THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PUBLIC DEBATE

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The Greek Historiography of the 1940s.
A Reassessment

Abstract. This article is a presentation and assessment of Greek historiography and public memory regarding the period of occupation, resistance, and civil war during the 1940s. It examines historical production and culture from the first postwar years until 1989 and explains the relation between the changing visions of the past and political developments in Greece. In addition, the article evaluates works published after 2000, in order to discuss new questions that were raised and the ensuing debates. The article concludes by addressing themes that can revitalize the study of the 1940s, regarding the analytical framework, the territorial and social dimension, the notion of state and governmentality, and the issue of memory and public history.

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Introduction

The 1940s were a watershed in modern Greek history, comparable only to the catastrophe of 1922. It was a decade of war, brutal foreign occupation, armed resistance, and a bitter Civil War. Not only did these events politicize Greek society during that era, but, as a recent volume accurately noted, they also cast a ‘long shadow’ that reaches even to our own era. Indeed, the Resistance, the occupation, and the Civil War remain thorny subjects whose study still incites vehement debates. The controversies about the 1940s are not confined to academia; they also extend to the public sphere, as this period has defined the historical conscience and memory of the Greek people.

One needs to understand the period’s violent events to comprehend the significance of the 1940s for modern Greek history and historiography. The Italian invasion of October 1940 brought the country into the maelstrom of the Second World War. Although Greece managed to repel the attack, its forces were no match for the Germans, who came to aid their allies. After its defeat, Greece was divided among Germany, Italy, and Bulgaria. The Axis occupation (April 1941–October 1944) brought mass reprisals against civilians; the deportation and ultimately the extermination of the vast majority of Greek Jews; famine; the burning and looting of mountain villages; internally displaced populations; and forced labor for many. This brutality spawned a massive resistance movement in the form of the National Liberation Front (Ethniko Apeleutherotiko Metopo, EAM). Led by the Communist Party of Greece (Kommounistikiko Komma Elladas, KKE), EAM mobilized large segments of Greek society, including hitherto disenfranchised groups, such as women and youth. Its armed wing, the Greek People’s Liberation Army (Ellinikos Laikos Apeleutherotikos Stratos, ELAS) grew to become a massive guerrilla army, which contributed to the broader Allied war effort. At the same time, it was heavily involved in fighting the armed collaborationist units, the Security Battalions. This civil strife divided Greek society, and the political climate remained polarized even after the country was liberated in October 1944. On 3 December 1944, after the police killed twelve unarmed demonstrators, a bloody civil war broke out in Athens. The capital became a battlefield for thirty-three days, with ELAS on one side and the government’s troops and British armed forces on the other. The latter’s victory did not bring peace and stability to the country, as a royalist backlash against the leftists followed swiftly. Spring 1946 saw the first skirmishes pitting communist guerrillas against the gendarmerie and royalist paramilitaries. The fighting soon evolved into a full-scale Civil War between the guerillas and the army that lasted until August 1949. These events violently divided Greek society and have had a long-lasting impact on the history of modern Greece.

In the last fifteen years, academic and public interest about the 1940s in Greece has surged. A large number of history conferences, articles in academic journals, history books, and research programs have addressed this turbulent decade, as have newspaper articles, novels, talks, museum exhibitions, commemorations, city walks, feature films, and documentaries in Greece. The aim of the present paper is to discuss and assess these contributions to the historiography of Greece during the 1940s, with particular focus on post-2000 scholarship. The paper is divided into three parts. In the first part, we will examine the historiography regarding the 1940s from the first postwar years until 1989, in order to analyze the relation between changing visions of the past and political developments in Greece. As becomes obvious, political developments defined the historical research on the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War. Although the Civil
War was excluded from analysis, the question of who was to blame for it exerted a tremendous effect on the interpretation of the occupation and the Resistance. In the second part, we will examine the historiography that emerged during the 1990s, and especially after 2000, in order to discuss the new questions that were raised and the ensuing debates. In particular, we show how some scholars claimed to have overcome the earlier political divisions and to provide a fresh look at this historical period; in essence, though, they became preoccupied with apportioning blame for the Civil War by reproducing obsolete analytical schemes. In the last part, we will suggest six themes that can revitalize the way historians study the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War.

