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“Modern Greek Historiography (1974-2000). The Era of Tradition from Dictatorship to Democracy”

If we had to choose only one theme with which to discuss mainstream historiography in the last quarter of 20th c., this would be the way that "modernity" has been conceptualized and, at the same time, contested. As modernity and the discipline of History have been formed together, so scrutiny of Modernity has gone hand to hand with the deconstruction of History. In this task, many trends from both inside and outside the history discipline have contributed: cultural history, linguistic and narrative turn, microhistory and gender studies, social anthropology and literature theory. But if mainstream historiography has to do with modernity, modern Greek historiography has to do with modernization. The encounter with modernity, in one way or another, is a common feature of Postcolonial theories and Subaltern Studies. However, in contrast to these theories where the principal aim is the critique of the concept of modernization, in Greek scholarship modernity, modernization (and Westernization) have a far more positive meaning.

What is described here deals with historical scholarship and not the public use of History. Although historiography has contributed in defining modernity, in the public use of History modernity has a more contested and ambiguous meaning. A characteristic of this scholarship is that it has been developed mostly outside universities and history departments by independent scholars or scholars educated and associated with universities or research centers abroad, principally in Western Europe and the USA. For this reason the development of Modern Greek Historiography has not simply been a domestic issue and its scholarship not confined to academia¹.

¹ L. Makrakis, N. Diamantouros, *New trends in Modern Greek Historiography*, New Haven 1982,

In the last quarter of the 20th century Greek society entered a new phase. With the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, a sixty year period of political turmoil and cleavage, which had begun during the First World War, ended. Thus, these years were not simply a new phase of development for Greek historical studies. In this period the community of historians and the framework of historiographical research were formed. Like every national historiography which is a product of an intersection between international developments in the discipline and the political and social realities of the particular society, the course of Greek historical studies presented convergences and divergences from mainstream historiographical trends.

1. Landmarks and generations

Since 1974 there has been a great proliferation of publications dealing with modern Greek history. The output of historical books reached its greatest volume in the middle of the 1980s and was maintained in the following years. In this period, there are a number of landmarks in the development of historiography. In 1971 the first volume of the multi-volume collective work, *History of the Greek Nation* (Athens, 15 vols), was published. The part which dealt with the modern period, that is, from the beginning of Ottoman rule, was published in the period 1974 to 1978. The whole work was intended to substitute the 19th century *History of the Greek Nation* of Constantinos Paparrigopoulos as the standard historical narrative. These volumes represent the first statement of historical scholarship in the early post-junta years. In 1971 the journal *Mnimon*, within which the generation of historians who emerged in the last quarter of the century was formed and expressed itself, appeared. The second great historical journal, *Ta Istorika*, appeared in 1983, at a time when the flood of history books was beginning, and expressed the new historiographical trends of the 1980s. During the 80s, historical research was supported by the great state banks as well as by research programs maintained by the Greek government (National Foundation of Research, Historical Archive of Greek Youth etc). Finally, in 1990 the journal *Istor*, and then in 1999 the journal *Historein* (with English as a working

Al. Kitroeff, "Continuity and Change in contemporary Greek Historiography" *European History Quarterly*, 19 (1988), 169-298, "Sygxrona Reumata sthn istoriografia toy Neou Ellinismou". Special issue of *Sygxrona Themata*, 35-37 (1998)

language) appeared with the aim of incorporating new historical works into mainstream historical studies.

If we classified modern Greek history by generations, we would distinguish four generations in the historical output of this period. The generation of the ‘Fathers’ (Dimaras and Svoronos), which created trends and schools of thought. The generation of their students, the ‘generation of the 60s’, which came to maturity in the period after the junta (represented by the journal *Ta Istorika*), the generation immediately after the junta (associated with the journals *Mnimon* and *Sinchrona Themata*), which manifested itself in books published in the 80s, and the generation of the 90s (*Istor* and *Historein*). These four generations are interesting as much for the themes they addressed, and particularly their treatment of the pattern of modernization, as well as for their methodology. Thus, the first and second generations were engaged chiefly with the history of the Ottoman period, while the third and fourth, were occupied with 19th and 20th century history. That is, the history of the modern Greek state was the theme of the generations which began to publish after the end of the dictatorship. Of course, the theory, the methodology and the style of writing do not always correspond to the concept of generations. The historiographical traditions, the trends, and the schools of thought straddle two or at the most three generations.

The studies which relate to modern Greek history (i.e. the period of the Ottoman Empire and the independent Greek state) do not themselves have a long history. The period of Ottoman domination was a period suppressed in traditional Greek historical studies. The first chair in Modern History at the University of Athens was established only in 1937. Until then, modern Greek history was regarded largely as a continuation of Byzantine studies and did not extend beyond the years of the Greek Revolution in 1821-1828. The first serious works which dealt with modern history appeared just on the eve of or in the aftermath of World War II². However, the postwar period was not favorable for the development of research. Even the suspicion that a certain historical work disputed the official version of history was enough to incur legal consequences for the author. Thus, in 1955, when Nicolas Svoronos published the *Histoire de la Grece Moderne* in Paris, he was deprived of his

² M. Sakellariou, *I Peloponissos kata tin deuteran tourkokratian (1715-1821)* Athens 1939

nationality. It took more than 20 years after the end of the War for modern Greek history to be incorporated into the national narrative, with the appearance of the above mentioned multi-volume work, *History of the Greek Nation*. This work inscribed the modern period within the ideological framework of the ‘continuity’ of the nation (beginning from the prehistoric period) and at the same time crystallized the historical approaches of the 1970s. Consequently it can be read as an expression of the immediate post-junta consensus in modern Greek history. The consensus stops at the great split of the 1940s (Axis occupation and civil war) which constituted the forbidden frontier to the continuation of this work in the seventies.

What were the most important historiographical schools in this period?

