



A Nationalist Palimpsest: Authoring the History of the Greek Nation Through Alternative Museum Narratives

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Abstract

For the purposes of EUNAMUS/Work Package 3, three cases studies from Greece were examined in order to illuminate various aspects pertinent to the broader theme of the project: i.e. how national identity is built and reinforced through reference to the past as well as the use of this past in national museum exhibitions. The three cases considered were: the first exhibition hosted at the National Historical Museum of Athens in 1884. The full title was ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’ curated by the historian Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos. The second case study was the exhibition hosted at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens in 1964. The exhibition is commonly referred to as the ‘Sculptures Collection’, the curatorial work for this project was done by Christos Karouzos and his wife, Semni Karouzos. The ‘Neolithic Exhibition’ hosted at the Archaeological Museum of Volos, in Thessaly, Central Greece was also examined in detail. The exhibition opened in 1975 and the curator was Giorgos Chourmouziades, then Ephor (director) of the Greek Archaeological Service for the region of Magnesia in Thessaly. The main conclusion drawn from the investigation of the foregoing museum exhibitions is that the authoring of Greek national history cannot be perceived as a monolithic phenomenon or an all-embracing narrative but instead, a highly complex and diverse ideology consisting of various, heterogeneous (and in certain respects, even incompatible) readings of ‘nationhood’. In an attempt to further substantiate this point, the present project has accorded a surplus of analytical weight to the exploration of the historical programme of each museum, to the in-depth examination of the disciplinary and museographic types adopted by the exhibitions’ curators to enhance their vision of national history and identity and finally, to the collection of information concerning the strategies of display and methods of visualization of all three programmes (i.e. disposition of objects, decors, lighting, guides, texts and other pedagogical material).

Introduction

There now exists a substantial body of literature in the broader field of humanities, which bears out explicitly that nationalism (both as a concept as well as an historical phenomenon), was neither spatially nor temporally homogeneous (*cf.* Fotiadis 2004; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Kedourie 1960; Kohn 1946). Furthermore, several writings have underlined that any analytical attempt to specify the causes of its emergence or classify its defining elements and/or manifestations, ought to be sensitive to its inherently complex and dynamic character (*cf.* Anderson 1991; Debray 1977; Foucault 1984; Hroch 1985; Kitromilides 1989; Smith 1986). However, behind this image of conspicuous diversity lies a common ‘denominator’ of fundamental importance: nationalism ought to be perceived as inextricably connected with the philosophical elaboration of a series of ideas, values and concepts, brought to the fore by the *modernist* paradigm (Kuhn 1962), a pattern of thought which dominated Western thought from the early Renaissance period until the early stages of the 20th century.

Modernity constitutes an ontological framework firmly associated with the decline of religious conviction and the simultaneous deification of human *logos*. From the very onset of the Renaissance, human agency began to be painted as the driving force behind social, political and historical development. Largely drawing upon Aristotle and Plato “as models of intellectual achievement” (Thomas 2004: 5), humans began to perceive themselves as masters of their own destiny “as opposed to simply putting their faith in the creator” (Thomas 2004: 6). By the end of the 17th century, the glorification of ‘humanism’ provided the necessary impetus for the “universalizing intellectual project of the Enlightenment” (Thomas 2004: 4). The main ontological quest became the tracing of the route to certitude and firmly grounded truth while the means to achieve this aim was “conceptual purification’ (Thomas 1996: 13), i.e. the ordering of the world and the separation of its complex morphology into a definable set of elements (Latour 1993: 7). This principle applied equally to the natural world and human societies (Jordanova 1989: 9): in particular, society was thought to represent a distinct, bounded system, that could be broken down into a series of separate institutions and/or groups of people; these sub-systems were interconnected and influenced one another like the organs of biological organism. Under this conceptual scheme, scientific discourse could guarantee not only the drawing of rigid analytical boundaries but also the valorization of separate entities; put simply, one unit/entity could be held “to be more solid than another, or to underlie another or to give rise to another, or to be more fundamental than another” (Thomas 1996: 12-3).