A Forbidden Subject

The Greek historiography of the 1940s offers a case study of the interrelationship of history, memory, and politics. As Jacques Le Goff, among many others, has argued, the historian approaches the past from the standpoint of the present, and historians’ questions are shaped by the era and intellectual environment in which they study the past.2 The historiography of the 1940s is a case in point. In the twenty-five years between the end of the civil war in 1949 and the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974, Greek historical culture was dominated by the Right, the side that emerged victorious at the end of the Civil War. The bulk of publications was written by authors who were not scholars, and during those years very few academic studies on the occupation were published.3 The historical narrative was used to justify anticommunism and ethnikofrosini (national mindedness), the cornerstones of the postwar right-wing ideology.

The main concept developed during that period was the ‘theory of the three rounds’. The Communist Party had the clear goal of establishing a communist dictatorship, and made three distinct violent attempts to do so. The first attempt, according to this view, came about as part of the internal conflicts during the last phase of the occupation, when the Communist Party manipulated the Resistance in order to liquidate its enemies (collaborators and rival resistance organizations). The second attempt was the fighting in Athens in December 1944 against the government that returned from exile and was supported by the British. The last was the full-scale Civil War between 1946 and 1949. In general, the ‘theory of the three rounds’ not only belittled the contribution of EAM-ELAS in the struggle against the occupiers, but actually accused the Communist Party

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of being antinational. Echoing the divisions of the Cold War, it put forward the idea that the Communist Party collaborated with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia with a view of ceding part of Greece’s territory (Greek Macedonia) in exchange for support from the communist countries.4

In the public sphere, the questions concerning the Resistance and the Civil War, although they remained present, did not dominate the historical culture of that era. The day of the army’s 1949 victory against the guerrillas in the Civil War, 29 August, was celebrated in Kastoria, the area where the war’s decisive battles were fought, and in 1959 the anniversary was designated as a day to celebrate the ‘military prowess of the Greeks’. Still, the commemoration was not significant, at least not until the military dictatorship (1967-1974). Tombs in hundreds of villages and towns commemorated the communists’ victims but there was no grand monument for the dead soldiers on the order of the Valley of the Fallen (Valle de los Caidos) in Francoist Spain. The only officially commemorated and celebrated event from the 1940s was the outbreak of the Greek–Italian war on 28 October 1940 and the Greek army’s victories against the Italians. In fact, the celebration of 28 October had begun as an act of resistance during the occupation, when people demonstrated in the center of Athens. After the liberation, the commemoration acquired a different meaning as an event that could unite the nation and highlight the army’s role in modern Greek history. Today, Greece is one of the very few European countries in which neither the end of the Second World War nor the liberation of the country are officially commemorated.

Political repression and widespread discrimination against the leftists ensured that the right-wing narrative would remain dominant in the first postwar decades. The relaxation of political repression in the early 1960s, however, allowed the leftist narrative to gain significance in the public sphere and within the historical culture. The leftist narrative, focused almost exclusively on the resistance, put forward the idea that excepting a few collaborators, the entire nation had fought against the Nazis; the National Liberation Front was a patriotic organization that had led the struggle for Greece’s liberation. Moreover, the destruction of Gorgopotamos Bridge, one of the best-known acts of sabotage undertaken by the Resistance, was celebrated for the first time in 1964. Interestingly enough, while the commemoration of the Resistance was high on the agenda of the Left, the Civil War remained, for both the Left and the Right, a forbidden subject.

The historiographical works of that era were overwhelmingly written not by professional historians but rather by those who had lived through these events and were involved to a greater or lesser extent, i.e. army and gendarmerie officers, partisans, journalists, politicians, and British liaison officers. These first accounts are very important because authors in the following decades reproduced their basic arguments and narrative patterns. These early memoirs suffer from several analytical deficiencies. The first concerns the relation between experience and memory. Indeed, these accounts were treatises on the history of the occupation and the Resistance as well as testimonies based on firsthand experience. Their authors acquired their knowledge through participation in the events described, even as they claimed the status of observers of the same events they had lived through. What is more, they adopted the role of a disinterested commentator towards other events that they had not themselves experienced but had heard of or had information about through their access to relevant documents. Second, these narratives provided radically different versions of what had happened, and moreover, mirroring the deep polarization of the country, they were divisive. Their authors clearly took sides, starkly characterizing the protagonists as ‘culprits’ and ‘victims’ or, even worse, ‘heroes’ and ‘traitors’. Third, these narratives were selective in focus: right-wing authors concentrated on the civil conflicts during the occupation, while left-wing narratives dealt with the violence of the occupation forces and the struggle of the Resistance against them. Fourth, the nation’s interests became the sole basis of legitimacy and argumentation. Both sides claimed to represent and to have fought for the Greek nation against a foreign enemy and its Greek accessories. Finally, their analysis of the occupation and the Resistance was conditioned by the knowledge of what happened afterwards: namely, the Civil War, which, in fact, became the lens through which the occupation and the Resistance were examined.


