

## “The other Parthenon”: Antiquity and National Memory at Makronisos

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### Abstract

*Makronisos, the small, uninhabited island off the Attica coast, was the location of the most notorious concentration camp set up by the Greek government during the Civil War (1946–1949). It was a place of brutality, torture, and death, but its distinctive feature was its role as an indoctrination center for many thousands of political dissidents (mostly left-wing soldiers and citizens, but also ethnic and religious minorities) who, after they were “re-educated” in the national dogmas, were sent to fight against their ex-comrades. Classical antiquity was one of the main ideological foundations of this “experiment,” the audience for which was the whole of Greece and the international community. In the island, still known as “The New Parthenon,” the “redeemed” inmates were encouraged to build replicas of classical monuments, and the regime’s discourse emphasized the perceived incompatibility of the inmates’ “destiny” (as descendants of ancient Greeks) with left-wing ideologies. Paradoxically, many of the counter-discourses of the Makronisos inmates and their supporters also subscribed to the essentialist discourse of continuity and ancestral glory. This paper situates this phenomenon within the broader context of the role of antiquity in modern Greek society; it also examines the topological construction of Makronisos as a heterotopia where the panopticism of classical antiquity (the watchful eye of History and Destiny) merged surveillance with spectacle.*

In April 2000, I was researching material for the theme of this paper in a Greek library, and after asking to reproduce some illustrations, I was informed by the librarian that, as their photographer would not be back for several days (and by that time I would have already been back in Britain), it would be impossible for me to have the photographs. He then took a look at my reproduction application form and paused:

“I see that you are investigating Makronisos . . .”

“Yes, . . .” I said somehow hesitantly, being aware of the connotations of the word.

“Come tomorrow morning with your camera, I will be here, and I will

let you take the photographs . . . And you should also go and photograph in Athens the house of that Kanellopoulos [the late prominent politician] who said that Makronisos was the ‘New Parthenon.’”

He revealed to me afterwards that his father had been at Makronisos and went so far as to suggest other material that I might want to look at for my research.

This incident brought home to me once again the now widely accepted idea that, in most cases, it is almost impossible for researchers to maintain the pretence of distant objectified research, divorced from social experience, from emotions and feelings, both their own and those of their “interlocutors,” from ever-present, sometime painful, social memories. After all, I had decided to embark on this topic of research, not only because of its obvious relevance to my wider project on the role and meanings of antiquity in modern Greece (see below), but also because of the emotive weight that Makronisos carried for me: I still remembered how during my childhood years in the mid-to-late 1970s and early 1980s, in the village of East Crete, talk of those who “were sent to Makronisos,” uttered partly in contempt, partly in fear, and in any case with a cloud of social stigma, used to mystify me. In later years, during my mostly literary and political encounters of the phenomenon, this mystification increased, but was accompanied by the echoes of many painful memories and stories, mostly, it seemed, still untold. As someone who researches and teaches archaeology, one of the most intriguing aspects was the association in modern social memory of Makronisos with classical antiquity, especially with antiquity’s most prominent specimen, the Parthenon. Of course, the uses of antiquity by Greek regimes such as the Metaxas dictatorship or the military Junta of 1967–74 are well-known, even if not systematically studied (Carabott 2002). Makronisos was different however: not only was it linked to a period of apparent parliamentary democracy, but for reasons that will become clear later, there was until recently, very little discussion on it, let alone investigation (Somertis 2001).

*Makronisos: “A School for the Re-education of the Nation”*

The island of Makronisos is linked to one of the most dramatic moments of the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) (see for example, Baerentzen et al. 1987; Close 1993; 1995; Iatrides and Wrigley 1995; Margaritis 2001; Mazower 2000a; also papers in *Δοκίμιες* 6, 1997), the implications and consequences of which lasted many decades after its formal end (see Tsoucalas 1981). The events and contingencies surrounding this historical period will be more or less known to the readers of this journal, but for the sake of this discussion I give a brief historical outline below.

Greece was liberated from Nazi occupation in 1944, after a widespread and popular resistance movement organized mostly by the National Liberation Front (EAM) (and its military wing, ELAS), founded by the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and other left wing and left-of-center parties. After the short-lived participation of left-wing ministers in the post-war Papandreou government, which collapsed over the issue of demobilization of the resistance forces, leading to the *Dekemvriana* clashes in Athens (December 1944), the Varkiza agreement between EAM and the government was signed in 1945. This move, however, rather than bringing reconciliation, led to the infiltration of official positions and state bureaucracy by collaborationist elements, a large scale purge against the Left, and what has been described as a regime of “white terror” or “right-wing terror” (Mazower 2000b). Through the introduction of new “emergency” legislation, largely based on earlier laws going as far back as the nineteenth century, left-wing political views were criminalized; moreover, divisions of class or political conviction were replaced by the new division between the “nationally-minded” («εθνικόφρονες») and the “bandits” or “EAM-Bulgarians,” the state’s preferred terms for left-wing people (Voglis 2002:66). Acts of murder, execution, interment, and internal exile became routine.

Eventually, and against the international background of the Cold War, the country was led to Civil War, pitching government forces with British and American support (Mazower 2000b:7) against left-wing forces of the DSE (Democratic Army of Greece), the successor of EAM/ELAS. The regime was faced with the problem of having to combat militarily a popular, experienced guerrilla army, and it therefore needed a large number of conscripts. It knew, however, that many of the people called up to fight were sympathetic to the left cause or had even fought with the Left during the Nazi occupation (Iliou 1994).

Makronisos provided a grand solution to this problem: a major, state-run plan to “rehabilitate” and “re-educate” communist and left-wing citizens (as well as people who were thought to be so, or had some sort of link with left-wing supporters) and then send them to fight against the DSE. This plan and its materialization invites extensive research which, despite some recent advances (Bournazos 1997, 1988, 2000; Bournazos and Sakellariopoulos 2000; Diafonidis *et al.* 1994; Iliou 1994; Giannaris 1996; Voglis 2002, esp. 100–105; and Pantelis Voulgaris’s cinematic treatment in the 1976 film, *Happy Day*) is still lacking. It appears that Makronisos enjoyed the active or passive support of the most members of the political and intellectual establishment of the time, many of whom have remained key players in the political and intellectual life of Greece until very recently. Such factors may well have prevented serious analysis and research on the phenomenon.

How was this plan materialized? Makronisos is a small, bare, and uninhabited island off the Attica coast, opposite the town of Lavrio; it is only 13.5 km in length and 1.5 km in width. Partly because of its proximity to the capital, partly due to its isolated and barren nature, and perhaps partly because of the Western mentality that sees isolated islands as appropriate “laboratories,” be it of evolutionary and cultural changes or “rehabilitation” experiments, Makronisos had long been seen as a place for imprisonment and exile. (The islands of Gyaros and Ai-Stratis held similar positions and were already serving as places of exile at this time, as they had in the past.) The Greek government imprisoned a number of Turkish war prisoners on Makronisos during the Balkan Wars (1912–13), most of whom died of contagious diseases and were buried on the island. During the exchange of population following the Asia Minor War (1922), a number of refugees were temporarily lodged here on their way to a more permanent residence (Omada Ergasias 1994:16; Voglis 2002:101). In the midst of the Civil War, Makronisos was thus seen as an ideal place to set up a number of state-run military-concentration camps to “re-educate” left-wing conscripts (and other citizens) prior to their posting in the mountains of northern Greece, where in a tragic irony, they had to fight the side that they had previously belonged to or sympathized with.