The tendency to compartmentalize human societies, soon gave way to yet another vital development of the 19th century, namely the historicized understanding of humanity (Thomas 2004: 4; *see also* Dyson 2006; Gran-Aymerich 1998). Herbert Spencer offered a sociological twist to Darwinian evolution by advancing the premise that natural and societal changes were analogous phenomena (*cf.* Trigger 1998), which had essentially involved a morphological/functional change leading from simple homogeneous beginnings to increasingly differentiated wholes. Societies which were more complex and better integrated, were able to “prosper at the expense of less complex ones”, just as biological organisms and/or species that “were better adapted to the environment, supplanted those who were less well adapted” (Trigger 1998: 57). The concept of social evolution became prominent in 19th and early 20th century Western thought, with examples involving the comparison of societies but also legal institutions,

kinship systems and/or belief systems (Outram 1995; Trigger 1998). Underlying all these evolutionary sequences was not only the adherence to truth and the “universal law” (inherent in the so-called “organic analogy”), but also the firm belief in *progress*, with greater complexity being equated with progress towards *civilization* (Shanks & Tilley 1987a, 1987b):

Civilization was a new word, for it had only been incorporated into the French and English Language in the mid eighteenth century... It indicated the level of perfection of a society... (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 67).

Boundaries, order and progress were pivotal characteristics of the modernist world-view and as such, also established the paradigmatic foundations for the subsequent development of nationalism. “To be in a nation” was “an achievement that only the most civilized states could accomplish” (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 67). It is indicative in that respect that early nation-states of the 16th and 17th century combined a territorially bounded national community which included institutions and agencies (i.e. courts of law, systems of taxation and duty, police, standing armies and fleets) that were primarily concerned with maintaining societal and political order (Gellner 1983: 4):

Nationalism holds that the freedom and autonomy of nations (or a particular nation) must be the overriding principle around which the world should be *ordered*. To achieve their liberty, the modern individual must belong to a nation, and that nation must be granted self-determination (Thomas 2004: 108).

The concept of the *nation* was used widely throughout the 18th century but always in conjunction with monarchy. With the French Revolution however, a radical sociopolitical transformation took place in Europe, signaling the transition from the Ancien Régime to the *state* (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 63). More specifically, the French Revolution accorded a new political meaning to the term *nation*, by associating the latter with *civil society*. With the emergence of ideals such as truth, freedom and equality, royalty could no longer sustain itself as the basis of the state; the monarchical regime thus had to be abolished and replaced by a new form of socio-political construct, i.e. civic sovereignty (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 64). Roughly until the 1870s, nation-states were mainly located in Western and Northern Europe (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 79-82; Livianos 2008: 253). The Greek Revolution of 1821 was one of the few 19th century revolutions that resulted in the formation and concretization of a new nation-state despite its peripheral position (both politically and geographically) (Fotiadis 2004: 88; Liakos 2008: 205). This newly emerging type of nationalism relied far more on the common history and culture of the nation's members and less on civic sovereignty (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 80). If, for ‘older’ states like France, the nationalist ‘version’ constituted a celebration of the present and of progress (signaling the end of the monarchy), the connection with a noble, glorious and instructive past was a symbolic ‘restoration’ of superiority and achievement allowing the legitimation and reverence of newly founded states like Greece (Hamilakis 2007: 78-85; Mouritsen 2009).

Any investigation of the striking success of the Greek ‘national project’ ought to take into serious account its full dependence upon the construction of a viable historical model. As Liakos has rightly observed, in Greece’s case, “the history is identified with the nation’s mission” and, as a consequence, it is the ‘sacralization’ of origins and providence “that attributes a certain meaning to it” (Liakos 2008: 207). This discussion brings inevitably to the fore the phenomenon of *philhellenism* (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 82-86; Kitromilides 1994; Koundoura 2007: 43-77; Marchand

1996; Most 2008; Tsigakou 1981). At its most basic level, the term implies that the ideas and ideals that prepared the ground for the Greek revolution as well the subsequent emergence of the Greek state were essentially of both local *and* European origin. From the Renaissance onwards, ancient Greece was perceived as the origin of civilization and by extension, the birthplace of Western civilization and Western nations (Thomas 2004: 5). *Philhellenism* thus served “as a link in the triadic nexus of ancient Greece-Europe-modern Greece” and ‘Hellenization’ was “tantamount to Europeanization” (Augustinos 2008: 170; *see also* Liakos 2008: 207; Shannan-Peckham 2001: 115-36; St Clair 1972). Secondly, modern Greeks themselves were increasingly seen as the direct descendants of ancient Greece; as Augustinos claims, their “vision of the classical past” became “a mirror” in which they could contemplate “their imagined self” (Augustinos 2008: 170). In view of the above, it should not come as a surprise that a sound nationalist conviction soon began to crystallize, bringing forcefully to the fore that it was no longer acceptable for Greece to be under the rule of the Ottoman Empire (Diaz-Andreu 2007; Güthenke 2008).