2. The School of the Greek Enlightenment

The school of historical thought with the greatest influence is connected with K. Th. Dimaras and deals with the history of the Greek Enlightenment. Dimaras was one of the intellectuals who belonged to the literary generation of the 1930s which introduced modernist poetry to Greece and renewed the literary canon and aesthetics. To this generation also belonged the poet Giorgos Seferis, the writer Giorgos Theotokas and other influential intellectuals of the interwar years. Dimaras was a historian and a literary critic and wrote the first history of modern Greek literature in 1945. However, his interest was not restricted to literary matters, nor to the history of ideas, but to that which he called the ‘history of Consciousness’. Dimaras, with Nikos Svoronos, are the two central personalities of Greek historiography in the second half of the 20th century.

Dimaras coined the term ‘Enlightenment’ in 1945, i.e. in the middle of the decade of the Civil War. With this concept as a tool of analysis, periodization and evaluation, the period of Turkish rule was regarded as self-contained within the interpretation of modern Greek history. Thus, the older interpretative frameworks which had described the Ottoman period as one of post-Byzantine continuity, or a passive history of occupation, or as a long prologue to the Revolution of 1821, were revised³. Even more, the concept of the Enlightenment and the schema of the history

³ A. Liakos, “Pros episkeuin olomeleias kai enotitos. H domisi tou ethnou xronou,” in *Epistimoniki Synantisi sth Mnimi tou K.Th.Dimara*, Athens 1964, 171-199

which it implied, overrode the interpretative framework which the demotic movement established. Demoticism, the movement for the institutionalization of the vernacular, conceptualized cultural history as the opposition between the demotic and the learned tradition. The concept of the Enlightenment also confronted the warring ideological frameworks of the Right and the Left. It resisted the ethnocentric and romantic view of the National Revival, supported by the Right, but also, the idea that the national revolution remained incomplete as a result of the defeat of bourgeois and popular social forces, maintained by the Left. This concept constituted an interpretative break which created a change of paradigm across a widespread area of modern Greek history and created a corresponding community of scholars. With the formation of the concept of the Enlightenment, Europeanized Greek society acquires noble ancestors and is connected with a framework of modernist values. At the same time Greek history breathes to the rhythm of European society. It is incorporated, even if on the periphery, within one of its great moments.

The Enlightenment School was not only concerned with themes related to the period of Enlightenment, but also with a specific method, i.e., it was not limited to the history of ideas, but, as established by its founder, it was a history of ‘Consciousness’, that concerned the intellectual evidence of change. The students of Dimaras turned in many directions: to the history of the book and of *mentalités* (Filippos Iliou⁴), to the history of literature (Panagiotis Moulas⁵), to the history of men of letters but also of popular literature (Alkis Aggelou⁶), folk songs (Alexis Politis⁷), Philhellenism and travellers' literature (Loukia Droulia⁸), of Jurisprudence (D. Apostolopoulos⁹), of geography, and of the introduction of scientific ideas to Greek society. Through the Enlightenment School, Greek historiography came into contact

⁴ F. Iliou F., *Elliniki Bibliographia 19ou ai., Vol. A (1801-1918)*, Athens 1997,

⁵ P. Moulas, *Les concours poetiques de l'Universite d' Athenes 1851-1877*, Athens 1989

⁶ A. Aggelou, *Oi logioi kai o Agonas*, Athens 1971 and Introduction to Giulio Cesare Dalla Croce, *O Bertoldos kai o Bertoldinos*, Athens 1988

⁷ A. Politis A., *I anakalypsi ton ellinikon dimotikon tragoudion*, Athens 1984

⁸ L. Droulia, *Philhellenisme, Repertoire Bibliographique*, Athens 1974

⁹ D. Apostolopoulos, *I emfanisi tis sxolis tou fisikou dikaiou stin "tourkokratoumeni" elliniki koinonia*, Athens 1983

with developments in cultural history, especially in the interpretation of the Annales School. In parallel, the *topos* of the Enlightenment also was examined by researchers who had followed other courses, far from the influence and the method of Dimaras. The Greek Enlightenment was examined through a philosophical perspective closer to the philosophy of the European Enlightenment (P. Kondylis¹⁰) and also through the use of theories of political science, particularly modernization theory, regarding the creation of a national consciousness in the Balkan context (P. Kitromilides¹¹). This school also included Greek romanticism of the 19th century among its interests. However, here it did not create a dense net of concepts and tools of analysis. The ironic style of Elli Skopetea¹², demonstrating the fragmentation and misunderstanding of 19th c. national culture, serves modern readers more effectively with respect to the imposed familiarity which this period bequeathed, and their desired estrangement.

To sum up, Dimaras's conceptualisation of history both presupposes and underpins a certain dichotomy between the inertia of the masses and the intellectual vibrancy of the elites. This framework, alluded to that of the Annales School which characterized social change as the clash of a modernist elite and the inactive masses, as renewal and tradition. It also created an underlying schema of continuity for the ideological conflicts of Greek society from the pre-Revolutionary to the post-war period. It would of course be possible to read this in reverse: the renewed historiography versus the established ideological interpretations of modern Greek history. This framework was consumed, enriched and expanded over time by a series of interrelated concepts: renewal, Europeanisation, Westernization, rationalization, modernization on one side; inertia, conservatism, anti-westernism on the other. This dichotomy, in different ways, penetrated intellectual, political and economic history from the 18th to the 20th century.