The camps opened in 1947 and received an increasingly large number of conscripts. From mid-to-late 1948 a number of non-conscript political prisoners also arrived; their transfer continued throughout 1948, and by mid-1949 almost all male political exiles were transferred from other islands to Makronisos. Finally, in January 1950, female exiles were transferred to a separate camp on the island (Voglis 2002:104). It is worth noting that a number of prisoners also belonged to ethnic (for example, Slavo-Macedonian) or religious minorities. Initially Makronisos was tightly controlled by the army, but in September 1949, it came under the jurisdiction and control of an organization called, *Οργανισμός Αναμορφωτηρίων Μακρονήσου* (OAM, Organization of Corrective Institutions of Makronisos), under the supervision of five Ministries (Military Affairs, Justice, Education, Press, and Public Order), but still with a military structure, and a commander suggested and appointed by the army (Sakellariopoulos 2000:147). It seems that while Makronisos was initially designed for the indoctrination of left-wing conscripts, it later (once the Civil War had been won by the state) became a major punitive and ideological mechanism with a much wider scope and purpose (Margaritis 2000).<sup>1</sup>

To gain a sense of the scale of the Makronisos operation in its mature phase, a few figures will suffice: in September 1949, according to official statistics, the island housed 10,000 male political exiles, 9,000

civilians who were arrested by the army as part of its “preventive” operations, and 7,500 soldiers and officers (Voglis 2002:104). There is no agreement on the overall number but, according to one estimation, between 40,000 and 50,000 people or more seemed to have passed through this institution (Bournazos 2000, n. 3).

The planning and execution of Makronisos were extremely sophisticated: several camps were set up on the west coast of the island, connected by a main road and served by small ports. A number of buildings were constructed (mostly by inmates), including elaborate residences for the military commanders, churches, open air theaters, monuments of various kinds (see below), and even a soft drink factory. The architecture of confinement was particularly elaborate and followed a certain hierarchical order (depending on an inmate’s background and willingness to collaborate), including a notorious barbed-wired isolation sector (*σύρμα*) in each camp. Makronisos’s military role (the supply of “redeemed” soldiers to fight in the Civil War) as well as its political-suppressive role (the crushing and humiliation of the Left) were obviously prominent. Of equal, or even greater importance, of course, was its ideological-propagandistic function. Soldiers were not trained to carry arms until the regime was convinced that they had been “rehabilitated” (Voglis 2002:101). Inmates underwent an ideological training which involved the operation of a radio station, official magazines, and newspapers (organs of the different battalions, but with wide circulation all over Greece), as well as the organization of regular ceremonies, rituals, and performances featuring prominent visitors and “redeemed” inmates (see Koumandareas 2001 for a literary evocation of these ceremonies).

At the same time, as is revealed by the plentiful and painful memoirs of the prisoners (e.g., Avdoulos 1998; Geladopoulos 1974; Raftopoulos 1995; Staveris 2001; Vardinoyiannis and Aronis 1995; see also Margaris 1966), Makronisos was a place of severe oppression, brutal forced labor, torture, and, on at least one occasion (February-March 1948; see Margaris 1966) mass killings. As Iliou notes, “Makronisos became a place of organized torture, the first camp of mass torture to be created in western Europe after the second world war” (1994:77). The prisoners were to be “persuaded” (in most cases by fear, force, and torture) to denounce their political beliefs and sign a “repentance statement” (which most signed) declaring that they no longer had any links with communism.<sup>2</sup> While this suppressive and brutal aspect of Makronisos has been understandably emphasized (especially in the memoirs), the study of its propagandistic and ideological character is paramount in understanding the phenomenon.

Since a main function of Makronisos was propagandistic, its

“audience” was not simply its inmates but the whole of Greece, and even international public opinion. The authorities were trying to send a message far beyond the camp—hence the widespread advertising of the “experiment”; the circulation of Makronisos newspapers, magazines, and calendars to people and organizations all over Greece and beyond (sometimes reaching 15,000–25,000 copies; see Bournazos 2000:139); the production and circulation of postcards and leaflets in English, the invitations to many authorities and intellectuals to visit, the organization of such events in Athens, as a large photographic exhibition about Makronisos sponsored by the army at the Zappeion in April 1949; and the parades by “redeemed” soldiers and citizens in Athens. Moreover, the “declarations of repentance” that the inmates were forced to sign were publicized in the press, sent to the home communities of the inmates, and read aloud by local priests to the whole congregation in the Sunday mass. “Redemption” was not the only requirement, however: the “redeemed” then had to “persuade” not only other inmates, but also all “polluted” Greeks, by writing letters and poetry, and delivering speeches, both in Makronisos and their places of origin.

This phenomenon and its legacy in social memory are extremely interesting, and need to be studied from many different angles. In this essay I briefly discuss only one aspect of the Makronisos experience: the deployment of the discourse of antiquity at Makronisos, not only from the view of the regime that conceived and materialized the project, but also from the view of the prisoners and exiles. This is done by examining not only the official literature produced by the regime and the “redeemed” inmates at Makronisos, but also the counter-discourses produced by the “unredeemed” inmates: the letters and reports smuggled out of the country in an effort to mobilize international public opinion, and the plentiful memoirs and fiction produced by the prisoners during their interment and afterwards. Finally, I examine present-day writings and interventions by Makronisiotes in the press and in meetings, as well as the secondary literature.

These different types of evidence present a number of interpretative problems that cannot be adequately addressed here. Suffice it to say that none is here treated as a privileged and unproblematic site of Objective Truth, but all carry value for this project as discursive (and often literary and iconographic) takes on a multi-faceted phenomenon where events, experiences, emotions, and memories create an often contested field of power. To give but one example, as is well known, autobiographical writings are not neutral discourses but rather materialized attempts to construct one’s identity and subjectivity, in the present as well as in the past; to quote Gready (1993:490), they are narratives in which “events are selected, ordered, dramatized, simplified, and passed

over in silence” (see also Young 1987; and for Greek Civil War, Papathanasiou 1996; Lambropoulou 1999). In what follows, I attempt to trace some of these multi-layered processes.

*Makronisos and antiquity in the national narrative*

It has been already suggested (Bournazos 1998, 2000; see also Yannas 1994) that in the official rhetoric about Makronisos, a range of prominent metaphors were deployed: the metaphor of the medical institution, which aimed at curing and cleansing “polluted” individuals (and the related Biblical-religious metaphor of the “Siloam” and redemption), was combined with the metaphor of the national school, or even university, which sought to “rehabilitate” its prisoners by teaching them their “true” destiny, identity, and history. These discourses were widespread in the West during the Cold War. There was, however, an additional dimension, albeit one linked to the above metaphors: the close association of this experiment with discourses on classical antiquity.

