the empire was framed as a day of national crucifixion, 'something like a Good Friday', in Angelomatis's terms in the aforementioned article, the *Palingenesia* of the 1820s was often presented as the climax of a struggle for national rebirth that had started right after the fall. In an earlier 1940 article, Angelomatis had stated this boldly and tried to substantiate it with a long list of revolts from the early 1460s to 1821.[78]

[74] See Andreiomenos 2012. The two novels appeared under the rubric 'From the Byzantine Epopee' and 'Our Byzantine Novel' respectively.
[75] [Anon.] 1939a.
[76] See Dimadis 2016: 101-102, 164.
[77] Angelomatis 1940g.
[78] Angelomatis 1940c.

At any rate, the limits between Mediaeval and Modern Hellenism were fluid. On the one hand, the origin of modern Greek nationhood and language was placed in late Byzantine history.[79] This was corroborated by means of narratives of continuity that were even articulated through the institutional arrangement of material culture. That was the case, for instance, with the museum of modern Athens ('μουσείο των νεωτέρων Αθηνών'), which was established by decree in 1939, was funded by the Ministry of the Capital District and the municipality of Athens, and was planned to showcase artefacts spanning from 'Frankokratia to the time of Otto'.[80] On the other hand, post-1453 art was often presented as a continuation or culmination of Byzantine art, as in the case of Cretan plays such as *The Sacrifice of Abraham* or El Greco's painting, who was described in Achillefs Kyrou's 1938 book *The Greeks of the Renaissance and Dominikos Theotokopoulos* as the 'last bright representative' and the 'final capstone' of Byzantine art.[81]

Overall, the treatment of Byzantium under Metaxas revolved around consolidating its Greek character, its place in Hellenism's chain of continuity, and its spirituality in the national imaginary.[82] Byzantium was more emphatically asserted as a part of national history during the dictatorship, but its treatment in Metaxist discourse remained rather peripheral in comparison to that of ancient or modern Greece. Perhaps Byzantine history had not been studied enough at the time to be given more coverage. The War of Independence, on the other hand, was regarded as a period whose study was just reaching its heyday.

[79] Apart from Paraschos's letter discussed above, this view is expressed in several texts published in pro-regime periodicals. For instance, a short biography of Nikiforos Lytras in *I Neolea* claimed with regard to Lytras's artistic quests that 'Ιδιαίτερα τον ενδιέφερε η περίοδος απ' τον Ιουστινιανό μέχρι την άλωσι, ίσως γιατί είχε αντιληφθή πως η σημερινή Ελλάδα είναι συνέχεια αυτής της εποχής' (Stalios 1939).
[80] [Anon.] 1939l.
[81] See Siatopoulos 1939 and V.[istakis] 1940 about the Cretan play. The quotation is taken from Kostas Kerofylas's highly positive review of Kyrou's book in *To Neon Kratos* (Kerofylas 1938a: 121). It is also worth noting that in 1939 the Ministry of Education (headed by the dictator at that time) launched a tendering procedure for the creation of a bust of Dominikos Theotokopoulos that was to be placed in Athens ([Anon.] 1939j). See Hadjinicolaou 1999 about nationalist appropriations of Theotokopoulos in general, both in and outside Greece.
[82] For a brief overview of Byzantium's place in Metaxist discourse see also Gounaridis 1994.

1.3. MODERN ERA

A hostile attitude towards the Enlightenment and its era prevailed under Metaxas, as it did in most authoritarian regimes of the time. According to Kambanis, 'the ideology of 1789 was not simply opposed to the hierarchised post-mediaeval world that it abolished, it was opposed to the ancient reality, which it claimed to be copying'.[83] However, the view of the Renaissance was probably much more positive, as evidenced by the high praise of Italian-Greek cultural interactions and of Ionian culture as a fusion between East and West. In addition, western Renaissance was presented as a doubly Greek creation. While the West supposedly failed in its emulation of ancient Greece during the Enlightenment, the Renaissance was not only seen in much more positive light in terms of its reliance on ancient Greece but was also framed as the result of influence from Byzantine scholars and other Greeks that migrated to the West in the sixteenth century.[84]

Yet, the most discussed period of modern history under Metaxas was perhaps the 1820s, a trend that was in tune with the Fourth-of-August's statism and self-styling both as the National State and a kind of national revolution. Christos Angelomatis highlighted the significance of recent publications on the 'Epic of 1821' and asserted that its history 'is just now being written based on the truth'. He claimed that this was because a long time is required 'before the various historical pages of the Nation are submitted to eternity in their exact form'.[85]

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[83] 'Η ιδεολογία του 1789 δεν ήτο απλώς αντίθετος προς τον ιεραρχημένον μεταμεσαιωνικόν κόσμον τον οποίον κατέλυσεν, ήτο αντίθετος προς την αρχαίαν πραγματικότητα, την οποία ισχυρίζετο ότι αντέγραφε' (Kambanis 1939: 127)

[84] See e.g. Angelomatis's review of a book by Fanis Michalopoulos on the achievements of Greeks who had migrated to the West between 1453 and 1821: 'Ξεύρουμε καλά σήμερα πως η Αναγέννησις αρχίζει ευθύς μετά την Άλωσι ή λίγο πριν με τους Έλληνας που σκόρπισαν στην Ιταλία, στην Γαλλία και σ' άλλες ευρωπαϊκές χώρες' Angel. 1940b. About the dissemination of this belief in earlier centuries see Liakos 2008: 212.

[85] 'Μου εδόθη και άλλοτε η ευκαιρία να τονίσω από την ίδιαν αυτήν στήλην την αξίαν διαφόρων συγγραφών που αναφέρονται εις το Έπος του 21 και που είδαν το φως της ημέρας τους τελευταίους καιρούς. Είναι πανθομολογημένον σήμερον ότι η Ιστορία του 21 τώρα μόλις γράφεται με βάσιν την αλήθειαν. Όχι, βεβαίως, διότι οι γράψαντες ευθύς μετά την Επανάστασιν είχον κατά νουν να παραποιήσουν την Ιστορίαν, ή ν' αλλοιώσουν ωρισμένα της κεφάλαια. Όχι, προς Θεού! Συμβαίνει όμως να υφίσταται ο συγγραφεύς υποσυνειδήτως την επίδρασιν του περιβάλλοντος ή να μη έχη τα μέσα να εξακριβώση την ιστορικήν αλήθειαν, δια τούτο ακριβώς πρέπει να διαρρεύση ένα μακρόν χρονικόν διάστημα πριν παραδοθούν εις την αιωνιότητα με την ακριβή των μορφήν αι διάφοραι ιστορικαί σελίδες του Έθνους' (An. 1940).

Several books about the Greek Revolution were published during the dictatorship. The most notable historical publications were those by the established intellectual Kostas Kerofylas and by the young and aspiring historian Kostas Kalantzis (Peloponisios), who both contributed frequently to pro-regime periodicals.[86]

The preoccupation with the 1820s revolution was also expressed in the domain of literature, with the Metaxas years witnessing a renewed wave of fictional biographies on heroes of the revolution. The lives of major figures of the War of Independence had attracted the interest of intellectuals ever since the nineteenth century, when the memoirs or biographies of many such figures were published. This was also one of the main topics of *vies romancées* in Greece and it seems to have been particularly in vogue around the time that the centenary of the Greek state was celebrated in the early 1930s. Spyros Melas was one of the main representatives of this trend, as he published three books of vies romancées from 1931 to 1933 thematising Theodoros Kolokotronis, Andreas Miaoulis, Patriarch Gregory V, Papaflessas, and Germanos of Old Patras.[87] Yiorgos Theotokas praised this writing activity of Melas in 1934 in terms that would be accepted by all Metaxist intellectuals a few years later. He claimed that Melas 'has made us conscious of the spiritual/intellectual, ethical, and social point of departure of our national existence. Thus, knowing where we come from, we will more easily feel where we are and carve out our path from now on'. [88] During the Metaxas dictatorship, Melas wrote the theatre play *Papaflessas*, which was performed by the Royal Theatre in 1937 and published in book form the following year.[89] Moreover, Sitsa Karaiskaki published a novel on Yeoryios Karaiskakis in 1939, which was widely advertised and largely acclaimed by critics.[90]

[86] E.g. Kerofylas 1938b, Kalantzis 1936, 1938, 1939.
[87] Melas 1931, 1932, 1933a.
[88] Theotokas 1934: 919.
[89] Melas 1938.
[90] Karaiskaki 1939d.

Apart from major figures, the cult of sites related to the 1821 revolution was also promoted during the dictatorship. In the spring of 1937 it was reported in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* that, 'on the occasion of the celebration of the Missolonghi exodus, the Government decreed that Missolonghi be renamed as "Sacred city of Greece"'.[91] This is indicative of the fact that it was not just the Greek past that was appropriated symbolically during the dictatorship but the contemporary interior of Greece as well. Alongside national time, national space too was marked, with some places that were associated with privileged historic events being endowed with symbolic capital –or having their existing symbolic significance officially recognised and even legally sanctioned. The way this sanctioning was formulated in the case of Missolonghi upheld the sort of national mysticism that was generally promoted by the regime.

The siege of Missolonghi had long been associated with the realm of ethics and spirit because of the exodus. During the dictatorship, literary critics and other intellectuals repeatedly turned to the siege of Missolonghi, emphasising its symbolic wealth. In September 1936, Yeoryios Pratsikas described the Missolonghi exodus as a part of national history that still awaits to be fully exploited by modern Greek prose writers in order to produce 'pages vibrating with enthusiasm and faith'.[92] Stratis Myrivilis's contribution to the 25 March 1939 issue of *I Neolea* typified the approach of pro-regime intellectuals to the revolutionary history of the 'Sacred city of Greece' and the way it was laden with symbolic value.

Myrivilis portrayed the exodus as the 'apotheosis' of the besieged, 'those holy fighters' who entered eternity through their very death, and as 'the final act of the sacred drama'. He framed this act as a vocalisation of Hellenism's truest identity that proved to the world the link of the 1820s fighters with Thermopylae and Marathon and was raised to a 'symbol of universal nobility and virtue'. In fact, he held that this expression of eternal Greece surpassed its ancient

[91] [Anon.] 1937c.
[92] Pratsikas 1936b.

antecedents, has inspired those who comprehend 'the sacredness of manly pride', and should be seen as a loadstar by his contemporary youth.[93] In short, Metaxist cultural operators posited the Missolonghi events as an obligatory source of inspiration both in life and in art, a resource to be exploited for the creation of new Greek epics in both senses of the word: as a literary composition and as a heroic struggle. The fact that the revolutionary history of Missolonghi was understood as eternalising the ideals of self-sacrifice and duty even led to lamentations about the role that *The Free Besieged* would have played had it been completed, as we will see in the following chapter.

Something that nationalists sought after in the past was manifestations of organic unity. In modern Greek history it was the Revolution that was sometimes presented as such a case, although the Balkan Wars were more often associated with national unity, as I will discuss below. A note in the 25 March 1938 issue of *Pnevmatiki Zoi* declared that the national holiday should not only be linked to national liberation but should be seen as a symbol of national unity, of the synergy of all national forces 'for the materialisation of an ideal higher civilisation, following in the tracks of the eternal traditions of our race'. While Melis Nikolaidis's periodical focused on the symbolic and explicitly performative function of the Greek Revolution as a chronotope of national unity by adding that only this framing of the day would facilitate the 'ever deeper awareness of our duties and our purpose',[94] others promoted a historical account of the outbreak of the revolution through the lens of national unity.[95]

The next landmark in modern national history that was appropriated by Metaxist discourse, indeed constituting a major distinguishing feature of the Fourth-of-August regime, was

[93] Myrivilis 1939.
[94] [Anon.] 1938o.
[95] Describing the eruption of the revolution in Patras, Dionysios Kokkinos had claimed in his 25 March 1939 contribution to *I Neolea* that both the locals and those born elsewhere immediately headed the call to arms. He then went on to assert that 'it was not a movement of few captains. It was the Revolution of the Greeks. Everyone was kneeling in front of the cross and reciting the oath. Respected primates and imposing clerics, boatmen, craftsmen, servicemen'. Kokkinos 1939: 783.

Kapodistrias and his 'Hellenic State' (Ελληνική Πολιτεία). As the Metaxist treatment of Kapodistrias's governorship is intrinsically linked to both idiosyncratic narratives of continuity and to Great Man theory, it will be elaborated upon in the following chapter. Returning to the main segments of modern Greek history that were venerated during the dictatorship, it should be noted that the Greek Revolution had been established as a 'reference point that can sensitise collective memory' long before 1936, while the Balkan Wars were seen as its 'complement'. In fact, what had been constructed in the public imaginary was a 'unified image of the liberation struggle, which lasts from 1821 to 1913'.[96] Yet, the Balkan Wars were not just integrated in the dictatorship's narratives on the past so much as the continuation or culmination of the Greek War of independence, as they were invested with mythical and motivational attributes pointing to the value of 'national unity'.

The Balkan Wars constituted the point of origin within a tripartite narrative of the Greek twentieth century. They represented the moment of exemplary national unity, followed by the National Schism and other subsequent tensions (Old Greece vs New Lands, locals vs refugees etc.). The third part of this narrative was the termination of the Schism and the restoration of national unity, which the regime claimed as its achievement, as we shall see in chapter six. In his speech on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the annexation of Thessaloniki, the dictator similarly pointed to a conception of the Balkan Wars as a continuation of the War of Independence while framing the coup as a further link in that chain of continuity. The two events had 'essentially the same aim': If on 26 October 1912 that aim was 'the independence of the Greek land', on 4 August 1936 it was 'the rebirth of Greece from the degeneration it had meanwhile fallen into'.[97] Aristos Kambanis almost three years later would present the Balkan

[96] Stavridi-Patrikiou 2008: 211.
[97] Metaxas 1969a: 82. It is interesting that Metaxas started this speech with an almost literary account of the events immediately preceding the capitulation of Thessaloniki in 1912. The knowledge of the man who was present and witnessed the events first-hand as a high-ranking military officer is pointed to both through the details in the narrative and explicit mentions of the fact that Metaxas was there when the city was liberated.

Wars as a 'fortunate parenthesis of national discipline under the King who headed the Greek Armies'.[98] As we will see in chapter six, Kambanis also integrated 1912 in his discourse as a yardstick of national unity, a unity that the dictatorship had purportedly restored and which would be demonstrated again in case of war.

Thus, the immediate past was condemned in Metaxist discourse, particularly the period after the Balkan wars. However, this condemnation also applied considerably to the nineteenth century, as evinced by the regime's association only with the revolution and Kapodistrias and by its tendency to reinvigorate aspects of the pre-1912 national(ist) project which was seen as insufficient and incomplete on the whole. Relevant to such conceptions is the designation of the Venizelist period as a 'failed experiment'; after its failure, which was viewed through the lens of determinism (the experiment was bound to fail), what was required was a 'reconnection forward'.[99] Similarly, parliamentarianism was portrayed as a failed experiment and the Metaxas regime as a continuation of Kapodistrias's rule. Thus, the path towards modernity was defined as a connection of broken threads, as a reversal of multiple ruptures of the past: the post-1915 rupture of national unity, the post-Venizelos rupture in the domination of conservative/royalist nationalism, the post-Kapodistrias rupture in authoritarian rule.

This reversal was supplemented by the renegotiation of the modern Greek past, the erasure, marginalisation or denigration of certain of its facets and the promotion of others. For example, Eleftherios Venizelos was dissociated from the triumph of the Balkan Wars and King Constantine was presented as 'the king of victory', picking up a royalist theme that had started taking shape already in the 1910s. At the same time, Venizelos's achievements in the 1910s were not rarely read in terms similar to the reading of Periclean Athens. Beneath the democratic

[98] 'Από των ημερών του Τρικούπη μέχρι της παλινορθώσεως του 1935 είδομεν επανειλημμένως πολεμικάς ήττας, προνουντσιαμέντα, εμφυλίους συρράξεις, αυτόν τον κίνδυνον του διαμελισμού. Υπάρχει βέβαια και η διετία του 1912-1913, αλλ' ήτο αυτή μία ευτυχής παρένθεσις εθνικής πειθαρχίας υπό τον Βασιλέα που ηγήθη των Ελληνικών Στρατιών. Όταν η πειθαρχία εκείνη διεκυβεύθη συνέβησαν όσα ημείς οι πρεσβύτεροι εζήσαμεν και απευχόμεθα να τα ζήσουν οι νεώτεροί μας' (Kambanis 1939: 133).
[99] See chapter 10.

veneer, Venizelos was acting as an authoritarian most of his time in office.[100] What is more, lines of continuity were pointed to through bringing back to light forgotten figures of the modern past that shared some idea(l)s with the regime, e.g. the nineteenth-century antiparliamentarian journalist and intellectual Anastasios Vyzantios.[101] In other words, there was an attempt to construct genealogies even within the periods that were generally condemned, a topic which will be further discussed in the next chapter.

In sum, Metaxist discourse on the modern Greek past focused on the 1820s and the Balkan Wars, largely cancelling out the rest of the nineteenth century and the interwar period. Whenever not cancelled or outright condemned, segments of modern political history were integrated in a nationalist, authoritarian framework that was supposed to explain their achievements. Despite this extremely negative approach to the recent political past, however, cultural history had a better fate under Metaxas and, as we will see in chapter two, there were attempts to incorporate significant parts of it in the new canon that was to be accepted in the new era that had supposedly started in 1936.

CONCLUSION

The above analysis corroborates the Fourth-of-August regime's highly eclectic approach to the Greek past.[102] The dictatorship and its followers amongst the intelligentsia were not glorifying every aspect of Hellenic history but picking some phases and facets that would befit the regime's present needs and futural visions. This chapter has also shown that pro-regime cultural

[100] See e.g. 'η μετά την εναντίον του κοινοβουλευτισμού εξέγερσιν του Γουδή εποχή ήτο περίοδος *μετημφιεσμένης δικτατορίας*' (Kambanis 1937c: 215-216; emphasis in the original); 'Αν τω 1912 επετύχαμεν, οφείλεται εις το ότι την υστεραίαν μιας κοινοβουλευτικής επαναστάσεως, καταλυσάσης τα κόμματα, την υστεραίαν του 1909, είχε συγκεντρωθή η εξουσία εις άνδρα συνεργαζόμενον με μίαν Βουλήν που δεν ήτο Βουλή, αλλά υποπόδιον των ποδών του' (Kambanis 1938a: 147). Also, Koumaros & Mantzoufas (1938: 810) asserted that 'prime ministerial dictatorships' were not uncommon in Greek politics, referring only to Venizelos's premierships (1911-1915, 1917-1920, and 1928 onwards). They even cited Alexandros Svolos's 1928 treatise *Το Νέον Σύνταγμα και αι βάσεις του Πολιτεύματος* with regard to the 1910s (ibid., footnote 106), although Svolos was then in internal exile.
[101] See Kambanis 1937c. It is worth noting that the first amongst many laudatory references to Kapodistrias in Kambanis's texts in *Το Νέον Κράτος* was actually a quote by Anastasios Vyzantios (Kambanis 1937c: 212).
[102] See also Ploumidis 2016: 60-61.

operators had substantial leeway to promote discourses on the past that seemed compatible to the regime's agenda but were either borrowed from foreign fascisms or sought to indirectly legitimise the wider turn towards fascism in Europe.

The main aspects of the past that were appropriated by the Fourth-of-August regime and promoted as components of its own scheme of national history were the Minoan civilisation as the beginning of the Hellenic civilisation, classical Sparta as the summit of discipline, and the Kingdom of Macedon, which for the first time united the Greeks within a single political entity. Apart from its emphasis on the statism and chiefly the religiousness of Byzantium, Metaxist discourse did not significantly alter the secondary position of the 'Second Hellenic Civilisation' compared to the First. Both the dictator and pro-regime intellectuals referred much less to Byzantine history than they did to ancient or modern Greek history. As for the modern Greek past, the temporal units that were most venerated in Metaxist discourse were the years 1821-1831 and 1912-1913, which were associated with patriotism and national unity, all the while the dictatorship was framed as their continuation.

- CHAPTER 2 -

Modes of historical representation

This chapter examines different ways of presenting and understanding the past that are traced in the texts of pro-regime cultural operators. It argues that these 'theories of history' served to substantiate ideological positions that were part and parcel of the regime's worldview. In some cases, they aided intellectuals in their efforts to introduce new elements into the hegemonic ideology in a manner that was in tune with the dominant modes of historical representation. Thus, history was used as evidence for claims regarding continuity, essence, or the significance of charismatic leaders in politics as well as in culture.

The chapter is divided into three sections, each one centring on a particular mode of historical representation that was employed in Metaxist discourse. Even as this tripartite section breakdown is adopted for the sake of the analysis here, the discussion throughout the chapter also demonstrates how these modes often intersected. The first section deals with linear perceptions of history and the ways they intertwined with discursive formations related to continuity and organicism. The second one offers diverse examples of how the theory that 'Great Men' are the driving force of history was applied during the dictatorship. The third section revolves around cyclical conceptions of national history as the eternal, recurring struggle of Hellenism against barbarity, and of human history as premised on cycles of rise and fall.

2.1. HISTORY AS LINEAR PROGRESSION

Secular history is intricately linked to conceptions of linear progression. In the case of Greece, continuity and organicism were two frameworks that had been fused with linear conceptions

of history already in the nineteenth century.[1] As we will see below, such conceptions often combined questions of origins with the Greek 'continuity syndrome' in pro-regime discourse, and could therefore be seen as forming a 'total history'.[2] Rather interestingly, long narratives of continuity were particularly offered to the readership of *I Neolea* around the national celebrations of 25 March and 4 August.

One characteristic case was that of Grigorios Xenopoulos's contribution to the special issue of 25 March 1939. Xenopoulos's narrative began with prehistory and the presence of Pelasgians in the land inhabited by the modern Greeks. The Pelasgians were portrayed as a different race that was subjugated by 'another people, stronger, more militant' that came from the north. Thus, the Greeks were not presented as autochthonous; what was projected was their supremacy, which led to their expansion throughout the Mediterranean and to the creation of 'the highest, most perfect civilisation'. After Alexander the Great, Hellenism declined, only to rise again in the middle ages and create another great civilisation, the Byzantine or 'Helleno-Christian' civilisation. Despite the fall of the empire in the fifteenth century, 'the power of Hellenism was retained and emerged victorious once more' in the 1820s. Xenopoulos subsequently claimed that the modern Greek state 'evolved and progressed', becoming 'nowadays one of the most significant in the Balkans'. He pointed again to Hellenism's exceptionalism, by asserting that 'Modern Greek Literature … is superior to any other Balkan literature'. Xenopoulos even overtly demonstrated the utilitarianism and didacticism that underpinned his overview of the Hellenic past, stating that 'it must make us hopeful and optimistic for the future. For it shows us very clearly the power and immortality' of the Greek nation.[3]

Another indicative text is that by Konstandinos Faltaits on 19 August of that same year, which was occasioned by the 4th August festivities at the Panathenaic Stadium and the way

[1] See Liakos 2008: 206-208.
[2] See Tziovas 1986: 90.
[3] Xenopoulos 1939: 791.

they showcased the Greek past and tradition. Similarly to Xenopoulos, Faltaits asseverated that 'Greece developed the most beautiful and noblest human civilisation, with a continuous duration of four and a half or five thousand years'. The author posited the Minoan civilisation as the beginning of Greek history, moving on to a rather confusing sequence of Mycenaeans, Achaeans, and Dorians. He then extolled the classical Greek era, which he extended all the way up to 300 A.D., dismissing the appellation of most of this period as 'Roman' on the grounds that it was culturally Greek. Faltaits also claimed that both in the classical and the Byzantine era, Greek civilisation spread 'everywhere', and, albeit restricted, it was preserved throughout the centuries of foreign occupation that started in 1204.[4]

The ending of both these texts is rather revealing of the instrumentalisation of such narratives in order to endow the dictatorship with legitimacy. Xenopoulos had closed his article with an avouchment that the 'free State that was created' after the war of independence 'will be eternal', adding that 'after the 4th of August, the memory of the 25th of March must inspire even greater hopes for the future'.[5] Like Xenopoulos's narrative of continuity, Faltaits's narrative ends with the New State as the last link in this chain of continuity and the portrayal of the 4th of August as the beginning of a new, revitalising and hopeful era for the Greek nation.[6]

The obverse of the Greek continuity syndrome is found in the fear of change or 'metathesiophobia' that characterised several pro-regime cultural operators. This is why, although the dictatorship favoured creativity and novelty to a considerable extent, it usually posited its experimentations as instances of continuity or recurrence of elements from the national past. Even when the regime's novel features were exalted, they were often presented as fulfilling the nation's organic or vital needs in the present rather than constituting a radical break with its development throughout the centuries.

[4] Faltaits 1939: 1461.
[5] Xenopoulos 1939: 808.
[6] Faltaits 1939: 1461, 1479.

In his review of a 1939 painting exhibition, Dimitris Poulianos fell back on ancient Greek art before Phidias and early Egyptian art, claiming that one notices the evolution of art, but 'new elements are ingested with the uttermost restraint; and only after they have been adjusted to indigenous thought'. Moreover, he portrayed the transition from Byzantine to Renaissance art in a similar light, emphasising its gradualism.[7]

Vasos Vasileiou also registered fears of change and their interrelation with questions of continuity when he exclaimed that some modern Greek writers 'are in a hurry to bring a vanguard from foreign aristocratic paths, without any continuation with the trajectory that we have traversed'. According to the critic, 'the life history of Modern Greek Literature in the last ten years is being pushed into an evolution that is not very normal'.[8] Vasileiou's claims are typical of the conservative 'anxiety about change': such argumentation typifies 'the urge to distinguish between unnatural and *natural change*', with natural change being 'modelled on continuous organic growth'.[9] The wider discussion on change, whether literary, artistic, social or political, was largely defined by the discourses of evolutionism and organicism, as indicated through the constant employment of terms like 'evolution' and 'natural'. Within this framework, even Vasileiou's reference to 'cultivated peoples' is to be seen as carrying additional connotations aside from the common metaphorical usage of the adjective 'cultivated'.

A few lines further down in that same 1938 essay by Vasileiou there is also mention of the reception of 'a civilisation anomalous in its origin'. Apart from reiterating the question of the 'natural' or 'unnatural' as such, this phrase points more clearly to the issue of foreign influences as potential interferences in the organic growth of indigenous phenomena leading to abnormalities and deformations. The same principle underlies the negative discussions of parliamentarianism as a political system which did not grow naturally from Greek realities, from

[7] Poulianos 1939a.
[8] Vasileiou 1938: 865.
[9] Freeden 2003: 88 (emphasis in the original).

the Greek soil, but was 'transplanted' from abroad.[10] In this light, what might at first appear as an inane excuse for authoritarianism can be seen as being completely in line with a widely accepted framework of analysis and understanding at the time, and as a way to condemn parliamentarianism while retaining good relations with Great Britain. Whereas parliamentarianism was presented as an organic outgrowth of the British soil and the result of gradual, century-old socio-political evolution, it supposedly did not befit Greece whose historical path had been different.

Organicist narratives of continuity and evolution were particularly promoted by pro-regime intellectuals with respect to the demotic language. Such narratives seem to not have any elements of novelty but to be rather replications of decades-old demoticist discourse.[11] For instance, Xenopoulos maintained in his 1939 contribution to *I Neolea* that demotic is nothing else 'but the ancient language of Homer and Plato, the language of the Gods, as it evolved with time and according to the linguistic laws'.[12] Angelomatis interjected his obituary for Zacharias Papandoniou in the same periodical with similar remarks. He presented a line of continuity from the language of Hesiod to Homer, and from there to the language of the tragedians, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch, and the 'Alexandrians', which extended through *Koine* to Byzantium and then to demotic, 'the natural evolution' and 'legitimate child of ancient Greek'. Additionally, Angelomatis did not hesitate to attack purists, arguing that they seek to 'erase at a stroke historical laws, linguistic rules, truth itself'.[13]

In keeping with the organic model was also the emphasis put on the assimilation of compatible and beneficial foreign elements that Hellenism had displayed throughout its long life. An organism full of health, strength, and vitality can assimilate foreign elements, while

[10] See e.g. 'Υπήρξεν μέγα σφάλμα η εμφύτευσις του βρετανικού κοινοβουλευτισμού –του θαυματουργούντος εν τη χώρα της καταγωγής του– εις την Ευρώπην και εις άλλας χώρας' (Nikoloudis 1937: 1).
[11] See Tziovas 1986 about the employment of such narratives by demoticists already in the late-nineteenth century.
[12] Xenopoulos 1939: 808.
[13] Angelomatis 1940a.

having the capacity to select the ones that fit its composure. This logic was applied mostly to cultural history in all its manifestations ranging from language to music and from visual arts to literature. Several pro-regime intellectuals acknowledged that the ancient Greek civilisation did not constitute a case of parthenogenesis but rather relied on previous civilisations of the Near East. According to Xenopoulos, ancient Hellenism initially borrowed the materials that allowed it to create its civilisation from the Phoenicians and the Egyptians.[14] Dimitris Poulianos also claimed that ancient Greek thought and art 'took plentiful elements from the surrounding known countries that had preceded in civilisation'.[15] Similarly, Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas depicted the 'century of Pericles' as the 'ripe fruit' of a process of organic evolution that did not exclude foreign influences. On the contrary, 'the Asian and Egyptian contribution as well as the primitive art of Africa meet, clash, prevail, fuse, and in the end get assimilated'.[16]

In the domain of language, Xenopoulos argued that modern Greek included many foreign words, but it had assimilated them, making them 'Romaic'.[17] An anonymous 1939 article in *I Neolea* entitled 'Our music' lashed out against the tendency to indiscriminately import western music and to westernise Greek church music. At the same time, it dismissed the argument that oriental elements had 'adulterated' Byzantine music during Ottoman rule, claiming that, even if that was true, it was in harmony with the oriental character of Greek music, and such elements 'do not tamper with its form'.[18]

[14] Xenopoulos 1939: 791.
[15] Poulianos 1939c.
[16] Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938: 131.
[17] Xenopoulos 1939: 808.
[18] [Anon.] 1939n. It is worth noting that the author referred to those who call for what he saw as the westernisation of Byzantine music as 'Ευρωπαίοι-Έλληνες'. Compare the following note from *Πνευματική Ζωή* where a similar view is expressed with relation to language: 'Τι είναι αυτός ο "Πατριωτικός Όμιλος", που έχει αναλάβει την εκκαθάριση της γλώσσας μας από τις ξένες λέξεις κι' εκφράσεις; … αισθανόμαστε μεγάλην ανησυχία. Είναι τόσο πικρή η πείρα που έχουμε από τους διάφορους εκκαθαριστές που παρουσιάστηκαν ως τώρα! Αν εννοούν -κι' ευχόμαστε να είναι αυτό που εννοούν- να κτυπήσουν την ανόητη και γελοία ξενομανία, που κάνει μερικούς ψευτοέλληνες να μιλούν με τα γνωστά κι' ανεκδιήγητα "αλαμπουρνέζικα", είμαστε σύμφωνοι μαζί τους και πρόθυμοι να πάρουμε κι' εμείς μαστίγιο για τους κωμικούς αυτούς τύπους. Αν πρόκειται όμως για ευρύτερη εκκαθάριση από τις ξένες λέξεις, που με τον καιρό και τις διάφορες εθνικές περιπέτειες έχουν εισχωρήσει στη γλώσσα μας κι' έχουν συγχωνευθεί κι' αφομοιωθεί μαζί της, ο Θεός να βάλει το χέρι του' ([Anon.] 1940e).

Thus, many pro-regime critics and intellectuals fitted the theme of assimilation into an organic model. This theme will be picked up in the last section, as it was often presented as a recurring preamble to the rise of great civilisations; and conversely, either the loss of ability to assimilate or the lack of openness to external elements which could usefully be assimilated was portrayed as a catalyst for decadence and fall. However, there is another interesting issue that was in keeping with the organic model. Namely the claims about hypothetical history were based on a trajectory of organic growth that was supposedly bound to lead to this or that historical development had it not been thwarted by external factors. For instance, Angelomatis maintained that 'had it not been for the parenthesis of the scholars of the late 17th and the early 18th century, who fantasised that a return to the Attic dialect was possible, our language, the modern written language, would have been formed physiologically'.[19]

During the Metaxas years, some painters who also published aesthetic essays and exhibition reviews would point to a connection of the modernist techniques they had espoused with ancient Greek art. This connection was made to legitimise especially various forms of abstraction as compatible with the production of national art. According to Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas, 'abstract recreation' rather than 'photographic representation' characterised all Greek art until the time of Phidias, while Dimitris Z. Poulianos would go even further, venturing into alternative history. Whereas Chatzikyriakos-Gikas laid emphasis on the stages of art all the way up to classical art, Poulianos inferred from classical art the characteristics of a Greek art that was to be after the classical era. This was a kind of abstract art that would have materialised, had it not been for the 'political events that brought about the cultural decline' of ancient

[19] A. 1940b. The word translated here as 'physiologically' is 'φυσιολογικά', which is usually translated as 'normally'. I have opted for the adverb physiologically as it pertains to organic processes, a connotation that is obvious in the original but would be lost to the reader had I chosen the most common rendering of the word into English.

Greece. Thus, Poulianos posited a certain form of abstraction as a higher stage of artistic evolution rather than a preamble to or an equivalent of 'classical' art.[20]

In short, this section has analysed linear perceptions of time manifested in narratives of continuity, organic evolution, and assimilation as components of the Metaxist preoccupation to (re)align national culture and politics with a supposed trajectory of continuity. As we will see in the next section, this obsession with continuity manifested also in the discussion of Great Men and the implicit or explicit attempts to arrange them in genealogies.

2.2. GREAT MAN THEORY

Thomas Carlyle is often considered the intellectual who inaugurated 'leadership studies' with the 'model of individual heroism' he put forward in the mid-nineteenth century.[21] In his first lecture on the topic of 'Heroes, hero worship, and the heroic in history' in 1840, Carlyle had claimed that 'Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom, the History of Great Men …; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt into the Great Men sent into the world'.[22] Carlyle's theory prevailed in leadership studies until WWII, something that has in part been attributed to the human tendency to 'hanker after simple solutions to complex problems'.[23]

Aside from leadership studies, however, Carlyle's conception of history had a significant impact on Greek intellectual circles. Carlylean notions of leadership were also influential

[20] See Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938: 130-131 and 'Μου φαίνεται πως οι αρχαίοι Έλληνες, αν δεν μεσολαβούσαν τα πολιτικά εκείνα γεγονότα που έφεραν την παρακμή και κατέστρεψαν τον πολιτισμό τους, σίγουρα θα σπρώχναν την αναζήτηση από τον ρυθμό στην αφηρημένη τέχνη, όχι όμως άκρατη και ανόητη, αλλά με ρυθμό ακόμη γενικότερο στη μορφολογική του πλευρά. Απόδειξη ότι στα γλυπτά και προ παντός στα αγγεία –έδαφος προσφορότερο για άπλωμα των νέων τάσεων ενός ρυθμού,– βλέπουμε ένα είδος μορφολογικής αφαίρεσης ή μάλλον καθαρή τάση γι' αυτή' (Poulianos 1939d).
[21] Grint 2010: 40.
[22] Carlyle 2007: 1
[23] Grint 2010: 83.

amongst interwar literary critics, such as Yiannis Apostolakis and Kostis Bastias.[24] If the 'epic tone' Theotokas had attributed to Melas's writings on revolutionary figures in 1934 is pertinent to the discussion in the previous chapter, his framing of Melas's protagonists as 'Carlylean heroes' is indicative of the circulation of Carlyle's theory of Great Men in interwar Greece.[25]

Given that both the political system and leadership of Greece in the century before the dictatorship was condemned in Metaxist discourse, a conceptualisation of Greek political history as the history of Great Men could not be applied beyond the revolution. The only exception was the first governor of Greece, Ioannis Kapodistrias. The dictatorship itself was presented as the continuation of Kapodistrias's rule and the background and image-making of Metaxas had certain parallels with Count Kapodistrias. Not only both men hailed from the Ionian Islands, but Metaxas had adopted the title 'National Governor', while dictatorial propaganda did not hesitate to emphasise Metaxas's aristocratic descent.

In a 1938 article, Aristos Kambanis claimed that 'starting two years ago, the idea of the State has relived here in the way it was dreamt of by the greatest politician of the Greek 19th century, Kapodistrias'.[26] The author then went on to elaborate on correspondences he traced between the time of Kapodistrias and his own time, only to emphasise subsequently that 'the analogies between Kapodistrias and Metaxas are not external'; they have to do with the salvation of Greece through the 'concentration of power in the hands of a strong man'.[27] The usual encomium of autocracy was combined here with the haunting spectre of a civil war, which had been allegedly prevented due to the 4 August coup. These issues as well as 'enlightened despotism', which constituted an implicit link between Kapodistrias and Metaxas, will be discussed further in subsequent chapters of the thesis. At this point, it is useful to note that Kapodistrias has been explicitly analysed from a far-right perspective in relation to the concept of

[24] See also here, Introduction. About Apostolakis's influence from Carlyle see Tziovas 2003.
[25] Theotokas 1934: 918-919.
[26] Kambanis 1938e: 869.
[27] Kambanis 1938e: 870.

enlightened despotism even in the post-WWII period, while Metaxas and his government were often depicted as combining illuminated thought with strong will and ample power by pro-regime intellectuals such as Melis Nikolaidis or Kostis Bastias.[28] In general, the dictatorship was presented as the continuation or resumption of Kapodistrias's state and parallels were often drawn between Metaxas and Kapodistrias, particularly by Nikoloudis and Kambanis.[29]

For the regime the line of continuity in Greek political history was broken with the assassination of Kapodistrias. However, its supporters amongst the intelligentsia paid homage to several historical figures who acted in the century between the rule of Kapodistrias and that of Metaxas. These were mostly 'Great Men' acting in the domain of culture. The two first ones had also lived through the time of Kapodistrias's rule, although none of them resided in the Greek state. Those were the 'poets of the Greek Revolution',[30] Andreas Kalvos and Dionysios Solomos, who expressed the 'spirit of the 1820s' in the domain of literature, much like Kapodistrias did in that of politics.

The interest in Andreas Kalvos during the Metaxas years seems to have spiked to the extent that Marietta Eptanisia exclaimed in a mid-1938 review that 'lately there are writings

[28] Tsakonas n.d.. See also Tsakonas 1962: 59-64. Dimitrios Tsakonas was one of the most characteristic successors of pre-WWII Greek fascistic thought, who served in various ministerial posts from 1969 to 1974. In several cases of far-right intellectuals and men of letters of the pre-war period, Tsakonas constitutes one of the main sources we still have today on those little-researched personalities. Despite his work's obvious deficiencies, I consider Tsakonas a somewhat useful source in both phases of his work, which I would divide based on the collapse of the Junta in 1974. The first phase, when he was advocating a Greek variant of national socialism relying on the communal tradition of Orthodox Christianity, focuses precisely on the intellectuals whom he felt closest to ideologically and wanted to enlist in his nationalist genealogy. The second phase is much more moderate and characterised by Tsakonas's (implicit) disillusionment with his previous politico-ideological project but is often marked by sizeable –albeit perfunctory– primary research on an impressive number of mostly interwar intellectuals. About Tsakonas's work and especially his relation to the Colonels regime see Meletopoulos 2008: 243-255.

[29] Kambanis elaborated in a later article that 'the State we established on 4 August was the one that had been extirpated by kodjabashism on the day of Kapodistrias's death' (Kambanis 1938g: 1022). Parallels between Metaxas and Kapodistrias are constant in Kambanis's contributions to *To Neon Kratos*, some of which were originally delivered as lectures either at Parnassos or at the Panteios School of Political Sciences, where Kambanis was appointed professor of National Education (Εθνική Αγωγή) in 1939. See Kambanis 1938b: 263, 1938f: 869-870, 1938h: 1022, 1940a: 502. Theologos Nikoloudis delivered several speeches in which he paralleled Kapodistrias with Metaxas and presented the latter as the successor to the former. See Koulouri & Loukos 1996: 129-130 where two such speeches from 1937 are partly quoted and a lecture by Kambanis containing a similar parallelism is cited, all subsequently published in the newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*.

[30] Kambanis 1938d: 169.

and speeches on Kalvos everywhere'.[31] The prevailing trend was one of appropriating Kalvos in the new canon that was under construction within the frames of the Fourth-of-August regime, and several discussions revolved around discrediting Apostolakis's extremely negative assessments. For instance, I. M. Panayiotopoulos rebutted Apostolakis without mentioning his name, but the allusion is clear, as Panayiotopoulos juxtaposed his appraisal of Kalvos to that of negative critics and he discussed Kalvos alongside Krystallis, another poet that had recently been harshly criticised by Apostolakis.[32] Theodoros Xydis, on the other hand, openly undertook the task to deconstruct Apostolakis in his 'Response to the critique of Kalvos by Mr Yiannis Apostolakis'.[33] In this context of appropriation and reverence, the Metaxas years also witnessed an initiative to return Kalvos's remains to his birthplace on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the annexation of the Ionian Islands in 1939, privileging again his connection with the struggle for liberation and unification of Greece.[34]

Dionysios Solomos had been established as the national poet long before the dictatorship. The new regime, however, attempted to appropriate him and draw on the symbolic capital he had been invested with in order to promote its own ideology and legitimise itself as the guardian of national culture and successor of the national poet's spirit. Less than a year after the coup, the Ministry of Education decreed that the poet's image be hung up in all state schools, thus increasing and officialising the tendency for his idolisation while asserting his symbolic position in the Greek 'pantheon' (given that this was a practice associated with holy figures).[35]

[31] Eptanisia 1938.
[32] Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1655-1657. See below, footnote 50 about the opposition to Apostolakis's critique of Krystallis.
[33] Xydis 1939a, 1939b.
[34] [Anon.] 1938ad, [Anon.] 1938ah, [Anon.] 1939e. The initiative did not materialise; it would be approximately two decades later and with action taken by the ambassador and poet Yiorgos Seferis that Kalvos's remains would be returned to Greece.
[35] [Anon.] 1937c.

A 26 May 1938 radio broadcast by Aristos Kambanis entitled 'The national poet', which was subsequently published in the periodical *Ionios Antholoyia*, is particularly interesting in this connection. The appropriation of Solomos in order to legitimise the dictatorship's own ideology is most evident in Kambanis's reading of the *Free Besieged*. The critic claimed that Solomos was trying to provide an example of his aesthetics through this poem, 'an aesthetics that believed that the subjective element has to disappear in the work, that passion has to submit to the meaning of Art, like the citizen has to submit to Duty'.[36] Kambanis thus inferred that the *Free Besieged*, had it been completed, would have been 'the lyrical epopee of Duty', while he attributed to Solomos a will for 'self-discipline' in attempting its writing.[37]

The fragmentariness of Solomos's oeuvre was posited by Kambanis as 'the greatest misfortune' in Greek cultural history. In his final remarks, the critic linked Solomos to Kapodistrias, describing them both as 'founders' (one of the modern Greek state and the other of modern Greek literature) while engaging in hypothetical history. If these two men had managed to complete their work, 'the Nation would have been spared great cultural and political adventures, … moral and aesthetic anarchy'. Nonetheless, they serve as exemplars, according to Kambanis, as they allegedly both aimed at 'disciplined freedom, the subordination of the part to the whole, the familiarisation of the Greek with the need for personal sacrifice'. Wrapping up the indirect association of these 'great Heptanesians' with the new regime (and, one assumes, its Heptanesian leader), the critic concluded in this way: 'The 4th August is like a return to the spirit of Kapodistrias and Solomos'.[38]

Aristotelis Valaoritis had also been considered as a national poet in the nineteenth century, but his status had been contested much more than that of Solomos, while the interwar years witnessed a significant decline in his prestige and in positive discussions of his work and

[36] Kambanis 1938d: 172.
[37] Kambanis 1938d: 173.
[38] Kambanis 1938d: 173.

his contribution to Greek culture.[39] Valaoritis and the Heptanesians were often seen as Solomos's 'heirs' and it is perhaps not coincidental that he was the second writer whose oeuvre was published in the newly established literary series (1937-1940) of the Society for the Dissemination of Useful Books, after Solomos. During the dictatorship, the endorsement of Valaoritis as a national poet was most notably expressed through the numerous contributions to *I Kathimerini* by Fanis Michalopoulos from 1937 onwards, some of which were subsequently reprinted in periodicals such as *I Neolea*.[40]

Beyond Valaoritis, it was mostly the Heptanesian poetic tradition, with its refined reliance on folk songs and its robust demoticist positions, that represented a 'healthy' strand of continuity up to much more recent times than the time of Solomos and Kapodistrias. This lineage originating with Solomos was placed centre stage in a second radio broadcast by Aristos Kambanis that was published in *Ionios Antholoyia* in 1938, originally aired on 1 June. The attribution of lower qualities to the overall literary output of Solomos's heirs that was common to most discussions of the 'Solomic School' was present in Kambanis's broadcast as well. Nonetheless, the significant contributions of figures like Yeoryios Tertsetis and Ioulios Typaldos to the cause of vernacular language and poetry were also put to the forefront.[41] From within this discussion of Solomos and his 'students' who continued in part his spirit, his poetic and linguistic legacy, there appear the contours of a genealogy for the dictatorship itself.

As mentioned above, the Fourth-of-August regime had been portrayed in the closing remarks of Kambanis's previous radio broadcast as a kind of 'return to the spirit of Kapodistrias and Solomos'. Explicit or implicit appropriations of aspects and figures of the (post-Solomic) nineteenth century served to smooth out the transition into the next bright moment in national history after the 1820s revolution and Kapodistrias's governorship. That moment was the

[39] See Tziovas 1986, particularly 274ff.
[40] See e.g. Michalopoulos 1940.
[41] See Kambanis 1938f.

Balkan Wars, which was associated with the heroic death of another Heptanesian poet and patriot, who continued in part the Solomic poetic tradition, Lorentzos Mavilis, as will be discussed below. In doing so, pro-regime intellectuals catered to anxieties of discontinuity and wove threads stretching from the time of Kapodistrias and Solomos towards the twentieth century and the time of the regime.

On the other hand, the so-called First Athenian School (1830-1880) was largely passed over in silence by Metaxist critics. This was rather unsurprising, given the demoticist credos that prevailed amongst them, and it followed pre-existing demoticist accounts of literary history in stride, such as the first complete *History of Modern Greek Literature* (1925) by Aristos Kambanis.[42] Aside from the *katharevousa* that the writers of the First Athenian School used, their marginalisation in discussions of nineteenth-century literature may also be partly attributed to the romanticist excesses that characterised some of their writings. Pessimism, expressions of futility and death wish, disjointedness, and meaningless verbalism conforming to ill-digested foreign literary standards were clearly discordant with the dictatorship's outlook.

As a result, it was only since the appearance of the so-called New Athenian School that the literary production of Athens was considered as potentially worthy of incorporation into the new national canon. The 1880s were moreover associated with the emergence of *ethographia*, *Laographia*, and the demoticist movement, that were all promoted in various ways under Metaxas. However, Yiannis Psycharis and the other figureheads of 'militant demoticism' were portrayed as forerunners, as the consensus was now rather inclined towards a 'post-Psycharic' or 'neo-demoticist' solution to the language question.[43] Namely a solution that

[42] Kambanis devoted less than three full pages to poets of the First Athenian School, making positive remarks only about Yeoryios Zalokostas (1805-1853), who wrote some poems in demotic, and Dimitrios Paparrigopoulos (1845-1875), who, Kambanis implied, was poetically talented, but undermined himself by using *katharevousa*. A further demonstration of Kambanis's attitude towards this group of writers is that he does not actually employ the term 'poet' to describe them, but retorts to expressions such as 'verse writer' (Kambanis 1925: 115-118, esp. 117). By contrast, his discussion of Aristotelis Valaoritis that follows covers nearly eight full pages (Kambanis 1925: 118-125).

[43] For example, Panayiotopoulos (1939i: 130-131) presented early demoticism as a revolutionary movement and its exponents as 'warlords' (πολέμαρχοι), framing them as leaders-in-front. Nonetheless, he also pointed out that

would neither exclude the elements from *katharevousa* that had been organically absorbed into demotic nor would it be an extremely artificial construction, but would rely on the spoken language of the country's capital.[44]

Naturally, the most venerated representative of the Second Athenian School was Kostis Palamas, who was widely esteemed as a national poet and was held highly by most idealist and ethnocentric interwar critics, including the circle of *Nea Grammata*. We will see some interesting examples of appropriation of Palamas's work by regime functionaries and pro-Metaxas intellectuals in the last part of the thesis, as the dictatorship was presented as the fulfilment of his poetic prophecies.[45]

A contemporary of Palamas who was also idolised under Metaxas was Alexandros Papadiamandis. In fact, Papadiamandis and Solomos were often portrayed as forming a kind of diarchy in the realm of Greek national literature. This was a belief expressed by Hellenocentric critics and literati both before and after the dictatorship.[46] A few days after the coup, Kambanis posited Solomos and Papadiamandis as exemplars for the creation of a modern Greek culture, while Papadiamandis was moreover proclaimed the sole 'mysticist' in the last century of Greek fiction by Vasos Vasileiou.[47] Stratis Doukas also presented Papadiamandis as a blueprint for the creation of a Third Hellenic Civilisation in 1940, due to the way he had 'Hellenised' his home island through his writings.[48]

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the conflicts regarding the language question around the turn of the century were so intense and linguistic form was taken as an aesthetic criterion to such an extent, that each camp praised works which promoted their own linguistic version. Mediocre or even poor writing was lionised merely due to its language whilst some worthy writers were marginalised. In another article, Panayiotopoulos (1939j: 275) also displayed the predominant attitude amongst the demoticists of his time towards Psycharis, namely that Psycharis should not be taken as a blueprint anymore but should only be appreciated as a 'progenitor'.

[44] See also the discussion in chapter 5.

[45] See also the undisputed role of a national 'spiritual' leader attributed to Palamas as discussed in chapter 8.

[46] Even those who were very critical of Palamas, such as the circle of Fotos Politis and the periodical *Ελληνικά Γράμματα*, held Papadiamandis in high esteem. In the post-war period, this diarchy was most notably pointed to by Odysseas Elytis, with his famous injunction to 'commemorate' specifically these two writers.

[47] Kambanis 1936b; Vasileiou 1938: 871 (footnote).

[48] Doukas 1940b: 674.

Aside from such established figures, there was a rekindling of interest in a somewhat forgotten late-nineteenth-century poet in the late 1930s and an attempt to incorporate him in the national canon that was vocalised through publications, events, and monuments. That was Kostas Krystallis, whose collected works were published in 1939, edited and commented by Christos Angelomatis.[49] As will be discussed in the next part, Panayiotopoulos would go as far as to depict Krystallis in his review of this edition as the potential Greek Wagner.[50] In addition, there were multiple initiatives from 1937 to 1940 to adorn public spaces with the poet's bust, especially on mountainous areas (Pindus, Parnitha, Parnassus etc.), while memorial services were held at his home village.[51]

Another writer who was incorporated in the new canon was Lorentzos Mavilis, the hero of the Balkan Wars. Mavilis was perhaps the last significant poet of the Solomic tradition, an ardent demoticist, patriotic politician, and disciplined soldier. His death is alleged to have been quite theatrical, with Mavilis performing his role as a disciplined soldier who dies while doing his duty for his fatherland and is determined to salute his officer despite the two headshots that have pulped half his face. Thus, Mavilis's life and mostly his death turned him into a 'symbol of the eternal homeland' for Metaxist critics.[52] Only in 1937-1938, at least three 'philological commemorations' were held for Mavilis (in Athens, Ioannina, and Volos), while a special issue

[49] Krystallis 1939.

[50] See below, section 5.1. As mentioned above, Apostolakis had rejected Krystallis's poetry whereas Panayiotopoulos deconstructed Apostolakis's critique. This critique was expressed in Apostolakis's 1938 book *Ο Κρυστάλλης και το δημοτικό τραγούδι*, which Chatzinis reviewed negatively, claiming that 'δεν μας μένει καμιά αμφιβολία για την άμεση πρόθεσή του να μειώσει, να εκμηδενίσει τον Κρυστάλλη. Κι' επειδή ακριβώς δεν πρόκειται για μια διάθεση απροκατάληπτη, αλλά για μια απόφαση παρμένη εκ των προτέρων, που πρέπει με κάθε τρόπο να αιτιολογηθεί, είναι μοιραίο να δυσπιστούμε στην κρίση του και στα συμπεράσματά του. Έτσι η καταδίκη που απαγγέλλει ο συγγραφέας μένει χωρίς αποτέλεσμα. Δεν κλονίζει, αλλά απεναντίας στερεώνει περισσότερο τη θέση του Κρυστάλλη. … Ο βάναυσος τόνος του κ. Αποστολάκη, όχι μόνο αδικεί την αξία της κριτικής του παρατήρησης, αλλά και τον Κρυστάλλη αφήνει άθικτο,– τον κάνει μάλιστα πιο συμπαθή, πιο αγαπητό παρά πριν' (Chatzinis 1938c: 77). Angelomatis in his introduction to Krystallis 1939 also argued against Apostolakis's views.

[51] [Anon.] 1937f, [Anon.] 1938aa, [Anon.] 1939af, [Anon.] 1940b, [Anon.] 1940l.

[52] Pratsikas 1938: 172. See also the article on Mavilis by Yerasimos Spatalas, which was published in *Πνευματική Ζωή* in two instalments. Spatalas 1938a portrays Mavilis as an idealist person privileging soul over body and as a poet who was also a martyr and a hero, while Spatalas 1938b includes a description of the poet's theatrical death and draws to an end labelling Mavilis as 'πιστός στρατιώτης του χρέους'.

was published by *Ionios Antholoyia*.[53] Moreover, Mavilis's bust was placed at a square in Athens, which was restructured and named after the poet in late 1938.[54]

After this overview of the Great Men in the domain of literature that were honoured and appropriated by Metaxist critics, it is useful to proceed to some more general observations pertinent to the topic. First of all, it should be noted that contributions regarding modern Greek art and literature in *I Neolea* consisted to a significant extent of biographical sketches of great artists. Taken as a whole, these sketches can be seen as a canon endorsed by the periodical and the organisation that published it. One of these brief biographies, concerning the nineteenth-century painter Nikiforos Lytras, is indicative of the preoccupation with the causes for the emergence of great artists: Is the cause internal or external to the subject? While suggesting that Lytras's artistic achievements were owed to talent, to his having an 'artistic soul' or 'vein', the author also brought to the fore environmental and geoclimatic approaches that will be further discussed in chapter four.[55]

This presentation of Lytras is moreover suggestive of a conception of great men as sharing a quasi-religious devotion to a higher cause, as emphasis was placed on his faith and his 'sacrifice in front of the altar of Apollo'. Similar claims were made with regard to several modern Greek writers and artists. Dominikos Theotokopoulos was portrayed as living in 'divine seclusion', while Yiannoulis Chalepas, Dionysios Solomos, and Alexandros Papadiamandis were presented as self-negating individuals of higher morality. Papadiamandis was also presented as a hero of modern Greek literature, while articles on the death of Pavlos Nirvanas and Zacharias Papandoniou labelled them as 'the hero of spirit/culture' and an intellectual

[53] Nikolaidis 1937f: 225, [Anon.] 1938b, Pratsikas 1938: 172.
[54] [Anon.] 1938ad, [Anon.] 1938af.
[55] 'Κι' αν ακόμα δεν έτρεχε στις φλέβες του αίμα καλλιτέχνη, το φως που ήταν χυμένο στον αέρα, η θάλασσα με τις ατελείωτες διπλωσιές της, τα μακρινά νησιά θαμμένα στην ομίχλη, οι γελαστές αμμουδιές με τα διάφανα νερά τους κι' οι γλάροι σαν άσπρες πινελιές στο φόντο τ' ουρανού, του χτίζανε μια τέχνη στην ψυχή. Μεγάλωσε μέσ' στην ωμορφιά. Στην φωτεινή, την απλή και καθάρια ωμορφιά που βαλσαμώνει τον πόνο και χαρίζει χαρά' (Stalios 1939).

'soldier' respectively. All this points to a conception of the ideal Greek artist as a kind of hero, martyr or saint.[56]

Yet another way that the view of national history as the history of Great Men was advanced is evinced in the parallelisms between the dictator and major figures of the Greek past. I have already touched upon the analogies with Kapodistrias that were promoted in Metaxist discourse. However, the most extraordinary cases are those regarding ancient figures, with Metaxas being presented as their modern recurrence. This is how Evangelos Zavitsanos approached Metaxas in parallel to Ulysses, even claiming that the two display an astonishing similarity in terms of facial features.[57] Rather than rulers, though, Metaxas was presented as the recurrence of major lawgivers. In 1937 Nikolaidis's periodical labelled the moratorium on interest payments for farmers' loans imposed by the Metaxas government as 'seisachtheia', while Karaiskaki two years later would be much more explicit, by claiming that 'Metaxas is nothing but the recurrence of Solon'.[58] Another instance of the same trend was Leonidas Triiris's book, *Metaxas, the new Lycurgus*.[59]

In conclusion, Metaxist discourse laid a strong emphasis on Great Men of the past, attempting to establish links with the present. Even though modern political history could hardly offer any figures suitable for appropriation by the regime, quite the opposite was the

[56] Kouk. 1939; [Anon.] 1939r: 1133. Kl. 1939 is also a very characteristic example regarding Papadiamandis, 'the hero and martyr of Modern Greek letters', whose house in Skiathos is presented as a 'church'. See Chatzinis 1938e about Nirvanas and Angelomatis's text discussed in section 5.2 about Papandoniou. Cf. above, footnote 52 about Mavilis. Such ideas persisted long after the interwar years and have significantly impacted the approach to Papadiamandis (the so-called 'saint of modern Greek letters') and Chalepas (see for example Stratis Doukas's 1967 book *Ο βίος ενός αγίου. Γιαννούλης Χαλεπάς*). What is more, the image of the secluded but exceptionally moral and ever-struggling poet has not been rarely applied to Solomos.

[57] Zavitsanos 1939.

[58] [Anon.] 1937d; 'Τότε πήρε τα χαλινάρια της κλυδωνιζομένης αθηναϊκής πολιτείας ένας ξεχωριστός Έλληνας που λέγονταν Σόλων και τώρα ένας ίδιος με το όνομα Μεταξάς. Πόση ομοιότητα υπάρχει στις εποχές και στα πρόσωπα αυτά, θα νοιώση μόνον εκείνος που αμερόληπτα, βαθειά, μεταφυσικά τα παραβάλλει. … Αν πρεσβεύη κανείς το όμοιον, την αυτουσία της ψυχικής βάσεως ενός Λαού μέσω των αιώνων, δεν μπορεί παρά να παραδεχθή πως μια 4η Αυγούστου του 20ου αιώνα είναι επανάληψι της μέρας εκείνης που φάνηκε ο Σόλων και δημηγόρησε τις γερές απόψεις του στην Αγορά των Αθηναίων στον 7ον αιώνα προ Χριστού και πως ο Μεταξάς δεν είναι παρά μια επανάληψι του Σόλωνα εκείνου πάνω στην κληρονομική μεταφυσική βάσι της ψυχής' (Kar. 1939d: 1450).

[59] Triiris 1940. The Spartan lawgiver was repeatedly discussed and praised in *I Neolea*, e.g. in [Anon.] 1938ae: 82 and Konstandinidis 1939b: 1138 (where Lycurgus is presented as a major source of values and life ideals for the youth of antiquity).

case in the domain of culture. In a sense, modern Greek cultural history was a history of Great Men, revolving around the belief that 'the will of one and only man is that which usually plays the greatest role in things of beauty and grandeur'.[60] Even though most discussions of Great Men were placed in a framework of genealogy or continuity, the examples of Ulysses, Lycurgus, and Solon point to notions of eternal recurrence, which leads to an understanding of history as a cycle or repetition. This is the topic of the next section.

2.3. HISTORY AS REPETITION

Cyclical conceptions of time are generally rather associated with religious or pre-modern mindsets. It is thus no coincidence that Karaiskaki stressed the metaphysical basis of the eternal recurrence of the great lawgiver who saves Greece, something that 'no science and no mind can explain with material examples and mathematical equations, neither any theory can erase or create'.[61] Despite their apparent incompatibility, Metaxist discourse combined cyclical conceptions with linear conceptions of history, which could also be manipulated for mythicising and essentialist claims, as was shown in the first section.

The conception of history as the unfolding of an eternal struggle of civilisation against barbarism falls under the same category of history as repetition, although the National Socialist inflection of this mode of historical understanding merged cyclical with linear patterns, by portraying WWII as the end of the perpetual conflict between the Aryan and the Jewish race. In the Fourth-of-August regime, the bottom line of national history was that Hellenism repeatedly fought a war of civilisation against barbarism. As we will see in the next chapter, this conception was closely knit with the identification of Hellenism with civilisation or culture

[60] Angel. 1940a.
[61] Kar. 1939d: 1450.

(*Ellinismos=Politismos*) and the tracing of Hellenism's essence in the struggle towards a higher culture.

Perhaps the most typical expression of this view of Hellenic history as a ceaseless strife is found in Alexandros Kanellopoulos's 25 March 1939 statements: '1821 was a repetition of the struggle that has been continuing for 3000 years and which aims at safeguarding the values that constitute our ideology and civilisation against every barbarity!'. According to Kanellopoulos, this struggle constitutes the 'historical mission' of Hellenism and was picked up again on 4 August 1936.[62] Despite the difference that was noted above, this conception of history has definite affinities with the Nazi conception of history as an eternal struggle between the creators and the destroyers of civilisation.[63] This was the 'millenarian war' of the Aryan race, exemplified by ancient Greeks, Romans, and Germans according to Hitler.[64] Such Manichaean modes of historical representation were in fact very common in fascist regimes. While National Socialism presented the course of history as the result of the struggle between Aryanism and Semitism and posited the Hellenes as fellow Aryans who were moreover of Nordic descent or at least spiritual ancestors of the Germans, Fascist propaganda positioned ancient Greece as the adversary of Rome.[65]

Nevertheless, the most common articulation of cyclical patterns is found in narratives of rise and fall. Several texts on culture and art published during the dictatorship delved into the issue of the rise and fall of nations and civilisations. Pro-regime intellectuals seem to have particularly followed up on the dictator's own early post-coup claims that 'history teaches that nations cannot develop a great culture, unless deep religious sentiment precedes'.[66] Dimitris Poulianos, for instance, premised the greatness of ancient Greek art on its contact with Egypt

[62] Kanellopoulos 1939: 806.
[63] See Chapoutot 2016.
[64] See Chapoutot 2016: 1.
[65] See Chapoutot 2016, Ben-Ghiat 2001.
[66] Metaxas 1969a: 98.

and chiefly on the prevailing religious sentiment 'that inspired the artist with sublime ideals'. For Poulianos, this fusion of the religious and the artistic was the basis of every culture that created its own 'rhythm', including that of the Byzantine civilisation. Conversely, when religiousness was lost, 'when the gods were brought down from Olympus and became men and the era tolerated their mocking by the poets and satirists …, art stooped to the quotidian, to the episodic, to dry technique'.[67]

On his part, F. Konstandinidis laid out a more distinctly cyclical conception of history, claiming that 'as the history of humanity treads along time, it sometimes ascends to mountain-tops, and then we say that it has reached its acme, and other time it falls low, and we say that it is in decline and decay'. According to Konstandinidis, the fall of a national civilisation cannot be reversed. Only 'fresh ideas, new ideals and faith' can lead that same nation to cultural blossoming once again.[68] Apart from pointing to faith and idealism as preconditions for the rise of civilisations, such statements served to justify the novel ideas and ideals that were promoted by the Metaxas regime.

In a June 1939 radio broadcast that was subsequently published in his periodical, Melis Nikolaidis predicated success, glory, and grandeur on a 'higher faith', in fact extending this faith beyond religion.[69] For him the common feature of 'martyrs and heroes of humanity' was faith and decisiveness, something that he applied to the 'history of Peoples' as well.[70] This rationale places willpower at the basis of collective rise and fall, an idea that seems to draw on National Socialism. Nikolaidis moreover identified these features with 'optimism', claiming that 'in all epochs, the peoples that rose to greatness and glory were precisely those that had been optimistic or at the time that they were optimistic'. By contrast, those same peoples

[67] Poulianos 1939b.
[68] Konstandinidis 1939a.
[69] Nikolaidis 1939d.
[70] Nikolaidis 1939d: 177-178.

'shrivelled and fell when they lost their optimism'.[71] Nikolaidis portrayed ancient Greeks as an example of this maxim, quoting Hippolyte Taine on their life stance, which he summarised again as optimism. He drew his article to a close by providing further examples of 'Peoples or eras' that supposedly proved his claims. On the one hand, there were the ancient Indians, the Egyptians, the Romans, and Renaissance Italians, and on the other hand, the Chinese, the Brahmans, and the Middle Ages.[72]

Apart from religiousness or faith, another cause for the rise of civilisations projected by many pro-regime intellectuals was a relative, prudent or healthy openness to cultural exchange. As I mentioned above, Poulianos saw contact with the Egyptian civilisation as a reason for the achievements of ancient Greek art. Likewise, Nikolaidis argued that 'civilisation had also developed in China; but the Chinese had built the Great Wall; and their civilisation –stranded, isolated behind the wall– withered, languished, vanished from lack of renewed air'.[73] Stratis Doukas partly attributed the emergence of modern Greek sculpture in the nineteenth century to the 'global ideological currents that come here to merge with the mental bouts and enthusiasms of a nation that has just been liberated'.[74] Conversely, the loss of a nation's assimilationist ability was often posited as the cause or manifestation of its decadence. According to Stratis Myrivilis, 'this means that the racial collective has lost its organic cohesion and does not exist in life as a living, breathing organism'.[75]

[71] Nikolaidis 1939d: 178. See also chapter 10 about the importance attributed to optimism and faith for the creation of a new civilisation. Metaxas himself repeatedly associated optimism with any worthwhile achievement both in his speeches and in his personal notes (see Hering 1995 and Spiliotis 2002).
[72] Nikolaidis 1939d: 179. I have not been able to identify why the Brahmans, which is a Hindu caste and not a nation, is included in Nikolaidis's list. It might be that this was down to ignorance, confusion or a slip of the pen. About the significant circulation of Taine's theories in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Greece see Matthiopoulos 2017: 391-394, who focuses on the notion of race. It is worth noting that a new translation of Taine's classic work *Philosophie de l'art* (1865), made by the critic Emilios Chourmouzios, was published the same year as Nikolaidis's radio broadcast (1939; see Matthiopoulos 2017: 393, footnote 23). A year later, an essay on 'the historical process according to Taine' was published in *Το Νέον Κράτος*, laying out Taine's philosophy of history (see Tsouka 1940a, 1940b).
[73] Nikolaidis 1938g.
[74] Doukas 1940a.
[75] Myrivilis 1940a: 333.

By contrast, and adopting a much more clearly Nazi rationale than Nikolaidis, Sitsa Karaiskaki posed racism, exceptionalism, and (symbolic) segregation as prerequisites for great civilisations in a late 1939 article in *Pnevmatiki Zoi*.[76] Nonetheless, a year earlier she had focused on a natural rather than social factor as catalyst for the rise of great civilisations: the sun.[77] This earlier article shows how Nazi ideology was not merely disseminated by Karaiskaki under the cover of Greek nationalism but was adapted and even in cases inverted to fit the Greek regime's propaganda. Karaiskaki here is firmly within the domain of geoclimatic discourse. The sun effects the growth of civilisations, which appear to spring naturally out of the land. This suggests a 'metaphysics of depth', because if the sun is the activator, the seed or natural force that bursts out must lie within the land itself. The sun was a favourite theme of Nazi ideology too, while Hitler believed that Germanic peoples migrated from their Nordic homeland to the Mediterranean, where favourable climate and plenty of sunlight led to the emergence of great civilisations: 'the Indo-Germanic type needed sun to facilitate its cultural photosynthesis'.[78]

At the same time, Karaiskaki affirmed the Orientalist imaginary geography produced by Western Europe and its culmination in Nazism, whereby the world is divided into the 'West'

[76] She characteristically claimed that 'Μόνο κάτω από τη δημιουργική αυτή δύναμη του Ομήρου το συνειδητό ξεκαθάρισμα των φυλών, των ηρώων και δειλών, των κυρίων και σκλάβων, δημιουργήθηκε χρυσούς αιώνας, η αιωνία αθανασία και η απέθαντη νεότητα του Ελληνισμού. Υψώθηκε η λάμψη του Παρθενώνα παντοδύναμη, ακατάλυτο δείγμα της ξέχωρης, ανώτερης ελληνικής φυλής και της ελληνικής τέχνης' (Karaiskaki 1939b: 262).

[77] 'Δεν είναι ουτοπία όταν πη κανείς πως ο ήλιος παίζει μεγάλο ρόλο στον πολιτισμό των λαών. Θα μπορούσε άραγε να *ξεπηδήση* ένας πολιτισμός της Μάγια, των Κινέζων και των Γιαπωνέζων, θα *ανάβλυζε* ένας αιγυπτιακός των Φαραώ με τις φωτόλουστες πυραμίδες, ένας της βασίλισσας του Σαβά, θα *βλάσταινε* το θαύμα των θαυμάτων και των αιώνων, ο Παρθενών, που και σήμερα ακόμα κάθε ερειπωμένη του στήλη *ανεβαίνει σαν ζωτικό λουλούδι* προς το φως, αν δεν είχανε πάνωθέ τους τον ήλιο τον μαλαματένιο; Συγκρίνοντας τον βόρειο με τον πολιτισμό της Ανατολής, θα μπορούσε κανείς να κάνη την αντιδιαστολή. Τον πρώτο μπορούσε να τον ονομάση πολιτισμό της ομίχλης –θαμπό, μυστικόπαθο, βαρύ, στερεό. Τον δεύτερο, πολιτισμό του ήλιου –γεμάτο διαφάνεια, φανερό παιχνιδιάρικο, λιγερό' (Kar. 1938b: 236; emphasis added).

[78] See Chapoutot 2016: 66-69; quotation from p. 69. See also the discussion about the sun and 'Greek light' here below in chapter 4. Conversely, for Karagatsis organisms not grown out of this land cannot acclimatise under the Greek sun, which is not just a creator of organic life but also an annihilator of any life that does not have organic roots to the land, both Apollo and Apollyon. All three protagonists of his 1930s trilogy *Εγκλιματισμός κάτω από το Φοίβο*, who are foreigners that have found themselves living in Greece, die or leave the country for good, being unable to adapt to the environment. About biological discourse in Karagatsis's work see Mike 2007 and Pechlivanos 2017.

and the 'Orient'.[79] Based on the criterion of sun exposure, Karaiskaki embraced the Nazi distinction between North/Nordic Civilisations and the Orient but included Greece in the Orient. It is at this point that she deviates from the Nazi regime, as well as from many French ultranationalists and fascists, that projected ancient Greece not just as the cradle of western civilisation but as a model for their envisioned new/regenerated civilisation.[80] Karaiskaki even retained the exoticism and some of the most stereotypical characteristics attributed to the Orient. Thus, the Nazi imaginary geography of the world remained virtually intact, but the value ascribed to each side of the divide was almost turned upside down.

Before concluding this section, it is worth mentioning a narrative of fall that further demonstrates the array of totalising approaches to history that were co-housed under Metaxism. Angelomatis reproduced an old narrative that had been disseminated by the Orthodox Church for centuries. This discourse had provided legitimacy to Ottoman rule as the instrument of God for the punishment of the nation for the primeval sin it had committed. Although this narrative had actually been set against nationalism and struggles for independence, Angelomatis fitted it into a nationalist schema, in classic Helleno-Christian style.[81] The primeval sin was the opposite of nationalism's (and the regime's proclaimed) main aim: national discord. According to Angelomatis, 'the Greek nation had to be purified for all its misconduct, its discord, that spirit of civil hatred, by means of the dark night of slavery'. This narrative is linear, but the causality of fall has an exemplifying function, reinforcing the Metaxist claim that rise and fall are respectively predicated on national unity and the lack thereof.[82]

[79] The latter is simultaneously the geographical East and the South, including not only Asia and Eastern Europe, with the Slavs being presented as barbarians and the Bolsheviks especially as Asians, but also Central and Latin America and chiefly Africa.
[80] See Carroll 1996, Chapoutot 2016.
[81] About the way this discourse had been employed by Orthodox clergy and intellectuals in previous centuries see for instance Politis 1998.
[82] Angelomatis 1940g.

In sum, representations of history as repetition were quite common and simultaneously diverse under Metaxas. They could be classified into two broad categories regarding the view of history as an eternal, recurring Manichaean struggle, and the hermeneutics of rise and fall of civilisations.

CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed modes of historical representation that pervaded Metaxist discourse. It dealt with notions of continuity, natural and unnatural change, as well as with the ambivalent disposition of cultural operators towards foreign influences, which was related to the compatibility of those elements with Hellenism and the ability of Greek culture to digest and absorb them in a way that would enable it to continue evolving without losing its identity. It has moreover pointed to the fact that the dictatorship was assisted in its self-styling as a legitimate and even organic development in the history of the nation through the emphasis that pro-regime cultural operators placed on the 1821 revolution and the governorship of Kapodistrias while passing over in silence or condemning the intermediate century as a negative parenthesis of imported institutions and mentalities (mainly parliamentarianism).

Further issues that were discussed in this chapter were the view of history as a history of Great Men, who were implicitly or explicitly arranged in genealogical sequences. The attribution of collective achievements to the charismatic and strong leadership of a single person was even coupled with parallelisms between the dictator and major historical or mythical figures. The presentation of Metaxas as the recurrence of previous leaders or lawgivers who had undertaken the task to save the Greeks or lead them to grandeur was in tune with broader conceptions of history as repetition. As demonstrated in the last section, such conceptions were usually articulated in the context of Greek history as a recurring struggle of civilisation against barbarism and the cyclical rise and fall of civilisations.

CONCLUSIONS

This part examined the way the past was used for the ideological needs of the Fourth-of-August regime and as a means to legitimise fascistic departures in the present. It discussed the 'temporal units' that were taken over as parts of the Metaxist project for the construction of a national past that was compatible with the dictatorship's own goals and priorities, moving along a tripartite scheme that encompasses antiquity, the middle ages, and the modern era. It has also sought to show that, apart from appropriating specific 'temporal units', Metaxist critics and intellectuals employed various schemas for the narration and interpretation of history. These frameworks were not cloistered but rather overlapped and intersected in several ways. The three major historical frameworks that were discussed here are those regarding history as a line, as revolving around Great Men, and as a cycle or repetition.

The analysis in this part provides a classic example of 'cross-contamination' of temporalities. As the approach to the past was significantly determined by the regime's needs and objectives in the present, the past was infiltrated by the temporality of the present and it appears to have been retroactively constructed in its likeness. Correspondingly, the present was populated by the past and its symbolic capital. As the present got contaminated with the temporality of the past, it was shaped in its image. The understanding and representation of the past on the one hand and the form and perception of the present on the other hand transformed as the two temporalities maintained an open channel and fed or spilled into each other.

The celebration of the national past and its persistent association with the political present and future created a self-reinforcing ceaseless circle of legitimisation: The regime did not break with the recent past in an effort to cut off the trunk of the national organism, but in order to reconnect the nation with the 'genuine' national past, the quasi-sacred or eternal 'essence'

of the national soul, with the national roots. Moreover, several past-related intellectual projects pursued under Metaxas were partly subsumed under the regime's central objective which will be discussed in the last part of the thesis, namely the creation of a 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'. The formation of a new historical narrative, the fuller acquaintance with the works and ideas of the ancient Greeks, the historical novels and dramas set in the forlorn era of 'Second Hellenism', the engagement with modern Greek folk culture or the reckoning with the literary production of the nineteenth century, did not merely represent a monumentalising drive, let alone scholastic traditionalism. They were all supposedly attuned to the nation's vital needs and its modern life, constituting prerequisites for its new civilisation.

Part 2 The Greek Nation and Land: Exceptionalism, Culture, and Organicism

'The construction of the national narrative restructures the experience of time, attributing a new significance to it and presenting the nation as an active historical agent that, through the narration, acquires a new historical identity'.[1] This indicates why it was necessary to discuss discourses on national history first before moving on to discourses regarding the nation. History is indeed a part of national identity and the national past had assumed the status of an atemporal picture of Greekness or national essence long before 1936.

This part attempts to show how multifaceted the discourses on the nation were. It is divided into four chapters. Chapter three revolves around the major features that were attributed to the Greek nation or people. It deals with notions of national essence and focuses particularly on the interrelation of culture and nation. Chapter four investigates the multiple ways in which a 'return to the land' was promoted under Metaxas and how these were laden with national and political significance. Chapter five deals with vernacular culture and language and seeks to show how they were appropriated by the regime and promoted by Metaxist cultural operators as part of an ultranationalist agenda. Finally, chapter six discusses the issue of national unity and the propaganda regarding the dictatorship's role in restoring the integrity and unity of the national organism and forcing its formerly conflicting parts to collaborate.

[1] Liakos 2008: 202.

- CHAPTER 3 -

Essentialism and the cultural definition of the nation

This chapter seeks to identify the attributes that were associated with the Greek nation and to map out its privileged relationship with culture. The Greek nation was defined *by* its culture but was also defined *as* the nation of culture par excellence. The notion of essentialism here does not only imply the association of the Greek nation with particular characteristics and qualities but also the presence of a perennial quasi-ontological core that gave form to the members of the nation and classified it as a whole in specific racial categories.