The Enlightenment School was hegemonic in Greek historical studies, even if the universities, especially the older ones, opposed it. Nevertheless, just as every

¹⁰ P.Kondylis, *O Neoellinikos Diafotismos*, Athens 1988

¹¹ P.Kitromilides, *Neoellinikos Diafotismos*, Athens 1996

¹² Elli Skopetea, *To protypo Vasilio kai I Megali Idea*, Athens 1988

hegemony which spreads itself, absorbs elements preexisting or even foreign to its logic, so the history of the Greek Enlightenment, identified itself ultimately with the history of the men of letters (*Logioi*) and of learning (*Logiosyni*). It is a history which, at least in Greece, is quite traditional. According to the logic of its construction of national history, since there existed no political autonomy to become an object of political history in the years of Ottoman domination, the gap was covered by the history of cultural achievements and of erudition. On the other hand, while the object of this history was principally men of letters, with few exceptions, interest in popular culture was rare. The most important political consequence of the Enlightenment School was that it created the terms for a critique of nationalism, introducing the problematic of the construction of the Greek national ideology, even if it gave an exaggerated emphasis to the dependence of the national ideology on the work of the men of letters and overestimated the influence of the Enlightenment. Nevertheless, it protected the Greek history community from the winds of nationalism which blew strongly in the decade of the 1990s.

3. The Renewal of historiography

a. The Marxist View

Another strong influence on modern Greek studies is due to the work and the presence of Nikos Svoronos. The influence of Svoronos is linked to the introduction of an interest in economic and social history in modern Greek historiography as well as of a more elaborated and renewed Marxist method. Before Svoronos, Yannis Kordatos had tried in the 1920s to introduce Marxist analysis into Greek historiography and to create an alternative version to the official narrative of Greek history¹³. His work on the social causes of the Greek Revolution, which he considered a bourgeois revolution, provoked a very great reaction from the Greek establishment, but also from the Communist Party after the 1930s, when it changed its strategy and considered that the bourgeois transformation of Greece had not yet been completed. Since then Marxist historiography has aimed to prove the positions of the party and been politically controlled. Svoronos belonged to eurocommunist trend. He remained an exile in France for 30 years and consequently was connected with the French

¹³ Yannis Kordatos, *I koinoniki simasia tis ellinikis Epanastaseos tou 1821*, Athens 1924

historiographical tradition. Svoronos moved the discussion from the nation to the society, and with his work emphasized the economic and social forces, particularly in modern economic activities, which were evident in the 18th century. This thematic shift was already important and it reoriented historical studies from the political events of the Greek Revolution to the social realities in the period which preceded it. However, his influence on the wider public is chiefly due to the *Histoire de la Grece Moderne*, which was translated into Greek in 1976. If in the Enlightenment School the schema of history was the modernist elite versus the inertness of the masses, the schema of Marxist history which Svoronos inspired was "society and people" versus "State" and the "mechanisms of local and foreign power".

b. The New History

In the years after the junta an osmosis was created between the Enlightenment School and the Marxist current, despite their appreciable differences both in historical framework and in method. It was expressed in the demand for the 'renewal' of historical studies, and it created what was called 'New History'. Spiros Asdrachas, Philippos Iliou, Vasilis Panagiotopoulos, G. Dertilis and Vasilis Kremmidas, i.e. the following generation, constituted the leading figures of the 'New History'. There is no clear definition for what the term 'New History' specifically meant or what included. Usually, it is defined in juxtaposition to 'traditional history'. If 'traditional history' considered itself to belong to the Humanities, the 'New History' included itself within the Social Sciences. If the former was characterized in practice as only interested in documents and susceptible to historical myths, the latter was interested in the "*Histoire-probleme*", the history of the average person and in the history of the society as a whole. In short, for many who took their first steps at this time, i.e., the generation of *Mnimon*, the 'New History' meant Dimaras plus Svoronos, the Annales school plus Marxism.

It may be that the influence of the Annales School has been exaggerated in the Greek 'New History', because Dimaras' history of 'Consciousness' (*Istoria ton syneidiseon*), is not related to the history of *mentalités*. The "Consciousnesses" (in plural) constitute indicators of modernity, while the *mentalités* are signs of inertness.

Changes in 'Consciousness', the "psychological transformations" in the historiographical model of Dimaras, precede the social changes, they foreshadow and cause them. They are detected in the written word, in the sphere of modernity and in historical change. By contrast, in the Annales model, the *mentalités* retard the relationship between economic and social changes; they express the forces of immobility, they are intellectual prisons. Even in countries with a strong tradition of Marxist historiography, the influence of the Annales has been adopted into alternative frameworks to the Marxist model. In Greece, (but also in other countries such as Spain), Marxism and the Annales have merged.

The theoretical texts which express the spirit of the New History were written by Spyros Asdrachas¹⁴ and Philippos Iliou¹⁵. These texts encapsulate a theory of history. Although this theory was not codified, it does not constitute a simple transfer of the Annales School to Greece. It set up a particular historiographical tradition, which is inscribed in the wider current of social history which dominated the international field of historical studies in the period 1960-1980. In each country this current takes particular forms, following the social developments and the historiographical tradition. In Greece this social history was delayed because of the abnormal political conditions. Particularly anything which was concerned with social history was suspected of Marxism. But on the other hand the abuse of history by Greek national ideology enriched the 'new history' with a problematic of the ideological use and abuse of history.

Asdrachas, starting with a holistic conception of historiographical phenomenon, developed a theory of historical practice which included the historicizing subject as much as the historicized object as active elements. With this conception, historiographical and social practice, are distinguished analytically on the one hand but are written in a totality which confronts the history at the same time as a social and cultural practice. This analysis kept pace with and was supplemented by the theory of 'the ideological use of history' (Iliou), which related to the way in which Greek society received and formed its perceptions of the past. In the context of the liberation from the 'ideological use of history' the historians of this generation

¹⁴ Sp. Asdrachas, *Zitimata Istorias*, Athens 1983, and *Istorika Apeikasmata*, Athens 1995

¹⁵F.Iliou, *I Ideologiki xrisi tis istorias*, Athens 1976

understood their historiographical task to be a discharge of ‘ideological myths’ from history. However, with this conception the slide to positivism was not uncommon. The opposing fear of the ideological abuses of history in a wider cultural environment supported this trend. At the same time, it made difficult the reception of historiographical currents which were connected with the ‘linguistic turn’ and the postmodernism of the 1980s and 1990s. As long as the task of historians was to rescue reality from ideology, it was difficult for them to accept different versions of reality and even its disappearance into the linguistic games or regimes of discourses, as the postmodernist school maintains.