As suggested by the title of this essay, the regime and its intellectuals connected Makronisos with ancient Greece right from the start. In recent years the ex-inmates of Makronisos sometimes refer to it ironically as the “New Parthenon” (e.g., Valetas 1975:38; Kontos 1982; for other references see Bournazos 2000:28–30), a phrase originally attributed to the then Minister for Military Affairs and official primarily responsible for Makronisos, Panayiotis Kanellopoulos, although he has denied this (Bournazos 2000, n. 25). His denial, however, makes little difference, as Kanellopoulos, together with many other politicians, intellectuals, and journalists (including Konstantinos Tsatsos, Spyros Melas, Stratis Myrivilis, Andreas Karandonis, Linos Politis, Sir Steven Runciman, the archaeologist Spyridon Marinatos, and others) constantly linked Makronisos with ancient Greece and compared the classical “miracle” (the Athenian “Golden Age” of the fifth century BC) with the “miracle” of Makronisos. Their statements and articles were published daily in the press and in the magazines of Makronisos. Here are some examples:

Like Hera, who according to the ancient legend, by immersing herself in the waters of the Kanathos, used to acquire virginal strength and beauty, in the same way the entrants in the national school of Makronisos are cleansed from any spiritual pollution and rust of the soul, and acquire new strength. (V. Vafis, University Professor, cited in Margaritis 1966[1]:102)

We [the Greeks] have 3000 thousand years of history and we will not become slaves to the Slavs. (K. Tsatsos, then Minister for Education, and subsequently, President of the Hellenic Republic, in a speech during one of his frequent visits; *Skapanefs* 4, 1949)

The magazines published at Makronisos were full of articles (by visitors, prominent intellectuals, and “redeemed” inmates alike) and iconography referring to classical Greece.<sup>3</sup> A drawing of the Parthenon was part of the logo/cover of *Skapanefs*, the most important publication of the regime at Makronisos: in its second issue (10 August 1947), the cover-title page feature a drawing of the Parthenon in the background, the rising sun behind it, while in the foreground, a female figure in classical dress (“History” or the “Motherland”?) delivers a gun to the rising “redeemed” soldier with one hand, while showing him the Parthenon with her other. Behind the soldier, thrown on the ground, are the hammer-and-sickle and also a spade and another digging tool, symbols of his “redeemed” status and his “rehabilitation” through hard labor (see Margaris 1966 [2]:301). The link of Makronisos to classical Greece and the Parthenon in particular became such a widespread theme that an article published in the French *Le Monde* some years after the closing down of the camp states:

The passing tourist, intoxicated from the glory of the Greek landscape will visit only one of the two Parthenons. The other one is to be found on the horrible concentration camp of Makronisos, where the cries of the tortured are lost in the infinite blue sky (*Le Monde* 10 September 1965; cited in Margaris 1966 [1]:98).

Furthermore, the prisoners built imitations of various classical buildings, such as the Erechtheum, the Temple of Athena Nike (both



Figure 1. A replica of an ancient Greek theatre at the Third Battalion (G'ETO) of Makronisos. (Source: Bournazos and Sakellaropoulos 2000)

originally on the Acropolis), as well as reliefs and statues of ancient Greek warriors, four open theaters which were meant to be replicas of ancient Greek theaters (Figure 1), and a replica of the Parthenon on a scale of 20:1.<sup>4</sup> Remnants of some of these buildings are still visible on the island (Figure 2). Photographic records from the camp also show constructions on the hill slopes, made of white painted stones, in the shape of the Parthenon. In the grand photographic exhibition at the Zappeion, among the photographs displayed were propagandistic posters that showed soldiers building their own replicas of this “National Monument” (Photographic Exhibition of Makronisos 1949) (Figure 3). The place was filled with inscriptions and rhymes in which antiquity featured prominently. The construction of a monumental landscape on the island (especially in the grounds of the Second Battalion—B’ETO) inspired some of the “redeemed” to compare it with the island of Delos during the classical period, a comparison that evokes classical glory, monumentality, and sacredness (see Zoanou-Sarri 1950:45; see also n. 3). Here is how a “redeemed” inmate described his first encounter with these replicas and related constructions:

When I arrived at Makronisos I was stunned; I understood that I am Greek and I saw with my own eyes the lies that the comrades were saying to me. My blood heated up and I immediately came to my senses when I saw “The Parthenon,” and, carved upon the rocks with big letters, “Now above all the struggle” [«Νυν υπέρ πάντων ο αγών»], “The feats of our ancestors lead us,” “Hellas is an ideal, that is why it does not die,” “In the mists of the centuries, the Parthenons will remain grand symbols, to enlighten, and to remind of their glory for ever.” (L.K. “How I spent my time at Makronisos,” *Skapanefs* 11 (1948), p. 20)<sup>5</sup>

In an article referring to the replica of the Parthenon (Figure 2) published in *Skapanefs* (3, 1949, p. 24) we read:

The small Parthenon of the B’ ETO is an admirable representation of the real one. The proportions were kept with such precision as a result of countless efforts and continuous work, so that someone could dare say that if we were to enlarge the dimensions twenty-fold, we could have the picture of the real Parthenon, and only the unique hand of Pheidias would have been missing to complete the sculptural artistic representations.

White, as if made of marble from Penteli, the small Parthenon in the camp of the First Company, appears like a white vision. It expresses the spirit of optimism, of joy, of beauty, of adoration for the fatherland which the reborn Makronisiotis feels, a feeling which shakes his soul.

All soldiers admire it and the visitors understand that, in a place where soldiers create such wonderful works, the most advanced morale-building and character re-shaping work must be taking place.

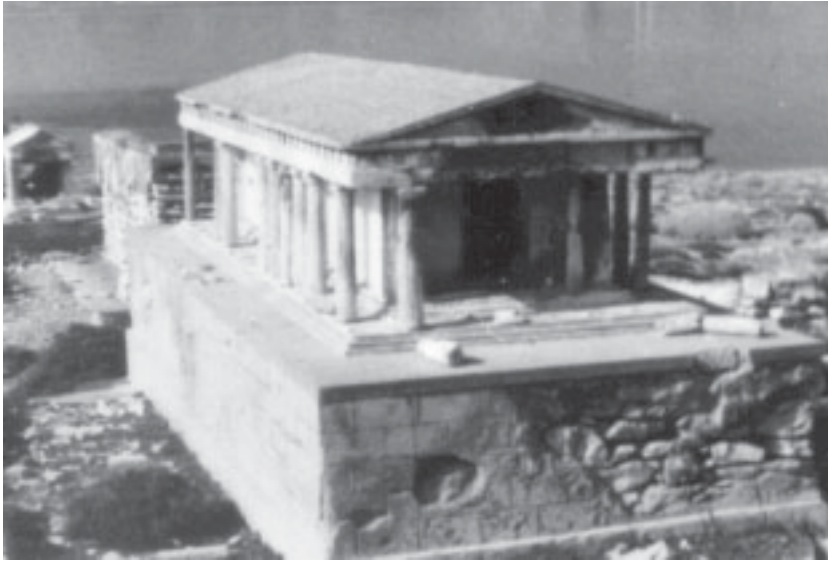


Figure 2. A replica of the Parthenon at the Second Battalion (B'ETO) of Makronisos. (Source: ICOMOS 1991)