Subsequent socio-economic and political developments gave these ideas further impetus (Clogg 1996; Hamilakis 2007; Livianos 2008). More specifically, the second half of the 18th century witnessed considerable changes in the social structure of Greek territory under Ottoman rule, with the most important being the increase in maritime trade activity around Europe, the conscious intellectual orientation towards Western European models by the influential educated classes of Greek (or more broadly Balkan) society (i.e. the so-called *Neo-Hellenic* Enlightenment) and also the socio-economic development and cultural flourishing of Greek communities outside the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. “Through their contacts with the West”, the emergent Greek mercantile middle classes and contemporary Greek intellectuals “realized the respect with which Western elites regarded ancient Greece” (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 82; *see also* Augustinos 2008: 170). It is noteworthy that during the late 18th century and the early stages of the 19th century, the “new economic elite in Greece subsidized schoolteachers to study in the West” where they became more familiarized with Western *philhellenism* (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 82). At the same time, ‘Europeanized’ Greek intellectuals began to imitate antiquity with the ultimate purpose being its very ‘revival’: texts were written in ancient Greek, the use of ancient names for the new generations was promoted, and on occasions it was even commonplace to dress in ancient Greek ‘style’ (Clogg 1992: 28; Diaz-Andreu 2007: 82-3; St Clair 1972: 20).

Equally notable is that many Greek intellectuals “experienced the French Revolution first-hand and became greatly inspired by its philosophical background”; even more importantly, they rapidly came to apprehend the potential of “the new ideas of popular freedom and sovereignty for their own struggle” (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 83; *see also* Kitromilides 1994: 61). Amongst the most famous and well-known figures of the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment (*cf.* Dimaras 1985; Henderson 1970; Kitromilides 1983) was the intellectual Adamantios Korais, who urged his compatriots to revive ancient Greece by imitating political events in France, “the nation which most resembled it”. In addition, Korais tried vigorously to convince Greeks “to draw upon the wisdom of the ancient world” and proposed the adoption and regeneration of a ‘purified’ language (i.e. a blend of ancient and modern Greek), “in order to be prepared for freedom” (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 2003; *see also* Augustinos 2008: 192; Fotiadis 2003: 83; Kitromilides 1994: 62):

For Korais, enlightened nations were those with a consciousness of their linguistic heritage. Greece could only be liberated if the language was rejuvenated first (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 18).

Korais' understanding of Greek antiquity and its relation to the present acknowledged the chasm separating the ancestral from the modern terrain but also insinuated "the will to bridge it" (Augustinos 2008: 169). For Korais, this relationship presupposed both "cognitive distance" and "affective proximity" (Augustinos 2008: 169) and it is precisely through this conceptual amalgamation that the temporal divide could be overcome and ultimately lead to the emulation of "ancient ideals" for the moral awakening of modern Greeks (Philips 2003: 444, 447).

The process of 'translating' the principles and ideals of the Enlightenment into the social and cultural context of the Ottoman Empire also necessitates that we take into consideration the serious conflicts that ensued between 'Europeanists' and the Orthodox Church; after all, as Hamilakis alleges, for the vast majority of people in Greece, "Christianity was still the organizing canon of the world" (Hamilakis 2007: 84). Numerous examples of confrontation, censorship, control, and persecution are reported from the 18th as well as the early 19th centuries (Skopetea 1988), all of which are particularly revealing of the clerical efforts to control the circulation of 'new ideas' (*cf.* Livianos 2008). Such tensions were the result of various factors, including Russian pressure, the priorities of Greek domestic and foreign policy and the multidimensional engagement of Orthodoxy with Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and the pagan tradition. Amidst these developments, a considerable amount of intellectual effort was put into finding ways to reconcile reason and faith, innovation with tradition, and individual freedom of thought with theological determinism. In fact, many ecclesiastical thinkers advanced an Orthodox perspective on the Enlightenment that developed an (admittedly selective) interest in new ontological and political conceptualizations. On the other hand, the impact of Protestant values promoting the ideal of a reformed and self-conscious Christianity, on the works of prominent figures as, for instance, Adamantios Korais, should not be underestimated.