Two generations shared the New History: the generation of the 60s (journal *Ta Istorika*) and the generation of the seventies (journal *Mnimon*). From the end of the 70s and during the 80s there was a widespread enthusiasm for the New History. The term ‘Renewal’, which the new historians used, was not only restricted to historiography, but in a period of political optimism, it meant that the New History constituted a cultural request that had the power to play a role in the renewal of society. The term ‘*self-knowledge*’ (*autognosia*) defined the duty of history, the mission of historians, and their subjective consciousness in the writing of history. Interest and activity in history became a broader stream. While traditionally, graduates of Philosophical Schools turned to history, at this time the history profession drew graduates not only from the social but also from other sciences.

4. The Modernization Debate

a. The History of the Political System

The Dictatorship constituted a powerful cultural shock for those Greek intellectuals who had addressed themselves to the issue of what had impeded the democratic development of the country overall. Intellectuals, particularly those in Western Europe and USA, turned to the study of the development of the political system and the detection of a logic to the political development of modern Greece of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The first study which laid the threshold for this period was that of John Petropoulos, *Politics and Statecraft in the Kingdom of Greece 1833-1843* (Princeton 1968). The author belonged to a group of Greek-American scholars (together with L.Stavrianos and G.B.Leontaritis) who had absorbed the political and social theories which had flourished in the post-war American academy, following the generous contribution of European thought by exiled German intellectuals of the 1930s. A common characteristic of their work was its grand and broad syntheses. However, this tradition of modern Greek historiography in America was interrupted and the interest in Greek affairs became drawn more to social anthropology.

In Greece, Petropoulos' book created a tradition of approaching political history, employing basic categories which originated from social anthropology and from theories of modernization. The concept of clientelism became the fundamental key for the interpretation of political behavior and of the relations of society and state, with several variations. It maintained that Greece was characterized by a class vagueness and ambiguity, by an absence of social conflict, by the autonomy of politics as opposed to its social background (G.Dertilis¹⁶). It asserted that the State in Greece constituted the field of the formation of the dominant class, and that consequently it produced a clientelist machinery (K.Tsoukalas¹⁷). The clash of westernized institutions and traditional society concerned not only the institutions but the political culture as well (N.Diamadourous¹⁸). Finally, the clientelist system was modified from oligarchic parliamentarianism to mass democracy and from a personal system it became a bureaucratic one combined with populism (N.Mouzelis¹⁹).

This debate revitalized modern Greek historiography. It created a field in which history intersected with political science and sociology on the ground of

¹⁶ G. Dertilis, *Koinonikos metasximatismos kai stratiotiki epemvasi*, Athens 1977

¹⁷ K. Tsoukalas, *Koinoniki anaptyksi kai kratos. I sygkrotisi tou dimosiou xorou stin Ellada*, Athens 1981

¹⁸ N. Diamantouros, *Cultural dualism and political change in postauthoritarian Greece*, Madrid 1994

¹⁹ N. Mouzelis, *Facets of Underdevelopment*, London 1978 and *Politics in the Semi-periphery*, London 1986

modernization theories. However, underlying this discussion was a subtext. Greek society was described as ‘what it is not’ and its analysis presupposed its comparison with an ideal type implied by universalist modernization theory which interprets changes only according to Western categories. Consequently the search concerned the divergences and the differences; the *negativity*. This framework overturned the Marxist schema of Svoronos in which the fundamental conflict was between state and society. In the new schema, the causes of backwardness were shifted into the society. The result of this analysis was the discourse on populism by the modernist intellectuals of the 1980s and its dissemination from historiography to political discourse.

Even if these studies exercised a great influence on historical studies, as well as on social and political scientists, and even created a modernist orthodoxy, it did not pass without criticism. The principal problem was how to deal with the sixty years period of ruptures and intense political and social cleavage in Greek society. This began during World War I with the *National Schism (Dichasmos)* between the Venizelists and the Royalists, continued during the interwar period, was transformed during the Occupation to a civil war between the Right and the Left in the 1940s, and prolonged into the post-war period until the end of the Dictatorship in 1974. This period was not adequately explained within a theoretical framework of modernization which reduced problems to clientelism and the transplantation of institutions.

Accordingly, political historiography developed from two different perspectives and methods which analyzed the differences between the two periods. The first was the period from 1864 until the First World War. This was regarded as a period in which, for the most part, parliamentary institutions functioned within a framework of a society characterized by traditionalism and the absence of great social cleavages. Consequently the studies revolved around issues of the function of institutions, the establishment of the state, and clientelist links. The second was the period from the First World War until the end of the Dictatorship in 1974. This period, marked by two great ruptures of national integration and social conflict (National Schism and Civil War), imposed a particular problematic. From an analysis of the parties we passed to this problematic of several levels of social--cultural cleavages and partisanship (*parataxeis*). In the same way the focus changed to the functions of the state. In the first period the emphasis was given to the social analysis of the state and the elites; in

the second, to the changes to institutions and to the processes of political identification within the divisions which the two great ruptures of modern Greek society created (G.Leontaritis²⁰, N. Alivizatos²¹, G.Mavrocordatos²², G. Hering²³).

b. Economic History

Economic history developed in two directions. The first oriented itself towards the economic history of the last centuries of Ottoman rule. Its object was the agricultural economy and taxation (Asdrachas²⁴), and the contribution of commerce and shipping to the social transformation of Greek society before the Revolution (Kremmydas²⁵). This orientation culminated and at the same time was epitomized in the work of the conference, *Economies Mediterraneennes. Equilibres et intercommunications, XII-XIX siecles*, (Athens, 1985). In this conference, the economic historiography of the period was placed within the Mediterranean context and the Braudelian tradition.