As the terms 'people' and 'nation' recur throughout the chapter, it is worth providing some preliminary information here. The terms were sometimes conflated and other times distinguished in twentieth-century political discourse. The immediate background of their usage in the late 1930s is traced within the context of the National Schism. Venizelist discourse privileged the 'nation', while anti-Venizelist discourse privileged the 'people'. In a similar paradoxical coexistence as the one of authoritarian leadership and people's power that the dictatorship promoted, anti-Venizelist discourse had associated 'people's rights' with the monarchy.[1] In that context, the distinction between the two has been formulated thusly: 'The *people* is the one that errs, learns, and pays, but the *nation* constitutes a dual reference to an organic community that gets hurt, ill, infected, or cured, and to a moral value'.[2]

Nonetheless, the distinction between the two remained unclear, as each term in fact acquired multiple semantic layers based on the circumstances and the agent who employed it.

[1] See Papadimitriou 2006: 62-63.
[2] Papadimitriou 2006: 63.

In anti-Venizelist discourse the people was often defined in opposition both to communism and to plutocracy or a capitalist 'oligarchy' who was in cahoots with foreign interests and had been identified with Venizelism already in the 1910s.[3] Moreover, it was sometimes seen itself as a moral value, as indicated for instance by Theologos Nikoloudis's newspaper *Politeia*, which had presented the people as 'an ethical category, which represented the Greece of "noble traditions and patrimonial probity"' back in 1920.[4]

During the Fourth-of-August dictatorship, some cultural operators portrayed the nation as a transhistorical collectivity. Since the actions of the present ought to be based on the teachings and blueprints of the forefathers and on the duty towards the descendants, this could well accommodate the official mantra that even a single man could really express the nation and the national will at a given time, as the regime's constitutional experts claimed in an attempt to legitimise the coup.[5] However, the terms 'nation' and 'people' (as well as 'race' to a lesser extent) often overlapped or interchanged in the discourse produced by pro-regime intellectuals. This simplification runs against the official, legalistic distinction between the two terms.[6]

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section seeks to provide a general picture of the characteristics that were attributed to Greek people or nation by pro-regime cultural operators. It also explores essentialist claims regarding the existence of a specifically Greek racial type. The second section focuses on the elaborate nexus of interrelations between the Greek nation and culture that are traced in Metaxist discourse. .

[3] See Papadimitriou 2006: 64, 68, 70 and passim.
[4] Papadimitriou 2006: 72.
[5] Koumaros & Mantzoufas 1938.
[6] About this distinction see Kokkinos n.d., Hering 1996: 308-309. Hering (1996: 309, footnote 101) made the interesting observation that this way the concept of the nation 'became an empty formula, which could be filled with content and manipulated as necessary'. Cf. his designation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation in the same way here, chapter 10.

3.1. THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE AND THE ESSENCE OF HELLENISM

The prevalent conceptualisation of the Greek people or nation promoted by pro-regime cultural operators was one of national distinctness and continuity that posited Greeks as exceptional and in possession of inherent qualities. Christos Angelomatis labelled them 'the noblest Race on earth' and a 'race of the select'.[7] By presenting Greeks as an elite race Angelomatis was turning the inconvenient fact that they are very few in number against its head. Furthermore, such claims reinforced notions of exceptionalism that effectively posited Greeks as a 'Chosen People'. The following analysis attempts to answer the obvious question of what allegedly made the modern Greeks so special.

In a 1938 article on modern Greek culture, which was occasioned by the publication of a special issue of the periodical *Kritikes Selides* dedicated to the Cretan writer Ioannis Kondylakis (1861-1920), Stratis Myrivilis put forth a pseudo-biological and essentialist conception of Greekness. He combined this conception with a notion of the collective Self that seems to draw on Ion Dragoumis (and indirectly on Maurice Barrès).[8] For Myrivilis, there are various stages of the national Self, while national consciousness is a kind of germ cell, what could be called the 'extimate' kernel of every Greek:[9]

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[7] Angelomatis, Ch. E. 'Με πύρινα γράμματα', *Η Νεολαία* 43 (4 Aug 1939), 1401. An.1939a: 1454.

[8] Ion Dragoumis played a central role in the adjustment and dissemination of Maurice Barrès's ideology in Greece, but he additionally took a post-mortem role as an intellectual and political model in interwar Greece in a similar way to that of Barrès in France, who died three years after Dragoumis was assassinated. Both Dragoumis's and Barrès's legacy were appropriated by individuals and groups that sought to create an indigenous (but perhaps more civilised or 'humanist') fascism. About Barrès's 'proto-fascism' and his 'ideology of the collective subject' see Carroll 1995: 19-41. In fact, Carroll (1995: 26) quotes a passage from Barrès's *Scènes et doctrines du nationalisme* (1902) which is quite similar to Myrivilis's statement quoted here below: 'We are the continuity of our parents. This is anatomically true. They think and they speak in us. The entire series of descendants only makes *one and the same being*' (emphasis added by Carroll).

[9] Extimacy is a Lacanian concept denoting the presence of something external and concealed, an otherness situated in the innermost part of the self that is essential for subject-formation. For some intellectuals examined in this thesis, Greekness itself could be seen as 'the central place, as the intimate exteriority or "extimacy", that is the Thing' (Lacan 1992: 139). The notion of extimacy is also useful for the understanding of the intertwinement of Greekness or Greek tradition and its correlatives (e.g. ancient Greek mythology or Greek Orthodoxy) with the search for spiritual levels of human wholeness (as is the case with Sikelianos's 'lyricism') or for lost centres of signification (as in Lorentzatos's *Το χαμένο κέντρο*). 'Since the Thing is always there, it becomes a sort of landmark for our journey through life. It is the fixed center of our movements. … The Thing is extimate inasmuch as

> Those that leave us are our former self. Those that are to come are our later self. And all together we constitute –passing from century to century– the Greek Consciousness. This consciousness constitutes the nucleus of this entire majestic movement. It is the pit of the fruit, which perennially stores in its protective shell the racial cell. We are not only Humans. We are Greeks-Humans.[10]

Myrivilis's 'national consciousness' is congenial to the notions of 'national soul', 'Greek spirit', and 'Greekness', which 'evoke an organic conception of the nation and depict a totality that is represented by its nucleus. All of them are symbols of the "Ideal", which stand in a microcosm-macrocosm relationship to their surroundings'.[11]

In a 1939 article in *To Neon Kratos* bearing the title 'The New State and Art', I. M. Panayiotopoulos claimed that 'the Greek people is gifted with tremendous abilities, principally of a creative character. It is a builder by nature'.[12] This was projected as a national trait and the New State (which introduced itself as a National State) was itself a 'builder', as the cover of *To Neon Kratos* designed by Chatzikyriakos-Gikas also implies. The National Governor, the leader who personifies the nation, was presented in a similar light, e.g. in the very first article of the same periodical, authored by Theologos Nikoloudis.[13] Yet, such distinctions of nations were rather commonplace until the end of WWII and Panayiotopoulos's statement perhaps alluded to racial categorisations like those found in French and German racist discourse. For instance, Hitler in *Mein Kampf* classified nations as 'founders of culture', 'bearers of culture', and 'destroyers of culture'. Quite expectedly, only Aryans were said to belong to the first

it constitutes the subject's intimate experience that gives meaning and existence to the external things' (Pavón-Cuéllar 2014: 662).

[10] Myrivilis 1938: 248.

[11] Tziovas 1985: 263. Tziovas's analysis here can also be read alongside the discussion in part 1. The next sentence after the passage quoted above reads as follows: 'These concepts are the principles by which the different periods of history can be integrated into a single macrocosmic process of developments'.

[12] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 56.

[13] In Nikoloudis 1937a: 3 one finds the phrase 'ο Ιωάννης Μεταξάς ανοικοδομών'. Such imagery might be relevant to Metaxas's Freemasonry background but is certainly in tune with the creative qualities attributed to the Leader, which will be discussed in chapter 8.

category.[14] In this light, the presentation of the Greek people by Panayiotopoulos could be seen as amounting to its classification as an essentially Aryan people.[15]

In that same article, Panayiotopoulos spoke of the 'Mediterranean' or 'Helleno-Latin' civilisation that had as its nucleus 'the candid essence of pure Hellenism', which again demonstrates the circulation of notions of 'families' of peoples and civilisations at the time.[16] Furthermore, he posited 'Hellenism as a spiritual/cultural occurrence and Greece as a geophysical reality' while speaking of the 'biological consistency of the race and the peculiar character of the land'.[17] Myrivilis similarly referred to the 'peculiar character of the race' in a 1940 contribution to *Nea Politiki*.[18]

Despite their focus on culture, Metaxist intellectuals did not hesitate to propagate the idea that the Greek people has a distinct biological and psychological composition.[19] Some, like Stratis Myrivilis and Pavlos Floros even employed the strange phrase 'Έλλην-άνθρωπος', most probably to denote clear racial distinctiveness, to point to a taxonomy of different human types.[20] Vasos Vasileiou also held the belief that the Greek 'race' has a particular character and aptitude, much like Petros Orologas, whose views about the fact that 'Romios has determinate

[14] See Michaud 2004: 76.
[15] In the same periodical, one finds explicit references to the 'Aryan' nature of the Greek people along with proposals hailing from Nazi hygienic discourse. Ioannis D. Frangos, a jurist who had completed his doctoral studies in Bonn, Germany, contributed three rather short texts to Kambanis's publication. In the last one, which is the most extensive of the three, he lays out his proposals for a new Civil Law. Therein not only does the author put forward eugenic measures barring unhealthy Greeks from procreating (ibid. 309), but he moreover calls for measures to safeguard racial hygiene from the threat of blood mixture with inferior races: 'Φρονούμεν ότι *δέον δια του μέλλοντος κώδικος ν' απαγορευθή η σύναψις γάμου Έλληνος μετά μη αρίου*, προσώπου δηλαδή μη ανήκοντος εις τας συγγενείς του Ελληνισμού εθνότητας' (ibid. 310; emphasis in the original).
[16] Cf. Eleni Tsouka's discussion of Hippolyte Taine's 'milieu' concept ('[το] φυσικόν περιβάλλον επέδρασεν επ' αυτής της Αρίας ομοφυλίας και την διήρεσε εις φυλάς Γερμανικάς και εις φυλάς *Ελληνολατινικάς*'; Tsouka 1940a: 799, emphasis added) and.Ouranis 1938 where the question whether Greeks fall into the category of Mediterranean or Balkan peoples is presented as worthy of investigation.
[17] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 56.
[18] Myrivilis 1940h: 797.
[19] E.g. Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57 and Orologas 1938a: 5.
[20] Myrivilis 1938, Floros 1940b: 129. The term 'Έλλην-Άνθρωπος' is also very seldom found in nineteenth-century texts that are discussed in Dimaras 1985. However, Dimaras does not clarify its meaning nor does he examine whether this formulation was influenced by pseudo-Darwinian or other threads of quasi-biological discourse.

hereditary endowments' Vasileiou quoted approvingly.[21] This points to the conclusion that cultural and pseudo-biological discourse could sometimes supplement each other or partly overlap within the Fourth-of-August dictatorship.

Panayiotopoulos moreover claimed that 'there is a cell of marvellous fertility and historical evolution, singular and extraordinary, and this cell constitutes the great offer of the Greek land to the movement and blossoming of global civilisation'.[22] Likewise, Fanis Michalopoulos presented Greeks as laborious people and claimed that 'the Greek genius has always played a leading part in the civilising history of the world'.[23] On his part, Angelomatis argued that the 'Greek race' is one of very few races that have managed to 'live for millennia at the service of humanity and civilisation'.[24] This notion that the import of Hellenism lies in its contribution to global civilisation and culture was quite widespread during the dictatorship but was not really novel, as it was already in circulation in the nineteenth century.[25]

Nonetheless, the greatest achievement of Hellenism according to Angelomatis was not simply its perennial contribution to human civilisation but that it had managed to remain 'always young'. Consequently, the author attributed to the Greek people 'youthfulness of soul and adequacy of spirit'.[26] Both Angelomatis in other texts and several other Metaxist intellectuals proclaimed the eternally youthful character of the Greek nation and its vitality.[27] Most characteristically, Myrivilis spoke of 'a Nation simultaneously very old and so young'.[28] Such claims catered for anxieties of degeneration associated with old 'organisms' like that of the Greek nation, and had often been made prior to the dictatorship as well.[29]

[21] Vasileiou 1938: 868, Orologas 1938: 5.
[22] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 56.
[23] Quoted in Angelomatis's review of Michalopoulos's 1940 book *Έλληνες ταξιδιώται (1453-1821)*: Angel. 1940b.
[24] Angelomatis 1940b.
[25] See for instance below, chapter 10, footnote 1.
[26] Angelomatis 1940b.
[27] E.g. Angelomatis 1940h, Nikolaidis 1938h: 241, Karaiskaki 1940a: 451.
[28] Myrivilis 1940h: 797.
[29] See Tziovas 1986.

Another 1939 article by Panayiotopoulos discusses the critical debate around the nineteenth-century poet Kostas Krystallis, who was known as an heir to the folk tradition. The critic presented Krystallis as a personification of the Greek people, all the while displaying elements of a masculinist ideology, common amongst several critics of the time: 'He was a man. And it is precisely the manly, robust, unbowed and unbending character of his song that warrants special attention'.[30] This indirectly points to a masculine conception of the People itself, for if Krystallis was essentially manly and he incarnated the 'soul of the people' (*Volksgeist*), then the character of the people (*Volk*) cannot but be itself masculine.[31]

Masculinity could be understood alongside heroism, bravery, patriotism, and optimism as components of Greekness. In an article I have already discussed in chapter two, Nikolaidis maintained that optimism is 'not simply an old sacred patrimony; not only a precious teaching of our history; it is an ingredient of our very life, diffused in our blood, identified with our soul'.[32] Angelomatis depicted the Greek as being 'by nature an enthusiastic patriot' that exhibits its passionate love of homeland and great 'national pride'.[33]

Another relevant theme is the definition of the 'essence of Hellenism' in terms of struggle. For Panayiotopoulos, this seems to be identical with what he calls 'the drama of Hellenism': 'this ceaseless dramatic endeavour upwards throughout the most diverse centuries'.[34] Likewise, Melis Nikolaidis presented struggle, and particularly struggle for the attainment of a higher culture, as the Real of Hellenism, as its perennial core.[35] Such views reflect those

[30] Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1657.
[31] Alki Kyriakidou-Nestoros (1978: 30) claims that the Greek term 'ψυχή του λαού', which is used by Panayiotopoulos here, is actually a translation of the romantic German term 'Volksgeist'.
[32] Nikolaidis 1939d: 179; see also chapters 2 and 10 for further discussions of this editorial
[33] An. 1939: 1454.
[34] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 56.
[35] 'Κι' ούτε άλλως τε είναι άγνωστος στη φυλή μας. Απ' εναντίας ο αγώνας αυτός υπήρξε πάντα το κύριο χαρακτηριστικό της ζωής της, το βασικό συστατικό της ψυχής της' (Nikolaidis 1938h: 241).

expressed by the dictator himself, when he claimed that the recurring theme in the history of the Greek nation was perpetual striving towards the creation of an elevated culture.[36]

Both masculinity and the struggle for the creation of a sublime culture are indirectly linked to another trait that was projected in Metaxist discourse as an indispensable component of Hellenism. That is its love for freedom from representatives of lower culture or, in other words, different types of 'barbarians', be them external or internal enemies. For instance, Kambanis alluded to Cavafy's poem 'Waiting for the Barbarians' in order to talk about the communist threat from which Metaxas had supposedly saved Greece.[37] The alleged characteristic of the Greeks as a freedom-loving nation was extended to claims regarding its contribution to the struggle of other peoples for national sovereignty. Angelomatis presented the Greeks as 'a race that has waged a fierce struggle for its very existence and national independence, ceaselessly, over long centuries'. At the same time, he claimed, several of its members have fought for the freedom of other nations throughout its history.[38] As suggested in chapter two, patterns of historical repetition were instrumentalised in order to present specific traits as parts of the essence of Hellenism. According to Angelomatis, 'History itself teaches us that the Greek race, since its constitution in organised communities and polities, has been the civilising and liberating race par excellence'.[39]

Thus, liberty and civilisation formed a coupling that had allegedly always characterised Hellenism. Most significantly, Hellenism was identified with culture in Metaxist discourse, constituting a kind of tautology. The title of an early-1940 text by Karaiskaki typifies this identification: 'Hellenic Art = Hellenic Race'.[40] According to Nikolaidis, 'our Greece is not simply

[36] See also chapter 10 and Angelomatis 1940b.
[37] See Kambanis 1936d and Kambanis 1939: 134.
[38] 'Αυτό όμως δεν ημπόδιζε την ιδίαν φυλήν να εξαποστέλλη τα τέκνα της προς κάθε κατεύθυνσιν, να προσφέρουν και άλλο αίμα, δια τον ίδιον πάντοτε σκοπόν, την Ελευθερίαν. Και το φαινόμενον τούτο επαναλαμβάνεται καθ' όλην την μακράν περίοδον της υπάρξεως του Ελληνικού Έθνους' (Angelomatis 1940b).
[39] Angelomatis 1940b.
[40] Karaiskaki 1940a.

a Homeland; … it is an Idea, a primordial, immortal, incomparable and unmatchable Idea of spirit and culture'.[41] Perhaps the most common relevant claim was that the Greek people or race had a distinctive cultural vocation and latent or smouldering spiritual abilities, as was avowed for instance by Achillefs Kyrou.[42] Myrivilis emphatically stated that the Greeks constitute 'a nation whose entire history, life, and glory have been only and solely a spiritual/cultural affair'.[43] Nikolaidis's periodical exclaimed that 'there is in this land a spiritual/cultural proclivity, … this superior tendency is within the blood of our race'.[44] In another note in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* it was asserted that 'the eternal Greek soul has never ceased –and will never cease– to pulsate, to inflame, to be vitalised by the most beautiful artistic and cultural expressions of life'.[45]

Overall, the Greek people was portrayed by pro-regime cultural operators as exceptional, endowed with masculine, optimistic, heroic, and patriotic qualities as well as with cultural, spiritual, moral, and civilising proclivities. The Greek nation was supposedly eternally youthful and represented an elite race. The essence of Hellenism was identified with notions of struggle and liberty, being seen as a civilising force. This privileged relation of Hellenism with culture and civilisation, that sometimes was even presented as tautological, is discussed further in the following section.

[41] Nikolaidis 1938f.
[42] 'την χαρακτηριστικήν πνευματικήν προδιάθεσιν' - 'τας σοβούσας εκείνας πνευματικάς δυνάμεις' (Kyrou 1937b: 107). Similarly, Angelomatis (1939a) speaks of 'το πνεύμα της Φυλής', which he defines as 'οι ψυχικές ικανότητες που υπήρχαν "σοβούσαι" στον Έλληνα σ' όλες του τις περιπέτειες'.
[43] Myrivilis 1940i: 1043. Myrivilis's intention to emphasise this is made clear through his use of the literary device of repetition ('μόνο και μοναχά').
[44] [Anon.] 1939ac.
[45] [Anon.] 1939ag.

3.2. *KULTURNATION* AND NATIONAL CULTURE

Following on earlier ideological constructs, the Greek nation was not just portrayed during the dictatorship 'as a given entity with "innate" and "inalterable" features' but as a *Kulturnation*: the foundation of national identity and homogeneity purportedly lay in the shared idiosyncrasy of its culture. Cultural expressions from language to art and from folklore to religion were seen within this framework as expressions of the 'collective soul' or the 'national spirit'.[46] As a result, nation and culture stood in a metonymic or even synonymic relation to each other. *Kulturnation* and national culture were intricately linked, and a nation without its own, distinct culture was seen as no proper nation at all. Furthermore, we have already seen that the Greeks were presented as the nation of culture par excellence. At the same time, the cultural definition of the nation implied the possibility of processes of 'Hellenisation' or 'de-Hellenisation' premised on instillation with or detachment from genuine Greek culture respectively, while the people could be presented as having an organic and spontaneous relation to culture.

It is worth considering that, aside from the semantic contestability of the terms 'nation' and 'people' touched upon at the beginning of the chapter, there were also two major strands of conceptualising the people. One was as the collectivity of contemporary Greeks, the living members of the nation, or at least all those living within the Greek state. Another one, with several variations, narrowed down the scope of applicability to the peasantry, the 'ordinary Greeks' or the productive members of society. What these variations usually shared is that they included the lower classes, which formed the vast majority of the country's population, and they in some way set the people against an upper-class minority plagued with xenomania. Rather than class criticism, this constituted a national populist critique of a high bourgeoisie that had lost touch with indigenous culture and reality, disconnecting from its national identity.

[46] The quotations are from Mylonaki 1995: 15, where pre-dictatorial Modern Greek history is discussed.

Metaxist discourse did not move beyond reprimand for the Athenian bourgeoisie that had distanced itself from the Greek culture and the *Volksgeist* that constitute the basis of the nation.[47]

This tension was particularly expressed in relation to the ordinary people's effortless connection with 'true' Greek culture. For instance, the uneducated people were allegedly deeply affected by Orthodox ecclesiastic music and folksongs unlike the 'musically educated' (arguably based on Western/non-Greek models).[48] Similarly, Myrivilis spoke of 'a century of anti-national education' exalting the 'wise ignorance' and the 'sacred illiteracy of the Greek people' that had preserved genuine national culture and the necessary materials for a new civilisation.[49] Nikolaidis's periodical characteristically described the 'People of the Countryside' as the 'pure and robust soul of rural Greece' and the 'healthiest, largest, and strongest part of our People'.[50] Thus, even when the people was identified with particular groups and not with all citizens, those groups were broad enough to include most of the population. At the same time, they were portrayed as the 'true' or 'genuine' Greeks, whose collective character showcased continuity or a natural process of change and organic evolution rather than constituting an artificial restoration of dead realities or unnatural mimicry of foreign sources.

[47] This second conceptualisation of the term was also in keeping with the description of the regime in official discourse as a 'Workers' and Farmers' State'.

[48] 'το μη μουσικώς μορφωμένον κοινόν, ο Λαός, αισθάνεται και ζη αυτήν την μουσικήν των τροπαρίων και των εκκλησιαστικών ύμνων, την πατροπαραδότως μονωδικήν και μονότονον και την ψάλλει όπως τραγουδεί και τα άλλα του τραγούδια, που είναι και αυτά μονωδικά και μακρόσυρτα και μονότονα. Και συγκινείται με αυτά, όπως συνεκινούντο αι γενεαί των προγόνων του, διότι είναι δικά του, ζη μέσα των η ιδία η ψυχή του. Εάν δε συμβαίνη μολοντούτο ένα μέρος του Λαού αυτού, το "μορφωμένον", να έπαυσε να συγκινήται από τα τροπάρια και τους ύμνους, πρέπει να εξετασθή μήπως συμβαίνει κάτι άλλο: Μήπως δηλαδή δεν είναι η εκκλησιαστική μουσική η αιτία της ελλείψεως συγκινήσεων, αλλά η έλλειψις θρησκευτικότητος, ικανότητος δηλαδή κατανύξεως;' ([Anon.] 1939n).

[49] 'Ας τολμήσουμε να διατυπώσουμε σήμερα μιαν απίστευτη όμως αδιαφιλονίκητη αλήθεια: "Αν ύστερα από έναν αιώνα αντεθνικής εκπαίδευσης σώζεται ακόμα ακμαίο και δυνατό στις βιολογικές εκδηλώσεις του το ελληνικό έθνος, το χρωστάμε στο ευτύχημα της αγραμματοσύνης του ελληνικού λαού". Και εννοώ τον γνήσια αγράμματο λαό, που εξακολουθεί να μας απομένει ο μοναδικός θεματοφύλακας του εθνικού πολιτισμού, και να διατηρεί μέσα στη σοφή άγνοιά του όλα τα νήματα της φυλετικής μας συνέχειας' (Myrivilis 1940a: 333) and 'πόσο πολύτιμη και εθνοσωτήρια Κιβωτός του Νώε στάθηκε η άγια αγραμματοσύνη του ελληνικού λαού, αυτή που μας περισώζει τις ελληνικές μορφές ζωής και τέχνης, στις οποίες απάνου θακουμπήσουμε για το χτίσιμο [του Τρίτου Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού]' (Myrivilis 1940d: 533).

[50] [Anon.] 1940m.

Summarising most of the traits attributed to the Greek people that were discussed in the previous section, Angelomatis turned his eulogy of the dictator in early 1940 into a declaration of Greek exceptionalism. The people was portrayed as equipped with bravery, patriotism, heroism, spiritual and intellectual superiority. The cause of its former degradation lay in its leadership and the political system: 'what was lacking was the Leader, organisation and preparation, namely those elements that render force positive and materialise value'.[51] In an earlier article, Angelomatis had not only claimed that 'it is not possible to erase from the [people's] soul the virtues that constitute its very composition' but also proclaimed the Greek people as the finest raw material.[52] This was in dialogue with the imagery of the leader as an artist and of the creation of a new national community based on his vision as the greatest work of art.[53]

A similar claim is found in Alexandros Kanellopoulos's text on the celebrations for 4 August 1939, especially when it comes to the question of allocation of blame for the pre-dictatorial dire conditions. The Greek people is exonerated fully, it is a patriotic, heroic, intellectually and culturally superior people, which has only been misguided; those who bear responsibility for its predicament are solely its previous leaders.[54] Only a god-sent leader who personifies the qualities that characterise the people by nature, before its corruption by the country's elites and by bad influences, could lead them first to retrieval of self and then to grandeur. This exculpation and exaltation of the people is in keeping with Metaxas's professed agenda to restore the Greeks' 'self-confidence', their collective narcissism.[55] This would foster enthusiasm and could have a performative function, serving as a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy: Believing that they have a natural proclivity towards great works, creative achievements or

[51] A. 1940a.
[52] An. 1939: 1454.
[53] See also here, section 8.2.
[54] Kanellopoulos 1939: 806.
[55] Cf. Michaud 2004 & Chapoutot 2016 about Hitler.

patriotic self-sacrifice, Greek citizens could create themselves anew based on their alleged essence and produce a higher culture and glorious feats.

Following this logic of acculturation, Aristos Kambanis had characteristically ascribed to the dictatorship a 'programme of Hellenisation of the Greeks'.[56] While he lashed out against the modern conception of the nation, he inadvertently pointed to the fact that the nation is a manufactured category and national identity is constructed rather than inherent and biological.[57] If Greeks are Greeks naturally and simply by birth, then there is no need to Hellenise them. However, the conception of Greekness that prevailed in the Fourth-of-August regime was largely cultural, based on shared customs, language, and ideals. This explains the role other Metaxist intellectuals, such as Melis Nikolaidis, assigned education. The (re)hellenisation of the Greeks was to be effected top-down through a process of national re-education revolving around the authentic components of Greekness. The conception of the nation as a community imbued with Greek culture and history as well as with the spirit of the Greek land even enabled some pro-regime cultural operators such as Tombros to present nineteenth-century Bavarian artists who operated in Greece and their works as essentially Greek.[58]

Such views had a long pedigree, going back to the pre-revolutionary years. In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, education was conceived in Greek intellectual circles

[56] Kambanis 1938b: 260.
[57] See below, section 6.2 about Kambanis's attack on modern conceptions of the nation.
[58] 'Τα γλυπτικά έργα της Ακαδημίας είνε γνωστόν ότι, εξετελέσθησαν από τον πρώτον, Βαυαρόν την καταγωγήν, γλύπτην Δρόσην, όστις διδάξας αρκετά χρόνια στην Αθήνα, εμελέτησε και αγάπησε την κλασσική παράδοσι της αρχαίας ελληνικής γλυπτικής τέχνης και τεχνικής και γι' αυτούς τους λόγους το έργον του, είναι δυνατόν να χαρακτηρισθή ως γνησίως ελληνικόν και ως διαπνεόμενον από ελληνικήν τεχνικήν, για την οποίαν και ο ίδιος παρέμεινε τελικώς Έλλην την ψυχήν, την Πατρίδα και τον νουν. Τα έργα συνεπώς της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών δημιουργηθέντα εντός της ατμοσφαίρας του Αττικού περιβάλλοντος, είναι και δημιουργήματα των νεωτέρων Αθηνών' (Tombros 1937: 411). Michalis Tombros (1889-1974) was a pro-regime sculptor that was appointed professor at the Supreme School of Fine Arts and represented Greece in the Venice Biennale during the dictatorship (see Matthiopoulos 1996). He was commissioned multiple times by state authorities such as the Ministries of Education and Agriculture under Metaxas, while his works of that same period include at least one purchased by the Metaxas family as well as a bust of Ioannis Metaxas (see Pavlopoulos 1996: 100-104). His stance during the Axis Occupation (e.g. his contribution to the Fascist periodical *Quadrivio*) caused tensions with EAM artists in the early period after the liberation (see Matthiopoulos 2007).

as a foundation of nationhood and a means to recover the nation's true character.[59] Furthermore, a dual attitude to culture and the people was evinced in Greek public discourse, an attitude that survived throughout the nineteenth century and was renormalised and boosted under Metaxas. Its first facet was rather related to Romanticism whereas the other more connected to the Enlightenment: 'On the one hand, the *Volk* was celebrated as a repository of Greek history and national identity, organically linked to the land. … On the other hand, the people had to be instructed by intellectuals in order to begin a painful process of re-education'.[60]

In an article entitled 'Greece and Art', the owner and editor of the newspaper *Estia* claimed that the role of art for 'great peoples' is 'primarily and literally directive'.[61] The implications of Kyrou's text were that the Greeks are one of these 'great peoples' and that the political role of art should be put to the forefront. Such ideas are analogous to German right-wing populist criticism that rejected artistic autonomy and instead emphasised the national and political significance of art and culture, as well as of criticism itself.[62] A similar attitude is displayed by Petros Orologas, who started his 1938 literary criticism book *Writers and their Time* with a negative presentation of the autonomy and elitism of Greek literature, its artificiality, and lack of connection to the ordinary people.[63] In a clear allusion to the far-right regimes that were springing up across Europe at the time –and especially to Nazi Germany– Kyrou moreover claimed that 'for those interested in the preservation and progress of the truly national

[59] Peckham 2001: 17-18.
[60] Peckham 2001: 17.
[61] Kyrou 1937b: 101.
[62] See Berman 1988: 139-140, Pfohlmann 2004: 108. Chamalidi (2002: 368) also argues that this 'πιθανότατα αντανακλά τη θέση της τέχνης στην εθνικοσοσιαλιστική προπαγάνδα, όχι μόνο ως αντικειμένου πολιτικών επιρροών, αλλά και ως μέσου χειραγώγησης των μαζών'.
[63] 'Οι λογοτέχνες μιλάνε μια γλώσσα που δεν την καταλαβαίνει το κοινό. Το έργο τους, δυσπρόσιτο, συχνά ντελικάτο και θερμοκηπιακό, συχνότερα ανεδαφικό και μετέωρο, δίχως ρίζες που να το συνδέουν με την ψυχή του πλήθους' (Orologas 1938a: 3). Orologas's conclusion included an explicit rejection of Oscar Wilde's approach to art and reiterated yet again the connection of 'genuine' art with the nation, people or race (Orologas 1938a: 26).

cultures of some countries, one of the foremost thoughts has been the protection and development of the typical and historical Art of these countries'.[64]

Beside the indirect praise of ultranationalist autocracies, a significant part of Kyrou's text is an attack on communism and its allegedly insidious and destructive aims. In this context, Kyrou posited art as an 'obstacle' to the de-Hellenisation efforts of the communists.[65] Anti-communism, the appropriation of the Greek past, and the promotion of a 'genuine' Greek culture did not just constitute means of legitimation for the regime but also basic coordinates for the reconfiguration of Greek collective identity. A particular type of archaeolatry and preoccupation with national culture were framed as features of the nation. Those who identified with and showed reverence for Greek history and culture were members of the national in-group. At the same time, Greek collective identity was reshaped in opposition to communism.[66]

For many critics, art and literature was presented as intimately linked to the 'soul of the nation', something that arguably proceeds from the romantic conception of the nation as *Kulturnation*. The relationship was often presented as bidirectional, with art being the means both to articulate and to transform the national soul, both to externalise that internality and to influence and steer it in a particular direction, both to communicate its meaning to the non-artists

[64] Kyrou 1037b: 101. About the promotion of national art under the Nazi regime see Michaud 2004. Hering (1996: 312) associates Kyrou's text with the 'Blood-and-Soil ideology', while Chamalidi makes multiple references to the author's blueprints from fascism and especially from the German Far Right –from Conservative Revolutionaries to National Socialists– in her discussion of this article (Chamalidi 2002: 368-371).

[65] Kyrou 1937b: 101. Kyrou here is probably not merely alluding to the Nazi regime, but moreover appropriating its propaganda regarding art and adjusting it to the Greek case. Cf. Eric Michaud's claim that 'Hitler … surrounded himself with men such as Dietrich Eckart, Joseph Goebbels, Baldur von Schirach, Alfred Rosenberg, Walther Funk, Julius Streicher, and Albert Speer. These men were united primarily by a shared faith in the cultural and artistic mission of the German people, and by an equal conviction that this mission was bound to take the form of a struggle. Each of them prided himself on playing an active part in the struggle to restore a "German art" which Hitler claimed in 1933 would be "the proudest defense of the German people"' (Michaud 2004: 30)

[66] This logic reached its apex when the communist threat became real during the civil war rather than the largely imagined and fabricated threat of the 1930s. Indicative is a 1948 speech by Stratis Myrivilis, subsequently published in book form, which presented communists as non-Greeks, indeed as a distinct race (Myrivilis 1948). For a discussion of Myrivilis's anti-communist rant in relation to racial theories see Kousouris 2017: 324-330.

and to communicate with the soul itself.[67] The quality of cultural products was thus premised on the qualities of the people.[68]

Karaiskaki pushed the boundaries of this ideological framework to the extreme by putting forward a concept of racial aesthetics. Plagiarising the chapter on 'racial aesthetics' in Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg's book *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1930), she maintained in an early-1940 article that art and ideals of beauty are racially determined.[69] Only when the purity of the race and this link between race and art is retained does art remain genuine and has the potential to be eternalised. In a slightly earlier article, Karaiskaki had declared that 'the Greek has been an aesthetic value throughout the centuries. Beauty was the measure of Greek life'.[70]

Nonetheless, several pro-regime cultural operators promoted notions of a distinct 'Hellenic aesthetics' that was nationally determined. Its characteristics were harmony, moderation, wholeness, and an emphasis on shape rather than colour. Orologas, for instance, posited 'Μορφή' as the principal aesthetic criterion for literature in a way that seems to coincide with 'σχέδιο' in painting, whereas the flux and melody that characterise modernist fiction point to a

[67] See e.g. 'Λογοτέχνες και καλλιτέχνες, εσείς που επικοινωνείτε άμεσα και βαθειά με την ψυχή του Έθνους και την εκφράζετε και την ωμορφαίνετε και την ανυψώνετε με την τέχνη σας' (Nikolaidis 1938h: 242).
[68] This was also applied to products of vernacular culture; see e.g. 'Ο Ελληνικός λαός με πλούσιον συναισθηματικόν κόσμον, ζωηράν φαντασίαν και ποιητικήν προδιάθεσιν, δεν ήτο δυνατόν παρά να έχη πλάσει τραγούδια από τα ωραιότερα, αν όχι τα ωραιότερα όλων των λαών' (A. 1940b).
[69] Compare for instance the following two passages from Karaiskaki's and Rosenberg's text respectively: 'Σχεδόν όλοι οι φιλόσοφοι, που έγραψαν για "αισθητική" ή για την αξιολογία της τέχνης, πέρασαν χωρίς ν' αγγίξουν το γεγονός ενός φυλετικού ιδεώδους ωραιότητος φυσικής και μιας φυλετικά δεμένης ανωτάτης αξίας ψυχικού είδους. Και όμως είναι τόσο φανερή η διαφορετική επίδρασι, που κάνει πάνω μας η καθαρά ψυχική παράστασι, π.χ. ενός Έλληνος εφήβου από την εικόνα ενός Κινέζου αυτοκράτορος. Κάθε γραμμή στην Κίνα παίρνει μιαν άλλη λειτουργία παρά στην Ελλάδα. Έτσι χωρίς τη γνώσι και την κατανόησι της μορφοποιούσης και φυλετικά ωρισμένης θελήσεως δεν μπορεί η ελληνική τέχνη – και κάθε τέχνη – να ερμηνευθή και να παράσχη αισθητική απόλαυσι' (Karaiskaki 1940a: 450). 'Fast alle Philosophen, welche über den „aesthetischen Zustand" oder über die Wertfestlegungen in der Kunst geschrieben haben, sind an der Tatsache eines rassischen Schönheitsideals in physischer Hinsicht und eines rassisch gebundenen Höchstwertes seelischer Art vorübergegangen. Dabei liegt es auf der Hand, dass, wenn überhaupt über das Wesen der Kunst und ihre Wirkung gesprochen werden soll, die rein physische Darstellung z.B. eines Griechen auf uns anders einwirken muss, als etwa das Bildnis eines chinesischen Kaisers. Jede Umrißlinie erhält in China eine andere Funktion als in Hellas, die ohne die Kenntnis des formenden, rassisch bedingten Willens weder zu deuten noch „aesthetisch zu genießen" ist' (Rosenberg 1935: 279).
[70] Karaiskaki 1939b: 261. That article too was plagiarised from Rosenberg but French (proto)fascists also used to make similar claims, identifying Frenchness with beauty (see Carroll 1995), which suggests a wide dispersion of such ideas in pre-1945 ultranationalist circles in Europe.

function similar to that of 'χρώμα'.[71] Literary and artistic approaches that did not privilege 'form' or 'shape' were seen as too materialistic and effeminate, and in the final analysis as 'un-Greek', as indicated also by Chatzikyriakos-Gikas, who identified 'σχέδιο' with the essence of Greek art.[72] The standards for this aesthetics were often drawn on ancient Greek art but were also related to the alleged qualities of the Greek land, as will be further discussed in the next chapter.[73]

In sum, the Greek nation was not just defined based on its culture but was moreover portrayed as having a privileged relationship with culture in comparison to other nations. At the same time, the development and promotion of national culture was alleged to serve as a rallying force and a bulwark against the onslaught of corrosive forces. The concept of a specifically Greek culture enabled both the recalibration of the people based on that culture's alleged characteristics and the promotion of a Hellenic aesthetics.

[71] In Orologas's article there are indeed clear allusions to painting, especially in the last paragraph: 'Όπως το άτομο αγωνίζεται να σχηματίσει μια ιδιαίτερη κι' ενιαία φυσιογνωμία και δεν αφίνεται ν' αποσυντεθή σε "στιγμές" που την αποχρωματίζουν, την εξαρθρώνουν και τη διαλύουν, έτσι κι' ο μυθιστοριογράφος δε μπορεί ν' αγνοήση τη φυσική τούτη προσπάθεια του ατόμου για σχηματισμό και διαφοροποίηση, αφού το επιβάλλει η αδυσώπητη ανάγκη της υπάρξεως και της διακρίσεως. Και τα έργα της τεχνοτροπίας αυτής, μ' όλη την καλλιγραφία τους, που μπορεί να είναι κάποτε εξαίσια –έργα, τα οποία, δεν είναι πια σύγχρονα, αλλά χτεσινά– αντιδραστικά δημιουργήματα, για να χτυπήσουν την πεζολογία και τον ακαδημαϊσμό, θα πλέουν σαν άνθη άρρωστα, στο τέλμα μιας χρονικής περιόδου κοπώσεως. Μερικά απ' αυτά θα είναι, ασφαλώς, πολύχρωμα και ωραία θα φαίνωνται…' (Orologas 1939b: 274).

[72] Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938.

[73] See for instance the following passages: 'Ανάμεσα στα "ελληνικά" στοιχεία της τέχνης, την κυριώτατη θέση κατέχουν βέβαια η ισορροπία και η αρτιότητα της μορφής, και η τελειωμένη πλαστικότητα. Για τον έλληνα καλλιτέχνη δεν νοείται αισθητική δημιουργία που δεν έχει υποταγεί πρώτα και σαν ουσία και σα μορφή στους ρητούς νόμους που ορίζει ο Απόλλωνας. Πρέπει να πάρει πρόσωπο και πνεύμα ο ασχημάτιστος πηλός, ναποχτήσει ραχοκοκκαλιά το πλάσμα. Πρέπει να μπει στο ρυθμό μιας αυτοτελούς και ισόρροπης αρμονίας το ακαθόριστο χάος που στριφογυρνά και τρικλίζει στην τύχη. Κάθε τι άλλο είναι βάρβαρο και έξω από τους νόμους αυτής εδώ της γης' (Myrivilis 1940b: 403-404); 'Είναι αδύνατο να φαντασθώ μια ελληνική ζωγραφική που το κυριώτερό της χαρακτηριστικό θα έγκειται σε μια κακή (αντιαισθητική) παραμόρφωση του αντικειμένου. Ένας ρωμηός που εννοεί την πλαστική σημασία του Παρθενώνος, που γοητεύεται από αυτήν, ποτέ δεν θα σταθεί ικανός ν' αντιληφθεί μια ζωγραφική τέχνη που όλη της η αξία στηρίζεται στο χρώμα' (Ziogas 1938c).

CONCLUSION

The analysis in this chapter has sought to determine the principal characteristics that were assigned to the Greek nation by Metaxist cultural operators and to pinpoint essentialist claims regarding its nature. It has shown that the discourse of pro-regime intellectuals presented the Greek nation as an excessively unique and charismatic race which was sometimes indirectly portrayed as part of the Aryan family. The foremost characteristic of this race was its intimate relation with culture, a view that arguably contributed to the regime's futural visions for the creation of a high culture with global radiance, as will be discussed in chapter ten.

- CHAPTER 4 -

Back to the land

In line with the global economic paradigm shift towards autarky following the 1929 Crash, the Metaxas dictatorship promoted self-sufficiency, particularly after 1939.[1] The outbreak of WWII in September 1939 led to the dictator's appeal for a 'return to the land' and the intensification of agricultural production. Metaxas characteristically requisitioned all Greeks to leave 'no inch of land uncultivated' and all ploughmen to turn Greece into a 'farming barracks'.[2] However, the injunction to return to the land was multivalent and encompassed various political and ideological projects both before and after September 1939. Some of these projects have been summarised as 'the reconnection of agricultural tradition with the past of the people's legends, as well as the bridging of the gap between city and village and of the distance between scientists and the people'.[3] The latter convergence applied mostly to agronomists, whom the regime allegedly sent to the countryside in droves.[4]

That polysemous 'return to the land' also signified contact with the mystical side of the countryside, which preserves pure Greekness both in its aesthetic qualities and in the character of its inhabitants. Even Metaxas's appeal for intensified agricultural production was interpreted in mystical terms by *Pnevmatiki Zoi*: 'We are not simply going to cultivate the land; we are mostly going to be self-cultivated; and here lies, in our opinion, the deeper meaning and the

[1] See Psalidopoulos 1990, Gregory & Sailors 2003, Chase 2005: 51-104. Chase demonstrates how the interwar shift towards economic autarchy also followed on the breakdown of international trade during the Great War, which eventually fostered 'trade within formal and informal empires' (Chase 2005: 51). In the early 1930s, even John Maynard Keynes –arguably the most significant economist of the twentieth century– published an article that indirectly endorsed economic protectionism and policies of 'national self-sufficiency' (Keynes 1933).
[2] See the dictator's 9 September 1939 circular in Metaxas 1969b: 138-139.
[3] Machera 1987: 85.
[4] See Ploumidis 2011.

substance of the premier's slogan'.[5] Such an introvert tendency was additionally articulated in the promotion of domestic tourism and of what Theologos Nikoloudis labelled as 'tourist consciousness', while being understood as a pre-requisite for a new civilisation. The homeland was placed alongside the national past and traditions as a repository of Greekness and a source to be explored and exploited on the way to self-knowledge and to what will be discussed in chapter ten as 'reconnection forwards'.

During the Metaxas years there was a profusion of journalistic, critical, and literary texts presenting the particularities of different Greek regions. Some of these texts seem to serve immediate political objectives, such as several articles in *I Neolea* which are dedicated to Crete. The regime paid special attention to Crete which was staunchly Venizelist and the site of a failed anti-dictatorial uprising over the summer of 1938.[6] Other texts seem to fall within the wider nationalist framework of regionalism and of *patridognosia*. Geoclimatic theories were also pertinent to the discussion of the nation, as they were employed not so much for historical developments as such but as an explanation for nation-formation and national continuity. This chapter points to the intertwinement of such theories with aesthetic and metaphysical readings of the Greek land.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first one deals with the connection of travel literature and tourism with the politico-ideological project of the dictatorship and the way this connection was upheld by cultural operators. The second section discusses the attribution of aesthetic and metaphysical qualities to the Greek land and nature. In the third section I deal with the discursive advancement of ruralism and regionalism.

[5] [Anon.] 1939aa.

[6] About the preoccupation of Metaxas with Crete and the failure of the regime's propaganda there see Petrakis 2006: 180-181. The special treatment of Crete in *I Neolea* is discussed in Andreiomenos 2012: 69-71, while this is tentatively linked to the 1938 uprising in Angelis 2006: 108. It should be noted that the periodical commenced its publication in autumn 1938, that is a few months after the Cretan revolt, something that provides further credence to the association between the special treatment of the island and the revolt.

4.1. TRAVELOGUE AND TOURISM

Many texts appeared in pro-regime newspapers and journals, especially in *I Neolea*, that thematise the Greek land and nature in various ways. Scholarly treatment of the period has already emphasised the particular interest of *I Kathimerini* in such texts, as well as their connection with the regime's ideology and the dictator's tours and speeches throughout the Greek countryside.[7] The drive to familiarise oneself more with one's homeland intensified in the interwar period and especially during the dictatorship even in travel literature, which witnessed a revival of a nineteenth-century trend sometimes tagged as *patridognosia*. However, the focus now was not so much on purely geographical characteristics as on the 'Soul' or 'substance' of the countryside, with the traveller-writer taking on the identity of a 'pilgrim'.[8]

Albeit not producing travel literature, Melis Nikolaidis unequivocally adopted such an approach in his April 1938 editorial. As it was announced in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* in advance, the editor went on a tour throughout Central and Northern Greece from late February onward in order to open a channel of communication with its cultural elites and map its cultural status and needs.[9] This tour engendered a streak of texts discussing and glorifying the Greek countryside. The most significant amongst them was the editorial published by Nikolaidis upon his return, in which he described this tour as a 'pilgrimage'. He spoke of the Greek land, nature, and soil as 'sacred' and identified the countryside with the 'true Greek Soul'. The religious intertext culminates at the closing of the article, where Nikolaidis professed the necessity for 'the holy breath of a deeper faith in the high vocation of the Greek Soul' in order to engender 'the miracle of our cultural and spiritual rebirth'.[10]

[7] See Dimadis 2016: 203-205.
[8] See Panaretou 1995: 87.
[9] [Anon.] 1938h.
[10] Nikolaidis 1938d. See also the discussion in chapter 9 regarding the intertwinement of nationalist and religious discourse as well as specifically about the idea of 'rebirth'.

Stratis Doukas contributed numerous texts to *I Neolea* on Greek areas he had visited, providing information about the landscape and climate, the history and culture of each one, themes that I will pick up in the following sections. For now, it is important to note that these texts fall under the category of travelogue, although the personal role of the author as a kind of pilgrim and mystic interpreter of the land was not always made explicit. Even in such cases, however, Doukas probably achieved the same if not a better ideological effect on his readership by making interpretation appear as fact. Nevertheless, the dominant tendency was one of overtly idealising the Greek land and approaching it as a wonder replete with metaphysical, mystical or magical forces. The role of the pilgrim was adopted by many cultural operators who published their impressions on trips to the Greek countryside in pro-regime periodicals. This is the case with Karaiskaki's third signed contribution to in *I Neolea* as well as with Takis Papatsonis's 1937 contribution to *Nea Politiki*, where he framed his excursion on the mountains near Athens as a mystical experience, as the 'Great Easter'.[11]

According to the editor of the Greek anthology of travel literature, this literary genre can 'steer, to a lesser or greater degree, the stance, the acceptance, the adjustment of the reader, and regulate their relation to physical space'.[12] Following up on this claim, one could argue that some travel literature of Metaxas's time focusing on Greece cannot but be seen as being in line with the regime's 'spatial agenda'. Several pieces of travel literature 'textualised' areas within the country's borders as national space and guided the reader towards a particular perception of and approach to this space. This approach was highly compatible with the dictatorship's objectives to glorify Greek land and nature, foster patriotism and love of homeland, and assert the aesthetic and metaphysical qualities of Greek landscape.

[11] Kar. 1938b, Papatsonis 1937.
[12] Panaretou 1995: 35.

Literary critics amplified the resonance of this literature by promoting it to their own readership, quoting passages from such books, and often openly encouraging their reading or purchase. Whether one publication of this sort was intended to uphold the regime's cause (as is arguably the case with I. M. Panayiotopoulos's books mentioned below) or not, its positive review by Metaxist literary critics signified its appropriation and absorption within the overarching agenda. Regardless of initial intentions, both production and reception of travel literature focusing on Greek areas during the Fourth-of-August regime were bound to be codetermined by the dominant ideology.

Alongside contributions to serial publications, relevant books were published by pro-regime cultural operators, like Myrivilis's *The Song of the Land – Greek Symphony (Lyrical Prose)* (1937) and Panayiotopoulos's *Forms of the Greek Land* (1937) and *Greek Horizons* (1940).[13] Particularly Panayiotopoulos's 1940 book was hailed with rave reviews in Metaxist periodicals. Angelomatis praised it in *I Neolea*, pointing to the fact that aesthetic pleasure was induced by the text, its aesthetic qualities, the writer's unique style, as well as the 'concentrated wisdom' and the 'painting disposition' that he had poured into his book. Yet, for Angelomatis the reader's delectation seems to have mostly arisen from Panayiotopoulos's being a 'worshiper of the Greek land' who 'offers his book as a monument to the Greek generations'.[14] In another review, Angelomatis claimed that Panayiotopoulos's book along with L. Petromaniatis's *Lighthouse Keepers* (which the critic portrayed as 'the briskest and most graphical book … that has been written in recent years') 'acquaint us with Greece in all its forms'.[15] Chatzinis's review in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* demonstrates further that the primary critical standards were

[13] Original titles: *Το τραγούδι της Γης – Ελληνική συμφωνία (λυρικό πεζογράφημα)*; *Μορφές της Ελληνικής Γης* (published by Nikolaidis's Office of Intellectual Services); *Ελληνικοί Ορίζοντες*. Panayiotopoulos's books were based on texts he had initially contributed to the newspaper *Η Πρωία* from mid-1934 to late 1938.
[14] Angelomatis 1940e.
[15] Angelomatis 1940f.

ultimately that the writer brought the Greek land to life and enabled the reader to enjoy the aesthetic, mystical, and national qualities of the land itself.[16]

This whole 'back-to-the-land' trend was also dialectically related with the state promotion of tourism in the Metaxas years as a propagandistic tool. Significantly enough, the equivalent of the German Ministry of Propaganda that was established by Metaxas was named Deputy Ministry of Press and Tourism.[17] Tourist policy under Metaxas aimed at improving the image of the country abroad –and thus endowing the dictatorship with legitimacy internationally– and at bringing Greeks into contact with their homeland in a way that bolstered the dominant ideology. A 'tourist consciousness' was fostered by the regime and especially by Nikoloudis, who identified it with the 'consciousness of our civilisation'.[18]

As I suggested at the beginning of the chapter, that introvert drive was not only related to domestic tourism but also to the creation of a new civilisation. According to the dictator, 'in order to develop worthwhile tourism, a country must have natural beauties, which Greece fortunately does not lack, and civilisation, which Greece has to develop much more'.[19] Thus, the promotion of tourism and the quest for a new civilisation or 'cultural rebirth' were portrayed as having a bidirectional relationship. Tourist consciousness and familiarisation with the fatherland and its mystical, cultural, historical, aesthetic, and ultimately national treasures were supposedly conducive to Greek civilisation. Simultaneously, further development of civilisation was seen as a prerequisite for noteworthy tourism, arguably for attracting foreign visitors.

[16] 'ζωντανεύει γοργά, πληθωρικά, συναρπαστικά ένα μεγάλο κομμάτι Ελλάδας. Ακούμε τον παλμό της, καθώς αντιχτυπάει στην ίδια την καρδιά του συγγραφέα. … Και πρέπει ασφαλώς να έχει ο κ. Παναγιωτόπουλος πλούσια εσωτερικά αποθέματα, για να μας καταφέρει να διαβάσουμε τον ογκώδη τόμο των 326 πυκνοτυπωμένων σελίδων του βιβλίου του, χωρίς να το καταλάβουμε· και μάλιστα με το ζωηρό συναίσθημα πως επικοινωνούμε με την ελληνική γη, πως τη γνωρίζουμε και την αναγνωρίζουμε, πως χαιρόμαστε ολόψυχα τη μαγεία της, όπως τη χάρηκε ο ίδιος ο συγγραφέας' (Chatzinis 1940c: 136).
[17] The Deputy Ministry was founded in autumn 1936 based on the institutional blueprint of Fascist Italy (see Vlachos 2016: 212).
[18] See Zacharia 2014: 190-196.
[19] Metaxas 1969a: 242.

Tourist consciousness was coterminal to *patridognosia*, whose imperative is reflected in the very title of one of Nikolaidis's editorials in the aftermath of his countryside tour: 'Let's become acquainted with Greece'.[20] It can also be understood against the backdrop of the recurring injunction at the time –coming from both the dictatorship's apparatus and its supporters amongst intellectuals– 'to get to know our self'. As already mentioned, the land was conceived of as part of Greek identity, while domestic tourism entailed familiarisation with history, monuments, tradition, and the common folk of the countryside. It was precisely on these grounds that Theologos Nikoloudis's call for the Greeks to develop a tourist consciousness and 'travel as often as possible' was reproduced and passionately supported by *Pnevmatiki Zoi*. Nikolaidis's periodical even proposed that writers be facilitated to travel throughout Greece in the same way as journalists, something that would arguably contribute to the production of a literature in tune with the regime's agenda.[21]

In general, literary critics praised the regime's tourist policy, wrote positive reviews of technical books on tourism, promoted a tourist consciousness, and urged their readership to get actively involved in the advancement of tourism.[22] Additionally, several travelogues that were positively reviewed were explicitly associated with tourism. For instance, Kalamatianos

[20] Nikolaidis 1938e.

[21] [Anon.] 1937e. Nikolaidis made a similar request, even addressing Theologos Nikoloudis, in his editorial entitled 'Να γνωρίσουμε την Ελλάδα' which was published almost a year later (see footnote 20 above), concluding thusly: 'Είναι ανάγκη να διευκολυνθούν οι πνευματικοί άνθρωποι του τόπου με κάθε κρατική παραχώρηση κι' ενίσχυση, για να μπορέσουν να επικοινωνήσουν με τον Λαό μας, με την ψυχή της Ελλάδος. Δεν είναι απλώς ζήτημα τουρισμού. Είναι πολύ μεγαλείτερο και πολύ σοβαρότερο: είναι ζήτημα πολιτισμού'.

[22] Some indicative examples are 'σαν την εντατική μέριμνα υπέρ της αναδιοργανώσεως ή, ακριβέστερα, του εκπολιτισμού των τουριστικών κέντρων της χώρας μας και σαν την τουριστική διαφήμιση των ωραιοτήτων της στο εξωτερικό' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 58) and 'ως παρατηρεί πολύ σωστά ο συγγραφεύς, "ο Τουρισμός δεν είναι μονάχα υπόθεσις κρατική, αλλά και υπόθεσις ομαδική και ατομική" … η οποία πρέπει να ελκύη την προσοχήν κάθε Έλληνος, διότι συνδέεται με την ανάπτυξιν της Ελλάδος και την οικονομικήν ακμήν της' (An. 1940). The author of the book on tourism reviewed by Angelomatis was Stelios Chiliadakis, who was a close associate of Nikoloudis, to whom he dedicated the book. He was in charge of the Directorate for Tourist Organisation, which was the most significant department of Nikoloudis's Deputy Ministry (see Vlachos 2016: 217, 243-244). Another example is provided below, in footnote 32.

acclaimed a book of 'tourist impressions' on three Macedonian cities while pointing to the mythical and rejuvenating qualities of the land.[23]

While Greek tourism was promoted abroad by means of foreign-language publications, such as *En Grèce* (1937-1939) and *Voyage en Grèce* (1934-1939), travel literature was also framed as conducive to foreign tourism.[24] Fanis Michalopoulos's books *Touring Greece… Olympia* (1939) and *Touring Greece… Mycenae* (1939) clearly fall into this category.[25] They were published by the Greek Touring Club (EPL), which was the only organisation of its type that was sanctioned by the New State.[26] Reviewing those two books, Lazaros Piniatoglou maintained that 'this new endeavour must be continued and expanded, so that we obtain "guides" of Greece worthy of their name that would allow the foreigner to face the beauties of our land under the guidance of an illuminated spirit'.[27]

In sum, the Metaxas years witnessed an increased interest in the Greek land that reinvigorated, recalibrated, and extended pre-existing trends to fit the regime's agenda. It is against this backdrop that the advancement of travel literature, tourism, and travel guides during the dictatorship should be set. This interest did not manifest only in the form of travelogues but also in the form of essays about the inherently aesthetic character of the Greek land, as we shall see in the next section.

[23] 'Τουριστικές εντυπώσεις χαρακτηρίζει το νέο βιβλίο του ο γνωστός σοφός φιλόλογος και πρώην πρόεδρος του Εκπαιδευτικού Συμβουλίου. ... Αρχαία ιστορία,–και πόσα δεν έχει να ειπεί κανείς για την πατρίδα του Μεγ. Αλεξάνδρου,– Βυζαντινή ιστορία, ο Μακεδονικός αγώνας κι' οι Βαλκανικοί πόλεμοι, στους οποίους πολέμησε κι' ο ίδιος ο συγγραφέας, Λαογραφία, φυσικός πλούτος και βιομηχανία ... δε γερνάει ποτέ η ψυχή, όταν λούζεται στις πηγές της Ομορφιάς του Ελληνικού πνεύματος και της νεραϊδένιας Ελληνικής φύσης' (Kalamatianos 1939a).
[24] See Zacharia 2014.
[25] Original titles: *Περιοδεύοντας την Ελλάδα… Ολυμπία* and *Περιοδεύοντας την Ελλάδα… Μυκήναι*. During the dictatorship, Michalopoulos also published *The Attic countryside and landscape* (1940; *Το αττικό ύπαιθρο και τοπίο*).
[26] EPL (Ελληνική Περιηγητική Λέσχη) had been co-opted and integrated in the dictatorship's corporatist scheme in the domain of tourism (see Vlachos 2016: 246-247). The club had been co-founded by Chiliadakis (see above, footnote 22) and was the most important organisation of this kind in twentieth-century Greece.
[27] Piniatoglou 1940.

4.2. POETICS OF LANDSCAPE – METAPHYSICS OF NATURE

Addressing Athens technical employees shortly after the first anniversary of the coup, the dictator stressed that their works must be beautiful 'from a Greek point of view' or 'in Greek terms'. For, Metaxas claimed, contemporary Athens is 'Greek in terms of climate, in terms of sky and nature that surrounds it, but both Athens and Piraeus, and partly even the suburbs are not Greek in terms of technical appearance and rhythm'.[28] This recalls the notion of a Hellenic aesthetics that was discussed in the previous chapter, but also points to the intimate connection of this aesthetics with the Greek environment.

The sun and the 'Greek light' held a significant position in the ideological universe of nationalist writers and intellectuals, not just during the dictatorship but also before and after it. The Greek light was most notably idolised by Periklis Yiannopoulos and by major exponents of the 1930s generation, predominantly Odysseas Elytis, forming a 'mythology of the light'.[29] In fact, the emphasis on the Greek light as something unique and characteristic, whose representation should be integral to a distinct Modern Greek style, does not only appear in the domain of literature. It is recurrent in several branches of art and art criticism during the interwar years and earlier, including painting, photography, and cinema.[30]

As mentioned in chapter two, Nazi ideologues attributed a high significance to sunlight, seeing it as a catalyst for the externalisation of Aryan genius and the creation of civilisation and culture. Sitsa Karaiskaki would delve deeper into the association of the sun with culture by presenting the Greek landscape as a piece of art created by the sun.[31] Having already

[28] 'από ελληνικής απόψεως ωραία' (Metaxas 1969: 239-240).
[29] The term 'mythology of the light' is taken from Tziovas 1989: 119. See Koutrianou 2002 about Elytis's poetics and the central role of light in it. See Voutouris 2011 about the association of Elytis with Yiannopoulos.
[30] See Chamalidi 2002: passim, Carabott, Hamilakis & Papargyriou 2015: 4, Stasinopoulou 2000: 362.
[31] 'Η Καστέλλα κομψοτέχνημα, φωτισμένο από έναν πελώριο, ξωτικό προβολέα. … Ο ήλιος απλώνει το χέρι του και κάνει τα αποκαλυπτήρια του καλλιτεχνικού ταμπλώ. § Σαν θαύματα ζωγραφίζονται πέρα οι αμφίβολες κοντούρες του νησιού της Αφαίας και του Πόρου. Ποιο πινέλλο μπορούσε να πετάξη αυτές τις πινελλιές στο υπέροχο ταμπλώ, ποια σπάτουλα ζωγράφου είναι δυνατό ν' αναμίξη τα χρώματα αυτά τα ασύλληπτα; § Και μέσα σ' αυτή την αφάνταστη πρωινή αρμονία, μέσα στην λεπτοσύνθετη και φίνα αυτή ακουαρέλλα…' (Kar. 1938b: 236).

portrayed the sun as an agent that precipitates the development of culture in a land and endows the landscape with aesthetic qualities, she further demonstrated the multivalence of the sun in the ideological universe of the time. Implying notions of health, remediation, and optimism, which will be analysed more extensively in the final part, Karaiskaki associated the joyful attitude of the Greek people and their enjoyment of the sun with 'liberation' from the diseased or 'uncanny' aspects of Greek life after the coup.[32]

In an aesthetic essay he published in *Pnevmatiki Zoi*, Valias Semertzidis also laid emphasis on the Greek light and its creative/artistic effect. Moreover, he presented the Greek land, and particularly Attica, as a blueprint for art that showcases itself the qualities of an artwork.[33] However, the basic premise of Semertzidis's essay was that both living organisms and art are geoclimatically determined.[34] This recalls the 'doctrine of circumstances' that circulated already in nineteenth-century culture-related thought in Greece.[35] Nonetheless, such views were also in dialogue with the geoclimatic theories that were in vogue in the interwar years and particularly with the renewed interest in the ideas of Periklis Yiannopoulos.[36]

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[32] 'Ο ελληνικός Λαός στο σύνολό του σήμερα χαίρεται τον ήλιο του τον χινοπωριάτικο, ξεχυμένος στις αττικές ακτές των Φαλήρων και ξεφωνίζει λευτερωμένος από πολλούς βρυκόλακες των περασμένων: "Ο ήλιος… ο ήλιος!"' (Kar. 1938b: 237). It is characteristic that Karaiskaki spoke of vampires, which have been analysed as the representation par excellence of the uncanniness of Greece from the perspective of the West (see Garcia Marin 2015). It might not be incidental that Karaiskaki also praised the tourist policy of the regime and described the enthusiastic reactions of foreign tourists to the changes effected by the dictatorship in this domain (see Kar. 1938b: 236).

[33] 'να πάρει κανείς τους δρόμους της Αττικής, μια, δυο, χίλιες φορές, πρωί, βράδυ, και να δει την αποκάλυψη αυτή που λέγεται αττική γη και που κρύβει όλον αυτό το θησαυρό της αρμονίας, της γραμμής, της φόρμας, του φωτός και του χρώματος! Το κάθε τι λούζεται μέσα σ' ένα φως, ένα φως που μπορεί και τα φτιάχνει όλα, που κάθε ώρα τ' αλλάζει, τα μετατοπίζει, τα διαλύει, τα σχηματίζει και τα μετασχηματίζει. Το χρώμα της γης, το χρώμα του δέντρου, της πέτρας, της ατμοσφαίρας, είναι διάχυτο, ταυτοχρόνως όμως έχουν τ' αντικείμενα αυτά σχήματα, χρώματα, γραμμές και αρμονίες άγνωστες στην Τέχνη μας, για τούτο και σε σπρώχνουν όλ' αυτά σε μια δημιουργίαν ανώτερη, σε μια δημιουργία παντοδύναμη' (Semertzidis 1938: 109).

[34] 'Τα στοιχεία που μεταμορφώνουν το νεκρό σε ζωντανό, βρίσκονται ξεχωριστά σε ορισμένα γεωγραφικά μήκη και πλάτη του πλανήτου μας. Σ' αυτές λοιπόν τις οποιεσδήποτε γεωγραφικές θέσεις, και κάτω φυσικά από ορισμένες και ανάλογες κλιματολογικές συνθήκες, αναπτύσσεται τούτο ή εκείνο το είδος (ανθρώπων, ζώων, φυτών), κι' αναπόφευκτα, κατά συνέπειαν, διαπλάσσεται ο χαρακτήρας του ανθρώπου, η σωματική και διανοητική υγεία του, όλα δεν πάλιν αυτά, στις διάφορες εκδηλώσεις της Τέχνης, παίρνουν τον προσωπικό χαρακτήρα των' (Semertzidis 1938: 109).

[35] See Tziovas 1986: 392ff.

[36] See Tziovas 1989, Varelas 1997, Kayialis 2007, Voutouris 2017. Valias Semertzidis (1911-1983) was a painter and engraver who seems to have been very close to Kostis Bastias during the dictatorship and especially after the First Panhellenic Art Exhibition of 1938 by which this text is occasioned. His acquaintance with Bastias began in

The dictator himself had stated in 1938 that 'land and human are something indissolubly united and for this reason certain areas have given a certain, always identical, human type throughout the centuries'.[37] In a 1936 article in *I Kathimerini* which I will discuss further in chapter ten, Nikos Pappas had expressed similar views in an attempt to prove the irrelevance of miscegenation for national identity. His line of thought reiterated a locus already in circulation during the nineteenth century, that of the Greek landscape as a medium of continuity. It was the same space where the ancient Greeks acted, the space that is always illuminated by the 'Greek light'.[38]

In his 1939 radio broadcast that was discussed in chapter two, Nikolaidis insisted that optimism is a perennial characteristic of the Greeks because it is 'an ingredient of our very life, an ingredient diffused within our blood, identified with our soul'. In an argumentation that resembles *Blut-und-Boden* discourses, Nikolaidis posited optimism as the outcome of geoclimatic circumstances, while combining tradition and land as well as claims of cultural and pseudo-biological (in fact metaphysical) exceptionalism. Optimism was the result of fresh air, natural beauty, and the 'Greek light': 'How are we to see life as "black" under this clear and smiling sun, within this cheerful and bright nature? No, we cannot but see it as "white and sky-blue", as is our environment and as our idiosyncrasy, our character physiologically takes

the late 1920s, when Semertzidis had illustrated parts of Bastias's periodical *Ελληνικά Γράμματα*, and in the Metaxas years Semertzidis made two portraits of Bastias (see Matthiopoulos 1996). The views Semertzidis expresses in his article are in line with dictatorial ideological constructs of 'aesthetic territorialism' (see Tziovas 1989: 143) and geophysical approaches to the nation, but also with the linking of Greek art to harmony, clear lines, and light. During the Axis Occupation he joined EAM and he is more often than not identified with his post-WWII engravings that have left-wing ideological implications (see Chatzinikolaou 2012).

[37] Quoted in Ploumidis 2011: 22.

[38] 'Συζητώ για όλα: Για τις επιδρομές των βαρβάρων, για τις επιμειξίες που πάθαμε με τους Σλαύους, για τις θεωρίες του Φαλμεράιερ, για όλα, για όλα συζητώ. Αλλά, μήπως πάψαμε να κατοικούμε κάτω από τον Ελικώνα; Στις χώρες που γεννήσανε τον Μέγαν Αλέξανδρο; Στη νήσο της Σαπφούς; Στον Παρνασσό πάντα δε ζουν οι γραφικοί ποιμένες, στην Πίνδο τα Τσελιγκάτα, στην Ήπειρο οι Κρυσταλλικοί επωδοί, στην Πελοπόννησο ο Ταΰγετος, στην Κρήτη η Κνωσός; Ο ήλιος δεν είναι πάντα ο Θεοπάλαβος δημιουργός οργιώδικων ανοίξεων;' (Pappas 1936: 4). See for instance Carabott, Hamilakis & Papargyriou 2015: 4-5 for a discussion of this topic in the context of nineteenth-century photography.

shape'.[39] Nikolaidis here is also in dialogue with nineteenth-century positivism, as indicated by his quotation of Hippolyte Taine on the same page.[40]

The locus of the uniqueness and absolute beauty of the Greek land is recurring in several texts by cultural operators during the Metaxas dictatorship. In a 1939 contribution to *I Neolea* regarding Mount Olympus, Doukas described the landscape as 'the site of heavenly light, measure, and harmony'.[41] In his 1937 article on art, Kyrou linked the new era signified by the regime to the demand for a reconsideration of the nation's approach to art. The formation of a national artistic 'worldview', he claimed, was 'infinitely easier' for the Greeks, because they are 'surrounded from all sides with an exquisite nature and the still-alive ruins of a great past'.[42] The metaphysical and symbolic qualities attributed to the Greek land were partly owed to the presence of such a significant symbolic capital. Remnants of the Hellenic past punctuated the lands controlled by the modern Greek state and endowed the land in which they are located with both an aura of historicity and a formative dynamic. It is not only national history that is ever-present within parts of the landscape but also quasi-mystical forces capable of regenerating the nation, forming a new aesthetics, disseminating artistic cultivation, or spawning a new art.

As we saw in the previous section, Panayiotopoulos published two books during the dictatorship comprising of his impressions from visiting various Greek areas. In addition, his critical essays included references to his journeys throughout Greece, which, it is to be assumed, inspired his travel literature. He associated these journeys with the spiritual re-conquest of Greece and the recovery of lost true Greekness.[43] Panayiotopoulos described the land itself

[39] Nikolaidis 1939d: 179.
[40] Tziovas (1986: 395) has associated the 'appropriation of Taine's positivism by certain demoticists' in earlier decades with an 'ethnocentric tendency' that 'advocated the circumstantial and racial determination of each culture' while it 'also demanded an even greater sense of locality in literature and the arts'.
[41] Doukas 1939.
[42] 'πανταχόθεν περιβάλλει μια φύσις εξαιρετική και τα ζωντανά ακόμη ερείπια ενός μεγάλου παρελθόντος' (Kyrou 1937b: 106)
[43] See section 10.3.

as showcasing extraordinary classicist and realist aesthetics: 'Now in the summer, in our short Greek trips, we chance upon marvels of simplicity and limpidity and shapeliness either in formations of the land and the sea or in the calm vacillations of the climate or in the unsophisticated settings of everyday life'.[44]

At any rate, those were years of introspection and internal exploration. In a 1939 contribution to *To Neon Kratos*, Petros Charis reviewed the EON performance of von Kleist's *Penthesilea* on Lycabettus. The first section of the review contains a dismissal of his generation's *Fernweh*, while there is lavish praise of the leadership of EON for uncovering the secret marvels and the hidden potentials of their own land, for offering this natural space as a theatrical stage to the Athenian audience.[45] For Charis, the exotic was to be found in the familiar and he suggested that his generation should rather turn its centrifugal momentum (as manifested in 'λογοτεχνία φυγής' and cosmopolitanism) into a centripetal one, focusing on the artistic exploration of the indigenous.[46] This attitude was contiguous to the interest in the countryside and the (re)emergence of regionalism during the Metaxas years, which is the topic of the next section.

In conclusion, the sun and the land were idealised and the 'mythology of the light' was sometimes combined with the perception of Greek soil as a carrier of national memory, ideology, and identity. Apart from a certain 'metaphysics of land', one can trace in critical discourse a relative preoccupation with the 'poetics of landscape', that is the idea that Greek landscape can be interpreted as a kind of literary text or artwork and indeed that its aesthetic qualities should form the basis of true Greek art.

[44] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57.
[45] Charis 1939d: 565-566.
[46] The concept of the 'exotic in the familiar' is analysed in Peckham 2001 in relation to earlier periods and particularly to Papadiamandis's work.

4.3. RURALISM AND REGIONALISM

Like many other European societies of the interwar period, Greece was witnessing a wave of internal migration and rapid urbanisation. For several *völkisch* nationalist, (ultra)conservative and fascist intellectuals, this meant nothing less than the corrosion and potential destruction of national character, as it was often the rural areas that were seen as depositories of authentic nationhood.[47] In Italy, the Fascist dictatorship advocated the policy of 'ruralisation' from 1927 onward and 'encouraged a return to the land and a high rural birthrate'.[48] In literature, both the *Strapaese* movement in Italy and fiction produced along the lines of the *Blut-und-Boden* doctrine in Germany –even before the Nazi rise to power– were characterised by the idolisation of the countryside and the peasantry.[49]

As for the Metaxas regime, its focus on agriculture was explicit and reached the point of presenting itself as the 'Farmers' State'.[50] Apart from ideological incentives related to forms of agrarian romanticism, the generalised turn to the countryside had the pragmatic goal of enhancing social stability and decreasing the numbers of the city proletariat which could always be radicalised and 'seduced' by the communists and the labour movement.[51] According to Konstantinos Dimadis, 'from its inception, the Metaxas regime directed systematic propaganda towards the Greek provinces, aimed at co-opting the support of agricultural labourers and Asia Minor refugees'.[52]

Within this context and following upon an earlier trend towards increasing the links and opening up the cultural market to the countryside, intellectual debates regarding the Greek

[47] Cf. Stasinopoulou 2000: 363-364 about the connection of 'Greekness' with rural landscapes in Greek interwar cinema.
[48] De Grand 2000: 64.
[49] See Griffin 2007.
[50] Several examples of this pro-peasant and pro-agriculture stance can be found in Metaxas's speeches, who repeatedly toured the Greek provinces and thus often addressed audiences including farmers (e.g. Metaxas 1969a: 61-64, 187-189, 208-211, 245-247, 298-304, 305-306, 403-404, 427-431, 432-433). See also Ploumidis 2011.
[51] See Boyiatzis 2012. According to De Grand (2000), a similar rationale underpinned Mussolini's agricultural policy.
[52] Dimadis 2016: 204.

provinces were quite common in the Metaxas years.[53] The 10 February 1938 editorial of Melis Nikolaidis was prompted by such a discussion put forward by two Athenian newspapers.[54] The objective of the discussion was to come up with ways in which 'both the Countryside will progress and the evil of urbanisation will cease'.[55] Nikolaidis provided his own proposal for the 'rejuvenation', 'elevation' and 'revitalisation' of the 'soul of the countryside', and by extension of the whole country, which centred on education and cultivation rather than mere technological developments.

It is especially the attitude of Nikolaidis to the countryside that is revealing in regard to the relationship between the promotion of regionalism and nationalism under Metaxas. The interest in the countryside did not signify any 'centrifugal opposition' to nationalism, but rather a drive towards integrating the periphery with the centre and, in the process, restructuring both.[56] In other words, this constituted an attempt at Hellenising the centre while modernising the periphery, at transferring some authentic Greekness to the capital while disseminating culture and education in the provinces.

Already in the first issue of *Pnevmatiki Zoi* a strong belief in the significance of the Greek provinces is expressed, indeed echoing and extending a claim of Metaxas in a recent speech of his that 'in the hands of the farmers there finds itself the fate and future of Greece':[57]

> We sincerely and absolutely believe that the cultural/spiritual renaissance of our land can originate only from the Countryside. However much it has itself been affected by the poison of the maleficent publications that have been circulating up to now, its pure and robust organism endures, reacts. The poison cannot decay, cannot cripple the almighty elements of life it has within it. And this is from which elements it is possible for the tired and ill Greek Intelligentsia to slowly take up life and strength.[58]

[53] See Varelas 1997.
[54] Nikolaidis did not state which these newspapers were but he was in all likelihood alluding to *Η Καθημερινή* and *Εστία*.
[55] Nikolaidis 1938c.
[56] Regionalism in previous periods is defined as 'centrifugal opposition' to nationalism in Tziovas (1994: 96). On the integrative, nation-building function of the interest in the countryside in nineteenth-century Greece, see Peckham 2001.
[57] Metaxas 1969a: 62.
[58] [Anon.] 1936b: 3.