The struggle for Greek independence began in 1821 and "leaders of the revolution implored other nations for help", with "manifestos" (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 84) like the one that follows:

Reduced to a condition so pitiable, deprived of every right, we have, with unanimous voice, resolved to take up arms, and struggle against the tyrants... In one word, we are unanimously resolved on Liberty or Death. Thus determined, we earnestly invite the united aid of all civilized nations to promote the attainment of our holy and legitimate purpose, the recovery of our rights and the revival of our happy nation (St Clair 1972: 13).

Eventually, European powers decided that "it was worth providing military assistance", legitimizing this change of position by referring "to the widely recognized status of Greece as the cradle of civilization and as a Christian nation under the rule of a Muslim Empire" (Diaz-Andreu 2007: 84). In 1827, Ottoman troops were defeated in the Battle of Navarino by a coalition force formed by France, England, and Russia.

When Greece gained independence in 1830, tensions related to issues of identity and national consciousness had to be resolved for the new 'nation-state' to be able to guarantee its 'survival'. There were two especially important means by which this was accomplished and both made explicit reference to the symbolic roots of the Greek Revolution: Classical antiquity and orthodox Christianity (Liakos 2008; Livianos 2008):

[This was the period] that saw the first sighting expressions of nationalism in the modern sense of the word' both as a political programme (aiming at the establishment of a nation-state) and as an ideology (commonality based on a "Hellenic", pre-Byzantine lineage and Greek language). It also witnessed the resurfacing of terms such as ("Hellenes") that had been buried, although never entirely forgotten, under a thick layer of Christianity during the period of Ottoman rule (Livianos 2008: 254).

From a very early stage and through a process of acculturation that emphasized the Hellenic as opposed to the *Romeic* (i.e. Byzantine) dimension of Greek identity, Greeks began to internalize deeply a Hellenic national identity that coexisted with but took precedence over the *Romeic* one (Clogg 1992: 50; Gallant 2001: 69; Livianos 2008: 242, 258). The strong appeal of the past played a decisive role in the objectification of the state while Athens (i.e. the ancient Greek metropolis where democracy was deemed to have been born), was reinstated as the capital of Greece in 1833, a year after the establishment of the modern Greek state (Bastea 2000; *see also* Clogg 1992: 50; Koundoura 2007: 85). The juxtaposition of past and present manifested by the very selection of Athens as capital of the Greek state is tellingly described by Lamartine in an entry to *Voyage en Orient* dated 18 August 1837:

When [Lamartine] reported... that the contemporary city of Athens was "desolate and entirely barren", he was not documenting a demonstrable fact but creating the scenery for revelation. His literary account discursively prepared Athens' supposedly desolate modern surface to reveal only its most eternal layers. The deepest of these, the Acropolis, arose apocalyptically out of present cursed barrenness to reach great physical heights (Leontis 1995: 53).

A symbolic restoration of the Parthenon, the temple of the goddess Athena at the Athenian Acropolis also began at the time, and it was there that the coronation of King Otto took place in 1835 with "an impressive public ritual, rife with symbolism and political significance" (Fotiadis 2004: 85; *see also* Bastea 2000: 102-3; Diaz-Andreu 2007: 85; Tsigakou 1981: 63; Yalouri 2001: 35-6). As Fotiadis rightly claims, in retrospect, this ritual stands as "an archetypal nationalist performance" which "brought together in one act the king, antiquities, the nation, its past and future, ancient Greece and modern Europe" (Fotiadis 2004: 85).

In unison, Orthodoxy was appropriated by the Greek state in such a way that its ecumenical religious aspect was downplayed and eventually transformed into a purely nationalist index (Gallant 2001: 69; *see also* Livianos 2008; Shannan-Pechham 2001: 8-9). For this purpose, in 1833, the Kingdom of Greece declared the Greek Orthodox Church to be independent of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul and this was the first step toward the "Church be[coming] an accomplice of the state in its mission to spread the cohesive nationalist creed" (Gallant 2001: 69). In subsequent years, further initiatives were underway to incorporate religion into a national identity. For instance, in 1838 the government selected the 25th of March as the national holiday commemorating the war of liberation. That this was the day on which Archbishop Germanos "raised the banner of rebellion is a perfect example of an invented tradition", since both his actions and their actual timing "remain open historical questions" (Gallant 2001: 69). By associating the celebration of the birth of the nation with the Christian festival of the Annunciation, the bond between religion and nationalism was further reinforced. "The day on which the announcement of the coming of Christ was made" became also the day on which "the birth of the new nation was foretold" (Gallant 2001: 69).