The second direction of economic history was supported and financed in the 1980s by two large banks, the National Bank and the Commercial Bank. The archives of the National Bank were a substantial and rich source of primary material, a fact which determined the subjects but also the perspective for many studies. Around the banks were established a group of historians with common characteristics and common questions. The questions of economic history were common with those of political history and linked with the problem of the modernization of Greece: why was there no industry in Greece? What are the causes of Greek backwardness? The explanations were pursued in issues such as the extent of the monetarisation of the economy, the

²⁰ G.B.Leontaritis, *Greece and the Great Powers 1914-1917*, Thessaloniki 1970, and *Greece and the First World War*, New York 1990

²¹ N. Alivizatos, *Politikoi thesmoi se krisi 1922-1974*, Athens 1983

²² G.Mavrocordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece 1922-1936*, Berkeley 1983

²³ G. Hering, *Die politischen Parteien in Griechenland 1821-1936*, Munich 1992

²⁴ Sp. Asdrachas, *Michanismoι agrotikis oikonomias stin tourkokratia (15-16 ai)*, Athens 1978 and *Elliniki koinonia kai oikonomia (14-19 ai)*, Athens 1982

²⁵ V.Kremmydas, *Sygkyria kai emporio stin proepanastatiki Peloponisso (1793-1821)* Athens 1980

alternative outlets of capital for industry, state borrowing, usury, the choices/policies of the Banks, the quality and the allocation of investments, the availability of labour, the obstructive role of small agriculture, the formation of the domestic market, the proportion of foreign loans, the role of domestic and Diaspora capital, and the time and the pace of incorporation into the international economy. The most synthesized works can be summarized in those of Christina Agriandoni²⁶, Kostas Kostis²⁷ and Christos Hatzioissif²⁸. The blueprint of the questions and the framework of the debate was given by George Dertilis, who officially directed the banks' projects, and presented a cohesive interpretative framework of Greek society from Turkish rule until the end of the 20th century²⁹. It was a schema typical of a *history of absences*. That is, it was a comparison between the elements which determined the development in Western societies and the absence of these elements in Greece. Emphasis was given to a system of adjustments and the uneasy equilibrium of a society of small landholders, with easy mobility and without differentiation of roles, which ultimately impeded the great changes which industrialization demanded.

Dertilis applied this interpretative framework to the history of the taxation system. Beginning with the overtaxing of farmers characteristic of the long duree (which included the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires), by the first half century of the independent Greek state, farmers, together with the economic elite, were not being taxed at all. The middle and lower urban strata bore the burden of taxes. This course was parallel and interdependent with the course of the democratization of the political system. Democratization was supported by an alliance between the upper and lower strata which, in turn, had the characteristics of a general clientelist system in an unstable equilibrium³⁰.

²⁶ Chr. Agriandoni, *Oi aparches tis ekviomichanisis*, Athens 1986

²⁷ K.Kostis, *Agrotiki oikonomia kai Georgiki Trapeza*, Athens 1987

²⁸ Chr. Hadziioissif, *I Giraia selini. I viomichania stin elliniki oikonomia 1830-1940*, Athens 1993

²⁹ G. Dertilis, "Terre, Paysans et Pouvoir economique (Grece, XVIII-XX siecle)", *Annales* n.2 (1992)273-291, and n. 1 (1993)85-107

³⁰G. Dertilis, *Atelesforoi I telesforoi.Foroi kai eksousia sto neoelliniko kratos*, Athens 1993

Most studies of economic history followed this framework, adopting its discourse, even if the conclusions did not necessarily lead in the same direction. Even more, those studies which introduced some differentiation (the objections to the general schema of a homogenous agrarian small landowning Greek society and to a generalized consensus around the universal franchise) did not create an alternative schema.

It is worth discussing a more general problem here. The central question which economic history poses is: why was industrialization not successfully achieved in Greece? Why was the Greek economy backward? This is parallel to the question asked by the School of the Greek Enlightenment and by political history about the modernization of Greece. This question alone orients itself to a history of absences, to the comparison of a model and its shadow, and certainly with the terms, the methods and the underlying value system of the model. From this view, the three great currents of historiography of this period kept pace in the formulation of a negative question and in the localization of the basic dilemma of Greek society with the terms tradition or modernity. Clearly, the view was dictated by the second part of the dilemma.

5. The Traumas of modernity

Occupation-Resistance-Civil War

One of the most traumatic periods of Greek history is the decade of 1940-1950, i.e., the period of the occupation of Greece by the Axis powers and the Civil War. It is perhaps ironic that the moment Greek history enters world history and becomes part of an international problem, is one of the most traumatic aspects of Greek history and memory. Until 1974, the public memory of this period was determined by the politics of the victors of the Civil War. Victors and defeated, Right and Left, continued to reproduce as historical interpretations the positions they had adopted during the period of the conflict. The split in the KKE and the end of the dictatorship loosened the interpretative orthodoxies. Veterans of the Resistance began to organize their memory publicly. A number of memoirs were published, associations founded, monuments built and anniversaries established. In academic historiography the incorporation of this period sprang principally from the generation of the 1970s, and

chiefly from those who had hammered out doctorates in European and American universities during the period of the dictatorship. Most studies dealt with the political conflict between the Left and the Right, and the role of the English and Americans, supported by the relevant archives. It was a political historiography which broke the ice which had been constructed during the period of the Cold War, and from this viewpoint it was documented in the more general, international revisionist climate of the end of the Cold War. Around the historiography of this period was created a community of historians, with the participation of historians from Greece and abroad, which, even if they did not form a school, nevertheless created a historiographical forum with close communication and lively debate.