Apart from reinforcing the romantic myth of the past national utopia which is still alive in the periphery, this passage moreover touches upon several other motifs in Nikolaidis's discourse.[59]

Relevant to that is the negativity towards urban life and the presentation of the city (particularly Athens) as a degenerative force, often in direct contrast to the virginity, authenticity, and rejuvenating or perennially youthful character of the countryside. Metaxas himself in a 1937 speech in front of peasants presented the urban environment as 'the matrix of corruption that in turn spreads through the countryside'.[60] The idolisation of the countryside and the simple rural lifestyle along with the condemnation of bourgeois life as something that might look tempting but leads to depravity and perdition had the additional function of restraining both urbanisation and social mobility. In a 1939 essay on poetic discourse, I. M. Panayiotopoulos made the following statement while reviewing the recent output of the young poet Yiorgos Kotzioulas: 'One must, however, bless Mr Y. Kotzioulas, for he maintained a part of his echo unadulterated: his affection for the countryside, for the Greece of the provinces, for what represents his first start in life, and he did not come unstuck due to the lights and the women of Athens'.[61]

Even in schoolbooks of the time it is claimed that cities inhibit one's connection with their 'intimate homeland' and by extension with the 'greater homeland'.[62] The idea that love of the immediate place of origin is the foundation of love for the entire country, or in other

[59] These consist mainly in the recurrent attack against the 'maleficent publications', the theme of the decadence of the intelligentsia (along with spiritual/cultural life as such) before the dictatorship, the vision of cultural renaissance, and hygienic/health discourse. The last two themes are analysed in the last part of the thesis.
[60] See Kondou 2013: 416.
[61] Panayiotopoulos 1939a: 1539. Cf. Stasinopoulou (2000: 365) about cinema: 'Αν και παρούσα η πόλη στην περίοδο αυτή, λειτουργεί κυρίως αντιθετικά προς την αθωότητα ενός μη αστικού χώρου'. Stasinopoulou also speaks of 'ηθική αντίθεση πόλη/ύπαιθρος' with relation particularly to films of the 'Egyptian period' (ibid.: 365) and claims that 'Στα πρώτα μεταπολεμικά χρόνια οι κινηματογραφικές εικόνες των "κινδύνων" της πόλης εξακολουθούν να αντιμετωπίζονται ως άρνηση της ελληνικότητας' (ibid.: 367). She also quotes this relevant passage from *Εθνικός Κήρυξ* of 1951: 'Η Λύκαινα είναι μια ελληνική ταινία και πρέπει να τη χαιρετίσουμε με κάθε ενθουσιασμό. Δεν έχει καμπαρέ, δεν έχει γυναίκες του δρόμου, είναι γυρισμένο όλο στην ελληνική ύπαθρο [sic]'.
[62] See Kondou 2013: 414.

words that regional identity can foster national identity is also evinced in the preoccupation of German right-wing populist criticism with 'subnational' characteristics of writers and their work.[63] However, Metaxas would every time adjust his discourse on the relationship between (capital) city and countryside attributing different functions to each and pointing to their role either in the pre-1936 past or in the future, catering to different audiences and settings. In another 1937 speech, this time addressing technical employees in the capital district, the dictator claimed: 'This is the role of Athens in Greece. It will represent the civilisation of the country and will manifest it, it will not impose it on the rest of Greece, it will manifest it as it exists in all the provinces of Greece'.[64]

The Metaxas years also witnessed a series of relevant publications by teachers or local amateur scholars that were sometimes explicitly linked to the dictatorship and its agenda. For instance, S. Michaliadou, a middle school teacher, dedicated her 1940 booklet *Samos* to EON, talking in her preface about the 'Hellenic Ideals' of religion and homeland as the perennial motors of grandeur for generations of Greeks. Reviewing *Samos,* Angelomatis exclaimed: 'how noble is this regionalist disposition and how grateful will historical researchers be to the author for the valuable information she provides in her book'.[65] Another 1940 book by the local laographist Niki Perdika entitled *Skyros* provided descriptions of the landscape as well as the folk culture of the island. *Pnevmatiki Zoi* labelled it as a 'precious book', concluding that 'it is so nice and pleasant, so precious to get in contact with our beautiful and beloved Land and to listen to the life noise and the pulse of this great and lively People through a book!'.[66]

[63] See Berman 1988: 339.
[64] Metaxas 1969a: 239.
[65] Angel. 1940c.
[66] 'Δεν το κρύβουμε δα, τα βιβλία που μας μιλούν για την Ελλάδα και για τον Λαό της, και μας κάνουν να γνωρίζουμε την ομορφιά του τόπου μας και την αγνή ψυχή των απλών ανθρώπων του υπαίθρου του, τραβούν περισσότερο την αγάπη μας και το ενδιαφέρον μας. Είναι τόσο ωραίο κι' ευχάριστο, τόσο πολύτιμο ναρχόμαστε μ' ένα καλό βιβλίο σ' επαφή με την ωραία κι' αγαπημένη Γη μας και ν' ακούμε τη βοή της ζωής και τον παλμό της καρδιάς του καλού και ζωντανού αυτού Λαού!' ([Anon.] 1940j).

The cataloguing of local customs and the literary exploitation of regional characteristics and identities, which will be further discussed in the following chapter as part of the Metaxist 'idolisation of folklore', rendered regional difference available to the entire nation. This way the notion of national unity through regional diversity was promoted, as local otherness was circumscribed by ethnic sameness. Instead of challenging a common identity, the presentation of the local colour of areas taken *a priori* to be Greek extended the scope and richness of that identity. In contrast to Athens and the big urban centres, the provinces had retained their Greek-ness intact and the countryside was unsurprisingly presented not just as a repository of national identity but also as the guardian of folk art.[67]

Overall, the Greek countryside assumed an ideological function and was exalted in Metaxist discourse as the site of national health and purity. It was juxtaposed to the urban centres and presented as replete with values and regenerative forces. Ruralism and regionalism were subsumed under the regime's nationalist agenda.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the homeland as an important component of national identity. It has discussed travel literature and tourist policy and the way these were instrumentalised by the regime. Additionally, it has touched upon the poetics and metaphysics of the Greek land and nature. Finally, ruralism and regionalism were examined along with the opposition city versus countryside. What emerges from the discussion in this chapter is that the dictatorship's various calls for a return to the land were welcomed by several cultural operators. Literary criticism

[67] 'Ας μη κακοφανή στους ανθρώπους της πρωτευούσης και των μεγάλων επαρχιακών πόλεων. Η επαρχία με το χωριό, την κωμόπολι και τη μικρή της πρωτεύουσα διεφύλαξε μέχρι των ημερών μας και θα διαφυλάξη και εις το μέλλον ό,τι ωραίο και καλό καλλιεργήθηκε από αιώνες σ' αυτό τον τόπο. … Στην Έκθεσι της E.O.N., που ωργάνωσε η Κεντρική Διοίκησις στην Αθήνα, θα ιδούμε τι πολύτιμος θεματοφύλακας της Λαϊκής μας Τέχνης είναι η επαρχία, και πως χωρίς αυτήν Λαϊκή Τέχνη στην Ελλάδα δεν υπάρχει' (Deilinos 1940).

legitimised the regime's land-related initiatives by explicitly praising state policy or echoing official propaganda. Moreover, cultural operators produced critical or even literary work that was in keeping with the regime's agenda. The exaltation of agrarianism and indigenous soil is correlative to the view of the countryside as the locus of true Greekness and the repository of Greek values and aesthetics but more specifically as guardian of folk art. Folk culture played a central part in the dictatorship's ideological universe and will be discussed along with the appropriation of demotic language by the Fourth-of-August regime in the following chapter.

- CHAPTER 5 -

Vernacular culture and language

By 1936 Greek folklore and language had long been intricately linked to national identity and to each other. Particularly after the breakup of the Educational Association in 1927, 'the idealist intelligentsia links demotic with the laographic desiderata and the imperative of "nationism"'.[1] *Laographia* and *ethographia* could be seen as the academic and literary face of Greek folklorism that displayed a particular interest in vernacular language, as evinced by laographic collections of regional words and the dialogues in ethographic fiction. While elective affinities can be traced between ethographia and the French *roman/étude de mœurs* or the German *Sittenroman* and *Dorfgeschichte*, as well as between Laographia and the beginnings of social or cultural anthropology, they both can be seen as rather distinct Modern Greek phenomena.[2] Most importantly, they both relied on and fed into the quest for a distinctly Greek national identity.

However, the ideological appropriation of vernacular culture was something that characterised even conservative circles and the Colonels Junta. The peculiarity of the Metaxas regime lay rather in its appropriation of demoticism, the intellectual movement that emerged in the 1880s and championed the consolidation of the vernacular language in the public sphere. Since the 1900s, the language question, namely the conflict between proponents of *dimotiki* and *katharevousa*, acquired a markedly political function.[3] The question essentially revolved

[1] Kayialis 2007: 166.
[2] See Herzfeld 1982 about the establishment of Laographia. See Tziovas 1986 about the fact that ethographia was an indigenous offspring of Greek 'nationist discourse' and bears no genetic relation to European realism.
[3] See Stavridi-Patrikiou 1976, who discusses the 'politicisation of the demoticist movement' in 1907-1909 (Stavridi-Patrikiou 1976: ιβ΄). See also Hering 1987, Mackridge 2009, and Karvounis 2016 for some notable discussions of the Greek language question more generally.

around the issue of which linguistic form would hold the status of national and official language. The political implications of the language question were extended and rendered the whole issue more complicated as the demoticist cause began to be contended by both nationalists and socialists on the basis of diverging first principles. Demoticism eventually developed a close relationship with modernist or radical political currents. This applied to currents situated both on the left and the right end of the political spectrum, particularly communism and forms of ultranationalism, fascism or what could cursorily be labelled as 'proto-fascism'.

For the needs of the analysis here, it is useful to note again that such a relation between cultural regeneration and fascistic movements or tendencies was no Greek particularity. Since the nation was often conceptualised as *Kulturnation* across Europe in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century, revival, reconfiguration or creative continuation of indigenous culture was seen in many nationalist circles as essential for, or indeed tantamount to, the rebirth of the nation. Something of this sort applied to a broad palette of –often conflicting– cultural figures or movements that could be grouped together under the rubrics of modernist nationalism and nationalist modernism.[4]

In Greece, a central question with regard to the reconfiguration of the *Kulturnation* was the form of language that would be identified with the nation. Demoticism emerged as a nationalist modernist movement aiming at revitalising modern Greek culture and making modern Greece a truly modern nation and a modern state, while showcasing its authentic Hellenic character.[5] The movement counteracted the classical and archaeological approach of the followers of *katharevousa*. The latter saw the restoration (or manufacture) of a linguistic form that had

[4] Amongst them were Gabriele D'Annunzio, Futurism or the Strapaese and Stracittà movements in Italy; Action Française as well as many groupings and movements in interwar France that often advanced a cultural platform, which included even modernist painting, photography or architecture as a means for the creation of a 'French fascism' and national renewal; and in Germany, Richard Wagner, *völkisch* literature, conservative revolutionaries and even Expressionism, which was firmly supported by a section within the Nazi movement up to the first years of National Socialist rule. See Antliff 2007, Griffin 2007.

[5] See Kokkinos & Boyiatzis 2017.

greater similarity to that of classical antiquity as a way to lay claim to ancient Greek heritage and to be accepted in the community of 'civilised' nations. On the contrary, demoticists relied on a romantic and organicist system of thought that emphasised the concepts of continuity and organic evolution. For them, modern Greek folklore and the spoken language represented the 'living continuity' or developed form of the ancient Greek past.[6] It is also relevant that the Greek version of folk studies or *Volkskunde* started developing as a discipline at the same time as demoticism began taking shape as an intellectual movement. Laographia represented an effort to prove the real or alleged links between modern Greek customs, folk songs, fairy tales, legends etc. and ancient Greece.[7]

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first discusses how vernacular culture was promoted for the regime's own purposes and revolves around the issues of folklore, Laographia, ethographia and tradition. The second section deals with demoticism and seeks out some strands of continuity with the pre-Metaxas period, in order to facilitate the understanding of the instrumentalisation of demoticism by the Fourth-August regime, while it also delineates some central discursive themes regarding demotic during the dictatorship.

5.1. IDOLISATION OF FOLKLORE

The idolisation of folklore under Metaxas can be seen as having two major aspects. On the one hand, it manifested in the endeavour to register, protect, and save from the passing of time the 'archive' of Greek tradition; in other words, to ensure the physical survival of material which is either a part of or a document for Greek tradition.[8] This is related to the increased interest in

[6] See Tziovas 1986.
[7] See Herzfeld 1982, Tziovas 1986.
[8] See for instance a relevant anonymous note about folk songs in the very first issue of *H Νεολαία* which comes to a close in the following way: 'Είναι δυστύχημα ότι τόσο πολύ μέχρι προ ολίγων ετών είχε παραμεληθή η μελέτη της μουσικής και της ποιήσεως των Δημοτικών μας τραγουδιών, του ανεκτίμητου αυτού Εθνικού θησαυρού. Ευτυχώς τώρα με την ίδρυση του Ραδιοφωνικού Σταθμού και την πρωτοβουλία του Εθνικού μας Κυβερνήτου

Laographia and the proliferation of relevant linguistic, anthropological, and archaeological publications. As mentioned in the introduction, a department of Laology was established within the Ministry of Education in 1939, while folk art, including needlework, music, dances, and costumes was showcased in exhibitions organised by the regime and within the frame of the annual 4 August festivities.

On the other hand, this idolisation concerns the creative continuation of tradition, which is associated with the support that both the dictator and pro-regime critics lent to some kind of new folkish literature based on ethographia and folk songs. It could be moreover linked to the impetus for a new aesthetic that aspired to be both Greek and modern by remaining in contact with contemporary (European) trends and exploiting aspects of the indigenous tradition. The search for this modern(ist) aesthetic in conjunction with a fluid concept of tradition-based Greek particularity (or 'Greekness') was shared by Metaxist literary critics and the 'Generation of the '30s'.

Part of this folkloric trend were periodicals like *Cretan Pages* (1936-1939) and particularly *Driros* (1937-1940), which constituted mixed laographic and literary publications that promoted local writers and folklore, and seem to have –at least occasionally– received funding from the regime.[9] Furthermore, many specialised periodicals that each focused on a particular region collected and published laographic material. Some of them, such as the *Archive of Thracian Laographic and Linguistic Treasure*, which also received the 1939 Academy award for Laographia and history, were promoted by critics and literary periodicals that often displayed the same characteristics as German *völkisch* criticism.[10] Namely an emphasis on regionalism

άρχισαν να μελετώνται από τους μουσικούς και έτσι θα περισωθή ο Εθνικός αυτός θησαυρός όπως σώθηκαν και τόσοι άλλοι' ([Anon.] 1938ac).

[9] For instance, the special issue of *Κρητικές Σελίδες* on Ioannis Kondylakis was funded by the Ministry of the Capital District and hosted a text by Kostas Kotzias (see Oi 'Kritikes Selides' 1938 and Kotzias 1938).

[10] The Academy award was reported in [Anon.] 1939k. For further information on *Αρχείον Θρακικού Λαογραφικού και Γλωσσικού Θησαυρού* see entry in *ΛΝΛ*: 194.

and ruralism alongside a strong advertising tendency, which framed purchase of such publications as a spiritual or quasi-national act.[11] Laographic texts moreover appeared in predominantly literary periodicals, e.g. many contributions by Marietta Eptanisia to *Pnevmatiki Zoi* about Heptanesian legends. It is also noteworthy that, alongside the second EON congress, a widely-advertised exhibition of folk art was held, whose aim was claimed to be 'not simply the presentation of folk art, but also its study, development, and predomination'.[12]

This preoccupation with vernacular culture manifested in Metaxist periodicals and particularly the ones most associated with the youth, namely *I Neolea* and *Pnevmatiki Zoi*. The Romaniote painter Giulio Caimi, who 'developed a sui-generis Hellenocentrism', displayed his keen interest in Greek folklore during the dictatorship through his numerous contributions to *I Neolea*.[13] According to Caimi, 'within the characteristics of every house we can discern the idiosyncrasy of a race, a climate, a nation'.[14] In his contribution to *I Neolea* that was occasioned by the 4 August 1939 festivities at the stadium, Konstandinos Faltaits portrayed modern Greek folklore as a continuation of earlier Hellenic culture that had 'preserved innumerable older elements'. Folklore was presented as an index of national and cultural continuity and a repository of Greekness, constituting a 'sacrosanct heritage, which must not be lost'.[15] Faltaits equated culture with customs and traditions and concluded that 'if a land does not have its own costumes, its own songs, its own dances, its own vernacular art, its own architecture, its own folksong, its own manners of celebration, it does not have a culture of its own' but only foreign imitations.[16] Similarly, Angelomatis argued that 'in folksongs one finds the spirit of a people, its reconstructive power, its psychical disposition, the heat of its imagination, the range of its

[11] See e.g. [Anon.] 1938h with regard to the fourth volume of the aforementioned laographic periodical. About these characteristics of *völkisch* literary criticism see Berman 1988: 339-342 and Pfohlmann 2004: 109.
[12] [Anon.] 1940f.
[13] The quotation is from the entry on Caimi in *ΛΝΛ*: 973, written by Michel Fais.
[14] Kaimis 1939.
[15] Faltaits 1939: 1461.
[16] Faltaits 1939: 1479.

horizon'. For Angelomatis, folksongs of his own time were the proof that 'the Greek people continues to have the same psychical and intellectual adequacy'.[17]

Folksongs were employed as an argument for Greek exceptionalism and superiority but also for what K. Th. Dimaras has termed 'diachronic and synchronic unity'.[18] Pro-regime periodicals emphasised their national significance, sometimes even claiming that they had played a role not only in the survival of the nation but also in its liberation.[19] Nonetheless, national continuity and unity remained the prevalent themes in discussions of folksongs under Metaxas. Significant in this connection is an extensive contribution to *Nea Politiki* by Konstandinos Psachos, a major figure in the music scene of Greece in the first half of the twentieth century and composer of the music that accompanied the plays performed in the Delphic Festivals. According to Psachos, Germany, France, and Balkan nations had recognised the significance of folksongs for national unity. Greece alone had not undertaken any official endeavour to collect its folksongs. Psachos additionally stressed that Greek folksongs constitute a 'continuous and unbroken millennia-old tradition' whose music and poetry constantly followed the same principles. This was taken as evidence of 'the unity of Greek spirit and soul from the most ancient times to nowadays'.[20]

Following the turn to folksongs in the second half of the nineteenth century both within the contours of Laographia and those of poetry, the turn of the century brought with it a relative distancing of contemporary literature from the folksong tradition.[21] However, the 1930s witnessed a resurgence of interest in folksongs and one finds several calls during the dictatorship for writers to draw on folksongs for their own writings. This is especially traced in the

[17] A. 1940b.
[18] Dimaras 1985: 366.
[19] [Anon.] 1939c.
[20] Psachos 1937: 1468. It is noteworthy that Psachos cited Bismarck's view of German folksongs as a means for national unification.
[21] Mylonaki 1995: 62.

correspondence columns of pro-regime periodicals that were addressing aspiring writers.[22] Nonetheless, the utilisation of folksongs and the vernacular tradition for new cultural products had been promoted by a wide array of Greek intellectual and political circles in the 1930s. Since early 1935 even the Communist Party and its literary periodical *Neoi Protoporoi* had embraced such a position. That was a shift which fitted into the pre-existing quest for a 'proletarian culture', aligned with developments in the USSR and particularly with positions endorsed during the First Congress of Soviet Writers a few months earlier, and coincided with the transition of KKE to a Popular Front strategy.[23]

Melis Nikolaidis and other regular contributors to his periodical such as Yiorgos Kalamatianos frequently wrote positive reviews of mediocre to insignificant ethographic literary works. Even the most acclaimed ethographia of the Metaxas years has since slipped into obscurity, although it was praised not just by *Pnevmatiki Zoi* but by nearly all critics of the time. Said book was Yiorgos Marandis's *Have you heard?* (1939), which revolved around a love affair in Crete (that led to marriage and family), described local customs, and contained dialogues in the Eastern Cretan regiolect.[24] The book's folkloric character was emphasised through its subtitle (*Cretan ethographia*) and the folk-art patterns that adorned its front cover.

For many reviewers, the book provided an occasion to engage in a wider defence of ethographia. Angelomatis dismissed the belief that ethographia is a facile genre by calling attention to the significant writers who have engaged in it, such as Kondylakis and Papadiamandis, and to the possibilities that it opens out to writers due to the rich regional diversity of Greek customs and traditions.[25] Nikolaidis too rejected accusations against ethographia, maintaining that literary quality depends on the writer's abilities and not on the genre. On the contrary,

[22] See e.g. I 'P.Z.' 1938.
[23] See Dounia 1996: 413-454.
[24] Marandis is the penname of Yiorgos Kaffetzakis (1886-1967), a former Venizelist teacher and writer who was a member of the editorial board of *Η Νεολαία* during the dictatorship.
[25] Angelomatis 1939b.

'good Greek Ethographia', like Marandis's book, fulfils the injunction of the national poet, which had recently been repeated by the dictator: 'enclose Greece in your heart and you will feel quivering within you every kind of grandeur'.[26] On his part, Chatzinis characterised the book a 'genuine and higher-quality ethographia' that demonstrates both the usefulness of folklore for modern literary production and the range of Greek customs and mores that are endangered due to shortage of similar undertakings by other authors.[27]

Another indicative example is the short story collection *Easter in Thrace* by Polydoros Papachristodoulou, the most prominent studier of Thracian Laographia, which was published in 1939 with an acclamatory foreword by Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas.[28] Reviewing the book for *To Neon Kratos,* Panayiotopoulos pointed out its stylistic flaws alongside its authentic and experiential qualities, highlighting its national character.[29] Despite his reservations, Panayiotopoulos concluded his review in a way that privileged the genuineness, spontaneity, and Greekness of the book. In the final analysis, what emerges as the foremost evaluative criterion for Papachristodoulou's work is that 'the humble world of farmers, shepherds, small merchants,

[26] Nikolaidis 1940b.
[27] Chatzinis 1940b: 115. Apart from Angelomatis, Nikolaidis, and Chatzinis, *Εμάθετέ τα;* was reviewed very positively by Panayiotopoulos in *Η Πρωία*, Lapathiotis in *Νέα Εστία*, and others.
[28] Polydoros Papachristodoulou (ca.1886-1967) chief editor/publisher of the laographical periodicals *Θρακικά* (see *ΛΝΛ*: 873-874) and *Αρχείον του Θρακικού Λαογραφικού και Γλωσσικού Θησαυρού* (see above, footnote 10) since the interwar period, founder of the Society of Thracian Studies. See *ΛΝΛ*: 1719-1720.
[29] 'η αισθητική ηδονή που μου προσπόρισεν υπήρξε μέτρια, μα το πέρασα από την πρώτη ίσαμε την τελευταία του σελίδα με θερμή προσοχή, γιατί βρήκα κάτω από τη συχνά πλαδαρή φράση μια καρδιά ολοζώντανη, που πάλλεται με σφοδρό ρυθμό, γιατί άκουσα ένα σπαραγμένο κάλεσμα και μήνυμα από τη Θράκη. … Μια προαιώνια ελληνική καρδιά, μυστηριακή και ορφική, που έχυσε το αίμα της σταλαγματιά-σταλαγματιά και που μαράθηκε μέσα στη ζοφερή απελπισία μακρών αιώνων και μακρών αγώνων, είναι πανταχού παρούσα εκεί πέρα. Και το βιβλίο του κ. Παπαχριστοδούλου είναι σαν μυστικός στεναγμός και σιωπηλό ανατρίχιασμα αυτής της προαιώνιας ελληνικής καρδιάς. … Αν στο υπέδαφος κάθε καλλιτεχνήματος αναζητούμε λαίμαργα το περίφημο 'βίωμα', όχι μονάχα σαν αίτημα αισθητικό, μα και γενικώτερα σαν ανθρώπινο αίτημα, κι αν την έλλειψή του τη θεωρούμε καίριο σφάλμα και αφορμή συνοπτικής καταδίκης και του εντελέστερα αραβουργημένου καλλιτεχνήματος, αυτό, βέβαια, οφείλεται σε μια θεώρηση της δημιουργίας εκ των ένδον. Και σε μια τέτοια θεώρηση το βίωμα της πεζογραφίας του κ. Παπαχριστοδούλου προβάλλεται αυτόματο και αυτοδύναμο. Ο κ. Ν. Χατζη-κυριάκος [sic] Γκίκας, πρωθύστερος προοιμιαστής της "Πασχαλιάς στη Θράκη", και τις αδυναμίες του βιβλίου δεν παραμέρισε, μα και το βίωμα επισήμανε ευστοχώτατα και πειστικώτατα' (Panayiotopoulos 1939d: 187).

unsophisticated clerics becomes one with the place that gave birth to him, that raised him, that nourished him, and represents unpretentiously the conscience of his land and his race'.[30]

Ethographia was thus promoted extensively by Metaxist periodicals, which also included relevant original literary pieces, as is the case with the recurring column 'Ethographic short stories' in *I Neolea*.[31] Additionally, pro-regime critics lauded ethographic writings of all forms, including drama and poetry aside from fiction. For instance, Nikolaidis exalted Nikos Katiforis's theatrical play *Το μεράκι του άρχοντα* for its Greekness, genuineness, and fortunate fusion of ethographia and psychography.[32] Even 'ethographic poetry' was positively reviewed, such as Panos Fyllis's collection *Tsirigotika*. The focus was again on its genuineness and the poet's communication with 'the soul of his people and his land'.[33]

Nevertheless, the most revered example of ethographic poetry during the dictatorship was not of any contemporaneous writer but of the nineteenth-century poet Krystallis. This is perfectly encapsulated in an early-1939 essay by Panayiotopoulos, which also demonstrates characteristics of *völkisch* literary criticism. Therein the critic compared Krystallis to the very artist and intellectual that is considered the forefather of German *völkisch* criticism, namely Wagner.[34] In addition, and unlike Nikolaidis and some critics of his circle for example,

[30] Panayiotopoulos 1939d: 188.
[31] See Andreiomenos 2012.
[32] 'Πρώτα-πρώτα ένα έργο Ελληνικό: από την πρώτη στιγμή ως την τελευταία έβλεπες, ένοιωθες, ανέπνεες την Ελληνική ατμόσφαιρα. § Εζούσες το Ελληνικό χωριό, την οικογένειά του, τους ανθρώπους του, τον τρόπο και τις αντιλήψεις της ζωής τους, τα αισθήματά τους και τις σκέψεις τους. § Ηθογραφία! θα πουν με ύφος ανωτερότητος οι γκρινιάρηδες. Ηθογραφία ναι, αλλά όχι μόνο ηθογραφία. Όχι απλώς ηθογραφία. Προ πάντων ψυχολογία. Και όταν μαζί με την ηθογραφία υπάρχει κι' η ψυχολογία, αυτό θα πει ζωή, θα πει τέχνη' (N. 1939). It is noteworthy that Katiforis was a communist who had participated in the editorial board of *Πρωτοπόροι* and *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι* and had regularly contributed pseudonymous texts to *Ριζοσπάστης* (see Dounia 2003).
[33] [Anon.] 1940c.
[34] 'Ο Κρυστάλλης δεν έζησε όσο έπρεπε, για να ολοκληρώσει την προσωπικότητά του. Μας άφησεν, ως τόσο, ένα τεράστιο δίδαγμα: πως ο ποιητής δεν έχει άλλη πιο ανόθευτη πηγή από το λαό του κι από τον τόπο του, για να πυργώσει το αριστούργημά του. Αυτός το ιδανικό τούτο το είδε μονόπλευρα και περιωρισμένα. Ένας άλλος, δαίμονας των ήχων, ο Βάγνερ, το είδε σ' όλη του την απλοχωριά και το μεγαλείο· και πήρε τους θρύλους της πατρίδας τους και τους έζησε στη γερμανική του ψυχή και τους έκαμε θύελλες και νηνεμίες και παράπονα και θριαμβευτικά ξεσπάσματα και ολολυγμούς. Νομίζετε, πως είναι αταίριαστη και άσκοπη η σύγκριση; Δεν έχετε παρά να συλλογισθήτε περισσότερο' (Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1661). See Berman 1988: 336-343 about *völkisch* literary criticism, particularly 337 about Wagner's role. Cf. Hitler's attitude to tradition and Wagner, as described by Michaud (2004: 14): 'to his mind the authority of tradition was vested in the forms of the art of the past. He

Panayiotopoulos was quite adamant in his disapproval of the stereotypical and artificial ethographic output of the past, while defending the genuine and candid folkish poetry of Krystallis. All this was subsumed under the concept of 'Dorian virtue', and it is perhaps not unrelated that a certain type of exaggerated Doric values and aesthetics was being promoted by fascist(ic) regimes of the time (from Nazi Doric-style sculpture and architecture to Metaxas's exaltation of Sparta and Macedonia): 'His virtue had something of the Dorian, implacable virtue of Kalvos. And after all, in a place that was tortured for generations by seminary ethographists, Krystallis personified the guileless soul of the people and the true spirit of Laographia'.[35]

In conclusion, folklore, Laographia, and some form of ethographia were promoted by the regime and its followers amongst intellectuals. Their positive stance towards vernacular culture revolved around its instrumental character in showcasing national idiosyncrasy as well as national unity across space and time. Apart from reproducing decades-old Greek discourses on folklore that emphasised its national, spontaneous, and genuine character, some cultural operators under Metaxas seem to have been in dialogue with more recent trends in Germany. In the next section I will discuss the issue of demotic as the *Volkssprache* aspiring to become the standard language, starting with a historical overview of demoticism, whose focus is on features of and developments within the demoticist movement that paved the way for its synergetic relationship with the Metaxas dictatorship.

5.2. DEMOTICISM AND THE 'PEOPLE'S LANGUAGE'

For Hellenocentric demoticists, the victory of their cause would create a solid and healthy foundation on which Greece could base its path to modernity. To that end, they often went

therefore believed that he could realize the program that he had laid out for himself in *Mein Kampf* by working to reactivate those forms of authority, using all the means now available to him through power and force. In this enterprise, Wagner remained his best guide'. About the influence of 'Wagnerism' in earlier Greek criticism see Bezantakou 2018.

[35] Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1657.

beyond the mere diffusion of their views through texts and lectures. They applied them in paedagogical practice and sometimes cooperated with governments that aspired after modernisation in a national(ist) framework: that of Venizelos and Metaxas. This is especially true for the founding members of the historic Educational Association (1910-1927), which is generally considered to be the most important demoticist organisation.

On the other hand, internationalist or socialist appropriations of demoticism had already emerged in the period of turbulence and ideological fermentation from the debacle of 1897 and the imposition of International Financial Control on Greece the following year to the 'bourgeois coup' of 1909 and the ascension of Eleftherios Venizelos to power.[36] By the late 1920s, most left-wing demoticists had rallied under the banner of communism.[37] Conservative nationalists that identified *katharevousa* with the nation and the 'truth' –and subsequently employed an archaic language as an instrument of and for power– tended to adjust their rhetoric to the emergence of left-wing voices in the demoticist camp, smearing the entire camp as 'anti-national' or 'communist'.[38]

Eleftherios Venizelos returned to Greek politics in 1928 riding a fresh wave of political Messianism and he contested the general elections on a modernising and utopian platform to 'make Greece unrecognisable'.[39] Given the unequivocal status of Venizelos as the 'great man' of Greece at the moment (or the 'man of the moment' for Greece) and his positive disposition towards the demoticist cause, most nationalist demoticist intellectuals endorsed Venizelos in the run-up to the 1928 elections or during his time in office. The timid educational reform of

[36] See Gounelas 1984, Mackridge 2009, Stavridi-Patrikiou 2009, Voutouris 2017.
[37] The most famous (and indicative example) is the essential suspension of the Educational Association in 1927. The end of this historic demoticist organisation resulted from the split between nationalist bourgeois demoticists Manolis Triandafyllidis and especially Alexandros Delmouzos on the one hand and Dimitris Glinos on the other. Glinos, disillusioned with the failure or unwillingness of national liberalism to implement an effective and permanent demoticist reform through the bourgeois state had turned to the anti-bourgeois Left, coming ever closer to the Communist Party of Greece, until he joined its ranks in the mid-1930s and even represented it in parliament
[38] See Tziovas 1986 and Mackridge 2009.
[39] It is interesting that the exact same claim with regard to Italy was a central feature of Mussolini's historic 'Discorso dell'ascensione' that was made a year earlier, on 26 May 1927 (see Ben-Ghiat 2001: 6).

his last government, however, triggered some unexpected political turnarounds amongst major nationalist demoticists. On the one hand, a longstanding demoticist partner of Venizelism as significant as Alexandros Delmouzos distanced himself disaffected by the inability of bourgeois statism to implement a comprehensive and permanent demoticist reform.[40] On the other hand, two demoticists who were formerly staunch anti-Venizelists sided with Venizelism and called for a national demoticist 'revolution'. These were Spyridon Melas and Aristos Kambanis, two prominent cultural operators also later, during the Metaxas years, who were moreover distinguished journalists and had consecutively served as presidents of the Journalists Association.[41]

The last four years of Venizelos at the helm of the Greek state raised palingenetic hopes amongst demoticists too. Throughout this time, he held absolute control over the parliament and ushered in a mellow demoticist reform in public education. Facing the revolutionary conditions that were brewing after the bankruptcy of 1932 and the collapse of Venizelos's project to 'transform' Greece, both Melas and Kambanis proposed a radicalisation of demoticism under the auspices of Venizelism. There were moreover the repeated attempts of Venizelist elites to cling on to power by any means, and indeed at a time when 'national revolutions' were in progress in other parts of Europe (Germany, Austria).[42] This, along with the positive assessment of Mussolini and of departures from parliamentarianism, sometimes expressed publicly by leading Venizelist politicians like Andreas Michalakopoulos, may have encouraged Kambanis and Melas to openly pursue the creation of a Greek fascism under the aegis of Venizelism.

[40] See Kokkinos & Boyiatzis 2017.
[41] About the fact that both Melas and Kambanis had sided with the anti-Venizelist camp and promoted its positions fervently during the first phase of the National Schism see Appendix.
[42] The movements and upheavals aimed at regime change and the propelling of fascist forces into power were often advertised as 'national revolutions'. See Schmitz-Berning 1998: 413-415 about the usage of the term by German National Socialists. The resonance of the term is further evinced by the fact that it was adopted by the Vichy Regime in France and by Ukrainian fascists in the early 1940s (see Burrin 2000 and Rossolinski-Liebe 2011). See also the discussion on revolution here in chapter 7.

Given the increasing demonstration of authoritarian and anti-communist tendencies on the part of Venizelist elites, both authors suggested that a 'demoticist revolution' replace the gradualist approach of educational reform. Reigniting the nationalist, modernist, and utopian core of demoticism and reframing it in the context of the interwar years, they attempted to foster a Greek fascism that would have the demoticist cause as its (Sorelian) 'myth'. Spyros Melas promoted his vision in the periodical *Idea* and the Venizelist newspaper *Eleftheron Vima* in October and November 1933. He did not hesitate to bluntly speak of fascism and to parallelise his proposed 'demoticist revolution' to Mussolini's revolution while admonishing young Greeks to organise following the example of the German youth.[43] It is perhaps not coincidental that Melas made these proposals after the streak of publications on heroes of the Greek revolution that was mentioned in the first part. Another fact that is worthy of note, however, is that Spyros Melas was one of the founding members of the Venizelist weekly *Ergasia*, where Aristos Kambanis pointed to a fascist/demoticist revolution during those same autumn months of 1933.[44]

In his contributions to *Ergasia*, Kambanis had repeatedly praised the 'enlightened' linguistic views of Venizelos and most major Venizelist politicians, and made mentions of personal meetings and relevant discussions he had with them.[45] Some of his late 1933 contributions endorsed a fascistic demoticist revolution as a solution to the 'question, which, had it been solved a century now, would have turned Greece into the homeland of lights'. However, he did not point to Melas's Italian and German models but to the blueprint of Kemalist Turkey and the 'redemptive Violence of G. Sorel'. Significantly, Kambanis suggested that one last attempt

[43] Melas's 'demoticist revolution' based on the blueprint of the 'fascist revolution' is discussed in Tziovas 1989: 28, Ladoyianni 1993: 76, 90, 198, 203, and passim, Kayialis 2007: 147, 167. The two main texts expressing his call for such a revolution are Melas 1933b and Melas 1933c, while his appeal to the Greek youth to follow on the tracks of the *Hitlerjugend* is found in Fortunio 1933.
[44] About Kambanis's ever closer cooperation with Venizelist publications in the early 1930s, see Appendix.
[45] Such statements regarding Venizelist politicians are found for instance in Kambanis 1933b and 1933c, which are discussed below.

should be made first to resolve the language question through the collaboration of all demoticists, the creation of a new Educational Association excluding the 'preachers of class war', and the intensification of propaganda.[46]

The discussion up to this point demonstrates that demoticism had been combined with plans for fascist(ic) political departures years before the Metaxas dictatorship. This observation should inform the predominant conception of demoticism as a progressive movement. Demoticism was not linked only to liberalism, socialism, or communism. It was much more associated with modernist nationalism that was sometimes radicalised in the direction of palingenetic ultranationalism.[47] Consequently, labels such as 'progressive bourgeoisie' should be

[46] 'Χρειάζεται οι καθηγηταί του Αθηναϊκού Πανεπιστημίου να μιμηθούν τους καθηγητάς του Πανεπιστημίου της Θεσσαλονίκης. Ν' αρχίσουν να γράφουν τα επιστημονικά ή φιλοσοφικά τους βιβλία στη δημοτική. … Τότε θα είν' εύκολο μια Κυβέρνησις δυνατή να κάνη εκείνο που έκανε ο Μουσταφά-Κεμάλ στην Τουρκία. Να επιβάλη τη δημοτική σ' όλη την εκπαίδευσι, σ' όλες τις εκδηλώσεις της εθνικής ζωής –να λύση δηλαδή το ζήτημα που, αν είχε λυθή εδώ κ' έναν αιώνα, θα είχε μεταβάλει την Ελλάδα σε πατρίδα των φώτων. § Ενώ τώρα είναι ο τόπος ολίγων λεξιθήρων και έξι εκατομμυρίων αγραμμάτων ή μισογραμματισμένων. Για την κατάλυσι μιας καταστάσεως τέτοιας θα μπορούσαμε να προσφύγωμε ακόμη και στη σώτειρα Βία του Γ. Σορέλ' (Kambanis 1933b) and 'Για να προκόψη ο δημοτικισμός, για ν' αποχτήσουμε ύστερ' από εκατό χρόνια ανεξάρτητου πολιτικού βίου τη γλωσσική μας ελευθερία, χρειάζεται να σταματήση ο αμοιβαίος σπαραγμός των δημοτικιστών, χρειάζεται να συνεννοηθούν οι δημοτικισταί μεταξύ τους και να οργανώσουν ένα νέο Εκπαιδευτικό Όμιλο. Και στον Όμιλο αυτό να μη λάβουν μέρος οι κήρυκες του πολέμου των τάξεων. § Αν η προπαγάνδα δεν καρποφορήση, αν η πλειοψηφία μείνη στην Κινέζικη γλωσσική ιδεολογία της, θα χρειαστή κ' εδώ ό,τι χρειάστηκε στην Τουρκία: Η βία ενός Κεμάλ που μπόρεσε να επιβάλη τη γνώμη της φωτισμένης μειοψηφίας σ' ένα λαό θεοσκότιστο. § Η γλωσσική μονογλωσσία απ' το δημοτικό σχολείο ως το Πανεπιστήμιο και η απλοποιημένη ορθογραφία είναι ανάγκες επιτακτικές κ' επείγουσες. Για την πραγμάτωσί τους θα ήταν δικαιολογημένη κάθε θυσία' (Kambanis 1933c). A few months earlier, however, Kambanis had rejected dictatorial/fascistic solutions all the while pointing to the circulation of such ideas in demoticist circles at the time: 'Λένε μια φωτισμένη δικτατορία θα μπορούσε να κάμη το μεγάλο πήδημα: Και φέρνουν ως παράδειγμα τη[ν] Κεμαλική μεταρρύθμισι. Μα εγώ δεν πιστεύω στη βιωσιμότητα μιας Ελληνικής δικτατορίας. Οι δικτατορίες εδώ ζούνε όσο και τα ρόδα. L' espace d' un matin. Κ' ό,τι ράψη μια δικτατορία θα το ξηλώση μια αντιδικτατορία. Γι' αυτό θα πρότεινα μια οργάνωσι εντατικής προπαγάνδας και μια προπαρασκευαστική εργασία για την ημέρα της νίκης' (Kambanis 1933a). It is worth noting that this text was published only twenty days after Plastiras's abortive coup. Moreover, as the above passage demonstrates, Kambanis did not oppose a dictatorship per se but merely doubted that such a regime and the measures it would introduce would last in Greece.

[47] One should take into account the nationalism of Psycharis and the first demoticists as well as that the new generation of demoticists that emerged in the 1900s included racist thinkers such as Ion Dragoumis and especially Petros Vlastos (see Voutouris 2017; it should be noted, however, that rac(ial)ist ideas amongst turn-of-the-century Greek intellectuals often deviated from the belief that their contemporaneous Greek race was or had to be biologically pure). Kokkinos and Boyiatzis (2017) have brought to the forefront the conservative and nationalist components of Alexandros Delmouzos's belief system. According to Mackridge (2009: 284), 'for Delmouzos, the very moral fibre of the Greeks was at stake in the language controversy: demoticism aspired to mould a dynamic, lively nation made up of a new type of Greek', which points to a radical nationalist ideological framework. Although this was associated with notions of freedom and liberty, it might be helpful to bear in mind that such notions have been appropriated and manipulated by fascist interwar forces, the Metaxas regime, as well as modern-day far-right political forces, such as the Freedom Party of Austria and the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands. This

reconsidered when they are employed in a way that automatically distinguishes those labelled as such from intellectuals or politicians with ultranationalist and dictatorial inclinations.[48] All the while distancing some manifestations of demoticism from progressivism in today's sense (that may cover the political ground from the centre to the far left), it would be useful to reconstruct the sense of progressiveness that often accompanied early-twentieth-century political departures on the Right such as those that were related to demoticism in Greece.

New-Right political experimentation in the interwar period had in fact been perceived at the time as an instance of progressive politics or even politico-ideological 'leapfrogging'.[49] This explains perhaps why far-right extremists like Karaiskaki would write about 'progress' as if it were something represented by the Metaxas dictatorship.[50] Moreover, it may assist our understanding of the leeway that was allowed to critics to openly champion 'progressivism' or a healthy fusion of progress and conservatism in cultural affairs (but not only there).[51] Although the rational/liberal conception of progress was rejected in Metaxist discourse, the concept of progress as such was sometimes appropriated and used in the sense of modernisation-cum-national fulfilment, e.g. 'giving the People its language', that is through the promotion of demotic. Several examples of the use of the words 'progress' or 'progressive' in this sense –

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does not mean that Delmouzos's vision was 'proto-fascist' per se but calls attention to the fact that the presence of freedom in that ideological mix did not necessarily preclude its appropriation for a fascistic departure.

[48] See for instance the way Kalerande 2016 uses the term.

[49] See Roberts 2016: 5, 190-199, 216, and passim.

[50] 'Ενας νόμος από τους κυριαρχούντας στη φύση είναι και ο νόμος της αδρανείας. Στη ζωή του ατόμου λέγεται ησυχία, τεμπελιά και πρόωρο γήρας. Στην πολιτική ζωή το ονομάζουμε συντηρητικότητα και οπισθοδρομικότητα. … Δύο δρόμοι υπάρχουν, με τους οποίους μπορεί κανείς να ξεπεράση αυτόν τον μεγάλο εχθρό κάθε προόδου … . § Ο δρόμος του νόμου και του υλικού εξαναγκασμού … . Εμείς ζητάμε την ελεύθερη συνείδηση, μέσα στην πειθαρχημένη όμως θέληση. § Ο δεύτερος δρόμος … είναι η διαμόρφωση και η διαπαιδαγώγηση του ανθρώπινου υλικού, το ακόνισμα του μυαλού και η διάπλαση της ψυχής του' (Karaiskaki-Nikolaou 1938: 154). This can be seen as a new signification of progressive and conservative politics and as a claim that the 4th-August regime is supposedly on the progressive side of the political spectrum. Perhaps its allegedly progressive character was reinforced on account of its being in keeping with the rising tide of 'Third-Way' politics, of fascist and radical nationalist regimes, as well as totalitarianism and statism more generally at the time. Furthermore, while the nineteenth century was generally seen as the era of liberalism, the twentieth century was often presented from the interwar years to WWII as the era of authoritarianism, totalitarianism, and 'national states'. Cf. here, chapter 9.

[51] See e.g. Ziogas 1938b and Charis 1939b: 1664 where the need for a combination of renewal and conservatism is put forward.

which apparently relied on the strong political and modernising dynamic that had been attributed to demoticism long before the dictatorship– can be found throughout *Pnevmatiki Zoi* for instance.[52]

The dictator reasserted the national(ist) character of demoticism, dissociating it from communism from early on, despite the fact that the Ministry of Education was held by a conservative who was a staunch defender of *katharevousa*.[53] Attacking Glinos for taking advantage of demoticism, Kambanis rhetorically asked in early 1938: 'Who believes today that communism and demoticism are synonymous?'.[54] Also using a rhetorical question (in tune perhaps with the orality and directness demotic was associated with), Karaiskaki implied that demotic was a propaganda tool for the communists, something that Metaxas deprived them of and exploited himself.[55]

Pro-regime intellectuals did not conceal the instrumentalisation of demotic by the New State but rather framed it as part of the regime's transformative and totalitarian project. Several texts in Metaxist periodicals asserted that only the 'living language of the people' could enact the regime's agenda for national 'recreation', 'education', and 'illumination', so that the State be 'united and identified with the [People's] soul'.[56] Apart from a bid to mass appeal and a way

[52] See also the application of the adjectives 'προοδευτικός' and 'φιλοπρόοδος' to members of the state apparatus, the new archbishop Chrysanthos (who had been elected after the personal intervention of Metaxas), ordinary citizens or even communities that promoted reading or the arts (e.g. [Anon.] 1938t, [Anon.] 1938u, [Anon.] 1939i, [Anon.] 1939w).

[53] The most significant early manifestation of this stance was the first part of Metaxas's interview to Kostis Bastias that was published in the newspaper *Η Βραδυνή* on 15 September 1936 (the second part appeared in the issue of 16 September). In this interview Metaxas also made a statement relevant to the point about 'progress' I just discussed: 'Τα περί δημοτικής γλώσσης που μου αναφέρατε, τίθενται σκοπίμως εις την κυκλοφορίαν από τους κομμουνιστάς, οι οποίοι θέλουν να παραστήσουν την Κυβέρνησιν ως αντίθετον προς την πρόοδον. Αλλά ψεύδονται' (Metaxas 1936). The interview was coupled with several articles by renowned demoticists that were published in the daily press around mid-September 1936 and dismissed the association of demoticism with communism, such as Delmouzos 1936a, 1936b, and Skipis 1936.

[54] Kambanis 1938b: 261.

[55] 'Ποιος του μιλούσε στη δική του γλώσσα;' (Karaiskaki-Nikolaou 1938: 155).

[56] 'απόδοση δικαιοσύνης στη ζωντανή γλώσσα του λαού. Το Ν. Κράτος, εφαρμόζοντας το ευρύτατο πρόγραμμά του προς κάθε κατεύθυνση, αισθάνθηκεν από την πρώτη στιγμή της Μεταβολής, πως το ξύπνημα των ηθικών δυνάμεων και το έργο της αναδημιουργίας δε μπορούσε να πραγματοποιηθεί με όργανον άλλο εκφράσεως, έξω από την ολόθερμη γλώσσα που μιλεί ολόισια στην καρδιά του πλήθους, που ανταποκρίνεται στην σύγχρονη γλωσσική του συνείδηση και που είναι η επίσημη να πούμε, γλώσσα, της πνευματικής του ζωής'

to attract the support or collaboration of Greek cultural operators, whose vast majority was in favour of demotic, Metaxas's pro-demotic rhetoric and educational reforms also attest to the regime's modernising and modernist drive.[57] This constituted yet another example of pre-existing nationalist modernist movements of cultural or intellectual character that fed into the efforts to pursue what could be called a 'national path to fascism'.[58]

Metaxas had spoken out in favour of demotic before the 1936 coup, presenting it as evidence of racial continuity, and declared his pro-demoticist stance around a month after the coup, asserting that demoticism is a 'national movement'.[59] His personal notes reveal that he went through a period of ideological search and reappraisal after his political defeat in the 1928 elections and had consolidated his belief in the 'truth' of 'natural language' by early 1929, embracing a moderate demoticism.[60] During his premiership he did use demotic sometimes, particularly in speeches to EON members or literati. Additionally, his foreword to

(Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57). 'Τον λαό τότε μόνο θα τον συγκινήσεις, τότε θα τον φωτίσεις, τότε θα τον διδάξεις, όταν του μιλήσεις στην ψυχή του, αλλοιώτικα δεν θα μπορέσεις να έχεις πάνω του καμμιάν επίδραση δια το ... "χαλεπόν της γλώσσης"' (Foufas 1939). 'Το συμπέρασμα είναι καθαρό: η δημοτική γλώσσα να γίνει η επίσημη γλώσσα του Κράτους. Όχι μόνο για να γίνουν κατανοητοί οι Νόμοι, αλλά για να γίνει κατανοητό ολόκληρο το Κράτος, σ' όλη την έννοια και την υπόστασή του, σ' όλες τις εκφράσεις και τις εκδηλώσεις του, για να μπορέσει να επικοινωνήσει και να συνεννοηθεί με τον Λαό, για να συνενωθεί και να συνταυτισθεί με την ψυχή του. Χωρίς το μοναδικό γλωσσικό όργανο του Λαού, δεν μπορεί να γίνει αυτή η τόσο ωραία και μεγάλη, η τόσο γόνιμη επικοινωνία ([Anon.] 1939m).

[57] Modernist in the maximalist sense proposed in Griffin 2007. This populist and activist aspect of the regime points in itself to the fascist (and thus modernist) direction the Metaxas experiment took, especially after late 1938. Moreover, Rigopoulou 2002 argues that Metaxas's educational and linguistic policy was more 'modernising' than that of Venizelos.

[58] For such examples in other countries, especially Italy and Germany, see Griffin 2007. See also Antliff 2007 with regard to France. As far as I know, the appropriation of demoticism for the construction of a Greek fascism has not been sufficiently studied. Moreover, demoticism has only recently been approached in Modern Greek scholarship as a modernist movement (see Kokkinos & Boyiatzis 2017).

[59] See Metaxas 1935: 384, particularly the following passage: 'είναι βαρύ πταίσμα εκείνων οίτινες τον ζωντανόν αυτόν οργανισμόν, την καθομιλουμένην γλώσσαν μας, ηθέλησαν να καταστήσουν στατικόν κατασκεύασμα, οριστικής μορφής, παραβλέψαντες την εκ των ιδίων αυτής σπλάγχνων δυναμικότητα αυτής προς ανύψωσιν, ανακάθαρσιν και βελτίωσιν, ώστε αφ' εαυτής να φθάση εις βαθμίδα εξυπηρετούσαν τας γενικωτέρας ανάγκας ενός εκπολιτιζομένου έθνους, της τύχης, και του πολιτισμού του οποίου είνε η κυριωτέρα εκδήλωσις'. Metaxas's early post-coup statements in favour of demotic are found in his interview cited above, footnote 53.

[60] See Metaxas 1969b: 420-421.

Triandafyllidis's *Grammar* was written in demotic.[61] However, Metaxas usually delivered his speeches in a quite moderate or simple *katharevousa*.

Nonetheless, some pro-regime intellectuals praised even the dictator's usual speeches as being in plain demotic. The first note in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* where it was maintained that the periodical had nothing to do with politics is an indicative example: 'The Premier's speeches do not satisfy only from the perspective of form; they don't simply have a smooth and lively demotic language; they also have a spiritual content that is broad and serious'.[62] Thus, Nikolaidis's periodical described the dictator's public statements as being in demotic while normalising his policies and rhetoric in a way that was particularly common for its editor. That is, dictatorial discourse (and, in other cases, dictatorial praxis) was approached as an aesthetic phenomenon, pleasant in terms of form and spiritual/cultural in terms of content.

Several texts in Metaxist periodicals maintained that the dictator used a language that was close to the people's language.[63] M. Karagatsis would even present him as the 'first demoticist prime minister' in the special issue dedicated to Metaxas by *Nea Estia* shortly after the dictator's passing.[64] Although the regime did not adopt demotic as the state language, that was perhaps the first time that official documents were issued in demotic. There appeared several such documents, mostly by mayors and prefects, including even encyclicals of the Ministry

[61] The book was eventually published shortly after the start of the Axis occupation and Metaxas's foreword was omitted. One may consider it self-evident for a foreword to a grammar of demotic to be written in that linguistic variety, but the import of this choice can only be understood if one takes into account that countless pro-demotic texts had appeared in *katharevousa* in the decades leading up to Triandafyllidis's grammar. This was due to the latter's institutional and symbolic status and the fact that it had been associated with scholarly and theoretical discourse.

[62] [Anon.] 1936c.

[63] 'Ο κ. Πρωθυπουργός το ξέρει και το εφαρμόζει ήδη στην προσωπική επικοινωνία του με τον Λαό. Δεν αμφιβάλλουμε πως θα θελήσει να το επεκτείνει και να το εφαρμόσει και σ' όλες τις κρατικές εκδηλώσεις' ([Anon.] 1939m). 'Την αλήθεια αυτή την έννοιωσαν όσοι θέλησαν ν' αλλάξουν τον ρυθμό της ζωής του και να δημιουργήσουν γι' αυτόν μια καινούργια παράδοση. Έτσι και ο σημερινός μας Κυβερνήτης στις ομιλίες του μεταχειρίζεται γλώσσα που συγγενεύει με το πνεύμα και την ψυχή του λαού του. Δεν είναι λοιπόν απλό το γλωσσικό ζήτημα· είναι πολιτικό, έχει κοινωνικό και εθνικό περιεχόμενο' (Foufas 1939). Vasileios or Vasilis K. Foufas (1909-?) was a philologist working in secondary education. See the biographical note embedded in his 1965 contribution to *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά* (Foufas 1965).

[64] Karagatsis 1941. Cf. Charis 1941.

of Economics.[65] Moreover, EON proclaimed a competition for a book of Greek history in the summer of 1940 that was scheduled to be published on 25 March 1942 and was to be written in demotic.[66]

Many critics supported the dictatorship's linguistic policy and even engaged in a kind of public debate making policy suggestions.[67] The regime met demands that had been expressed by many intellectual circles of various political leanings for years by upgrading the status of demotic in public life. Demotic was re-introduced in secondary education and was occasionally used by the dictator, while demoticists and their cause were promoted. The dictator commissioned Triandafyllidis to write a grammar of demotic merely a few days after he assumed the Ministry of Education. A few months afterwards, he made sure that a couple of known demoticist professors were transferred to the more conservative University of Athens from that of Thessaloniki, which had already a strong demoticist presence.

The support that cultural operators lent to New-State language policy was a result of their pre-existing ideas on linguistic standardisation and homogenisation/homogeneity. On its part, the regime was making at least triple gains. First, by meeting long-standing demoticist demands, Metaxas's government became the first one after those led by Venizelos to give massive ground to demoticist ideas and leeway for linguistic policy on the part of the demoticist camp. It thus earned the approval of a significant part of the country's intelligentsia. Second, by extending the public and official usage of the 'people's language', Metaxas aspired after populist gains making his message more accessible to the wider population. Third, by

[65] See e.g. [Anon.] 1939m, Karagatsis 1940, Charis 1940c.
[66] Kanellopoulos 1940: 231. See Kalerande 2016: 266 where it is claimed that this would be the first book of Greek history written in demotic.
[67] Apart from the various texts discussed or cited in this chapter, a characteristic article that falls under this category is Nikolaidis 1938b, where the editor of *Πνευματική Ζωή* proposed that the new schoolbooks that were to be introduced in 1939 or 1940 be written in demotic.

promoting linguistic homogeneity, it was fostering cultural and thus national homogeneity. This was in keeping with the regime's totalising project of national reconstruction.

By co-opting cultural and intellectual elites, mobilising the masses and establishing politico-ideological consensus, while forwarding language standardisation and homogenisation, the regime facilitated the development of its most ambitious project of social engineering, namely EON. In state-affiliated contexts, demotic was mostly used in speeches, texts, radio broadcasts etc. addressed to EON members.[68] This was perhaps due to the fact that the National Youth Organisation was a new institution completely controlled by Metaxas and his dictatorial apparatus as opposed to other institutions that had long been associated with *katharevousa* and/or were partly controlled by royalist and conservative circles that were disrupting Metaxas's totalitarian agenda.

Several statements by critics demonstrate their belief that the language question had finally been resolved.[69] It was only a matter of time; now that a regime that was supposed to be permanent had sanctioned demotic, it would gradually entrench itself in all aspects of life and all modes of communication. It was even claimed in pro-regime periodicals before Metaxas had taken charge of the Ministry of Education that 'now our demotic language has received official recognition after so many struggles'.[70] Less than a year after November 1938, Panayiotopoulos characteristically maintained that 'it is no exaggeration to say that our language question has essentially been solved and that with a further step that is prudent and well-calculated in advance the last fortifications of *katharevousa* will fall and the Nation will win its linguistic unity and homogeneity'.[71]

[68] See e.g. Charis 1940b and Kalerande 2016: 113, 119. The state radio, however, generally broadcasted in *katharevousa*, save its cultural segment (cultural news, recitals of theatre plays, lectures delivered by literati etc.).
[69] Cf. Kalerande 2016: 110-111.
[70] Yialouris 1938a.
[71] Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57. Cf. 'Δεν υπάρχει, φυσικά, αμφιβολία, ότι τα πιο εκλεκτά και προοδευμένα πνεύματα, εκείνοι που κρατούν στα χέρια τους τις πνευματικές τύχες του έθνους, είτε σαν συγγραφείς, είτε σαν αρχηγοί και οδηγητές, έχουν τα μάτια τους ολάνοιχτα προς την αλήθεια,– κι' αυτό δεν είναι απλώς μια εγγύηση, αλλ'

Thus, there prevailed a belief that the demoticist cause was heading towards definite victory under Metaxas. That is not to say, however, that the pace of progress towards that goal was rapid. A hagiographic obituary enlisting Zacharias Papandoniou in the national genealogy is indicative of the renitence the demoticist cause was facing. It was one of a small percentage of Angelomatis's contributions to *I Neolea* which were actually written in demotic. That was perhaps as a tribute to the first Academician who dared deliver his speech at the Academy induction ceremony in demotic and had been the author of the first demotic reader. The article revolves mainly around that exact textbook, i.e. *The High Mountains*, and the reactions it caused, presenting the author as a 'soldier' for the demoticist cause.[72]

However, that text by Angelomatis was not only a minority in relation to his texts in *katharevousa*, but an unsigned concise biography of Papandoniou was appended to it. The content here was more factual, the language more puristic. No poems were quoted, no analogies were made between fictional beings in Papandoniou's work and his own fate as in Angelomatis's contribution. Angelomatis's bold attack against the 'rot' represented by the anti-demoticist camp was (perhaps unintentionally?) followed by a reminder that *katharevousa* was still the sanctioned linguistic variety for the production of scholarly or journalistic discourse. Complete legitimacy for demotic remained largely confined to the areas of literature, literary criticism, essay writing, and early education.[73]

In sum, demoticism had been associated with nationalism and even with fascistic departures prior to the dictatorship and was subsequently appropriated by the Fourth-of-August regime to serve its own ultranationalist and fascistising agenda. Metaxas provided significant support to demotic, especially after he assumed the Ministry of Education. Nonetheless,

αποτελεί ήδη την ίδια τη λύση του ζητήματος. Μένει όμως να γίνει το μεγάλο και θαρραλέο βήμα, που θα κάμει αυτή την αλήθεια κτήμα ολόκληρου το έθνους' (Chatzinis 1939b: 194).

[72] Angelomatis 1940a.

[73] See Kalerande 2016: 115, 117-118.

katharevousa remained the official language and the recognised variety for scholarly publications throughout the regime's lifespan.

CONCLUSION

The analysis in this chapter has sought to demonstrate that vernacular culture and language were promoted by the regime as national matters. Both vernacular culture and language had been promoted before the dictatorship as parts of national(ist) agendas, but the Fourth-of-August regime integrated them in its own fascistic project, giving them a somewhat new spin. As mentioned above, demoticism and folk culture had even been appropriated by the communist Left, which in itself indicates that the same ideological components can often assume different functions based on the system of ideas in which they are subsumed and their syntagmatic relationship with other units in that sign-system. The discussion in this chapter has also dealt with approaches to both vernacular culture and language during the dictatorship as factors of national unity and homogeneity. These constituted central objectives of the regime and occupied a significant position in the discourse of Metaxist intellectuals, as we will see in the next chapter.

- CHAPTER 6 -

The national organism: Unity and corporatism

National unity has been a longstanding theme associated with nationalist or right-wing politics Europe-wide. It was usually promoted as a central desideratum of such political forces in times of nation-building or crisis, especially in cases that the aim of reconfiguring the nation played a similar role as nation-building. Several indicative examples can be found in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century history of Germany and Italy which have a bearing for Metaxas's own stance on the question of national unity. 'From Bismarck's time onwards, "national unity" in the new nation-state not only received exaggerated emphasis, but was focused on the rejection of the internal "enemies" of the Reich'.[1] The very name of Fascism is related to the concept of unity and strength in unity (fasces).

As already shown through several examples, organicist and pseudo-biological discourse permeated the critical field of the time. Parliamentarianism had failed, or rather was bound to fail from the beginning, because it was not an organic outgrowth of Hellenism, but was transplanted from abroad. National history was a history of organic evolution while national culture and, conversely, the nation itself as *Kulturnation* was growing out of the land, and thus the bonds with the land had to be restored in order for authentic Greek art and literature to be produced. As we will see in the final part, the creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation was largely a question of restoring the health of the national organism and reactivating forces lying dormant within it. In short, the nation was presented as a sort of double organism, simultaneously a plant with its roots deeply entrenched in the national soil and a human body. This

[1] Kershaw 1987: 255.

equivocation is encapsulated in the double entendre of the word 'κορμός' (as in 'εθνικός κορμός'), whose two basic meanings are the human torso and the tree trunk.

Such conceptions of the nation facilitated both the ideal of organic unity, whereby all Greeks were parts of the national body and all regions were part of the national trunk, and the promotion of corporatist ideas and class collaboration. One could compare here Metaxas's reference to Epirus, Thrace, and Crete as the 'right arm', the 'left arm', and the 'feet of Greece' respectively in his secret speech to journalists on 30 October 1940 or the designation of Macedonia as the 'lung of Greece' by Pavlos Melas decades earlier.[2] Just like the parts of a body or an organism in general, the members had various and differing functions, some more significant than others, but all essential in order for the organism to perform well and continue growing. Thus, citizens were to accept their different (which, in most cases, meant subordinate) status and role by means of which they contributed to the well-being of the overall national organism.

Organicist discourses were employed constantly in relation to notions of a unified nation by pro-regime cultural operators. Melis Nikolaidis for example would claim that when intellectuals are not enabled to provide their labour in the field that they have a natural inclination for, it is a loss for the national collective or totality (σύνολο) rather for the individual. 'Precious drops of blood are drawn from the national organism, drops of life, progress, and culture, which unjustly fall and perish unused'.[3] If this statement is pertinent to corporatist conceptions, Kambanis's following claim points to an interrelation of modes of thought with political systems: 'The problem of unifying people into an amalgam was a mechanical problem for parliamentarianism … The organic will of the people cannot be expressed numerically, …

[2] Metaxas 1969b: 358-359. About bodily metaphors used with regard to national geography in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century see Peckham 2001: 43-45. Pavlos Melas is quoted in Peckham 2001: 44. For a succinct discussion of the topos of equivalence of humans and trees throughout history see Demandt 2014: 27-29.
[3] Nikolaidis 1939c.

it is revealed through its entire history in the form of its civilisation, it finds its expression in the people's moral and religious unity'.[4]

However, the national organism was plagued with multiple divisions in the interwar years. Those divisions had largely arisen from the 1910s onwards and could be summarised in the following binaries: Old Greece vs New Lands, natives vs refugees, Venizelists vs Anti-Venizelists, Republicans vs Royalists. The last two distinctions did not completely coincide, as neither all Venizelists were against the monarchy nor all anti-Venizelists were monarchists. This accounted for an even more fractured political scene. All these were supplemented with class divisions and the minority problem. Yet, the 1936 regime change was allegedly a catalyst for bringing all Greeks together in unison and making an end of the National Schism, the discord that had been distressing the nation for decades.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section discusses the question of horizontal unity, namely solidarity along the geographical and political divides of the past. The second section revolves mainly around vertical unity, that is unity between the upper and the lower classes, and deals with the concepts of class collaboration and corporatism.

6.1. ETHNIC SOLIDARITY AND POLITICAL UNITY

The multitude of factors of disunity that characterised early-twentieth-century Greece were considerably intertwined. Minorities and refugees played a significant role in the labour movement and the rise in KKE's electorate, particularly in Macedonia. The sizeable Jewish community of Thessaloniki had a leading part in the first major socialist organisation within the Greek state, the *Fédération* led by Avraam Benaroya. The organisation was largely absorbed by

[4] Kambanis 1939: 131. We see again the conflation of people with nation that was discussed in chapter three; Kambanis's 'people' and 'popular will' here is essentially what Koumaros and Mantzoufas had defined as 'nation' and 'national will'.

SEKE (the precursor of KKE) in the late 1910s, while the advent of hundreds of thousands of refugees in the 1920s created the conditions for further support for KKE.[5]

The promotion of ethnic solidarity from Thrace to Crete was also related to the National Schism. Both camps had a bourgeois character and enjoyed an inter-class support, but their following was often geographically and historically determined. The Peloponnese and 'Old Greece' was a conservative and royalist bastion, while the 'New Lands' and especially Crete, Venizelos's homeland, were favouring the Venizelists. Particularly after 1922, the 'New Lands' received a large number of Asia Minor refugees, who also predominantly backed Venizelos. Refugee support continued unabated at least until 1930, when Venizelos's treaties with Kemal caused the reaction and disillusionment of considerable segments of the refugee population.[6] Nonetheless, both the 1917 National Defence Movement and the 1935 coup attempt relied on a plan that largely involved Crete, the islands of the Northern Aegean, Macedonia, and Thrace, which shows where Venizelos himself thought he could garner more support in his effort to overthrow the conservative government of Athens.[7]

The New Lands were further problematic because of the rise of communism in their urban centres: Kavala and Serres had elected communist mayors in the first local elections after the 1932 bankruptcy (1934). The mayors were summarily removed from office and sent to internal exile on the basis of Venizelos's 1929 *Idionymon* legislation and with the approval of both bourgeois factions.[8] The dynamic of labour agitation, however, persisted in Northern Greece, especially amongst tobacco workers. Salonica in 1936 was the focal point of working-class struggle, with general strikes, demonstrations, and violent clashes with the police. It was

[5] See Mavrogordatos 1983.
[6] See Mavrogordatos 1983: 210-211. This diplomatic rapprochement might have been crucial for regional stability but was detrimental for the refugees who lost their rights to full compensation for the properties they had left behind in Turkey (see Mavrogordatos 1983: 190).
[7] Mavrogordatos (1983: xv) makes the interesting observation that the areas to which both camps of the Schism looked for support were largely the same in coups and elections.
[8] See Karayiannakidis 2010.

the last show of mass resistance to the ever-increasing fascistisation that parts of the Greek elites had opted for as a route out of the 1930s economic, political, and institutional crisis.[9] The bloody May 1936 events in Salonica, where Metaxas, now in charge of the state apparatus, let the police violently crack down on protesting strikers, demonstrated amply that national unity would be secured and the red threat would be warded off by force.

Lacking evidence to substantiate the alleged communist revolution that the coup averted, the dictatorial government steered the press towards exaggerated reports on the Spanish civil war and claims of a similar fate from which Metaxas saved Greece.[10] Thus, the solidification of the spectre of a civil war was often effected through the comparison of Greece to Spain, especially in the first years of the dictatorship that coincided with the Spanish Civil War.[11] Had it not been for the 4th-August coup, Kambanis argued for instance, Greece would

[9] In his analysis of the Greek economy in the context of the interwar economic crisis Mazower (1991) points to a speedy recovery after the 1932 bankruptcy. Labour agitation and social unrest in the mid-1930s was largely the result of denial on the part of Greek elites to engage in fairer distribution of the fruits of recovery. According to Boyiatzis (2012: 96), 'η οικονομική Κρίση των αρχών του '30 αντιμετωπίστηκε με επιτυχή τρόπο … και η στροφή σε αυταρχικές μορφές απάντησης στην πολιτική προβληματική αποτέλεσε *επιλογή* κι όχι αναγκαίο αποτέλεσμα των οικονομικών μέτρων αντιμετώπισης της κρίσης' (emphasis added). While discussing fascism from quite different perspectives, both Paxton 2004 and Roberts 2016 argue against the interpretation of fascism's interwar trajectory from a teleological perspective. Specific historical circumstances (particularly the Great War) did play a role in the emergence of fascist and other ultranationalist movements and political figures in the interwar political scene. Yet, the ascension of fascism to power and its overall development rested on interactions with a pre-existing system. Both Paxton and Roberts emphasise in their own way the factor of contingency, particularly with regard to the decisions of establishment circles and institutional agents, such as monarchs and presidents, vis-a-vis fascist forces. As Paxton (2004: 98) points out, 'the fascist route to power has always passed through cooperation with conservative elites'. Most importantly, Paxton (2004: 102) stresses that 'there was nothing inevitable about the arrival of either Mussolini and Hitler in office. Looking closely at how fascist leaders became head of government is an exercise in antideterminism. … But the conservative leaders rejected other possibilities … . They *chose the fascist option*' (emphasis added). Wherever fascistic groups or individuals rose to power, significant parts of the pre-fascist establishment and mainstream political forces were their accomplices rather than their victims. Quite interestingly, Metaxas had delusively claimed in spring 1935 that he did not intend to restore the monarchy or introduce fascism (see Hering 2004b: 1235) but the fourth plenum of the Communist Party central committee in September 1935 stressed that the restoration of monarchy would lead to fascism (see [Anon.] 1975: 243-245). Nonetheless, Metaxas had repeatedly made his antiparliamentarian agenda known in the mid-1930s and yet the Greek parliament gave him a vote of confidence nearly in its entirety (excluding the fifteen MPs of the KKE-led Popular Front and three other parliamentarians) when he was appointed prime minister by the king in spring 1936.

[10] See Richter 1974: 60.

[11] Arguments of this kind that projected the coup as a means by which to avoid a Greek version of the Spanish predicament were employed by Metaxas himself already in his radio broadcast of 10 August 1936: 'Έχομεν ημείς και αναλαμβάνομεν ενώπιόν σας όλην την ευθύνην της πράξεως ταύτης [=of the 4th-August coup], με την πεποίθησιν ότι όλοι σας συναισθάνεσθε την ανάγκην αυτής. Κανείς σας, πλην των γνωστών δημαγωγών και των

have shared the destiny of the Iberian country. Despite the clearly propagandistic objective of this argument (and its apparent propagandistic character is probably what makes Kambanis stress that 'it is not a rhetorical pattern'), which intended to legitimise the coup by projecting as a certainty what was naught but a hypothesis, there might be some kernel of truth in it.[12]

The Spanish Civil War was the result of a counterrevolution of the nationalist, ultra-conservative, right-wing and authoritarian forces in the Spanish society and especially in the army that could not tolerate the rise of the Left. Likewise, a civil war in Greece would not be caused by some agency external to the one represented by Kambanis and other pro-dictatorship voices. On the contrary, it would be themselves that would start it were the Left to even come close to power (as it happened in the mid-1940s). Kambanis's argumentation reflects the worldview of an entitled Right which sees itself as the protector of 'natural' political order.[13] In any case, the rationale here is in correspondence to Metaxas's own arguments upon suspending parliamentary democracy in 1936: were he not to proceed with the coup and prevent the general strike of the following day, it would be nearly impossible to avoid a bloodbath (which would be created by the state machinery of which himself was in control, as he was already the Prime Minister during the May events in Thessaloniki).[14]

Most of these tensions –apart from those regarding minorities, which were effectually passed over in silence– were registered in texts by pro-regime intellectuals. With regard to the divide between autochthonous and allochthonous Greeks, Marietta Eptanisia asserted in an encomium to the dictator: 'Now with the Metaxas Government the notorious refugee question

παραφρόνων ανατροπέων, δεν θέλει να ιδή τον τόπον μας να πέση εις την τύχην της δυστυχούς Ισπανίας' (Metaxas 1969a: 16).

[12] Kambanis 1938e: 870.

[13] See Mannheim 1936 on the tendency of political ideologies to dehistoricise and naturalise themselves following their consolidation.

[14] 'η Κυβέρνησις … θεωρούσα επιτακτικόν αυτής καθήκον να προλάβη την εκδήλωσιν της ανατρεπτικής στάσεως, δια την καταστολήν της οποίας θα έρρεεν ασφαλώς άφθονον το αίμα, προέβη, τη εγκρίσει της Αυτού Μεγαλειότητος του Βασιλέως, εις την κήρυξιν του Στρατιωτικού Νόμου καθ' άπασαν την Χώραν και την διάλυσιν της Βουλής' (Metaxas 1969a: 11). See also Metaxas 1969a: 12.

has also evaporated. The Refugees, who are also Greeks, have finally understood that they are the same as everyone else and belong to one homeland, to Greece'.[15] Karaiskaki declared that Metaxas 'has united the Greeks from north to south and from east to west, and has also led close to us the soul of those that mountains and seas keep away from us'.[16]

Maintaining that there had been a 'reconstitution of the moral bonds of the Greek nation', Kambanis spoke of demagogues agitating for conflict between natives and refugees as well as between those born in Old Greece and the New Lands in the pre-dictatorial period, particularly in Northern Greece. Employing the vitriolic term 'subhumans' to describe these demagogues, Kambanis was clearly alluding to the growing strength of KKE in the area in the 1930s. He claimed that there had been attempts to address this issue from below, which did not come to fruition. 'However, an initiative was undertaken from above. Under the aegis of the reconstituted King, Mr Metaxas united the Greeks'.[17]

The king was presented as a symbol of unity, called elsewhere for instance 'the factor of continuity that stands above parties'.[18] Metaxist discourse emphasised the link between the (recently restored) monarchy and the restoration of national unity. The fact that the National Schism had largely been the result of royal meddling in politics was conveniently left out. As Kambanis argued, given the long time that had elapsed from the Great War and the Asia Minor catastrophe, 'it would be ridiculous and simultaneously pernicious for us to be debating whether we should have participated or not participated in the international conflict, and to be debating about the responsibility for the catastrophe'.[19]

Even if such claims were intended to put an end to the tensions between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists, with their conflicting accounts on recent history, the blame for the absence of

[15] Eptanisia 1939: V.
[16] Kar. 1940a: 557.
[17] Kambanis 1937b: 17.
[18] Kambanis 1938e: 871.
[19] Kambanis 1937b: 16.

national unity before 4 August 1936 was allocated to the political system at large. According to Angelomatis, 'party corruption and party dispute extinguished from the Greek horizons all the beautiful centuries, erased the national objectives, and, aided by the communist propaganda, threw Greece in the arena of petty and nation-corroding internecine strife'.[20] While the other Balkan nations had been getting organised and prepared for the possibility of a wide-scale military conflict, claimed Angelomatis in a later article published after the beginning of WWII, Greeks had been too busy fighting each other.[21] Essentially, Metaxist discourse identified partyism with partition. It is thus no coincidence that the banning of political parties would be put side by side with the cessation of divisions in texts extolling the achievements of the regime.[22]

Perhaps the most common praise of the dictatorship amongst intellectuals was precisely its achievement of national unity. Kostas Kerofylas began a historical article on the question of national unity and discord –published in *I Neolea* on the occasion of the 25 March 1940 celebrations– with the assertion that 'political hatreds have fortunately vanished thanks to the National Government'.[23] According to Karaiskaki, it was the intervention of Metaxas with the 4 August coup that 'has gifted us unity and understanding of our brother Greek citizen'.[24] In another article Karaiskaki had declared that, thanks to its current leadership, 'the Greek soul has exercised concord and solidarity'.[25]

In autumn 1940, as the war was raging in Europe and Greece was itself on the brink of military conflict, assertions of national unity intensified in pro-regime periodicals. A

[20] An. 1939: 1454.
[21] 'Προ ολίγων ακόμη ετών μία εθνοκτόνος ενέργεια είχεν αποδείξει την γυμνότητά μας, αφού εχρειάσθη να δανεισθώμεν (!!) από σύμμαχον γειτονικόν Κράτος μερικά αεροπλάνα' - 'ημείς κατετριβόμεθα εις καρδιοφθόρους και εθνοφθόρους αγώνας' (A. 1940a).
[22] E.g. 'Από της 4 Αυγούστου 1936 δεν υπάρχουν κόμματα εις την Ελλάδα. Τα κόμματα κατηργήθησαν. Δεν υπάρχουν διαιρέσεις: Έλειψαν. Δεν υπάρχουν επιβιώσεις του Μεγάλου Πολέμου' (Kambanis 1937b: 15).
[23] Kerofylas 1940.
[24] Kar. 1940a: 557.
[25] K. 1940.

characteristic example is an article by Spyros Melas entitled ‘Unity’. Melas dismissed the rumours that Greece would engage in an internecine struggle between factions supporting the two competing blocs of WWII. He argued that the Greeks ‘have not forgotten at all which was the tragic conclusion of our great internal adventure: A major and irreparable national catastrophe’. Melas spoke of a ‘steely unity of the Greek people, derived from the teachings of history and its clear consciousness, given that it does not aspire after territorial expansion against other peoples. Most importantly, however, that unity was supposedly premised on the sacrifices that had led to the liberation of the Greek lands. As a result, Melas concluded, ‘With clenched teeth, with firm resolve and serenity we raise our slogan: -Greece intact or ashes!’.[26]

Overall, the question of national unity was central in Metaxist discourse, reflecting perhaps the significance of the tensions and cleavages that had existed in interwar Greece. Much like earlier disunity was attributed to the pre-1936 political system, the alleged achievement of remarkable national unity was portrayed as the result of regime change.