The military dictatorship (1967-1974) put an end to the political culture’s brief democratization, and the right-wing narrative—in its most extreme version—became the norm in the public sphere. The military regime erected several monuments across the country commemorating the struggles of nationalists and the army against the communists. Furthermore, 29 August became the official day to celebrate the ‘war prowess of the Greeks’. This version of the right-wing narrative also dominated the historiography, as the army published a series of volumes on the 1940s and the army’s struggle against the communists. Authoritarian rule and censorship in Greece led to the publication of popular history books on the Resistance in Western European countries, mostly in French. These accounts praised the heroism of common people who fought for the liberation of the country and social change, and attributed the defeat of the movement to the communist leadership and the British intervention.

The fall of the military dictatorship in 1974 ushered in a new historical era. The consolidation of democracy and freedom, as well as institutional reform, the liberalization of political culture, and the legalization of the Communist Party (which had been banned since 1947) created the conditions for the reappraisal of the past. As one scholar noted, the new basis for political legitimacy was not the defeat of the communists in 1949 but the efforts of the Resistance under the Nazi occupation; this was a past that could unite rather than divide Greek society. The process of establishing this new legitimacy was not linear or smooth, especially for the Right, since it had constructed its identity on nationalism and anticommunism. Despite the reactions of the Right, this process culminated with the Socialist Party coming to power in 1981. The following year the socialist government passed a law recognizing the contribution of the National Liberation Front in the Resistance. In the 1980s the commemoration of the National Resistance gained a conspicuous position in Greece’s historical culture and public history. The commemoration of the National Resistance was founded on a very convenient narrative: the whole of the Greek nation, with

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7 The politics of memory during the military dictatorship with regard to the 1940s have not yet attracted the attention of historians, with the exception of Eleni Kouki, Politikes gia ton elegho tou ethnikou pairellhontos apo to kathestos tis 21is Apriliou. Istorikes epeteiioi kai mniemeia tis eptaetias, PhD thesis, University of Athens 2016.
few exceptions, fought against the Nazis for the liberation of the country. The resistance was deprived of its revolutionary and political aspects, in favor of an ‘inclusive’ narrative that united all Greeks, emphasizing their patriotism and heroism and excluding only a few ‘traitors’. The day of the Gorgopotamos Bridge sabotage (25 November) was established as the official day of commemoration of the National Resistance; leftist partisans were given awards and pensions; streets and squares in all cities were renamed ‘National Resistance’; monuments dedicated to the Resistance were erected; and there was a genuine ‘explosion’ of memoirs written by leftist partisans.\textsuperscript{11}

Within this historical context, students and researchers began to study the period of the 1940s for the first time. The first academic conferences on the 1940s were organized in 1978 and took place in Washington and London, probably because it was still deemed too ‘sensitive’ a topic for a conference to be held in Greece. The first conference in Greece on the occupation and the Resistance (but not the Civil War) was organized in 1984.\textsuperscript{12} Although Greece had already become the subject of Cold War studies,\textsuperscript{13} it was mainly during that period that the occupation and the Civil War were examined through the prism of foreign intervention. Historians dismissed the ‘three rounds’ argument as an anticommunist construction. Instead, most of them focused on the role of Great Britain and the United States in Greece during the 1940s, echoing the broader revisionist trend in these two countries that questioned the prevailing Cold War approaches. Britain was criticized for being heavily involved in Greek politics during wartime by supporting the king, nationalist resistance organizations, and bourgeois politicians, in order to check the growth of the leftist resistance movement. Their involvement reached its climax in December 1944 when Britain intervened militarily in liberated Greece, and British troops, together with government forces and collaborators, fought against the National Liberation Front. These studies also scrutinized the scope of British intervention in postwar


\textsuperscript{12} The proceedings of the conference in Washington were published in the volume by John O. Iatrides, ed, Greece in the 1940s. A Nation in Crisis, Hanover et al. 1981; those of the conference in London were published in the volume by Marion Sarafis, ed, Greece. From Resistance to Civil War, Nottingham 1980; the proceedings of the conference in Athens were published in Hagen Fleischer / Nikos Svoronos, eds, E Ellada 1936-1944. Diktatoria – Katochi – Antistasi, Athens 1989.