There are two landmark years in the course of this historiography: 1978 and 1984. In 1978 the first conference on the Occupation and the Resistance was organized, not in Athens, but in Washington. This conference dealt with the conflict during the occupation as the culmination of a crisis which had been smoldering since the establishment of the Greek state. The title of the conference was characteristic: '*Greece in the Decade 1940-1950, A nation in crisis.*' The second conference which took place in Athens in 1984 with the title '*Greece 1936-44, Dictatorship-Occupation-Resistance*'³¹ also aimed at the incorporation of the period within the continuity of modern Greek history. The interesting thing is that this conference divided the period of the Occupation and Resistance (1941-44) off from the period of the Civil War (1946-49). The organizers' explanation that the conditions were not yet psychologically mature and so did not allow historical distance (Svoronos) does not seem convincing. In other respects the whole period was judged within an implicit framework of the conflict which led to the Civil War. The problem of the arrangement of the period concerned more the psychology of the Left. At a time when it was incorporating itself into the political and academic system, it sought to place the history of the Resistance within the national history. In this process, the Civil War constituted an "anomaly". Still, the first conference on the Civil War took place in the same year in Copenhagen, with the programmatic statement that historical analysis of

³¹ H.Fleischer, N. Svoronos, H, *Ellada 1936-1944. Diktatoria –Katochi-Antistasi*, Athens 1989

the Civil War could contribute to the reconciliation which was being undertaken at that time in Greece³².

During the same period, most studies were based on the Anglo-American archives and concerned its diplomatic aspects, although here we should not use this term in the conventional way. The first complete study of the period 1941-1944 was written by Hagen Fleischer³³. It was a work of inspiration, based on a systematic and assiduous archival documentation of the belligerents, a cross-referencing of sources, a reconstruction of events, a careful presentation of their opposing interpretations, written with a vivid awareness. It was a study which laid the foundation of the historiography of the period. The second great work belonged to Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece. The Experience of the Occupation* (English ed. 1993; Greek edition, 1995). As the subtitle indicates we have here a turning away from the history of the principal organizations and events to the everyday experience of the occupation, to the economy and the black market, and to the social conditions which set off the Resistance, such as the excellent analysis of Nazi violence, and of the politics of the powers of occupation in Greece.

The 1990s are marked by a shift from the political to the social history of the Occupation and the Resistance. This is characterized by the book of Giorgos Margaritis, *From Defeat to Uprising, Greece: Spring 1941-Fall 1942* (1993). Margaritis seeks the explanation of the development of the social uprising (which replaces the conventional but ideologically sanctioned term Resistance) not in the field of political decisions, but in the changes of the experiences and the consciousnesses which the social conditions of the occupation and the break up of the state imposed. This shift from political to social history is characterised by the studies of youth and youth organizations, about the position and the role of women in the Resistance, about the trade unions, and above all with oral history studies. Riki van Boushoten '*Upside Down Years*' (1997) used a social anthropological approach, to examine the experience of the occupation, the resistance, the people's rule, and the

³² L.Baerentsen (ed.) *Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War, 1945-1949*, Copenhagen 1987

³³ H.Fleischer, *Stemma kai Svastika. I Ellada tis katoxis kai tis Antistasis*, Athens vol.I 1988, vol.II 1995

civil war for the inhabitants of a particular mountain village. In this way she shows how hopes were articulated, frustrated and fuelled, as well as the differences within one small community towards the ideologies and conflicts of the opponents of the occupation and civil war.

The study of everyday experience and memory shows how much fluidity there is in the periodization between the Resistance and the Civil War. The older view of the Right was that from the beginning of the occupation the KKE aimed at the seizure of power, a thing which it first attempted in December 1944 and later in 1947-49. The traditional view of the Left also merged the period as a national liberation struggle, first against the Axis until 1944, and subsequently against the “Royalist Fascists”. In the post-junta period, this decade was divided into two: the National Resistance, which obliged the mobilization of all the people, and the Civil War, which was incited by foreigners. In the 1970s and 1980s, it had become acceptable to hold the view that the EAM Resistance was not identical to the communist movement, although the question of who caused the civil war was still posed, with the responsibility sometimes given to the Right and sometimes to the Left. From the view of contemporary scholarship, it is difficult to separate the Resistance from the Civil War. Moreover, as Claudio Pavone showed, even for Italy, the Resistance was a form of civil war³⁴. It is also difficult not to consider the period 1944-47 as an unannounced and diffuse civil war. In addition, studies such as that of Close on the Civil War, as well as the second conference of the Civil War which took place in Copenhagen in 1987, dealt with the decade as a unit.

Thus, in the 1990s, a perceptible shift occurred in studies of the period of the Civil War³⁵. The first conference in Athens, which related to the whole of the period 1936-1949, took place only in 1995. But in this the papers on the Civil War related principally to its diplomatic aspects. There were still basic components missing: first of all, the Left is more studied than the Right; secondly, there is no social history of the Civil War. We know hardly anything, for example, about behavior in the cities,

³⁴ Cl. Pavone, *Una guerra civile. Saggio storico sulla moralità nella Resistenza*, Turin 1991

³⁵ D. Close, *The Greek Civil war, 1943-1950*, Routledge 1993

and about the compulsory internal migration. On the other hand, new objects of interest emerged, such as political prisoners and the exiles in Eastern Europe, the fate of children of both sides, the position of minorities (this last issue will be referred to below), the study of the victors and their ideology.

Greeks outside of Greece

In Greece one basic *topos* of the national ideology but also of historiography is the history of the Greek Diaspora. Historians of the Greek Enlightenment considered Diaspora as a lever of modernization. But in the history of the 19th century its modernization role was doubted. Of course, the term 'Diaspora' changes according to the particular approach. If one adopts a position consistent with the ruling national ideology, the issue appears simple: those living in territories where the Greek state was considered ancestral were "unredeemed"; those outside were emigrants. In this way, the point of view of the nation-state is extended to the past. From the moment of its creation, the Greek nation-state rearranged space into three concentric circles: a national centre, an irredentist periphery and the Diaspora. If however, the Eastern Mediterranean is imagined as an area of overlapping ethnic Diasporas, the perspective changes.