In this dominant discourse, an attempt was made to situate Makronisos in the imagined Hellenic national *topos* and in the ancestral sacred geography. A reference to the comparison with Delos was made earlier. The publications of the regime made frequent references to a mythological tradition mentioned by *Pausanias* (I, xxxv, 1) that connects the island to Helen of Troy, who is supposed to have stopped here with Paris (e.g., *Anamorphosis* 17 January 1949). Furthermore, the proximity to Attica with its classical associations was constantly emphasized. In a speech to the inmates, Linos Politis, Professor of Philology at the University of Thessaloniki said:

In front of you is Attica, the place that glorified ancient Hellenism. This is where you are. Enlighten yourselves with the light of our ancient ancestors, and leave out of your mind any fake, foreign light. (*Skapanefs* 4, 1949)

From Makronisos the remnants of the famous classical temple of Poseidon at Sounion were visible on a clear day. This visual connection became another link; it was discursively expressed in official rhetoric, as well as in poems written by “redeemed” prisoners and published in *Skapanefs*. Here are two examples:<sup>6</sup>



Figure 3. Inmates at Makronisos, building a small replica of the Parthenon. (Source: Photographic Exhibition of Makronisos 1949)

*To the Sounion Temple* (by E.L.)

From the gray rocks of Makronisos  
In the dusk the soldiers' souls fly towards you,  
Glorious Temple, carried by the sails of  
the boats that cross the sea

.....  
Oh Temple, you project the shine of the ancestral spirit  
to our poor souls, with your rosy marbles you fly  
like butterflies in the night,  
You resurrect Hellas, glorious, pure and complete. (*Skapanefs* 1, 1947, p. 20)

*For Makronisos*

.....  
The Attic sky surrounds her and from afar  
The columns of Sounion send her greetings  
Here, in this bare and forgotten wasteland  
Out of the ruins Parthenons spring up again  
.....  
In its caves once upon a time Helen and Paris  
Met together and hugged in love, and all round  
Nature covered them in its simple beauty  
And the wild flowers were surrounding them with their scent

Now a new orgasmic creation takes place here, and together  
 Come legends and dreams, desires and hopes  
 Quietly and away from the crowd a miracle happens  
 And from here the new Leonidas will emerge. (E.N., *Skapanefs* 2 (1949))

The regime's aim was to show not only to the inmates but to all dissidents in Greece that the ancient Greek "spirit," which had survived through to the present, was incompatible with modern radical ideologies. Communists and other left-wing citizens were associated with the national "other," which in the context of the Civil War and Cold War was "Slavo-communism." The inmates at Makronisos, by building replicas of ancient monuments could be helped to rediscover the ancient Greek spirit (Rodocanachi 1949:6) and re-enter the community of Hellenism. Rodocanachi, one of the advisors of the regime, wrote in a pamphlet aimed at an international audience:

The idea behind the foundation of this seminary is that there exists a radical antinomy between the Greek racial psychology, essentially individualistic, and communism essentially gregarious: this idea has as its corollary that every Greek communist is a self-exile from the spirit of the Greek race. (1949:6)

The regime also tried to convince the inmates that with their own hands they were "re-creating" ancient Greece in the present, they were fulfilling their destined mission. At the same time this process of building, literally with their own hands, "ancient Greece" in the present, was aimed at inscribing upon their bodies the idea that not only is Greekness at odds with ideologies such as communism but also that the Civil War was just another re-run of the millennia-old national drama wherein Hellenism fights its "others":

Even today we are the same. Here are the Persians who come to enslave us. Only this time they come from the North [he means here the Socialist Republics, north of Greece]. Here are the Plataea, the Marathons, and the Thermopylai. Here are Miltiades, Themistocles, Leonidas. It does not matter that they have different names. . . . They are the same. The same continuity of history of our fatherland. The same Greece with its children. (M. Dogkas, a "redeemed" inmate [Voglis 2002:80] who became the chief editor of *Skapanefs*; in that magazine, 8, 1948, p. 3, as cited in Bournazos 1997:110)

Makronisos and the whole Civil War became part of national history, of national destiny, of unbroken and inescapable continuity. The prominent intellectual Andreas Karandonis wrote in an article entitled "The meaning of our History" (*Skapanefs* 3, 1948, p. 5):

I am sure, and you must be too, that nothing of the sad events of the last years would have happened in our country, if all of us had studied our History . . . . However some of the heroic children and military leaders of that epic battle [he refers here to the 1940s war against the invading fascist Italian army] were later deceived and were dragged into a battle against their own race and their own allies. Why? Because, as most of them were common people, they had not formed Greek historical consciousness. They had never read the History of the Hellenic Nation, and even if they had learned something, they did not understand it. They thought that they could change our historical destiny and that they could continue our history themselves, as if they were not acting on the soil of Greece, as if they were fighting for the historical ideals of Albanians, of Bulgarians and of Russians!

*The discourse of the subordinate: the hidden transcripts  
and the master(s) narrative*

But how was this national discourse, based on the official version of national antiquity, received by the inmates who refused to sign the “declarations of repentance” and by the opponents of the whole “experiment”? This is a difficult matter to investigate, linked as it is to the broader issue of the discourse of antiquity in the ideology and culture of the Greek Left, a study that has yet to be done. In the context of Makronisos, this question becomes even more complicated, as the boundaries between “redeemed” and “unredeemed” inmates were not always clear: for example, many of the “redeemed” inmates later retracted their statements, which had often been signed as a result of unbearable pressure or deception (Voglis 2002). Moreover, it would be a mistake to take the “unredeemed” inmates as a unified group, given the diversity in their social, economic, political, and educational backgrounds, a diversity that remains largely unexplored. Even on a general level, however, certain conclusions clearly emerge.

When in the elections of 5 March 1950 (in which the inmates at Makronisos were allowed to take part; cf. Nikolakopoulos 2000) the center-left parties achieved a majority, Margaris (1966 [2]: 638) narrates that the women prisoners celebrated with dances, shouting “The Parthenon has gone!” Margaris himself concluded the narration of this episode by stating: “The ‘Parthenon’ cracked. It will soon start falling down.” Such ironic usage of the term to refer to Makronisos is not a rare occurrence. The mocking tone toward the “New Parthenon” often found in the memoirs of Makronisiotés is clearly an attempt to ridicule the assumption that the regime could be compared with the “glory” of classical Athens. This very attempt reveals in some ways an acceptance of the ancestral cult of antiquity and glorification of its value.