\textsuperscript{13} Iatrides, Revolt in Athens; John O. Iatrides, Ambassador MacVeagh Reports. Greece 1933-1947, Princeton 1980.
Greek politics in order to secure its geopolitical interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Other historians studied the role of the US intervention in the country through the lens of the Truman Doctrine. They questioned the view that the Soviet Union and its Balkan satellites had instigated the Greek civil war and that the conflict constituted an instance of Soviet aggression. In contrast, they argued that the American intervention was a first step in implementing a US strategy directed towards global hegemony.¹⁴

Whereas the first wave of historical studies on the 1940s dealt primarily with external factors, namely the involvement of Britain and the US in Greek politics, the second wave in the 1990s addressed the social and political dimensions of Greece during the occupation and the Civil War. Historians argued that Greek society broadly supported the leftist resistance movement, highlighted by the mobilization of disenfranchised groups such as women and youth, and underlined by the social changes that the National Liberation Front introduced to the territories under its control. These studies also brought attention to new questions, such as those of the collaboration between Greek armed units and the Nazis against the Resistance; the deportation and extermination of Greek Jews; and the collective memory of the occupation.¹⁵

This change in Greek historiography took place at a time when the National Resistance had already become the cornerstone of Greek historical culture. The partisans were transformed into the new national heroes. Still, the most decisive step towards the construction of a past that could unite rather than divide the Greek people was taken in 1989. Forty years after the end of the Civil War, in the same year that the communist regimes in Europe collapsed, a coalition government of the Right and the Left was formed in Greece. Under the slogan of ‘National Reconciliation’, the coalition government passed a law that recognized

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that a civil war had actually been fought in Greece (not a ‘bandit war’, as the Civil War had officially been called for decades), and that the leftists were not bandits and criminals but were the guerrillas of the Democratic Army of Greece (Demokratikos Stratos Elladas, DSE). The Right’s anticommunist past and the Left’s revolutionary history were now irrelevant for the corresponding political identities. Anticommunism had been discredited after the military dictatorship, and the Left had abandoned the idea of radical, not to say revolutionary, change.

The Historiographical Debate

In contrast with the 1990s, when most historians studied the Axis occupation and the Resistance, in the following years more and more scholars turned to the study of the Civil War. The turning point in this process was the conferences organized in 1999, the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil War’s end.\(^\text{16}\) No longer taboo, the war was now the subject of many publications. Following the lead of the aforementioned works, there emerged a ‘social turn’ in the study of the 1940s. Indeed, after 2000 a plethora of publications addressed the social experience of war, how society was involved in or affected by the occupation, the Resistance, and in particular the Civil War.\(^\text{17}\) This ‘social turn’ was the outcome of several developments, such as the general flourishing of social history in Greece, the influence of social anthropology, and researchers’ access to newly available archival sources, such as those in military archives or in the archives of the Greek Communist Party.

The era’s most interesting development was the launch of the ‘post-revisionist’ approach towards the 1940s, or the ‘new wave’ of historiography. Promoting studies on the local level, the ‘new wave’ focused particularly on the notion of violence, albeit in a very narrow sense. The ‘post-revisionist’ approach considers violence exclusively as a method for forcing the civilian population into


submission, and for seizing political power through its unrestrained exercise against internal enemies. For instance, a key ‘post-revisionist’ work examined the collaboration phenomenon within a confined geographical area, using violence as the main factor to influence the civilian population’s attitude. In sum, the ‘new wave’ declared that it brought a ‘fresh look’ to this historical period by studying heretofore ‘taboo’ issues, focusing on the local dimension, providing an objective assessment, and avoiding the placement of blame on one side or the other.