From a conventional point of view, the chronological range of the phenomenon extends over five centuries, from the first Orthodox community in Venice in the 17th century until the post-war migration to Germany³⁶. In these five hundred years, not only Greek-speaking Orthodox were transformed into Greeks by reference to a nation-state which imposed new conceptual differentiation, but the whole region in which Greeks were scattered was nationally transformed. The conceptual terms depend then on the position of the observer. From this perspective the dividing boundaries and the distinctions are changing, negotiated and above all abolish the barriers between the Greek-Orthodox inside the Ottoman Empire and those outside in the Greek colonies (*paroikies*) of South-East Europe (e.g. Odessa and Trieste) and East Mediterranean (e.g. Alexandria). [In addition, many cities of the Ottoman Empire (such as the coast of Asia Minor) were colonized by Greek emigrants from areas within the Greek state. Southern Russia was colonized by Greek Orthodox of the Pontos. Even the Greek-Orthodox bourgeoisie from Constantinople,

³⁶ I.Xasiotis, *Episkopisi tis Istorias tis Neoellinikis Diasporas*, Thessaloniki 1993

of Smyrna and of other cities of the Ottoman Empire, had close relations and common roles with the Greek bourgeois community groups active in Alexandria, Odessa and other cities of this region. Accordingly, it is difficult and historically unproductive to distinguish between them as "unredeemed" and "Diaspora". On the other hand, the Greek-Orthodox populations who lived in the Pontos, Cappadocia, Crete, Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace exhibited so many great differences that it is inappropriate for them to be considered as a solid object of study, as the traditional national historiography expects. In short, in the historical output of this period, we can observe a transition from the history of the Greek communities of the Diaspora, to its economic role in the Greek state, and from there to the study of identities and the institutions of incorporation of the Greek Orthodox into the Ottoman Empire.

In the first category of study, which concerns Greek communities, we can include studies relating to the Greek communities of Trieste³⁷, Alexandria³⁸ and Smyrna³⁹. To the second category belong studies relating to the economic role of the Diaspora. The periodization of economic flourishing and decline of the Greek communities is the first issue of the debate. The economic peak is connected with their incorporation into the economy of the region, while their economic decline, which is placed after the 1850s, or in the 1870s, is connected with an investment phase in Greece. However, this investment phase is judged as counter-productive. Thus, the continuing issue is the influence of these communities in the reproduction of the model of development of Greece and their ambivalent role towards modernization.⁴⁰ Finally, in the third category of studies, which developed in the decade of the 1990s, issues of the creation of identity are examined. These works refer primarily to the territory of the Ottoman Empire of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. The three main studies in this field refer to the structure of communal

³⁷ O. Katsiardi, *I elliniki paroikia tis Tergestis*, Athens 1986

³⁸ A. Kitroef, *The Alexandria We Have Lost: The Greeks in Egypt 1917-1937*, Athens 1988

³⁹ El. Frangakis, *The commerce of Smyrna in the eighteenth century (1700-1820)*, Athens 1992

⁴⁰ G. Dertilis, *To zitima ton trapezon 1871-1873*, Athens 1980, Ch.. Exertzoglou, *Prosarmostikotita kai politiki omogeneiakon kefalaion*, Athens 1989

organization of the Greeks of Asia Minor⁴¹, to the way in which the national identity of the Greek Orthodox in Constantinople was formed connecting it with community stratification and cultural strategies⁴², and finally to the transformation of the millet system and the nationalization of the Greek-Orthodox population in Asia Minor⁴³.

During the 1990s, because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the migratory waves to Greece, an interest developed in the Greek Diaspora of Southern Russia⁴⁴, while the growth of Greek studies in America, created a new debate about the Diaspora in the Greek-American context. The most important and older work of Th. Saloutos was criticised because he presented a narrative of prosperous migration which excluded those inconvenient aspects linking Greek migrants with the American working class⁴⁵. From these debates, which influenced the social history of the 1970s, the debate passed onto the diasporic identity, to the connection with the wider currents of study of migrant groups in America, and the emigration of the dominant white narrative. Finally, the post-war emigration into Western Europe and Australia, now begins to be an object of history.

Social History

Twenty years ago, in international historiography, social history coincided more or less with the history of the labour movement. This historiography began initially with the history of labour and socialist organizations and continued under the influence of EP Thompson and British Marxism, which turned to the history of the workers themselves and the formation of the working class. This shift signaled also a move from the economy to culture, from political activity to social and cultural assumptions and to everyday life.

⁴¹G.Augustinos, *The Greeks of Asia Minor*, Kent Ohio 1992

⁴²Ch. Exertzoglou, *Ethniki tautotita stin Konstantinoupoli*, Athens 1996

⁴³ A. Anagnostopoulou, *Mikra Asia 190s-1919*, Athens 1977

⁴⁴ I. Xasiotis, *Oi Ellines tis Rossias kai tis Sovietikis Enosis*, Thessaloniki 1997

⁴⁵ Th. Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States*, Harvard 1964

However, in Greece the discussion about modernization favored the ambiguity of class terms and pointed to the lack of a labour dynamism as one of the obstructive constants of industrialization. Consequently it discouraged studies and marginalised interest in the labour movement or the formation and behavior of the Greek working class. Emphasis was given more to the ideas, that is to say, to the history of socialist ideas (Noutsos⁴⁶) and the relation between socialist intellectuals and Demoticism (movement for the institutionalization of vernacular) rather than the working class itself. Only in the 1990s did works appear regarding the relation of the working class with the state as well as the origins of the welfare state in Greece (Liakos⁴⁷).

Neither popular culture nor the everyday life of the popular classes attracted the interest of Greek historians, as it did in Western Europe where some pioneering studies dealt with popular culture in early modern Europe (Ginzburg, N.Z. Davis). In Greece the popular masses were considered anti-modern (Iliou 1976b) and in juxtaposition to modernity. The best work in early modern Greek history dealt with demography (Panagiotopoulos⁴⁸), famines and plagues (Kostis⁴⁹), as well as diet (Matthaiou⁵⁰). In contrast to the works dealing with the modern period, social history was occupied with youth, urban and gender histories (Varikas⁵¹ and Avdela⁵²).