In a leaflet written by the prominent inmate, Manolis Proimakis (subsequently a member of parliament with EDA, the United Democratic Left), and translated into English by the London-based League for Democracy in Greece in order to raise the issue of Makronisos in the international community, we read first about the tortures committed on the island and then this:

We appeal to the conscience of all civilized men to throw themselves into the struggle to save us, with the conviction that in so doing they will be helping to save the honor of a small but heroic country, which was the cradle of democracy and civilization-the honor of Greece. (Proimakis 1950?:12)

This statement is, of course, a tactical strategy that exploits the position of classical antiquity in the imagination and culture of the West. It fits with the many cases in which mostly international organizations have played the ancient Greece “card” to raise consciousness for an issue concerning modern Greece. In this particular case, the author is aware of the position of classical antiquity in the thinking of his audience (intellectuals and educated citizens in the West) and deploys this power to raise awareness and concern for the sufferings of the inmates at Makronisos.

Such appropriation does not seem, however, to be simply a public performance. It was noted earlier that the classical temple at Sounion played a key role in the regime’s rhetorical devices, which attempt to situate Makronisos in the national time and topography of Hellenism. In the following poem, written by one of the prisoners (Raftopoulos 1995:40), this very temple features prominently:

*The message*

As much tighter as I can  
 (everyday if possible)  
 I must  
 With a pen and a piece of paper  
 tie myself with those opposite  
 .....  
 and more so  
 I must tie myself with this ancient  
 Temple, over there, at Sounio, opposite to us  
 where the sun shines at dawn  
 and covers it with a purple for the night  
 I need to tie myself to it  
 And respect it and hold it as an example  
 because only its bones are left  
 and still it remains upright day and night

projecting towards infiniteness  
its stubbornness, and will to stay upright.  
I need to tie myself with it  
I need to hear constantly  
Its message.

The temple of Sounion thus becomes a metaphor for the exiled inmates; like them it is constantly exposed to the sun (the treeless, shadowless, dry island only added to the suffering of the inmates) but survives and stands upright; its marble columns become the bare bones of an exhausted, moribund organism, but still it projects its determination and continues sending its message (much like the “unredeemed” inmates). The image of classical antiquity portrayed here is much different from that of the official version. Instead of glory and eternal light, we encounter a skeletal presence. It is nevertheless significant that both discourses employ the notion of this temple as a materialization of an eternal message and as a point of personal identification.

The same author also relates a story that points to the possibilities of resistance by the prisoners. A theater group (operated by the inmates themselves) took the initiative to stage an ancient Greek play in one of the camps. They chose Sophocles’s *Philoctetes*. As the author explains (Raftopoulos 1995:45), they chose this play in particular because of the implicit associations with the present that could be drawn from its content: the main hero in *Philoctetes* is abandoned on the remote island of Limnos for ten years. As the play states, “No sailor of his own will stops here, there is no port. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

More recently, in the first officially supported conference on Makronisos (Athens 1993; Diafonidis *et al.* 1994), the president of the association of surviving prisoners prefaced his speech with Cavafy’s *Thermopylai*. Paradoxically, the same poem was often used by the regime at Makronisos in its rhetoric on ancestral glory and historical continuity (for example, *Skapanefs* 11, 1950). Moreover, the same speaker made the point that the methods used at Makronisos were foreign (ξενόφερτες) and “against the tradition, the mentality and the civilization of our people” (Mouratidis 1994:69). The same argument, that the idea of Makronisos was not conceived by Greeks but must have come from abroad, often surfaces in the writings and interventions of former prisoners to the present-day.

One Makronisiotis, in a conference four years ago, narrated how a group made a decision (“against the will of the administration”) to build an open-air theater; they did not use stones (“we were allergic to stone” he noted), however, as this was the building material associated with forced daily labor and used in official projects. Instead they employed

mud bricks. He added that their theater was nevertheless “an exact replica of an ancient Greek theater” (in Bournazos and Sakellariopoulos 2000:264–265).

Political scientist James Scott, in his study on the resistance strategies of subordinate groups (1990), introduces the notion of “hidden transcripts.” In situations where overt resistance to domination is impossible or extremely difficult, subordinate groups develop strategies for covert resistance: while they apparently obey authority, observing the rules of “public/official transcripts” of power, they find the space and means to resist, “the hidden transcripts.” It seems that some of the above examples can be described as the “hidden transcripts” of the Makronisiotic resistance. The staging of an ancient Greek play or the construction of a replica of an ancient Greek theater show, at face value, compliance with official rules and discourse. The choice of the play or building material, however, constitutes an act of collective agency, demonstrates the ability to function as a political body under extreme suppression, and thus allows for covert resistance.<sup>8</sup>

These examples also support, however, the suggestion that in the public discourse produced by the victims and opponents of Makronisos, the essentialist notion of Hellenism and Greekness (implying uninterrupted continuity and cultural superiority) was often implicitly or explicitly accepted, if not reproduced. The moral authority of classical antiquity was not in doubt. The notion that the oppression at Makronisos must have been inspired by “foreigners,” because it is against Hellenic tradition, character, and “civilization” reveals an isomorphism of the two discourses concerning the uniqueness and superior character of Hellenism. Rhetoric on antiquity was not undermined by the inmates; rather they searched its repertoire for elements that could serve their aims. While theatrical performances would have been subject to censorship by the regime, the poem by Raftopoulos, expressing as it does, a moment of personal contemplation, discloses the relationship of the prisoners with antiquity and its material manifestations to be complex. This relationship was a matter neither of simple submission to the dominant narrative nor of opportunistic usage, but rather an appropriation and reworking of the common “charter myth” (see Appadurai 1981).

A word of caution is needed here: many of the “unredeemed” Makronisiotes (including many artists, authors and intellectuals) produced poetry and other works of art where the imagery and discourse of antiquity was not common (see Papatheodorou 2000). Nevertheless, the last “unredeemed” Makronisiotes, who were transferred in 1950 to Ai-Stratis where they “enjoyed” relative autonomy (compared to Makronisos), staged performances of ancient dramas on their own initiative, plays such as *Antigone*, (also performed at Makronisos under the “eye” of the

regime; see n. 7) *Oedipus Rex*, and *Perses*, as well as other, non-classical, plays (Avdoulos 1998:298–302).

Furthermore, if we look at a text that was the political manifesto of the left-wing resistance movement, “What is EAM and what does it stand for” («Τι είναι και τι θέλει το ΕΑΜ») we read:

Greeks know how to die for freedom which was not offered to them but which they always, from the time of Marathon and Salamis to 1821 and to the present, earned with their blood and their heroism. (Glinos 1975:142)

From the depth of a three-thousand-year-old history, your ancestors, the heroes and the martyrs, gaze down at you. The fighters of Marathon and Salamis, of 1821, the heroes of the Albanian mountains. Don't put your history to shame, don't betray yourself. (1975:173)

Like the collectivity of the inmates at Makronisos, the resistance movement was diverse and multifaceted. But this key text reveals that, for at least some of its protagonists (and no doubt, many of its followers), the resistance was inscribed into the body of national history as part of an eternal continuum (see Hart 1996:217–219). In other words, it adopted the official charter myth on the continuity of Hellenism. The official narrative of the regime at Makronisos was repeating something that many of its victims had embraced themselves before they got there, hence their use and appropriation of this charter myth in their own “hidden” and public discourses.