In spite of these claims, this approach failed to advance the discussion about the 1940s, mainly because of its reliance on obsolete analytical schemes. Indeed, the ‘new wave’ embraced the ‘theory of the three rounds’, and actually deemed the occupation’s civil conflicts as the key to understanding the 1940s. This approach is profoundly evident in a recent ‘new wave’ publication dealing with civil conflicts during the 1940s. The book’s main focus is on the civil strife that occurred during the occupation, which is clearly attributed to the Communist Party of Greece. Here the struggle of the National Liberation Front and the Communist Party of Greece against the occupiers is overshadowed by their revolutionary goals. In its effort to secure power in postwar Greece, the Communist Party was dogmatically attached to the Leninist approach of seizing power through a coup (an ‘assault on the “winter palace”’) if peaceful means proved insufficient. Violence was also the main tool for the National Liberation Front to secure the people’s support, and its enemies’ main motive to collaborate with the Nazis. As the liberation struggle is downgraded in favor of civil conflicts, collaborators are not considered to be serving the strategic goals of the Germans. Instead, they are seen as the victims of ELAS in the one-sided civil war that it waged against its domestic enemies. As a result, the balance sheet of the armed resistance is negative, since it brought more misery than benefit to Greek society.

In this view, then, the cataclysmic Second World War and the brutal foreign occupation in particular are nearly irrelevant to what was happening in the country during 1943 and 1944. The humiliating treatment endured by the populace, the country’s economic exploitation and dislocation, the burning of villages, and the mass reprisals against civilians have become

21 Stathis N. Kalyvas / Nikos Marantzidis, Emfylia Pathi. 23 Questions and Answers for the Civil War, Athens 2015.
22 Kalyvas / Marantzidis, Emfylia Pathi, 157-158, 199, 176, 180, 233, 301, 302.
23 Kalyvas / Marantzidis, Emfylia Pathi, 128-131.
matters of secondary importance in this new narrative of the occupation, and not factors to explain the development of the resistance movement.24

The emergence of the post-revisionist school incited a vehement debate, a Historikerstreit, and raised many questions.25 The first question had to do with the main characteristic of the period 1941-1944. Was it resistance and national liberation struggle, or rather civil war between resisters and collaborators? The post-revisionist approach downplayed the armed struggle against the Axis occupation to suggest that the Communist Party’s main target was not the occupying forces but rather their Greek opponents. At the height of the civil strife, however, ELAS was involved in numerous battles against the Germans and in acts of sabotage that targeted German military and economic interests. Moreover, the civil strife was itself partly fueled by the Germans who armed the collaborationist units. In practice, the dividing line between resistance and civil war was often blurred by the fact that in their counterinsurgency operations the Germans deployed and fought together with collaborationist units. The second question concerned the relation between local developments and the ‘big picture’ of the occupation and the Second World War. While the study of the local dimension is necessary for a thorough understanding of the microdynamics of violence, it cannot suffice for the analysis of the Resistance or of Nazi policies in occupied Greece.26 A broader perspective is required, which would relate local phenomena to developments on the national and transnational levels. The situation in occupied Greece was not a summation of local developments; the Resistance itself was a transnational phenomenon in occupied Europe, its development conditioned by the course of the Second World War. The third question elicited by the emergence of the post-revisionist approach was the use of violence as the overwhelming factor that influenced the attitude of the civilian population. Of course violence plays a significant role, but monocausal explanations are flawed—equally important in shaping people’s attitudes


25 This historiographical debate on the 1940s was expressed through a plethora of books, academic and newspaper articles, and edited volumes. For example see Giorgos Antoniou, The Lost Atlantis of Objectivity. The Revisionist Struggles between the Academic and Public Spheres, History and Theory 46 (2007), 96-112; Antonis Liakos, Antartes kai symmorities sta akadimaika amfiteatra, in: Fleischer / Svoronos, eds, E Ellada 1936-1949, 25-36; Ioanna Papanathanasiou, Strateumenes istories kai istoriografia. Prroythosistes sti syzitisi gia ti dekaetia tou 1940, E Kryiakatiki Augi, 9 May 2004. Cf. also the articles in the supplement ‘Viviliodromio’ of the newspaper Ta Nea between 20-21 March and 27-28 November 2004; the newspaper articles Oi tagmatasfalites dikaionontai, Kryiakatiki Eleutherotypia, 26 October 2003; E nea ‘sovietologia’ gia tin Katotchi kai tin Antistasi. Eksyronismena konservokoutia, Eleutherotypia, 5 December 2004; as well as the feature of the magazine Krama 19 (October 2004).