6.2. Class collaboration and corporatism

Repressive measures such as violent crackdowns on strikes and protests or domestic expulsions were often taken against the labour movement before the 1936 coup.[27] The months immediately preceding the coup witnessed the intensification of state violence in response to unprecedented labour agitation and the strike that has been labelled as ‘the most massive popular uprising in the history of the Greek labour movement’.[28] Following the establishment of his dictatorship prior to the general strike of 5 August that he depicted as the beginning of a communist revolt, Metaxas opted for a rhetoric of national unity and class collaboration that combined virulent anticommunism with paternalism. Early paternalist attempts to regulate syndicalism in

[26] Melas 1940.
[27] See Gikas 2013.
[28] Ploumidis 2011: 33.

twentieth-century Greece had class collaboration as their background and were targeted against forms of unionism that were seen as a threat to social stability and the bourgeois political system. Paternalist initiatives had the intention to turn trade unions into a 'social partner' that would act as 'a pillar supporting and not undermining bourgeois authority'.[29]

I will begin the analysis here with a passage that eloquently presents several of the themes related to this section:

> What is a nation? A metaphysical concept – thus argued the tailor-sociologists of the Universities and the cafes. Concept and non-concept. A nation is, they said, classes and factions ready to slaughter each other. A nation is groups, having opposing interests, non-susceptible to conciliation: Who believes today the tailor-sociologists? The classes have reconciled. Word has turned into flesh and from the northern and eastern borders to Crete Greeks believe completely in the need of solidarity, and they materialise this solidarity. Greek 'classes' are not connected anymore only by the same language and the same religion, the same customs and… post-byzantine cuisine. They are connected by common interests and common aims. And if the trumpet of danger ever sounds again, the Greeks will find themselves the way they did in 1912. Ready for the necessary sacrifices. Ready and disciplined.[30]

This is how Aristos Kambanis tackled the issue of the definition of the nation in Greece in a 1938 article. Laying out the views of sociologists (and, it is to be assumed, of others who reproduced more casually such views, as if they were sociologists) before 1936, he undermined them even through his wording. His critique suggested that their work constituted a sloppy patchwork –of foreign theories in all likelihood– and that their place of operation was not just within the universities, but also at the cafes, places associated in Greek culture with petty talk, meaningless arguments, and verbalism.[31] It could be assumed that this attack, to the extent that it is directed against pre-1936 university staff, was also associated with the 'cleansing' and

[29] See Gikas 2013.
[30] Kambanis 1938b: 259 (suspension marks in the original). It is highly likely that this text by Kambanis is in dialogue with Ernest Renan's seminal 1882 lecture 'What is a nation'. Kambanis had extensive knowledge of modern French cultural and intellectual history, while he had published the first Greek translation (and the only one that has appeared in book form to date, as far as I know) of Renan's most famous book (*Βίος του Ιησού*, 1915).
[31] Leisure spaces associated with bourgeois life were sometimes seen as loci of 'anti-national' activity under Metaxas. Aside from the negative representation of cafes, bars were also mistrusted because they had been the setting of anti-Metaxas plots.

'restructuring' of Greek academia that was pursued in the Metaxas years.[32] The repetitions at the beginning of this passage have a rhetorical function and especially sentences such as the shortest one of the text, which is also non-verbal ('concept and non-concept'), manifest Kambanis's intent to ironise such views.

Even though Kambanis dismissed this 'sociological' perception of the nation, suggesting that it is slovenly or self-contradictory, he then implicitly accepted that this was indeed the status of the Greek nation before Metaxas. The rest of the passage focuses on changes allegedly affecting the national body under Metaxas. National solidarity had supposedly passed from the dictator's preaching to the everyday life and practice of the Greek people. Social classes that had been placed at the centre of older discussions about the nation were now portrayed as standing by each other and having not only common interests, but also common aims. The definition of the nation through these common interests and aims supplements the traditional definition of the nation, as formulated first by Herodotus: common language, common religion, and common customs, to which Kambanis whimsically added the post-Byzantine culinary tradition. The end of the paragraph sums up what could be seen as one of the main *raisons d'être* of the Fourth of August: to prepare Greece for the imminent war.

In a similar spirit, Kambanis claimed in a later text of that same year that what was needed was 'a united and permanent Government. Not a class-based but a nation-based Government. One expressing the whole nation. One intensifying its control over all the domains of national life'.[33] However, this did not mean that classes were taken out of the picture. Instead of preaching a classless society or denying the reality of a class society, the dictatorship aimed to subsume all classes and class-based or profession-based organisations under its nationalist agenda. Corporatism represented an attempt to control and integrate class organisations and

[32] See Gounaridis 1994: 155.
[33] Kambanis 1938e: 873.

trade unions into a national scheme that could be compared to the instrumentalisation of regionalism that was discussed in chapter four.

Perhaps the most revealing expression of this view is found in an aesthetic essay by Vasos Vasileiou which will be further discussed in the final part of the thesis. Vasileiou claimed that 'class organisations assist the development of group consciousness always within the framework of National unity'.[34] In a later text, he also presented the Metaxas regime as a 'κοινωνιστικόν κράτος', maintaining that 'a measure that would favour one person, one group, or even one class in order to disserve the collective would constitute a betrayal of the state's principles'.[35]

As has been argued with regard to Nazi Germany, 'Welfare served the goal of incorporating all classes into an ethnically pure, militarily strong national community'.[36] Pro-workers measures, social insurance, benefits, pensions and other provisions to the lower strata of society are not necessarily left-wing. On the contrary, they may serve to undermine subversive forces and reinforce the stability of the status quo. Welfare and material concessions to the least well-off can serve to provide a mass following for the government and establish links of political patronage, while effectively demobilising the working-class movement and incapacitating or isolating its most radical elements. Interestingly, Metaxas himself repeatedly claimed that his pro-workers policies deprived the communists of their political 'clientele'.[37]

Corporativism was in fact the focus of a great deal of the Greek dictator's public speeches but it does not seem to have substantially progressed further than rhetoric. In 1939

[34] 'Με τους νόμους που ρυθμίζουν τα συμφέροντα ενός ευρυτάτου κύκλου επαγγελματιών εμπεδώνεται η αλληλεγγύη, δημιουργείται ταυτότης αντιλήψεων, τρόπων ζωής και ιδανικών. Να λοιπόν πώς "πραγματοποιείται η μετάβαση του ατόμου στην ομάδα" για την οποίαν ομιλεί ο κ. Ω. Δημιουργείται πνεύμα κοινό. Οι ταξικές οργανώσεις βοηθούν στο ν' αναπτύσση η ομάδα τη συνείδησή της μέσα στα πλαίσια πάντοτε της Εθνικής ενότητας' (Vasileiou 1938: 870).
[35] Vasileiou 1939: 912.
[36] Passmore 2014: 144.
[37] See e.g. Boyiatzis 2012: 243, 250 (footnote 507).

there were some developments in the domain of peasant syndicalism, with the establishment of the Deputy Ministry of Co-operatives and the appointment of Babis Alivizatos at its head, along with the commencement of publication of relevant print media targeting farmers, such as *Agrotikon Mellon*.[38] However, early plans for a corporativist constitution based on the Portuguese model had been shelved by then.[39] Nonetheless, Greek cultural operators largely ignored the dictator's frequent pronouncements regarding 'συντεχνιακό σύστημα' and the historical identification of the Greek nation with it.

Apart from all its other aspects which will be discussed in chapter eleven, EON was also the most ambitious project of class collaboration. The interclass character of the organisation as well as the solidarity and unity of its members are constant themes in EON-related propaganda. The latter theme extends beyond the organisation and embraces the entire national organism. EON members are supposedly trained in national and social consciousness, in prioritising the collective and demonstrating solidarity with their fellow Greeks outside of EON too. Instead of his usual 'letters to the youth', Nikolaidis even disseminated relevant propaganda through an epistolary short story he published in *I Neolea* in 1940. The text consists of the letters sent by a young upper-class girl to her mother, while the girl is in the EON summer camp. The story shows the girl progressing from retaining a snobbish distance from low-class girls to becoming best friends with them, regretting her initial contempt, and seeking to help them in all ways possible, after experiencing first-hand class collaboration and solidarity.[40]

[38] See Ploumidis 2011.
[39] See Linardatos 1988.
[40] Nikolaidis 1940d. Some further indicative examples of such propaganda are 'την ανώτερη κοινωνική αντίληψί σας, τη συναδέλφωσι, την ένωσι και την αλληλεγγύη σας. … αποκαλύπτουν το νέον εσωτερικό σας κόσμο και δείχνουν την υγεία, την υπέροχη και πολύτιμη ηθική υγεία, που έχει εξαγνίσει κι' έχει εξυψώσει για πάντα την ψυχή σας και τη σκέψι σας' (Nikolaidis 1939i) and 'πολιτισμός θα πη συμβολή όλων μας και μόνο όταν συμβάλλουμε και μεις ανατέλλει μέσα μας φωτεινό το αστέρι της αλληλεγγύης. Γιατί η μεγάλη αυτή για τους λαούς αρετή σημαίνει ανατροφή για θυσίες, διαπαιδαγώγησι για αγώνα, εξάσκησι για πειθαρχία, δημιουργία αληθινά εθνικής συνειδήσεως' (Kar. 1940c). See also the discussion on EON in chapter 11, particularly the analysis in 11.2 regarding the New Man project.

The extent to which discourses of class collaboration circulated under Metaxas is further demonstrated by their employment in unconventional contexts. One such example is an editorial in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* by Yiannis Chatzinis. The critic defined litterateurs and journalists as two 'classes' in conflict that must begin a process of 'reconciliation' and 'collaboration'.[41] As basis for such a process he took the examples of good journalists who were also good literary writers, worthy members of both classes at the same time. Significantly, the figures he mentioned as examples all either came from a French anti-Semitic, monarchist, ultranationalist tradition or were overt supporters of Metaxas working for the New State in one form or another. Amongst the French he referred to the brothers Jerome and Jean Tharaud (notorious for their antisemitic pamphlets), the editors of the journal of *Action Française* Leon Daudet and Charles Maurras, as well as Maurice Barrès; amongst the Greeks he mentioned only Aristos Kambanis and Kostis Bastias. Chatzinis then discussed other variations of a –not so balanced– mixture or overlapping of journalism and literature, yet the main focus of his article was the necessity for 'class collaboration'. For the critic, this conciliation was necessary given that language was a national issue of utmost importance and priority, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, was itself seen as a major factor of national unity.[42]

In sum, class collaboration, corporatism, and even welfare concessions were framed in Metaxist discourse as commensurate to national unity. They were further alleged achievements of the regime which had managed to unite the Greeks and restore the health of the national organism. The resonance of such notions could sometimes reach beyond the sphere of politics and economics in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues within the cultural field.

[41] Chatzinis 1939c: 225

[42] 'Οι υπεροψίες κ' οι μικροεγωϊσμοί, οι τυχόν ακόμη προσωπικές εχθρότητες, πρέπει να υποχωρήσουν και να υποταχθούν στον ένα μεγάλο σκοπό, που είναι να δοθεί στο έθνος η γλώσσα του. … Είναι ανάγκη πνευματική του έθνους, που όσο πάει γίνεται πιο αισθητή και πιο επείγουσα, να βγούμε απ' αυτόν το γλωσσικό κυκεώνα, που έχει για συνέπεια τη μεγαλείτερη φθορά και σπατάλη πολύτιμων δυνάμεων. Ας συνεργαστούν οι λογοτέχνες με τους δημοσιογράφους· ας επέμβει το ίδιο το Κράτος δραστικά και αποφασιστικά. Γιατί σήμερα, απ' όποιο άλλο ζήτημα, κεφαλαιωδέστερο είναι η γλωσσική τακτοποίηση του Έθνους' (Chatzinis 1939c: 226).

CONCLUSION

The discussion in this chapter has pointed to the significance of unity as a recurring theme of pro-regime discourse. It has shown that the question of national unity had multiple facets, which included the unification of natives and refugees, of New Lands and Old Greece, of former Venizelists and anti-Venizelists, and of the members of all classes. It is to be assumed that this emphasis on unity was in response to the divisions that had plagued Greece before the coup and to which the dictatorship proclaimed to be putting an end. As the various references to an imminent war suggest, the termination of internecine conflicts did not only aim at establishing a healthy and well-functioning national organism for its own sake but was dictated by the need for military preparation.

CONCLUSIONS

This part has discussed several aspects of national identity, dealing with notions of essentialism and organicism, but, most importantly, with culture. A significant conclusion from the above analysis is that the texts that were considered in this part considerably correspond to the dictates and policies of the regime. As a matter of fact, one could trace an explicit or implicit dialogue between many of them and the pubic statements of the dictator. Moreover, the analysis in this part suggests that nationalist discourse was reinforced under Metaxas by means of reinvigorating older indigenous trends as well as through elective affinities with far-right circles and currents in the West, such as *völkisch* criticism or the intellectuals of the *Action Française*.

Nevertheless, apart from being 'written' (defined and constructed through texts), under Metaxas the nation was also extensively 'staged' (performed and viewed through public rituals and spectacles). This was particularly true with regard to national unity in its several and interrelated aspects: as horizontal comradeship, as oneness and integrity of the nation, even as direct communication between people and leadership. There was indeed an attempt at 'lending popular appeal to the ideal of organic unity by translating the idea itself into a highly theatrical manner of conducting politics'.[1] This last observation paves the way for the discussion in the next chapter, where theatrical politics and theatre criticism will be discussed.

[1] O'Sullivan 1983: 99.

PART 3 Authority and hierarchy

Speaking to technicians in 1937, Metaxas had claimed that 'in all major works' what is required is 'perfect coordination of efforts, as well as perfect discipline and hierarchy in those efforts'. The dictator demonstrated that these were central components of Metaxist ideology by calling for 'hierarchy even in thought': 'Everyone must submit their thought to another higher thought'. He furthermore argued that the era demands that the state takes charge of and guides all efforts. In this context, technicians were urged to take advantage of the fact that Greece had a political system that was in tune with the era and to do their best, 'everyone on the rung of the ladder where they are located'.[1]

According to Noel O'Sullivan, 'the leader principle is now a familiar part of all contemporary activist regimes. Fascism, however, is the only modern ideology to place the explicit cult of a leader at the very centre of its teaching'.[2] The *Führerprinzip* was part and parcel of the hierarchical vision upon which interwar totalitarian regimes aspired to establish a new system of government and social arrangements. Class collaboration that was discussed in the previous chapter was not to be achieved only through national solidarity but also through this 'natural' subjugation of the inferior strata to their superiors and the assumption by each one of their 'true' role in society. What is more, extending Ian Kershaw's observation beyond the borders of Germany, one could argue that the 'leader myth' 'was consciously devised as an integrating force' by interwar regimes 'acutely aware of the need to manufacture consensus'.[3]

[1] Metaxas 1969: 241.
[2] O'Sullivan 1983: 149.
[3] Kershaw 1987: 3.

It has been claimed from the perspective of constitutional law that the *Führerprinzip* does not apply to the Fourth-of-August Regime, or that indeed, if it were to apply, it would have to concern King George II and not the dictator.[4] There is indeed some sense in emphasising the differences between the Italian and the German blueprints and the fact that the position of Metaxas was largely dependent on the king. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to dismiss the existence of this organising principle in the Greek dictatorship altogether or to ascribe it to the king. In practice, it was largely Metaxas who shaped state policy, even if he had to manoeuvre and outflank obstacles set up by the palace or to always take into account and somehow accommodate the royal family in his fascistoid experiments. Even if the application of a leader principle did not have the legal implications seen in the Nazi case, the Metaxas regime demonstrated several affinities with the two major fascist states in this domain and promoted a doctrine of charismatic leadership and a kind of leader principle.

The Greek dictatorship appears to have particularly followed on the centralist tendencies and the mythicising that were dialectically related with the *Duce* cult. By the late 1920s, Benito Mussolini had ended up being in charge of eight ministries and ultimately gave up six of them in what turned out to be a failed attempt to improve efficiency and to incorporate more major figures from the Fascist movement in the government. Only a couple years later Mussolini would begin to reverse this process, and the 1930s witnessed again the concentration of multiple ministries in his hands or even his personal involvement in areas such as censorship.[5]

Likewise, Ioannis Metaxas took on increasingly more responsibilities and official roles. On 5 August 1936 he held the post of the Prime Minister simultaneously serving as head of all three Military Ministries and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To this was added on 25 November 1938 the Ministry of Education. Moreover, Metaxas was already General Head of the

[4] See Alivizatos 1983.
[5] See Clark 2014: 102, 146-147 and Bonsaver 2007.

National Youth Organisation, while he personally appointed high-ranking officials in the local administration, state agencies (such as the Secretariat for Letters and Arts), and dictatorial organisations (such as EON). The dictator both wanted to exert his control and 'guidance' over virtually every domain of national life and openly proclaimed his intention, legitimising it as a component of the regime's worldview, of its ideology and practice.[6]

In the domain of propaganda, the King was portrayed as a symbol of national unity and a source of legitimacy for the regime, but it was the dictator who was projected as possessing most of the traits that had been associated with the 'myth of the perfect leader' in Italy and Germany. At the same time, the regime reconciled its elitism with its populism by reiterating the claim that the Greek people is unique, gifted, and capable of the greatest achievements, but its previous leadership was the cause of all its misfortunes and of all the developments that had seemed to be evidence to the contrary. This was underpinned by the notion that both the leader and the people are inherently great, but they need each other to be able to externalise this greatness; neither one can be truly great without the other.

This part is made up of two chapters that deal with considerably interrelated issues pertaining to questions of dictatorial power and structure. The first chapter discusses the question of discipline and force. It presents the ways in which the regime's aims to impose order and to coordinate the masses as well as its centralising and absolutist characteristics were legitimised by cultural operators. It also explores how the ideas of discipline and coordination were employed as aesthetic standards within the context of literary and theatre criticism. The second chapter revolves around the regime's hierarchical and elitist tendencies. Its focus is chiefly the leader principle and the components that made up the 'Metaxas myth'.

[6] See Hering 1992: 287, particularly footnote 7, where relevant correspondence between Theologos Nikoloudis and Ioannis Metaxas is discussed: The request by Nikoloudis that the Sub-Ministry of Press and Tourism be upgraded to a Ministry was rejected by Metaxas along the lines of the *Führerprinzip*.

- CHAPTER 7 -

Discipline and force

As a dictatorship, the Fourth-of-August regime was self-evidently associated with notions pertaining to coercion and militarism. In keeping with its imposition as a response to an alleged communist uprising that was in the making, it was additionally catering to bourgeois preoccupations with order and stability. However, Metaxist discourse did not merely seek to legitimise the government's application of force and its demand for discipline but aspired to endow them with a veneer of respectability and even associate them with exciting new possibilities. Thus, despite its backing from several conservative circles, this is another indication that the Fourth-of-August regime was not simply an authoritarian regime. Unlike a typical military dictatorship, it displayed clear fascistic tendencies and the intention to co-opt and instrumentalise the masses for its own ultranationalist palingenetic agenda.

The discussion in the following pages demonstrates that discipline and force were not only applied in practice but were even promoted as social or aesthetic virtues in Metaxist discourse. The chapter is divided into two sections, the first one dealing with the themes of order and coordination and the second one with those of absolutism and state violence, including a discussion of the regime as a national revolution.

7.1. ORDER AND COORDINATION: DISCIPLINE AND THEATRICAL POLITICS

In the discussion up to this point the notion of discipline has come up several times. It was characteristically shown in chapter one, for instance, that ancient Sparta was used as a model by the dictatorship because of its almost exclusive association with discipline. In fact, the conceptualisations of discipline associated with Sparta resemble Metaxas's own diary notes in the

1900s, where he claimed that he would put himself unhesitatingly at the King's disposal, without ever asking whether he was right or wrong.[1] That was also the kind of discipline that was expected on the part of Greek society and particularly the youth.

The notion of discipline was promoted in many texts published in the periodicals examined for this thesis and was applied in various contexts. These could be classified into two broad categories: political discipline and aesthetic discipline. The first category was often combined with notions of unity, order, and –rather interestingly– 'rhythm'. It was presented as encompassing not only the Greek dictatorship but sometimes other regimes of the time as well, which were deemed as akin to it. Discipline was even presented by Petros Orologas as the political paradigm of the time, characterising the three major socio-political systems of democracy, bolshevism, and fascism, which he saw as influencing and interacting with each other.[2]

The letter sent out to potential contributors of the periodical *To Neon Kratos* included the programmatic declaration that the periodical 'will champion the ideas of order and discipline'.[3] In her first signed contribution to *I Neolea* Karaiskaki praised the orderliness imposed by the regime whereas in early 1940 she would claim that 'today all of us, young and old, walk in the same pace, think in the same spirit and live in the same rhythm'.[4] Yeoryios Roumanis in a pro-dictatorship text about Palamas in *Nea Politiki* referred to the 'believers in the Ideal of order –of discipline and the New Rhythm'.[5] In an earlier contribution to the same periodical, he had described non-parliamentary regimes as 'the states of Rhythm and Order'.[6]

[1] Metaxas 1951: 527.
[2] Orologas 1939a: 561. Orologas's observations here are rather interesting and, to some extent, accurate. However, he largely left pre-existing circumstances as well as negative interaction and influence out of the picture by essentially presenting commonalities as the result of ideological borrowing.
[3] I Syntaxis 1939: 5.
[4] 'ο διεθνής κόσμος των ταξιδιωτών ξεχύνεται στην παραλία. Το Νέο Φάληρο με το νόστιμο και περιποιημένο του πάρκο δίνει πολύ καλά την πρώτη σύστασι τάξης και νοικοκυροσύνης του ελληνικού Λαού το 1938. … Τα ταξί, καθαρά, αραδιασμένα, περιποιημένα, οι σωφέρ … στη θέσι τους' (Kar. 1938b: 236); Kar. 1940a: 557.
[5] Roumanis 1940b: 579.
[6] Roumanis 1940a: 383.

The discussion of Solomos by Kambanis that was analysed in the first part is indicative of the employment of discipline as an aesthetic criterion. Even if Kambanis's approach was rather idiosyncratic, the criterion of discipline was applied to literary and artistic production by several critics. Panayiotopoulos for instance would speak of a shift towards discipline in literature after the chaos that prevailed in that domain following the Great War. He discerned a 'new thirst' for 'pure and disciplined discourse' and argued that 'what concerns collective conscience is the need to discipline internal discourse'.[7] Likewise, Orologas claimed that 'Literary Art seeks after form and, as it tends towards form, is subjected to a certain discipline, while being relieved of nugatory and superfluous elements'.[8] Chatzinis downright rejected Melpo Axioti's novella *Would You Like to Dance, Maria?* precisely on the grounds that it lacked discipline, which alone can produce 'an organised world and an integral work of art'.[9]

Even more conspicuously, Yeoryios Roumanis published an article entitled 'Discipline in literature and the fine arts', whose main argument was that creative writing and artistic production were more than compatible with fascist(ic) regimes. According to the article, these states and art are both intricately linked to discipline, while the 'true' artistic creator has the same goal as any such state, namely to improve and galvanise their people. For Roumanis, 'art and literature presuppose discipline to certain rules and principles, extraordinary concentration of all the Creator's powers'. In addition, artists and writers in authoritarian nationalist regimes

[7] Panayiotopoulos 1939c: 96, 97.
[8] Orologas 1939b: 274. See also section 3.2.
[9] 'Νομίζω μάλιστα, πως όταν, ύστερα από καιρό, θα ζητούμε να συλλάβουμε, αντικειμενικά πια και ιστορικά, το πνεύμα και τις τάσεις της μεσοπολεμικής εικοσαετίας, βιβλία σαν της κ. Αξιώτη θα μας βοηθήσουν να διαπιστώσουμε κυρίως ό,τι είχε πιο ασυνάρτητο, πιο ανεύθυνο, πιο άσκοπο, με όλες τις ενδείξεις της φθοράς και της παρακμής. Η εγκατάλειψη στο ένστικτο και στο υποσυνείδητο, χωρίς προσπάθεια συγκροτήσεως εσωτερικής, χωρίς πειθαρχία, απ' την οποίαν μόνο μπορεί να προκύψει ένας οργανωμένος κόσμος κι' ένα καλλιτέχνημα άρτιο, η αντικατάσταση του μόχθου μ' έναν ύποπτο αυθορμητισμό και με μια πιο ύποπτη έμπνευση, ιδού η χαρακτηριστικότερη τάση της εποχής αυτής … . Αλλά πιστεύω πως έργα σαν το "Θέλετε να χορέψομε Μαρία;" όχι μόνο δεν έχουν αισθητική δικαίωση στο σύνολό τους, αλλά ακόμη πως είναι υποχρέωσή μας να τα αρνηθούμε βασικά, γιατί αλλιώς, και με την ανοχή μονάχα, ανοίγουμε το δρόμο ελεύθερο στην ευκολία και την ασυναρτησία' (Chatzinis 1940d: 160). Chatzinis had negatively reviewed several other publications based on similar criteria, such as Yeoryios A. Markidis's *Στοχασμοί και Σημειώματα* (1939): 'Η έκφραση του κ. Μαρκίδη δεν είναι οργανωμένη· της λείπει η τάξη κι' η πειθαρχία' (Chatzinis 1939d: 253).

have to work within coordinates which are supposedly identical with the limits of true art; when they fail to do so, they are brought back to order by the state.[10]

Similar standards were applied to other arts aside from literature, particularly performative arts. A music review of the 'Athens trio' by Yiorgos Pratsikas maintained that 'homogeneity has not been achieved yet and the personality of every artist is not subjugated enough to the collective'.[11] It was not the employment of such criteria per se that was in any way peculiar to the period, but rather the extent of their diffusion and the dialogue in which they engaged with the political context of the time. Rather expectedly, discipline and group coordination came to constitute the primary aesthetic criterion in the domain of theatre. Melis Nikolaidis, for instance, praised the EON performance of *Penthesilea* for the 'harmonious and disciplined movement of that entire crowd of young actors'.[12]

Theatre in fact occupied a central position in the regime's cultural agenda. The dictator declared his belief early on 'that theatre is in the nature of the Greek. For this reason, I place theatre on the front line of the government's interest'.[13] Metaxas entrusted Kostis Bastias to organise, centralise, and improve Greek theatre. As per the first report of the Directorate of Letters, Theatre, and Fine Arts, the aims of its theatre department were two: '1) The remediation of the Royal Theatre from polyarchy and the establishment of centralised administration in the hands of the General Director and 2) the support and stricter artistic organisation of free theatre'.[14] The second objective entailed the supervision and co-option of non-state theatre companies by the state. It was most characteristically expressed in the official transformation of the leading Greek private theatre organisation into the 'Semi-state Kotopouli Theatre' and the appointment of Bastias as its government commissioner in 1939.[15]

[10] Roumanis 1940a: 383-384.
[11] Pratsikas 1939.
[12] N. 1939.
[13] Metaxas 1936.
[14] [Anon.] 1938z: 238.
[15] See Dimadis 2016: 94-95.

The regime's promotion of theatre served an international and a domestic agenda, both converging on the dictatorship's self-styling as a *Kulturstaat*.[16] On the international level, this translated in the utilisation of the Royal Theatre as a diplomatic tool, as evinced particularly in its 1939 tour in Britain and Germany. On the domestic level, it had the potential to do even more than co-opt artists and intellectuals involved in the Greek theatrical scene. This potential was not as fully realised as in Nazi Germany, whose theatre demonstrated clearly how this art form could be made to serve a totalitarian agenda. As an anonymous article on 'modern German theatre' eloquently put it, 'its aim is not to entertain the audience but to educate it, to teach it, and to prepare the way for a new society. In the hands of the guides of the Third Reich [theatre] has become an excellent propaganda instrument for the domination of the new National Socialist ethics'.[17]

Nonetheless, many significant initiatives were taken in the domain of theatre during Metaxas's rule, usually following Bastias's proposals. These initiatives did not only upgrade theatre itself while enhancing the dictatorship's image as an art patron, but were often in keeping with the regime's national-populist agenda. The regime sponsored 'people's tickets', setting the aim of an interclass theatre for the masses.[18] Furthermore, open-air performances were promoted, annual Ancient Drama Weeks were held since 1936 at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, while 1938 witnessed the first modern use of Epidaurus for theatrical performances.[19]

[16] See below, chapter 10.
[17] [Anon.] 1937g: 1151.
[18] See for instance the passages by Nikolaidis, Terzakis, and Bastias quoted in Dimadis 2016: 98, 100, 173, all three of whom emphasise the low ticket prices and the national, interclass role of Greek theatre. Cf. Metaxas's 1938 statements: 'Πιστεύω απολύτως ότι το θέατρον τότε μόνον θα ζήση και θ' αναπτυχθή όταν γίνη υπόθεσις των μεγάλων λαϊκών μαζών και ουχί μιας περιωρισμένης τάξεως' (Metaxas 1969a: 363).
[19] See Ioannidou 2010: 394-395. Ioannidou also makes a claim with regard to such utilisation of ancient sites which is in accordance with one of the main points of this thesis, namely that the Metaxas regime did not aim at a revival of or return to the past but at an instrumentalisation of national heritage for the creation of a new, modern civilisation and culture with populist and totalitarian implications: 'The use of ancient spaces in this period should not be seen as an attempt to revive the conditions of ancient performance either. It is best understood, I would argue, as part of the movement to use ancient sites in order to promote forms of popular theatre, an ideal shared by authoritarian governments across Europe, including Ioannis Metaxas's para-Fascist dictatorship, in which Bastias held a key position' (Ioannidou 2010: 395). Cf. a later text by Ioannidou, where she attempts to show the compatibility of Wilhelm Leyhausen's choral performances with National Socialist ideology and she argues that '*Sprechchor* as a means to reach back to older dramatic forms signified an attempt to retrieve the essence of great

Within the framework of EON, Lycabettus was used in 1939 as a performance site for the first time ever, hosting the aforementioned performance of *Penthesilea*. Moreover, from 1939 onwards the 'Wagons of Thespis' started touring the country. Pro-regime critics claimed that this was a Greek institution conceived by Bastias.[20] In reality, it did not draw on the ancient practice of Thespis as it did on the Fascist institution of *Carri di Tespi*, which Bastias inspected during his trip to Italy and attempted to copy upon his return to Greece.[21]

Several critics praised the regime's theatre policy und subsumed it under the regime's agenda. The theatre critic and historian Yiannis Sideris emphasised that theatre is a 'legitimate child of the Greek land' that was subsequently 'disseminated throughout the world'. Much like Theologos Nikoloudis in his late-1936 article which included the first postulation of the term 'Third Hellenic Civilisation', Sideris presented the history of theatre as following the trajectory of national/political history. He predicated the 'progress' of theatre exclusively on the support and supervision of state governors.[22] According to Sideris, ancient theatre was sponsored and regulated by the State while in modern Greece it has been predominantly supported by the

poetry for the sake of cultural renewal' (Ioannidou 2013: 331-332). See here, part 4, especially chapter 10 for further analysis of this point.

[20] E.g. 'εκείνο που γίνονταν ως εχτές, στην έξω απ' τας Αθήνας Ελλάδα, απ' την άποψη της Τέχνης, γενικότερα, και ειδικότερα του θεάτρου, ... αυτή η θλιβερή και τόσο ανησυχαστική κατάσταση για το μέλλον μιας φυλής με πλουσιότατη παράδοση, όπως η δική μας φυλή, είναι το σοβαρότερο γενεσιουργό αίτιο της αναγέννησης σήμερα του ελληνικότατου θεσμού των "Αρμάτων Θέσπιδος". ... εξ ολοκλήρου οφείλεται στον Κωστή Μπαστιά, γιατί αυτός και τον εμπνεύστηκε και τον πραγματοποίησε' (Ziogas 1939: 276).

[21] On 25 May 1938, *Πνευματική Ζωή* had reported: 'Ο Γεν. Διευθυντής του Βασ. Θεάτρου κ. Κωστής Μπαστιάς επήγεν στην Ιταλία για την παρακολούθηση και μελέτη των εκεί θεατρικών πραγμάτων' ([Anon.] 1938v). According to Dimadis (2016: 112, footnote 106), the Greek institution relied not only on the Italian *Carri di Tespi* but also on Spanish and German blueprints.

[22] 'ξεκινώντας από τα φτωχά εδάφη της Αττικής, διαδόθηκε σ' όλον τον κόσμο, αν και χωρίς να φτάση ποτέ ώς τα σήμερα τουλάχιστον, σε κείνο το ύψος της πιο απόλυτης τελειότητος όπως τότε. § Από τότε, το θέατρο, αυτό το γνήσιο παιδί της Ελληνικής γης, ακολούθησε τις τύχες της πατρίδας μας κι' όποτε κι' Εκείνη δυστυχούσε, δυστυχούσε κι' αυτό κι' όποτε κι' Εκείνη υψωνότανε, υψωνότανε κι' αυτό. § Κι' άμα ξεχυθήκανε στα χώματά μας βάρβαροι, άγριοι λαοί και το Θέατρο μαζευότανε κι' έσβυνε μέσα στην κοινή πίκρα. Γιατί το χαϊδεμένο αυτό παιδί της Ελληνικής Ιδιοφυίας προτιμά τη γαλήνη … Μόνο κάτω από το θερμό βλέμμα των κυβερνητών προοδεύει το Θέατρο και δίνει μόρφωσι και ευχαρίστησι' (Sideris 1939: 1362). Cf. Nikoloudis 1936 about the parallel fluctuations of artistic and political/national history. For more general information on the significance of this article by Nikoloudis, see below, chapter 10.

'Leader'. Extolling the Royal Theatre's unique achievements in its 1939 European tour, the author presented the progress of Greek theatre as the 'incarnation of the Leader's ideas'.[23]

Angelomatis, who had started his cooperation with Fourth-of-August periodicals with theatre reviews in *To Neon Kratos* before he became a major columnist in *I Neolea*, repeatedly stressed the importance of theatre for the work of national regeneration and re-education that the regime had undertaken. He particularly called for the development of a children's theatre within the framework of EON.[24] As mentioned in the first part, historical dramas by Terzakis and Melas attuned to the regime's agenda. Yet, the play that best encapsulates the imprint of the dictatorship was one intended for children. It was a patriotic drama written by a member of the editorial board of *I Neolea*, Nikos Tsekouras.[25] *The Little Souliots did not die* was first performed at the Kotopouli theatre on 25 March 1939 in the presence of Metaxas and other high-ranking functionaries. It received the EON award in 1940 and continued to be performed at school celebrations for the 25 March in the post-WWII period.[26]

However, the most significant example of a critic that associated theatre with the official ideology is that of Petros Charis. With his regular articles on theatre published in *To Neon Kratos* from spring 1938 to early 1940, Charis essentially assumed the role of the periodical's

[23] 'Στην αρχαίαν εποχή το Θέατρο το βοηθούσε το Κράτος με τους νόμους του, που κανονίζανε με αυστηρότητα το πώς θα εύρισκε τους πόρους του, για να ζήση και να εκτελέση τον προορισμό του. § Στις μέρες μας, περισσότερο από κάθε άλλον Έλληνα Κυβερνήτη, το βοήθησε το Θέατρο και το βοηθάει ο Αρχηγός και μακάρι να μπορέσουμε όλοι οι άνθρωποι του Θεάτρου μας να πλησιάσουμε στους πόθους του και να βοηθήσουμε έτσι και μεις την πρόοδο του πολιτισμού μας, που όρια δεν πρέπει να έχη μέσα στη σκέψι μας. § Αυτές τις μέρες, ενσαρκώνοντας ακριβώς τις ιδέες του Αρχηγού με τους άξιους εργάτες του, μπόρεσε το νέο Ελληνικό Θέατρο, αντιπροσωπευόμενο από το θίασο του "Βασιλικού", να παρουσιάση τις μεγάλες του προόδους στην Αγγλία και στη Γερμανία μ' έναν τρόπο αλήθεια πρωτοφανή, που άλλοτε δεν στάθηκε ικανό κανένα μικρό έθνος να επιδείξη' (Sideris 1939: 1363).

[24] 'θα ήθελα να επιστήσω την προσοχή της Εθνικής Οργανώσεως Νεολαίας, γιατί πιστεύω πως η αποστολή του θεάτρου στην αναμόρφωσι ή την ψυχική διαμόρφωσι ενός λαού έχει πρωταρχική αξία. Το θέατρο μιλά στην ψυχή μεγάλων και μικρών και μπορούμε να το δεχθούμε σαν γεγονός μη επιδεχόμενο διάψευσι ότι περισσότερο θα μιλά στην ψυχή των μικρών, αφού τόσο μιλά στην ψυχή των μεγάλων' (A. 1939: 1263). It is rather curious that Angelomatis extended such an appeal to EON from the very columns of the organisation's official periodical.

[25] Nikos Tsekouras (1911-2009) was a theatre writer and journalist who joined EAM during the Occupation and was associated with the Left in the post-WWII period. About the fact that he was a member of the editorial board of EON's periodical see Panopoulou & Tsiknakis 1992: 166.

[26] See Petrakis 2006: 146-147.

theatre critic.[27] In his contributions discipline was projected as the primary aesthetic criterion and the foremost quality of both the performances and the organisation of Greek theatre at the time. Charis even applied terms associated with the dictatorship to the theatrical field that was taking shape under Metaxas, such as 'μεταβολή' and 'νέα τάξη πραγμάτων'.[28]

Charis's contributions to *To Neon Kratos* indicate that the values of disciplined and coordinated collectives under the guidance of a leader were endorsed as main standards of theatre criticism at the time. A play's success was often judged based on the degree of synchronisation and uniform movement that secondary characters (some sort of chorus) displayed, while directors were presented as leaders and paedagogues of the collective. In his review of *Penthesilea* Charis praised the director for the way in which he coordinated the young and amateur actors. The focus, as usual, was on the disciplined and organised way in which groups acted on stage.[29] Moreover, in his last contribution to *To Neon Kratos* Charis discussed the factors that contributed to the success of a theatre company, pointing to direction and the necessity for a 'worthy leader'.[30]

This predilection for large, coordinated masses characterised political spectacles as well. Critics perceived, advertised, and –most crucially– evaluated public celebrations and

[27] There had only been four contributions on current theatrical activity before that: two by Christos Angelomatis and two by Dionysios Kokkinos.

[28] Some indicative examples are the following: 'να γυρίσω σε ό,τι δίνει τη σφραγίδα του στη θεατρική μας κίνηση: στο οργανωτικό πνεύμα που θέλει να συγκεντρώση καθετί αξιόλογο και να το υποβάλη σε αυστηρή πειθαρχία. Ασφαλώς, η προσπάθεια αυτή είναι σταθμός στο ελληνικό θέατρο. Αλλά και η προϋπόθεση δημιουργίας θεατρικής παραδόσεως' (Charis 1939b: 1666); 'τα λάθη ή οι αδυναμίες των μονάδων σκεπάζονται, ως ένα σημείο τουλάχιστον, από το οργανωμένο σύνολο. Κάποιος ρυθμός, φανερός σε κάθε εμφάνιση της κρατικής και ημικρατικής σκηνής, τείνει ν' απλωθή και να επικρατήση και στους άλλους θιάσους. Κάποια μεταβολή γίνεται στο ελληνικό θέατρο' (Charis 1939c: 309); 'αρχίζει να παγιώνη μια νέα τάξη πραγμάτων και να πλησιάζει τον κρατικό θεατρικό οργανισμό μας στον αληθινό προορισμό του' (Charis 1940a: 346). About the terms 'νέα τάξη πραγμάτων' and 'μεταβολή' in Metaxist discourse see below, sections 9.1 and 9.3 respectively. These and other formulaic expressions such as those referring to 'the previous one hundred years' seem to have constituted a code for sanctioning the dictatorship and its real or alleged achievements in juxtaposition to the pre-Metaxas era. See also the characteristic example of a contribution to *Νέα Εστία* by a vocal pro-Metaxas writer, Miltiadis Malakasis, regarding the press. Metaxas or the Fourth-of-August regime is not mentioned, but the distinction between the 'old press' of 'few years ago' and 'today's press', between poison and purity, between the didactic and recreational on the one hand and the corrupting and distressing on the other, along with the repeated use of the word 'μεταβολή' (seven times in a text less than two pages long) makes this an indirect but clear praise of the dictatorship for the change it has supposedly effected in the press (Malakasis 1940).

[29] Charis 1939d: 567.

[30] Charis 1940a: 346.

festivals staged by the regime as aesthetic phenomena. The aesthetic framing of such events legitimated both their discussion by critics (who sometimes explicitly claimed to be away from politicking) and their being staged in the first place. Instead of verbose manifestations of dictatorial power, they were presented to the readership as quasi-artistic/cultural expressions of the nation or one of its constituents (e.g. the peasantry, the refugee communities or the youth). The *Führerprinzip* is also applied here, as the leader is in a way the mastermind and invisible hand behind the mass spectacle performed in front of the eyes of the nation. While the crowd is at best a secondary participant in the spectacle, the dictator, his daughter or more generally EON officials are presented as the wise directors who actively but silently supervise the outcome of their directorship.

In conclusion, order, discipline, and coordination were crucial components of Metaxist discourse and were extended beyond the sphere of politics and social arrangements. It is particularly interesting in the context of this thesis that the desiderata of discipline and coordination were applied to literature and the arts as well, and that ultimately the theatricalisation of politics under Metaxas was correlative to the politicisation of theatre.

7.2. Absolutism and violence

Apart from the image of the unified, disciplined, rejuvenated, and purified nation, another ultimate fascistic spectacle was that of the 'national revolution', which virtually every exponent of fascism talked about after reaching power. Yet the revolution meant selective violence against the enemies of the nation *before* and in the early period *after* being handed over state power by traditional elites and institutional figures: King Victor Emmanuel III in Italy, President Paul von Hindenburg in Germany, King George II in Greece. No actual revolution took place upon the ascendance to power. Even the 'March on Rome' has been labelled by a major

historian of fascism as 'a gigantic bluff that worked'.[31] The violence unleashed on the way to Fascism's and Nazism's consolidation of power was ultimately aestheticised even through secular rituals and political spectacles, such as the *Mostra di rivoluzione fascista,* which was held in 1932 to mark the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome.

Several political movements and historical events or processes that are known today or were (self-)labelled at the time of their occurrence as revolutions were combined with or eventually led to civil war. The Fourth-of-August regime appropriated the term revolution in the construction of its own public image, but that was allegedly a revolution carried out from above in order to prevent civil war. However, Metaxas's dictatorship was first presented as a counter-revolution before-the-fact and then as a nationalist palingenetic revolution. The more the communist threat was removed from the horizon, the more official discourse focused on the regime's palingenetic vision. The longer communists and political dissidents were away from public space, the more the dictatorship's humanist pretensions were reinforced, the larger the number of intellectuals who openly came out in favour of its cultural and national agenda.

It has been argued that 'the most remarkable feature of the fascist *Weltanschauung* … consists in the essentially fluid and dynamic conception of life and the world', which can be seen as the premise of the pursuit of a sort of 'permanent revolution' on the part of the Fascist regime.[32] The Greek dictatorship also projected to some degree an obscure notion of permanent revolution, with its constitutional experts presenting it as an ongoing and enduring revolution.[33] Kambanis's statements on the regime's 'constant readjustments' which will be further

[31] Paxton 2004: 90. In reality, Mussolini stayed in Milan throughout the Blackshirts' attempt to converge in on Rome and only arrived there by train three days after the King appointed him Prime Minister for fear of large-scale bloodshed.
[32] O'Sullivan 1983: 138.
[33] Koumaros & Mantzoufas 1938.

discussed in chapter nine may be set against this backdrop.[34] The same could apply even to several calls by intellectuals to conform to the needs of the 'present' or of 'life'.[35]

Already in his first article in *To Neon Kratos* Kambanis had maintained that 'the violence of the State has worked miracles. For State violence has been the expression of a social ideal: Of class collaboration. Of social hierarchisation. Of the coarticulation of productive elements'.[36] This line of argument is most likely drawn from Georges Sorel. This is not brutal, unjust violence, but 'aestheticised violence' at the service of an ideal. It also aspires at the collaboration of the 'productive elements' of society, like Sorel's recalibration of his reflections on violence during his co-operation with the circle of *Action Française*.[37]

Beside aestheticisation, attempts to legitimise the violence of the New State were contaminated with religious discourse, with miracles and blessings being part of the mix. A 1938 article by Kambanis is indicative in this respect. The violence of the dictatorship is effectually presented as a combination of *law-preserving* and *law-making violence*.[38] On the one hand, it is violence aimed at saving the bourgeois regime and neutralising subversive threats, such as that coming from communism or the labour movement, but also violence presented by its perpetrators as lawful, typically following the law and intended to protect against a supposed communist uprising. Here Kambanis praised Fourth-August violence on the basis of the results it delivered in the areas of social stability and state security (further down on the same page he calls it 'the State of rapid realisations').

On the other hand, like every successful revolution, it was supposed to be establishing a new system of societal arrangements: one where 'social peace' prevails. Discussing state violence while being aware of the question of its legitimacy, Kambanis even resorted to legal

[34] See section 9.2.
[35] E.g. Spandonidis 1940, Tomadakis 1940.
[36] Kambanis 1937b: 16.
[37] See Antliff 2007.
[38] Terms borrowed from Walter Benjamin's 'Critique of violence'. See Benjamin 1986: 277-300.

jargon in order to justify it: 'Without the violence of the 4th of August Greece would have been res nullius today'.[39] Perhaps echoing the meaning of 'Κράτος' in ancient Greek (which he knew well, as he had translated several classical works), Kambanis essentially identified state and violence. In that same article he characteristically exclaimed: 'Either the State is able to muzzle the paranoiac or self-serving enemies of national interests, or it is no State'.[40]

While some pro-regime cultural operators labelled the dictatorship as a 'national' or 'spiritual revolution', it is also interesting that they described it as an 'uprising from above'.[41] The paradox ostensibly embedded in such a concept could be lifted if one analyses the function of revolution. Normally, revolutions come from below and are aimed against the state. This is usually a response to state violence inflicting extensive harm on the commons, either in the form of 'subjective' (e.g. physical violence perpetrated by those staffing the regime's security apparatus) or 'objective' violence (e.g. the proletarisation of the masses or the engineering of inequality).[42] The ultimate goal of an uprising from below could thus be a top-down redistribution of power or the overturning of the socioeconomic system.

On the contrary, an uprising from above could be seen as an attempt at preserving the current socioeconomic system, reproducing the symbolic order that has spawned from it, and either halting the process towards top-down redistribution or effecting a bottom-up redistribution of power. Whereas an uprising from below would probably entail demands for shifting wealth and power from the elites to the commons by means of opposition to the state, an uprising from above could involve further transfer of power and wealth to the elites and a more overt appropriation of the state. A 'revolution from above' can moreover be understood as 'a revolution to prevent popular revolution from below. It works on the principle that a reform

[39] Kambanis 1938b: 261.
[40] Kambanis 1938b: 264. It is worth noting that Kambanis had openly called for 'regenerative' or 'ordering' violence in the past against the groups that he saw as inimical to national fulfilment: the Venizelists in the early 1920s (see Marketos 2006), the language purists in the early 1930s (see here chapter 5).
[41] E.g. K. 1938: 47, Kambanis 1937b: 16.
[42] See Žižek 2008.

given is always better than a reform taken, forced or won. Popular demands are met, but in such a way as to weaken claims for further demands.'[43]

Much more than lionising the punitive or harsh face of state control, pro-Metaxas intellectuals eulogised the state's paternal(istic) face. Concentration of power was normalised as something that allowed the government to take quick and decisive action to remedy outstanding problems. By positing a link between the right(eous)ness of particular requests and proposals made by intellectuals and the indubitability of the regime's positive response, the dictatorship was endowed with the aura of a peculiar *Rechtsstaat*. The function of the state was not premised on respecting civil rights but on imposing what was 'just'. The justice of a cause was usually substantiated based on its alleged benefit to the nation. For several cultural operators, this naturally coincided with protectionist measures in favour of national literature and art and for the extension of state patronage in the cultural sphere. Thus, the New State itself was seen as a 'patron of letters and arts' and was attributed paternal features. These themes were present in the image-making of the head of the government, creator of the New State, and national 'Leader', Ioannis Metaxas, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

The normalisation or even praise of authoritarianism and strong central power that the new regime stood for was advanced by some cultural operators very early on following the 4th-August coup. This stance is witnessed already in the first issue of *Pnevmatiki Zoi*, a periodical which, as we have seen, continuously alleged that it had no relation to politics and no intention to politick. Therein one finds for instance a note requesting that printing paper for literary books be exempted from duties. The note includes the following characteristic statement: 'The demand is so rightful that we believe the Government will satisfy it with the determination and the speed of action afforded by the power it has in its hands'.[44] This motif of concentration of

[43] This is in reference to Matthew Arnold's cultural and educational proposals found in Storey 2015: 22, but it is rather fitting for the discussion here.
[44] [Anon.] 1936a.

power in the dictatorship's or, more often, the dictator's hands as something positive was in fact quite common, as were references to Metaxas's 'strong hands' that had assumed full power.[45]

In sum, state violence, authoritarianism, and the regime's centralising and absolutist drive were endowed with legitimacy in the discourse of Metaxist intellectuals. This was mostly achieved through the projection of an image of the dictatorship as a righteous revolution conducive of national fulfilment and realignment with the needs of the nation.

CONCLUSION

The discussion in this chapter has delineated the ways in which authority, discipline, and force were not just tolerated but were turned into positive features in the discourse of pro-regime cultural operators. Order and centralisation were seen as political values, while discipline and coordination were viewed as aesthetic standards as well. One of the most significant points that have emerged from this analysis is that the dictatorship was also depicted as a revolution whose violence was justified on the basis of its objectives and outcomes. Another one is that the interest in disciplined and coordinated group action as an aesthetic phenomenon overlaps politics and theatre at the time, to the point that it is difficult to discern whether such theatrical plays were enjoyed because they recall political rituals or parades, marches, and political celebrations were enjoyed mainly as aesthetic spectacles.

[45] E.g. Kar. 1938b: 236, Kar. 1940a: 557.

- CHAPTER 8 -

Hierarchy and elitism

Whereas in Germany (like in Italy), there had to be a 'transition from the image of Party leader to that of supreme national leader',[1] Metaxas had to build his image as the national leader on what was virtually a vacuum. Even if Ioannis Metaxas was indeed a party leader before 1936 and he had been considered amongst the most likely candidates for the establishment of a personal dictatorship, his appeal and public image did not seem to transcend the level of traditional small party politicians.[2] Except perhaps for a short period in the 1920s, when he appeared as a likely leader of the anti-Venizelist camp and his party came third in the elections, with more than 70 MPs, his following was not considerable.[3] In addition, although the organisation and leadership of the first proto-fascist, paramilitary organisation in Greece has been attributed to Metaxas, he had no *squadristi* or other forms of paramilitary groups at his disposal in the 1930s, nor did he seem too intent on acquiring any.[4]

While the percentages of *Eleftherofrones* did not enable Metaxas to aspire at a mass movement, the former General was also quite old in comparison to his Italian and German counterparts and his physique was rather far from what could be called 'awe-inspiring'.[5] However, even if Metaxas had not been able to galvanise the masses before his ascension to power, he could take advantage of a long tradition of personality cult in Greek politics and of models provided by other European dictatorships.

[1] Kershaw 1987: 5.
[2] See Marketos 2006.
[3] See Benos 2009.
[4] See Marketos 2006, Mavrogordatos 2017.
[5] See Angelis 2006: 194.

Albeit not in the legal sense it assumed in Nazi Germany, the leader principle was a characteristic of the Metaxas dictatorship. It was manifested in the form of an ideology based on belief in charismatic leadership and the need for the many to subsume themselves under a leader that is by nature or providence 'destined' to lead. This ideology was expressed through both discourse and political practice. The dictator had proclaimed in his speeches that in whichever collective endeavour or structure they find themselves in, the many should wilfully and obediently submit themselves to the leadership of the 'best' amongst them.[6] Such statements fed into the concentration of several leadership posts to a few people, as manifested in Metaxas's own assumption of multiple ministries, in the strictly hierarchical structure of EON where Metaxas himself was the supreme leader and his daughter Loukia Mantzoufa the leader of the female sector, and in the assignment of multiple directorial posts to Kostis Bastias.

This chapter is made up of two sections. The first one touches upon the hierarchical and elitist conceptions that underpinned dictatorial ideology and the discourse of its supporters amongst the intelligentsia. The focus of the chapter is on the second section, which deals with the capstone of the regime's hierarchical design, namely the leader principle.

8.1. HIERARCHY AND MYSTIFICATION OF ELITES

Hierarchy is a concept directly associated with implicit or explicit forms of obedience, and thus with the notions of discipline and order that were discussed in the previous chapter. It is moreover linked to inequality, a condition presented as natural in Metaxist discourse. In fact, the dictatorship posited hierarchy as an all-encompassing principle of life.[7] Additionally, the hierarchical vision of the dictatorship had a dialectical relationship with the legitimation of the elites' takeover of the state that was associated with the concept of 'revolution' in the previous

[6] E.g. 'Και όταν δεν έχετε κανένα να σας οδηγήση, να πειθαρχήτε εις τον καλλίτερον από σας. Πρέπει να το μάθετε αυτό το πράγμα, διότι μέσα εις την ζωήν σας θα πρέπη πάντοτε να πειθαρχήτε σε κάποιον όπως και κάποιοι άλλοι θα πειθαρχούν σε σας για να πάη εμπρός η κοινωνία' (Metaxas 1969b: 66).
[7] See e.g. Kambanis 1939: 129.

chapter. There was an attempt to present the regime as an 'aristocracy qua meritocracy', an oligarchy of the charismatic few who are the chosen ones for the guidance of the people and the management of the state that represents the organised expression of the nation. In keeping with this elitist maxim, the ruling cadres could claim that their intervention was not meant at overturning the state, as an uprising from below would threat to do, but rather at saving the 'bourgeois regime' from itself.

The mystification of elites is part of a hierarchical conception of society, of the idea that aristocracy equals meritocracy. Here I will focus on a particular debate related to literature which showcases the circulation of this view. In a 1937 editorial, Nikolaidis pitched the idea for the state-wide establishment of People's Libraries that would make 'the good Greek book' available to the public. He claimed that the selection of books 'would not be difficult' and would merely have to be entrusted to a specialised committee.[8] Proposals such as this were repeatedly put forward during the Metaxas years and probably conduced to the eventual decision of the government for the establishment of an 'Organisation of Literary Books' in 1940 – something that was in all likelihood not materialised due to the eruption of the war.[9] What is relevant for the discussion here is that the above passage manifests an uncritical belief in the abilities of specialised elites. Such elites are considered as being able to easily distinguish between books that are to be read by the People and those that are to be discarded. In this context, People's Libraries essentially become depositories of the national canon, while the capacity of regulatory bodies is mystified.

For Nikolaidis there seems to exist a clearly defined, quasi-ontological category of 'good' Greek books. What makes these books 'good' or based on which criteria is a specialised

[8] 'Οι Βιβλιοθήκες θα σώσουν και το **καλό** Ελληνικό βιβλίο, που όσο πάει παραγκωνίζεται πιο πολύ, εκτοπίζεται, χάνεται. … Αυτό το βιβλίο θα καταφύγη στις Λαϊκές Βιβλιοθήκες. Η επιλογή δεν είναι δύσκολη. Η Εταιρία Λογοτεχνών ή μια ειδική Επιτροπή θα μπορούσε να επιφορτισθή με την εκλογή των βιβλίων που θα είναι κατάλληλα, αλλά και **υποχρεωτικά**, για τις Βιβλιοθήκες' (Nikolaidis 1937a).
[9] Myrivilis refers to the preparation that had been made for this in an August 1940 article (Myrivilis 1940h).

body able to make such a selection is not problematised. On the contrary, Nikolaidis wants the inclusion of the selected books to be 'compulsory' for every People's Library, thus promoting the idea of a centrally controlled literary field and book market. To allow or deny entrance to the 'Republic of letters' used to be considered as the critic's primary task and was to be practiced through the public act of criticism.[10] Here Nikolaidis envisions a dominion of letters where the critical act is conducted behind closed doors by the members of a literary elite, while excluding or endorsing texts and authors in a much more direct and absolute manner than critical writing. Quite significantly, Nikolaidis would probably be himself a member of the regulatory body, as he had been for years the secretary of the Writers Association, he had served as a member of the jury in several literary competitions and awards, and had established close connections with the regime, as evinced later through his regular column in *I Neolea* and his broadcasts in the state-controlled radio.

In a later editorial Nikolaidis clarified that his attack against 'bad books' was intended primarily for pulp fiction rather than the early writings of aspiring literati.[11] Nikolaidis's editorials on the question of Greek literary books inaugurated a prolific discussion in the Greek press with a plethora of relevant articles by intellectuals and writers. Passages from some of these texts were reprinted in several issues of *Pnevmatiki Zoi* along with letters sent to the editor. One such letter, written by Marietta Eptanisia, proposed that Greece follow the example of Mussolini's regime in book policy, 'whose brilliant and incredible results I saw with my own eyes in Italy'.[12] Eptanisia thus presented government support as a prerequisite for the promotion of 'good books', claiming that Metaxas's bibliophily renders such a development more than possible.[13]

[10]See Zionkowsi 1990.
[11] Nikolaidis 1937d: 148.
[12] Eptanisia 1937: 155.
[13] 'χρειάζεται το καλό βιβλίο μια υποστήριξη επίσημη από την Κυβέρνηση, ένα ευσυνείδητο ξεδιάλεγμα από το κακό … Από τον κ. Μεταξά, που είχα την ευτυχία πολλές φορές προσωπικά να εχτιμήσω την αγάπη του στο βιβλίο, πρέπει να περιμένουμε και αυτό χωρίς αμφιβολία' (Eptanisia 1937: 156).

Another letter, by Nikolaos Laskaris, in effect called for preventive censorship and the recommended solution seems to have been a further model and source of influence for Nikolaidis's proposal in later years for a state-funded organisation that would be responsible for the selection and publication of 'good' Greek literature, which would then have to be acquired by every public library in the country.[14] In subsequent issues, Nikolaidis dismissed such measures as 'illiberal and depressive', while he also expressed his reluctance vis-a-vis the newly-established School Textbook Publishing Organisation on the grounds of its centralising character.[15]

However, in 1939 Nikolaidis would come to argue for the establishment of a regulating institution with the jurisdiction to select the 'good' books that were to be published. He envisaged an elite committee that would promote some books and authors while side-lining others, by selecting the books to be published by a state-funded literary book organisation (presumably inspired after the creation of the state organisation of school books). This was perhaps due to increased commitment to the New State and faith in its interventionism, but it shows in any case that Nikolaidis gradually supported 'centralising systems' in parallel to the regime's progression towards totalitarianism.

In conclusion, the uncritical belief in the ability of elites to provide simple solutions could be combined with ever more hierarchised and centralising frameworks, ultimately leading to attempts at regulating the book market in a totalitarian direction. In contrast, the ability

[14] 'Δια να διορθωθή λοιπόν το κακό, πρέπει δια πάσης θυσίας να λείψουν τα κακά βιβλία, τα οποία επλημμύρησαν **τα ράφια** των βιβλιοπωλείων ανακατεμμένα με τα λίγα καλά βιβλία … . Νομίζω ότι αυτό είναι δουλειά της Κυβερνήσεως, η οποία πρέπει να λάβη μέτρα και για τα κακά βιβλία, όπως έλαβε και για τα κομμουνιστικά. Ας συστήση μίαν επιτροπήν από σοβαρούς ανθρώπους των γραμμάτων και προ πάντων **ευσυνείδητου**ς (τονίζω την λέξιν), εις τους οποίους να υποβάλλεται κάθε βιβλίον που πρόκειται να εκδοθή και ν' αποφαίνεται εάν είναι άξιον εκδόσεως ή όχι' (Laskaris 1937: 172).

[15] 'δεν συμφωνώ με κείνους που για τη θεραπεία του κακού ζητούν προληπτικόν έλεγχο στα εκδιδόμενα βιβλία από μιαν επίσημη κριτική Επιτροπή, που να μπορή ν' απαγορεύη την έκδοση των βιβλίων που κατά τη γνώμη της δεν είναι καλά. Ένα τέτοιο μέτρο, εκτός που θα είναι ανελεύθερο και καταθλιπτικό, θα είναι συγχρόνως κι' επικίνδυνο, γιατί θα μπορούσε μια σφαλερή κι' άδικη γνώμη της Επιτροπής να καταδικάση και ν' αφανίση ταλέντα δυνατής μελλοντικής εξελίξεως, ενώ από την άλλη θα βάραινε και θα πίεζε αποπνικτικά κι' αποστειρωτικά τη γενική πνευματική μας παραγωγή' (Nikolaidis 1937e: 205); 'Δεν είμαστε φίλοι των συγκεντρωτικών συστημάτων· αλλά αφού, σύμφωνα με το Νόμο, η συγγραφή των βιβλίων θα γίνεται κατόπιν διαγωνισμού των Ελλήνων συγγραφέων και η όλη εργασία των εκδόσεων θα είναι συστηματικώτερη και οικονομικώτερη, έχουμε την πεποί[θ]ηση ότι μια καλή και πλήρης εφαρμογή του Οργανισμού, με την πλατειά και πολύπλευρη έννοια που του δίνει ο Νόμος, θα ωφελήση σοβαρά και ριζικά τη σχολική και λαϊκή μόρφωση' ([Anon.] 1937i).

of literary critics and 'specialists' to provide unbiased judgement was challenged in the preliminary discussions regarding the state awards that were legislated by the last Venizelos government.[16]

8.2. THE LEADER PRINCIPLE

In Germany, 'the constructed "Hitler myth" was indispensable in its integrative function, firstly as a counter to the strong centrifugal forces within the Nazi Movement itself, and secondly in establishing a massive basis of consensus among the German people for those aims and policies identifiable with the Führer'.[17] Indeed, it seems to lie at the core of the Nazi discursive universe, and the same can be said to an extent about the cult of the *Duce* in Italy. However, the fact that the 4th-August regime lacked a mass movement did not deter Metaxas from attempting to imprint the leader principle into the Greek populace and encourage his own cult. The doctrine was not constitutionalised or institutionalised officially, but it was expressed at least in two different contexts: One was the context of the 'anthropological tradition of the hero's cult' and another one the portrayal of the New State as 'the objectified substance of Ioannis Metaxas's "political genius"'.[18]

It has been argued that one should look for explanations of Hitler's adulation by the masses 'in those who adored him, rather than in the leader himself'.[19] Similarly, a review of the pre-1936 Greek political life reveals that by the early twentieth-century a tradition of personality cult was already in place and could actually be seen as deeply entrenched in Greek politics. The first governor of the Greek state was greeted as a saviour coming from abroad, and similar were the responses to several kings (Otto in 1832, George I in 1864, Constantine I

[16] See Niaros 2017: 305-306.
[17] Kershaw 1987: 4.
[18] Kokkinos n.d.: 76.
[19] Mason 2016: 207.

in 1920, and George II in 1935). This was in dialogue with pseudo-religious established mental schemes about 'Chosen Ones', 'God-sent saviours' etc.

A quasi-religious element had barely been absent from modern Greek politics, since notions of 'destiny' and '(divine) providence' were part and parcel of established political discourse, particularly in the nineteenth century.[20] This characterised to some extent even the premiers most associated with liberalism and modernisation. A very mild but famous example is Charilaos Trikoupis's proverbial phrase 'Greece is destined to live and shall live', whereby the political leader mixed the oratorical with the oracular, assuming in a way the archetypal role of the *propheta*. The phrase was also adopted later by Venizelists and used as a slogan at least as late as 1920, when it appeared in electoral posters.[21]

Moreover, most of the Greek parties since the very foundation of the Kingdom of Greece were leader-centred. Trikoupis's Modernist Party, which was purportedly relying on the blueprints of western principle-oriented parties and mainly on British liberalism, has been characterised as transitional, since, despite its modernising aspirations, it still largely fell into the category of *prosopopayi kommata*. The Party of the Liberals, often branded the first of a host of 'principle parties' in Greece, was ironically one of the most leader-centred in Greek history. [22] Its founder, Eleftherios Venizelos, is still an exceptionally venerated politician in Greece and many liberal circles and bourgeois politicians either centred round him or attempted to capitalise on his legacy.[23]

Apart from conforming to the pattern of the 'saviour figure coming from abroad', Venizelos was almost deified in the 1910s for being the Premier of the 'Doubling of Greece',

[20] See Hering 2004a.
[21] See for instance Stouraiti & Kazamias 2010: 31, illustration 1.3. The styling of the leader as a prophet in the context of the Metaxas regime is discussed in the next chapter.
[22] Mazower (1992: 885) has maintained that Venizelos's rise has to be understood as 'the expression of a new more confident nationalism, which reinforced the personality-centred quality of Greek politics'.
[23] See Mavrogordatos 1983. Some examples indicative of this veneration are the facts that Athens' new airport that opened in the early 2000s bears his name, whereas his statue decorates the central square of the second largest city in Greece, Thessaloniki.

which practically also meant that his point of departure (Crete) ceased to be part of 'abroad' for Greece.[24] So was King Constantine, who had shrewdly chosen to exercise the nominal right granted to him by the Greek constitution to lead the army in its march northwards during the Balkan Wars.[25] In the second decade of the twentieth century, personality cult was alive and kicking in Greece, with not just one, but two 'heroic' figures to choose from. That was the beginning of the 'National Schism', which afflicted the Greek political scene well beyond the Great War and which the dictatorship boasted of putting an end to.

As will be further demonstrated in the next chapter, Messianic discourse was employed in representations of Metaxas. Aside from the tradition of personality cult that was just discussed, political Messianism can also be associated with a widespread sentiment in the 1930s that a dictatorship was imminent or even necessary. The way had been paved by numerous coup attempts in the interwar years, the most significant ones being the ones of 1922, 1923, 1925, 1933, and 1935. At the same time, there were debates in the press or even at the university on the question of whether parliamentarianism or dictatorship was a better political system.[26]

It is relevant for the discussion here that the image of Metaxas as of quasi-divine origin was furthered through the advertisement of his superhuman will and stamina.[27] He was not just a being with superior abilities, but he sacrificed these abilities at the altar of the community. It is interesting for the analysis of temporal alongside religious discourse in the next chapter that it was not so much spatial concepts that prevailed in the texts praising Metaxas as a kind of divinely ordained *Übermensch*, who both *willed* and *was fated* to assume the leadership of the nation. There were some mentions of him assuming control of the state in his 'στιβαρά χέρια', which are rather bizarre given Metaxas's physique and age when he rose to power. Yet, it was not his physical abilities that he offered to the nation. It was the spiritual and temporal aspects

[24] See Mazower 1992.
[25] See Alivizatos 1983.
[26] See Boyiatzis 2012.
[27] Nikoloudis 1937 spoke of 'divine providence'.

of his supposed self-sacrifice for the sake of the nation that were emphasised: his enlightened and inspired thought, his unbending faith, and most of all the superhuman amount of time devoted to his service to the nation.

As mentioned in chapter two, one of the purported links between Metaxas and Kapodistrias is that premised on 'enlightened despotism'. A transformed version of 'Enlightenment despotism' was actually projected as a component of the leader principle in the Fourth-of-August regime and could be seen as part of the 'myth of the perfect leader'.[28] The periodicals discussed in this thesis and particularly *Pnevmatiki Zoi* abound with relevant descriptions of Metaxas and other high-ranking functionaries of the regime, often employing words related to 'light' and 'illumination' or 'enlightenment'.[29]

The most typical attributes of the myth of the perfect leader, however, were his genius, infallibility, industriousness, and indefatigability. Such claims were common amongst pro-regime intellectuals, the most distinctive case being that of an encomium to Metaxas by Marietta Eptanisia published in *Olimpo* on the occasion of the third coup anniversary. Eptanisia depicted Metaxas as a Great Man who has been successful in every undertaking, has deep knowledge of every subject, supervises everything, and 'works daily eighteen to twenty hours'.[30]

Perhaps the principal component of this myth, however, is that the leader constitutes the 'embodiment of national essence'.[31] Leading the nation almost equals being the nation, as the leader is presented as the incarnation of the national psyche, the nation's will or the nation itself. Karaiskaki identified Greece and Metaxas explicitly already in the title of a note in *I Neolea*. The slogan was slightly altered in the text, with the possessive pronoun modifying

[28] A phrase borrowed from Angelis 2006: 195.
[29] For example, Metaxas is characterised 'Ο φιλόσοφος, ο μεστός και φωτισμένος' (Roumanis 1940b: 578-579), who has 'φωτισμένους συνεργάτες' (Nikolaidis 1938b), such as Theologos Nikoloudis, that 'φωτισμένο και πολιτισμένο άνθρωπο' (Nikolaidis 1938e), while his government in general is said to have 'φωτισμένη αντίληψη' (Nikolaidis 1937b).
[30] Eptanisia 1939: II-IV (the quotation is from p. III). Some further examples are 'Σήμερον υπάρχει Κυβερνήτης οδηγός, αρχηγός εργασίας και χαλκέντερος εργάτης ο ίδιος' (Kambanis 1938b: 263) and 'έπρεπε να υπάρχη η ικανότης και η φυσική ευφυία του Αρχηγού δια να καλύπτεται η Ελληνική γυμνότης' (A. 1940a).
[31] Angelis 2006: 195.

Greece and not the Leader ('Γιατί η Ελλάδα μας είναι ο Αρχηγός και ο Αρχηγός είναι η Ελλάδα μας'), but remains as hollow as the title.[32] This slogan was unequivocally drawn from Rudolf Hess's notorious phrase 'Die Partei ist Hitler. Hitler aber ist Deutschland wie Deutschland Hitler ist'.

The final feature of Metaxist discourse on leadership is what could be called a nexus of leadership, paedagogy, and art. Multidirectional threads wove this web of semantic interactions and identifications. The first pair to be explored is that of leadership and paedagogics, which is linked to the dictator's styling as the 'father of the nation'. Some intellectuals indirectly pointed to Metaxas's fatherly attributes, by claiming for instance that 'the Leader … knows better than anyone how to read, to listen to, and to feel the youth's soul'.[33] Others were more explicit, such as Karaiskaki who called the dictator 'our good Father'.[34] In fact, Karaiskaki did not only disseminate the myth of Metaxas as the father of the nation or at least of the Greek youth but addressed the dictator in her personal communication with him as if she believed in that myth herself. In a letter she had sent to Metaxas prior to their meeting that she described in a 1940 text in *I Neolea*, Karaiskaki effectively tried to prove that she loved the dictator as a father and asked for a salaried post as a demonstration of his paternal affection.[35]

The presentation of the leader as a paedagogue was a common feature of political forces from the far Left to fascism, which posited the leader as a 'teacher of ideology', as the 'teacher-leader'.[36] Pro-regime intellectuals expressed this sentiment by using appellations such as 'the

[32] Kar., S. 1938a.
[33] Nikolaidis 1940c.
[34] Kar. 1940a: 557.
[35] 'Αν Σου το αναφέρω αυτό σεβαστέ μου και αγαπητέ μου Αρχηγέ είναι γιατί αληθινά Σε νοιώθω σαν πατέρα, γιατί από πριν Σ' αγαπούσα' (GAK Metaxas F43 0118), 'Όμως Εσένα ας το πω, Αρχηγέ και Πατέρα μου, για να μπορέσω να εργασθώ, για να μπορέσω να χρησιμοποιήσω τις γνώσεις μου και να ξεδιπλώσω τις ικανότητές μου χρειάζομαι μια δυνατότητα. § Εσύ μονάχα με το φωτεινό Σου νου και με τη πλατειά Σου για όλους μας καλωσύνη ξέρεις, ότι τότε προοδεύει Λαός και άτομο όταν δοθεί στον κατάλληλο άνθρωπο η κατάλληλη θέση. Μονάχα Εσύ…' (GAK Metaxas F43 0120). Karaiskaki's letter to Metaxas is dated 2.1.1940 while her contribution to *H Νεολαία* presenting her recent encounter with Metaxas was published on 3 February 1940.
[36] See Kayioglou 2014: 108.

Leader and national paedagogue' and 'our great Guide, our great Teacher'.[37] Moreover, the leader was presented as teaching not just through his words and the policies he enacts but also through his example.[38] The image of Metaxas as a teacher was consolidated through his assumption of the Ministry of Education in late 1938, while the interrelation of leadership and paedagogics was reinforced by the emphasis that pro-regime periodicals and especially *Pnevmatiki Zoi* laid on the role of teachers as leaders.[39]

The most significant conceptual pair was that of leadership and art. Interwar dictators procured legitimacy from their self-styling as sponsors of art and creators of national culture, and Metaxas was characteristically labelled as a 'patron of letters and arts'. While Mussolini was also a writer and Hitler had been a painter who even helped design the Volkswagen Beetle and architectural plans, Metaxas only projected his inner kinship with artists.[40] Alongside its pseudo-religious implications, the view of leadership as a form of art based on inspiration was another aspect of the *Führerprinzip* that was linked to the spiritual. This is relevant to a more general phenomenon of a discourse on politics in artistic terms, which was endearing to Fascism and particularly National Socialism.[41]

This rhetorical strategy circulated within the New State as well, with government officials themselves at times resorting to it. At any rate, this could be seen as a manifestation of a reinvigorated romantic conservatism or be associated with the contemporaneous tendencies to

[37] Kambanis 1938b: 259; Nikolaidis 1940c.
[38] E.g. 'ο Αρχηγός μας βρίσκεται, σαν ακούραστος στρατιώτης και υπεύθυνος εργάτης, στη θέσι του από πολύ πρωί. Αν όλοι μας τον παίρναμε και στις λεπτομέρειες της ζωής μας ως παράδειγμα, θα γινόμαστε μια ζηλευτή γενιά, ένας περίδοξος και πάλιν λαός. Γιατί οι λεπτομέρειες κάνουν το σύνολο. Είναι οι μικρές πινελλιές στο μεγάλο ταμπλώ' (Kar. 1940a). Cf. 'Hitler and Mussolini were not only creators able to mold society according to their "sublime" vision; the people themselves were to take on such creative agency under the impact of fascism's mythic constructs' (Antliff 2007: 61).
[39] See for example the discussion in section 11.1.
[40] See Ben-Ghiat 2001, Michaud 2004, and Metaxas's late 1938 speech to artists (Metaxas 1969a: 438-439). It is worth noting that Kostis Palamas had published a positive article on Mussolini as a writer a few months after the latter ascended to the premiership of Italy (Palamas 1923).
[41] See Sontag 1975, Carroll 1995. See also the observation of Ben-Ghiat (2001: 4) that 'After World War I, Mussolini put his own twist on this celebration of the power of the creative urge, proclaiming himself an artist who would mold and style the national body as a sculptor did a lump of clay' and the discussion of Hitler's depiction as a sculptor of the national body in Koonz 2003 and Michaud 2004.

privilege the 'irrational'. These tendencies included the invocation of aspects of politics that went beyond rationalism, such as instinct, inspiration, and creative fantasy. Such tendencies stood in opposition to the divergent visions of politics as science, either in its technocratic/liberal or in its dialectical materialist/Marxist variant.[42]

The claim that politics has common foundations with art or is indeed the highest form of art was quite common amongst pro-regime cultural operators.[43] The presentation of the New State as a construction site with the dictator as the architect falls into the same category.[44] As mentioned in chapter five, the dictator's policies and speeches were often presented as aesthetic phenomena, particularly by Nikolaidis. In an editorial occasioned by Metaxas's proclamation of literature as a 'national affair', Nikolaidis even claimed explicitly that the dictator's statements resembled the discourse of a litterateur.[45]

One of the most exorbitant examples of this motif is provided by Roumanis, who placed Metaxas alongside Palamas and spoke of 'the great poet and the great artist', the two leaders showing the way for a New Greece. In fact, Roumanis presented the two as having interchangeable qualities, which brings us to another relevant *topos*.[46] This consists in the obverse of the

[42] However, the New State perpetuated and, in a way, intensified liberal technocratic traditions, which is evidently relevant with the bourgeois character of the regime. At the same time, technocracy and specialised elites were 'romanticised' and mystified. The dictator also spoke of a combination of the creative and the technocratic, of quasi-artistic inspiration in coming up with policies and projects combined with rational and science-based implementation (see below chapter 10).

[43] E.g. 'Με τον "Κοριολάνο", γραμμένο στα 1608, ο Σαίξπηρ εγγίζει τα όρια της υψηλότερης πολιτικής, που σε βαθύτερη ανάλυση είναι ασφαλώς η "ALTISSIMA" τέχνη' (Piniatoglou 1939b: 140); 'Ασχολούμενος όμως με την ανωτάτην όλων των τεχνών, την τέχνην του διοικείν, εκείνη που οι Ινδοί φιλόσοφοι αποκαλούν Βασιλικήν Τέχνην, [ο Μεταξάς] εβρήκε και την αρμόζουσαν λύσιν στο πολυπλοκώτατο αυτό ζήτημα που απασχολεί τις καθ' εαυτό πλαστικές τέχνες' (Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938: 127); 'το κυβερνάν θέλει έμπνευσιν όπως το ποιείν. Ο Κυβερνήτης δεν γίνεται, γεννάται, όπως ο ποιητής του Ορατίου. Ο κ. Μεταξάς είναι γεννημένος κυβερνήτης, γεννημένος αρχηγός' (Kambanis 1938b: 264).

[44] See chapter 3, especially footnote 14. Cf. 'comparison of the artist to God the Creator had already become commonplace by the sixteenth century, even before God was in turn set up as the Great Architect' (Michaud 2004: 11). 'The concept of "creative work"' (Michaud 2004: xii), 'a process that was able to lead from *idea* to *form* … under the direction of a führer' (Michaud 2004: xiii) might also be relevant.

[45] 'Νομίζει κανείς ότι ακούει κάποιον λογοτέχνη, κάποιον ποιητή να υμνεί τη Λογοτεχνία σε στιγμές εξάρσεως, να τονίζει και να εξαίρει μ' ενθουσιασμό τη μεγάλη και πλατειά σημασία της' (Nikolaidis 1938f). See also below, section 10.1 about this text.