#### *Antiquity and national imagination in modern Greece*

In order to understand the deployment and entanglement of antiquity with this painful episode of the Greek Civil War, we need to consider the role and meanings of antiquity in modern Greek society in general. The issue is too complex and rich to be dealt with fully in the context of this essay, but I will attempt a brief overview of some of its main features, resulting from work in progress, some of which has been published elsewhere.

It is now well-known that antiquity had been a fundamental cornerstone upon which the ideology of the imagined community of the nation-state of Greece was built. This more or less generally accepted statement, however, hides a rich, diverse, and complex web of meanings, contradictions, and ambiguities. Too often the fundamental role of the material traces of antiquity, of monuments, artifacts, and sites, is lost, ignoring the fact that for most people, a key mode in their perception and appreciation of antiquity involves its material dimensions, rather than its literary, historical, or philosophical production. Furthermore, many accounts of the role of antiquity are often top-down narratives,

which focus on state mechanisms—seen as unidirectional and monolithic—and assume a passive and homogeneous consumption of antiquity. Several studies in diverse fields have shown how flawed and reductionist such approaches can be. As Makronisos and other cases have demonstrated, national discourses involving antiquities are constructed simultaneously from above and from below, and are not simply the work of state mechanisms (see Brown and Hamilakis 2002).

It has been suggested elsewhere (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996, 1999) that antiquities and monuments in modern Greece operate as symbolic capital which, despite its origin in the complex appropriation of Western classicist ideals by intellectuals and the emerging middle-class in nineteenth century Greece, has since been put to diverse uses and has acquired complex and often ambiguous meanings. This capital has, for example, been deployed by political leaders and regimes to legitimize authority, but it has been also drafted in the service of resistance toward these regimes, or toward perceived or real enemies beyond the borders of Greece. Their materiality, visibility, sense of authenticity, and links with earth and territory have established archaeological monuments, sites, and artifacts as key mnemonic devices for the construction of the national myth, based on the notion of racial and/or cultural continuity with antiquity. Furthermore, if nationalism is primarily a topographic project as has been recently suggested (Leontis 1995; Gourgouris 1996), then antiquities, due to the properties outlined above, are crucial for constructing the territory of Hellenism. Hence the omnipresence of these monuments in various national narratives, from state school textbooks (Hamilakis 2002) postal stamps, and bank notes (Gounaris 2002), to political cartoons that comment on current affairs (Hamilakis 2000a), diasporic representations, and both official and unofficial discourses on the internet (Hamilakis 2000b).

Greek antiquities have also acquired connotations of sacredness (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1999), as a result of the linkage of nationalism with religion in general and Orthodoxy in particular (in relation to Makronisos, consider the religious connotations of “redemption”), and also as a result of the sacralization of classical antiquity since the eighteenth century by Western travelers, who constructed Greece as a locus of pilgrimage (Leontis 1995; Hamilakis 2001). This has been accompanied by such “rituals of purification” as the demolition of Ottoman and Frankish buildings on the Athenian Acropolis in the nineteenth century, which as “matter out of place” (Douglas 1966) had to be erased (Hamilakis 2001; Athanassopoulou, this volume; see also Kaftantzoglou 2001 for a similar argument). The contradiction between antiquities as symbolic capital (and hence an exchangeable value in global negotiations) and as sacred and thus inalienable cultural prop-

erty has been the source of tension and debates (as in the discussions on whether antiquities should travel abroad for international exhibitions) (Hamilakis in press; see also Yalouri 2001). Moreover, the ambiguous role of classical antiquity as both national and, according to dominant Western perceptions, global heritage, adds another tension, involving issues of ownership (as in debates concerning the Elgin marbles, Hamilakis 1999) and claims to the use of classical heritage in the global cultural economy.

The entanglement of antiquity with the national narrative has not been a linear process. A key modification (not without resistance) in the mid-to-late nineteenth century has been the incorporation of the Byzantine past in national time (Liakos 2002), thus creating an unbroken continuum and a more “indigenous” rather than European version of national history (Tziouvas 1995). From that point onwards (and with few exceptions) national discourse has emphasized “uninterrupted continuity.” Despite this the classical period and its monuments remain an undisputed “golden age,” while Byzantine and other monuments occupy a position of secondary importance, a circumstance illuminating the emphasis on the Parthenon at Makronisos, even when its replica was built next to that of St. Sophia, the most famous specimen of Greek Orthodoxy.

*Makronisos: the heterotopia of spectacle and surveillance*

Makronisos, while a distinctive phenomenon in terms of its links with the discourse on antiquity, is thus far from unique. This discourse, despite its divergent expressions, appropriations, and modifications, has structured the national imagination and its temporality from the nineteenth century to the present. Makronisos seems to be another case (albeit extreme) in point. National memory creates a mythology based on a highly selective and sanitized version of classical antiquity, which in turn is based on dominant Western constructions of antiquity. Furthermore, through an analogic model of history (one period can be substituted with any other; Sutton 1998), the Greek Civil War is seen as another re-enactment of the millennia-old battle between the Greek spirit and “barbarity,” which this time has adopted the face of communism. Analogic thinking seems to have been a form of historical understanding shared by both sides in this conflict, and the discourses on antiquity constructed by the regime and by the inmates of Makronisos share the same charter myth, constitute in effect a common national memory,<sup>9</sup> and occupy the same national *topos*.

The topology of Makronisos is itself an extremely important and barely investigated dimension. While the *topos* of the nation as a whole

has sometimes been described, using Foucauldian terms (Foucault 1986), as a space of a different order, as a heterotopia (enacted utopia) (Leontis 1995, Hamilakis 2000b), Makronisos seems to be a classic “heterotopia of deviation,” within the broader heterotopic locus of the nation: as all heterotopias, it contains many different spaces (the school, the hospital, the church, the theater, the archaeological site, the prison, the isolation ward . . .). It was an enacted utopia, attempting to create a perfect and meticulous space, juxtaposed to the messy, real space around it (Soja 1996:161); and its entrance and exit were tightly regulated and subject to rituals of purification and cleansing.

Moreover, and of particular relevance to this discussion, the heterotopia of Makronisos was structured by a different temporality, by a heterochrony defined by the cyclical national time where antiquity occupies a central position. The heterotopia of Makronisos became both the medical institution and the “School” which could cure the “polluted” members of the nation and teach them that the ancient Greek spirit which they were destined by blood and history to carry, cannot be reconciled with “foreign” ideologies such as communism. Makronisos thus became a fundamental device for the monumentalization of the whole of Greek society, for the imposition of monumental national time upon social time (Herzfeld 1991). Antiquity, with its discursive and material manifestations, acts as an allochronic mechanism (Fabian 1983); Greece lived in the temporality structured by classical antiquity, not in the social time structured by the political and social trajectories of the Cold War.