26 Sfikas, Mia alli syzitisi, 170-171.
during times of war are other factors, such as the ability of the Resistance to win the hearts and minds of the people, ethnic conflicts, economic interests, cultural background, political beliefs, and personal ties. Finally, the last question addressed the periodization of the Civil War. The post-revisionists argued that there was a ‘long civil war’ between 1943 and 1949, which stemmed from the revolutionary goals of the Greek Communist Party. The argument echoed the ‘theory of the three rounds’, the right-wing narrative in the first postwar decades that, as noted above, made the Left responsible for the Civil War. As a result, and to a large extent, the recent historical debate was trapped in an old and unproductive discussion about who was to blame for the Civil War, and who was responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Greeks.

Since 2010, new perspectives in the historiography have arisen. These have not stemmed from the post-revisionist approach, but have originated from researchers who examine previously ignored issues or use innovative analytical tools. Historians have focused on the Resistance and the civil strife in the urban environment of Athens, the administration of EAM during the occupation, and the local social networks that allowed the emergence of nationalist armed resistance organizations.\(^{27}\) Other works centered on the experience of children during the Civil War by examining their confinement in state institutions, and the issues of postwar justice and state continuity were discussed through the in-depth consideration of collaborators’ trials.\(^{28}\) Next to the flourishing research on the extermination of Greek Jews appeared the first studies on the experiences of those who survived the concentration camps and returned to Greece or immigrated to Israel.\(^{29}\) Many scholars studied how the traumatic experiences of the 1940s, such as the deportation of Greek Jews, the Nazi reprisals, or the transfer of children to the socialist countries during the Civil War shaped individual and collective memories.\(^{30}\) In addition to scholarly activity within Greece, the study of the country during the 1940s is also flourishing abroad. In the United


Kingdom, for example, academic research has included the study of the occupation’s social and economic effects in local contexts, the suffering caused by the famine, daily life in the guerrilla armies, and an analysis of EAM-ELAS using the theoretical tools of strategic studies.  

Many new and interesting topics about the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War were also examined in edited volumes on modern Greek history published after 2000. The significance of the 1940s on modern Greek history meant that the contributions about that period dominated the contents of these works. Some topics examined included the German antifascists in the ranks of ELAS, the role of minorities, gender relations, and the political economy of the reconstruction and the Civil War.  

An important contribution of these volumes was their bridging the gap between academic research and the public sphere. To a certain extent, they succeeded in shaping a new field, that of public history, as we will see in the next section.

Suggestions for the Further Study of the 1940s

As is apparent, although there is a mountain of studies about Greece in the 1940s, the period of the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War continues to attract great interest from academics and the general public alike. The last part of this paper will suggest several directions for the further study of the 1940s based on our own research and on other recently published studies.

References:


The first direction involves the relation between the state and the resistance movement. The study of the Axis occupation has shown a direct link between the ability and the capacity of the state and the growth of the resistance movement—particularly its armed expression. The capitulation in April 1941 brought the rapid disintegration of the state’s authority and legitimacy. The collaborationist government proved unable to protect the country’s national sovereignty, and failed to deal adequately with the humanitarian disaster during the winter of 1941-1942 or police the country’s territory. The Resistance filled the political vacuum created by the collapse of the official state. In the so-called liberated areas the National Liberation Front established its own proto-state authorities, including those of local administration, justice, education, the police, etc. Moreover, after the withdrawal of German troops from Greece in October 1944, the EAM-ELAS actually ruled the country (except Athens) until January 1945. Thus, it is important to study the Resistance as not only a grassroots movement but also a ‘state-making’ mechanism. Only a few studies have focused on the EAM’s governance, and hence, the question of state ‘breaking’ and ‘making’ requires further research.