[46] 'Κι' ο ποιητής είναι και κυβερνήτης, και ο Κυβερνήτης είναι και ποιητής. Ελλάδα, αθάνατη μήτρα αιωνίων αξιών, μπορείς και πάλι στον αιώνα των μεγάλων αναζητήσεων και των νέων μεγάλων δημιουργιών να καυχηθής ότι προσφέρεις ύψιστο δίδαγμα ζωντανό στους Λαούς: Έναν μεγάλο και αθάνατο ποιητή οραματιστή και έναν σοφό ποιητικό πολιτικό δημιουργό' (Roumanis 1940b: 580).

perception of political leadership as a form of art. It is the view of literature and art as politics and of poets and artists as leaders.

As shown in chapter two, writers and intellectuals embraced concepts of heroic leadership and even the Greek literary canon was constructed upon heroic figures. By the time that Thomas Carlyle's concept of the 'Great Man' was disseminated within nationalist intellectual circles, the domination of Dionysios Solomos in the Greek literary canon had been clear and uncontested.[47] Both he and Kostis Palamas (the second great 'national poet') were seen not just as occupying the highest positions of the literary hierarchy (leadership-in-charge) but also as pioneers, cultural ground-breakers, literary prophets, and insurmountable models (leadership-in-front).[48] During the dictatorship, it was especially Palamas that was appointed the role of a spiritual/cultural leader who expresses the national soul.[49]

In sum, a myth of the charismatic and perfect leader was formed around Metaxas which was in dialogue both with pre-existing Greek discourses and on European contemporaneous models. While the leader concentrated virtually every virtue and ability that his followers had, several groups were projected as having themselves leadership traits.

[47] See Veloudis 2004: 9.

[48] For a succinct discussion of these two types of position-based leadership see Grint 2010: 4-7. The impact that such a perception of literary precursors as leaders-in-front has on their successors might as well be analysed from the perspective of Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* (Bloom 1997). As a matter of fact, one of the most exemplary cases that fits into Bloom's six-fold scheme is that of the strategies employed by Kostis Palamas himself in relation to Solomos's oeuvre.

[49] E.g. 'μέσα στα Ελληνικά Γράμματα … περισσότερο κι' απ' το Σολωμό, η θέση του Παλαμά, αν όχι ως ποιητή, ασφαλώς όμως ως πνευματικού αρχηγού, είναι ακριβέστερα καθορισμένη και διαγεγραμμένη … αποτελεί τη βαθύτερη έκφραση του Έθνους του, μιλεί την πιο ενδόμυχη φωνή του, συγκεντρώνει τις ψυχικές και πνευματικές αρετές του, καμμιά φορά μάλιστα και τις κακίες και τις αδυναμίες του' (Chatzinis 1936: 44). According to Chatzinis, Palamas is not a personal poet, who predominantly expresses his individuality, like Baudelaire and Verlaine, 'αλλά μάλλον του τύπου Κίπλιγγ, ο ποιητής δηλαδή που εισδύει μέσα στην πολύεδρη και πολυσύνθετη ψυχή του Έθνους του' (Chatzinis 1936: 44). Cf. 'Μέσα στο πολυσχιδές έργον του η Ελληνική ψυχή θα δη να προβάλλωνται μπρος της σε ανάγλυφες παραστατικές εικόνες όλες της η αρρώστειες και η αδυναμίες η προγονικές, όλες η αρετές της' (Roumanis 1940b: 577); 'γνησίου εκπροσώπου όλων των ανησυχιών και αναζητήσεων του Ελληνικού νου, και των μυχιαιτέρων πόθων της αθάνατης ψυχής της Ελλάδος' (Roumanis 1940b: 572-573). Roumanis compares Palamas not with the British imperialist Rudyard Kipling but with another Western racist and supremacist, by calling him 'ένας Βυζαντινός Βάγνερ' (Roumanis 1940b: 573). The choice of such figures as parallels to Palamas is indicative of the models for literary/cultural leader and national poet that circulated in interwar Greece.

CONCLUSION

The above analysis has attempted to demonstrate the permeation of Metaxist discourse with notions of hierarchy, elitism, and charismatic leadership. The discussion in this chapter has also pointed to some paradoxes, characteristic of the official ideology. Metaxas was both the personification of the will of the nation, which was defined as a transhistorical collectivity with organic bonds, and a charismatic individual. True artists and writers were only those who at the same time expressed the soul of their people and their own artistic personality and creative genius. Throughout the history of the nation there has been only one Ioannis Metaxas but there were several other 'Great Men' who supposedly assumed more or less the same role and expressed the national will, as we saw in part one. Nonetheless, some of the views examined in this chapter could prove rather functional. Particularly the triple identification of leadership, paedagogics, and art may have provided further bargaining power to the dictatorship's offer to co-opt teachers and cultural producers as new intermediary elites. It was therefore useful for the regime's social engineering visions and for the dissemination of its future-oriented discourse, which were predominantly related to culture and the youth, as will be discussed in the next part.

Conclusions

The discussion in this part intended to show that discipline and force as well as hierarchy and elitism were either projected as positive characteristics of the regime or underpinned Metaxist discourse. It has also touched upon a fact that was particularly significant in the context of literary criticism. Namely, that 'palingenetic ultranationalism' was intimately linked to culture and both the Fascist and the Nazi regime projected themselves as promoters of art and pointed to a mixture of art and politics. This mixture was not only evident in their control over the artistic field and its infusion with their own political and ideological objectives, but also in the way politics was conducted or presented as a form of art. Carefully orchestrated gatherings, torchlight parades, slogans, songs, disciplined rhythm, and so on, all promoted a new kind of theatrical politics and arguably contributed to the ever-growing consensus in the 1930s that 'theatre is the genre of our time'. The Leader was depicted as a poet, who acts based on inspiration; as a sculptor that (re)moulds the nation; as the grand director of the body politic's performance of unity and discipline; as an architect that constructs the new state or the new civilisation (Third Reich, Third Hellenic Civilisation etc.).

The analysis in this part also recalls the near-tautology between patriarchy and hierarchy, which was even more blatant in the interwar fascist(ic) regimes: If the family is the cell of the nation and the father is the head of the family, the state, as the expression of the nation and the coordinated material manifestation of its will, can have no other as its head than the leader of the nation, the father of the people. On the other hand, the state, as the authority over society, cannot but itself possess fatherly attributes. For that reason, the leader principle was analysed here as the culmination and definitive manifestation of the hierarchical design of the Fourth-of-August regime.

Propaganda on Metaxist hierarchy as relying on a meritocracy intent on saving the nation moreover corroborates the conclusion that, if the Fourth-of-August actually constituted a revolution, it could only be some sort of 'conservative revolution', a revolution meant to remedy, conserve, and rejuvenate the collapsing status quo rather than to subvert it. Such a notion fits in properly with the regime's 'hygienic discourse', which will be discussed in the following part, while legitimising its totalitarian drive, its opposition to democracy and left-wing experiments, and its social engineering agenda.[1]

[1] It is also worthy of note in this connection that fascism has been associated with the goal to assume the leadership of the bourgeois regime rather than to topple it. See Boyiatzis 2012: 269-270.

PART 4 Colonising the Future

'Crises generate new semiotic and material opportunities, opening the space for new accounts of what is to be done to shape and secure the future'.[1] The Fourth-of-August dictatorship and its futural visions came about after a protracted period of generalised crisis starting in the 1910s and (re)intensifying in the 1930s: National Schism, Asia Minor Catastrophe, refugee question, countless coups and counter-coups, 1932 bankruptcy. For an ultranationalist deeply impressed by Wilhelmine Germany, such as Metaxas, the symptoms of crisis could not but include the abolition of monarchy, the erosion of the traditional value system, the disintegration of the nationalist ideological universe, labour agitation, and the rise of communism. Whilst pointing to the apocalyptic dimensions of his 'intervention', which was supposedly necessary and meant the salvation of Greece in the nick of time, Metaxas had in fact turned the crisis into a political opportunity. In other words, were it not for the crisis, the former General could legitimise neither the concentration of power in his hands nor a rather personal projection of the future.

This part considers the future as 'a key resource and modality of power to be claimed and cognitively shaped',[2] and thus future-oriented propaganda and ideological constructs disseminated under Metaxas are not viewed as mere rhetoric but as a deliberate attempt to 'colonise' the future. What is more, 'expectations about the future' impact decision-making, which can be seen as being based on three parameters, summarised in the dictatorship's case as follows: First, the idea that humanity was at the time going through the era of totalitarianism, underpinned by some kind of social(ist) consensus and focus on the collective. Second, the oft-repeated superiority which the Greeks would demonstrate through their future (cultural)

[1] Robertson 2017: 8.
[2] Robertson 2017: 1.

achievements and the concomitant feeling of pride that international recognition would produce. Third, the alleged expectations explicitly placed on the present people by the forefathers and the descendants, by the transhistorical nation or by the country's history on the one hand and by the implicit western gaze on the other.[3] Additionally, the observation that such expectations can promote concerted efforts and are 'performative' can be applied to the Metaxas dictatorship, where collective and organised endeavour was encouraged, and present actions were seen as concretely shaping the future, prefiguring a 'new Greece' and a new national civilisation.[4]

The very establishment of the dictatorship was cast in a way that allows it to be seen as an 'intervention into the present in the name of imagined future events',[5] namely of the supposed communist uprising that was to take place on 5 August. So, the regime began its life with a pre-emptive strike, like its approach to the future in general was pre-emptory, in the sense that it often legitimised its actions in light of anticipated events or called for action towards the realisation of envisaged future realities. It also predetermined the future by providing the framework and coordinates of permitted action. Thus, even if, for instance, the importance of family was barely discussed by intellectuals in relation to the Third Hellenic Civilisation, its postulation by the regime as the national cell and as a value not to be disputed would also shape the new civilisation accordingly. Conversely, the future was colonised to serve the needs and objectives of the regime, and to endow the dictatorship with legitimacy in the present. What was foregrounded was an idea that the fulfilment of the national destiny lay in a time to come when the New State would not only have fully evolved as a polity but would moreover have

[3] This is based on the tripartite schema affecting future-oriented decisions, as discussed in Robertson (2017: 3) '(i) what is thought to be currently the case …, (ii) emotions, such as pride or status around imagined future states, and (iii) the expectations of others'. Cf. 'Μία δε φυλή, όπως είναι η Ελληνική, … έχει καθήκον απέναντι του εαυτού της, της ιστορίας και απέναντι του άλλου κόσμου, να εκδηλώση τον ίδιον αυτής πολιτισμόν' (Metaxas 1969a: 239).
[4] Robertson 2017: 4. See e.g. Metaxas 1969a: 253.
[5] Chamlian 2016: 391.

transformed Greek citizenry according to its own political vision. This partly shifted the question of legitimacy away from the present status quo and into the attainment of the projected future.

The utopian components of Metaxist ideology were closely linked not just with the collapse of old national narratives incidental to the Asia Minor Catastrophe, but also with the international context of the time. Apart from various correspondences between its main slogan and the concepts of Third Rome in Fascist Italy and Third Reich in Nazi Germany, the promotion of a mixture of authoritarian politics at home and friendly or allied relations abroad prepared Greek society to be subsumed under a 'New Order'. Beside the constant of antiparliamentarianism, which theoretically facilitated the presence of Greece in a Europe dominated by autocratic regimes, dictatorial discourse was moreover punctuated, particularly in its early years, with the profession of a new order in the Balkans, within the framework of the Balkan Pact. Finally, the notion of a new temporality that was promoted was interposed with millenarian visions and pseudo-religious discourse. This discourse mostly renormalised ideological constructs of nineteenth-century nationalism, such as 'divine providence' or 'mission', but went a step further, perhaps in dialogue with contemporary fascist regimes, by presenting the leader as a prophet or Messiah.

The radical uncertainty, which is normally associated with the future in modern societies, was toned down by means of diverse strategies. The reinvigoration of traditional nationalist discourse which intertwined the future with notions of Divine Providence, national destiny, and national mission was merely one of these strategies. Another one consisted in populating the future of the nation with exemplars from its past. A third strategy can be evinced in the regime's efforts to reinforce existing cyclical patterns of social time and establish new ones through the celebration of numerous anniversaries and national or religious days.

Such strategies were largely embedded into the most significant ideological construct of the Fourth-of-August regime that was associated with the future: the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'.[6] Declared by the dictator in 1937, it constituted the new ideal, which abjured the territorial expansion usually associated with the *Megali Idea* while displaying affinities with pre-existing peaceful and cultural variations of or alternatives to it.[7] Nonetheless, this new ideal did not cease to be pervaded with utopian and futurological elements. Drawing on the past of the First and the Second Hellenic Civilisation and through the transitional phase of 'national remediation' and 'rebirth', the ultimate goal and the apex of the regime's trajectory was an enduring and 'higher' modern Greek spiritual civilisation. The creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation was supposed to once more place Greece amongst the leaders of human civilisation, to re-legitimise its 'civilising mission', and to fulfil the 'national destinies' of Hellenism.

Within this framework, the youth occupied a preeminent position, not merely as a target of propaganda concerning the Third Hellenic Civilisation but mostly as its designated carrier and future creator. For young Greeks to successfully undertake this task, it was necessary that they be radically revamped to discard the 'vices' of the parliamentary era and to be modelled in harmony with the new regime.[8] Apart from the attempt to co-opt the youth, the future was also colonised based on the logic of a 'natural' course of things or even organicist and pseudo-

[6] At first glance it might seem far-fetched to link national celebrations with the Third Hellenic Civilisation, yet both the cyclical repetition of old as well as several novel celebrations and the extravagant, centrally organised, and massive way in which they were celebrated fostered the entry of Greek society into a new temporality, emphasising the rupture with the pre-1936 past and the movement towards a new future. In addition, one could compare Michaud's analysis of Nazi rituals and celebrations or even of the Nazi salute as an experience or prefiguration of the future Third Reich in the present (Michaud 2004: 51-52).

[7] About such variations or alternatives in the nineteenth century see Skopetea 1988 and Kremmydas 2010.

[8] See e.g. '[η νεολαία] είναι το μέλλον αυτής της χώρας, η οποία, αναπτυσσομένη εθνικώς με τας παραδόσεις τας τιμίας του Ελληνικού Έθνους, αναπτυσσομένη πλέον και εις το σώμα και εις τον χαρακτήρα, θα δημιουργήση την γενεάν εκείνην, η οποία θα διαδεχθή την παρούσαν και η οποία πλέον θ' ανυψώση την Ελλάδα εις ακόμη μεγαλυτέραν βαθμίδα ισχύος και μεγαλείου και όχι μόνον τούτο, αλλά, αποβάλλουσα πλέον από την ψυχήν της τα μιάσματα της εποχής, την οποίαν επεράσαμεν, μιάσματα, τα οποία την είχον καταρρίψει, τα οποία είχον αφαιρέσει κάθε αισιοδοξίαν, κάθε θάρρος εις την ζωήν και αυτοπεποίθησιν, αποβάλλουσα, λέγω, τα μιάσματα αυτά, ανυψούται ήδη τώρα και ενθαρρύνει ολόκληρον την εθνικήν της Ελλάδος εμφάνισιν' (Metaxas 1969a: 383).

evolutionary discourse.[9] Political decisions were dressed the mantle of inevitability, while effort was put to secure the 'resource' of the future for the regime and to lock the collective imaginary regarding other potential uses of this 'resource' in exclusively one direction, by positing the dogmas that there is no alternative or that resistance to the course of history is futile.[10]

Nevertheless, the fact that the futural propaganda of the regime was not mere rhetoric does not negate the fact that the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' in particular was often designated in pro-Metaxas propaganda as a 'slogan' (σύνθημα) rather than as a tangible programme and can be partly defined as an 'empty signifier' or an 'empty formula'.[11] With respect to the frequent charge that the Metaxas dictatorship's ideology and propaganda lacked coherence and concreteness, one could take into account the argument that 'vagueness and elusiveness' are often part of politics as such (particularly in the process of manufacturing consensus and/or consent): 'In those situations, consumers of political language must be offered sentences that are sufficiently open in their meaning for different individuals and groups to read into them their own preferences and to gloss over distinctions'.[12] At any rate, despite the references to the concept by Metaxas and other regime functionaries, it was largely left to intellectuals –or rather intellectuals took it upon themselves– to give the concept more specific meaning. In declaring the close connection of the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' to art, literature, and culture in general, and granting the cultural field a relative autonomy, the dictator enabled intellectuals

[9] Hering (1996: 293) renders part of Metaxas's 6 September speech (Metaxas 1969a: 29) as a Spenglerian claim by the dictator that the old system was collapsing and 'Die historische Entwicklung laufe daher folgerichtig auf den Neuen Staat (und die Dritte griechische Kultur) hinaus'

[10] See for instance Kyrou 1937a.

[11] A brief presentation of the term 'empty signifier', furnished by Laclau and Mouffe, can be found in Freeden 2003: 111. The term 'empty formula' was used by Hering (1996: 291) in his discussion of the Third Hellenic Civilisation and the 'schema of the three cultures': 'Mit solchen Leerformeln konnte man stets nationale Emotionen wecken, ohne sich festzulegen'. Cf. Chomsky (2002: 26) on slogans: 'The point of public relations slogans like "Support our troops" is that they don't mean anything. … That's the whole point of good propaganda. You want to create a slogan that nobody's going to be against, and everybody's going to be for. Nobody knows what it means, because it doesn't mean anything. Its crucial value is that it diverts your attention from a question that *does* mean something: Do you support our policy? That's the one you're not allowed to talk about'.

[12] Freeden 2003: 56, 57. Cf. Dimaras's take on the *Megali Idea*: 'Το αβέβαιο περίγραμμα του όρου αυτού, εστάθηκε συντελεστής για την επικράτησή του, γιατί επέτρεπε στον κάθε έναν ο οποίος τον εστοχαζόταν, να τον πλουτίζει με υποκειμενικά στοιχεία και με συναισθηματικές συνδηλώσεις' (Dimaras 1985: 360-361); see also Kremmydas 2010: 22.

to assay their own interpretations of its meaning and proposals for its attainment. At the same time, he rendered the whole relevant debate a privileged ground for literary and art critics.

This part deals with texts that show how the institution of criticism, its operators, and cultural intellectuals more generally played a crucial role in the promotion of the futural projects of the Fourth-of-August regime. It consists of three chapters: In the first one I discuss the discursive creation of a New Order and a new temporality as well as the intertwinement of political and religious registers as part of the dictatorship's visions for the future. The second chapter revolves around the most significant and multifaceted ideological construct of the regime, the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Lastly, I devote a chapter to the youth, which, beside its commonplace designation as the generation of the future, was co-ordinated by the regime in keeping with its futural project and was revamped in order to become itself the enactor of this project.

- CHAPTER 9 -

New Chronotopes

The 'chronotope' is one of Mikhail Bakhtin's most contested terms but it is generally considered to signify compound articulations of time and space in literature. While I apply the term in a political context, the association of chronotopes with ideology is already present in Bakhtin's work and in relevant literary scholarship. Chronotopes are linked to distinct literary genres carrying their own ideological baggage and expressing distinctive 'world-views'.[1] The ideological implications of the term are further extrapolated from the fact that 'the aesthetic visualizing of a human being in relation to their temporal and spatial world … is ultimately an ideological perception'.[2] In any case, the time-space denoted by chronotopes is not that of reality but of its discursive representation. Thus, the discussion of 'new chronotopes' here does not imply any real change in any of the four dimensions but is limited to changes in the perception and expression of time and space, particularly related to concepts of radical novelty or renovation.

In this chapter the term is used to denote the new configurations of time and space that were promoted in the discourse of the Metaxas regime and of literary critics and other intellectuals who supported it. The most significant reconfiguration was the one inscribed in the concept of the New Order, which had both domestic and international applications.[3] The New State

[1] Morris 1994: 246, Bemong & Borghart 2010: 8.
[2] Morris 1994: 180.
[3] See Mazower 1996, Martin 2016 on this concept in the context of interwar and WWII Fascism and Nazism. Another example of New Order aspirations is that of Japan (see Miles Fletcher III 1982, Coble 2003: 33-48). The term was also dear to fascistoid circles well beyond the interwar period, as evinced by the examples of the Italian neo-fascist organisation *Ordine Nuovo* (1956-1973) and the French far-right movement *Ordre Nouveau* (1969-1973), that merged into the *Front National* in the early 1970s. In keeping with the transnational pretensions of the New Order, such parties had also drawn on far-right ideologues from different countries and established connections with each other (see Mammone 2015).

signified the inauguration of a new political order in Greece, something that was openly aspired to by Metaxas even prior to the dictatorship and was reiterated and normalised in official propaganda and the press following the 1936 coup.[4] At the very beginning of the dictatorship, however, the impression was given that this was solely a necessary deviation from parliamentarianism, whose purpose was to avert a grave threat to the nation and the social system.[5] Gradually this was replaced with ever-emphatic claims of the permanence of the new situation: Not only would it not be a 'parenthesis' in national time,[6] but it would be everlasting, with 4 August 1936 signalling the beginning of a new era and the dawn of a new civilisation with no end in sight.[7]

Moreover, the concept was relevant to the international sphere, consisting of projections into the future of a New Balkan, European or World Order based on a mixture of alliances abroad and authoritarian politics at home. All these blended together with the dictatorship's adoption of a vocally non-irredentist agenda, in conformity with most Greek interwar governments. After the Asia Minor Catastrophe, irredentism had largely lost its justifying grounds. Most of the 'unredeemed brothers' were either exterminated or had evacuated their homelands through expulsions, migration or population exchanges. The largest Greek-speaking populations in neighbouring areas outside the borders of the Greek state were under the rule of

[4] Already in his 16 April 1935 letter to the President of Democracy, Alexandros Zaimis, Metaxas emphasised the need for 'επιβολήν νέας τάξεως πραγμάτων' (Metaxas 1960: 151). See also Yeoryios Vlachos's first Saturday editorial after the coup in his widely circulated newspaper *Kathimerini* (V. 1936).
[5] See Metaxas's explanatory report on the suspension of the parliament in Metaxas 1969a: 12-13.
[6] 'ημείς δεν είμεθα μία παρένθεσις μέσα εις την πτωχήν ζωήν των κομμάτων' (Nikoloudis 1937: 3).
[7] See Linardatos 1966: 39. Several indicative examples can be found in the dictator's speeches and his followers' text. See e.g. 'πλέον απεκτήθη κοινή συνείδησις, ότι πρόκειται περί καθεστώτος, το οποίον εδράζεται μέσα εις τας ψυχάς και τας καρδίας των Ελλήνων και ότι τίποτε δεν θα ηδύνατο να το κλονίση και ότι θα είναι το διαρκές καθεστώς της Ελλάδος, με τας εξελίξεις τας οποίας θα λάβη εις το μέλλον' (Metaxas 1969b: 209); 'το Κράτος της 4ης Αυγούστου … είναι Κράτος, το οποίον δεν δύναται πλέον να παρέλθη, και το οποίον εξελισσόμενον, τη βοηθεία δε υμών εξελισσόμενον, θα βαδίση πλέον εις το μέλλον με σκοπούς σταθερούς και με αποτελέσματα μεγάλα' (Metaxas 1969b: 210); and 'υπήρξαν και άνθρωποι, και ίσως υπάρχουν ακόμη και αυτήν την στιγμήν, οι οποίοι φαντάζονται ότι είναι διαβατική κατάστασις… Διότι η μεταβολή ήτο ώριμος εις τας ψυχάς των Ελλήνων, διότι πολύς κόσμος ανυπομόνει να την ιδή επερχομένην, η μεταβολή αύτη υπήρξεν αναίμακτος και δι' αυτό τ' αποτελέσματα της μεταβολής παρέμειναν και θα παραμείνουν κτήμα εσαεί' .

established (Cyprus) or aspiring Great Powers (Dodecanese, Northern Epirus).[8] The imperial dreams of Greek nationalists and the capital bourgeoisie were crushed in 1922, so that 'unlike the German and Italian capitalism of the interwar era, Greek capitalism did not feel the pressing need to acquire living space; on the contrary, it prioritised the assimilation of the New Lands and the integration of the refugees'.[9]

Conceptualisations of new order were loaded with the dialectic found at the core of apocalypticism. A new order was supposedly necessary to ward off the imminent (communist) Armageddon at the same time as it constituted itself a form of wider renewal suggestive of notions of cosmic renovation. Religious discourse was congruent with the promulgation of new chronotopes, particularly with the correlation between right-wing political experimentation and the temporality of the new. In trying to identify the establishment of the dictatorship with the inauguration of a new temporality, Metaxist discourse often resorted to familiar religious tropes in order to endow such ideas of novelty with an aura of legitimacy. In this conjunction one also finds expressions of the dictatorship's colonisation of the future. The supposed continuity of government which the regime that had brought about this new temporality would offer allowed projections of policy and objectives for years or even generations to come.

The discussion in the following pages demonstrates the ways in which new chronotopes formed a component of public discourse under Metaxas and points to the relevant dialogue conducted between intellectuals and the dictatorship. The chapter is divided into three sections, which deal with the issue of an emergent New Order, the intertwining of futural political discourse with (quasi-)religious elements, and the promotion of notions of palingenesis and new temporality respectively.

[8] It was only after Greece had been dragged into WWII that irredentism was renormalised. Greek political and military circles in the 1940s negotiated with Germany and Great Britain the annexation of these exact territories to Greece. Germany was the main recipient of proposals regarding Northern Epirus, while Britain was heavily involved in negotiations regarding the Dodecanese and Cyprus. See Koliopoulos 1985 and Cliadakis 2014.
[9] Marketos 2006: 258.

9.1. NEW ORDER

A non-aggressive stance towards Turkey had been adopted by Greek governments since the signing of the Lausanne Treaty, with the exception of the Pangalos dictatorship.[10] Rapprochement efforts intensified under Venizelos and led to the Ankara accords of 1930, with excessive concessions on the Greek side.[11] The subsequent friendly bilateral relations were coupled with the wider initiative of the Balkan Entente in 1934. Therefore, the absence of irredentism in the regime's utopian project fell in line with existing attempts to improve ties with neighbouring nations. Even though the countries of the Balkan Pact were largely pro-Entente (in WWI terms), in case of a wider armed conflict between the then emerging Axis Powers and the liberal West, this rapprochement could paradoxically fit into the project of a totalitarian New Order. Many Balkan states were espousing autocracy at the time, in some of them dictatorships were installed, in others authoritarian governments with a parliamentary façade were in power, while even pro-Axis governments emerged after the outbreak of WWII.[12]

In some of his earliest speeches after the coup, Metaxas had explained his vision for the time to come as one of a civilisation that will not aspire after territorial expansion, in part continuing the royalist rhetoric of a 'small but honourable Greece' and his own criticism of the military pursuit of the *Megali Idea* in Asia Minor.[13] Former enemies, he claimed, are now 'our friends in the Balkans', with whom Greece will share a common future of peace and

[10] See Veremis 1998: 92-95.
[11] See Veremis 1998: 95-99.
[12] See Turczynski 1989 and Part 1 in Fischer 2007.
[13] 'δεν θα αποβλέπει δηλαδή εις την κατάκτησιν εδαφών, αλλ' εις την έντασιν του πολιτισμού' ('Λόγος εκφωνηθείς εις γεύμα δοθέν υπό της επιτροπής της ΙΑ Εκθέσεως Θεσσαλονίκης (6 Σεπτεμβρίου 1936)', Metaxas 1969a: 35) and 'ως έκτασις δεν έχομεν να πάμε παραπέρα' ('Λόγος εκφωνηθείς εις την Λάρισαν, (9 Οκτωβρίου 1936)', Metaxas 1969a: 59). On the policy of 'small but honourable Greece', see Mavrogordatos 1983: 286-288. About royalist opposition to the expansionist conceptualisation of the Great Idea since the National Schism see Vatikiotis 1998: 88. On Metaxas's opposition to the military campaign in Asia Minor from the very beginning and his refusal to return to active military duty after the 1920 elections see Vatikiotis 1998: 108, 112, 115; Benos 2009: 46. As a matter of fact, he even rejected the offer to assume the leadership of the army in the last stages of the Asia Minor campaign, which led to frequent slanders by leading anti-Venizelist politicians (such as Dimitrios Gounaris) and journalists (most notably, Yeoryios Vlachos; see e.g. his 25 August 1922 editorial quoted in Bambounis 2009: 11-13), as well as his effective marginalisation from the royalist camp (see Vatikiotis 1998: 115, 117, 123).

cooperation.[14] It is probably within this context that Balkan literature was promoted by publications like *Valkaniki Logotechnia* (1937-1938).[15] Leonidas Antonopoulos, its publisher, had founded a publishing house with the same name in 1936 specialising in translated literature from other Balkan countries.

Melis Nikolaidis's *Pnevmatiki Zoi* particularly promoted this concept of Balkan alliance and amity with a focus on cultural cooperation and exchange. It hosted literary pieces by Bulgarian and Turkish writers (and indeed writers holding diplomatic positions) and leapt at every chance to express its satisfaction with the developments in this area and to stress the bonds that were allegedly being created amongst the Balkan nations.[16] Such developments included the inauguration of a chair of Turkish Literature at the University of Athens and a chair of Modern Greek Literature at both the University of Istanbul and Ankara, the publication of books on Greece by intellectuals from neighbouring countries, and the organisation of art exhibitions of other Balkan countries in Athens.[17] Indeed, as per the propaganda that Nikolaidis disseminated, national literature and self-awareness were neither isolationist nor chauvinist goals, but foundations for getting to know other peoples and for forming amicable bonds with them.[18]

[14] 'Ημείς είμεθα Έθνος ειρηνικόν, δεν ζητούμεν πολέμους ούτε κατακτήσεις, είμεθα ευχαριστημένοι μέσα εις τα όρια που ευρισκόμεθα, αλλ' έχομεν υποχρέωσιν αυτό το οποίον μας ανήκει να το υπεραμυνθώμεν μέχρι τελευταίας πνοής μας. Έχομεν υποχρέωσιν να βοηθήσωμεν εις την ανάγκην τους φίλους μας της Βαλκανικής και αυτό το οποίον έχουν και αυτοί να το υποστηρίξωμεν και ημείς, ώστε να το κατέχουν δια παντός' ('Λόγος κατά το γεύμα του Δήμου Ιωαννίνων (13 Ιουνίου 1937)', Metaxas 1969a: 202) and 'Πέρασε πλέον η εποχή εκείνη των πολέμων της απελευθερώσεως της Ελλάδος και εκείνοι, με τους οποίους επολεμήσαμεν τότε, είναι τώρα οι καλλίτεροί μας φίλοι. Με αυτούς θα πάμε μπροστά και διαρκώς μπροστά' (Metaxas 1969a: 202-203).
[15] About this periodical see Karaoglou et al. 2007: 403-406 and *EET* 1:334.
[16] See for instance the short story by the Bulgarian Ambassador in Athens and the excerpt from a book of his, both in translation by Aryis Korakas (Sismanov 1936 & Sismanov 1938), as well as the prose piece by the Turkish ambassador in translation by Avraam Papazoglou (Esref 1937).
[17] See e.g. [Anon.] 1937a, [Anon.] 1938m, [Anon.] 1938p, [Anon.] 1938q, [Anon.] 1940h.
[18] Nikolaidis, M., 'Λογοτεχνία και πατριωτισμός', *Πνευματική Ζωή* 63 (25 May 1940), pp. 97-98 [98] 'Ζητούμε λογοτεχνία εθνική, γιατί πιστεύουμε βαθύτατα στα δυο αυτά πράγματα: πρώτο, ότι μόνον έτσι θα δημιουργήσουμε αληθινή τέχνη κι' αληθινό πολιτισμό· και ύστερα, πιο πλατιά ακόμα: μόνον έτσι, μόνο με την εθνική τους τέχνη οι Λαοί θα μπορέσουν να γνωρίσουν τον εαυτό τους, κι' όταν γνωρίσουν τον εαυτό τους, να γνωρισθούν και μεταξύ τους καλύτερα, να εννοηθούν βαθύτερα και να συνδεθούν με αγάπη, μ' εκτίμηση και μ' αλληλεγγύη'.

The regime's futural project, epitomised in the construct of the Third Hellenic Civilisation (which I will discuss at length in the next chapter), has been rightly presented as an ersatz imperialism, at the same time corresponding to and distancing itself from the blueprints of Third Rome and Third Reich.[19] One of the basic aims of the Nazis was to 'reconquer the lost territories in East and West and create "living-space" for ethnic German colonization of East-Central and Eastern Europe'.[20] Lacking the goal of territorial expansion, the Metaxas dictatorship promoted the ideals of retrieving a lost 'national self' and restoring direct connection and communication with the 'people's soul', while also limiting its colonising efforts to the level of the cultural and the symbolic. The disclaimer of imperialism is a constant in the discourse of Metaxas and his staunchest ideologues, a disclaimer sometimes expressed through circumlocutions and other times even through the usage of the term 'imperialism' itself.[21] Now it was the future that was 'colonised', by projecting on it the manifestation of Greek exceptionalism and superiority through cultural means. Soft power and cultural imperialism were purportedly to replace old-style colonialism.

Such an attitude can be traced in publications by literary critics as early as August 1936, for instance in an article by Aristos Kambanis published twenty days after the coup. There the critic lamented the poor quality of contemporary Greek culture and the fact that 'our literature has not been able to step over the borders of the Greek Kingdom'. His proposed solution was none other than a 'return to ourselves'; 'otherwise the conquest of foreign countries is

[19] See Matthiopoulos 1996: 673 and Machera 1987: 34-35. This does not mean, however, that militarism is reduced. As Heinz Richter (2014: 140) points out, Metaxas could not pursue an expansionist policy even if he wanted to, since the army was controlled by the King. Forms of militarism were however greatly promoted in the spheres Metaxas controlled, particularly in EON. For more on that, see below section 11.2.

[20] Evans 2004: 229.

[21] See e.g. the letter sent out to potential contributors of *To Neon Kratos* by Aristos Kambanis prior to the commencement of the periodical's publication: 'Η εθνικοφροσύνη, την οποίαν εκήρυξεν ο κ. Ι. Μεταξάς […] δεν είναι δόγμα εθνικής απομονώσεως. Δεν έχει κανένα επιθετικόν χαρακτήρα. Δεν περικλείει βλέψεις ή σκοπούς ιμπεριαλιστικούς. Εμπνέεται από την ιδέα της συνεργασίας και της βαθυτέρας κατανοήσεως' (I Syntaxis 1939: 5-6).

impossible'.[22] This is also relevant for Orologas's analysis in his first contribution to Kambanis's periodical in 1939, since he focused on imperialism.[23] In the face of rising imperialism on the part of the 'great' or strong nations, small nations like Greece 'return to themselves', rediscover their roots, and try to remould their culture based on their own traditions. The goal of that is purportedly to retain cultural sovereignty and counter western cultural expansionism, an attitude that could be also linked to the regime's insistence that it did not imitate any foreign exemplars.[24] According to Yiorgos I. Roumanis, Palamas's poetry could play a crucial role in such an endeavour –which he saw as the preamble to the Third Hellenic Civilisation– guiding the 'Greek soul' towards self-knowledge.[25]

In some texts, even a connection between pseudo-religious elements and an emerging New European Order can be noticed. The literary critic Vasos Vasileiou contributed a text about the 'National element in art' to *Nea Politiki* in late 1938.[26] The text was presented as a review of Orologas's book *Writers and their Time* (1938) and constituted an attempt not only to disseminate Orologas's political and aesthetic views, but also –more indirectly but no less

[22] 'Η λογοτεχνία μας δεν μπόρεσε να διασκελίση τα σύνορα του ελληνικού Βασιλείου, μ' όλες τις αξιέπαινες προσπάθειες ντόπιων και ξένων' – 'Η μανία του κοσμοπολιτισμού, του συγχρονισμού, υποτρέφει την πτωχαλαζονεία μας: Χρειάζεται να γυρίσουμε στους εαυτούς μας. Αλλοιώς είν' αδύνατη η κατάκτησις του εξωτερικού… και του εσωτερικού' (Kambanis 1936a). The preoccupation with exporting modern Greek literature to the West and rendering it a respected part of world literature had been recurring throughout intellectual –and to a lesser degree political– circles every time the political circumstances allowed for collective optimism and substantial hopes that Greece would finally be able to catch up to 'modern civilised nations', such as in the early 1910s or during Venizelos's last tenure in the interwar period. See for instance Niaros 2017: 297.

[23] Orologas 1939a.

[24] A parallel case in several respects was that of Brazil (see Bezerra 2015), where even many similar concepts and ideas emerged independently of each other (such as *estrangerismo*/*xenismos* or white/western superiority) or probably mediated through shared blueprints (such as the Estado Novo/Neon Kratos, which is a term used for an interwar dictatorship in both countries, drawn almost certainly on the common exemplar of Portugal). Cf. also part 2, particularly chapter 3.

[25] 'Και έτσι γνωρίζοντας τον εαυτό της καλά [=η ελληνική ψυχή], θα μπορέση να προχωρήση δυνατή, ωραία, καθαρισμένη, με πλήρη αυτεπίγνωση βλέψεων και σκοπών εξορμήσεως, που θα οδηγήσουν εις την δημιουργίαν του Γου Ελλην. Πολιτισμού' (Roumanis 1940b: 577). That is why Roumanis appealed for the widest possible dissemination of Palamas's oeuvre ('Είναι ανάγκη ο Παλαμάς εις όλον τον όγκον του να γίνη γνωστός εις τους Έλληνας. Δεν πρέπει να μείνει σπίτι Ελληνικό χωρίς Παλαμά.'; Roumanis 1940b: 576) and expressed his staunch belief in the regime's and the dictator's ability and willingness to see to it (Roumanis 1940b: 578-579). Roumanis's analysis of Palamas seems to owe a lot to Dimitrios Vezanis's 1930 book *Ο Παλαμάς φιλόσοφος*. Both Roumanis and Vezanis were amongst the founding members of the Greek Nationalist League, of which the former served as president during the dictatorship. For further information on Roumanis, see the Appendix.

[26] Vasileiou 1938.

markedly– to promote Orologas as a blueprint for the 'new' literary critic required within the context of the 'National State'. Therein Vasileiou associated the religious connotations that Orologas had ascribed to national consciousness with Hitler and 'German mysticism' and found such mysticism to be largely absent amongst the Greek people. As in Roumanis's appropriation of Palamas's poetry, Vasileiou pointed to the task of national paedagogics and leadership.[27] He claimed that it is primarily the New State that moves the nation in the direction of mysticism, while Greek writers have failed to express the new European political and intellectual milieu.[28] Vasileiou therefore both acknowledged the lack of a mass movement and provided legitimacy to the regime's self-styling as a 'revolution from above'.[29] At the same time, he indirectly called on writers to produce national literature while aligning themselves with the new international and domestic order.[30]

Vasos Vasileiou's statements here point to a reading of the Metaxas dictatorship as a regime that was in the process of bringing Greece into line with what was perceived as an

[27] Cf. here chapter 8.

[28] 'Όπως είδαμε ο συγγραφεύς διαπιστώνει και θρησκευτικό περιεχόμενο σ' αυτή τη συνείδηση. Θα έχει υπ' όψιν του φυσικά τον Γερμανικό μυστικισμό, προ παντός, χάρις στον οποίο η φωνή του Χίτλερ ανυψώθηκε σε φωνή της φυλής. Και για να έλθουμε ύστερα από τόσο μακρά ανάλυση στο προκείμενο ο κ. Ω. μάς παρέχει την αφορμή να απορήσουμε πώς οι συγγραφείς μας, που τόσο επηρεάζονται από την κίνηση των ιδεών στην Ευρώπη, δεν έδωσαν στο έργο τους ούτε την επικράτηση του συνόλου, ούτε την κυριαρχία αυτή των μυστικιστικών διαθέσεων, αλλ' επιμένουν στο "άτομο που θέλει να φύγη από το περιβάλλον του, να χαθή μέσα σ' ένα κόσμο φανταστικό, στο άτομο το εγκαταλελειμμένο, το χαμένο, που δεν είναι για τίποτε βέβαιο, ούτε για την αγάπη", που είναι λείψανο της Δημοκρατίας. Όμως μάς παρέχει την αφορμή να σκεφθούμε επίσης ότι για τον άξιο λογοτέχνη που θα ευχόταν να πλημμυρίση με την αγάπη της Ελληνικής πραγματικότητας θα ήταν ανέφικτο να διαπιστώση *εκ των κάτω* την τάση για ομαδική λύτρωση και την νίκην της εννοίας του συνόλου στην έννοια του ατόμου. "Το άτομο αντιστέκεται ακόμα". Το καθεστώς είναι μοναδικός συντελεστής για τη δημιουργία νέας ψυχολογίας, αλλά ένα καθεστώς δύο χρόνων οσοδήποτε και να έχη εκτιμηθή στην προσπάθειά του, οσοδήποτε και αν έχει ρυθμίσει με σειρά πρωτοφανών κοινωνιλοπολιτικών [sic] μέτρων ομαδικές ανάγκες, οσηδήποτε και αν είναι η αξία, η οιστρηλατημένη ορμή και η πίστη του Αρχηγού του, θα ήταν αδύνατο να μεταμορφώση από τη μια ημέρα στην άλλη ένα Λαό που δοκιμάστηκε τόσο, που αφανίστηκε τόσο, που απατήθηκε τόσο που εκατό "ελεύθερα" χρόνια σύρθηκε στα πεζοδρόμια, εγνώρισε την παγίδευση και τη διαπόμπευση, ανατράφηκε με τη θεωρία της "μπάζας", διδάχτηκε ότι είνε έξυπνος όποιος είναι διεφθαρμένος και ότι είναι ηλίθιος όποιος δεν έχει την ευχέρεια να λυγίζη την σπονδυλική στήλη του. Από ένα Λαό που ως προχθές ακόμα ο Κοσμοπολιτισμός ασύδοτος εμόλυνε την γνησιότητά που τού έμεινε, και πέρασε από χίλια βάσανα, ας μη ζητήσουμε από τώρα "μυστικισμό"' (Vasileiou 1938: 870-871; emphasis in the original).

[29] Cf. here chapter 7.

[30] Vasos Vasileiou would more aggressively repeat his call on writers and intellectuals to act in a way which complies with the new status quo in his second contribution to *Nea Politiki* (Vasileiou 1939). In that 1939 article, entitled 'The intellectual and his duty', Vasileiou slurred Yiannis Ritsos, Yianis Kordatos, Nikos Kazantzakis, and Panayiotis Kanellopoulos without mentioning their names (908-909) before laying out his tetraptych of duties that the modern Greek intellectual has to perform (911-913).

emerging New Order. Despite the country being subsumed into the British sphere of influence, Metaxas –like many other politicians and intellectuals of the 1930s Europe-wide, including Vasileiou and Orologas– was convinced that totalitarianism was the socio-political system of the century, and he did take steps to "prepare Greece for a New Order in accordance with Hitler's vision of a Europe under German leadership".[31] This conception of a new spatial configuration of power in Europe was corroborated by the emergence of the Rome-Berlin Axis in 1936-1938, around which other European countries would revolve, according to Mussolini.[32] It is worth noting that Vasileiou's article was published after the *Anschluss*, 'when it became clear that the European order that had emerged from World War I was breaking down'.[33]

Perhaps it is also not coincidental that Vasileiou picked out Sarandaris as the only philosophical exponent of mysticism and 'genuine' religiosity in Greece.[34] Yiorgos Sarandaris (1908-1941), a poet associated with the 'School of Thessaloniki' (like Vasileiou and Orologas), had lived in Italy during Fascism's rise and first decade in power. He moved to Greece in the 1930s, where he laid out a philosophical and cultural theory that emphasised notions of totality as well as Greek spatial and racial exceptionality.[35] He additionally contributed regularly to the bilingual periodical *Olimpo* (1936-1940), published in Thessaloniki. *Olimpo* was edited by another member of the *Makedonikes Imeres* circle, Stelios Xefloudas (1902-1984), along with the writer, translator, and Xefloudas's colleague at the Italian high school of Thessaloniki,

[31] Pelt 2001: 167. A similar understanding of the Metaxas regime can be deduced from an article published a little over a year after the beginning of the Axis occupation of Greece in the pro-Nazi newspaper *Nea Evropi*. Most probably authored by D. Th. Iliadis, who, along with Petros Orologas, owned the newspaper at the time (see Kokoris 2015), the article called for collaboration with Germany by claiming that this was the most appropriate decision based on the development of Greeks in 'recent years' as a 'national-minded, anti-communist, agricultural, enlightened nation' (D. I. 1942; quoted in Patrikiou 2009a: 228). Considering that Tsolakoglou's collaborationist government had been in office only one year, the author here seemed to allude to Metaxas's dictatorship –perhaps also implying continuity between the New State of Metaxas and the Hellenic State of Tsolakoglou.
[32] Mussolini 1936: 201ff.
[33] Roberts 2016: 114.
[34] Vasileiou 1938: 872 (footnote). Sarandaris responded to Vasileiou's reference to his mystical and anti-individualist philosophy with a brief letter to the periodical, wherein he claimed that Vasileiou had narrowed the meaning of his writings and he quoted in full the passage alluded to by Vasileiou (Sarandaris 1938).
[35] See *ΛΝΛ*: 1973. Even if one accepts the argument laid out by Alexis Ziras, who wrote the entry on Sarandaris in *ΛΝΛ*, that Sarandaris's theory 'did not have any political starting points whatsoever, as was the case with the totalitarian worldviews of fascism and Nazism', it is not hard to see why Vasileiou could interpret it this way.

Enzio Volture (1898-1982; penname of Lorenzo di Poppa). The periodical, which appeared to be part of Fascist Italy's New-Order aspirations in the Mediterranean, was founded by the Italian consul in Thessaloniki Pietro Quaroni. Moreover, it was subsidised by the Italian Ministry of Press and Propaganda and published several texts in favour of the Mussolini regime and –to a lesser extent– the Metaxas regime.[36]

To sum up, intellectuals and periodical publications that supported the Greek dictatorship's visions for the future reproduced its discourse on the positioning of the country in a new, more favourable and amicable international order, while stressing the New State's own non-imperialist character and promoting intra-Balkan cultural communication. Given the reconfigurations the regime had pursued within Greece, that new international order could potentially be a Nazi-dominated one. For some members of the *Makedonikes Imeres* circle and for the periodical *Nea Politiki* such a prospect was tempting, and they sought to steer state policy and the stance of intellectuals accordingly. Along with the regime's peaceful pretensions, several intellectuals supported its soft power strategy and presented alignment with its injunction for national introspection and self-discovery as both a defensive and an offensive weapon in the arena of cultural imperialism. Finally, this section has touched upon the pseudo-religious implications of New-Order-related discourse under Metaxas. I discuss the wider issue of the 'contamination' of the political with the religious in the domain of futural discourse more

[36] About *Olimpo* see Tsirpanlis 1987: 86-101, Kiskira-Kazantzi 2001, Siola 2010: 25-26, 530 (footnote 175), Kayioglou 2014. On the New Order implications of the periodical see e.g. Tsirpanlis 1987: 95. Indicative is also the periodical's subtitle from 1938 onwards (*Rivista mensile di Cultura Mediterranea*) and the fact that the editor Lorenzo di Poppa was relocated to Portugal in 1939, where he was appointed director of the Institute of Italian Culture at the University of Coimbra, while retaining his role in the periodical. In addition, another member of the periodical's editorial board, Luigi Omodeo, was a member of the National Fascist Party (see Tsirpanlis 1987: 20, footnote 3). As for Stelios Xefloudas's active involvement in this publication, Tsirpanlis and Kiskira-Kazantzi both effectively present him as a writer who had no relation to or was even critical of fascism and authoritarianism, despite the fact that he also signed the translation of laudatory poems dedicated to Mussolini or propaganda texts in favour of the Metaxas dictatorship aside from being responsible for the periodical's Greek sector. As evidence they reference personal accounts of people who were close to Xefloudas and books he published decades later (Tsirpanlis 1987: 93 (and footnote 2) & Kiskira-Kazantzi 2001: 250 and 260, endnote 16). Regarding pro-Mussolini and pro-Metaxas contributions see Tsirpanlis 198: 90, 92 and Kiskira-Kazantzi 2001: 260 (notes 14 and 15).

extensively in the next section, before I move to the discussion of the themes of palingenesis and new temporality in the last section.

9.2. POLITICAL VISIONS AND RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE

The intersection of political and religious registers was common both in nineteenth-century Greek nationalism[37] and in totalitarian regimes of the interwar period.[38] In the case of Metaxas, religion was first of all employed as an interpretative framework for politics. As early as during the Great War one finds elaborate accounts from such a perspective in his diaries, describing the dominant ideology on an international scale, which he identified with the liberal principle of equality, as the 'religion of humanity'.[39] Supporting Germany in the ongoing war, Metaxas discerned the emergence of a new 'religion' from within the German struggle and associated the new dominant ideology with the birth of a new civilisation.[40]

A second way in which religion intersected with politics lies in the (purposeful) contamination of political with (quasi-)religious discourse. During Metaxas's dictatorship, official propaganda was permeated with a juxtaposition of negative and positive apocalypticism, particularly early on.[41] On the one hand, the future was depicted as a time of destruction, decadence, and misery, with such apocalyptic projections closely linked to a significantly

[37] At the time 'πολλά από τα εθνικά συνθήματα τέμνονται με συνθήματα τα οποία ευνοούν την θρησκευτικότητα' (Dimaras 1985: 375). See also Stewart 1994 and Gazi 2009.

[38] For instance, both near the beginning and just before the ending of Benito Mussolini's (and Giovanni Gentile's) entry on 'The Doctrine of Fascism' in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* (1932) it is suggested that Fascism is a political religion: 'The Fascist conception of life is a religious one, in which man is viewed in his immanent relation to a higher law, endowed with an objective will transcending the individual and raising him to conscious membership of a spiritual society' – 'If each age has its doctrine, then innumerable symptoms indicate that the doctrine of our age is the Fascist. That it is vital is shown by the fact that it has aroused a faith; that this faith has conquered souls is shown by the fact that Fascism can point to its fallen heroes and its martyrs'. Literature on the topic of Fascism as political religion is very extensive. Emilio Gentile's work and the academic journal *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* (2000-2010; renamed *Politics, Religion & Ideology* in 2011) have been some of the most influential sources in the field.

[39] This could also be relevant to the fact that equality holds the same middle position in the triptych of the French Revolution *liberté, égalité, fraternité* as religion in the Greek conservative triptych *patris, thriskeia, oikoyeneia*.

[40] See Metaxas 1952: 456-461.

[41] Cf. Gunnar Hering's reference to 'a semantic system of polemic polarisation consisting in binary oppositions', which includes the recurring contradistinction between 'disintegration of the state and society' and 'salvation of the nation' (Hering 1996: 291).

exaggerated 'red threat'. On the other hand, the (historical or divinely-ordained) role of Metaxas and his authoritarian government were framed in terms of salvation, redemption, and regeneration. The more the degree of urgency of an intervention and change of course[42] were blown out of proportions and the country was presented as standing on the precipice of a catastrophe of apocalyptic dimensions (often compared to the Spanish civil war[43] or even alluded to as the end of Greece, which more often than not coincided with the domination of communism),[44] the more the messianic character of the dictator and the regime were brought to the spotlight.[45]

The 'turnaround' of 1936 was portrayed less as a regression –although in many areas it did represent an effort to restore a chimerical past of unbridled conservatism, patriarchy, and nationalism– and rather as an interim step back in order to gather new momentum towards a desired future. Hence the dictator's appeal to his fellow Greeks around two months after the coup to join him in 'dashing into a new future and not into the future of annihilation'.[46] This new future would witness the fulfilment of the 'national mission' and the creation of a new Hellenic civilisation of global radiance. Negative apocalypticism was therefore replaced with positive apocalypticism and out of the anteroom of the future dystopia, which was purportedly

[42] Significantly enough, the 4th-August coup was often referred to as *Metavoli*, a word which denoted regime change, but can also mean 'turnaround' or 'about-face', in which sense it is used in the military for instance.
[43] See e.g. Metaxas 1969a: 16, 200, 248 and Kambanis 1938e: 870. About the employment of the spectre of the Spanish civil war and the entirely (and, in all likelihood, deliberately) skewed rationale that underpinned it see here chapter 6.
[44] See for instance 'Ουδέν εθεωρείτο άξιον συντηρήσεως. Επροπαγανδίζετο ή επροφητεύετο η μεγάλη καταστροφή. Και ανεμένετο' ('To Neon Kratos' 1939: 421). This 1939 article was at the very least co-authored by Aristos Kambanis (along with Yeoryios Mantzoufas and Nikolaos Koumaros) and echoes older texts by Kambanis, such as Kambanis 1936d. See also Sitsa Karaiskaki's 1940 text, where the communist threat is not mentioned, but national unity (and class collaboration) is retrospectively presented as the force that has saved Greece: 'Στη σημερινή εποχή χωρίς αυτή ίσως να είχαμε κυλίσει ως λαός στον γκρεμνό. Ενώ απεναντίας στεκόμαστε ψηλά σήμερα μέσα στη γενική καταιγίδα μ' ένα ψυχικό ανάστημα που σπάνια έδειξε η Φυλή μας από τους αρχαίους χρόνους' (Kar. 1940a).
[45] For instance, Deputy Minister Theologos Nikoloudis penned the first text of *To Neon Kratos*, wherein he claimed with regard to Metaxas's ascension to power: 'Οποία τύχη, οποία θεία ευδοκία δι' ένα λαόν είναι, εις ώρας δυστυχίας και κρίσεως, ένας εξαιρετικός άνθρωπος, ένας μεγάλος κυβερνήτης' (Nikoloudis 1937: 2).
[46] Metaxas 1969a: 73.

bound to materialise had it not been for the intervention of Metaxas, there emerged a pathway towards a future national utopia.[47]

Unlike the German example, the idea of the leader as a prophet or Messiah connected to Divine Providence was not so assertively expressed in the Greek dictatorship.[48] Nonetheless, it features as a component of the 'Metaxas myth'. It was precisely enthusiastic religious believers like Melis Nikolaidis who seem to have promoted the mystical and pseudo-religious aspect of the regime and the dictator the most.[49] Divine Providence was not only renormalised as a concept fit for public and official discourse, but Metaxas was presented as a political prophet sent by Providence to proclaim and enact the rebirth of the Greek nation. The combination of the oracular and the creative in the person of Metaxas can also be glimpsed in other texts examined in this thesis, such as Kambanis's use of the biblical phrase 'the Logos became flesh' ('ο Λόγος σαρξ εγένετο'): the word of national unity was preached and subsequently turned into flesh by the same person, that is Metaxas.[50]

The dictator himself in a way projected this archetype of the *propheta* by frequently calling for (re)baptism.[51] What is more, he was cast as a 'grand national mystic', who brought a 'divine message', delivered a 'high preaching', and summoned the Greeks, and particularly the youth. The proclamation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, that is the new national ideal or

[47] A similar inversion –albeit more firmly located within a (pseudo-)religious milieu– was witnessed in interwar and WWII Germany, where a German utopia was juxtaposed to a Jewish dystopia and National Socialism was charged with soteriological connotations whereas the Weimar Republic was invested with an aura of eschatology, of degeneration, demise, and impending doom. See Redles 2011: 530-531, Griffin 2007.

[48] See Kershaw 1987: 82, 106-108, 213, 240, 243, 263. Adolf Hitler arguably represents the most characteristic example, but the Messianic was present also in Benito Mussolini's public image.

[49] Nikolaidis would often write texts about religion, the religious sentiment, religious celebrations etc. and his original literary work mainly revolved around Christian themes and figures. See further information in the Appendix.

[50] Kambanis 1938b: 259. Cf. Malakasis's letter to *To Neon Kratos* (Malakasis 1939a), where he calls Metaxas a 'creator' and describes him as a kind of Greek prophet pushing towards a better collective future. Repeating words coming from a religious register, such as faith and miracle, Malakasis draws his letter to a close thus: 'η εμπνευσμένη πίστη του, είναι κάτι *κατανυκτικό*. Και δεν εμπνέει μονάχα, παρασύρει και σαν στρόβιλος' (emphasis in the original).

[51] See e.g. Metaxas 1969a: 73: 'Πρέπει να γυρίσουμε πίσω εις τας πηγάς εκείνας από τας οποίας έρρευσε το νερό του Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού καθαρό και αγνό, και να αναβαπτισθούμε εκεί μέσα και να ξαναγίνουμε Έλληνες'. Cf. 'οφείλομεν να επαναστρέψομεν προς τα οπίσω, δια να επανεύρωμεν τον δρόμον μας' (Metaxas 1935: 382). See also the discussion below, section 10.3.

the new collective imperative for the future, was portrayed as the 'sacraments' offered to the nation by its 'mystic'. The communication of the leader's myth to the people was framed as a mystical act, a national communion.[52] Moreover, Metaxas was presented as a saviour, who rescued the nation and was effecting its redemption after the new beginning he had inaugurated.[53] Likewise, he was portrayed as if he was a divine figure or a national Messiah, while there were frequent references to the 'breath of life' that he breathed into the Greeks.[54] The translation of Metaxas's role into metaphysical terms is characteristically expressed in a 1940 article by Christos Angelomatis entitled 'Should we not bless him?'. The leader is portrayed as a Messiah who has saved the nation from the impending Armageddon, a mystic and 'preacher' who calls upon the people to listen and conform to his divine message. The ensuing developments and transformations are presented as a 'miracle', as a supernatural phenomenon like 'resurrection', most fitting for a Messiah.[55]

A relevant but more widespread theme that reverberated across Europe in the aftermath of the Great War was that humanity, the 'civilised world' or the West was going through a transitional era. This idea had taken hold amongst intellectual and political circles in Greece and most of Europe ever since the fin de siècle or even the mid-nineteenth century. It referred to 'what a growing number of Europeanized human beings experienced after 1850 as an indefinitely protracted phase of *liminoidality*'.[56] Such views rather constituted a *locus communis* in

[52] 'Πρώτοι εσείς ακούσατε το θείο μήνυμα, το υψηλό κήρυγμα του μεγάλου εθνικού μύστου, πρώτοι εσείς δεχτήκατε το τιμητικό κάλεσμά του, πρώτοι εσείς γεμίσατε από την ισχυρή και ζωογόνο πνοή του. Γι' αυτό και πρώτοι εσείς, μ' επικεφαλής τον πρώτο Νέο της Ελλάδος –την πιο αγνή, την πιο ζωντανή και πιο ωραία προσωποίησί σας– ετρέξατε στο ναό κι' εκαταθέσατε τα πολυτιμότερα δώρα της ψυχής σας, την πίστι σας, την αγνότητά σας, τον ενθουσιασμό σας, τη θέλησί σας, τη δύναμί σας, για να μπορέση ο μεγάλος μύστης να ετοιμάση και να προσφέρη στο Έθνος τη θεία μετάληψι του εξαγνισμού, της ανατάσεως, της αναγεννήσεως και της αναδημιουργίας, που όλα μαζί τα είπε: "Γ΄ Ελληνικός Πολιτισμός"' (Nikolaidis 1939g).
[53] Nikolaidis 1940j: 1384. Cf. Raftopoulos's 1939 where Metaxas is alluded to as 'ο λυτρωτής μας'. Alexandros Kanellopoulos too presented the dictator as a saviour, employing similar phrasing to Roumanis and indeed quoting Palamas again and presenting Metaxas as the Messiah whose coming had been foretold in *Ο δωδεκάλογος του γύφτου*: 'Περιμέναμε τον Προφήτη, τον Σωτήρα, τον Λυτρωτή, τον Μεγάλο Αναμενόμενο. Το προφήτευε και ο ποιητής στο Έθνος: / Και θ' ακούσης τη φωνή του λυτρωτή / Θα γδυθής της αμαρτίας το ντύμα' ([Kanellopoulos] 1939: 10).
[54] See e.g. Nikolaidis 1939g, 1939i, 1939j, 1940j, 1940k, 1940l. See also Angelis 2006: 198-201.
[55] A. 1940a.
[56] Griffin 2007: 107 (emphasis in the original).

intellectual discussions under Metaxas. For instance, the art critic Ilias Ziogas spoke of a 'transitional period, where values begin to assume a different depth from what they previously had', while the literary critic Yiannis Chatzinis referred to his time as 'a transitional era', 'an era of search and fermentation'.[57] The 'doctrine of transitional age' is also a recurring theme in the thought of Nikos Kazantzakis, one of Greece's intellectuals of the first half of the twentieth century most open to international developments and influences.[58]

In the case of movements or regimes that disseminated a discourse of palingenetic ultra-nationalism, such as the Metaxas dictatorship, this transition was also framed as a collective rite of passage, a ritual of revitalisation and purification, initiated by the Leader and performed by the national community. Rather significantly, most of the intellectual exponents of turn-of-the-century 'new politics' that paved the way for the New Right which emerged in the wake of the Great War, such as Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto, Maurice Barres, Julius Langbehn, and Rudyard Kipling, employed 'myths'. I will return to the significance of myths within the context of the dictatorship's futural projects in the next chapter. For now, it is important to note that these intellectuals 'looked on their manipulatory inventions as a means to a higher end, which was in every instance the purification and revival of a class, a nation, or a "race" that had a task to perform, a white man's burden to carry, or a destiny to fulfill'.[59]

As a matter of fact, 'national remediation' or hygiene was presented as the main objective of the Metaxas regime in the early period after the coup.[60] Such motifs were later instrumentalised in the context of the Third Hellenic Civilisation or the 'new' Greek art and literature that were to be created in the future under the auspices of the New State and following the

[57] Ziogas 1938b, Chatzinis 1938a. A further indicative example is the following passage: 'Έζησε και έδρασε σε μια εποχή, που έχει πολλές ομοιότητες με τη δική μας, εποχή μεταβατική ... . Ας κάνει ο αναγνώστης μια σύγκριση της εποχής του Απολλώνιου με τη δική μας και θα ιδεί πόσο μοιάζουν. Εποχές παρακμής ή κυοφορίας ενός νέου πολιτισμού;' (Kalamatianos 1939b).
[58] See Bien 1989 and Owens 2003.
[59] Weber 1965: 23.
[60] See for instance the 1 September 1936 editorial of the newspaper *Έθνος* entitled 'Εθνική εξυγίανσις'.

rallying cry of the National Governor. Moreover, notions of (mostly mental) health were so defused as criteria for literary criticism under Metaxas that literary scholarship has spoken of 'health as a Metaxist ideologeme'.[61] Beyond the sphere of literature or culture, one can even trace several instances of hygienic discourse applying on the Greek nation, people or political system in the texts and speeches of pro-regime intellectuals. Yeoryios Roumanis for example would present the Greek people as 'the great sick man, awaiting and anticipating its cure from its contemporary political leaders'.[62]

Aristos Kambanis's editorial on occasion of the second coup anniversary knitted together antiparliamentarianism and the idolisation of novelty and creativity as parts of a rhetoric of health and hygiene while indirectly alluding to public drainage works undertaken by the Metaxas government.[63] For Kambanis, the state itself was seen as a process of perpetual becoming, endowed with sanitising duties; this 'becoming' was a process of socio-political remediation. It is worth noting that, aside from promoting land reclamation projects during his dictatorship, Metaxas had also been responsible for drainage works his first time as a minister (1926).[64] Yet, the full scale of connotations such statements bore could be better comprehended if one takes into account the Fascist *bonifica* (reclamation or decontamination), which was applied to domains ranging from agriculture to culture and social engineering. In Italy 'land reclamation merely constituted the most concrete manifestation of the fascists' desire to purify the nation of all social and cultural pathology'.[65]

Nonetheless, religious discourse of 'purification' and 'baptism' was not only in dialogue with the regime's advertised achievements in draining both the swamp of

[61] See Dounia 2000: 219-225.
[62] Roumanis 1940b: 576.
[63] 'Απεστραγγίσθη – και απεξηράνθη τελείως το λιμνάζον τέλμα του κοινοβουλευτισμού. Νέα αύρα έπνευσεν επάνω από την καθαρθείσαν Ελληνικήν γην. Εις την εξυγιασμένην ατμόσφαιρα αναπνεύομεν, νέοι και πρεσβύται, τον ωξυγονωμένον αέρα της δημιουργίας' (Kambanis 1938e: 869). The metaphor of a 'new breeze' that cleansed and sanitised Greece was employed rather often in pro-regime discourse. See e.g. 'Τώρα, που η νέα πνοή έδιωξε τα μιάσματα και τα μολύσματα' (Kar. 1939b).
[64] See Boyiatzis 2012: 272 and Benos 2009: 60.
[65] Ben-Ghiat 2001: 4.

parliamentarianism and actual marshlands in the Greek countryside. Reclaiming physical space or transforming political space was coupled with a cleaning drive aimed at national time and tradition. In the 1938 editorial discussed above, Kambanis also pronounced that the current State made provision for the continuation of national tradition, 'rescuing everything worthy of rescue, demolishing everything worthy of demolition –conserving, but at the same time creating, effecting constant readjustments'.[66] This constitutes a remarkable example not only of the regime's time politics but also of its modernist aspect: its reading of the past (and by extension its efforts to survive the past into the present and future) was not monolithic and conservative but selective –and thus akin to fascism. This can also be seen as another aspect of the dictatorship's role as a 'gardening state'. According to Zygmunt Bauman, who coined the term 'gardening state', 'the gardening posture divides vegetation into "cultured plants" to be taken care of, and weeds to be exterminated'.[67]

Overall, the analysis here has demonstrated that futural political discourse under Metaxas was invested with religious connotations, aligning with a broader tendency in the New Right that could be traced across Europe. The main components of this discourse were apocalyptical allusions, notions of divine providence, prophetism and Messianism, as well as the framing of socio-political transition in terms of a rite of passage, revitalisation, and purification. The discussion in this section forms the basis for the treatment of religious themes in the following one, in connection to the themes of rebirth and new beginnings.

9.3. PALINGENESIS AND THE NEW TEMPORALITY

The 'sense of a new start or of a regeneration after a phase of crisis or decline which can be associated just as much with mystical (for example the Second Coming) as secular realities (for

[66] Kambanis 1938e: 869. Cf. Kambanis 1936c, where a first form of this sentence is found, without any mentions of the 'weeding' aspect yet.
[67] Bauman 1989: 18. The regime's gardening attitude in practical politics was epitomised in the treatment of communists.

example the New Germany)' is what Griffin designates as 'palingenesis'.[68] The Fourth-of-August regime promoted a similar conception of its own epochal significance and path-breaking task, as demonstrated for instance through EON's anthem 'Forward for a new Greece'.[69] Palingenesis is often seen in scholarship as the mythic core of fascism and in the case of Fourth-of-August discourse this myth may be seen as having a manifold application. Firstly, Greece was regenerated after a protracted period of degeneration, stalemate or crisis. Secondly, the palingenesis of Hellenism that started with the War of Independence and Kapodistrias was resumed. Thirdly, Greek culture was reborn in the modern era via the scheme of the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Last but not least, the Great Idea itself was resurrected, as EON's leader Alexandros Kanellopoulos had claimed, a claim I will get back to in the next chapter.

Petros Orologas expressed a wider sentiment amongst pro-regime literary critics and men of letters when he asserted in 1938 that 'our time is a time of new uplifts, a time of stretching after the blow we received from the Asia Minor catastrophe'.[70] It is in a similar spirit that Kostas Tournakis had first published *Nea Politiki* in the immediate aftermath of the 1922 debacle: as a reaction to the defeat, aspiring to national rebirth and new beginnings. This explains why his brother, Ioannis Tournakis, would recommence the periodical's publication a few months after the 1936 coup. Melis Nikolaidis and his periodical would repeat several lexemes related to rebirth and its concomitant prosperity *ad nauseam* throughout the dictatorial years.[71] In an article published the same year as Orologas's text, Aristos Kambanis would speak of the 'historic turnabout of August 1936' describing it as a 'new point of departure for national

[68] Griffin 1994: 32-33.
[69] The lyrics for EON's anthem 'Εμπρός για μιαν Ελλάδα νέα' were written by S. Metaxas and it was set to music by the conductor of the Athens Philharmonic, A. Papadimitriou (Panopoulou & Tsiknakis 1992: 147).
[70] Orologas 1938a: 26.
[71] The words 'αναγέννηση', 'εξυγίανση', '(πνευματική) ανάταση', '(ψυχικός) εξευγενισμός', 'άνθιση', 'πρόοδος', 'ακμή' all appear in Nikolaidis's second editorial (Nikolaidis 1936), but they can be traced in innumerable texts in his publication. For instance, some of these words, along with 'αναδημιουργία', appear in the same issue, in a note that was to be the first amongst several to start with a disclaimer regarding the periodical's non-involvement in politics ([Anon.] 1936b). Yet, the anonymous note upheld Metaxas's view of 'πραγματικά Ελληνόπουλα' and his vision for the kind of education that was needed in order to make all Greek children 'truly Greek' (about these issues see further discussion in chapter 11).

accomplishments' and declaring that 'the 4th August signifies the refoundation of Greece'.[72] In the very first text appearing in Kambanis's periodical upon its publication a year earlier, Theologos Nikoloudis had similarly maintained that 'today blows a wind of rebirth', whose inexorable 'end result' would be the Third Hellenic Civilisation.[73]

Having touched upon the relevance of palingenetic discourse for the analysis here, it would be useful to revisit the notion of rite of passage that was introduced in the previous section. Both rite of passage and palingenesis are encompassed in the 'revitalisation movement' theory, first expounded by the anthropologist Anthony Wallace, adopted by Roger Griffin and fit into his own schema for the understanding of fascism and other modernist political and cultural movements.[74] Central in this theory is the concept of 'mazeway resynthesis' or the formulation of the new cognitive map and route that leads a community to the future. The new mazeway that results from this reformulation is syncretic, containing both new and old building blocks.[75] This theory thus brings together the earlier mention of a partial 'effort to restore a chimerical past', the discussion on the cleanup of tradition that just preceded, and the revisiting of the Great Idea that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Moreover, the concept of the new mazeway is applicable to the Metaxas dictatorship and the discussion in this chapter, as it links religion to the wider themes of the future and of the attempt to install the community into new spatial and temporal coordinates. It may in fact serve as a framework based on which to approach additional statements by intellectuals, such as that made by I. M. Panayiotopoulos just before the third anniversary of the 1936 coup: 'The entire Nation, under the guidance and the assistance of the greatly powerful and imaginative

[72] 'ιστορική μεταβολή του Αυγούστου 1936' – 'νέα αφετηρία εθνικών πραγματοποιήσεων' (Kambanis 1938e: 869), 'η 4η Αυγούστου 1936 σημειώνει την αναθεμελίωσιν της Ελλάδος' (Kambanis 1938e: 870).
[73] 'μετά μακράν σκοτεινήν περίοδον δουλείας και παρακμής, πνέει σήμερον ο άνεμος μιας αναγεννήσεως. Αποτέλεσμα τελικόν της αναγεννήσεως αυτής δεν ημπορεί παρά να είναι ένας νέος πολιτισμός, ο τρίτος Ελληνικός πολιτισμός, εις τον οποίον πιστεύομεν και τον οποίον αναμένομεν ως μίαν αντικειμενικήν πραγματικότητα – πραγματικότητα ιστορικήν, η οποία θα απορρεύση φυσικώς και αναποτρέπτως μέσα από την εθνικήν πολιτικήν του νέου κράτους της4ης Αυγούστου' (Nikoloudis 1937a: 5).
[74] Griffin 2007: 108.
[75] Griffin 2007: 106-108.

Leader, *opens up new paths in its destinies* and shapes with its soul, its alacrity, and its toil the civilisation that will go down in History as a great turning point, a milestone of strength, as the "third Hellenic civilisation"'.[76] The same applies to Kostis Bastias's statements regarding Metaxas's cultural policy, which, as we will see in the next chapter, was intricately linked to the regime's futural project: 'Such then was the basis the Leader designated, such was the direction he gave, such were the horizons he showed us'.[77]

An expression similar to that of Panayiotopoulos is found in Metaxas's biography, published the previous year, in 1938 ('Ioannis Metaxas is at work ... in order to open up new paths in the Nation's history').[78] 1938 had also witnessed the beginning of operation of a new pro-regime monthly whose title translates as *New Paths* (*Neoi Dromoi*, 1938-1945). Near the end of that same year, a member of the conservative group that had founded that periodical, lieutenant general Yeoryios Nikolaidis (1874-1947), was appointed Minister of Railways and Cars by Metaxas.[79] That was essentially the Ministry of Transport, the same ministry that Ioannis Metaxas had assumed his first time in government (1926-1928). The ministry was responsible for the construction of the Greek road network, a task Metaxas had linked back then to 'civilising aims'.[80] The motif of the new 'pathways' towards the national future, which was identified with the inauguration of a new era in national history and with the creation of a new civilisation, was coupled with concerns for the actual roads of the country. Much like the religious theme of purification, this motif was in open dialogue with the regime's self-portrayal as a creator of infrastructure and carrier of civilisation, all pointing to its conceptualisation as a *Kulturstaat*. The dictatorship was purportedly not only creating a cognitive map that would

[76] Panayiotopoulos 1939g: 479 (emphasis added).
[77] Bastias 1939: 553.
[78] Kallonas 1938: 8.
[79] See the first 1939 issue of *Νέοι Δρόμοι*, where a half-page-sized photo of Yeoryios Nikolaidis, the news of his appointment, and a short biography are run on the first two pages.
[80] See Benos 2009: 59-135, particularly 63, 71-90.

'reconnect the nation forwards' but was also constructing the roads that would connect the core of the nation, that is the Greek countryside, with modernity.[81]

In addition to being presented as a time of rebirth, the post-coup period was projected as an era of radical 'new beginnings', as well as of transformation and coordinated efforts towards the achievement of the new Great Idea of Hellenism. It was the time of the *Metavoli*, of the regime change that would bring with it societal (and national) change, with 4 August 1936 constituting the moment of transition into a new era, and thus a turning point and an incision onto the tissue of national time. In Kambanis's 1938 article mentioned above, the author also quoted a relevant 1936 statement by Metaxas: 'On 4 August a colossal Change (Μεταβολή) occurred for Greece, opening a historic turning point for this nation, of which those of us who have lived over it may not have full awareness, but posterity will certainly asseverate the uttermost significance that it had for Greece'.[82]

Such beliefs were commonplace amongst interwar far-right regimes, as indicated for instance by the classic Nazi propaganda reel *Triumph of the Will*, where the year 1933 is dubbed as the 'beginning of German rebirth', or by the introduction of a new calendar in Fascist Italy on the blueprints of the French Revolution, the 'Fascist Era', starting with the Fascist seizure of power in 1922.[83] Likewise, the millenarian momentum of the New State was indicated through the selection of 4 August 1936 for a new –albeit unofficial– dating system. The 4th of August was marked as an epoch-making instance which was labelled as 'the first year of the third Hellenic civilisation' by some regime propagandists, as shown for instance by the title of a 1937 collection of Metaxas's speeches.[84] Nonetheless, this is simultaneously an example of not just ideological fluidity but also inconsistence and confusion. As evinced by Nikoloudis's

[81] See the discussion in section 10.3 about the term 'reconnection forwards'.
[82] Metaxas 1969a: 27. The passage is quoted slightly altered in Kambanis 1938e: 871.
[83] 'Beginn der deutschen Wiedergeburt' (*Triumph des Willens*, 1935). About the Fascist calendar see Cannistraro 1972: 132.
[84] See Metaxas, S. 1937.

remarks cited above, the establishment of the dictatorship did not represent the first year of the new civilisation. Rather the 'rebirth' that was ushered in by the coup stood in a cause-and-effect relation to the Third Hellenic Civilisation. In fact, Spandonidis and other pro-regime intellectuals depicted their generation as the one that laid the foundations for the Third Hellenic Civilisation, which, according to Metaxas, would be constructed by the new generation that was to be shaped within and by the regime.[85]

Furthermore, the dictatorship attempted to reshape national time and install the national community in a new temporality by annually repeating celebrations on the anniversary of events invested with foundational significance for the nation.[86] A ritual cycle enwrapped each calendar year, progressively connecting the past of the Greek Revolution (25 March) with the new beginning inaugurated by Metaxas (4 August) and the aspired-after future embodied in the National Youth Organisation (7 November). On top of the preponderance of regime-related dates in the inventory of national celebrations, propagandists would also explicitly link 25 March to 4 August, presenting the latter as the culmination of the nation's palingenetic drive that started with the former.[87]

The new temporality that Metaxas had inaugurated was also characterised by the recovery of the nation's 'divine mission' while –in consistence with the cultural ideal of a new Hellenic civilisation– everything cultural was presented as having a greater purpose or mission: literature, theatre, painting, public education, school libraries, periodicals, the provincial

[85] 'Ο κλήρος για την πραγματοποίηση της μεγάλης αυτής ιστορικής *καμπής προς την αξιοπρέπεια* ανήκει στη γενεά μας, η οποία κάτω από τη συμβολική αφετηρία της 4ης Αυγούστου έχει κληθή να αρχίση την ωραία πορεία προς το νέο δρόμο και τα νέα πεπρωμένα' (Spandonidis 1940d: 705). Cf. 'Διανύουμε, εμείς οι Έλληνες, μια πολύ κρίσιμη καμπή της πνευματικής μας ιστορίας, όλοι προσπαθούμε κάτι να δώσουμε, πρέπει όμως να προσέξουμε τώρα πολύ στην ποιότητα, στο είδος και στη μορφή της προσφοράς μας. Εφ' όσον βάσις του νεοελ. πολιτισμού που φιλοδοξούμε να δημιουργήσουμε, θ' αποτελεσθεί από υλικά που θ' αντιπροσωπεύουν το βαθύτερον εαυτό μας, μπορεί ν' αναμείνει κανείς έναν πολιτισμό του οποίου ο ρυθμός θάναι γνήσια ελληνικός' (Ziogas 1938c). See below, chapter 11 about the youth as future creators of the Third Hellenic Civilisation.