Makronisos was at the same time a locus of spectacle and surveillance. As noted earlier, the authorities made every effort to advertise it as a successful experiment, nationally and even globally. The photographic exhibition at the Zappeion, the parades of “redeemed” inmates in front of the royal couple and thousands of spectators in Athens, and even the filming of the camps by the BBC in April 1949 (Bournazos 2000:137) were expressions of this mechanism of spectacle. In some of its expressions, however, the spectacle merged with its other side, surveillance. The reading of “statements of repentance” for example, in front of church congregations, or the public speeches of “redeemed” Makronisotes in various parts of Greece were public spectacles but also public declarations under the watchful eye (in many cases quite literally) of the security and administrative authorities, as well as the collective watchful eye of the national body, which would act as deterrent to further anti-national (αντεθνικές) activities. Kyrkos Doxiadis (1995) has suggested that in Greek and broadly Western consciousness, the Parthenon, as the most prominent specimen of classical antiquity with all its connotations,

can be seen as the tower of the panopticon, the location of the all-seeing but unseen guard who oversees the incarcerated individuals, forcing them thus to exercise self-surveillance (see Foucault 1991). As the material manifestation of a supreme moral authority, the Parthenon has acquired immense power upon which subsequent acts, values, and behavior are judged.

Obviously, this metaphor does not exhaust the diverse meanings of the Parthenon for various groups, individuals, national, and supranational authorities (see Beard 2002; Giannakopoulou, this volume; Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996, 1999; Tournikiotis 1994; Yalouri 2001). In relation to Makronisos, however, this metaphor acquires a poignant relevance. “Remember who you are” was the recurring motto of the regime and its intelligentsia in their addresses to the inmates, but also to Greece as a whole. The moral authority of classical antiquity was the watchful eye upon which inmates were judged. The discursive and material construction of this mechanism of surveillance (the “new Parthenon,” the replica of the monument on the island, and so on) aimed at delivering to the national body, re-shaped individuals who would have internalized self-surveillance, based on the “destiny of the race,” the authority of classical antiquity, and its racial and cultural continuity to the present. Paradoxically, it seems that the victims’ own discourse itself subscribed to the panopticism of the authority of classical antiquity, and texts such as the manifesto of the resistance movement echo the theme: “don’t put your history to shame.”

In this “crowded wilderness” (to quote the poet, Aris Alexandrou), disciplinary practices, resistance attempts, official memories, and counter-memories were linked to the human body (Connerton 1989), and to bodily enacted rituals and performances. Inmates were seen as polluted elements from the national body, in need of cleansing before being allowed to rejoin it. Many of the texts discussed above started their life as speeches in front of congregated inmates and were thus central elements in embodied rituals. The discourse on antiquity was uttered in speeches and lessons, enacted in theatrical performances (see, for example, Figure 4) and in the writing and reciting of poetry, and embodied in the visual contact with the temple of Sounion and in the quarrying of stone and construction of monuments. At the other end of this continuum, there was thirst (an issue featuring prominently in the memoirs of Makronisiotes), hunger, torture, and death. The encounter with death was an experience that inmates faced from their first day on the island: as when some inmates, digging to put up their tent, found the bones of Turkish hostages from the Balkan Wars (Avdoulos 1998:105–106). All these encounters would have been crucial in constructing

bodily memories and would have played into the process by which the “unredeemed” Makronisiotes constructed their own counter-memories (Foucault 1977), by writing memoirs and poetry, drawing, and devising and initiating construction projects.

National memory and at least some of these counter-memories nevertheless relied on the same master narrative, the same authoritative resource of antiquity. For the regime, Makronisos was the new Parthenon, and the ancient Greek heritage could not have been reconciled with left-wing ideologies. For the “unredeemed” Makronisiotes, the regime was not worthy of the ancestral spirit, hence the ridicule with which they referred to the phrase, the “New Parthenon.” By building exact replicas of an ancient theater with their own hands, they were demonstrating their appreciation of the ancient Greek spirit they were accused of ignoring. By choosing those ancient plays they believed to be most directly linked to their ideas and experiences, they projected a counter-discourse on antiquity. A performance of *Prometheus Bound* was staged on Makronisos in 1998 (Bournazos and Sakellaropoulos 2000), due perhaps to the associations of this play with challenging authority and sacrificing oneself for the good of humanity<sup>10</sup>.

### Conclusion

Makronisos was recognized as a “historical site” and “locus of memory” by a Ministerial decree in 1989 (ICOMOS 1991; Diafonidis *et al.* 1994).



Figure 4. A theatrical performance at the First Battalion of Makronisos in 1949. (Source: Bournazos and Sakellaropoulos 2000)

Its buildings were deemed worthy of preservation and protection, and since then a number of them have been restored. Makronisiotes now organize an annual pilgrimage to the island and lobby the political authorities to set up an organization to manage the legacy of Makronisos. They are also demanding that all state archival resources (only partly disclosed so far) become available. Despite resistance by many Makronisiotes and in line with what has happened with the resistance movement as a whole (Mazower 2000c), the legacy of Makronisos is becoming part of the national memory in the name of a de-politicized “national reconciliation.” Furthermore, the national rhetoric on antiquity and racial and/or cultural continuity upon which Makronisos so heavily relied still guides many state and non-state discourses and practices.

The study of this phenomenon has only just started. Oral accounts and memories (especially from the many thousands of “redeemed” inmates) are still largely unrecorded. This paper has raised as many questions as answers, but it has hopefully addressed some key aspects of the situation. It has been argued that the discourse on antiquity and continuity was a fundamental device in the construction of the material, discursive, and mnemonic *topos* of Makronisos. This discourse supplemented and was closely linked with other key devices such as the metaphors of Makronisos as school or medical institution. Study of this aspect of Makronisos, however, would have been incomplete without considering the reception, and response of the inmates (especially the “unredeemed” inmates) to the deployment and appropriation of antiquity. The evidence examined leads us to assume that the authority of classical antiquity was accepted, if not perpetuated, and the charter myth on which the foundation of the modern Greek nation-state was based was a shared symbolic resource upon which both the creators of Makronisos and its victims and opponents relied for the construction of national memories and counter-memories. Furthermore, it has been argued that the *topos* of Makronisos can be seen, in Foucauldian terms, as a heterotopia of deviation, (incorporating elements of both spectacle and surveillance), where memories and counter-memories were created through bodily encounters and experiences. The panopticism of Makronisos involved the whole of Greece (and beyond) and not simply the inmates on the island. The discourse on antiquity also operated as a device through which the temporality of the Cold War and the Greek Civil War was suspended, and was replaced by monumental national time: the Civil War was seen as another re-run of the millennia-old battle of Hellenism against its “others.”