A second direction concerns the question of governmentality. According to the definition of Michel Foucault, governmentality has a dual sense. On the one hand, it is ‘the conduct of conduct’, or in his words ‘the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups is directed’. On the other hand, it is the ‘art of governing’, the rationality employed in the exercise of power. As Foucault did not address the relation between war and governmentality, it would be interesting to apply this notion to examine how power is organized, exercised, and diffused during times of war; to investigate how prewar politics ‘educate’ a given society for the eventuality of war; and to identify war’s impact on the rationality of government after the war is over. Moreover, the notion of governmentality can shed light on the process that was put forward in Greece after the end of the occupation: the postwar reorganization of the state under conditions of acute polarization. To understand the Civil War era, we need to explore how the Greek state established its authority, consider what kind of mechanisms allowed it to do so, and examine how it attempted to mold ‘loyal’ and obedient individuals. The process of individualization through fear and terror in the Civil War years seems to be the opposite of the top-down mass mobilization put forward by the Left during the occupation; however, it would be very interesting to further investigate what kinds of subjectivities were created by these antagonistic modalities of power.

33 Skalidakis, E Eleutheri Ellada.
The third direction concerns the relation between the urban resistance and the armed resistance in the mountains. The first manifestations of resistance to the occupying authorities occurred in the cities, particularly in Athens. The mobilization of the people by the leftist organizations in order to demand better living conditions rapidly developed into an urban, and for a long period a nonviolent, resistance movement. In the mountains, the partisans from the beginning were engaged in battles against the occupation forces and later came to control large parts of the country’s territory. Although there were fundamental differences between the nonviolent urban resistance and the armed resistance in the countryside, in the final months of the occupation the cities and the countryside converged on a crucial aspect. Athens, like major cities in other occupied countries in the period before the liberation, became the site of violent clashes between the Resistance and the Nazis and their Greek collaborators, which resulted in round-ups, arrests, and reprisals against civilians. Some recent studies shed light on this process whereby cities such as Athens and Thessaloniki were transformed into battlefields. Thus, the development and the forms of resistance are related to the control exercised by the occupation authorities on space and on people. Violence emerged when the incumbent’s control of space and people was challenged by the leftist resistance, which had transformed countryside villages and Athens neighborhoods into ‘little Moscows’. Highly relevant within this framework is the concept of territoriality. Territoriality refers to the policies and techniques of controlling people and resources through the enforcement of control over a geographic space, which is transformed into territory. This concept of territoriality can be useful for the analysis of the techniques and policies of controlling space and people and of the logic of war.

The fourth direction relates to the study of the population engineering that took place during both the occupation and the Civil War. The Germans’ most efficient anti-guerrilla method was to conduct large-scale mop-up operations, with the goal of encircling and annihilating the guerrillas in a pitched battle. At the same time, the German forces carried out brutal civilian reprisals that ravaged rural Greece, an area that was excluded from receiving relief. As a result, between 300,000 and 350,000 people were forced to leave their villages and seek refuge in the German-controlled cities. The goal of this policy was to empty these villages in order to deprive the guerrillas of food, recruits, and intelligence.

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35 Chandrinos, To timoro cheri tou laou; Charalambidis, E Empeiria tis Katochis kai tis Antistasis stin Athina; Dordanas, Ellines enantion Ellinon.

During the Civil War, the government followed a very similar anti-insurgency strategy. Large-scale mop-up operations to encircle the guerrillas were joined by forcible removal of the rural population. The first method used in this regard was stopping the delivery of relief to areas of guerrilla activity. At the climax of the Civil War, the army evacuated villages and transferred their residents to cities that were under the control of the government. As a result, about 700,000 people in 1948-1949 became refugees, many of them ending up in camps. As a recent study argues, this strategy of forced displacement transformed the countryside into a wasteland and devastated the guerrillas’ ability to continue their campaign. In fact, it constituted population engineering. Population engineering, in the form of forced population movements with the view of accomplishing ethnic, military, and political goals, was a strategy followed by the Nazis and other belligerent countries (for instance, the Soviet Union) during the Second World War, but also it was also pursued by several governments in other wars during the twentieth century. A more systematic study of forced population movements can offer a new understanding about the ideology and the policies of the state that transforms the heterogeneous people of a country into ‘populations’ during times of war.