However, in the 1990s a new interest appeared in nationalism and in the nationalist ideology which indicated a shift in interest away from modernization. Already in the

⁴⁶ P.Noutsos, *I Sosialistiki Skepsi stin Ellada 1875-1974*, Athens 1990

⁴⁷ A. Liakos, *Ergasia kai politiki stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou*, Athens 1993

⁴⁸ V. Panagiotopoulos, *Plithismos kai Oikismoi tis Peloponissou 13os-18os ai.* Athens 1985

⁴⁹ K. Kostis, *Aforia, akribeia kai peina. Oi kriseis diatrofis stin elliniki xersoniso*, Athens 1993 and *Ston kairo tis panolis (14os-19os ai)*, Athens 1995

⁵⁰ A. Mattheou, *Aspects de l'alimentation en Grece sous la domination ottomane*, Frankfurt 1997

⁵¹ Hel. Varikas, *I eksegarsi ton kyrion 1833-1907*, Athens 1987

⁵² E. Avdela -A. Psara, *O feminismos stin Ellada tou mesopolemou*, Athens 1985 and E. Avdela, *Dimosioi ypalliloi genous thilikou*, Athens 1990

eighties a keen interest in the creation of national ideology (Dimaras⁵³, Augustinos⁵⁴, Skopetea⁵⁵) and in the comparison of Greek nationalism with other national movements, such as in Italy (Liakos⁵⁶), had been developed. In the 1990s this interest became more systematic. Young historians, under the influence of theories of nationalism (Hobsbawm Anderson etc.) began to study Greek nationalism. These studies reflected a reaction to the strong nationalism within Greek society, especially from the beginning of the 1990s due to the Macedonian issue and Greek-Turkish differences. In the framework of this shift, the study of the minorities that live in Greece also began. A group of studies dealt with the Jewish presence in Greece and particularly the Holocaust⁵⁷, while a second concerned the stereotypes of Greeks for the others, and especially the Slavo-macedonian minorities within Greece⁵⁸. Naturally, and as expected, these works provoked strong debates which often manifested itself in demagogic attacks from writers in the daily press, such as in the case of Karakasidou⁵⁹. In this field the contribution of social anthropology was profound.

The Location of Modern Greek Historiography

The work discussed here is scholarly historiography. Of course in Greece the boundaries of this community of historians are not clear cut. Firstly, since the intensive use of the past is profound in Greek national ideology, there exists a great output of historical books which have no relation to the basic standards of the history profession and which simply reproduce ideological positions. In the last two decades

⁵³ K. Dimaras, *K.Paparigopoulos*, Athens 1986

⁵⁴ G. Augustinos, *Consciousness and History, Nationalist critics of Greek Society 1897-1914*, Boulder 1977

⁵⁵ Elli Skopetea, *To protypo Vasilio kai I Megali Idea*, Athens 1988

⁵⁶ A. Liakos, *I italiki enopoiisi kai I megali idea*, Athens 1985

⁵⁷ Ampatzopoulou Fr., *To Olokautoma stis martyries ton Ellinon Ebraion*, Thessaloniki 1993, Enr. Benveniste (ed.), *Oi Ebraioi tis Elladas stin Katoxi*, Thessaloniki 1988

⁵⁸ L.Divanii, *Ellada kai meionotites*, Athens 1995, B. Gounaris, I. Michailidis, *Tautotites sti Makedonia*, Athens 1997, El. Giannakaki (ed.) *Ourselves and the Others*, Oxford 1997

⁵⁹ A. Karakassidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*, Chicago 1997

a current of thought, known as 'Neo-Orthodoxy', was developed which tried to impose on public opinion, and to a degree succeeded, an 'oriental' reading of Greek history at great length, in full counteropposition with the 'western' reading. This current of thought holds up as its contemporary exponents, the historian Kostis Moskof⁶⁰, . It held that the "West" from the time of Thomas Aquinas to the present, misunderstood and misinterpreted Greek Antiquity, defamed Byzantium and imposed on modern Greeks a "western" image of their Past. The Greek Enlightenment was accused of being alien to the spirit of the Nation, and the Greek state of being a poor imitation of the Western way of organizing society. In this way, anti-westernism and anti-modernism were intermingled.

On the other hand, in discussing scholarly historiography we have to keep in mind that does not coincide with academic historiography, i.e. it does not coincide with the history which developed in Greek universities. The first expression of the concept of the Greek Enlightenment was in a political journal in 1945 by an independent scholar, K.Th. Dimaras⁶¹. Most of the studies concerning the Greek Enlightenment were produced in the National Centre of Research. The debate on modernization was initially developed outside the Greek universities and mainly abroad, and when within the Universities, took place not in History but in Social and Political Science departments. Research on economic history has been financed by Banks, as mentioned above. The program on the History of the Youth has been financed by Socialist Government but outside the university. The historiography on War-Resistance-Occupation has been developed outside the Greek University until the 90s. Of the generation of the "fathers" (Svoronos and Dimaras) none was a university professor. From the next generation of the 60s no one holds a position in any history department, and the editorial board of the journal *Ta Historika* includes no university staff. Although in the 1980s Greek universities were open to the new historians of the 70s generation, few of them belong to established history departments. At the same time, despite educational reforms, the discipline of History in Greece continues to share departments with Archeology; courses on Modern History are no more than a tenth of the syllabus in these departments. Despite all the

⁶⁰ K. Moskof, *I ethniki kai koinoniki syneidisi stin Ellada 1830-1909*, Thessaloniki 1972

above, from the late 80s onwards, historical community has become increasingly included in university campus.

⁶¹ K.Dimaras, “I Galliki Epanastasi kai o ellinikos Diafotismos gyro sta 1800”, *Dimokratika Chronika*, 1 (1945) 11-12