While the deployment of antiquity in the construction of national time, national memories, and counter-memories is far from unique,

both in Greece and in broader contexts<sup>11</sup>, the distinctive features of Makronisos make it a research topic of major importance. This research endeavor, however, should proceed with the sensitivity appropriate to the immense suffering, torture, and death associated with Makronisos and the painful memories of its survivors.

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#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Partly due to the elections of March 1950 and the resulting centrist-moderate government, and partly due to domestic (for example, the reports of the newspaper *Μάχη*—see Mahairas 1999) and international pressure, OAM was dissolved in July-August of that year. The last “unredeemed” (here, and throughout the paper, terms such as this were used by the regime and are thus cited in inverted commas for obvious semantic reasons) political prisoners were then transferred to Ai-Stratis (men) and to camps at Trikeri, a small island in Pagasitikos Gulf (women) (Voglis 2002:108); the conscript camps at Makronisos continued to operate until 1957 (and the military prisons until 1960), but violence had ceased and the whole “re-educational” operation stopped (Diafonidis *et al.* 1994:16).

<sup>2</sup> “Declarations of repentance” (as well as “loyalty statements” and of course exile and concentration camps) were already in use during the pre-war Metaxas regime (Alivizatos 1986:421–422; Kofas 1983:127), and the criminalization of political convictions and the persecution of the Left (including internal exile) dates from at least the 1920s (Voglis 2002: 35–36).

<sup>3</sup> For other references see for example, *Skapanefs* 6 (1949), “The Hellas of the epic of 1940–49 resurrected Marathons and Thermopylai”; 6 (1949) p. 20, “Delos, the sacred island”; 8 (1949), poem: “We Greeks / offspring of brave men / from the depths of time / in our glory / there are Grammoi /and Parthenons” [Grammos, a mountain in northern Greece where one of the most notorious and decisive battle of the Civil War took place]; 7 (1948), p. 12, article by A.L. entitled “Athletics and Communism,” which states “In

ancient Greece, the cradle of civilization, the youth of that distant era were brought up and educated with the ideal of ‘*kalos kagathos*,’ and athletics thus were experiencing an immense development and reached their highest point . . . [now] Hellenism united, regains the muscles of the titanic and gigantic wrestler of antiquity, Milon Krotoniatis, and suffocates the miasma, the blood-sucking monster which eats the guts of Greece”; 12 (1948), p. 7, which states “Hellas for three thousand years fights for the freedom and the civilization of the people of the world.” In the same article, and after a review of Greek history since the Persian wars, we read: “The Mother of eternal light [Hellas] has been again chosen for a heavy duty. A ferocious battle has started by our fatherland. . . .” See also many other references in Zoannou-Sarri (1950), a pamphlet produced by “redeemed” inmates from the Second Battalion.

<sup>4</sup> Other replica buildings evoking different periods and monuments were also built, for example, representations of mythical events from the War of Independence, and, most prominently, the church of St. Sophia in Istanbul (Zoannou-Sarri 1950:67–68); it is the classical buildings, however, which were dominant architecturally, iconographically, and discursively.

<sup>5</sup> The ambiguous tone of this article (for example, some of the cited slogans could have been equally used by the left-wing inmates) and the use of inverted commas to describe the replica of the Parthenon, affords a different, ironic reading; is this an attempt to covertly undermine the national narrative? In another case, cited by Bournazos (2000:130), a poem praising Makronisos finishes with the lines: “It is not, as was called / a German Dachau / but a shelter / of national salvation.” Is the comparison with the Nazi camp, widely used by the Left (for example, Lambrinos 1949), another attempt of resistance “from within?” For such covert resistance at Makronisos, see the section on the “Discourse of the Subordinate.”

<sup>6</sup> The articles and poems by inmates cited here were originally signed by their authors (although some of the names may be pseudonyms).

<sup>7</sup> *Skapanefs* reported (12, 1948, p. 27) that another classical drama, *Antigone* was staged at Makronisos. It is worth noting (and worth exploring further) that in this case (but also more broadly), the literary appropriations of classical texts by the Left in Greece and beyond often evoke certain themes to do with injustice and bondage/confinement, but also the challenging of authority and the desire for freedom (for example, *Philoctetes*, *Antigone*, *Prometheus*). I owe this observation to one of the paper’s referees.

<sup>8</sup> For other possible cases of covert resistance see n. 5, above.

<sup>9</sup> The creation of a monumental landscape at Makronisos where evocations of classical antiquity were dominant, can be seen as the construction of *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1989), an attempt to materialize national memory in the shape of the replicas of the Parthenon and other classical monuments. On national memory and rituals of national commemoration, see among many others, Gillis (1994), and papers especially on war memorials in Forty and Küchler (1999); on war and memory in Southeastern Europe, see Finney (2002); two recent collections of use in exploring the masses of literature on the new, interdisciplinary field of memory studies are Bal *et al.* (1999) and Kwint *et al.* (1999); for memory in the Greek context, see Benveniste and Paradellis (1999); Kaftandzoglou (2001).

<sup>10</sup> Unlike the charter myth of Hellenism and its narrative of continuity upon which the foundation of this “indoctrination experiment” relied, the memory of Makronisos itself (including its purpose, character, and the events surrounding it) was a highly contested field, until the official recognition of the resistance movement by the state in the early 1980s and the subsequent wide exposition of the brutality of the “experiment.” Certain aspects are still contested, especially since the Ministry of Defense has not disclosed the entire files.

<sup>11</sup> A very interesting example with striking similarities with Makronisos (one of many

radical appropriations of classical antiquity) is the theatrical deployment of classical antiquity in the play, *The Island*, by Athol Fugard; the play was written during the apartheid era in South Africa, and it narrates the story of two black inmates imprisoned in Robben Island. A central theme of the play is the staging of Sophocles's *Antigone*, a case of another strategic deployment of the anti-authoritarian connotations of the ancient Greek drama. As is well known, such strategic appropriations of classical antiquity in the service of different and often conflicting purposes and agendas can be abundantly found in many global contexts and is not an exclusively modern Greek phenomenon. Obviously the meanings, connotations, and effects of these appropriations vary, at times considerably. Space limitations do not allow further exploration of this phenomenon here, but it is worth clarifying that, to my mind, it is not the mere reworking or appropriation of classical antiquity that is in itself problematic. It is the often-made implicit or explicit assumptions of "history as destiny," of unbroken continuities, of cultural superiority, of monumentalized temporality (assumptions that are often championed by national as well as colonial and neo-colonial ideologies and practices) that are hugely problematic; as the case of Makronisos has shown, they often have serious political and social consequences and effects. As is shown above, these discourses and practices are not necessarily and always the work of states or establishment institutions, they often come "from below." One of the great challenges that researchers face in these contexts is to balance the appreciation of different social modes of historical understanding (which may include elements of the above) with the exposition and critique of their consequences and of the structures of power that have contributed to their creation (Handler 1985).

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