The fifth direction suggested here concerns the framework for analyzing the occupation and the Resistance. The historiography’s recent turn to specific issues and to the local dimension has provided useful insights in particular instances. And yet the detachment of phenomena such as the Resistance and collaboration from the general framework can lead to misconceptions. Examining such issues in isolation and through a local, or even national, perspective results in a distorted image and a failure to grasp their broader implications. Instead, a coherent study of complex phenomena such as the Resistance, collaboration, the civil strife, retaliatory measures, and the deportation of the Jews to be exterminated requires the adoption of a transnational perspective. The spread of the Second World War across large parts of the globe (Europe, Asia, and Africa) was a unique as well as a unifying phenomenon. There have been several studies about the Second World War as a global, transnational development, especially from the European point of view, yet more research is required in the field of

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39 Liakos, Antartes kai symmorities, 34-35.
social and cultural history. A transnational perspective will require historians to move beyond comparisons between the different countries and address war as a structural event that violently and drastically redefines the ‘social’ in terms of collective identities, social relations, institutions, values, ideas, and practices.

The final suggested direction is the study of public history, a subject that had been touched on only slightly in the past and has recently been gaining prominence. In fact, to a large extent the Greek Historikerstreit is itself an example of public history, because most of the articles in the controversy were published in newspapers rather than academic journals. In general, a contemporary development has been the greater engagement of scholarly discussion with the larger public. A large number of events about the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War has aroused public interest and has attracted massive participation. For instance, in 2015 a series of public events, including photographic and archival exhibitions, city walks, and public talks, introduced the commemoration of the liberation of Athens. In a similar vein, next to the flourishing research on individual and collective memory, as for example in the current project ‘Memories of the Occupation in Greece’ conducted at Berlin’s Free University, there is growing academic interest in lieux de mémoire: how historical memory is constructed by monuments, exhibitions, museums, commemorations, etc.

Further research on public history will help us understand the complex relationships among history, memory, and identity, and to analyze the political use of the past. In recent years, the Second World War and the Nazi occupation have been in the limelight of public history, not only in Greece but all across Europe. In addition, we see that in our own era governments use history as a political tool, and history can even be rewritten to advance nationalist agendas. The study of memory politics and of the use of the past during a period when nationalism, xenophobia, and bigotry are on the rise is of the utmost importance. The 1940s in particular offer an example of how experience and memory can shape political subjects and how a distorted image of the past can lead to fanaticism.

41 For the commemoration of the liberation of Athens, see the website ‘12 Oktovriou 1944. E Athina eleftheri’, http://freeathens44.org; for the Berlin project on the memories of the occupation, cf. http://www.occupation-memories.org/en. Internet references were accessed on 16 March 2017. See also Droumpouki, Mnimeia tis Lithis; Kouki, Politikes gia ton elegho tou ethnikou parelthontos.
42 For a comprehensive study on this topic in Greek see Hagen Fleischer, Oi polemoi tis mnimis. O B’ Pagkosmios Polemos stin dimosia istoria, Athens 2008.
Conclusion

On 27 October 2016, a peculiar trial was scheduled in Athens. The accused were Sheila Lecoeur, a British historian who had written an acclaimed academic monograph about the Italian occupation of the island of Syros, and the publishing house that had published this work in Greek in 2013. The accusers were the children of a man who had been appointed prefect in Syros by the occupation authorities in 1944. The charge was that the historian had insulted the ‘honor and reputation’ of their late father by mentioning in her book that a large part of the local community considered the prefect to be a collaborator.

Although the lawsuit was withdrawn after the press, the academic community, and the general public expressed its outrage, this event was truly alarming. Indeed, it highlighted how the occupation, the Resistance, and the Civil War remain potentially explosive subjects whose discussion causes fiery debates, and how the decade of the 1940s defines the historical conscience and memory of Greeks. It also underscores how imperative it is for historians to continue their research unabated by the polemics that have resurfaced, both in public and academic discussions, around the questions of who is to blame for the Civil War, who is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Greeks, and who was or was not a true patriot. Thus, instead of staging actual or metaphorical trials to absolve or condemn, it is time to start discussing the effects of the occupation on Greek (and European) society, the phenomenon of the Resistance, and the nature of the Civil War in order to deepen our understanding of this turbulent decade.

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Sheila Lecoeur, To nisi tou Mousolini. Fasismos kai italiki katochi sti Syro, Athens 2013. This is the translation of Lecoeur, Mussolini’s Greek Island, published in 2009 with Tauris Academic Studies.