[86] About regime celebrations see Machera 1987: 131-144, Balta 1989: 75, Soursos 2015: 408ff.

[87] See e.g. Kar. 1939d: 1450. See also the discussion in part 1.

press etc.[88] Expressing an even more markedly metaphysical sentiment, Yeoryios Roumanis quoted verses from Palamas's *The Motionless Life* (*Ασάλευτη Ζωή*, 1904) in order to point to a new temporality and a new milieu, which was foretold in the work of the poet-cum-prophet, and was coming true in the Fourth-of-August regime.[89] Thus, the poetry of the 'prophet of a New Greece' was reframed by Roumanis as a prescience and anticipation of the current regime, and the dictatorship was presented as a materialisation of visions and utopias first articulated in national poetry.[90] The millenarian impetus of the regime and its desire to colonise the future was further articulated in statements by men of letters regarding the permanence of the government 'today –and tomorrow and evermore', the supposed fact that 'return to condemned institutions is impossible' and '*never again* will Greece remain ungoverned' or the designation of the new civilisation the regime had set out to create as the 'eternal Hellenic grandeur'.[91]

All in all, palingenetic discourse was widely circulated under Metaxas in a way that allows the understanding of Metaxist ideology in terms of a mazeway resynthesis. The idea of

[88] See Dimaras 1985: 383-388 about the diffusion and consolidation of this ideological construct in the Greek nineteenth century. For some claims regarding the 'higher mission' of cultural and educational institutions see e.g. O Theatis 1938; Ziogas 1938a: 13; Nikolaidis 1938b; [Anon.] 1938d; [Anon.] 1938h; K. 1936a. About the cultural character of the Third Hellenic Civilisation see below, section 10.1.

[89] The verses he quotes are the following: 'Και την ελεύθερη ψυχή και την καρδιά την άδεια / γέμισε και δυνάμωσε μ' όνειρο μόνο ένα: / Πώς να γεννήσης νέον καιρό που ν' αρχινά από σένα' and 'Από σταυρούς κι' από είδωλα να πλάσουμε ζητάμε / τη νέα ζωή που είν' άγνωρον ακόμα τ' όνομά της'. He then goes on to claim: 'Και να η 4η Αυγούστου που έρχεται με τον Φιλόσοφον Κυβερνήτην, τον εμπνευσμένον οδηγητήν και αναμορφωτήν αυτής της Χώρας να πραγματοποιήση τους στίχους αυτούς –να κάμη αλήθειαν αυτόν τον οραματισμόν του ωραίου Έλληνος ασκητού Βάρδου με τις κολοσσιαίες αληθώς προσπάθειές της να θέση τα θεμέλια και ν' αναγείρη το νέον οικοδόμημα μιας νέας ωραίας δυνατής και περήφανης Ελλάδας και ενός Νέου Πολιτισμού' (Roumanis 1940b: 577-578).

[90] Roumanis 1940b: 571. About Palamas not only as a national prophet but as a national leader, see above, chapter 8. A similar but much more official regime legitimisation attempt through the celebration of the legacy of national poets, the targeted nationalist reading of their work, and the presentation of the dictatorship as a realisation of their visions was undertaken in Fascist Italy. It focused, however, on poets who were long dead, which meant that the regime's approach to their work could go unopposed (see Martin 2005).

[91] 'Σήμερον –και αύριον και εις το διηνεκές– υπάρχει και θα υπάρχη κυβέρνησις μη φοβουμένη τα παρασκήνια' (Kambanis 1938b: 263); 'η επιστροφή εις καταδικασμένους θεσμούς είναι αδύνατος, … *ποτέ πλέον* η Ελλάς δεν θα μείνη ακυβέρνητος. Ποτέ πλέον δε θα γίνη θύμα της υπόπτου ρητορικής των δικολάβων και των σοφιστών' (Kambanis 1938b: 265; emphasis in the original); Angelomatis 1940d. Cf. the second stanza of the poem by D. S. Raftopoulos published in *I Neolaia*: 'Για να στηθούνε ατράνταχτοι *αιώνια* / απάνω οι θησαυροί του Ελληνισμού, / να προστατεύονται *για πάντ'* από τα χρόνια / του Τρίτου Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού' (Raftopoulos 1939; emphasis added). The prepositional phrase 'από τα χρόνια' is to be interpreted as a temporal qualifier, namely the meaning of the last two verses is not 'for them [=the treasures of Hellenism] to be protected *from* the years / of the Third Hellenic Civilisation' but 'to be protected *starting with* the years / of the Third Hellenic Civilisation'. Albeit awkwardly phrased, this emphasises the millenarian character of the envisaged new civilisation, which, on top of everything, will supposedly serve as a repository of intertemporal national values.

a new beginning was promoted alongside the claim that the regime constituted an incision or turning point in national time that introduced the Greek people into a new temporality. Following on the discussion in the previous section, we have in fact seen that such beliefs often carried pseudo-religious connotations.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that claims of altered spatiotemporal coordinates made up a significant part of Metaxist discourse that sought to legitimise the regime's existence and its visions for the future. Moreover, it has shown that both the state apparatus and newly emerging intermediary elites resorted to pseudo-religious discourse in order to both project and legitimise the novelty of the regime. The fact that the latter inaugurated a new period in the country's history as well as its claims to permanence were justified in metaphysical terms. The findings of this chapter also allow the conclusion that literary criticism was at times employed as an instrument of politico-ideological control and consensus, while even national poetry was appropriated so as to lend legitimacy to the regime's colonisation of the future and its cultural imperialist project.

More broadly, it can be inferred from the above analysis that notions of transition, rite of passage, creative destruction, convalescence, and purification can be used as conceptual tools for the framing of a wider period. From the perspective of many intellectuals and politicians who moved within the milieu of the New Right, what they were witnessing in the decades after the outbreak of the Great War constituted the 'birth pangs of a new era'. The twentieth century was seen as the century of totalitarianism, as opposed to the nineteenth century of liberalism. This perceived radical change in temporal terms was coupled with a major

reshuffling of spatial arrangements of power. The new era was largely identified with the New Order aspirations of fascist regimes.[92]

[92] Characteristic of this were the titles of two pro-Nazi publications that started circulation during the Axis occupation of Greece, in which intellectuals discussed in this thesis were heavily involved. One was a newspaper published in Thessaloniki under the title *New Europe* from April 1941 to October 1944 and co-owned from late 1941 to early 1942 by Petros Orologas, who continued contributing to it after that point. The other was a periodical published in Athens by Aristos Kambanis and Evangelos Kyriakis under the title *Twentieth Century* (1942). About *Νέα Ευρώπη* see Patrikiou 2009a, 2009b and Kokoris 2015. See also Patrikiou 2012 about anti-Semitic propaganda and the presentation of Jews as the enemies of the 'New Europe' in *Νέα Ευρώπη* and in another Thessalonian serial publication of the same milieu, the periodical *Νέοι Καιροί* (1942-1943). About *Εικοστός Αιών* see Argyriou 2003: 59-60, Kastrinaki 2005: 107, Boufea 2006: 510 and *ΛΝΛ*: 590.

- CHAPTER 10 -

The Third Hellenic Civilisation

It was Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos who 'introduced the terms *First Hellenism, Macedonian Hellenism, Christian Hellenism, Medieval Hellenism, Modern Hellenism*' and in doing so he 'constructed a teleological sequence in the Greek national history with long-term consequences'.[1] One such consequence was probably the emergence of the slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation in the late 1930s. And although the claim that the first formulation of the concept was made by Aristeidis Steryiadis in 1919 seems rather problematic,[2] when it comes to the content of the slogan, this could be yet another domain in which Metaxas indeed relied on the blueprints of Greek national liberalism.[3] He particularly borrowed or continued aspects of the programme of the 1928-1932 Venizelos government.[4] Most of the ideas associated with

[1] Liakos 2008: 210-211. Liakos also describes the distinguishing traits of these 'stages' of Hellenism in terms that have bearing on the discussion both here and in previous chapters (particularly chapter 3 and 9): 'The specific features that differentiate or, rather, give substance to each Hellenism are formed according to the "*historical order*" prescribed by Divine Providence, in other words, the "*mission*" or the "*final aim*." These orders are related to the nation's contribution to world history' (Liakos 2008: 210).

[2] Ploumidis 2016: 58. Ploumidis relies solely on the testimony of Michail L. Rodas found in his book on the Greek presence in Asia Minor from 1918 to 1922, wherein the author merely states that Steryiadis 'told all those who would visit him that Greece in Asia Minor will create the third or fourth Hellenic civilisation' (Rodas 1950: 87).

[3] Regarding the designation 'national liberalism' see, for instance, Mavrogordatos 1988: 10, where he posits at the core of Venizelism the 'dialectics' of 'bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois modernisation'.

[4] About the continuation of aspects of Venizelos's policies in the dictator's cultural ideal see also Matthiopoulos 1996: 699. It is worth noting that Metaxas's *Eleftherofrones* joined three coalition governments with Venizelist parties from 1926 to 1928, two of them after the Popular Party had left the 'all-party' government –excluding the communists– which was formed after the overthrow of Theodoros Pangalos's dictatorship. After Eleftherios Venizelos had quit Greek politics for private life in Paris and the monarchy was abolished in early 1924, Metaxas's firm decision to first officially acknowledge the Second Republic and then co-operate with Venizelists in office caused serious tensions within his party and turmoil throughout the anti-Venizelist camp. The gradual disintegration of the party spiked with the return of Venizelos in Greek politics in late 1928. In the elections of 19 August 1928 *Eleftherofrones* received a single seat in the parliament and Metaxas himself was not elected, declaring his intention to quit politics (Benos 2009: 59-138).

the Third Hellenic Civilisation had been laid out by Yeoryios Papandreou in the early 1930s, with Metaxas's speeches often mirroring some of Papandreou's statements almost verbatim.[5]

Even within the frames of the regime, however, the attribution of the paternity of the concept to Metaxas has rightly been disputed.[6] It was in keeping with the *Führerprinzip*, which the regime adopted as its organisational principle and promoted as the cornerstone of the ideal organisation of the entire nation, that every major idea or achievement was credited to Metaxas.[7] It was often claimed in pro-regime texts of later years that Metaxas had 'declared' or 'preached' (or imparted the slogan of) the Third Hellenic Civilisation to the Greek nation from day one.[8] This was a false claim on more than one counts:[9] Firstly, the term was introduced by Theologos Nikoloudis in December 1936 and it was not until well in 1937 that Metaxas made a public use of it.[10] Secondly, before the inception of the term, Metaxas had laid out his vision for the 'elevation of Greek civilisation/culture'. He considered this a 'great ideal for the Greek

[5] The most characteristic statements by Papandreou were the following ones: 'Δια την Ελλάδα, το Ιδανικόν του Πολιτισμού, η δημιουργία Εθνικής Αναγεννήσεως, η νέα αυτή "Μεγάλη Ιδέα" ημπορεί να ονομασθη κατ' εξοχήν Ελληνικόν Ιδανικόν, διότι αποτελεί μίαν αληθινήν επάνοδον εις τον εαυτόν της και ανοίγει δρόμον των πλέον υψηλών προορισμών' – 'όλη η προσπάθεια θα τείνη εις την δημιουργίαν Εθνικής Τέχνης' – 'ο ρόλος της Ελλάδος είναι αναμφισβητήτως ποιοτικός. Δεν δυνάμεθα να επιβάλλωμεν την δύναμιν μας δια της γεωγραφικής μας εκτάσεως. Δι' αυτό ο ρόλος μας ανήκει εις την πνευματικήν ποιότητα' – 'Η Ελλάς εάν έχη και εις το μέλλον ένα προορισμόν ούτος θα είναι η αναβίωσις του παλαιού της προορισμού η επαλήθευσις, η επικράτησις της πνευματικής της εκδηλώσεως' (quoted in Matthiopoulos 1996: 189-190).

[6] See Matthiopoulos 1996: 698.

[7] Something similar happened for instance with state literature awards: During the second award ceremony, Kostis Bastias 'revealed in his speech that these awards are owed to the personal inspiration and initiative of the Premier' ([Anon.] 1940g), which Melis Nikolaidis and other pro-regime intellectuals would then repeat as a fact, whereas in 1938 Nikolaidis's periodical had announced the following: 'Με την πρωτοβουλία της Διευθύνσεως Γραμμάτων και Τεχνών έγεινε και δημοσιεύεται αυτές τις μέρες Νόμος, σύμφωνα με τον οποίο θα χορηγούνται κάθε χρόνο τέσσερα λογοτεχνικά βραβεία συνολικού ποσού δρχ. 150.000 στα καλλίτερα βιβλία πεζογραφίας, ποιήσεως, κριτικής και θεάτρου' ([Anon.] 1938h). At any rate, state literature awards had been conceived many years earlier and were first legislated under Venizelos in the early '30s (see Niaros 2017). About the *Führerprinzip* see here, chapter 8.

[8] See for instance Nikolaidis 1940i: 145, Nikolaidis 1940j: 1384 and Metaxas 1969a: 239 (the latter is a speech given by Metaxas on 31 August 1937).

[9] False statements regarding even the most recent past with the intention to promote the image of the leader and/or a particular historical pattern were not uncommon in other authoritarian regimes of the time. 'Alternative facts' were at times disseminated and repeated until accepted as reality. Apart from various conspiracy theories and other elaborate fake accounts, one characteristic example in Nazi Germany is that of Hitler's 'prophecy' that an imminent generalised conflict would lead to the extermination not of the German (as 'world Jewry' would have it) but of the Jewish 'race'. This supposed divination was made in early 1939, yet Hitler would often refer to it during WWII as having been made on the first day of the war (1 September 1939), subsuming it *a posteriori* under the grand scheme of the ongoing war. See Redles 2005: 166-167 and Redles 2011: 543.

[10] Nikoloudis 1936. See Matthiopoulos 1996: 698-699.

people' and a major aim for his government. On that occasion he did associate this 'cultural elevation' with 'modern civilisation', which should not be envisaged as 'expansive' but as 'intensive'. This is something that reverberates through several texts discussing the Third Hellenic Civilisation and the way towards its creation. Nevertheless, that speech was given more than a month after the 4th of August 1936.[11]

In this chapter, texts where synonyms of the term were used will also be discussed: 'New Hellenic Civilisation' was the most common one, but other synonyms such as 'Third Hellenism', 'new national civilisation', 'high' (υψηλός) or 'higher civilisation' (ανώτερος πολιτισμός) were employed as well. Characteristic is the case of Melis Nikolaidis, who only used synonym terms for a long time, which he then gradually fitted into the regime's agenda ever more openly, until he started frequently using the term Third Hellenic Civilisation as well. At this point it should also be noted that literary critics treated most aspects of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, but generally tended to ignore the identification of the new civilisation with the peasantry, that was part of official propaganda.[12] The Thessalonian Petros Spandonidis clamoured for an extension of literary activity in the periphery and presented the 'expansion of cultural/spiritual Greece as far as the furthest Greek province and as far as the furthest Greek village' as a prerequisite for the creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Even Spandonidis, however, did not explicitly associate the new civilisation with the peasantry or speak of a Peasants Civilisation. On the contrary, he laid emphasis on urban centres and the middle class.[13] Only Melis Nikolaidis made few relevant remarks within his numerous texts on the Greek

[11] Metaxas 1969a: 35.

[12] See Ploumidis 2011: 108-110 and Ploumidis 2016: 62-63. Still, the identification of the Third Hellenic Civilisation with an 'Agricultural Civilisation' was rather marginal in comparison to the projection of its cultural substance.

[13] Spandonidis 1940d: 702-703. As a matter of fact, the relation between villages and culture he implies is one of import of culture into the village (p. 703), while his calls to extend literary activity, that is the fostering of original cultural creation, concerns the 'big urban centres' of the periphery (p. 702). Nonetheless, such a call did coincide with the third of the seven injunctions laid out by Y. D. Mylonas ('Head of Ideological Enlightenment [=Propaganda] of the Central Administration of E.O.N.') in a late 1939 text in *I Neolaia*, which repeatedly associated the Third or New Hellenic Civilisation with the farmers: 'Ν' αγωνισθούμε για την αφύπνιση συνειδήσεων και τη διάδοσι πολιτισμού ανάμεσα στους ανθρώπους της ύπαιθρής μας χώρας' (Mylonas 1939).

countryside, which he had proclaimed one of the main concerns of his periodical from the very first.[14]

The chapter is divided into four sections which offer examples from texts of literary critics and other cultural operators alongside official dictatorial discourse in order to demonstrate how these intellectuals interacted with the regime in the construction and dissemination of four crucial and largely intertwined aspects of the Third Hellenic Civilisation. They thus provided legitimacy to one of the regime's principal propaganda innovations and a core myth of the new ideological hegemony it was trying to form, therefore extending legitimacy to the dictatorship itself. These four aspects of the ideological construct were its implication with the cultural, the spiritual and the utopian, its conceptualisation as a reborn Great Idea, the identification of the means to its achievement with a process of re-activating inherent 'Greekness', and its association with notions of synthesis and modernity.

10.1. CULTURE AND THE MYTHIC CORE

The fall of the Great Idea meant the disintegration of a symbolic system of transcendence, exposing the terror of the void.[15] In its resounding collapse, it unleashed forces of existential angst that were partly responsible for the turn of many intellectuals to the political left in the years immediately thereafter and for the melancholic outlook of the 1920s poetic generation.[16] Faced with existential terror and the apparent meaninglessness of life, some of the most significant writers of this latter group turned to what Baudelaire would call 'artificial paradises' and/or ultimately to suicide (Kostas Karyotakis, Mitsos Papanikolaou, Napoleon Lapathiotis). It was the same mindset that led Karyotakis in his famous 'Preveza' (1928) to proclaim even

[14] About the discussion on the Greek land and the countryside, where several texts from *Pnevmatiki Zoi* are discussed see chapter 4. One of the most characteristic ones is actually found in a text he published not in his own periodical but in *I Neolea* (Nikolaidis 1939i; see here below, note 955). According to Ploumidis (2011: 109) this article reproduced the ideas of the Nazi ideologue and Minister of Agriculture, Walther Darré.
[15] See Boyiatzis 2012. Cf. Machera 1987: 37, 52.
[16] About the 1920s generation see Steryiopoulos 1980, Filokyprou 2009 and Dounia 2012.

the source of all life, the sun, as 'death within deaths', a mere veneer concealing the Real of futility and death.[17]

For the Metaxas regime, the response was to advance a terror management system in at least two ways: through the promotion of religion and through the intensification of nationalism. Christianity holds out the prospect of literal immortality, offering a form of transcendence which contends that death is not the end but there is an afterlife (which indeed shall be inconceivably perfect and complete for the virtuous). Nationalism provides a form of 'symbolic immortality' stemming from a sense of 'being part of something larger, more significant, and more enduring than ourselves', of 'entities [that] will continue to exist long after our deaths'.[18] From the perspective of Terror Management Theory, self-esteem and faith in one's cultural worldviews serve as a bulwark against this crippling fear of death.[19] This is pertinent both to Metaxas's expressed aim to imbue the Greeks with collective self-confidence as well as faith or even fanaticism and to the discussion in the previous chapter about negative apocalypticism and Metaxist utterances regarding the imminent death of Greece. It is of particular relevance in this conjunction that Metaxism has been classified as a form of 'Christian nationalism' and the Third Hellenic Civilisation has been closely linked to 'Helleno-Christianity'.[20] Since the whole construct of Helleno-Christianity could be seen as a defence mechanism against the fear of death, the future objective of the regime amounted to a creation of a solid system of terror management.

[17] On the contrary, as discussed in chapter 4, the sun occupied a central position in the ideological approach of the Greek land and nation by many nationalist writers.
[18] Pyszczynski 2004: 831. National Socialism focused on this idea of symbolic immortality, which it presented as part of how nature works (also in the sense that people inherit genes from their ancestors and carry their own genes forward through their offspring) and not as something symbolic, while it actually denounced the (Judaeo)Christian idea of an afterlife and it was to an extent antagonistic with established religion, especially with Judaeo-Christianity, but less so with its Lutheran variant, which some Nazis viewed as Nordic and cleansed of Jewish influences.
[19] Pyszczynski 2004: 833.
[20] See Mazower 1998: 29 and Kallis 2007. Also, Zelepos (2014: 150) claims that the term represented a 'perpetuation of the "Helleno-Christian" conceptual coupling of the 19th century'.

Both the near-identification of the Third Hellenic Civilisation with the construct of Helleno-Christianity and death anxiety is traced in Stratis Doukas's 2 March 1940 text.[21] Doukas is perhaps the intellectual who suggested the mythic core of the Third Hellenic Civilisation most typically. In his contribution to *I Neolea*, which is an open statement of intention to contribute to the cultural and educational efforts of EON, the writer referred to 'Third Hellenism'.[22] He defined it as the 'fatherland/homeland' turned into an 'immortal image' and linked it with the vision of the national future laid out by Dionysios Solomos in one of the national poet's late poetic fragments, the apocalyptic *Carmen Seculare*.[23]

Yet, Stratis Doukas was not the only cultural operator to lend credence to the utopian and mythical traits that the regime attributed to its ideological construct of the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Others pointed to the function of the construct as a new 'sacred canopy' that would act as a myth, unifying and stabilising the social system, while providing the social body with signposts for the way forward.[24] I. M. Panayiotopoulos, writing on the occasion of the third anniversary of the 'great national celebration of the 4th August', demonstrated his fascination with the utopian aspects of the regime and its project of wholesale transformation and elevation of Greek culture. He recognised the overarching character of the new ideal (like a sacred canopy) over all activities and targets of contemporary Greece. Additionally, he traced the deep

[21] 'Η πατρίδα μας για να είναι "όμορφη, πλούσια κι' άπαρτη και σεβαστή κι' αγία" πρέπει να γίνη "χώρος συγκεκριμένος", Βυζαντινή εικόνα ψηφιδωτή, ομηρικό τραγούδι, χιλιοτραγουδισμένο, μυριαγάπητο· άλλως θα παραμένη ακαθιέρωτη. Ο εχθρός ή ο χρόνος θα μπορούσαν να την αφανίσουν, ο θάνατος να την καταβάλη. Τρίτος Ελληνισμός θα πη τρίτη αθάνατη εικόνα. Την εικόνα αυτή την ωραματίστηκε ο ποιητής. Φτάνει να την καταστήσουμε πραγματικότητα' (Doukas 1940b: 674).

[22] The index in Andreiomenos 2012 lists this text among those where the Third Hellenic Civilisation is mentioned, which means that Andreiomenos also sees the term 'Third Hellenism' as a synonym for the Third Hellenic Civilisation.

[23] Doukas's text is replete with verses by Solomos, but neither the poet's name nor the title of *Carmen Seculare* (which is quoted almost in its entirety) is mentioned. Doukas explicitly refers to Papadiamandis as a model, owing to the latter's success in 'eternalising' his home island, Skiathos (see also chapter 4). About the mythical, mobilising dynamic of the image see Michaud 2004; see also the Sorelian conception of the myth in O'Sullivan 1983, Carroll 1996, Antliff 2007. An indication of how squarely located within the right-wing approach to myth and myth-making Doukas's discourse is here can be found in Roland Barthes' *Mythologies*, where myth is associated predominantly with the Right, whose language is posited as aiming at 'eternalizing' (Barthes 1972: 150).

[24] About the term 'sacred canopy' see Griffin 2007. Cf. Kitromilidis 2007 about the role of collective myths in social cohesion.

allure of the 'slogan of the third Hellenic civilisation' precisely in the near-unattainability of its content, in its utopian dynamic. At the same time, Panayiotopoulos presented this ideal as the culmination of pre-1936 national(ist) longings.[25]

This patently metaphysical aspect of the new Great Idea was manifested not only in its association with religion,[26] but also through its designation as 'πνευματικός πολιτισμός', since *pnevmatikos* can mean cultural or intellectual, but also spiritual. The aim of the creation of a more advanced spiritual civilisation or culture in Greece is commonplace in the political and intellectual discourse of the time. One example of that is *Nea Politiki*, which –amongst those examined in this thesis– is the periodical that is most pronouncedly oriented towards technology and practical policies outside the sphere of arts and letters. Even *Nea Politiki*, however, recommenced its publication in 1937 with a programmatic statement that includes an expression of its own intention to contribute to the creation of a 'higher spiritual civilisation'.[27] Relevant to that is a speech to Athens technicians given by the dictator that same year, wherein Metaxas urged them to act in accordance with the premise that 'the technical civilisation of a country has to be inspired by a deeper ideal. This is the expression of the country's moral civilisation', where the moral corresponds to the cultural and the spiritual.[28]

Thus, the new civilisation that the regime was aspiring to and that all Greeks and especially intellectuals and artists were called to work towards was identified with *Kultur* rather

[25] 'όλα αυτά, και τα κατορθωμένα και τα προβλεπόμενα, να τα τοποθετήσουμε, το καθένα στη θέση του, μέσα στο ευρύχωρο πλαίσιο του τρίτου νεοελληνικού πολιτισμού, που έβαλε και ακρογωνιαίο λιθάρι και ακραίο σκοπό των προσπαθειών του το Ν. Κράτος' – 'το σύνθημα του τρίτου ελληνικού πολιτισμού δεν είναι σύνθημα ριγμένο στην τύχη· είναι ένα τεράστιο και δυσαπόκτητο, μα και για τούτο περισσότερο ελκυστικό ιδεώδες, άξιο του Έθνους, των παραδόσεών του και των πεπρωμένων του· είναι η τελειωτική έκφραση του διάχυτου πόθου που δέσμιος πάλευε μέσα στα σπλάχνα όσων ένοιωθαν, αγαπούσαν και πονούσαν τον τόπο τούτο, χωρίς και να μπορούν να δώσουν μια διέξοδο στην οποιαδήποτε δραστηριότητά τους' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 54).

[26] See for instance Kambanis 1936b and the discussion above, in section 9.2.

[27] 'Η "**Νέα Πολιτική**" … θέλει μελετήση κατά πρώτον και κύριον λόγον το οικονομικόν πρόβλημα και το στενώς προς αυτό συνυφασμένον δημογραφικόν και δώση λύσεις ριζικάς βάσει μιας αντικειμενικής ερεύνης κατευθυνομένης όμως από πνεύμα απολύτου αισιοδοξίας δια την δυνατότητα δημιουργίας περιβάλλοντος κοινωνικο-οικονομικού ευνοϊκού δια την ανάπτυξιν ενός ανωτέρου πνευματικού πολιτισμού' (I diefthynsis 1937: 2; bold in the original). Something similar was included in the programmatic statements of other Metaxist periodicals as well, such as *To Neon Kratos*: 'Θα εργασθώμεν δια την θεμελίωσιν ενός νέου Ελληνικού πολιτισμού πνευματικού' (I Syntaxis 1939: 7).

[28] Metaxas 1969: 240.

than *Zivilisation*.[29] The polarity *Zivilisation* versus *Kultur* had been a key component of German nationalist and conservative thought since the eighteenth century that was raised to a central position in the ideological universe of 'conservative revolution' in the twentieth century. Its presence in Metaxas's belief system is long-standing, as evinced through the thoughts recorded in his personal diaries already decades before his assumption of power, but it was also widespread amongst Greek intellectuals in the interwar years and earlier.[30] *Kultur*, as opposed to *Zivilisation*, has generally been associated with the 'accentuation of ethnic differences' and the 'cultivation of extraordinary personality', but its most relevant aspects for the discussion here are encapsulated in the notions of 'morality' and 'true virtue' as well as in the focus on 'spiritual/intellectual, artistic, and religious elements'.[31] More succinctly, the distinction between the two is that between internal and external, between spirit and matter or idealism and materialism.

Myriads of statements juxtaposing *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* or their correlatives such as soul and cold rationality, privileging the former, and criticising the emphasis of the era on the latter are to be found in public discourse under Metaxas.[32] A further issue regarding this polarity that warrants attention points to the problems of ideological transfer and translation from Germany. The Greek language does not differentiate between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. Both are denoted using the word 'πολιτισμός'. In the relevant discussion under Metaxas –but not only then– this often necessitated the addition of adjectives like 'material/mechanical/technical' and 'spiritual/intellectual' in order for the two concepts to be distinguished. At times it led to the employment of the German terms themselves, either in their original form or in a more or less

[29] The fact that the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' was a non-aggressive and cultural nationalism is often pointed out in relevant secondary literature. See e.g. Petrakis 2006: 128 and Ploumidis 2016: 58.
[30] See Boyiatzis 2012: 196-201, Boyiatzis 2014.
[31] Boyiatzis 2012: 196. For a discussion of these two terms in the Greek context see also Tziovas 1986: 320-322.
[32] See Boyiatzis 2014. Some further examples not discussed in Boyiatzis's article are Nikolaidis 1938a, Nikolaidis 1939f: 241, and Nikolaidis 1940a. Apart from relevant texts, one also traces public speeches given by pro-Metaxas intellectuals on this topic. Again, an indicative example is that of Melis Nikolaidis, who was invited to deliver a lecture in Larisa on 27 February 1938 entitled 'Υλικός και πνευματικός πολιτισμός' (see [Anon.] 1938k).

phonetic transliteration into the Greek alphabet. What is more, attempts were at times made to create neologisms that could somewhat render these terms in Greek. On top of unequivocally postulating the superiority and exclusive authenticity of *Kultur*, Sitsa Karaiskaki's first fully signed contribution to *I Neolea* displays a combination of all three linguistic strategies for tackling this perplexing question.[33] She rendered *Kultur* as 'αληθινός πολιτισμός', 'γνήσιος και βαθύς πολιτισμός', 'Κουλτούρ' and *Zivilisation* as 'εκπολιτισμός', 'τεχνικός πολιτισμός', 'Τσιβιλιζασιόν'. On the one hand, she presented culture as 'eternal' and a thread of national continuity replete with values. On the other hand, she painted a rather comical picture of civilisation as aping that calls to mind *nouveau riche* attitudes, which, in their misguided effort to break with the past, end up in buffoonery.[34]

Against this background, the promotion of the arts was not understood as ordinary cultural politics, but as a requirement for the accomplishment of the new ideal: so that art 'becomes the daily bread of the People – the People of the Third Hellenic Civilisation'.[35] Likewise, the biblical cliché 'man shall not live by bread alone' (ουκ επ' άρτω μόνον ζήσεται άνθρωπος) was quoted countless times by regime propagandists, more often than not in relation to art and cultural matters.[36] The usage of the phrase in the context of the interwar Far Right is underpinned by the idea of the human as a totality and the common strand that unites all these references is anti-materialism as not just a religious creed but as a political stance.[37] An example of how cultural education and intellectual cultivation also took on a starkly political role, as part of a wholesale crusade against decadence, is provided in the call for papers sent out to potential

[33] Texts undersigned with 'K.' appear already in the second issue of *I Neolea*. Their stated anti-communist intention, their fervent propagandistic tone, their literary and rhetorical features, as well as their subtle anti-Semitism suggest that the texts were probably penned by Karaiskaki.
[34] Karaiskaki-Nikolaou 1938: 154.
[35] 'ο Αρχηγός νοεί αλλά και προβαίνει εις την ενίσχυσιν των τεχνιτών και της Τέχνης, ώστε αυτή να καταστή ο επιούσιος άρτος του Λαού – του Λαού του Γ΄ Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού' ([Anon.] 1939b).
[36] See e.g. Kambanis 1936c, Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 55, Kambanis 1939: 129, [Anon.] 1940a: 4, Roumanis 1940b: 576. Cf. '[ο Λαός] δικαιούται της πνευματικής όπως και της σωματικής τροφής' (Kyrou 1937b: 107).
[37] As Kambanis (1939: 129) said, 'ο άνθρωπος δεν είναι μόνον ζώον οικονομικόν'. Cf. Bastias 1939: 550, 552, where art is presented as an 'organic need'. The notion of totality preoccupied the far-right literary intelligentsia in western Europe at that time. See Carroll 1996 on the example of France.

contributors prior to the publication of *To Neon Kratos*. They represented measures for the defence of culture, components of a struggle that implicitly or explicitly was pointed to in several speech acts by regime functionaries and Metaxist intellectuals. That was the struggle of the 'encultured' against the 'brutes', of the 'civilised' against the 'barbarians', of *Kultur* against the absolute domination of *Zivilisation*, of idealism against materialism, of spirit against matter.[38]

This is the same Manichean logic that we have seen with regard to conceptualisations of history in chapter two. At the same time, the identification of 'πολιτισμός' with *Kultur* more generally was further normalised through the projection of aesthetic, spiritual, and cultural aptitude as a perennial trait of the Greek race that I discussed in chapter three.[39] From this logically stemmed that Greece had a civilising mission: 'the world awaits again the New Light from immortal Greece'.[40] Given the consensus on literature as the crown of civilisation amongst cultural operators, its role in this civilising mission was paramount.[41]

The advocation of *Kultur* is correlative with a professed 'return to idealism' congruent also with spiritualism or modes of understanding beyond rationalism. It could even be argued

[38] See I Syntaxis 1939.

[39] See e.g. 'Αν όλ' οι άνθρωποι έχουν την φυσικήν αυτή κλίσι προς το ωραίον, για τον Έλληνα η κλίσι αυτή είναι το ιδιαίτερο χαρακτηριστικό της φυλής, και μάλιστα χαρακτηριστικό, που την εδόξασε και θα την δοξάζη για πάντα' ([Anon.] 1940a: 6), 'η χώρα μας … έζησε κι' εμεγαλούργησε πάντοτε με τη δύναμη του πνεύματος' ([Anon.] 1939u), and 'Η προσήλωσις προς τις πνευματικές αξίες υπήρξεν ο κλήρος μας και η προ αιώνων αποστολή μας. Η πνευματική ζωή και δημιουργία εστάθη εις όλους τους αιώνας το μέγα όπλον της αθανάτου Ελλάδος. Με το πνεύμα έζησε, εγαλουχήθη, επεβλήθη, εδοξάσθη και υπηρέτησε ολόκληρον την ανθρωπότητα. Με το πνεύμα και την τέχνην θέλει και πάλιν και πάντοτε να υπηρετήση τον άνθρωπον' (Nikolaidis 1940i: 146). This passage is a slightly altered quotation taken from Metaxas's 2 July 1940 speech at the premiere of the Royal Theatre in Thessaloniki. See Metaxas 1969b: 321. See also the discussion in chapter 3.

[40] 'ο Κόσμος και πάλιν περιμένει το Νέον Φως από την αθάνατη Ελλάδα' (Roumanis 1940b: 580). Roumanis moreover urged 'ας δουλέψουμε να φωτίσουμε και πάλιν τον Κόσμον όλον με το Νέον Ελληνικόν πνευματικόν και ψυχικόν φως'.

[41] See for instance the designation of literature as the 'highest and most perfect expression of human civilisation' according to the Greeks ([Anon.] 1938e); a 'mirror' of civilisation (Chatzinis 1940a: 90); and the 'principal, most valuable and most stable bearer and factor of civilisation' ([Anon.] 1938g). The dictator himself declared literature an 'εθνική υπόθεση' in 1938 and Nikolaidis praised his statements as akin to those of a litterateur (see above, chapter 8). Nikolaidis even asserted: 'Κι' όμως τα ωραία και βαθυστόχαστα αυτά λόγια δεν είναι παρά οι μετρημένες, οι ζυγισμένες, οι μελετημένες σκέψεις του Κυβερνήτου, που μέσα στα πλατειά πλαίσια των αναμορφωτικών προσπαθειών του εθεώρησε αναγκαίο να τοποθετήσει σε τόσο εξέχουσα, σε τόσο καίρια θέση τη Λογοτεχνία. … Οι Έλληνες λογοτέχνες και γενικότερα ο Ελληνικός πνευματικός κόσμος δεν μπορεί παρά να είναι υπερήφανος κι' ευτυχής για την τόσο επίσημη και σοβαρή αναγνώριση της μεγάλης συμβολής του στην πνευματικήν αναγέννηση και στον πολιτισμό της χώρας μας. Και να κάμει το καθήκον του' (Nikolaidis 1938f).

that under Metaxas the Greek tradition of idealist literary criticism was often combined with the advocacy of idealism as a (political, social and ethical) philosophy. Overall, religiousness and idealism seem to still have had a strong holding in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Greece. This could be associated with the fact that literary critics at times portrayed the 'return of idealism' as already in force, whilst at times they projected this return as a desire, target or plan. Doing away with what was seen as detrimental materialist influences was made easier by the fact that the disintegration of traditional idealist frameworks had not progressed so much in Greece as in the West. As we will see in the next section, this had particular implications for the effort to revisit the national ideal: the new ideal was effectively a syncretic concept making use of existing alongside new ideological elements.

In one of the earliest contributions to the post-1922 intellectual quest for a new national ideal published in the periodical *Ermis* in late 1926, Aristos Kambanis had described the *Megali Idea* as the 'fertile *myth*' enveloping all national activity.[42] One could fruitfully compare here Eric Michaud's analysis of the Nazi slogan '*Deutschland erwache*' as an 'awakening into the myth', that is as an injunction for the German nation to regain the strength to believe in its national myth and experience the national fantasy in every aspect of its life.[43] National Socialist idealism was intimately linked to the notion of faith, as exemplified by the very title of the first major Nazi propaganda film, *The Victory of Faith* (1933), directed by Leni Riefenstahl. As a matter of fact, Hitler had declared the retrieval of faith and self-confidence of the German people as his main objective.[44] Metaxas followed suit by proclaiming that he wanted to restore the Greeks' ability to have faith in themselves and in the exceptionalism of their nation. Faith in the nation was officialised and reinforced through public rituals. Marches, parades, gatherings and other public events fulfilled multiple symbolic functions. They displayed the discipline of

[42] Kambanis 1926: 21 (emphasis in the original).
[43] Michaud 2004: 84-101 (esp. 92)
[44] See Chapoutot 2016: 5

the regime's followers, provided a sense of national unity and cohesion, and performatively recalled the ideal future.[45] At the same time they constituted the externalisation and formalisation of 'racial faith' and optimism.

As also shown in the discussion on past civilisations, all great civilisations according to Metaxist discourse rely on great ideals.[46] This is an anti-materialist outlook that could be read against the basic premise of Marxism. What would be part of the 'superstructure' from a Marxist perspective is presented here as the 'base'. The primacy of systems of belief is corroborated by the central position assigned to education (indoctrination) in preparation for the Third Hellenic Civilisation.[47] The modernist dynamic of the Fourth-of-August phenomenon is in this case manifested in the organised endeavour to create a civilisation, in the will to 'make history'. The First and Second Hellenic Civilisation did not emanate from a programmatic intervention into the fabric of time with the intention to found a civilisation. Their durability or grandeur, however, was associated with the ideology and values they came to nurture. In the previous chapter, I pointed to the motif of purification and a broader 'gardening' attitude as central in future-oriented Metaxist discourse. For a Third Hellenic Civilisation one would have to combine whatever is healthy and useful from the living present and recent –mostly cultural– history with cherry-picking and 'reactivation' of the best amongst the virtues and ideals of the previous two civilisations that could be fitted into the modern times. I will return to this point later on in this chapter discussing it in conjunction with the notion of synthesis.

To conclude, the construct of the Third Hellenic Civilisation was closely linked to the domain of culture and invested with metaphysical or utopian qualities. It relied on an idealist conception of historical change and took on the role of the mythic core of Metaxist ideology. As has been suggested, such myths are intended to be performative; yet, for the new national

[45] See Michaud 2004. Much like the Hitler salute, events could point now to the future national utopia, they were both rehearsals of and expressions of belief in the millennial Reich.
[46] See chapter 2.
[47] See below section 11.2.

ideal to be performed, it first had to be internalised by the collective imaginary. Perhaps one of the safest methods to achieve this is to incorporate in the new myth attributes of old and already internalised collective myths or to present it as a modern rebirth of the previous national myth. This is the topic of the next section.

10.2. THE NATIONAL IDEAL REVISITED

Metaxism constituted in part a revival of nineteenth-century nationalism at a time when the questions of Turkish domination and irredentism had been superseded by historical events.[48] However, the vision of instituting a Western-style state remained and was reconfigured based on the ideological milieu of the time and on previous alternatives to the Great Idea. Amongst such alternatives one could count the 'Model Kingdom in the Orient', Ion Dragoumis's futural visions, and the rhetoric of a Balkan Federation, whose bearing on futural discourse we have seen in the previous chapter. Under Metaxas, the *Megali Idea* was presented as reconstituted through the slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, but without its expansive implications.

It is of relevance here that the Great Idea has been labelled as a form of 'Pan-Hellenism'.[49] Seen from this perspective, the predominant Greek national ideal is to an extent comparable to Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, or even Fascist Italy's self-styling as the high patron of Mediterranean and romance-speaking populations. Under Metaxas, Panhellenic visions did not disappear but were mitigated and funnelled into a non-expansive direction. In a significant 1935 article in the newspaper *I Kathimerini* Metaxas laid out his Panhellenic vision employing a metaphor of tentacles (or constellation) around the national centre represented by the Greek state, which he probably took up from Ion Dragoumis's *Hellenic Civilisation* (1913).[50] Greek

[48] On the principal concerns of Greek nationalism in the nineteenth century see Hering 2006: 11-62.
[49] Based on Pollis 1996, Peristianis and Mavris (2012: 147, footnote 6) claim that 'The *Megali Idea* (or *Panhellenism*) refers to the vision of reconstituting the Byzantine Empire by extending the authority of the "mother-state" to include any areas where there were Greeks'.
[50] That was Metaxas's seventieth and conclusive article in the plethoric and rather extraordinary public debate on the history of the National Schism that transpired between him and Venizelos within the course of just a few

communities beyond the borders were not to be part of the Greek territory, but channels of constant communication and co-ordination between 'central' or 'internal' and 'peripheral' or 'external' Hellenism should be opened or extended. Such a pursuit during Metaxas's dictatorship is suggested through the outreach of EON to the Greek community in Egypt.

Already prior to 4 August 1936, Ioannis Metaxas had expressed himself in favour of the need to replace the bankrupt 'Great Idea' with a new national ideal. Similar pursuits characterised intellectual circles throughout the bourgeois camp, who often focused on the creation of a distinct modern Greek civilisation, which would be able to compete with the 'great nations' of the time at the cultural level.[51] As suggested in the previous section, the demise of the *Megali Idea* had engendered existential angst, which contributed to the diffusion of pessimist and internationalist aesthetics and ideas amongst several intellectuals in the 1920s. Reaction against this phenomenon intensified in the 1930s, as demonstrated for instance in the backlash against 'Karyotakism' and the alleged return of religiousness in Greek poetry.[52] In dialogue with the quests of bourgeois intellectuals, the regime moved in the direction of erecting a new 'sacred canopy' that would take upon the role previously played by the Great Idea.

Shortly before the third anniversary of the coup the editorial of *To Neon Kratos* stated: 'The 4 of August has gifted a new Great Idea to the Nation: The idea of the creation of a new spiritual civilisation –a civilisation both national and autonomous'.[53] One finds similar statements in aesthetic essays and book reviews, such as Angelomatis's reference to the 'Great Idea in the cultural/spiritual form that it has today'.[54] In the Second EON Convention in 1940,

months, from late 1934 to early 1935. Therein Metaxas (1935: 382) used the word 'πλόκαμοι', which in ancient Greek can mean constellation but in modern Greek would be understood as tentacles, painting an image of the Greek state as some sort of cephalopod. Ion Dragoumis had employed the following simile with regard to the Greek state: 'Το κράτος και τώρα ακόμη μοιάζει οχταποδιού που δε νοιώθει τα άκρα του, και γι' αυτό παραδέρνει' (Idas 1913: 9).

[51] See Tziovas 1989.

[52] See Dounia 2000 and Paraschos 1938a.

[53] 'To Neon Kratos' 1939: 424.

[54] Angelomatis 1939b. Some further indicative examples are '*Αν η "Μεγάλη Ιδέα" ενός μεγάλου Κράτους διαλύθηκε, μια άλλη "Μεγάλη Ιδέα", της πνευματικής αποστολής μας, της "Μεγάλης Αποστολής" του γένους μας, ας θερμάνη την κάθε ελληνική καρδιά κι ας γίνη η μόνη σκέψι κι ο μόνος σκοπός της ζωής μας: η πίστι ότι απ' την*

Alexandros Kanellopoulos claimed that the Third Hellenic Civilisation was the resurrection of the eternal Great Idea of Hellenism.[55] Palingenetic discourse, discussed in the previous chapter, was thus related not only to the nation or society, but to the new ideal as well. The objective of a Third Hellenic Civilisation became a vehicle for recreating the Greek nation and was supposed to be itself the recreated form of the *Megali Idea*. Although Kanellopoulos's statements were clearly a form of mythmaking, they point to a useful line of thought, as it was from the 1850s onwards that the concept acquired its irredentist connotations.[56] In its early stage, the Great Idea did not have any military implications. It was rather a civilising or missionary ideal that assigned Greece the role of a transmitter of Western civilisation to the Orient.[57]

Ioannis Kolettis, who is usually credited with the promulgation of the *Megali Idea* in the 1840s, had claimed that Greece had to repay the West for lending it the 'light' of civilisation. It would supposedly do so by carrying the torch to the Orient. That amounted to a justification of the Great Idea as an enterprise of cultural colonialism undertaken by Greece on behalf of Europe. Two decades later, the annexation of territories entailed in the transfigured *Megali Idea* would even be justified as a necessity in order for the Greek state to be able to repay its financial debt to the Great Powers and to sustain the cost incurred by the institution of

Ελλάδα θα ανατείλη και πάλι μια μέρα ο Φάρος που θα λάμψη για μια ακόμη φορά και θα φωτίση όλη την Οικουμένη. Όποιος εμπνέεται από αυτή τη νέα "Μεγάλην Ιδέα", θα δη πόσο ασήμαντα είναι όλα τα ταπεινά πάθη και οι μωρές αντιζηλίες' (Zoras 1937: 139; emphasis in the original) and 'Μιλάμε για τον τρίτο ελληνικό πολιτισμό … γιαυτή τη "Μεγάλη Ιδέα"' (Myrivilis 1940d: 532).

[55] 'Σήμερον αυτή η γνησία και πανομοιότυπος εις την ουσίαν της, ανεξαρτήτως της μορφής της, από της εμφανίσεώς του συνοδεύουσα τον Ελληνισμόν Μεγάλη Ιδέα, η τοσαύτας υποστάσα παραποιήσεις και ήτις ανέκαθεν υπήρξε και υπάρχει ως η αυθεντική διατύπωσις της αξιώσεως, δια την ύπαρξιν της τοιαύτης Ελληνικής αυτοκρατορίας, εμφανίζεται υπό την σύγχρονον μορφήν της, την μορφήν του ιδεώδους του Τρίτου Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού. Είναι η ίδια Μεγάλη Ιδέα, είναι η ίδια Ιδέα της Ελληνικής Αυτοκρατορίας, την οποίαν μαζί με το Έθνος αναγέννησεν η 4η Αυγούστου…' (Alexandros Kanellopoulos in the proceedings of the Second EON Congress, p. 45, quoted in Linardatos 1966: 172). Linardatos considers such manifestations of 'πατριδοκαπηλεία' and 'μεγαλοϊδεατισμός' as a means to obfuscate the fact that the regime was selling out the country's assets to foreign interests instead of utilising its resources to render it truly viable and independent, all the while constituting a negation of Greece's 'national, democratic, and cultural traditions' (Linardatos 1966: 173).

[56] See Kremmydas 2010: 37-40.

[57] See Kremmydas 2010: 25, 28, and passim. In this context, the 'Orient' signified the Balkans and Asia Minor, largely coinciding with the Ottoman Empire. It was probably such preconceptions of Greek exceptionalism, cultural superiority, and missionary role combined with the precedent of the Eastern Roman Empire that underpinned visions like Dragoumis's 'Eastern Empire', where Greeks and Turks would initially be co-rulers until the 'inevitable' Hellenisation of the state.

monarchy (which had been imposed by the Great Powers in the first place). Some texts in the press would go as far as to call for the intervention of the European powers to this effect.[58] The underlying rationale was that, if the European Powers wanted Greece to become a 'modern' state, as they had indicated by undersigning its autonomy and serving as its Protecting Powers, they had to mediate so that Greece be granted the 'vital space' or the necessary 'colonies' that would provide for its growth and transformation into such a state. The 'reborn Great idea' under Metaxas was dissociated from such territorial claims but reignited lofty aspirations for cultural colonialism, something that was also discussed in the previous chapter with regard to New-Order-related discourse.

Although the national ideology proclaimed Greek exceptionalism and superiority, its constantly transfigured core myth more often than not constituted a plea for acceptance from the 'civilised West' and a vision of playing the role of the 'little white man'. It is indicative that the Fourth-of-August regime reached particularly for the Greek community in Egypt. The latter's financial and intellectual elites subscribed to a narrative that positioned the Greek community in the intermediate space of the 'little white man' between the British colonial authorities and the indigenous Arab population.[59] Nonetheless, the outreach in Egypt, as indicated for instance by the establishment of EON formations in the Greek community and the celebrated trip of EON members from Egypt to Athens, can be seen as a particularly restrained application of Metaxas's 'tentacles' metaphor that was discussed at the beginning of the section.[60] The Panhellenic policy of the regime was largely limited to Greek communities residing in areas on which the Greek state had never laid claim.

Even though this ideological construct echoes previous indigenous futural slogans and conceptualisations and draws on the national past, the Third Hellenic Civilisation is not a

[58] See Kremmydas 2010: 66-69.
[59] See Marangoulis 2011.
[60] See Linardatos 1988: 190-191

conservative vision of restoration. In this respect, it is indicative that it demonstrates elective affinities not so much with the *Megali Idea* in its military conceptualisation, which was predominant in the first quarter of the twentieth century, but rather with the modernising, national(ist) liberal tradition of the nineteenth century and the interwar years. The former envisaged territorial expansion with the supposed final aim of reconstituting the Byzantine Empire, whereas the latter focused on modernisation and demonstration of Greek supremacy and exceptionalism through domestic achievements. Manifestations of this latter strand are the concept of the 'model kingdom in the Orient' and the proposals for a 'new Great Idea' put forward in the last years of Venizelos's premiership. Such a combination of a nationalist and modernising or modernist dynamic is also seen in Italian Fascism, which claimed the legacy of the *Risorgimento*, a product of nineteenth-century Italian liberalism.[61]

I have already touched upon some affinities of the regime's future-related propaganda with the conception of the 'model kingdom' in the previous chapter, particularly its peaceful character.[62] Other possible affinities include the advancement of regional supremacy and equal participation in the international sphere due to domestic achievements, as well as the assumption of a civilising mission. As the dictator had asseverated early on following the coup, 'we want to live in peace. We want to make a Hellenic civilisation. We do not want the foreign civilisations. We want our own civilisation, which we may push and make superior to all the civilisations in this corner of Europe'.[63]

[61] See Woolf 1965 and Forlenza & Thomassen 2011. In Giovanni Gentile's characteristic 1931 text 'Risorgimento e Fascismo' the philosopher of Fascism asserts the continuity between Fascism and 'the "true" liberalism of the Risorgimento' (Turi 1995: 410). Perhaps the nineteenth century was the century of liberalism from this perspective as well: liberalism at the time served as the vehicle for national causes. In most of Europe, the nationalist dynamic of liberalism had run its course by the late nineteenth century and new political identities and ideological currents emerged to take on its role. The twentieth century was allegedly the time of authoritarianism/totalitarianism, or so believed Mussolini, Hitler, Metaxas and several of their followers.

[62] On the peaceful character of the 'model kingdom' construct see e.g. Skopetea 1988: 313.

[63] 'Θέλομεν να ζήσωμεν εν ειρήνη. Θέλομεν να κάμωμεν πολιτισμόν Ελληνικόν. Δεν θέλομεν τους ξένους πολιτισμούς. Θέλομεν ιδικόν μας πολιτισμόν, τον οποίον να τον ωθήσωμεν και να τον κάμωμεν ανώτερον απ' όλους τους πολιτισμούς εις την άκρην αυτήν της Ευρώπης' ('Λόγος εκφωνηθείς εις Κομοτηνήν (7 Οκτωβρίου 1936)', Metaxas 1969a: 53).

Beside his 'civilising nationalism', progress and equalisation (but not assimilation) with Europe, were parts of Metaxas's agenda that could be paralleled to connotations of the 'model kingdom'.[64] Already in the immediate aftermath of the Asia Minor Catastrophe, upon the official inauguration of his political party (*Eleftherofrones*) and its programme, Metaxas emphasised 'recreation' in the interior with a view to 'progress, which we consider as the principal means for Hellenism's domination in the Orient'.[65] His later dictatorship in reality did not significantly move the country towards industrialisation. On the contrary, it conformed to diachronic decisions of Greek interwar capitalist elites and British interests, while continuing the bureaucratic industrial policy of pre-dictatorial governments.[66]

However, the Fourth-of-August regime proclaimed its intention to pursue industrial policy, aimed at autarchy, military preparation, and a planned economy open to private initiative but supposedly not directed by market forces or laissez faire economics.[67] What is more, dictatorial discourse did not shun a specific type of modernisation in keeping with the Greek tradition nor mechanisation in the productive sector it wanted the Greek economy and society to rely on, namely agriculture.[68] In addition, despite stressing the indigenous, official discourse demonstrated the desire for Greece to be a member of the 'civilised' or western world. Sterile imitation of foreign models and internationalism were strongly renounced, but the regime itself on the one hand drew on foreign models and on the other hand wanted to transform Greece with the western gaze always in mind.

Yet, the new ideal did not only demonstrate affinities with the 'model kingdom' or the various conceptualisations of the Great Idea. It also relied on twentieth-century intellectual

[64] See Skopetea 1988: 222, 347.
[65] 'Την ανάγκη αναδημιουργίας εσωτερικού βίου εξασφαλίζοντος την εθνικήν και κοινωνικήν πρόοδον του λαού, πρόοδον, την οποίαν θεωρούμεν ως το κυριώτερον μέσον επικρατήσεως του ελληνισμού εν Ανατολή' (Metaxas 1964: 778).
[66] See Chatziiosif 1993: 308-319; Marketos 2006.
[67] See Chatziiosif 1993.
[68] See Machera 1987: 33 and Breyianni 1999.

quests for a national ideal that focused on the domain of culture. The most significant blueprint in this connection was Ion Dragoumis and his book *Hellenic Civilisation*, which resonates through several of the texts that are discussed in the following section. In fact, it has been claimed that the statements by Yeoryios Papandreou, which I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter as being a basis for Metaxas's proclamation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, are traced back to Ion Dragoumis's ideas and signal the beginning of the liberal turn towards 'Greekness'.[69] It is noteworthy that Dragoumis was also explicitly enlisted in the genealogy of liberal intellectuals around the same period (e.g. Yiorgos Theotokas), while he had greatly influenced Metaxas's beliefs on the Greek nation and culture.[70]

This is perhaps an indication that, despite the National Schism, an ideological synthesis was already underway within the bourgeois camp. It moreover attests to the fact that the reignition of political passions between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists after the bankruptcy of 1932 was a result of the intention to hold on to power and/or establish a one-party state rather than of any substantial ideological differences.[71] Finally, it assists the understanding of the parallels between the last Venizelos government (that was dubbed a 'parliamentary dictatorship')[72] and the Metaxas regime, as well as of the reasons why intellectuals who used to support the Venizelos government, such as Kostis Bastias or Spyros Melas, went on to lend their

[69] See Matthiopoulos 1996: 190.
[70] See Ladoyianni 1993: 43, 133 and Boyiatzis 2012: 327-328 about Theotokas; Tsakonas 1972 and Xifaras 1996 about Metaxas. See Mazis 2014 for a recent discussion of Dragoumis's life, his political activity and his ideological composition. Unfortunately, Mazis's study does not delve into the afterlife of Dragoumis's ideas and thus does not touch upon the influence of his thought on important interwar personages such as Theotokas and Metaxas.
[71] Already in the first period of the National Schism, Metaxas would rather justifiably claim that 'Εις την Ελλάδα εν μόνον κόμμα υπάρχει· το αστικόν' and 'Το μόνον εν Ελλάδι κόμμα, διαιρείται εις μερίδας, αι οποίαι όλαι έχουσι σχεδόν το αυτό πρόγραμμα. Διαφέρουσι μεταξύ των μόνον κατά το πρόσωπον του Αρχηγού' (Metaxas 1952: 637-638)
[72] Although the term was first used in relation to the high percentage of votes and the even higher percentage of seats Venizelos's party received in the 1928 elections, Greek liberalism did take a turn towards authoritarianism those years, at the level of both ideology and policy (see Alivizatos 1983, Benos 2009: 134-135, 138, and Boyiatzis 2012: 124-125; see also here, Introduction).

support to the Fourth-August dictatorship and promote the slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation.[73]

The middle interwar period witnessed a plethora of cultural projects and proposals that aspired to take on the role of the new Great Idea. Spyridon Loverdos for example had posed the creation of 'Modern Greek rhythm' as the new ideal, something that prompted a broad debate on the possibility for the creation of a Modern Greek style and the ways to its achievement.[74] Several men of letters and politicians participated in a survey that *Ergasia* undertook in 1932 on the basis of Loverdos's article, such as Alexandros Papanastasiou and Zacharias Papandoniou.[75] Under Metaxas such aspirations would come back to circulation and be promoted by various critics and intellectuals, such as Yiannis Chatzinis, who posited national style as the 'greatest conquest' for a people and advocated cultural contact with the West as a prerequisite for the consolidation of a Modern Greek style.[76]

What is more, the '1930s generation' had explicitly aspired not only to shape this Modern Greek rhythm or style according to its own aesthetic and ideological choices, but also to export it, to use it as 'currency' in order to be accepted in the global/European(ised) cultural market. As will be shown more extensively in the last section, this association of the introvert concept of Greekness with extrovert aims of equal participation in the international cultural arena was also championed by pro-regime intellectuals, many of whom have often been associated with the '1930s generation', such as Panayiotopoulos, Myrivilis, and Chatzikyriakos-Gikas.

[73] My observation here is in line with Kayialis's claim that it was primarily the former Venizelists who actively supported the regime and reproduced its propaganda, 'such as the stereotypes about the Third Hellenic Civilisation' (Kayialis 2007: 16-17).
[74] Loverdos 1931. Loverdos served as vice-president of the Supreme Economic Council of Greece at the time and became minister of economics in 1933 in the Tsaldaris cabinet. He was a widely respected public figure and known art collector who had established the company 'Greek arts', producing mainly household goods based on 'Greek designs', while he was also the primary funder of the fascist and anti-Semitic organisation National Union of Greece (EEE) (see Boyiatzis 2012: 135, 189).
[75] Papanastasiou 1932 and Papandoniou 1932.
[76] Chatzinis 1938b.

The late 1920s and early 1930s had also witnessed quests for a new 'sacred canopy' that had even more markedly international tenor, such as Sikelianos's Delphic Idea or '*New humanism,* the ideological capstone of the socio-political arrangement that Theotokas advanced', which 'aspired to fill the void of meaning in Greece and Europe'.[77] New humanism represented a wider trend in Europe in the 1930s and several relevant texts of foreign intellectuals were published in *Nea Politiki* during the dictatorship, mostly in translation by Elli Lambridi who advocated herself similar views.[78] As we will see below, several Metaxist intellectuals associated the Third Hellenic Civilisation with Europe, the West or global civilisation, even at times explicitly setting the objective to turn the new Greek civilisation into the spiritual foundation of (western) modern civilisation.

Early on after the August coup Metaxas identified his conception of the new civilisation with the way in which ancient Greeks allegedly meant civilisation and he defined it as a 'great ideal, because it gives to the people … the feeling of domination, domination not over territories, but of civilisation, domination over others through its civilisation'.[79] In his 1935 article mentioned at the beginning of this section, the soon-to-be dictator had claimed that the ancient conception of the Great Idea was that of 'Hellenism's supremacy wherever it is located and acts'.[80] Petros Spandonidis echoed Metaxas when he stressed the small size of the country as a

[77] Boyiatzis 2010: 677.
[78] See e.g. Lambridi 1937, Mann 1938, Duhamel 1938.
[79] 'ακριβώς όπως ηννόησαν τον πολιτισμόν οι αρχαίοι Έλληνες' – 'μέγα ιδανικόν, διότι δίδει εις τον λαόν … το συναίσθημα της κυριαρχίας, κυριαρχίας ουχί εδαφών, αλλά πολιτισμού, κυριαρχίας επί των άλλων δια του πολιτισμού του' (Metaxas 1969a: 35).
[80] 'Δεν κατέπεσεν η Μεγάλη Ιδέα. Κατέπεσεν η προσπάθεια προς πραγματοποίησιν αυτής υπό εδαφικήν μορφήν. Κατέπεσεν η Ελληνο-βυζαντινή αντίληψις αυτής. Δεν κατέπεσεν όμως η αρχαία αντίληψις αυτής, η αντίληψις της κυριαρχίας του Ελληνισμού, όπου ευρίσκεται και δρα. § Το σφάλμα είνε, ότι ενομίσαμεν ότι ημπορούμεν κατ' αναλογίαν με άλλα έθνη, να περιλάβωμεν εντός ορίων εδαφικών τον Ελληνισμόν. Ενώ ακριβώς η ιδιοφυΐα της φυλής μας είνε το να μη έχη όρια. Εις όλην την ιστορίαν μας, πλην του Βυζαντίου, οι Έλληνες απετελούμεν ένα ή πλειότερα ισχυρά κρατικά κέντρα με όρια, ακτινοβολούντα όμως πλοκάμους προς πάσας τας κατευθύνσεις, και απωτάτας ακόμη. … Χάρις εις πολιτικήν εσφαλμένην, πολλοί από τους πλοκάμους αυτούς απεκόπησαν. Αλλά θα ξαναγίνουν πάλιν. Διότι προς τα εκεί μας οδηγεί η φυλετική μας ιδιοφυΐα και η μοίρα μας. … Αλλά τότε ποία θα είνε η ενότης ενός τοιούτου Ελληνισμού; Ο πολιτισμός του! Και με πολιτισμόν δεν εννοούμεν τον μηχανικόν πολιτισμόν, αλλά τον βαθύτερον πολιτισμόν, όστις είνε η εκ των εγκάτων της φυλής μας εκδήλωσις της ζωτικότητος, της ιδιοφυΐας της και της ισχύος της. § Έργον λοιπόν του κέντρου του Ελληνισμού, του ζώντος εντός των ορίων του ελευθέρου κράτους είνε να αναδημιουργήση τον πολιτισμόν αυτόν, τον οποίον να ακτινοβολήση και εις τα τελευταία άκρα των πλοκάμων της ελληνικής φυλής, συνδέοντα ούτω στερεώς όλα τα τμήματα της φυλής

reason to focus on culture, while he elaborated on the blueprint of antiquity. The critic called on his contemporaries to 'intensify as much as possible, to the furthest limit, every effort for cultural/spiritual recreation with a view to the future conquest'.[81]

This conceptualisation of civilisation and cultural accomplishments as an instrument for an idiosyncratic form of what was described in the previous chapter as 'cultural imperialism' is not peculiar to Spandonidis. For instance, it is typified in Roumanis's pompous 1940 text about Palamas published in *Nea Politiki*. After repeatedly associating the poet with the 'colossal endeavour of cultural regeneration for which the New State of the 4th of August so unflaggingly works', Roumanis concluded his argumentation for the national significance of Palamas's work, claiming that 'spirit equals power, imposition, victory, conquest'.[82]

That early 1935 article by Metaxas is to be seen as the first, preliminary postulation of the national ideal that Metaxas wanted to replace the irredentist conceptualisation of the *Megali Idea* with. A typewritten 1940 textbook by Spyros S. Manouras, presumably an EON officer from Rethymno engaged in ideological training of other EON members, provides some insight into this assumption. The book, entitled *The New State: Its Ideals and Work,* includes a brief chapter on the Third Hellenic Civilisation which starts with a passage from that very article by Metaxas. The author explicitly associated Metaxas's 1935 text with the new civilisation that was declared during the dictatorship. After analysing the notions of spiritual and material

εις εν συνειδητόν σύνολον. Όπως επίσης έργον του αυτού κέντρου του Ελληνισμού, του ζώντος εντός των ορίων του ελευθέρου κράτους, είνε να δημιουργήση και την κρατικήν εκείνην ισχύν και δυναμικότητα δια της οποίας να δύναται να υπερασπίζη την ύπαρξιν, την ζωήν και την εξέλιξιν των εκτός ορίων πλοκάμων του' (Metaxas 1935: 382-383).

[81] 'Και ακριβώς αυτό το πνευματικό μέλλον είναι εκείνο, στο οποίο τείνει η Ελλάδα ως εθνική υπόσταση. Η Ελλάδα είναι μια χώρα μικρή. Η καθυπόταξη των φυσικών και υλικών δυνάμεων σ' αυτή είναι αδύνατη, διότι της λείπουν όλες οι φυσικές και οικονομικές προϋποθέσεις. Δεν της μένει παρά ν' ακολουθήση τη μοίρα και την ιστορία της. Στ' αρχαία χρόνια ένας λαός 5 περίπου εκατομμυρίων είχεν εκπολιτίσει τη Δύση και την Ανατολή με τη δύναμη της ποιότητας και όχι με την επιβολή της ποσότητας. Σήμερα ό,τι μας μένει ως μοίρα και χρέος είναι να σκεφθούμε καλά και ν' αποφασίσουμε μια για πάντα γι' αυτό που πρέπει να γίνη και που θα θεμελειώση τον τρίτο ελληνικό πολιτισμό και τη νέα ακμή. Πρέπει να πιστέψουμε στον εαυτό μας και στον προορισμό μας. Να εντείνουμε όσο είναι δυνατό, στο έσχατο όριο κάθε προσπάθεια για πνευματική αναδημιουργία με προοπτική τη μελλοντική κατάκτηση' (Spandonidis 1940d: 702-703).

[82] Roumanis 1940b: 576.

civilisation and linking the National State with the former, Manouras averred that 'it was such a civilisation that the Leader of our New Greece was dreaming of, when 5 years ago (1935) he pitched the rallying slogan of a deeper Civilisation'.[83] In fact, this claim could be used to explain the otherwise nonsensical statement by Metaxas on 4 August 1939 that he had launched 'our new great ideal' for a new civilisation 'almost 5 years ago'.[84]

Overall, this section has argued that the Third Hellenic Civilisation demonstrates many affinities with previous ideas and debates regarding the Greek national ideal and was even explicitly associated with the Great Idea. The fact that it was to an extent a return to or a renormalisation of older concepts played a significant role amongst intellectuals and perhaps accounts partially for the connection of the regime to older literati like Grigorios Xenopoulos or Nikolaos Laskaris. The psychological factor, albeit hard to examine and measure, should not be ignored. In a period of profound instability, uncertainty, and volatility, recognising old ideological constructs in the new ideal must have provided a sense of security, of being 'at home', for several intellectuals.[85]

10.3. 'RECONNECTION FORWARDS'

As suggested in the first part of the thesis, several statements by pro-regime intellectuals were part of or closely linked to the understanding of the national past as a basis or leaven for the future civilisation. One could compare here Ion Dragoumis's argument with regard to the creation of a new Greek civilisation expressed at an earlier time of national optimism. Just after the end of the Balkan Wars, when a similar sense of rebirth, new beginnings, and reconnection forwards under charismatic leadership (Eleftherios Venizelos and Constantine I) had emerged,

[83] GAK EON F13 0401.
[84] Metaxas 1969b: 123. The relevant part of Metaxas's speech is quoted by Matthiopoulos (1996: 701), who justifiably found this statement incomprehensible while asserting that his efforts to find references to the Third Hellenic Civilisation by Metaxas in the years 1934-1935 did not produce any results (Matthiopoulos 1996: 701, footnote 103).
[85] Cf. Ben-Ghiat 1996: 299 on the example of Fascist Italy.

Dragoumis claimed that the study of folk culture 'will not help history but the creation of new life and art'. For Dragoumis, such an endeavour does not have the aim of recording the knowledge about the indigenous tradition in 'history, dictionaries and museums'. It is rather the means 'for us to get to know our self and move steadily forward'.[86]

The certainty about the need for and the possibility of a kind of mystical or spiritual return with a view to the future was typical of most pro-dictatorship intellectuals and encapsulates the idea of a 'reconnection forwards', first postulated by the conservative revolutionary Moeller van der Bruck in his 1923 book *Das Dritte Reich*.[87] In keeping with the emphasis on the cultural character of the new civilisation and on notions of vitality, spontaneity, and liveness (as opposed to the mechanic, the artificial, the mimetic, the scholastic, and the dead), the relationship of the third civilisation to the former two was often presented in terms of 'substance' and 'spirit' and not of form.

Aristos Kambanis discussed the 'new Hellenic civilisation' in such terms shortly after the coup.[88] Following the introduction of the appellation 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' by Theologos Nikoloudis, Kambanis was most probably the first amongst literary critics who employed it, endowing it with a refined version of the features he had already associated the new civilisation with.[89] He prescribed the quest for 'new artistic forms within the spirit that permeates the great Hellenic civilisations of the past'. On this basis, the critic outlined two variations of the term 'Third Hellenic Civilisation', which run through several subsequent discussions of the same issue by other critics and intellectuals. One was what could be defined as a 'creative continuation' of the 'substance' of past civilisations, whereas the other one constitutes a

[86] 'Μερικοί λόγιοι, χωρίς να καταλαβαίνουν γιατί μελετούν τη δημοτική ζωή και τέχνη … θαρρούν πως για την ιστορία το κάνουν, τουλάχιστο έτσι λεν. Και δεν ξέρουν πως η δουλειά τους αυτή … θα βοηθήσει όχι την ιστορία παρά τη δημιουργία καινούριας ζωής και τέχνης. Όχι για να μπουν στην ιστορία σε λεξικά και σε μουσεία, παρά για να γνωριστούμε με τον εαυτό μας και να προβούμε σταθερά παρά πέρα, σ' αυτό χρησιμεύουν οι πάμπολλες λεπτομέρειες της δημοτικής παράδοσης που τόσο επίμονα μαζεύουν' (Idas 1913: 36-37).
[87] About the concept of the 'reconnection forwards' see Griffin 2007: 132.
[88] See Kambanis 1936b.
[89] Kayialis (2007: 210-211) even suggests that Theologos Nikoloudis and Aristos Kambanis were those that 'processed' or propounded the 'doctrine of the Third Hellenic Civilisation'.

synthesis, a notion that will be elaborated upon in the next section.[90] All this discussion, however, relies on a consensus amongst many critics, men of letters, and artists alike that the level of modern Greek culture is very low and that there is virtually no cultural production worthy of its name. This is expressed, for instance, in one of Kambanis's 1936 articles, which he concluded with the statement that 'the modern Greek civilisation is an affair of the future'.[91] Likewise, the painter Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas would claim in an early-1938 aesthetic essay published in Kambanis's periodical that there is no 'Greek art' at the moment and a modern artistic tradition has to be created from now on.[92]

Another characteristic example is Achillefs Kyrou with his 1937 text entitled 'Greece and Art', wherein he called for a submergence into the cultural bequest of the nation. This would supposedly result in the debunking of modernist artworks and 'almost automatically' create a new Greek Art drawing on tradition, national land, and the 'contemporary life of the Greek people'.[93] Similar mystified abstractions about the way forward are found in several other texts of the period: the dissemination of education, culture or a particular idea would create a new Greek civilisation by itself. Recurring notions in supporting this case are those denoted by words such as 'automatically' or 'natural' along with those of 'recovery', 'retrieval' or 'awakening'. This suggests the spontaneous creation of authentic Greek culture as an organic development, a mere unravelling of traits lingering within the national psyche, the national genes or the national soil.

[90] 'πρέπει να επιζητούν νέας μορφάς καλλιτεχνικάς εντός του πνεύματος το οποίον διέπει τους μεγάλους ελληνικούς πολιτισμούς του παρελθόντος' – 'δεν θ' αντιγραφή κανένα προηγούμενον, και θα συνεχίζη όχι επιφανειακώς, αλλ' εις την ουσίαν των, τους ελληνικούς πολιτισμούς του χθες. Η ενδεχομένως, θα συνθέτη, αφομοιώνων, στοιχεία της ιστορίας και της ζωής' (Kambanis 1937a). More specifically, the second passage suggests a synthesis of elements of the past along with the present, of what was once 'alive', 'vital', and 'valuable' in different eras of the national past and can be integrated with what is 'alive', 'vital', and 'valuable' in the national present. Cf. Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1655 (see below, footnote 120).

[91] 'Ο νεοελληνικός πολιτισμός είνε υπόθεσις του μέλλοντος' (Kambanis 1936a).

[92] Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938: 127.

[93] Kyrou 1937b: 107-108.

More specifically, for Stratis Myrivilis, this is a process that goes through the survey and classification of past cultural achievements and the consciousness of racial distinctness and continuity.[94] Melis Nikolaidis on his part moved continually within a geoclimatic and romantic milieu that at times oscillated between conservatism and Nazism, grounding the creation of a new culture on the *Volksgeist* and the national soil.[95] Echoing both Myrivilis and Nikolaidis, Pavlos Floros indirectly discussed the question of the creation of a new indigenous (or, one could say, 'organic', 'integral') civilisation, which he associated with the 'civilising' role of the teacher.[96] For Petros Orologas what was required for the new civilisation to spring up was

[94] After discussing these issues, Myrivilis closes his 1938 article in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* as follows: 'Από τη στιγμή που αυτό θα κατανοηθεί στην πιο πλατειά και ανοιχτομάτικη σημασία του από το σύνολο των ηγετών της ζωής του λαού μας, από αυτή τη στιγμή η φυλή ξαναβρίσκει αυτομάτως την αιώνιά της κοίτη, τη φυσική. § Απ' εκεί υποθέτω αρχίζει ο ονειροπολούμενος Γ' ελληνικός πολιτισμός' (Myrivilis 1938). Myrivilis reiterated his injunction for historical and racial consciousness and expanded on several of the points he made in this text in other publications as well, such as in a series of articles he published in *Nea Estia* in 1940 under the rubric 'Από την ζωήν και από την τέχνην'. See Myrivilis 1940a-g. As suggested in chapter 3, Stratis Myrivilis was influenced by Ion Dragoumis's thought. In his discussion of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, Myrivilis often appears to be in dialogue with Dragoumis's text *Ελληνικός Πολιτισμός*, particularly in his 1938 article, which is entitled 'Νεοελληνικός Πολιτισμός'. Compare for instance his statements here to Dragoumis's following remarks: 'Αλλά είναι βέβαιο πως άμα στους καλήτερους της φυλής γίνει ολότελα συνειδητό το έθνος και σιγά σιγά το νοιώσουν έντονα και ολοκληρωτικά, τότε και κράτος φυσιολογικά αληθινό θα φτειάσουν οι Έλληνες και πολιτισμός θα αναβρύσει πάλι από τα Ελληνικά τα χώματα' (Idas 1913: 17).

[95] 'το περιοδικό … [ζ]ητά να ξυπνήσει μέσα στην ψυχή του Λαού μας την αγάπη του για υψηλότερα και πλατύτερα ιδανικά, για την ψυχική και πνευματική αναγέννηση του τόπου. Απ' αυτή την εσωτερική ανάταση θα πηγάσει ομαλά και φυσιολογικά κι' η Τέχνη, η αληθινή Ελληνική Τέχνη, που θα είναι όχι ένα ψεύτικο, ξένο κι' αταίριαστο στολίδι, αλλά ένας γνήσιος καρπός, ένα αληθινό λουλούδι πολιτισμού, που πήρε τα στοιχειά της ζωής του και της γονιμότητός του από την Ελληνική γη και την Ελληνικήν ατμόσφαιρα' (Nikolaidis 1939a). Cf. 'Κανείς δεν παραγνωρίζει την μεγάλην αξία της Λογοτεχνίας, που είναι ο ωραιότερος και ωριμότερος καρπός –το λουλούδι καλλίτερα– του πνευματικού πολιτισμού. Μα για να δέση, να μεστώση ο καρπός, για να πάρη την ομορφιά των χρωμάτων και τη γεύση της ουσίας του, πρέπει ν' αντλήση από τον κορμό, από πιο βαθειά ακόμη: από τις ρίζες, από τη γη, τους χυμούς της ζωής. Κι' οι χυμοί της ζωής εδώ είναι η μελέτη, η μελέτη της Ελληνικής Γης, η μελέτη της ιστορίας και του πολιτισμού της, η βαθειά και στενή γνωριμία με την Ελληνική ζωή, με τη λαογραφία της, με την ηθογραφία της, με όλες τις εκδηλώσεις της' ([Anon.] 1937h; this was most probably written by Nikolaidis, like the vast majority of unsigned notes in his periodical) and 'Αν στο ίδιο εκείνο έδαφος που πατείτε ακουμπήσετε το αυτί σας, θ' ακούσετε καθαρά τον παλμό της ιερής μας γης, θα τον ακούσετε να κτυπά γοργά, στον ίδιο ρυθμό και με την ίδια έντασι των χτύπων των δικών σας καρδιών. Είναι σα να σας στέλλη από κει κάτω, μέσα από τα βαθύτερα μέρη των μητρικών της σπλάχνων, το θείο μήνυμά της και να σας μουρμουρίζει: … Σας αναγνωρίζω επί τέλους· είσθε τα παιδιά μου, τα δικά μου παιδιά, που γυρίζετε σε μένα, που έρχεσθε να επικοινωνήσετε με μένα, πιο άμεσα και πιο βαθειά, ν' αφουγκραστήτε τα μυστικά μου, να πάρετε γνώσεις από την πείρα μου, ν' αντλήσετε δυνάμεις από τη ζωτικότητά μου, να στολίσετε και να πλουτίσετε τον εσωτερικό σας κόσμο με τα λουλούδια της ψυχής μου, να δροσιστήτε από τις αστείρευτες πηγές μου, να ζωογονηθήτε από την αγνή μου ατμόσφαιρα. Καλώς μου ήρθατε, παιδιά μου. Ελάτε να δουλέψουμε μαζί, να σμίξουμε και να διαθέσουμε μαζί όλες τις δυνάμεις μας για την εντατική καλλιέργεια, αυτήν που σας ζητάει το φωτεινό πρόσταγμα του Αρχηγού, αυτήν που θα κάμη να γονιμοποιηθή, να ριζώση και να ξεπεταχτή και πάλι από το έδαφός μου όχι μόνο η υλική ακμή, αλλά και η πνευματική ανύψωσι, που είναι και τα δυο μαζί ο μόνος αληθινός πολιτισμός' (Nikolaidis 1939i).

[96] Floros's conclusion is 'I do not separate the manifestations of Art from the fundamental questions of education and the basic attitude of the Greek human towards life. When we acquire a unified rhythm of life, which we lack, then the solutions will also be found automatically' (Floros 1940b: 130). Employing a river metaphor for the

'a different return, not just to types, schemes, and systems, but to the soul of Greece'.[97] I. M. Panayiotopoulos employed biological in addition to geoclimatic arguments, linking the Third Hellenic Civilisation to the revitalisation of ancient qualities.[98]

This is yet another case where quasi-biological discourse was combined with a 'metaphysics of depth'.[99] The idea that was put forward was that there is some hidden truth to be uncovered, which merely had to be reached for suppressed potentials and faculties to be awakened and (re)activated. The 'metaphysics of depth' was easy to combine with biological/evolutionary thought, which highlighted the importance of the inside with its cells and genes while framing change as a form of 'unfolding',[100] namely as the mere externalisation of inner capacities. Another characteristic example of this is provided by Panayiotopoulos, who presented the Greek people as a natural creator, as we saw in chapter three. After having been turned into a destroyer, the people was now in the process of regaining itself.[101] For him, this return to the 'true nature' of the nation serves to take a leap forward from presumably sound foundations towards the future utopia. The retrieval of the 'genuine national character' from within the remains and the memories of the past would facilitate the creation of the future civilisation, because in its real nature the Greek people is a builder and creator. Consequently, the people

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nation, Floros explicitly associated it with the pre-1936 inability for 'organic solutions'. Such solutions were to 'open up a pure riverbed to the abilities, to the sap of the Nation', and as the rest of his text suggested they were possible in post-1936 Greece (Floros 1940b: 129; the sap indicates vitality and can be interpreted as the live inner substances of the national organism or tree, of the *ethnikos kormos*; cf. the passage from [Anon.] 1937h quoted in the previous note about the 'sap of life').

[97] 'Χρειάζεται μια άλλη επιστροφή, όχι σε τύπους, σχήματα και συστήματα μόνον, αλλά στην ψυχή της Ελλάδας, αλλά στο πνεύμα της ρωμιοσύνης και τότε μονάχα θα βγη ο νέος ελληνικός πολιτισμός. Τότε και η λογοτεχνία η ελληνική θ' αποκτήση τα ελληνικά της γνωρίσματα' (Orologas 1938a: 23).

[98] 'Κι' αν μιλούμε για τις αρετές που ανέβασαν σε απροσπέλαστη τελειότητα οι αρχαίοι, κι' αν θεωρούμε μια νέα πραγμάτωσή τους επιχείρημα όχι ακατόρθωτο, το κάνουμε μόνο και μόνο, γιατί βαθύτατα πιστεύουμε πως η ρίζα τους, πως η αφετηρία τους βρίσκεται στη βιολογική σύνθεση της φυλής και στον ιδιότυπο χαρακτήρα του τόπου. Άμα ξανακερδίσουμε με ολόκληρη τη συνείδησή μας την Ελλάδα, άμα ξαναβρούμε τον χαμένο και παραπλανημένο εαυτό μας σε όλη του την πληρότητα, οι αρετές αυτές θα ξαναζήσουν αυτόματα, γιατί βρίσκονται πάντα μέσα στα κατάβαθα της ψυχής μας, κληρονομιά από πανάρχαιους αιώνες' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57).

[99] The term is drawn from Tziovas 1985: 258, where Tziovas links this metaphysics to the 'problematic of nationism', which, he claims, consists of a 'search for hidden essence (i.e. "Greekness") or forces (i.e. "Greek spirit")'. The concept is more extensively discussed in Tziovas 1986.

[100] This is made all the clearer through the fact that the term 'ξετυλιξιά/ξετυλι(γ)μός' was often used to denote evolution in the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century (see Zarimis 2015: 19, 89).

[101] 'Μα ιστορικές τύχες αντίξοες και αδιάκοπη κακή χρήση των δυνάμεών του τον μετέβαλαν σε ασυλλόγιστο και αδιάφορο χαλαστή. Σήμερα ο χαλαστής ξαναγίνεται οικοδόμος' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 56).

could construct its New (and Modern) Civilisation itself, indeed taking advantage of an admirable stockpile of past materials.

Such ideas, when seen in the light of metaphysics of depth and the belief in Hellenism's 'smouldering/latent powers' or eternal substance, intimate a notion of 'national entelechy'. The notion of entelechy is Aristotelian and, much like relevant ideas expressed during the dictatorship, it is based on inherent capacities but is also performative and attained through personal endeavour. Much more than Aristotle, however, intellectuals sympathetic to nationalist variants of totalitarianism borrowed concepts from Plato.[102] Their statements on the way to the future as a reactivation and translation of 'true Greekness' in the modern age sometimes echoed the Platonic approach to truth as the negation of oblivion, as anamnesis or retrieval. For them, national character resided in the realm of eternity and metaphysics much like the Platonic Idea.

What the calls for a reconnection forward expressed was the desire to replace national entropy with national entelechy. A highly anomic situation that was supposed to lead Greece to implosion or utter catastrophe had to be reversed and displaced by the opening of an organised and organic path towards national modernisation and self-fulfilment. Thus, discourse on the reactivation of forces dormant inside the Greek people can be understood on the basis of the assumption that those virtues and ideals were not arbitrary developments but were determined by national entelechy and by what Panayiotopoulos defined as the 'biological composition of the race' and 'the peculiar character of the land'. The 'race' and the 'milieu' was unchanged; the 'moment' had changed and any effort towards a new civilisation would have to take that variant into account while it 'restored' the citizens' link with the constants of land and nation.[103]

[102] See Tsakonas 1972; Michaud 2004.
[103] See also the discussion in part 2, particularly chapter 4.

Following the 1939 celebrations for the coup anniversary (the most extensive and spectacular the regime ever organised), Nikolaidis focused his editorial on a construct that adorned Stadiou Street in Athens during the festivities. It consisted of three arches representing the three Hellenic civilisations and was interpreted by Nikolaidis as symbolising both continuity and innovation: 'Three diverse forms, but all three on the same road, the road that symbolises their deeper unity, their inner continuity and consistency … The third arch is unfinished … It is the will of the Nation … for the creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation'.[104] Even if the Third Hellenic Civilisation prerequires the past in the sense that it always draws attention to the fact that there has been a First and Second Hellenic Civilisation, it is an open project associated with the alleged creative power of the nation and the open possibilities of the future. In fact, number three has its very own visionary and futurological implications already in the Bible, something that probably lent more credence to the futural visions and 'prophecies' of dictators who foretold –and simultaneously led the way to– the full realisation of a Third Reich, a Third Rome or a Third Hellenic Civilisation.[105]

Therefore, although increased familiarisation with and study of the previous civilisations was repeatedly encouraged, their blind imitation or replication was emphatically rejected.[106] According to Panayiotopoulos, such a 'resurrection' was impossible and unrealistic. On the contrary, 'the N. State does not preach any retrogression, but looks straight forwards'.[107]

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[104] 'Οι τρεις αψίδες, που έστησε στην οδόν Σταδίου η Λαϊκή Επιτροπή του εορτασμού της 4ης Αυγούστου, ήταν ασφαλώς από τις ωραιότερες και παραστατικότερες εικόνες που συμβολίζουν τη μεγάλη εθνική προσπάθεια. Ο ελληνικός πολιτισμός στις δύο κυριότερες εκδηλώσεις του: τον αρχαίο και τον βυζαντινό, και στη σημερινήν αναδημιουργική του εξόρμηση. Τρεις διάφορες μορφές, αλλά και οι τρεις πάνω στον ίδιο δρόμο, τον δρόμο που συμβολίζει τη βαθύτερη ενότητά τους, την εσωτερική τους συνέχεια και συνέπεια, τον δρόμο της πνευματικής παραδόσεως και κληρονομίας της Φυλής μας. … Η τρίτη αψίδα είναι ατελείωτη. … Είναι η θέληση του Έθνους για την ψυχική και πνευματική του ανάταση, για την αναδημιουργία του Πολιτισμού του, για τη δημιουργία του Γ΄ Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού' (Nikolaidis 1939e).

[105] See for instance the central role it plays in John's *Revelation* as discussed by D. H. Lawrence (1980: 130ff).

[106] See e.g. Kambanis 1936a ('Ας θελήσωμεν… ν' ανακαλύψωμεν τους αρχαίους Έλληνας. Όχι δια να τους αντιγράψωμεν… Αλλά δια να εύρωμεν εις αυτούς τους κανόνας σκέψεως, πνευματικήν χρηστότητα, ανιδιοτέλειαν εις την ζήτησιν του ωραίου και του αληθινού') and Kambanis 1937a (quoted above, note 90).

[107] 'Δε θα ξαναζωντανέψουμε τους αρχαίους, γιατί αυτό είναι από τη φύση των πραγμάτων αδύνατο. Και ακριβώς το γεγονός ότι το Ν. Κράτος δεν κηρύττει καμμιά παλινδρόμηση, με [=μα] βλέπει ολόισα μπροστά, αποκλείει κάθε τέτοιο κίνδυνο ανεδαφικών κηρυγμάτων' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57).

The conclusion that emerges is that pro-regime intellectuals saw the past as an exemplar, a guide, and a source of inspiration, but not as a utopia to be restored. Kambanis for instance had contended already in 1936 that 'a page of Thucydides, a drawing on an ancient vase, a Byzantine fresco, a folk song, a piece of folk needlework can become springboards to new autonomous artistic creations'.[108]

In conclusion, the regime's project for the future pointed extensively to the national past. Nonetheless, it was also invested with the suggestion that the destiny of Hellenism would only be wholly fulfilled through the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Metaxas had even told the Greek youth (the creators of the new civilisation) that the previous two civilisations were not perfect and that it was the youth's task to 'complement' them and make a better civilisation.[109] In this respect, the Fourth-of-August dictatorship was not far from the temporal stance of the 'Conservative Revolution', which Osborne classifies along with fascism: 'It understands that what it would "conserve" is already lost … , and hence must be created anew. It recognises that under such circumstances the chance presents itself fully to realise this "past" *for the first time*'.[110]

10.4. SYNTHESIS, MODERNITY, AND THE QUESTION OF ISOLATIONISM

In addition to such conceptualisations of reconnection, another notion that was quite crucial for conservative revolutionaries and fascists alike and is useful for the discussion here was that of synthesis. First of all, the Third Hellenic Civilisation was sometimes presented as an amalgamation of the best traits and values of the First and Second Hellenism.[111] The demand for a

[108] Kambanis 1936b.
[109] 'Μη σας τρομάζουν οι πολιτισμοί μας οι οποίοι επέρασαν. Να μη σας τρομάζουν καθόλου. Δεν ήσαν τέλειοι. Σεις πρόκειται να τον κάμετε τελειότερον' ('Λόγος επί τη ορκωμοσία των φοιτητών (20 Νοεμβρίου 1937)', Metaxas 1969a: 285).
[110] Osborne 1995: 164 (emphasis in the original). For his discussion of the Conservative Revolution in relation to fascism see Osborne 1995: 162-167, particularly 165.
[111] According to Zelepos (2014: 150) the Third Hellenic Civilisation represented a 'synthesis of the most outstanding cultural achievements of ancient and byzantine Hellenism'.

synthesis applied also to the formulation of the new ideal itself, which had to be 'deduced from the two traditions' of ancient and medieval Hellenism.[112] Based on the analysis in the second section of this chapter, the new Great Idea could additionally be seen as a synthesis built upon earlier ideological constructs that had vied for the position of the overarching national ideal. Moreover, the demand for synthesis was extended to the practical issue of creating the new civilisation, sometimes having as loadstars the handful of modern Greek writers and artists who had supposedly achieved this synthesis.[113] Finally, synthesis is pertinent to the religious aspect of the regime's futural visions, discussed in the first section of this chapter. For Helleno-Christianity lies at the core of the Third Hellenic Civilisation project and it represents the distillate of the values of the two previous Hellenic Civilisations which are seen as still relevant and useful for the accomplishment of the project.

The discussion that led to the demand for synthesis within the frames of the 4th-August dictatorship began a few days after the coup with the articles of Aristos Kambanis in the newspaper *Ethnos*.[114] In November 1936, based on Kambanis's texts, Nikos Pappas hit out at 'cultural deterritorialisation' through the columns of *I Kathimerini* and proposed a campaign to promote Greek cultural 'territorialism' with Aristos Kambanis at its helm.[115] Pappas's article serves perhaps to delineate a parallel transition of young progressive intellectuals towards palingenetic ultranationalism through the path of syncretism in both Italy and Greece.[116] Claiming

[112] Kambanis 1936b.
[113] 'συνάγοντες από τας δυο παραδόσεις ένα ιδανικόν' – 'Πρέπει να δημιουργήσωμεν ιδικόν μας πνευματικόν πολιτισμόν αντλούντες από τας δύο ελληνικάς παραδόσεις τα στοιχεία του. … Την σύνθεσιν αυτών των παραδόσεων την είδαμε εις τον Σολωμόν. Την είδαμεν εις τον Παπαδιαμάντην. Την είδαμεν εις τον Γύζην' (Kambanis 1936b).
[114] More than forty articles signed by the critic and future editor of *Το Νέον Κράτος* were published on the front page of the newspaper from mid-August to the end of 1936. Some of Kambanis's contributions occupied the column where normally articles by the chief editor of the newspaper would appear. The topics discussed in his contributions ranged from literature and art to political ideas and contemporary events such as the ceremonies accompanying the transportation of the remains of King Constantine and Queens Olga and Sophia to Greece in November 1936.
[115] The term 'ανεδαφισμός' could be translated more literally as 'non-territorialism', but its use by Pappas could be seen as showing similarities to the use of the modern term 'deterritorialisation', especially as used in anthropology.
[116] See Ben-Ghiat 1996.

that 'there are many and substantial truths' both in the ethnocentric and the internationalist intellectual camps, Pappas put forward a synthesis of 'the most creative' elements from both camps 'in order to make a Greek spiritual precondition for our new civilisation'.[117] This is a kind of dialectical approach, with nationalism being the thesis, internationalism being the antithesis, and a 'Third-way' position being their synthesis.[118] A parallel polarity that should be synthesised is that between Greek tradition and contemporary achievements. What has yet to be obtained, Pappas claimed, is 'a moderate fusion of the beautiful traditions of Greek spirituality with the international wisdom of post-war achievements' and 'an intellectual principle that will not be buried in backwardness and that will also not cease being Greek in the healthiest way'.[119]

Much like Kambanis and Chatzikyriakos-Gikas before him, Panayiotopoulos stressed the selective appropriation of the legacy of the national past as a means for the modern nation to 'shape its own tradition'. Panayiotopoulos thus predicated the creation of this new tradition on the 'clean-up' of the 'inheritance of the past', an assertion which is also relevant to the discussion in the previous chapter.[120] Other cultural thinkers, such as Stilpon Kyriakidis,

[117] 'Είναι αλήθεια πως η Ελλάς έχει μια ράτσα χιλιετηρίδων, διαυγή και ζεστή σαν τον ήλιο του ουρανού της. Η πνευματικότητά μας έρχεται από μακρυά, από τις αψίδες των αιώνων, γεμάτη κλασικότητα, όρθια σαν τους στύλους του Παρθενώνα, ποιητική σαν τους στίχους του Σοφοκλή και του Πινδάρου. … Από την άλλη μεριά, έχομε τα γενικώτερα προβλήματα. Έχομε τους Διεθνιστές, τους απόλυτους φίλους του ανθρώπου. … Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία πως υπάρχουν πολλές και ουσιαστικές αλήθειες κι' απ' τις δύο παρατάξεις. Ας πάρουμε τις πιο ζουμερές, τις δημιουργικώτερες, για να φτιάξωμε μια Ελληνική πνευματική προϋπόθεση για το νέο πολιτισμό μας' (Pappas 1936).

[118] This is signified very clearly at the syntactic and semantic level, with the nationalist position postulated as an axiom ('It is true that…') and the internationalist one framed as an opposition ('On the other hand...').

[119] Pappas 1936: 3. The fact that Pappas aspired after a synthesis probably invalidates the interpretation of his references to some bourgeois critics as an 'accusation' (see Dounia 2000: 221, footnote 65). Varelas (1997: 129) on the contrary is closer to the reading of this article as a call for a synthesis of nationalism and internationalism. To an extent, Pappas's εδαφισμός-ανεδαφισμός binary seems to be a remake of Kleon Paraschos's distinction almost a decade earlier between ελληνοκεντρισμός and ευρωπαϊσμός (see P. 1928: 621). Paraschos had then openly aligned himself with the latter trend, while another critic mentioned by Pappas as having 'internationalist tendencies', Alkis Thrylos, had repeatedly taken a stand against Hellenocentrism and in favour of a modern Greek culture turned towards Europe, particularly in the 1920s. In fact, Paraschos had characterised Thrylos in his article as a 'κριτικός απαλλαγμένος από κάθε εθνικιστική πρόληψη', while he contended that the basic components of the latter's ideology are Europeanism, rationalism, and 'η διεθνιστική του ελαφρώς αριστερίζουσα διάθεση'. The third critic mentioned by Pappas is Emilios Chourmouzios, who aligned with Trotskyism up until the mid-1930s (see Kotzia 2006: 99-117).

[120] 'Το σημερινό σκεπτόμενο Έθνος δεν απιστεί στην παράδοση, τη σέβεται, την εγκολπώνεται, την καλλιεργεί· μα σε ό,τι γόνιμο έχει. Γιατί, παράλληλα, πλάθει και τη δική του παράδοση. Κ' η δική του παράδοση τού επιβάλλει

explicitly placed modern folklore on a par with ancient and medieval Hellenism as a distinct, third source of inspiration for the new civilisation.[121] However, even Kambanis's reference to the 'two traditions' that was mentioned earlier should be set within the context of demoticist and organicist nationalist thought. As we saw in part one and chapter five, modern Greek vernacular culture was often seen as rooted in the middle to late Byzantine period, thus being a part of the second tradition. This means that while Thucydides and classical pottery represent the first tradition, Byzantine painting and products of folk culture were considered parts of the second tradition.

Yet another perspective on the issue is given in Chatzikyriakos-Gikas's 1938 essay, who attempted to undermine the camp of 'academism' by presenting its exponents not just as obsessed with classical art but as superficial imitators of foreign models, and to promote modern(ist) art as national. Therein he implied that the creation of the 'New Hellenic Civilisation' would lie on a synthesis of all Greek artistic achievements of the past along with the eclectic digestion of useful foreign influences and with personal experimentation.[122] Such statements should be set against the backdrop of widespread discourse on the assimilationist power of the Greek nation, like the narrative of cultural superiority and the justification of foreign influences throughout Hellenism's history that we saw in chapters two and three. The superior qualities of the race allow it to absorb and assimilate foreign influences and produce something innovative and at the same time genuinely Greek.[123] Alongside Gikas, a wide range of pro-regime

το ξεκαθάρισμα της κληροδοσίας του παρελθόντος, τού επιβάλλει την προέκταση και την ανανέωση. Για τούτο ακριβώς θεωρώ την περίσταση εξαιρετικά κατάλληλη για ένα προσεκτικό κοίταγμα των καταλοίπων των περασμένων γενεών' – 'Το ξεκαθάρισμα –και με τα μοιραία του σφάλματα, βέβαια– είναι απαραίτητο και για να εννοήσει το Έθνος τι κατέχει σε άδολους καλλιτεχνικούς θησαυρούς από το άμεσο παρελθόν και τι μπορεί από τούτους να χρησιμοποιήσει, για να πλάσει το μέλλον του' (Panayiotopoulos 1939g: 479, 480) and 'η πληρέστερη επαφή με ό,τι συχνά ονομάζεται "κληροδοσία του παρελθόντος" είναι μια πράξη οφειλής κ' ένας τρόπος θαυμάσιος, για να ζει μια νέα ωφέλιμη ζωή ό,τι γερό και ζωντανό υπάρχει στην παράδοση' – 'η παραδοχή της παραδόσεως δεν αποκλείει κανένα ξεκαθάρισμά της' (Panayiotopoulos 1939b: 1655, 1656).

[121] Kyriakidis 1940.

[122] Chatzikyriakos-Gikas 1938: 130-132.

[123] Cf. Spandonidis *Η ζωή που αγαπά τον εαυτό της* (1938): 'Εγώ δε φοβούμαι τους ξένους. Διότι έχω την πεποίθηση ότι όσο καταθλιπτική, όσο συντριπτική κι' αν είναι κάποτε η επίδρασή τους σε μια αδύνατη ακόμα πνευματικότητα σαν τη δική μας, εμείς είμαστε ράτσα γερή, φυλή ακμαία, και θα δεχθούμε τη διασταύρωση με το

critics and essayists shared a conception of the synthesis that would spawn the new civilisation or culture not only as a combination of elements from the Greek past but also in a quasi-dialectical sense. The selective appropriation and acculturation of foreign and modern elements was part of the synthesising process, as it reconciled the thesis of Hellenocentrism and tradition with the antithesis of Europeanism and modernity.[124] Panayiotopoulos for instance held that the 'beneficial elements' of foreign civilisations and the 'spirit of the age' were not to be excluded from the new synthesis, while even Kambanis acknowledged the necessity for 'loans' ever since his first articles after the coup.[125]

Furthermore, I. M. Panayiotopoulos projected an understanding of the Third Hellenic Civilisation that could be compared to Martin Heidegger's early view of National Socialism that led to his collaboration with the new regime in 1933-1934. As late as 1935 Heidegger 'was alluding to his vision of Nazism creating a new synthesis between a globalizing technocracy and the human need for rootedness and metaphysical life'.[126] In referring to 'whatever modern ingenuity and industriousness manages to create' Panayiotopoulos was most likely alluding to *Zivilisation* and technology. The Third Hellenic Civilisation was seen as the rallying cry that would lead to the export of the 'idiom/style of Greekness' to the 'civilised' world. Greekness,

ξένο αίμα χωρίς να υποκύψουμε σ' αυτό'. This passage was quoted by Chatzinis in his review of the book, who then went on to claim: 'Όλη η σημασία, ωστόσο, έγκειται, νομίζω, σε τούτο: όχι μόνο να δεχθούμε τις ξένες επιδράσεις, αλλά και να μπορέσουμε ν' ασκήσουμε επιδράσεις, τουλάχιστον όσο χρειάζεται για να μπαίνουμε σε λογαριασμό. Ιδού η μεγάλη επιδίωξη της λογοτεχνίας μας, το ευτυχισμένο της τέρμα, αν υπάρχει, φυσικά, τέρμα σε μια τέτοια προσπάθεια. Τότε μόνο θα σταθούμε κοντά στους ξένους χωρίς να "υποκύψουμε"' (Chatzinis 1938e: 284).

[124] This polarity is discussed in Tziovas 1989: 19-29 (see esp. 24).

[125] 'χωρίς ν' απιστήσουμε στο πνεύμα της εποχής μας και χωρίς να παραμερίσουμε τα ωφέλιμά στοιχεία του πολιτισμού των άλλων' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57). 'Από την σύνθεσιν … όλων των ιστορικών στοιχείων θα ανακύψη ο νέος ελληνικός πολιτισμός. Και από την αφομοίωσιν των όσων αναγκαίως θα δανεισθώμεν' (Kambanis 1936c). Cf. the discussion of the Third Hellenic Civilisation the laographist Stilpon Kyriakidis, where he claims that the 'external elements' of the new civilisation should be in dialogue with the West, but the 'internal elements' have to draw on the national civilisations of the past (Kyriakidis 1940: 655-656). This phenomenon was both more intense and more clearly recognisable in Fascist Italy, where the regime for some time even promoted the familiarisation 'with the latest cultural trends in America, Germany, Russia, and other countries so that Italy would be able to develop a modern culture to match its innovative "revolutionary" politics' (Ben-Ghiat 1995: 635).

[126] Griffin 2007: 323.

this 'higher, epiphanic spirituality', would 'guide and supplement' modern civilisation.[127] As a country lagging far behind Germany in terms of technological and industrial development, Greece could not conceivably give birth to 'a new metaphysically grounded but technocratically powerful race'.[128] However, modern Greece could supposedly aspire after a Promethean mission, to provide its new spiritual synthesis, its culture, everything represented by the Third Hellenic Civilisation, as the metaphysical foundations of modern civilisation, similarly perhaps to the role played in the past by ancient Greece, especially with regard to European civilisation.[129]

Thus, while Nikos Pappas was rather exceptional in pleading for a kind of syncretism of left-wing and right-wing intellectual currents in Greece, of the legacy of both internationalist and nationalist criticism, synthesis was a crucial component of discourse related to the new civilisation. Furthermore, many discussions of the term point to a conception of the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' as an alternative path towards modernity with national colour: the framework is the nation, the foundation is the national past, but the route is towards the future. The predominant reliance on indigenous sources does not coincide with isolationism but is supposedly the very means for modern Greece to establish itself amongst modern 'civilised' nations. The extension or supplementation of Greek tradition and the expression of the 'style' or 'rhythm' of the Greek land and race are coupled with the desire to bring the 'eternal' values traced within the previous Hellenic civilisations up to date and to align the new civilisation

[127] 'θα βρούμε τη δύναμη να περπατήσουμε κ' εμείς παράλληλα προς τους σύγχρονους μεγάλους πολιτισμένους λαούς, φέρνοντας το ύφος της ελληνικότητος, δηλαδή φέρνοντας μιαν υπέρτερη, αποκαλυπτική πνευματικότητα, σαν οδηγία και σαν επικουρία σε ό,τι η σύγχρονη επίνοια και φιλοπονία κατορθώνει να δημιουργήσει' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 57).

[128] Griffin 2007: 323.

[129] Cf. here note 1. Fascist Italy had adopted a similar domestic rhetoric and even tried to export its self-image as the most civilised of the two major fascist regimes. This approach was favoured particularly after the formation of the Berlin-Rome Axis and during WWII, as it served as a counterbalance to Germany's undisputed military superiority. See Ben-Ghiat 2001, Roberts 2016: 17. As for the fusion of technocratic and cultural models of modernity in the discourse of the Greek dictator see for instance his 1937 speech to Athens Administration technical employees: 'ο τρόπος του σκέπτεσθαι ο ιδικός σας και ο ιδικός μου είναι ο καθαρός ορθολογιστικός τρόπος εις την εκτέλεσιν, εμπνευσμένος τρόπος εις την σύλληψιν' (Metaxas 1969a: 242).

with the modern *Zeitgeist*.[130] This consensus amongst pro-regime literary critics probably challenges the claim that 'regime ideologues … and Metaxas himself, with his vision of the third Hellenic civilisation … agree that art has no relation to historical reality and is atemporal'.[131]

Before concluding this chapter, it would be useful to deal with the transmutations of the term in Metaxas's public discourse across time and in relation to its target audience. The belated employment of the term by the dictator in comparison to Nikoloudis has been construed by art historian Evyenios Matthiopoulos as a sign of reluctance to embrace the objective of a Third

[130] Nikolaidis (1938e) for instance proposed the combination of the two opposing sides in the 1938 debate on the modern Greek civilisation. The longed-for cultural rebirth could not rely solely neither on Greek sources, as Yiannopoulos would have it, nor on foreign sources. The basis was the immersion in the Greek essence and the deepening of the knowledge of the Greek people and folklore, but the scope had to be extended electively on foreign exemplars. His main argument for extroversion was that culture or civilisation 'Δεν μπορεί να ζήσει, να εξελιχθεί, ν' αναπτυχθεί χωρίς τους δοκιμασμένους ξένους σπόρους· κι' αν ακόμα δεν τους αναζητήσουμε οι ίδιοι, θα μας τους φέρουν από παντού τα μυστικά κι' ακατάσχετα ρεύματα των ιδεών, που περιτρέχουν τη γη σαν νόμος φυσικός· μα οι σπόροι αυτοί δεν μπορούν να γονιμοποιηθούν και να καρποφορήσουν, αν δεν ταιριάσουν με το κλίμα μας, αν δεν εξοικειωθούν με την ατμόσφαιρά μας, με τον ήλιο μας, με το όλο περιβάλλον μας, αν δεν βρουν στοιχεία συγγενικά κι' αφομοιώσιμα μέσα στο χώμα μας, αν δεν γίνουν, με δύο λέξεις, **δικοί μας**. … Δεν είναι πια ξένοι οι σπόροι που βρήκαν κατάλληλο έδαφος μέσα μας' (1938e: 178; bold in the original). Some further relevant examples are provided in the following passages: 'πολιτισμό γνήσιο, συγχρονισμένο, και συγχρόνως αδιάσπαστα δεμένον με τη μεγάλη παράδοση του τόπου και της φυλής' (Myrivilis 1938); 'να εκφράσουν με την τέχνη τους το πνεύμα και το ύφος της εποχής των και του τόπου των' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 58); 'η μεστή κατάκτηση του νοήματος και του ρυθμού της εποχής μας και του τόπου μας' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 59); 'Δεν επιτρέπεται [ο κριτής/κριτικός] να δέχεται πως υπάρχει μια μορφή τέχνης. Πρέπει να καταλαβαίνει πως κάθε εποχή βρίσκει την έκφρασή της' (Panayiotopoulos 1939f: 403); 'Έπειτα από τον Α΄, που οι υπέροχες εκδηλώσεις του είχαν οδηγήσει τα πρώτα βήματα της Ανθρωπότητος προς τον Πολιτισμό κι' εξακολουθούν ακόμη ως σήμερα να φωτίζουν και να δονούν τη σκέψη και την ψυχή της· έπειτα από τον Β΄, που, εμποτισμένος από το Χριστιανικό πνεύμα, έδωσε αθάνατα έργα Λόγου και Τέχνης, και χάρισε ανάταση, εξαγνισμό και λύτρωση στη βασανισμένη ψυχή της Ανθρωπότητος, ήταν ανάγκη, σαν μια φυσιολογική μοιραία επέκταση και συμπλήρωση εκείνων, να δημιουργήσουμε έναν νέο πολιτισμό, που διατηρώντας τα γερά, τα βιώσιμα, τ' αθάνατα και θεία στοιχεία, πνευματικά και ηθικά, των δύο πρώτων, θα τα *προσαρμόσει στις νέες εξελίξεις και κατακτήσεις της Ανθρωπότητος*' (Nikolaidis 1940i: 145; emphasis added); 'Πόση όμως πρέπει να είναι και η υποχρέωσι εμάς των νέων για τη διατήρησι και τη μετάφρασι στη σημερινή εποχή του αθάνατου αυτού και ανώτερου ελληνικού πολιτισμού' (Kar. 1939a). Cf. Spandonidis's claim that, following the educational reform he proposes, Greek education 'θα δοθή στην *ουσιαστική αναζήτηση των δημιουργικών στοιχείων*, των στοιχείων εκείνων *του αρχαίου πνεύματος* τα οποία είναι ακόμη ζωντανά και χρήσιμα για να μας κάνουν πολυτίμους συγχρόνους ανθρώπους – και όχι παραπλανημένους αρχαίους που επιζούν κατά παρεξήγηση στη σύγχρονη εποχή… Όταν αυτή θα είναι η στάση μας απέναντ [sic] στην αρχαία ζωή και το αρχαίο πνεύμα, υπάρχει ελπίδα να *ξανακερδίσουμε τον εαυτό* μας, να αποκτήσουμε τη συναίσθηση ότι στηριζόμαστε στα δικά μας πόδια, όταν περπατούμε ανάμεσα στα σύγχρονα έθνη' (Spandonidis 1940d:705; emphasis in the original).

[131] Chamalidi 2002: 451. Chamalidi argues that the presence of the notions of progress and era-specific art is something that sets Evangelos Papanoutsos apart from Metaxist ideology. On that same page, however, she quotes his opinion about a mixture of Realism and Idealism that 'characterises all major moments of art history'. This could be read as an acknowledgment of an atemporal, transhistorical core of great art on the part of Papanoutsos, something that again seems to contradict Chamalidi's claim from another perspective. Moreover, we have seen in chapter 5 that the notions of progress and progressiveness were not downright rejected but rather instrumentalised by the regime and its fellow travellers amongst the intelligentsia.

Hellenic Civilisation. Although it would be legitimate to associate Metaxas's cautiousness with potential reactions within the state apparatus (especially from circles around the Royal House), it cannot be that the dictator was sceptical about the 'megaloideatic exorbitance of such goals'.[132] As we have seen, the content of the new ideal was largely defined by Metaxas himself. Moreover, Matthiopoulos points out on the same page that the dictator never explicitly referred to the Third Hellenic Civilisation on coup anniversaries barring that of 1939. I claim that this fact should be seen in conjunction with the consolidation of Metaxas's position in late 1938. The 1939 celebrations for the coup were the most extensive and well-organised throughout the regime's lifespan and provide a clearer picture of the character the dictator intended for the New State. What is more, the sporadic use of the term by the dictator was in all likelihood a symptom of the slogan's dissemination and consolidation. Since 1938 the uses of the term by intellectuals seem to have proliferated even amongst those who had not expressed open support for the dictatorship, such as Elli Lambridi.[133]

Not only did the dictator employ the term throughout the years 1937-1940 but he even gradually expanded its semantics. First of all, Metaxas's references to the Third Hellenic Civilisation had a different focus depending on the audience he was addressing (peasants, students, intellectuals etc.) and the setting in which his statements were made. Nonetheless, the expansion of the term's meaning seems to have occurred particularly in response to recurring appeals and debates on the part of cultural thinkers and public intellectuals. That was a practice that, as in other issues and domains ranging from education to demoticist concessions and from state literary awards to lower taxes on printing paper, made several intellectuals perceive and/or present the regime as responsive to their demands. They did not shun an image of the intellectual class being in open communication with the 'national government'. On the contrary, they

[132] Matthiopoulos 1996: 701.
[133] See Lambridi 1938. Lambridi had however legitimised the regime's efforts for youth organising (see Lambridi 1939). It is also worth noting that Lambridi 1938 is a transcript of a broadcast made at the Bari station, which was a radio station established by the Fascist state for propaganda in the Eastern Mediterranean.

often assumed that their demands were to be heeded because these demands were allegedly right and stemmed from the needs of the nation or the national culture.

As I have discussed in chapter three, nation and culture stand in a metonymic or even synonymic relation to each other in the ideological universe of the Fourth-of-August regime. The national culture originates from the spirit of the nation or responds to its spiritual and vital needs, and thus healthy, organic growth of national culture would only be to the benefit of the nation itself, which is defined on the basis of its culture and identifies with it. Consequently, when national culture and its operators are afforded the means to prosper, the nation itself will prosper; and when the nation retrieves its natural trajectory of development based on its own alleged inherent capacities and eternal traits, it will spontaneously create a blossoming art that is the expression of its regenerated character and manifestation of its new civilisation. This explains Nikolaidis's suggestion that economic security (procured by the State) for cultural producers is necessary for the creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation.[134]

Around the time that the Italian attack was expected, in the summer of 1940, Metaxas made a public statement on the occasion of the opening night of the Royal Theatre in Thessaloniki.[135] In a text in *I Neolea* largely repeating the dictator's statements, Melis Nikolaidis interpreted them as an extension of the scope of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, explicitly associating it with the civilising mission of Greece not just in the Orient anymore but for the whole of humanity.[136] In any case, the concept was employed as an expression of faith in the abilities of the Greek nation and thus in the Greek artists and writers. While the Third Hellenic Civilisation is often linked to isolationism in secondary literature, Metaxas and his followers amongst

[134] 'οδηγώντας το Έθνος στη νέα του εξόρμηση, [ο Μεταξάς] του έδωσε για πρώτο και κύριο σύνθημα τη δημιουργία του Γ΄ Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού. Και γι' αυτήν ακριβώς τη δημιουργία πρέπει να ελευθερωθούν τα χέρια, να ξεμουδιάσει η σκέψη, να λυτρωθεί η ψυχή των πνευματικών ανθρώπων του τόπου, που είναι οι σοβαρότεροι, οι μοναδικοί ίσως εργάτες και συντελεστές της.' (Nikolaidis 1939c).
[135] Metaxas 1969b: 320-321. See Koliopoulos 1985 and Cliadakis 2014 about the levy of summer 1940 and the commotion in the army awaiting the attack.
[136] Nikolaidis 1940j.

the intelligentsia repeatedly presented it as a call for introspection and self-knowledge with a view to inaugurating an era of rising Greek soft power in the international scene. In this connection, it is significant that government policy and rhetoric under Metaxas were extended internationally for the first time since Venizelos's time in office. And even Venizelos had not gone as far as to employ the Royal (or National) Theatre as a diplomatic tool. The 1939 Germany and Britain tour by the Royal Theatre asserted the regime's friendly disposal towards the hosting countries and simultaneously supported its self-fashioning as a *Kulturstaat*.

Nonetheless, the concept retained a degree of contestation throughout the period from late 1936 to late 1940. Not only did the meaning, the scope, and the way to create the Third Hellenic Civilisation remain under debate amongst literary critics and other authors until virtually the outbreak of the war, but the term itself was called into question until as late as 1940, with counterproposals focusing on numbering and which previous civilisations should be taken into account.[137]

CONCLUSION

The public statements of Kostis Bastias in Great Britain during the regime's most successful soft power campaign showcase most of the attributes of the Third Hellenic Civilisation that have been discussed in this chapter: its peaceful character, its use as a means for equal participation in the international community (amongst the 'civilised' nations), its civilising and

[137] Some counterproposals to the appellation 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' can be found in Nanadakis 1940 and Lambridi 1939. Nanadakis dismissed the choice of the term as historically inaccurate and recommended that it be changed to 'Fifth Hellenic Civilisation'. Nanadakis was most probably drawing on Paparrigopoulos's schema, although, aside from 'Alexandrian Hellenism', he also referred to 'Cretan or Minoan Hellenism', which he posited as 'the first Hellenic civilisation and the first civilisation of Europe, and, furthermore, primogenitor of the present European Civilisation, which has now become global'. This argumentation is perhaps due to the author's own Cretan origin and in dialogue with the regime's special emphasis on Crete that we saw in chapter 4. Like Nanadakis, Elli Lambridi (1939: 364) had presented pre-classical Cretan civilisation as the first Hellenic civilisation (although she merged Minoan and Mycenaean into a 'Cretomycenaean' fusion) and claimed that it should be called the 'Fourth Hellenic Civilisation'. Unlike Nanadakis, however, she did not seem to consider the Hellenistic civilisation as distinct from the classical.

humanist mission, as well as its instrumentalisation for soft power politics.[138] Bastias not only attributed the successful performances of the Royal Theatre in England to 'the will of the country's Governor to place the foundations of the third Hellenic civilisation' but he also effectively presented the New State as a *Kulturstaat*, a characterisation that was particularly promoted in the self-styling of the Nazi regime and was even explicitly applied to the Metaxas dictatorship by other pro-regime intellectuals and scholars at the time.[139] Such portrayals of the dictatorship certainly had a legitimising function and the dictator himself capitalised on the Greek Royal Theatre's British tour, calling it 'a victory of today's Greece within the largest international arena'.[140]

Through its peaceful character, the new national ideal of the Third Hellenic Civilisation could in fact support the regime's efforts to remain officially neutral between Germany and Great Britain. The Royal Theatre tour, taking place merely two months before the outbreak of WWII, proved a medium to demonstrate that the new Greek ideal was compatible with both Germany's and Britain's dominant ideology. For Nazi Germany, the promotion of modern Greeks as successors of the ancients (owing to the 'biological consistency of the race and the peculiar character of the land' in Panayiotopoulos's terms) and as creators of civilisation meant modern Greece could be considered a member of the family of Aryan peoples. For Great

[138] 'Ο Γεν. Διευθυντής του Βασιλ. Θεάτρου κ. Κ. Μπαστιάς ευχαρίστησε από σκηνής "για την τιμή, την ενθάρρυνση και τη δικαιοσύνη, με την οποίαν εκρίνατε το έργον μας" που το παρέβαλε με "νέον κλάδον ελαίας, τον οποίον ένα έθνος, πτωχόν ίσως σε υλικά μέσα, αλλά πάμπλουτο σε ηρωικές σελίδες ιστορίας και πολιτισμού, προσφέρει στα άλλα πολιτισμένα έθνη". Ο κ. Μπαστιάς μίλησε επίσης από τον ραδιοφωνικό σταθμό του Λονδίνου και ετόνισε ότι η τόσο ικανοποιητική εκδήλωση της Ελληνικής πνευματικής προσπαθείας στην Αγγλία "δεν οφείλεται σε τυχαίο γεγονός, αλλά στη θέληση του Κυβερνήτου της χώρας να θέσει τα θεμέλια του τρίτου Ελληνικού πολιτισμού. Και σ' αυτό διαφέρει ο Κυβερνήτης μας από άλλους: πιστεύει ότι χωρίς ρωμαλέα πνευματική ζωή και μεγάλη καλλιτεχνική άνθηση, η προσπάθεια δεν βρίσκει ποτέ δικαίωση"' ([Anon.] 1939s).

[139] See Martynkewicz 2011: 11, 18, Michaud 2004, and Chapoutot 2016 about the Nazi *Kulturstaat*. Cf. 'Η Πολιτεία σήμερον δεν είναι απλώς ο ρυθμιστής, δ.λ.δ. ο αστυνόμος της τάξεως, αλλ' είναι φορεύς πολιτισμού και δίδει κατευθυντηρίους γραμμάς εις πάσαν εκπολιτιστικήν πρόοδον και ανόρθωσιν, έχει δ.λ.δ. αποβή "Κράτος-πολιτισμού" (Kulturstaat, γερμανιστί)' (Charalambidis 1937: 627).

[140] 'μια νίκη της σημερινής Ελλάδος εντός του μεγαλυτέρου διεθνούς στίβου' (see [Anon.] 1939t).

Britain, the focus was on the traditional association of classical Greece with western civilisation and the worthiness of modern Greece to continue this legacy in the modern age.[141]

In summary, this chapter has demonstrated that the construct of the Third Hellenic Civilisation took centre stage in the regime's futural discourse and was used as an instrument of legitimacy for the dictatorship, something that several literati contributed to by accepting and promoting it in their own public discourse. As a compound construct that was intended to act as a new 'sacred canopy', the Third Hellenic Civilisation had multiple aspects and was open to a degree of interpretation and refinement by intellectuals. Thus, the term was discussed in cultural and metaphysical terms and was positioned in the realm of the 'myth'. It was moreover associated with the *Megali Idea* and represented a modern revisiting of the national ideal. Its attainment was bound up with a process of 'reconnection forwards' or reactivation of inherent traits, a process that did not necessarily entail either a return to the past or isolationism. On the contrary, most pro-Metaxas cultural operators not only linked the creation of the new civilisation to a synthesis that did not exclude foreign loans but presented the Third Hellenic Civilisation as an entrance ticket for modernity and global civilisation.

[141] See several reviews in the English press and Greek responses in Dimadis 2016: 136-152.

- CHAPTER 11 -

The Youth

Shortly after the establishment of the Vichy regime, the literary critic Emilios Chourmouzios published a text in *Nea Estia* on the ideological reconfigurations taking place in France after its defeat. He claimed that 'all great movements of national reformation, to whichever direction they turn, start from school, from the youth'.[1] As we have already seen, the Metaxas dictatorship was stylised as a palingenetic endeavour aimed at a revamped and purified national community. In its programme of 'national reformation', the youth occupied centre stage. Propaganda motifs pertaining to the youth under Metaxas were in dialogue with contemporary foreign far-right regimes but also with the discourse of critics and intellectuals on the Greek youth and its national role before 1936. It is of particular interest that motifs related to the youth after 1936 such as optimism and vivacity had a significant resonance in critical discourse, often being employed by pro-regime critics as criteria in their evaluation of literature. For several critics, literature, as a component of the *Kulturnation*, was to be subjected to the same standards as the Greek nation, as the latter –and particularly its youth– was recalibrated towards rejuvenation and grandeur.

In his effort to consolidate the regime in the present and to ensure its permanence in the future, Metaxas took great pains to co-opt and co-ordinate the youth. To this end, the dictator founded the National Youth Organisation (EON) in November 1936, following on the steps of the major far-right regimes of the time.[2] The organisation did not really commence activities

[1] Chourmouzios 1940: 1173.
[2] See Pelt 2001: 157, Petrakis 2006: 20, Ploumidis 2016: 41.

until approximately a year later, and 7 November 1937 (the date when the first EON formations paraded in Patras in the presence of Metaxas) was later celebrated as the day of its establishment.[3] Literary critics and other intellectuals who dealt with cultural matters were vital to the dictatorship's aim to organise and reform the young, more so given that several interwar critics had repeatedly voiced their concerns over paedagogics.[4] This was due to the fact that the aim of the regime was to effectively instil a particular ideology and culture into the new generation. Thus, it is no coincidence that a known literary critic such as Tellos Agras would staff EON's propaganda office and act as editor in chief of the organisation's quarterly intended for its older members (*Falangitiki Epitheorisis*).[5] Similarly, the three authors (Christos E. Angelomatis, Melis Nikolaidis, Sitsa Karaiskaki) of non-specialised and non-literary texts that contributed most regularly to the organisation's main official periodical (*I Neolea*) also dealt with literary or art criticism and wrote cultural essays.

Moreover, the youth were consistently eulogised by state functionaries and pro-regime intellectuals alike and were upgraded to a crucial component of propaganda.[6] Apart from being qualities that the whole population should embrace in the context of the regime's projected 'return to idealism' that was discussed in the previous chapter, traits like enthusiasm, optimism, faith, laboriousness, and endurance were summoned in order to promote a particular concept

[3] See Angelis 2006: 81.

[4] Debates about the country's educational system or institutions were very common amongst the operators of literary criticism. See for example Mylonaki 1995 about such discussions in the periodical *Nea Estia*. The most significant examples of intellectuals interested in such matters amongst those treated in this thesis are I. M. Panayiotopoulos, who was a tutor, Petros Spandonidis, who was a middle school teacher, Melis Nikolaidis, who had briefly worked as a teacher in his youth and displayed a particular preoccupation with the youth for long thereafter, Aristos Kambanis, who had published books with the educational purpose of promoting the (neo)demotic, Sitsa Karaiskaki, who maintained that she had also studied child psychology and paedagogics. For more information, see Appendix.

[5] See here, Introduction.

[6] See e.g. the poem dedicated to the Greek youth by the then president of the Association of Greek Writers, Miltiadis Malakasis: 'Όνειρα φτερωμένα, νιάτα, / την αξετίμητη αρετή σας, / για την πατρίδα, στην ορμή σας, / κρατήσετε την φυλακτό. // Και σεις, μικρότερα, κοιτάχτε / μπροστά στους μεγαλύτερους σας, / φοβέρα νάναι στους εχτρούς σας, / κι ευλογημένη απ' το θεό! // Τίποτε άλλο απ' την Πατρίδα! / Δόξα καμμιά άλλη σαν και δαύτη, / φωτιά ιερή τα σπλάχνα ανάφτει, / χτυπά σαν το σφυρί η καρδιά. // Την ώρα που τα νιάτα αστράφτουν / στη μάχη απάνω αντρειωμένα, / κι είναι η Ελλάδα στον καθένα / τα μάτια, ολόφωτη μπροστά…' (Malakasis 1939b).

of the Greek youth under the New State. Special emphasis was laid on health, which was promoted as an ideal for young Greeks while the youth itself was presented as the healthiest part of the nation (not rarely it was the peasants who were also presented in such light).[7] Most of these traits appear constantly in the periodicals under consideration in this thesis, particularly in *I Neolea* and *Pnevmatiki Zoi*, with Melis Nikolaidis being one of the most prolific popularisers of these themes (as in the matter of the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation').[8] Furthermore, they coincide with major parts of the poetic universe of some literary modernists at the time, most notably Odysseas Elytis, something that probably rendered such writers all but subversive in the eyes of the regime.[9]

As for youth being the target of state propaganda, the publications aimed at the country's children, teenagers, and young adults thematised many of the topics I discussed in the previous chapters in the most unambiguous manner. The National Youth Organisation published dozens of booklets which it then distributed to EON officers, making sure that they would in turn use them as basic auxiliary tools in their effort to disseminate the regime's propaganda amongst the rest of the EON members.[10] Additionally, many of Metaxas's speeches concerning the future were actually addressed to the youth.[11] More importantly, creating a new 'sacred canopy', an ideal whose attainment would stem from a quasi-mystical immersion into the history and true character of the nation, was often specifically entrusted to the new generation. According to a frequently cited speech by the dictator, the selective revitalisation of the two previous Hellenic civilisations was to be undertaken by the contemporary Greek youth,

[7] See Ploumidis 2013: 128.
[8] See for instance [Anon.] 1936d: 20.
[9] To such an extent that one cannot help but wonder at Elytis's later expression of bewilderment at the dictatorship's lack of restrictions on his work. See Boyiatzis 2012: 311.
[10] See Petrakis 2006: 24. This series of publications includes books such as *Parliamentarianism and Partyism* (Mallosis 1939), *Nation* ([Anon.] 1939ah), and *The King* ([Anon.] 1939ai).
[11] See e.g. 'Ομιλία προς τους φοιτητάς του Πανεπιστημίου (10 Οκτωβρίου 1936)' Metaxas 1969a: 65-75; 'Λόγος κατά την συγκέντρωσιν της νεολαίας εις τα Ιωάννινα (13 Ιουνίου 1937)', Metaxas 1969a: 197-198; 'Λόγος επί τη ορκωμοσία των φοιτητών (20 Νοεμβρίου 1937), Metaxas 1969a: 282-287.

who had to approach the achievements of their ancestors through a Christian lens, actively enmeshed in deep religious faith.[12]

This chapter is divided into two sections which focus on two youth-related and considerably intertwined issues. These issues largely correspond to those pinpointed by the professor of Political Science and Constitutional Law at Panteios, Dimitrios Vezanis, in the inaugural issue of *To Neon Kratos*, that is at a time when EON had not really started operating yet. According to the known National Socialist Vezanis, 'the question that arises for our New State is what kind of edification (αγωγή) we will provide the youth with, and which position is the youth entitled to occupy within the New State'.[13] My analysis here will start with the 'position' ascribed to the youth and move to matters revolving around education and training, as the two stand in an end-means relation to each other. It was the envisaged role and its attendant tasks that determined the kind of guidance and grooming the youth would receive.

11.1. The Youth and the Fourth-of-August regime

Fascist regimes laid special emphasis on the role of the youth and based their hopes on it for the dissemination of their ideology and the advancement of their futural projects.[14] For Adolf Hitler, 'it was upon the conversion of the youth of Germany to the new faith of National

[12] See 'Λόγος κατά την συγκέντρωσιν της νεολαίας εις τα Ιωάννινα (13 Ιουνίου 1937)', Metaxas 1969a: 197. Dafnis, who quotes the relevant part of this speech (Dafnis 1997: 453-454) claims that 'όσον και αν ο Ι. Μεταξάς είχε συλλάβει ορθώς το πρόβλημα και επεχείρησε να υποκαταστήση τα εφθαρμένα ιδανικά δια νέων, να ξεφύγη από την στείραν άρνησιν και να καλλιεργήση ένα σύστημα ιδεών, που θα εκάλυπτε το ιδεολογικόν κενόν της εποχής του μεσοπολέμου, δεν το επέτυχε. Διότι τα συνθήματά του … [ή]σαν κατασκευάσματα του εργαστηρίου, ξένα προς την λαϊκήν ψυχήν' (Dafnis 1997: 454). Thus, the author both acknowledges the lack of a 'sacred canopy' in the interwar years and accuses Metaxas of not having managed to create it based on criteria that are drawn themselves on an interwar ideological milieu. Indeed, such criteria might as well have been used by a pro-Metaxas author during the dictatorship, such as I. M. Panayiotopoulos, for instance, who had blasted the 'seminary ethographists' ('ηθογράφοι του σπουδαστηρίου'; see here chapter 5) and would have certainly agreed with the need for an ideal to not be 'alien to the people's soul'. Dafnis would later be commissioned by the Colonels Junta to write a history school book, which he interspersed with anticommunism and pro-Junta propaganda. For a discussion of this book see Mitsopoulou 2014: 225-230 (see particularly pp. 225-226, where Mitsopoulou also refers to the ideological debts of Dafnis's anticommunism to the interwar period).

[13] Vezanis 1937: 22.

[14] See Anastasakis 1992: 117-118.

Socialism that the millennial Reich would be built'.[15] In Italy, Fascism went to great lengths to present both itself and its leader as the epitome of perennial youthfulness.[16] The discursive construction of youth in Fascism has even been seen as serving the same 'mobilizing and integrating' function as race and class did in National Socialism and Bolshevism.[17] Thus, the intimate association of the rallying slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation with the youth is nothing out of the ordinary. In fact, it does not have equivalents only in the totalitarian regimes of its time. The utopian character of this construct made it an ideal domain for the pursuit of 'activist politics'. More often than not, activist politics tends to appeal to the youth and use it as its avant-garde or 'strike force' regardless of ideological orientation.[18] Moreover, political initiatives, movements or parties with the most diverse background and objectives, activist or not, seek the support of the youth, which normally constitutes a large part of the population.

This must have been even more the case in the interwar years, which followed a period of protracted war that had a heavy toll on young and middle-age adults. As a result, the youth in several European societies that had been involved in the Great War (including France, Italy, Germany, and Greece) appeared a more dominant age and social group. In turn, modernists of all political leanings had even more reasons to focus on the youth and they called on them to enact their utopia, whether that was framed as liberalism, communism or palingenetic nationalism. If the Greek 1920s generation was decimated by the aftermath of the war and its psychosocial impact, the 1930s generation could pose as the force that would rejuvenate the nation and its culture, restore society's optimism, and upgrade the country's international standing. Furthermore, the last decade of the interwar period witnessed a proliferation of appeals to the

[15] Redles 2011: 539.
[16] See Ben-Ghiat 2001: 94.
[17] See Ben-Ghiat 2001: 29-30.
[18] On the connection of the youth to activist politics see O'Sullivan 1983: 72-75. Cf. 'Ο μεγάλος ενθουσιασμός για τα μεγάλα γεννάται πάντα μέσα στις τάξεις της νεότητος κάθε Λαού. Η ελληνική νεότητα έχει όλες τις ωραίες κληρονομικές προϋποθέσεις και μπορούμε να πούμε από τις σημερινές μας παρατηρήσεις και όλη τη γερή θέληση να γίνει πρωτοπόρος για τον αγώνα της στερεώσεως της εθνικής Ιδέας, της διατηρήσεως και μεταδόσεως του γνήσιου ελληνικού πολιτισμού και της διαφυλάξεώς του από κάθε βέβηλο χέρι, που θα θελήσει, να μετακινήσει και να σπιλώσει τις αξίες του' (Karaiskaki-Nikolaou 1938: 154-155).

youth to act as a force for national regeneration. Thus, alongside young and ambitious intellectuals like Yiorgos Theotokas, older and established intellectuals like Fotos Politis and Spyros Melas posited the youth as a vehicle for comprehensive cultural and socio-political revitalisation and remediation.[19]

Efforts to co-opt the youth and attract its support can be particularly intense when a newly formed government or regime seeks to secure its legitimacy. In the case of the Fourth-of-August dictatorship, this serves to explain in part the privileged relationship of the youth with the futural slogan of the regime, whose legitimising function I have already marked. This relationship opened up the way for a kind of illusory mass participation of a considerable proportion of the populace in the political process and for citizens to feel that they can somehow co-shape the future.[20] At the same time it meant that the regime often did not have to go into specifics about future actions, as these were supposedly contingent on involvement from below.

The most poignant theme in youth-related propaganda under the Fourth-of-August regime was its portrayal as the nation's hope for the future. In his 13 June 1937 speech where he first employed the term 'Third Hellenic Civilisation', Metaxas addressed the youth as the 'future of the Nation' and called on them to prepare for their future task, prophesying that they will see the new civilisation.[21] In an address to the members of EON approximately two years later the dictator presented the entire Greek youth, regardless of class, as being 'conjoint' 'in a sacred union', ready to construct 'a New Greece'.[22] Additionally, Metaxas intended EON as

[19] See Ladoyianni 1993, Boyiatzis 2010.
[20] See for example Metaxas's 31 October 1937 speech, where, just after addressing the youth, he stated: 'Πάμε προς δημιουργίαν του τρίτου Ελληνικού πολιτισμού, τον οποίον δεν θα τον δημιουργήση το Κράτος, αλλά σεις ως σύνολον και ο καθένας σας ως άτομον' (Metaxas 1969a: 253).
[21] 'Εσείς αποτελείτε το σύνολον, το οποίον θα είναι μίαν ημέραν το μέλλον του Έθνους. Σεις θα έλθετε εις την θέσιν την ιδικήν μας. Από τώρα πρέπει να είσθε έτοιμοι δι' αυτό που θα κάμετε. Τότε, εσείς, θα ιδήτε τον τρίτον πολιτισμόν, τον ελληνικόν' (Metaxas 1969a: 197).
[22] 'μέσα σε μια ένωσι ιερή, συνενωμένα μεταξύ τους, αδιάσπαστα και αλληλέγγυα για να δημιουργήσουν εκείνο που λέει και το τραγούδι σας: Μια Ελλάδα Νέα' ('Διάγγελμα επι τη συμπληρώσει διετίας της ΕΟΝ, 7 Νοεμβρίου 1939', Metaxas 1969b: 182).

the laboratory of a new elite that would ensure the consolidation of the regime and its continuation into the future.[23] Early on following the coup, before EON had even formally been founded, Metaxas had framed higher education as preparation for the creation of civilisation, proclaiming students the future 'ruling class of the Nation'.[24]

Both the intellectuals who contributed regularly to EON's journal and several others who supported the regime presented Greek youngsters in a similar light. Along with the Greek countryside and the advancement of 'good' literature, the Greek youth is the main axis around which the intellectual activities of Nikolaidis and his periodical revolve during the Metaxas years. A 1936 note in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* set the goal of the periodical as being mostly associated with the young people, 'for they are the most beautiful and sound hope for the spiritual/cultural rebirth of our land'.[25] Discussing the 'concept of true civilisation', Sitsa Karaiskaki identified the youth with the future of Greece. She juxtaposed the lack of awareness of this fact on the part of pre-1936 political leaderships to the youth's current positioning in its rightful place as disseminator of Greek civilisation across space and time.[26] Echoing a similar sentiment, Panayiotopoulos added to this argumentation that the regime change signified the allocation of 'consecutive objectives' for the youth, which 'converge in upon a grand objective, a bright ideal worthy of every sacrifice': 'the creation of the third Hellenic civilisation'.[27] Melis

[23] See Ploumidis 2016: 39.

[24] 'Εσείς επιδιώκετε τον αγώνα του βίου να τον διεξάγετε εις τα επίπεδα εκείνα, εις τα οποία δημιουργείται και διαμορφώνεται ο πολιτισμός ενός Έθνους. Επομένως θα γίνετε μίαν ημέραν η ηγέτις τάξις του Έθνους αυτού' Metaxas 1969a: 66 ('Ομιλία προς τους φοιτητάς του Πανεπιστημίου (10 Οκτωβρίου 1936)').

[25] [Anon.] 1936d: 20.

[26] 'Δεν είχανε συναίσθηση οι πριν άρχοντες, πως οι μικροί αυτοί πιτσιρίκοι αποτελούν το μέλλον της πατρίδας, είναι η Ελλάδα της αύριον που θα πάρει τα ηνία στα χέρια της και ή θα οδηγήσει στο γκρεμό ή στον ίσιο δρόμο' – 'Στη σημερινή νεότητα την ελληνική έχει ανατεθή το μεγάλο καθήκον να γίνει ο φορέας και ο μεσίτης του ελληνικού πολιτισμού σε όλες τις κατόπιν γενεές και σε όλες τις εκδηλώσεις της σημερινής λαϊκής ζωής'. (Karaiskaki-Nikolaou 1938: 155).

[27] 'ένα χαρακτηριστικότατο σημάδι της Μεταβολής: πήρε τα νιάτα και τα σήκωσε όπου πραγματικά βρίσκεται η θέση τους, μέσα στη συνείδηση του Έθνους και της Φυλής, μέσα στο παρόν και το μέλλον, στην καθημερινή ζωή και την ιστορία. Τους έδωσε φτερά, τα προίκισε με ασάλευτα και ολόφωτα ιδανικά και διοχέτευσε τον ενθουσιασμό τους και τη δραστηριότητά τους προς τη μόνη κατεύθυνση την άξια της υπάρξεώς των, του μόχθου των και της αισιοδοξίας των. Διαδοχικοί σκοποί τοποθετήθηκαν μπροστά τους. Μα όλοι αυτοί οι διαδοχικοί σκοποί συγκλίνουν σ' ένα μεγάλο σκοπό, σ' ένα φωτεινό και άξιο κάθε θυσίας ιδανικό που μετεωρίζεται ολόλαμπρο μπροστά σε όλους όσοι είναι άξιοι της υπάρξεώς των –και είναι όλα τα ελληνικά νιάτα, και είναι όλο το Έθνος άξιο

Nikolaidis spoke of 'the national and spiritual rebirth of the Greek Youth, which will lead to the realisation of the new Hellenic Civilisation'.[28] Christos Angelomatis, on his part, presented Greek children as the future 'governors and pioneers' of the millennial civilisation.[29]

Metaxas had openly expressed similar beliefs prior to the dictatorship, as he had suggested a close link between the youth and the national ideal(s) in his concluding article in the public debate with Venizelos on the National Schism, published in *I Kathimerini* in 1935.[30] Its very title suggests the active and privileged role of the youth in the area of the collective ideal: 'The new Greek generation can reconstruct the ideals that were ravaged by the disaster of Venizelos'.[31] The wording here is also useful for a distinction that has been suggested in the previous chapter between a reactionary conception of time, which is 'static', as 'a particular point in time is adhered to', and a fascistic one, which sees time as 'renewable'.[32] It is not a period of the past that is to be 'restored', but the national ideals, which can then lead to the creation of a new (national) future. In line with the privileged association of the youth with the creation of a new civilisation, this article demonstrates affinities with Metaxas's later discussions of the Third Hellenic Civilisation both in terms of content and in terms of verbiage. This corroborates the conclusion that, although the term might belong to Nikoloudis, its content was partly of the dictator's own inception. A characteristic example is the repetition (both in this article and in speeches during the dictatorship) of flag relay imagery in reference to the Third Hellenic Civilisation to symbolise the handover of nationalist ideals from generation to generation.

της υπάρξεώς του, καθώς είναι και της ιστορίας του άξιο. Ο μεγάλος αυτός σκοπός είναι η δημιουργία του τρίτου ελληνικού πολιτισμού' (Panayiotopoulos 1939h: 55).

[28] Nikolaidis 1939b: 97.

[29] 'τα σημερινά ελληνόπουλα, που θα είναι σε λίγα χρόνια οι κυβερνήται και οι πρωτοπόροι του αιωνίου ελληνικού μεγαλείου' (Angelomatis 1940d).

[30] About this article see also 10.2.

[31] Metaxas 1935: 379-384.

[32] See Freeden 2003: 75.

However, this imagery, albeit seemingly commonplace, is positioned alongside several themes that appear also in Hitler's speech delivered in front of the *Hitlerjugend* in Nuremberg on 8 September 1934. That speech was widely disseminated at the time in and out of Germany, also through its recording in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935). This raises another important issue, which is the fact that much of the Metaxist propaganda aimed at the youth echoed the discourse of National Socialism. Several addresses of the dictator to the Greek youth seem to be in dialogue with Hitler's 1934 speech.[33] Sitsa Karaiskaki, a known National Socialist, was hired to work as the number one propagandist of *I Neolea* after having anonymously scribed a few EON booklets.[34] In her articles she often translated –literally and metaphorically, though without ever mentioning her use of German sources– Nazi ideas and texts. Melis Nikolaidis, who held the column 'Letters to the young' from late 1939 onwards, also progressively adopted parts of Nazi ideology, at least insofar as it could fit into the regime's general framework –without promoting expansionism or anti-Semitism for instance.[35] Nikolaidis even advertised Karaiskaki's work in his periodical, while having her publish an article in it on 15 October 1939, merely a day after his first contribution to *I Neolea*.[36] That article by Karaiskaki was almost identical to one she published in January 1940 in *I Neolea*, with another article on the same themes appearing in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* a few days later.[37] These texts constituted in fact a case of plagiarism from Alfred Rosenberg, as I showed in part two.

[33] See for instance a part of Metaxas's 31 October 1937 speech in Selinounda compared to a part of Hitler's speech: 'πίστιν προς τας αρχάς της 4ης Αυγούστου, των οποίων, εσείς παιδιά και εσείς κορίτσια, θα επωφεληθήτε μίαν ημέραν και την σημαίαν, την οποίαν εσείς, όταν θα λείψωμεν ημείς, διότι άνθρωποι είμεθα, εσείς θα πάρετε την σημαίαν των και θα την φέρετε παρά πέρα, έως ότου αρκέση ο βίος σας δια να την παραδώσετε εις τους επερχομένους νέους, οι οποίοι και αυτοί θα την πάνε πάρα πέρα εις αιώνα τον άπαντα' (Metaxas 1969a:); 'All that we demand of the Germany of the future, we demand from you, boys and girls. This you must practice and, in this, contribute to the future. No matter what we create today and what we do, we will pass away one day. But in you, Germany will live on. And when there is nothing left of us, you must bear the flag in your hand – a flag which we once raised from nothing'.

[34] See Appendix.

[35] See for instance Nikolaidis 1940f and 1939i, which echoes Darré, as noted in the previous chapter.

[36] See e.g. the advertisement for her historical novel *Ο γυιος της καλογρηάς* (1939) in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* 59 (25 Jan 1940), 17 (that was also the issue that contained her last contribution to Nikolaidis's periodical). The two mid-October texts are Nikolaidis 1939g and Karaiskaki 1939b.

[37] The two January 1940 texts are Karaiskaki 1940a and Karaiskaki 1940b. A comparison between Karaiskaki 1939d and Karaiskaki 1940a reveals that some paragraphs were omitted in the latter text and there were a few

This predilection for Nazi discourse in Metaxist youth-oriented speech acts might be down to several factors. One was the great allure of National Socialist propaganda at the time, while another one was the existence of several German speakers amongst the Greek intelligentsia –including Metaxas himself. A third factor could have been the fact that the Nazi youth organisation was actually even older than its Italian counterpart, established long before the ascension of the Nazis to power, in 1922.[38] Finally, this probably also had to do with the conception of history promoted in the two major far-right regimes of the time, which was instrumental for their present policies and future goals.[39] Whatever the exact prime movers, this predilection had further implications for the social engineering enterprise of the Greek dictatorship targeting the youth, which we will see in the next section.

To sum up, the youth was placed in a central position by the Metaxas dictatorship and was assigned a Promethean mission to act as carriers of its ideals and founders of the new civilisation. The new generation, organised under the surveillance and guidance of the state, was entrusted with the survival and strengthening of both the nation and the regime, while it was intended to provide the future elite.

11.2. EDUCATION, SOCIAL ENGINEERING, AND THE NEW MAN

In order for the new generation to fulfill its tasks, EON purportedly exercised the Greek youth in virtue, the classical *arete*.[40] The organisation's aim was expressly paedagogical,

spelling and capitalisation differences (which arguably had to do with the periodical and not with the author). Karaiskaki also published an article on the novelist-turned-Nazi sympathiser Knut Hamsun in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* in November 1939 (Karaiskaki 1939c).

[38] See Evans 2004: 213. Despite the little appeal of the organisation for approximately a decade, National Socialist youth organising improved with time to the extent that by 1931, through their Student League, 'the Nazis had completely taken over student representation in Germany' (Evans 2004: 215).

[39] As mentioned in chapter two, both regimes constructed a Manichean historical framework. In the National Socialist conception of history, Greece was not the opposition of Germany (as in Italy's case), but its close Indo-Germanic relative and its spiritual ancestor. Particularly the appropriation of the Spartan model for their New Man project by the Nazis provided Metaxas with a blueprint that was easy to follow and even easier to integrate into Greek nationalism.

[40] That was repeatedly stated by EON functionaries and was one of the main conclusions of the second convention of EON's Peripheral Administrations. A note embedded in a 1940 article by Karaiskaki on the 'Greek virtues'

supplementing schools and in some domains outflanking them.[41] Nonetheless, school education remained a recurring theme under consideration in texts by men of letters, indeed often appearing in conjunction with explicit references to the new civilisation, the new Greece or the new type of man that the dictatorship was aspiring after.

In several articles, schools or educational reform were presented as prerequisites for the new civilisation and teachers as catalysts in the process of creating the Third Hellenic Civilisation, since they are responsible for (re)fashioning the youth.[42] According to Pavlos Floros, 'the Greek elementary school teacher has a historic work to put through: to assist in the figuration of the "third Hellenic civilisation" by moulding the new generation'.[43] Without being very explicit about it in most of his article, Floros in fact not just endorsed the Metaxas regime, but posited its vision for a 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' as the only appropriate way forward. Against this backdrop, it comes as no surprise that even governmental initiatives against illiteracy were framed in *Pnevmatiki Zoi* as a national crusade.[44] In addition, the periodical's editor argued that, contingent upon proper education relying on the 'language of the People', the

communicates this conclusion: Μέσα εις την Εθνικήν Οργάνωσιν της Νεολαίας τα παιδιά της Ελλάδος δεν διδάσκονται απλώς την αρετήν. Διδάσκονται να ασκούν την αρετήν' (see K., S. 'Οι ελληνικές αρετές', 1194).

[41] See Kalerande 2016: 247-277.

[42] See e.g. 'Εκεί, στα Σχολεία, είναι η μοναδική βάση, πάνω στην οποία μπορούμε να στηρίξουμε τον νέον Ελληνικό Πολιτισμό' ([Anon.] 1940d) and Spandonidis 1940d. About the presentation of teachers as leaders and of the Leader as a national paedagogue, see here chapter 8. Cf. 'το χαρακτηριστικό γνώρισμα του νέου Κράτους μας, είναι προ πάντων η μέριμνα για το σύνολο των παιδιών, η σκέψη πως έτσι μονάχα, με το ενδιαφέρον αυτό, μπορούμε να δημιουργήσωμε τον Τρίτο Ελληνικό Πολιτισμό' (Stamatis 1940: 60-61).

[43] 'Ο Έλληνας δημοδιδάσκαλος έχει να επιτελέσει έργο ιστορικό: πλάθοντας τη νέα γενεά, να βοηθήσει στη διαμόρφωση του "τρίτου ελληνικού πολιτισμού"' (Floros 1940a: 79). Cf. 'Κ' ίσως η Ιστορία αναγράψει κάποτε στα ερχόμενα δεκάχρονα τη φράση: "Τον πνευματικό πολιτισμό η Νέα Ελλάδα τον χρωστά το περισσότερο στους δημοδιδασκάλους"' (Floros 1940a: 80), 'στα χέρια των εκπαιδευτικών μας προ πάντων βρίσκεται όχι απλώς η μόρφωση του Έθνους, αλλά και γενικότερα η πνευματική αναγέννηση του τόπου μας κι' η δημιουργία του νέου μας πολιτισμού' ([Anon.] 1939ab), and 'αν πρόκειται ν' αναδημιουργηθεί ο πνευματικός πολιτισμός του, οι πρώτοι και κυριότεροι παράγοντες και συντελεστές της μεγάλης αυτής αναδημιουργίας είναι, χωρίς καμμιάν αμφισβήτηση, οι εκπαιδευτικοί' (Nikolaidis 1940m).

[44] 'Κάθε φτωχό παιδί του λαού, που αποτραβιέται από το σκοτάδι της αγραμματοσύνης και χαρίζεται στο φως και τη χαρά της πνευματικής και ηθικής απολυτρώσεως, είναι κι' ένα *μεγάλο κοινωνικό κι' εθνικό κέρδος*. Ο αγώνας εναντίον του αναλφαβητισμού είναι από τους πιο ωραίους και τους *πιο ιερούς*· και πρέπει να εξακολουθήσει και ν' αναπτυχθεί όσο το δυνατόν περισσότερο' ([Anon.] 1938f; emphasis added).

demotic, Greek youngsters 'will become, consciously or subconsciously, the labourers, the agents, the creators of the new Hellenic Civilisation'.[45]

In early 1938, following Nikolaidis's departure for his tour in the Greek provinces that I discussed in chapter four, Yiannis Chatzinis undertook the editorial of *Pnevmatiki Zoi*. Therein he discussed the 'drama of the youth', who are often unjustly blamed for what is simply their nature, and the duty of the older generation to provide them guidance. It is not only the advocacy of increased intervention on the part of the older generation with the aim of moulding the youth appropriately that falls in line with the regime's 'activist politics'.[46] It is also the characteristics of youth which are praised that echo its rhetoric: enthusiasm, élan, boldness.[47]

Near the end of the year an unexpected intervention materialised, as the dictator took over the Ministry of Education, being now able to supervise, guide, and mould Greek children more effectively than any private initiative would. On this occasion, Nikolaidis came up with a whole imaginary dialogue based on a photo of Metaxas amongst pupils in order to present this development in good light. The dictator supposedly heeded a call and that is why he assumed the minister's position. The call, however, was not openly expressed, but rather deduced by Nikolaidis, so for Metaxas to have heard it, the reader presumes, he would have to command a very good sensory ability, to be a 'seer', able to see beyond the phenomena and act upon the

[45] Nikolaidis 1938b. In a later editorial, Nikolaidis belauded the classicist Ioannis Kakridis for delivering the first lesson in the history of Greek academia in the demotic. The editor signed off his text on this note: 'Δώστε μας κι' άλλους, κι' άλλους τέτοιους δασκάλους, πολλούς, όσο το δυνατόν πιο πολλούς. Αν είναι δυνατόν, κάμετε τέτοιους όλους τους δασκάλους των παιδιών μας. Θα εξασφαλίσετε την πνευματικήν αναγέννηση του τόπου μας, θα πραγματοποιήσετε την αναδημιουργία του πολιτισμού μας, τη δημιουργία του Γ΄ Ελληνικού πολιτισμού' (Nikolaidis 1939k: 290).

[46] Cf. Metaxas 1969a: 254: 'Οδηγοί σας θα είναι και οι πνευματικώς υπερέχοντες Έλληνες, οι διδάσκαλοί σας, οι καθηγηταί σας, όλοι εκείνοι τους οποίους η τύχη ηυνόησε ή η αξιότης των τους έφερεν εις ανώτερην πνευματικήν ανάπτυξιν και οι οποίοι, από όπου και αν είναι, εύχομαι να ακούσουν την φωνήν μου'. About the discussion of teachers, men of letters, and artists as leaders, see chapter 8.

[47] 'Η νεότης είναι ένα ποτάμι που χύνεται, γιατί δεν μπορεί να κάνει διαφορετικά, που απλώνεται όπου τύχει. Δουλειά και υποχρέωση των πρεσβυτέρων είναι να του προετοιμάσουν την κοίτη. Το να διατυπώνονται κατηγορίες εναντίον της νεότητος και για ό,τι μάλιστα αποτελεί το ίδιο το νόημά της, την πιο χαρακτηριστική της εκδήλωση, είναι σα να κατηγορεί κανείς ένα φυσικό φαινόμενο. … τα μειονεκτήματα, έχουν ως αντιστάθμισμα τον ενθουσιασμό, την ορμητικότητα, την τόλμη. Κι ακριβώς αυτά τα στοιχεία πρέπει να χρησιμοποιηθούν κατάλληλα, να διοχετευθούν εκεί που πρέπει, για να ελπίζουμε σ' ένα γόνιμο αποτέλεσμα, για να δρέψουμε τον πολύτιμο καρπό. Οι νέοι έχουν ανάγκη από κατευθύνσεις πνευματικές' (Chatzinis 1938a.).

silent injunctions of his People and of abstract idealistic agents, such as what the author labels as the 'Spirit of Education'.[48]

Another significant theme that the Greek regime probably borrowed from foreign totalitarian regimes was the explicit declaration and pursuit of radical social engineering. The idea of creating a New Man in harmony with their ideology and as the enactor of their future-directed visions was pivotal in both Fascism's and Nazism's treatment of the youth.[49] As Theologos Nikoloudis had contended in his 1937 article that opened the first issue of *To Neon Kratos*, 'along with the form of the new state the new Greek citizen will spring up, who, as a natural consequence, will also be a superior (hu)man'.[50] Pavlos Floros's June 1940 text I discussed in the previous chapter regarding the significance of education for the creation of the new civilisation points in the same direction as several of Melis Nikolaidis's texts throughout the years of the dictatorship.[51] What Floros and Nikolaidis meant –but the former expressed more pointedly– was a kind of education that largely overlaps with civics. In other words, the social engineering that creates a new type of citizen, a national citizen, while it ensures homogenisation and social stability (what Floros called 'the unified rhythm of life').

Sports and exercise formed an integral part of the process towards the creation of a New Man (and Woman), as well as of the propaganda featuring advances in this process in both major fascist regimes.[52] The Fourth-of-August dictatorship followed on their tracks, but in the Greek case this does not seem to have applied so much to workers (unless they were EON members) or wider segments of the population. Rather, relevant efforts concentrated on the National Youth Organisation. Athletic spirit and physical activities made for a central component of EON's regimen and regimentation. They were also a significant part of EON-related

[48] See Nikolaidis 1938i.
[49] See Ponzio 2015.
[50] Nikoloudis 1937: 5.
[51] See section 10.3, note 96.
[52] See Dogliani 2009: 190, Chapoutot 2016: 5, 8 and passim.

propaganda, whether it was aimed at the organisation's members or it thematised them. As a matter of fact, the physical training of and imposition of discipline onto the Greek youth was promoted as a major source of legitimacy for the regime from the very beginning, as illustrated for instance in an August 1936 editorial by the publisher of *I Kathimerini,* Yeoryios A. Vlachos.[53]

What is more, pro-regime intellectuals intertwined sports with hygienic discourse, idealism, and the primacy of culture. In his 1938 book *Writers and their Time* Petros Orologas followed on the nineteenth-century tradition of thought that saw neurasthenia as a 'symptom of the mechanical civilisation'. He claimed that in Europe the antidote was found in endeavours and activities that promoted sports, joy, and a return to nature, as well as in the new 'dynamic ideologies' that had a 'purely religious content' and combatted isolation and alienation.[54] All this is a clear allusion to fascism and especially Nazism, both as ideology and as praxis. Sitsa Karaiskaki, who had been involved in hosting the Greek delegation at the 1936 Berlin Olympics,[55] contributed a text on the 'deeper spirit of athleticism' to *I Neolea* in 1939, dissociating it from records, profits, and the American model of professionalisation and commercialisation. Posing ancient Greece as the exemplary site of athletic activity, she associated sports with religious spirit and the endeavour to create 'the well-rounded human'. Linking sports to art, she claimed that her time was witnessing a disintegration of the maxim 'sports for sports' sake'

[53] 'Αλλ' όταν αργότερα τους σημερινούς «νεολέους» [sic] αντικαταστήσουν τετράδες αθλητικαί νέων Ελλήνων, οι οποίοι με το στέρνον ευθύ και με την κεφαλήν υψηλά, θα βαδίσουν προς τα εμπρός, … τότε τις θα είναι εκείνος ο οποίος δεν θα ομολογήση ότι είχε άδικον να μη συνταχθή με την τώρα ανατέλλουσαν νέαν τάξιν πραγμάτων και τις εμμένων εις ό,τι εγίνετο μέχρι της χθες δεν θα ομολογήση την πλάνην του;…' (V. 1936). Vlachos's description of the future youth does not only point to the importance of athleticism for palingenetic ultranationalist movements and regimes of the period but perhaps even more so to the importance of mass coordination and public spectacle, topics I analysed in chapter 7. For a discussion of how sports, historical myth, and mass public performance combined within the context of the Metaxas and the Colonels dictatorships see Van Steen 2010 and Van Steen 2015: 159-189.

[54] Orologas 1938a: 5.

[55] See [Anon.] 2013: 82 and Vallianatos 2014: 164.

like that of 'art for art's sake' and she attributed a social/national function to athletics: 'the physical and spiritual remediation of the collective'.[56]

A year later, Dimitris Poulianos would reiterate most of Karaiskaki's claims while placing special emphasis on the complementariness and interconnection of art and sports.[57] In the same issue as her aforementioned text, Karaiskaki had also published an article on the Discobolus of Myron and the Lancellotti copy, in which she included similar remarks, particularly with regard to the relation of sports to religion in ancient Greece. This most famous of the statue's copies had been recently acquired by Adolf Hitler and placed in the Munich Glyptothek.[58] That development was described by Karaiskaki as brought about by 'the longing of the leader of the German people' and as having a refreshing impact on the 'entire civilised world' and the Greek youth as well, bringing them into contact with the ancient Greek spirit.[59] It is worth noting that Riefenstahl's film about the 1936 Berlin Olympics (*Olympia*, 1938) starts with a sequence of ancient Greek statues climaxing with the Discobolus, who is then turned into a living German athlete.[60]

Interestingly, Grigorios Xenopoulos was amongst those who praised the physical education provided to the youth under the new regime. He started his 1938 contribution to *I Neolea* by claiming that 'today's youth is happy. It has an organisation, it can cultivate both spirit and body, it has books and periodicals, it has gymnasiums. At my time it did not have any of these things'. Xenopoulos then shared his memories about the lack of athletic and outdoor activities for pupils when he was a kid, focusing on the private initiative of some teachers to start a gym for their pupils in Zante, and the eventual abandonment of the project some years after the opening of the athletic facility. His closing remarks revolved around the radical difference he

[56] Karaiskaki 1939a: 1075.
[57] Poulianos 1940c.
[58] See Michaud 2004: 148 and Chapoutot 2016.
[59] Kar. 1939c: 1085.
[60] See Chapoutot 2016: 166-167 for a brief reading of this scene.

saw between the two eras: 'But in this difference I see the entire civilisation that our new State has managed to create over the last years. And the organised and blissful youth will increase and strengthen this civilisation further. We should owe a great deal of gratitude to the national Governor who awakened, roused, and chastened it'.[61] These statements, published in the official periodical of EON, must have had a significant legitimising impact, considering that, apart from a famous writer, Xenopoulos was a member of the Academy and had served as the chief editor of the foremost children's magazine in the country for decades (*I Diaplasis ton Pedon*).

The social engineering project aimed at moulding a New Man was presented throughout the dictatorship as a work in progress. It was only on the eve of the war that Karaiskaki and Nikolaidis started portraying it in *I Neolea* as being complete or nearing its completion. In the summer of 1940, the outbreak of war in the southern Balkans seemed imminent. Italy had annexed Albania the previous year and the battle of France had been lost, with British troops being pushed out of the continent. The first claims of completion of the regime's New Man project appeared in EON's weekly around the time that Italy eventually entered WWII by declaring war on and ultimately invading France.[62] On 8 June, Karaiskaki asserted that 'today a new type of child and teenager, a new type of girl has been created'.[63] On 22 June Nikolaidis would conspicuously associate the completion of the project with readiness for defensive war, while writing about the 'great national regeneration that has taken place under the impetus of the principles and ideals of the 4th August' and about the national soul that has 'awareness that it knows itself already and knows what it can and what it must do'.[64]

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[61] Xenopoulos 1938.
[62] See Rodogno 2009: 249.
[63] 'δημιουργήθηκε σήμερα ένας νέος τύπος παιδιού και εφήβου, ένας νέος τύπος κοριτσιού, που ξεπερνώντας το κατώφλι της αδράνειας και της ψυχικής αδυναμίας και εξαρτήσεως πλέει με γεμάτα τα πανιά προς την συμπλήρωσι του ανθρωπίνου εαυτού του' (Kar. 1940b: 1132).
[64] Nikolaidis moreover claimed that 'Βλέποντας τα φωτεινά μάτια του Αρχηγού να παρακολουθούν και να εποπτεύουν με καλωσύνη και στοργή τις πολιτιστικές εκδηλώσεις του Έθνους, ξέρει ότι τα ίδια αυτά μάτια είναι εκείνα που μένουν πάντα ανοιχτά κι' άγρυπνα, μέρα και νύχτα, για την ειρήνη και την ασφάλεια του Κράτους. Μα ξέρει συγχρόνως ότι τα ίδια αυτά ήρεμα μάτια θα πετάξουν με μιας τις φλογερές σπίθες που θα φλογίσουν και θ' ανάψουν την εθνική ψυχή τη στιγμή της απειλής και του κινδύνου και θα την οδηγήσουν στην πλήρη

In a September 1940 issue, published approximately three weeks after the sinking of the cruiser Elli, both Nikolaidis and Karaiskaki contributed texts that emphasised the accomplishment or near-accomplishment of the New Man project. Positing the 'combatant spirit, the heroic spirit, the spirit of self-sacrifice' as a trait of all EON members, Nikolaidis spoke of the 'great ethical and national breath that has regenerated you radically, firmly, permanently, conclusively, that has remade you genuine and beautiful little Greeks'.[65] While alluding to the 15 August events, Karaiskaki discerned the contours of 'the type of new (hu)man that the Leader envisaged, of a man capable of acting heroically in every national need by instinct'.[66]

It is worth noting here that the Nazi conception of the New Man was one of a 'political soldier' or 'ideological warrior', whose main trait would be a natural inclination towards 'sacrifice for the common good'.[67] To an extent, these notions drew on the concept of the citizen-soldier, which had been developed in Georges Sorel's seminal book *Reflexions sur la violence* (1908).[68] Thus, despite the non-militarist stance of the regime on the international level, militarism played an ever-increasing role domestically. The youth was enlisted in an organisation with many military characteristics, including group action, sports and athletic activities, strict routine, discipline, ranks, uniforms, marches, fascist salutes, slogans, flags, emblems and songs. At the same time, official propaganda and pro-regime discourse transferred visions of military struggle and triumph into the symbolic realm. Particularly the propaganda aimed at the youth through the pages of *I Neolea* was laden with military symbolism, while explicit references to the military itself were anything but uncommon, especially throughout 1940.[69]

εκπλήρωσι του μεγάλου καθήκοντος. Και είναι έτοιμη. Γι' αυτό ακριβώς είναι και ήρεμη. Ήρεμη και έτοιμη' (Nikolaidis 1940h).

[65] Nikolaidis 1940l.

[66] Kar. 1940c.

[67] See Chapoutot 2016: 4.

[68] Although Sorel was originally a revolutionary syndicalist, his palingenetic, antidemocratic, Bergsonian agenda led to his alliance with royalists and other right-wing circles for a while and his thought influenced many fascists in and out of France. See Antliff 2007.

[69] See also Safouris 2016: 92-95 about the indirect promotion of militarism and familiarisation with war in primary school books under Metaxas.

To get back to the two September 1940 texts by Karaiskaki and Nikolaidis, I should point out that a relative oxymoron appears between the texts at first glance. The oxymoron is, however, lifted if one takes into account the mindset I suggested in previous parts of the thesis. The regime's New Man visions are to be understood in conjunction with the concepts of 're-connection forwards' and 'national entelechy' that I discussed in chapter ten. Their ideological background can also be associated with what was discussed in chapter three as the 'Greek consciousness' in Myrivilis's terms. The Fourth-of-August dictatorship's New Man concept was one of revamping the young generation in accordance to (its own interpretation of) the 'racial cell'. The reactivation of Hellenism's true –but latent or suppressed– Being was supposed to be the means for the transition of Greece into 'organised modernity'.

In other words, the new type of (hu)man that had allegedly been shaped by the regime was nothing but the recreation of the 'genuine' Greek identity of an imaginary and superhistorical past directed at the future. What was portrayed as essence or substance was actually based on manipulatory will and social engineering. This explains why the 'genuine little Greeks' who were made according to the leader's vision were presented simultaneously as *New* Men and as *re*made.[70] To quote Osborne on the conservative revolution again, 'its image of the future may derive from the mythology of some lost origin or suppressed national essence, but its temporal dynamic is rigorously futural'. In anticipation of the impending war, regime propagandists portrayed the open project of fully realising 'this "past" *for the first time*' as drawing to an end.[71]

Overall, youth-related discourse under Metaxas revolved predominantly around the kind of education and regimentation that would allow the new generation to succeed in the role it had been assigned within the New State. Special emphasis was laid on national edification,

[70] Cf. Chapoutot 2016: 8-9.
[71] Osborne 1995: 164.

athletic activities, and military-style training, as EON members were to turn into New Men and Women who would prioritise the collective good and would be willing to sacrifice themselves without thought. In this effort, which appears to have been increasingly intertwined with the expected Italian attack, the Greek regime and its followers amongst intellectuals relied especially on Nazi models. Nonetheless, using fascist techniques against a fascist adversary was no Greek particularity. Several French intellectuals, including Sorel's short-lived ally and Action Française figurehead Charles Maurras, consistently called for an alliance with Fascist Italy and/or the adoption of a 'French' or 'minimum fascism' to counter the threat of Nazi Germany or to prepare France for a war against it.[72]

CONCLUSION

This chapter demonstrated that the youth constituted a crucial component of futural discourse under Metaxas. It examined the role assigned to the youth in the context of the regime, showing that this role consisted mainly in the dissemination of national(ist) ideals and the regime's values along with the pursuit of the latter's basic objectives of making a 'new Greece' and a new civilisation. The fact that the National Youth Organisation was presented as the laboratory of the future elite was intricately linked to these tasks, which were central in the regime's self-styling and important for its continued existence.

In addition, the chapter dealt with the way in which the youth was supposed to succeed in its new role. National education was supplemented with the promotion of sports and militarism in a process of social engineering aimed at the creation of a New Man. Through the institution of EON the dictator was therefore merely moulding the material that would allegedly give birth to his futural visions. The blueprint of National Socialism had a significant impact on all this and indeed one that seems to have increased as the expected attack from Italy was

[72] Antliff 2007.

drawing closer. The analysis in this chapter leads to the conclusion that the expressed aim of revamping the youth for the creation of a new Greece and the Third Hellenic Civilisation was gradually but tacitly displaced by the objective of preparing citizen-soldiers for the impending war.

CONCLUSIONS

This part set out to determine how the Fourth-of-August Regime and sympathetic intellectuals laid claim to the future and populated it with ideas and visions. It has examined the idea of a New Order and its bearing on both domestic and international affairs. The utopian connotations the future was invested with under Metaxas can partly be construed from the presence of palingenetic, millennialist, religious discourse. Moreover, the findings of this part point to an understanding of the regime's temporal politics as fascistic. This is mainly deduced from the emergence of the Third Hellenic Civilisation through the examined texts as a renegotiation of endogenous future-oriented national ideals and watchwords, but at the same time as a modernist conception premised on synthesis, regeneration, and creative continuation. It was also shown that the youth were intimately linked to the future in official and pro-dictatorial rhetoric in a rather novel way for the Greek context. The injunction that was placed upon them to become the creators of the new civilisation, the disseminators of dictatorial ideology or the regime's future elites, was enveloped within a totalising project of social engineering intent on the shaping of the 'New Man'. Despite the British connection, the dialogue with the Nazi blueprint was extensive, especially in the domain of youth-related propaganda.

The most significant futural concept, one that most other future-directed ideas revolved around, was the Third Hellenic Civilisation. This has often been associated in secondary literature with ancient Sparta, Macedonia, and Byzantium, which are perceived as blueprints and archetypes or focal points in its genealogy. Yet, these particular models, especially Sparta and Macedonia, are conspicuously absent in the texts by literary critics and intellectuals dealing

with the concept, despite the general references to the 'ancients'.[1] Another finding to emerge from this part is that, apart from being the main propagator of the slogan 'Third Hellenic Civilisation' in *I Neolea*, Melis Nikolaidis also penned a host of texts for his own periodical that refer or allude to this and other futural concepts of the regime. Thus, despite being the one amongst the critics discussed in this thesis most vocally and most frequently disclaiming any political interest or pro-dictatorial bias, he is perhaps the number one disseminator of the regime's core ideological constructs in the literary and cultural sphere.

Similarly to the first part of the thesis, one can notice in this part the cross-contamination of temporalities. For instance, the present and the future under Metaxas marked the fulfilment of a cultural and national renaissance foretold in national poetry, while the Third Hellenic Civilisation was the present version of the Greek nation's age-old (or eternal) Great Idea. The fact that the line between the distant past and eternity was blurred in discourse relevant to the Third Hellenic Civilisation indicates that the Fourth-of-August regime did not seek to restore a past age. It rather approached the future with the aid of a largely superhistorical past, which it treated as an inventory of traits and practices which would be useful for the nation to 'reactivate' in the modern age.

Moreover, the Third Hellenic Civilisation was supposed to be in dialogue with both previous civilisations, with folk culture, and with the modern civilisation of the West, whose integral part it aspired to be. The difference with earlier ideological constructs that sought to be accepted as the national ideal and the collective objective of the Greeks was that those earlier attempts never intended Greece to become a 'full-time' member of the community of 'civilised nations'. They rather called for it to be recognised as a 'junior partner' of Western Europe, to

[1] Perhaps the only primary source examined in this thesis where an indirect association of the term with ancient Sparta is made is Myrivilis 1938. In this text, the author illustrates the consciousness of racial continuity, which he then posits as a prerequisite for the creation of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, through the verses recited by the three choirs of old men, adults, and boys in Spartan festivals, according to Plutarch (άμμες ποκ' ήμες…).

be supported in its role as the 'little white man' in the Orient, and to be acknowledged its right to ancient Greek heritage, which lay in the foundations of modern European civilisation. These attempts had aimed at upgrading the Greek state to the status of a regional power either through domestic modernisation and development or through territorial expansion. The slogan of the Third Hellenic Civilisation meant that modern Greece would no longer aspire to function as a simple conveyor but as a creator of civilisation (or, in Hitler's terms, not as a 'bearer' but as a 'founder of civilisation'). It also meant that Greece's pattern of cultural communication with the West would not be merely that of a receiver but also of a sender.

The scope of the thesis does not go beyond the eruption of the war with Italy on 28 October 1940. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that in the case of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, the slogan was taken out of the picture. The focus was on the victory against the Italian aggressor and there was no discernible tendency to, for example, associate this desired victory with the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Intellectuals directed their desire to mobilise and participate in a wider political and national endeavour at the 'Spiritual/Intellectual Levy', which engaged even personalities that had not supported the dictatorship and was characteristically headed by the former deportee Konstandinos Tsatsos.[2] Following the death of the dictator in early 1941 and the German invasion in spring of the same year, the supposed creators of the new civilisation, EON, were disbanded without resistance. At the same time, several intellectuals, who had formerly propagated Metaxas's vision for the future and/or had attempted to actively contribute to the shaping of the Third Hellenic Civilisation, joined the ranks of the collaborationists and promoted a National Socialist New Order in Europe.[3]

[2] About 'Πνευματική Επιστράτευση', which was pursued as part of the war effort, see Petraki 2014: 200-231 and Papari 2017: 326-340.

[3] Amongst those discussed in this thesis, the ones who collaborated and/or actively propagated for collaboration with the Nazis were Aristos Kambanis, Sitsa Karaiskaki, Achillefs Kyrou, Spyros Melas, and Petros Orologas.

General Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine the discourses produced by pro-regime cultural operators and to place them in the context of dictatorial ideology and propaganda. Several of the positions that were supported in the texts that were discussed here were in themselves neither novel nor particular to these years. Yet, it was part of the regime's agenda to restore, renormalise, and reinvigorate old ideals and aspects of nationalism that might have been part of the political mainstream in the nineteenth century and the early-twentieth century but were being undermined and losing in social resonance in the interwar years. Even Italian Fascism, which contained much more modernist and even 'progressive' currents than the Metaxas dictatorship, was portrayed as a return to the old ideals and the old status quo by some of its exponents.[1] Apart from continuities across time, the thesis sought to point to interactions across space by discussing foreign sources or parallels for the Greek case. Thus, the aim of engagement with reviews and essays from the period 1936-1940 in this way could be associated with Nietzschean 'interpretation': 'To interpret a text is not to give it a (more or less justified, more or less free) meaning, but on the contrary to appreciate what *plural* constitutes it'.[2]

An effort was made to conduct this discussion within the contours of a coherent structure. This structure does not aspire to be seen as a grand narrative providing the 'true' picture of the official and pro-regime discursive nexus that was in the making under Metaxas. It seeks to deal with the central questions that both sources and research findings have pointed to, but it also betrays my own theoretical background and a particular approach. Others might raise

[1] For example, by the 'godfather' of Fascist corporatism, Alfredo Rocco (1875-1935). See also the 1933 article by Sitsa Karaiskaki, who was then working for the National Socialist government in Germany (Karaiskaki 1933). Published in the newspaper *Η Πρωία* and aiming at presenting the new state of affairs in Germany after Hitler's ascension to power, the article was characteristically entitled 'Αναστήλωσις παλαιών αξιών στη Γερμανία'.
[2] Barthes 1974: 5.

different questions, point to different axes of analysis or frame the key issues differently. Hopefully, this thesis might actually contribute to increase research into the insufficiently studied period of the Metaxas dictatorship as well as into different aspects of the political role of Greek literary critics and cultural operators.

Apart from providing an account of the way intellectuals engaged with major components of Metaxist ideology along the axes of national past, national identity and unity, authority, and national future, the thesis has pointed to some more general issues. One of them is that, even though the Fourth-August state cannot be unequivocally classified as fascist, it was indeed influenced in various ways from Italian Fascism and National Socialism, to the extent that Metaxas came to complain that Mussolini and Hitler were not true to their ideology by turning against a Greece governed by him and sharing the same values.[3] Paradoxically, the end of the Metaxas regime was brought about precisely because of the attack of Fascist Italy in late 1940 and Nazi Germany in spring 1941, which had constituted its main sources of foreign ideological influence. The New State did not complete its route towards fascism or full-scale totalitarianism, but the utilisation of the Fascist and Nazi blueprints on its part had consequences even after its fall. By disseminating several of their principles in Greek society and the state apparatus, by legitimising their ideology and endorsing their socio-economic organisation as the ideal one for the twentieth century, Metaxas unwittingly paved the way for collaborationism.

Although the absence of a social movement or political party rendered Metaxas's fascist experiment a remarkably personal matter, it would be wrong to assume that the dictator controlled everything, including ideological production. The position underlying this dissertation is that we should take into account the various actors who engaged in a dynamic process of interactions with the regime, attempting to both position themselves in the new political setting

[3] The complaint –which reaches the point of accusing Hitler and Mussolini of ideological fraud and opportunism– can be found in Metaxas's 'Notebook of thoughts' and is dated 2 January 1941 (Metaxas 1960: 552-554).

and to influence its development. To an extent, such attempts may be deemed as successful, at least if one judges by the way historical accounts of Metaxist discourse pass personal opinions of intellectual fellow travellers for official dictatorial positions. One can see this for example in most analyses of *I Neolea*, where the names, roles and relationships of contributors to the regime are generally ignored and their views are held as uncontested components of Fourth-of-August ideology.[4] This observation is also relevant to another implicit position taken by this dissertation, which is that we should get back to the primary sources and study them carefully instead of judging the regime's character or its synchronic perception based merely or almost entirely on secondary literature.

Moreover, Modern Greek scholarship has touched upon the employment of several literati by the Metaxas regime, but not so much on the ways in which intellectuals of the time legitimated the dictatorship and its agenda. This thesis, albeit concentrating on criticism, does provide information regarding not just the dissemination of discursive constructs that were similar to those advocated by the regime, but also the open support for the dictatorship and the dictator on the part of a wide array of literati. Despite the silences and taboos enveloping this era, a closer analysis of contemporary sources points to the conclusion that a great deal of critics, writers, artists, humanities scholars and other individuals involved in the arts and humanities expressed at some point their support for the Fourth-of-August regime.

Consequently, historiographical approaches of the period that suggest an indifference or hostility of the majority of the Greek population towards the regime might need to be revised. In any case, the idea that this applies to the cultural and literary field as well is rather far from reality. As a matter of fact, it seems that the regime found some of its basic sources of legitimacy within this field, since some of the most recognised or respected Greeks of the time supported it, including members of the Academy such as Grigorios Xenopoulos (1933) and Spyros

[4] See for instance Machera 1987 and Angelis 2006.

Melas (1935), the president of the Writers Association, Miltiadis Malakasis, major composers and music theorists such as Manolis Kalomoiris and Yeoryios Lambelet, painters such as Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas and Fotis Kondoglou, sculptors such as Michail Tombros, writers such as M. Karagatsis, Stratis Myrivilis, Eirini Athinea, and Marietta Eptanisia, critics such as Aristos Kambanis, Christos Angelomatis, Petros Orologas, I. M. Panayiotopoulos, actors such as Marika Kotopouli and Emilios Veakis, editors and publishers such as Melis Nikolaidis, Achillefs Kyrou, and Yeoryios Vlachos etc.

Most Modern Greek scholars tend to ignore these facets of the work of major authors or to avoid discussion of minor intellectuals who supported the dictatorship. When they do discuss them, what prevails is a tendency to exonerate them: in the final analysis hardly anyone emerges as a 'true' fascist or a sincere follower of Metaxas. Not only is the fascistic character of their views toned down or overlooked but, when their collaboration with or support for the regime is open and indisputable, they are usually presented at best as people who were forced to express positively in favour of the regime or whose writings were distorted by third persons, and at worst as opportunists who did not act on ideological conviction but were aiming for material gains.

In fact, two frequent and at times contradictory charges regarding support for the Metaxas regime are that the intellectuals who sided with it were marginal and insignificant or that the support lent by significant cultural operators was merely dictated by opportunism. Nonetheless, their significance and impact on the cultural and intellectual sphere of Greece should be judged based on a synchronic look and not on canonisations and frameworks constructed a posteriori. Comprehensive studies of the intellectual milieu of interwar Greece are still lacking, as scholars usually focus on the 'Generation of the '30s', which was, however, not that influential back then, but rather consolidated its position (and its own myth) in the post-WWII era.[5]

[5] See Tziovas 2011 about the gradual construction of the 'myth of the 1930s generation'.

Thus, literary scholarship in Greece often remains somewhat detached from an understanding of who was an intellectual authority at the time.

Although opportunism and careerism certainly constituted a reason for co-operation with the dictatorship, the employment of opportunism as a general interpretative framework for collaboration obfuscates the ideological play at work then. At any rate, it does not facilitate the understanding of the alignment of some pro-Metaxas intellectuals with the Left following the Axis Occupation of Greece. As EAM was the largest movement the country had ever witnessed, it naturally attracted opportunists in its ranks who would hope for a position in an EAM-dominated post-occupation political scene. However, the continued identification of a significant percentage of intellectuals with the Left even after the disintegration of EAM and throughout severely exclusionary and repressive times for the followers of the Left, challenges the assumption of opportunism.[6]

In several cases, the traumatising experience of the Occupation could have spurred a complete change of mind and an utter rejection of one's previous beliefs and preconceptions. In some cases, though, the support of Metaxas first and EAM later might point to a modernising-cum-patriotic dynamic that several intellectuals discerned in both the fascistoid dictatorship and the left-wing liberation movement. This might help us understand the perception of the dictatorship by many of its contemporaries instead of superimposing perceptions that were constructed after the war, when fascism and Nazism had shown their criminal and genocidal character *en masse*. Further research could also illuminate the extent to which writers and intellectuals who are mostly known as leftists actually turned to the left only after the German occupation.

[6] See for instance Panourgia 2009: 78-149 about the treatment of real or alleged left-wingers in Greece during the first post-WWII decades.

Beside pointing to interactions and parallels with other European countries, this thesis has shown that in many respects the dictatorship did not constitute a break with but rather a culmination of the previous period.[7] Apart from a more detailed and nuanced investigation of these continuities with the pre-1936 past, it would be useful for future research to map out the continuities with the post-1941 period.

[7] See also Boyiatzis 2012: 264. Cf Carabott 2003: 26.

Appendix

This appendix provides information on (usually) little-known critics and intellectuals whose texts are discussed in the main part of the thesis. Apart from evidence regarding their relation to the Metaxas dictatorship and their pro-regime activities, I often provide information regarding their pre-1936 political activities as well as their post-dictatorial trajectory. This largely serves two purposes: On the one hand, it shows that Fourth-of-August supporters or fellow travellers amongst the intelligentsia were remarkably diverse not only with regard to their political background but also to their political trajectory following Metaxas's death and the collapse of the regime in 1941. On the other hand, it points to the fact that, as was the case in many other countries, several former supporters of fascist(ic) dictatorships installed themselves in the Cold-War political and cultural field, often without significantly revising their political views or the ideological preconditions that underpinned them. Despite a few vocal but facile condemnations of fascism in the post-WWII period, such intellectuals quickly focused their fire against communism. Until the *Metapolitefsi*, one finds some of them being accepted into mainstream right-wing parties, working for the anti-communist apparatus or supporting the dictatorship of the Colonels. While some of them are rather unknown today, most of the individuals listed here occupied high-ranking positions in major professional associations, educational organisations, and cultural institutions of the interwar and/or the post-WWII era.

CHRISTOS EM. ANGELOMATIS (1903-1979)

A journalist, writer, theatre and literary critic born in Smyrna, Angelomatis combined cultural, political, and historical interests from early on in his career. He was also able to remain in contact with intellectual discussions outside Greece, as he spoke English, French, and Italian. During his long journalistic career, Christos Angelomatis served as chief editor or director of

the widely circulated newspapers *Σκριπ*, *Ακρόπολις*, and *Εστία*, while he also held regular columns in other publications such as the newspaper *Μακεδονία*. As a critic, he dealt primarily with theatre and even served as president of the Association of Theatre and Music Critics. In the early 1930s, he worked for liberal publications such as the journal *Εργασία* and the newspaper *Νέος Κόσμος*, where he contributed to the regular column 'Πρέπει να γνωρίσωμεν την χώραν μας. Η ελληνική επαρχία και τα ζητήματά της'. These contributions partly foreshadow his authorial interests during the dictatorship but are also indicative of the ideological concerns of media affiliated with Venizelism in the early 1930s. Being one of the most regular contributors to *Η Νεολαία*, Angelomatis held two columns, one coming after the front-page article and usually picking up on the issue discussed there, giving a more literary or historical note ('Σκέψεις επί των πραγμάτων'), and the column of book criticism ('Τα νέα βιβλία'). During the dictatorship, he edited the collected work of Kostas Krystallis (*Τα άπαντα*, 1939). Angelomatis refrained from publishing throughout the Axis occupation out of protest. In the post-war period he published several books of mostly historical content such as *Ο Αναγεννώμενος Φοίνιξ: Από του Ρήγα εις τον Όθωνα* (1949) and *Χρονικόν μεγάλης τραγωδίας: Το έπος της Μικράς Ασίας* (1950), which received the Athens Academy award. He also wrote the book *Πρόδρομος του Δημοτικισμού στο Βυζάντιο*.[1]

YIANNIS CHATZINIS (1900-1975)

Born in Marathokampos of Samos, Chatzinis lived in Athens most of his life and worked as a civil servant at institutions such as the Ministry of Finance and the Public Treasury from the 1920s to the 1960s. He served as a critic for the periodicals *Πνευματική Ζωή* and *L' Hellenisme Contemporain* in the second half of the 1930s, while he sometimes used the penname Y. Kerkis (Γ. Κέρκης). Starting in 1943, he held the prose fiction criticism column in *Νέα Εστία* for

[1] For general information on Angelomatis see *EET* 1:91.

decades, contributing more than one thousand texts to the periodical. He translated French symbolist poets and his writings are considerably characterised by the use of the psychoanalytical method.

In the texts examined in this thesis, Chatzinis does not appear as a vocal Metaxist, like Angelomatis, Nikolaidis, Myrivilis etc. However, he moved within the same ideological milieu and, apart from praising the 'leadership of the nation', he made proposals that were in line with the official ideology. When Chatzinis received the state award for literary criticism for his 1939 book *Πρόσωπα και ψυχές* (published by Nikolaidis's Office of Intellectual Services), a note in *Πνευματική Ζωή* claimed that 'Αυτή τη γενική κι' ομόθυμη αναγνώριση δεν θα μας αρνηθεί, πιστεύουμε, κανείς το δικαίωμα να τη χαρούμε κι' εμείς ιδιαιτέρως, όχι μόνο σαν δικαίωση της εκλογής μας, αλλά κυρίως σαν δικαίωση των κοινών επιδιώξεων και κατευθύνσεων, που συνδέουν την "Πνευματική Ζωή" στην ευρύτερη ηθική κι' ιδεολογική προσπάθειά της με τον εκλεχτό κι' αγαπητό συνεργάτη της'.[2] Furthermore, Chatzinis frequently cited French 'proto-fascist' intellectuals such as Maurice Barres and Charles Maurras, and had very good relations with several Greek ultranationalist intellectuals aside from Nikolaidis, such as Kambanis. It is telling that Chatzinis kept in touch with Kambanis even in the post-WWII period, when the latter had been accused of collaborationism and marginalised from mainstream cultural and intellectual life. In fact, he wrote Kambanis's obituary in *Νέα Εστία* a few days after his death.[3]

The consolidation of his reputation as a critic during the dictatorship led to his selection as a member of the jury for the last and least known state literary awards of the first period of the institution (the second started in 1956 and continues to this day), namely those of 1941, which were given in 1942.[4] Chatzinis was a founding member of the well-known 'Group of the Twelve' in the 1950s and served as a Vice-President and President of the National

[2] [Anon.] 1939v: 212.
[3] Chatz. 1957.
[4] See Niaros 2017: 332 (footnote 267).

Association of Greek Writers, the right-wing splinter from the Greek Writers Association that was established during the Civil War. He also served as the Vice-President of the Organisation for the Publication of Educational Books (ΟΕΔΒ) from 1965 to 1967. After his death, Chatzinis's house and personal library were donated to the Municipality of Kallithea, Athens, where he had long lived and worked, and formed the Chatzinis Cultural Centre (Χατζίνειο Πνευματικό Κέντρο).[5]

STRATIS DOUKAS (1895-1983)

Born in Moschonisia (Cunda Island in modern Turkey), Doukas moved to Greece in 1912 for studies at the Athens Law School, which he never completed. He was a writer, critic, journalist, and painter who developed close relations with other members of what later came to be known as the 'Aeolic School' and a keen interest in popular culture and Laographia. In the interwar years he contributed frequently to several major serial publications such as the newspapers *Πολιτεία*, *Πρωία*, and *Νέος Κόσμος* as well as the periodical *Εργασία*. It is highly questionable if Doukas was ever a 'Marxist' as is often facilely claimed. He joined EAM and aligned politically with the communist Left after 1942 but it would be wrong to assume that this meant he became a Marxist let alone to use his later politics as an argument to dismiss his right-wing nationalist perspective in the 1930s. Most importantly, Doukas cooperated with Nikos Chatzikyriakos-Gikas, Dimitris Pikionis, and Takis Papatsonis for the publication of the art journal *Το 3ο Μάτι* (1935-1937). None of them had any links with the Left while their periodical promoted Hellenocentric, idealist, and geoclimatic approaches to art such as those of Periklis Yiannopoulos. In light of this, it should come as no great shock that Doukas contributed to *Η Νεολαία* or that he approved of Metaxas's youth organisation. But it is also perhaps no coincidence

[5] For general information on Chatzinis see *ΛΝΛ*: 2359 and the relevant page on the website of the National Book Centre of Greece: http://www.ekebi.gr/frontoffice/portal.asp?cpage=NODE&cnode=461&t=410.

that the biography of his early years by Tasos Korfis does not go beyond 1936. At any rate, Doukas's long intellectual career should be studied alongside that of other cultural operators who were also active before the war and identified with the Left in the post-WWII period. A reappraisal of their critical output and life history might reveal that not only were some of them not associated with the Left in the interwar years but the fundamental assumptions and standards characterising their literary and art criticism did not change radically following their involvement with KKE. This is indicated by Doukas's hagiographic approach to Yiannoulis Chalepas in the 1960s and by the ethnocentric charges levelled against the 'Generation of the '30s' by Nikos Pappas and Kostas Kotzioulas in the 1940s.[6]

PAVLOS FLOROS (1897-1981)

Born in Smyrna, Pavlos Floros attended the German School of the city. Yiorgos Veloudis describes him as 'one of the few Greek writers of the interwar period that can demonstrate a "material", biographically verifiable contact with Germany'.[7] He undertook studies in Germany and Switzerland and worked as a merchant in Hamburg from 1922 to 1929, to which he would later resettle, from 1954 to 1966. He lived in Athens from 1929 to 1954 and from 1966 to 1981 but travelled in Europe a lot. His collaboration with *Πνευματική Ζωή* dates back to 1938, when he sent a letter to the periodical about the necessity of demotic in education, touching upon its connection to the creation of an authentic modern Greek civilisation.[8] Some of the articles he published during the dictatorship both in *Πνευματική Ζωή* and other serial publications such as *Νέα Εστία* point to a fascination with National Socialism, which is also corroborated by the account of his contemporaneous intellectual Asimakis Panselinos, who mentions

[6] For a discussion of the critique of the 'Generation of the '30s' by Pappas and Kotzioulas see Tziovas 2011: 431-437. For general information on Doukas see *ΛΝΛ*: 547-548.
[7] Veloudis 1983: 448.
[8] Floros 1938.

in his memoirs that Floros was influenced by 'Hitlerism'.[9] Floros contributed to *Νέα Εστία* occasionally from the mid-1930s onward and quite regularly for two decades starting in the early 1960s with original short stories, essays, travel reports, book reviews, translations of mostly German works, and texts on international politics. He played a part in cultural transfer from Germany to Greece by means of texts such as 'Νίτσε και Εμπεδοκλής', his translation from and notable introduction to Hölderlin's work, as well as his translation of short stories and poems by as well as notes with information on lesser known German writers such as Otto Erich Hartleben and Rudolf Binding.[10] His regular cooperation with *Νέα Εστία* in the post-WWII period is to be seen in the context of the Cold War, as his contributions often dealt with developments in the Eastern Bloc.

ARISTOS KAMBANIS (1883-1956)

Born in Athens, Kambanis moved to Piraeus as a child and later got involved in the intellectual circles of Piraeus, promoting and being promoted by several writers who were later listed as members of the 'Piraeus circle' in Yiorgos Valetas's history of modern Greek literature.[11] Kambanis had an intense involvement in politics, particularly from the 1910s onwards. He became an ardent supporter of Dimitrios Gounaris and even toured the Peloponnese giving speeches for the 'αρχηγός' as part of Gounaris's 1915 electoral campaign.[12] In 1916 he published the political monthly *Ελληνικά Χρονικά*, with the expressed aim to influence public opinion. The periodical was staunchly anti-Venizelist and it supported Constantine's stance of neutrality on the Great War while simultaneously venerating German militarism and promoting 'proto-fascist' ideas about the revitalising attributes of war. In spite of his fierce anti-Venizelism, Kambanis appears to have been amongst the sixty writers and intellectuals

[9] Panselinos 1974: 261.
[10] See Veloudis 1983: 387, 422, 427, 436.
[11] Valetas 1966: 129.
[12] See Kambanis 1946: 132-133.

included in the 1920 list of candidates for the Academy that the Venizelos government was planning to establish, something that indicates his status as an established intellectual at the time.[13]

In 1920, Kambanis was in charge of the United Opposition press office and, along with Ion Dragoumis, was responsible for the coalition's electoral campaign,[14] while he was also the person who recommended to Gounaris that he change the name of his party from *Komma ton Ethnikofronon* to *Laiko Komma*.[15] Moreover, 1920 was the year that Kambanis commenced publication of the newspaper *Πρωτεύουσα*, which served as Gounaris's organ.[16] From early 1922 onward the newspaper urged its readership to engage in violence against enemies of the government while it started praising the Fascists, who were on the rise in Italy at the time.[17] Aristos Kambanis has been attributed a pioneering role 'in the development of the Gounarist current of Greek fascism'[18] and he was in all likelihood the first person to publicly propose the establishment of 'Battalions of Greek Fascists'.[19] As his efforts for fascist mobilisation and organisation from below did not seem to produce the desired results quickly enough, he would go on to propagate the imposition of martial law and announce that he was going to publish a pamphlet on the 'philosophy' of fascism.[20] The ultimate defeat in Asia Minor and the Venizelist coup in the army headed by Plastiras would lead to the shutdown of Kambanis's periodical and his escape to Egypt, an action Kambanis would attribute to Gounaris's advice decades later.[21]

[13] See Niaros 2017: 60 (footnote 72).
[14] Niaros 2017: 172 (footnote 188).
[15] Hering 2004b: 941.
[16] Marketos 2006: 130.
[17] Marketos 2006: 131-132.
[18] Marketos 2006: 121.
[19] Marketos 2006: 136. Charges for high treason were pressed against Kambanis in the summer of 1922 because of his relevant newspaper articles: 'Εις την μήνυσιν τονίζεται ότι τα τελευταία άρθρα του κ. Καμπάνη συνιστώντα την οργάνωσιν ταγμάτων Φασίστι αποτελούν αυτόχρημα κήρυγμα προς αλληλοσπαραγμόν και διέγερσιν του λαού εις εμφύλιον πόλεμον και τείνουν εις υποκατάστασιν των καθεστηκυιών αρχών δι' ενόπλων ομάδων κακοποιών' ([Anon.] 1922).
[20] Marketos 2006: 138-140.
[21] Kambanis 1946: 5.

He was alleged to have been involved in the 1923 counter-coup and to have connections with Ioannis Metaxas.

While in Egypt, Kambanis published the first complete History of Modern Greek Literature in demotic. He returned to Greece in 1925 and quickly regained and furthered his status as a leading journalist, critic and public intellectual. Shortly afterwards he in fact became president of the Journalists Association.[22] As an alleged aesthetics expert and president of the Journalists Association, Kambanis even participated in the jury of beauty pageants in the interwar years.[23] At that time, he started improving his connections with the Venizelist camp, commencing regular cooperation with the Venizelist media *Εργασία, Έθνος*, and *Νέος Κόσμος*. Kambanis held the column of literary and cultural criticism in *Εργασία* from 25 April 1931 to 2 December 1934, taking over from Alkis Thrylos.[24] Around the same time, Kambanis started regular cooperation with the major Venizelist newspaper *Έθνος* while ultimately halting the long collaboration he had with the conservative and formerly Metaxist *Πρωία* ever since its establishment in the mid-1920s. Since mid-1933 he also held a regular column on the front page of the newspaper *Νέος Κόσμος*, subtitled *Panhellenic Daily Newspaper of Liberal Principles*, which was launched that year by *Εργασία*. Finally, Kambanis played a significant role in two monthlies published by the same newspaper. He contributed to half the issues of the monthly *Μηνιαίος Νέος Κόσμος* (1934), as well as to the first issue of the periodical *Φιλολογικός Νέος Κόσμος* (1935), while also serving as chief editor for the latter throughout its publication.

[22] The archives of the Journalists Association are in a sorry state and hard to access, so I had to rely on secondary sources in order to figure out approximately when Kambanis got that position. For instance, the entry on Kambanis in *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*, penned by Tellos Agras, mentions that Kambanis "'είναι από τριετίας πρόεδρος της Ενώσεως των Συντακτών"' (vol. 13: 650; that volume was published in 1929). Kambanis had become a member of the administrative board of the Journalists Association already upon its establishment in 1914 (see Niaros 2017: 395 (footnote 179).

[23] See Niaros 2017: 126 (footnote 49).

[24] This transition is perhaps symptomatic of the wider ideological reconfiguration that was taking place within the Venizelist camp at the time, as Thrylos represented a liberal, West-oriented criticism that often clashed with ethnocentrism (see e.g. Mylonaki 1994).

In the interwar years Kambanis was frequently included in significant culture-related juries and committees, in surveys on the opinions of major intellectuals conducted by periodical publications, and in mentions of the leading critics of the time made by other intellectuals and critics in their own articles or in interviews. He was moreover repeatedly nominated for the chair of modern Greek literature at the University of Athens by important critics and cultural operators such as Kostis Bastias and Kleon Paraschos. In addition, he received the first and little-known state literary award for his overall contribution to Greek letters alongside Dimosthenis Voutyras in early 1936.[25] All that attests to his very significant position in the interwar cultural and intellectual field that is at odds with his virtual non-existence in post-WWII scholarly accounts.

Kambanis supported the Metaxas dictatorship ever since the first days of its establishment with articles in the daily press and speeches he gave in various parts of the country but also in the Greek community of Egypt. He was probably the first major intellectual to recommend the use of the modern medium of the radio by the regime (he also gave radio lectures combining literary history with pro-regime propaganda after the inauguration of the state radio in 1938) and to openly espouse the term 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'. He published what came to be rather inaccurately known as the official organ of the dictatorship, the periodical *Το Νέον Κράτος*, and was selected as a member of the jury for the state literary awards of 1938 and 1939.[26] In 1939 he was appointed professor of National Education at the Panteios School of Political Sciences.

During the Axis occupation Kambanis published the pro-Nazi periodical *Εικοστός Αιών* along with Evangelos Kyriakis. He was to be prosecuted as a collaborator after the liberation, but the details of his case remain unknown. In 1946 he published a book on Dimitrios Gounaris

[25] See Niaros 2017: 317-318 and table 4.5 on p. 321.
[26] See Niaros 2017: 331.

and in 1948 a revised edition of his *History of Modern Greek Literature*. Around the same time he appears as the chief editor of the encyclopaedia *Ἥλιος*, a reference publication for the post-WWII Greek Far Right.[27] Despite his attempts to reintegrate himself in the post-war cultural and intellectual field, Kambanis remained rather marginalised, perhaps also due to the fact that the period of intensified reintegration of former collaborationists from the late 1940s onward coincided with affliction with serious mental health issues. He died at the Dromokaiteio Psychiatric Hospital in late 1956 and was excluded from most subsequent histories of modern Greek literature.[28]

SITSA KARAISKAKI (1897-1987)

Born in Moschonisia, Sitsa Karaiskaki fled to Greece in 1922. She briefly worked as a teacher before moving to Germany for studies. In the 1920s she had a short and superficial apprenticeship in Communism based on a religious reading of the communist ideology. She contributed to mostly left-leaning periodicals such as *Νουμάς*, *Καμπάνα*, *Νέοι Βωμοί*, and *Νέα Τέχνη*, while her poems from this period display a fascination with martyrdom and positive apocalypticism, with the coupling of human death and cosmic rebirth rather than with radical social transformation.[29] She studied at the University of Munich from 1923 to 1928. In a short biographical note that Karaiskaki attached to her early-1940 letter to Metaxas she claimed to have also attended courses on paedagogics and journalism at the University of Zurich, as well as on youth psychology at the University of Vienna. Moreover, she claimed to have worked at paedagogical

[27] The encyclopaedia itself and its reception warrants special research, as it seems to be the constitutive work for the engagement of a section of the Greek Far Right with a Nazi-style appropriation of and story-telling regarding prehistory. Representatives of this trend are Yiorgos Yeorgalas, Konstandinos Plevris, Kyriakos Velopoulos, and Dimosthenis Liakopoulos.

[28] For general information on Aristos Kambanis see *ΛΝΛ*: 1005-1006, *EET* 2:505-506, Stamos 2014.

[29] See the section 'Η Μεγάλη Άνοιξη' of her 1925 poetry collection, including poems such as 'Η νέα θρησκεία' and 'Καρλ Λίμπκνεχτ' (Karaiskaki 1925: 57-72). Liebknecht and Luxemburg are eulogised as martyrs of the new religion in that section.

and psychological training courses at the University and the Psychology Institute of Prague.[30]

Karaiskaki's variegated educational background was coupled with a prolific and diverse output during the interwar era and particularly the 1930s. While her publications in the 1920s were of a literary nature, including original pieces of poetry and prose as well as translations of German writers,[31] in the 1930s she attempted to maintain a more scholarly profile while in essence engaging mostly in politico-ideological propaganda. Particularly in the mid-1930s she published numerous books and studies of political, ideological, historical, and even laographic character in both German and Greek. Some indicative examples are *Das Dritte Reich durch meine Brille* (1934), *Ο πόλεμος εναντίον θρησκείας και εκκλησίας* (1934), and her biographical novel on Yeoryios Karaiskakis *Der mit dem Schwert Geschichte schrieb* (1936). The latter book was published pseudonymously under the name Anna Tolys (apparently a wordplay alluding to Karaiskaki's 'oriental' origin and her baptismal name, i.e. Anastasia) and appeared soon afterwards in Greek. First it was published anonymously in instalments in the newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* from late 1936 to early 1937 and then in book form in 1939.[32]

Karaiskaki lived in Germany for years and worked for the Ministry of Propaganda under Goebbels.[33] She was also a member of the most significant pre-1936 Greek fascist organisation, OEKK (Organosis Ethnikou Kyriarchou Kratous).[34] She is in all likelihood the correspondent of the organisation's newspaper *Kratos* who employed the pseudonym Dr Sigma Kappa.[35] In 1933 she established a publishing house in Athens along with fellow National Socialists Evangelos Kyriakis and Kyriakos Karamanos (Karamanos became an EON officer later), named 'Nea Yenea'. Karaiskaki generally tried to act as an intermediary between Nazi

[30] GAK Metaxas F43 0121.
[31] Karaiskaki published translations of works by Hölderlin, Ludwig Uhland in *Μακεδονικά Γράμματα* (1924), and Ludwig Bäte in *Νουμάς* (1924). See Veloudis 1983: 422-423.
[32] See Karaiskakis 1934, Karaiskaki 1934, Tolys 1936, Karaiskaki 1939d for full bibliographical data.
[33] See Vallianatos 2014: 164.
[34] [Anon.] 2013: 81.
[35] See for instance a front page of the newspaper as reproduced in [Anon.] 2013: 80.

Germany and Greece in the 1930s and early 1940s. Yiorgos Veloudis has indeed singled out Karaiskaki along with N. Chayer-Boufidis, N. Koulapidis, and E. Sossidi as those Greeks who 'popularised' the National Socialist body of thought in Greece.[36] Apart from transferring ideology, however, Karaiskaki also undertook more practical initiatives, such as when she explored the potential cooperation of Greek Orthodox church officials in a Nazi-headed anti-communist crusade in 1934. She eventually moved to Athens in 1938, taking up work with the National Youth Organisation. She first wrote some EON booklets that were published anonymously and then began her collaboration with the organisation's official periodical. She became a major contributor to *Η Νεολαία* with numerous texts on a vast array of subjects and she held the special column for the journal's female readers ('Σελίς των κοριτσιών').

Karaiskaki worked at the radio service of the German occupation forces and fled Greece along with the Tsironikos government in 1944. She was sentenced to death in absentia and spent the following years in Eastern Germany until she was pardoned and returned to Greece in the 1960s. While virtually unknown for decades even amongst far-right circles, there has been a resurgence of interest in her as of late. Most characteristically, a new publishing house with the same name and logo as that of her interwar publishing house was established in 2017, reprinting many of Karaiskaki's books as well as producing collections of her texts in *Η Νεολαία*. The publishing house has also printed texts by many other infamous fascists, National Socialists, racists or ultranationalists, such as Neoklis Kazazis, Petros Vlastos, Maurice Barrès, Robert Brasillach, Joseph Goebbels, Adolf Hitler, Julius Evola, and Benito Mussolini.[37]

[36] Veloudis 1983: 395.

[37] See https://neageneabooks.gr/. For general information Sitsa Karaiskaki see Posantzi 2015. As most of Posantzi's papers, this text should be read with extreme caution as it contains quite a few factual errors and unfortunate assumptions that try to fill in for insufficient research. It is, however, one of the very few scholarly discussions on Karaiskaki that have appeared to date.

ACHILLEFS KYROU (1898-1950)

He was of Cypriot descent, owner and co-editor of the newspaper *Εστία* with his brother, Kyros Kyrou, after their father's passing in 1918. He took part in the Great War as a volunteer and fought at the Macedonian Front. From mid-November 1916 to mid-March 1917, the circulation of the newspaper was halted, as its printing press was set on fire by *Epistratoi* during the November events. The newspaper was also banned for a few days by the 'revolutionary government' of 1922 due to the publication of a telegram by the British government requesting the suspension of the execution of 'the six'. In 1925, Pangalos's dictatorship banned the newspaper from circulation again, this time for three weeks, while Kyrou was sent to internal exile, for fact-checking falsehoods concerning American credits.

Alongside his long journalistic career, Achillefs Kyrou was involved in Greek cultural life from a young age, writing theatre plays and short stories and later establishing himself as an art critic. He was particularly interested in El Greco, on whom he published two books (*Δομήνικος Θεοτοκόπουλος – Γκρέκο*, 1932; *Οι Έλληνες της Αναγεννήσεως και ο Δομήνικος Θεοτοκόπουλος*, 1938), focusing on his biography, his Greek consciousness, and the so-called 'Byzantinism thesis' (i.e. that Theotokopoulos's work constituted part or the culmination of the Byzantine art tradition). He also served as the General Secretary of the National Theatre of Greece from 1946 until his death, promoting especially performances of ancient Greek drama.

Through his actions and public statements in the 1930s Kyrou appears unequivocally as an exponent of the Extreme Right. Relevant evidence includes his fascistoid book *Πιστεύω* (1933), the nationalist and racist ideological constructs he applies to the study of the work of El Greco,[38] his appeal for the establishment of a fascist regime in his first editorial of 1934, his involvement in the national socialist organisation OEKK (Organosis Ethnikou Kyriarchou Kratous, founded in 1934), and his request in February 1938 for the Metaxas regime to

[38] See Tziovas 1989: 115.

commence diplomatic relations with Franco instead of the legitimate government in Spain. Metaxas had offered him the post of Minister of Education at the time that the dictatorship was established.[39] It is unclear why Kyrou did not accept the position then, but he openly supported the regime on several occasions later on.

Immediately after the collapse of the dictatorship and the beginning of the Axis occupation of Greece, Achillefs Kyrou and his brother Kyros would be amongst the founding members of the OPNE (Organosis Protoporon Neas Evropis), a pro-Nazi collaborationist organisation.[40] It seems that they later switched camp, producing illegal pamphlets, for which Achillefs was arrested and imprisoned by the Italian occupation authorities in 1943. After the liberation Achillefs Kyrou remained active as an author and intellectual, adapting to the post-WWII state of domestic and international affairs. He published books such as *Η Ελλάς έδωσε την νίκην* (1945), whose thesis was that the Allies won the war due to the supposed postponement of the German attack on the Soviet Union caused by military operations against Greece in spring 1941, as well as *Η συνωμοσία εναντίον της Μακεδονίας* (1950) and *Η εξωτερική πολιτική της Σοβιετικής Ρωσίας* (1950), both steeped in Cold-War anticommunism.[41]

SPYROS MELAS (1882-1966)

Born in Nafpaktos, Melas spent most of his early life in Piraeus and became a member of the literary circle of Piraeus at the beginning of the twentieth century, along with Aristos Kambanis, Pavlos Nirvanas, Lambros Porfyras and others.[42] He had good knowledge of the French language and of German literary and intellectual matters through French sources, trips outside Greece, and his sojourns in Europe.[43] His prolific output includes a plethora of literary writings,

[39] Linardatos 1988: 41, Dafnis 1997: 421.
[40] See Vallianatos 2014: 182.
[41] For general information on Achillefs Kyrou see *ΛΝΛ*:1191 and *EET* 2:674.
[42] See Karra 2010: 94, 96, 110.
[43] See Veloudis 1983: 362.

mostly theatrical plays and *vies romancées*. He was the founder of 'Θέατρο Τέχνης' (1925) and 'Ελευθέρα Σκηνή' (1929). His main occupation was journalism and he worked for or contributed to a great many newspapers, including virtually every major newspaper of the first half of the twentieth century, e.g. *Άστυ*, *Ακρόπολις*, *Έθνος*, *Η Καθημερινή*, *Ελεύθερον Βήμα*, and *Αθηναϊκά Νέα*. Melas moreover served as president of the Journalists Association in the 1920s, while he was the first to establish a journalism school in Greece

Spyros Melas represents the most conspicuous case of a cultural operator who displayed political vicissitudes, supporting nearly every ideology and political camp in different periods of his life. He developed an inclination for socialism already in the late 1900s and was involved in the moderate socialist Sociological Society in the early 1910s. He then went through a brief anarcho-syndicalist phase and an equally brief Venizelist phase only to move to right-wing anti-Venizelism and support the 'proto-fascist' *Epistratoi*.[44] From the early 1920s Melas switched his allegiance to the Venizelist camp, for which he was persecuted by anti-Venizelists in 1921, and after the Asia Minor catastrophe he began supporting Venizelism's socialist and republican wing under Alexandros Papanastasiou (as did Myrivilis). He was the first editor-in-chief of *Δημοκρατία*, the daily organ of Papanastasiou's party, in 1924. Following Venizelos's return to Greek politics in the late 1920s Melas appears as his vocal supporter, involved in the establishment of the unofficial weekly organ of the Liberal Party, the periodical *Εργασία* (1930-1941). He was the publisher of the periodical *Ιδέα* (1933-34), through which he promoted a staunch anti-Marxism as well as proposals for a fascistic demoticist 'revolution'. Melas later supported the Metaxas dictatorship and had contacts with the dictator himself, with whom he seemed to be able to arrange meetings quite easily.

He was briefly expelled from the Writers Association after the liberation of Greece due to the articles he had published in *Η Καθημερινή* shortly after the German invasion of Greece,

[44] See Karra 2010: 45.

calling for collaboration with the Nazi authorities. Nonetheless, the decision was overturned later and Melas gradually reclaimed a significant position in Greek cultural and intellectual life, particularly from the late 1940s onward.[45] Around that time he commenced publication of the periodical *Ελληνικά Γράμματα* (1948-1954) and a close cooperation with Achillefs Kyrou and his newspaper *Εστία*. Having completely reintegrated himself in the country's intellectual field in the 1950s, he was elected president of the Academy of Athens in 1959.[46]

STRATIS MYRIVILIS (1890-1969)

Born in Lesbos, Myrivilis (pen name of Efstratios Stamatopoulos) became one of the most famous representatives of the 'Aeolic School' and the 'Generation of the '30s'. While he mostly drew on Greek ideological sources such as the thought of Ion Dragoumis, his literary work displays significant foreign influences, particularly from France and Germany. His first two books rely especially on the work of Erich Maria Remarque, but in general Myrivilis seems to have drawn mainly from French sources and even Remarque's influence came through French translations.[47]

As Myrivilis is one of the most famous Greek writers, this note will focus on his political vicissitudes. Myrivilis was a fervent supporter of Venizelos in the 1910s while he came to support the left-wing faction of Venizelism in the mid-1920s, co-publishing the pro-Papanastasiou newspaper *Ταχυδρόμος* in Mytilene. Before this, in 1923, he had started publishing the weekly journal *Καμπάνα.* In 1932 he moved to Athens after securing the post of editor-in-chief at the daily organ of Papanastasiou's party, *Δημοκρατία.* He quit *Δημοκρατία* in 1933 and started a regular cooperation with the conservative newspaper *Η Πρωία* that lasted from late 1933 to early 1936.

[45] See Karra 2010: 331-334.
[46] See http://www.academyofathens.gr/el/foundation/members-archive/presidents. For general information on Melas see *ΛΝΛ*: 1378-1379, *EET* 3:130-131, and Karra 2010.
[47] See Veloudis 1983: 445-446, 468, 505.

During the Metaxas years he emerged as one of the most vocal supporters of the regime amongst established literati. He actively promoted its agenda through his articles and essays in the newspaper *Η Εθνική*, the periodicals *Νέα Εστία*, *Πνευματική Ζωή*, *Νέα Πολιτική* etc., as well as through his literary writings. Perhaps the most characteristic case of promotion of the dictatorial ideology by literary means was Myrivilis's poems that were recited at the stadium in the context of the 4 August festivities of 1940 with background music composed by Manolis Kalomoiris.[48] During the dictatorship Myrivilis was given a position at the library of the Hellenic Parliament (which continued its operation after parliamentarianism was suspended), he had a weekly programme on literature at the state radio, and received a state award for fiction. As a matter of fact, Spyros Melas mediated between Myrivilis and Metaxas, facilitating Myrivilis's request for a salaried post in 1938.

His aggressive anticommunist rhetoric from the interwar years intensified in the postwar period. Characteristic is his 1948 speech in Kalamata that was published in book form the same year, entitled *Ο Κομμουνισμός και το παιδομάζωμα*, which combines anticommunism with racial theories. In the post-WWII years Myrivilis remained a widely recognised figure of Greek letters and served for two decades as the president of the National Association of Greek Writers. He was elected member of the Academy of Athens in 1958 and was repeatedly nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature. Indicative of the often-problematic approach to the politico-ideological vicissitudes even of famous writers is the entry on Myrivilis in *ΛΝΛ*, which states that 'η νεανική του πολιτική τοποθέτηση στο σοσιαλιστικό ρεύμα έφτασε και αυτή σταδιακά, και μέσα από τις περιπέτειες της ελληνικής πολιτικής ζωής, στη διαμόρφωση περισσότερο *πραγματιστικών* πολιτικών επιλογών'.[49]

[48] The full text of the poems, entitled 'Η πομπή προς το βωμό της Ελλάδος', 'Ύμνος στην Αθηνά', 'Το τραγούδι της γης' and 'Το χωριό των εργατών', was published in the daily press on that same day, e.g. in *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* and in the staunchly Metaxist newspaper *Ελληνικόν Μέλλον*.
[49] *ΛΝΛ*: 1522 (emphasis added). For general information on Myrivilis see *ΛΝΛ*: 1520-1522, *ΕΕΤ* 3:202-303.

MELIS NIKOLAIDIS (1892/1893-1979)

Born in Larnaca, Cyprus to a religious family, with a father and maternal grandfather who served as priests, Melis Nikolaidis briefly worked at a law firm and later as a teacher. Most of his intellectual activities are enmeshed with Christian, paedagogical, and nationalist concerns. In his early twenties he started publishing a weekly political newspaper supportive of Venizelos in Cyprus (*Ηχώ της Κύπρου*, 1913-1920). In his late twenties he was also employed by the Bishopric of Kition to deal with press-related issues. In the mid-1920s Nikolaidis moved to Athens where he worked in the daily press. In early 1936 he established the Office of Intellectual Services and commenced publication of the bulletin *Βιβλιογραφικό Δελτίο*. In October of that same year, he started publishing *Πνευματική Ζωή* (1936-1941).

Given his Venizelist publication in the 1910s and the fact that his bibliographical periodical promoted the publication of Venizelos's parliamentary speeches in 1936 as a 'national work', Nikolaidis was probably a Venizelist throughout the pre-Metaxas years. Despite turning into a staunch Metaxist, it is also worth mentioning that he avoided any mentions of George II and the Greek royal house in his numerous texts throughout the dictatorial period. Nikolaidis held a regular column in *Η Νεολαία* since late 1939 while he occasionally delivered lectures in various venues and the state radio that reflected his nationalist and idealist views and upheld the Metaxist ideology. He additionally held several posts in literary organisations and institutions, e.g. those of the treasurer of the Association of Greek Writers since 1936 and general secretary of the Cultural Centre from mid-1940 onwards, while he participated in the juries of EON literary contests.

After the war, Nikolaidis recommenced publication of *Pnevmatiki Zoi* (1951-1954), while he was heavily and prominently involved in the Cyprus Question and had connections with Yeoryios Grivas. Nikolaidis's writings often revolved around religious themes and figures and, after the Metaxas dictatorship, he would focus his literary output almost exclusively on

such topics. Some characteristic examples are the following books: *Κυπριανός ο Μάγος* (1958), *Τω καιρώ εκείνω* (1962), *Συνέσιος ο Κυρηναίος* (1967), *Ιησούς, όπως τον είδε ένας μαθητής του* (1970), *Βαρνάβας ο Κύπριος* (1973). In the early 1970s he received the state award for literary biography for a Christian-themed book as well as an award by the Academy of Athens. Around the same time, he became president of the Association of Greek Writers. Almost a decade following his death, Michalis Stafylas, who had first appeared in the periodical as a pupil in the late '30s, when Nikolaidis published a letter the former had sent him on the front page, started the third period of publication for *Πνευματική Ζωή* (1988-2018).[50]

PETROS OROLOGAS (1892-1958)

Born in Korytsa (modern-day Korçë in Albania), Orologas studied at the Greek-French College of Commerce of Thessaloniki. He chose a career in journalism, however, and he worked at several newspapers. His longest and most significant cooperation with a newspaper was with *Φως*, from which he also took his pen name Petros Foteinos. In 1916 he was expelled to Athens by the French General Sarail. He had a good knowledge of major European languages, as well as literary, artistic, and ideological developments. In the 1930s he was connected to the anti-Semitic organisation National Union 'Greece' (Ethniki Enosis 'Ellas'; EEE) that conducted the Campbell pogrom in 1931. During the dictatorship Orologas received the state criticism award for his book *Ίων Δραγούμης* (1938). It is noteworthy that Vasos Vasileiou's promotional December 1938 article in *Nea Politiki* had been published approximately two months before the jury convened. Kambanis was a member of that jury and a few months later Orologas started contributing pieces of criticism ranging from book reviews to cultural essays to Kambanis's periodical.[51] During the German Occupation, Petros Orologas and his brother Alexandros had

[50] For general information on Melis Nikolaidis see *ΛΝΛ*: 1577 and *EET* 3:335.
[51] Orologas's last contribution to *Το Νέον Κράτος* is in issue 30 (Feb 1940). From the following issue and up until the end of the year (issues 31-40) his critical work is promoted through advertisements.

leading roles in Thessaloniki's pro-Nazi and extremely anti-Semitic newspapers, and were as a result tried and sentenced to five-year imprisonment after the war. In the 1950s Petros Orologas made occasional contributions to Thessaloniki's literary press that were rather restrained and moderate. He had good relations with some Thessalonian intellectuals and cultural operators despite his National Socialist and collaborationist past. In the decades after Orologas's death one finds positive assessments of his critical work or abilities by Tilemachos Alaveras, Dinos Christianopoulos, Michalis Meraklis, Dimitrios Tsakonas, and Alexis Ziras, most of whom seemed to believe that he was a skilled and erudite –even if ideologically extreme– critic whose work is worth of further study.[52]

I. **M. PANAYIOTOPOULOS (1901-1982)**

Born in Etoliko, he moved with his family to the capital in 1910 and later studied Philology at the University of Athens. He worked in secondary education while being actively involved in the literary and intellectual life of Greece. His first significant steps into the literary field came in 1921 with his participation in the publication of the periodical *Μούσα* and with his book *Το ποιητικό έργο του Κωστή Παλαμά* (1921). As a philologist, Panayiotopoulos was knowledgeable of Greek culture and history from antiquity to his time, but he was also well-informed in modern European cultural and intellectual developments, particularly in Germany. He made several trips abroad, predominantly in the post-WWII period, and he visited Central Europe (Austria and Hungary) in 1930. Apart from his numerous pieces of literary and art criticism that appeared in the pages of important periodicals and newspapers, Panayiotopoulos engaged in the history of art and literature and published the books *Γενική ιστορία της τέχνης* (1927) and *Στοιχεία ιστορίας της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας* (1936). In 1937 he assumed a position in the

[52] For more information on Petros Orologas see the homage published in the newspaper *Εσπερινή Ώρα* on 28 Nov 1967, redacted by the Thessalonian writer Tilemachos Alaveras; Meraklis 1988; Tsakonas 1990: 167-178; *ΛΝΛ*: 2413; Siola 2010: 175-177.

administrative board of the National Gallery while the owner of the private school that employed him passed away, which led to him and a colleague taking over and revamping the school next year. Decades later Panayiotopoulos would remain as the sole owner of the school which remains in operation to date and is known as 'I. M. Panayiotopoulos School'.[53] During the dictatorship Panayiotopoulos also held the literary criticism column of *Το Νέον Κράτος* for several months and was selected as a jury member for the 1940 state awards for literature. In the post-WWII era he continued his literary, critical, and paedagogical activities and produced a very sizeable corpus of publications. He served as Minister of Culture and Sciences for a few weeks in Konstandinos Karamanlis's 1974 'national unity' government.[54]

NIKOS PAPPAS (1906-1997)

Born in Trikala, Pappas studied at the Law School of the University of Athens and did postgraduate studies in Berlin. He published the periodical *Επαρχία* (1931-1932) and co-operated closely with Yiannis Skarimbas in the mid- to late-1930s and got actively involved in the latter's periodical *Νεοελληνικά Σημειώματα*.[55] He contributed regularly to *Η Καθημερινή* from 1936 to 1940 and wrote a few articles for *Το Νέον Κράτος*. His spouse, Rita Boumi-Pappa (1906-1984), also contributed several poems to Kambanis's periodical that have been seen as literary expressions of the new ideological hegemony that was taking shape under Metaxas.[56] It is not completely unlikely that Nikos Pappas's proposals for a fusion of internationalism and nationalism that was discussed in chapter 10 of this thesis drew on some knowledge of similar ideological fermentations in Italy that he acquired through his wife, who had lived and studied in Italy in the 1920s and remained in contact with that country's ideological and cultural life

[53] See http://impanagiotopoulos.gr/index.php/to-sxoleio/istoria-skopos.
[54] For general information on I. M. Panayiotopoulos see Panaretou 1990 and *ΛΝΛ*: 1675-1676.
[55] See Varelas 1997, Siola 2010: 178.
[56] See Kokkinos n.d.: 45-46.

as a translator.[57] Pappas joined EAM during the Occupation and remained associated with the Left throughout the post-WWII period. He is probably the only author discussed in this thesis who did not attempt to completely conceal his pro-regime statements during the dictatorship, as he reproduced some of his articles from *Η Καθημερινή* in a selection of critical essays that he published in the 1980s.[58]

ΥΕΟRYIOS A. PRATSIKAS (1897-1975)

Born and having spent his childhood in Alexandria, Egypt, Pratsikas was a journalist who engaged predominantly in literary and music criticism. He was a regular contributor to *Νέα Εστία*, holding the column first on Italian (1933-1934) and then for decades on French cultural and intellectual affairs (1934-1960). He continued frequently contributing to the periodical until the early 1970s with articles on Greek and foreign –mostly French– culture and obituaries for literary and intellectual figures. Though little-known today even amongst Modern Greek scholars, Pratsikas was a significant figure in the interwar and early-post-war critical field. As noted in *ΛΝΛ*, 'τα κριτικά του σημειώματα είχαν αρκετή απήχηση στην εποχή τους'. Prior to expressing his support for the Metaxas regime and its national and cultural agenda, Pratsikas had shown interest in Fascism. As a matter of fact, he published the biography *Μπενίτο Μουσσολίνι: Ο δημιουργός της νέας Ιταλίας* in 1936 in the Akropolis book series 'The Great Men'.[59] Pratsikas published numerous articles and books on French literature, culture, and history as well as many translations of mostly French authors. He contributed regularly to *Πνευματική Ζωή*, mostly holding the music criticism column. In the post-WWII era he continued his regular collaboration with *Νέα Εστία* while holding a daily column in the newspaper *Αθηναϊκή* and

[57] See *ΛΝΛ*: 1498-1499 for information on Rita Boumi.
[58] See e.g. his positive remarks on the 'New State' in Pappas 1987: 79. For general information on Nikos Pappas see
[59] Pratsikas 1936a. The series included also the books *Κεμάλ Ατατούρκ: Ο δημιουργός της νέας Τουρκίας* by Thomas A. Vaidis and *Αδόλφος Χίτλερ: Ο δημιουργός της νέας Ιταλίας* by Nikos Chayer-Boufidis.

contributing frequently to the 'Philological Page' of *H Καθημερινή*. He moreover received awards for his overall contribution to letters by the Academy of Athens as well as by the French State.[60]

YEORYIOS I. ROUMANIS (1904-1960)

Born in Molaoi of Laconia, Roumanis completed his studies in Law at the universities of Athens and Michigan. During the dictatorship he appears as the president of the Greek Nationalist League (Ελληνικός Εθνικιστικός Σύνδεσμος) and he continued to be one of its most prominent members in the post-war period, along with Dimitrios Vezanis. He frequently contributed essays on politics, ideology, literature, and art as well as original literary works to *Νέα Πολιτική*. His texts constitute one of the most extreme and pompous examples of ultranationalist discourse during the Metaxas dictatorship. He was actually one of the few individuals examined in this thesis that did not hesitate to openly describe the regime as fascist and to use a vicious rhetoric that completely justified political violence and murder (another extreme case, which however did not reach Roumanis's level as far as the advocation of violence is concerned, was that of Stratis Myrivilis). Yeoryios Roumanis served as an MP in the post-war period, first with *Ellinikos Synayermos* and later with *Ethniki Rizospastiki Enosis* (ERE). He was characterised by 'eloquence', an exaggerated expressive style, and rhetorical activism.[61] He donated hundreds of books and periodicals as well as a monthly sum starting in 1955 for the establishment and operation of a public library in his home town which was named after him (Roumaneios Vivliothiki).[62]

[60] For general information on Yeoryios Pratsikas see *ΛΝΛ*: 1869.
[61] See P. 1960.
[62] See http://molaoi.com/roumanios.html.

PETROS SPANDONIDIS (1890-1964)

Born in Bucharest to Greek parents, he moved to Thessaloniki during adolescence. He studied Philology at the University of Athens and took part in the Balkan wars and the Asia Minor campaign. From 1921 onwards he worked as a high school teacher and, specifically between 1926 and 1936, at the Italian High School of Thessaloniki. As he had himself affirmed, his interest was mainly focused on French and Italian literary production up until the end of the 1920s. He was influenced by the aesthetic principles of Francisco De Sanctis and Benedetto Croce and the heroic idealism of Yiannis Apostolakis. In the 1930s, however, he became one of the main advocates of modernism amongst Greek literary critics. From 1946 onwards, he run a radio programme in Thessaloniki, through which he tried to promote the European features of Modern Greek literature. Spandonidis is perhaps the most significant critic in twentieth-century Thessaloniki and he was the leading figure behind the publication that came to be known as the most significant periodical of interwar Thessaloniki, *Μακεδονικές Ημέρες* (1932-1939). The periodical received funding from the Metaxas dictatorship and published positive texts about the regime. After it ceased its publication, Spandonidis inaugurated a criticism column in the periodical *Νέα Πολιτική*.[63]

VASOS VASILEIOU (1915-1985)

Born in Arta, Vasileiou read for the degrees of Philology and Law at the University of Thessaloniki while working at the local newspapers *Ελληνικός Βορράς*, *Νέα Αλήθεια*, *Μακεδονία*, *Φως*, and *Απογευματινή*.[64] In that city he moreover got involved with the circle of the periodical *Μακεδονικές Ημέρες*, to which he contributed several pieces of literature and literary criticism since 1934.[65] Even though he was not amongst the founders of the periodical, Vasileiou was

[63] For general information on Spandonidis see *ΛΝΛ*: 2059-2060 and Tsakonas 1990.
[64] Siola 2010: 157.
[65] Siola 2010: 158.

noted as being in charge of *Μακεδονικές Ημέρες* for five consecutive issues, from late 1937 to mid-1938.[66] Archival evidence, however, suggests that the periodical was in actuality run by Petros Orologas.[67] In his first contribution to *Νέα Πολιτική* (1938), Vasileiou in fact acted as a sort of manager for Orologas, with whom he shared National Socialist beliefs.[68] After the Axis occupation, Vasileiou moved to Athens and worked for various newspapers (*Ακρόπολις, Έθνος, Ελληνικόν Αίμα, Απογευματινή, Η Βραδυνή* et al.). He engaged in political reportage and got involved in the anticommunist apparatus of the post-WWII Greek state while branding himself as an expert in politics, international relations, and Sovietology. In the years between the Civil War and the Colonels Junta, Vasileiou worked for the Central Intelligence Service (ΚΥΠ), the Ministry of Press and Information, the Hellenic Army General Staff (ΓΕΣ), and was in charge of the Press Office of *Ellinikos Synayermos*. He moreover published the periodicals *Διεθνείς Σχέσεις* (1962) and *Στρατιωτικά Νέα* and books such as *Η Δεύτερη Οκτωβριανή Επανάσταση* (1956) *Το πρόβλημα της Μ. Ανατολής. Δόγμα Μπρέσνιεφ* (1969). In 1974 he assumed the position of Deputy Minister of Culture in the 'national-unity' government and was subsequently elected MP with New Democracy. In 1981 Vasileiou became president of the Greek Film Centre.[69]

ILIAS ZIOGAS (1909-1982)

Born in Istanbul, Ilias Ziogas was a journalist, intellectual, and art critic. In his latter role he is considered a significant figure of the 1930s by contemporary art historians.[70] Although he started as a Marxist art critic, Ziogas turned to the Right in the second half of the 1930s.[71] He

[66] See Siola 2010: 112-113.
[67] See Varelas 1997: 81 and Siola 2010: 158.
[68] About his role in promoting Orologas, see Ziras 2009: 80 (whereas Meraklis 1988: 291 wrongly presents him as an unsolicited distorter of Orologas's views).
[69] For general information on Vasos Vasileiou see Klaras 1985, Tsakonas 1988, and *EET* 1:343.
[70] See Chamalidi 2002: 19 and passim.
[71] See Chamalidi 2002: 12, 44, 244-247, 483-493, and passim. Indicative of Ziogas's ideological shift is that, whereas he criticised Michalis Tombros in the early 1930s for his bourgeois attitude to art, during the dictatorship

held the art criticism column in major periodicals of the Metaxas period such as *Νεοελληνικά Γράμματα* and *Πνευματική Ζωή*. After the war, he moved to the United States and took over the archbishopric Press Office of North and South America. In 1961 Ziogas served as director of the weekly supplement of the US-based Greek newspaper *Εθνικός Κήρυξ*. Some of his works were: *Γιαννούλης Χαλεπάς* (1941), *Ο Κωστής Μπαστιάς στη Νέα Υόρκη (1945-53). Μια άγνωστη πλευρά της ζωής του* (1973).[72]

he came to praise sculptures made by Tombros which verged on 'fascist realism' (see Chamalidi 2002: 114, 245, 543-544).

[72] For general information on Ilias Ziogas see *ΛΝΛ*: 780-781.

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GAK EON = General State Archives of Greece, EON Archive
GAK Metaxas = General State Archives of Greece, Ioannis Metaxas Archive

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