The convoluted relationship between Classical antiquity, orthodox Christianity and Greek nationalism persevered also in the following decades (Liakos 2008). In the name of restoring the Orthodox Empire of the Middle Ages, religious secret societies provided crucial support to the nationalist revolt against King Otto and the movement to enforce a constitution in 1843 (Calotychos 2003: 66; Clogg 1992: 51; Diaz-Andreu 2007: 86). The relationship between national identity and Orthodoxy became once again a topic of cardinal importance, as evidenced by the ardent declaration that the next king of Greece *had to* be Orthodox (Clogg 1992: 51; Gallant 2001: 70). The connection however is best exemplified by the speech of Ioannis Kolettis on the *Megali Idea* ('Great Idea'), given before the Constituent Assembly (1844) (Calotychos 2003; Leontis 1995):

In his fateful speech of 1844, Kolettis, a Hellenized Vlachos, powerful politician, and influential member of Parliament in the independent Hellenic Kingdom, argued for the expansion of political boundaries to fit a territory he associated with Byzantine Hellenism and its capital city, Constantinople: "The Kingdom of Greece is not Greece. [Greece] constitutes only one part, the smallest and poorest. A Greek is not only a man who lives within this kingdom, but also one who lives in Jannina, in Salonica, in Serres, in Adrianople, in Constantinople, in Smyrna, in Trebizond, in Crete, in Samos, and in any land associated with Greek history or the Greek race... There are two main centers of Hellenism: Athens, the capital of the Greek kingdom, [and] 'The City' [Constantinople], the dream and hope of all Greeks"... During the nineteenth [century] ... the recovery of both ancient and Byzantine Hellenism remained for Greeks a precondition for the rebirth and development of their modern nation (Leontis 1995: 74-5).

In the early stages of the 1870s, a series of events aimed for the further solidification/concretization of a Hellenic national identity, with the most representative restored the city of Athens as the very centre of Hellenism (*cf.* Bastea 2000). The jubilee year of the Greek kingdom was celebrated in 1871; the festivities planned for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the start of the Revolution were to commemorate the war but yet another central element of the celebration was the transportation and burial in Athens of the body of Gregory V, the Patriarch in power at the beginning of the Revolution. As historian Alexander Kitroeff observes, 'to associate the Patriarch with the commemoration of the revolution was a decision laden in irony, because the Patriarch had excommunicated the leaders of the revolution in the Peloponnesus upon hearing of the revolt in 1821' (*cited in* Gallant 2001: 71, *my translation; see also* Livianos 2008: 253-4). Notwithstanding this obvious irony, the decision was made a year earlier, in 1870, to use the re-interment of the cleric's body in Athens as a central element of the jubilee. The entire ceremony was fully imbued with symbolism: the Patriarch was transported to Greece "in a Greek warship named *Byzantium*, the casket was greeted at Piraeus by the Church hierarchy who conveyed it to Athens where it was received by King George and Queen Olga and huge crowds" (Gallant 2001: 71). The following year in the course of another public ceremony, a statue of Gregory V was unveiled at the University of Athens and placed next to a statue of Rigas Velestinlis. In 1875, a statue of Adamantios Korais was also added. This was essentially the "holy' trinity of the Hellenic Revolution and revival": one (i.e. Rigas Velestinlis) that "had espoused an ecumenical, secular new Greece", another (i.e. Adamantios Korais) that "believed in secular Greece" with origins in the Classical age, and a third (i.e. Gregory V) that "opposed the Greek Revolution" (Gallant 2001: 71). Despite their marked differences all these figures became

united as symbols of Hellenic liberation and assimilated as integral elements of Greek national identity.

However, even until the onset of the twentieth century, significant battles persisted between those making reference to the classical past and those in favour of orthodoxy. For instance in 1901, Argyris Eftaliotis published a *History of Romiosyni* and the reaction of the “Hellenists” to this publication was instant: University Professor G. Sotiriades noted that *Romeic* meant “nothing more than “a cheap and vulgar man”, while the folklorist N.Politis, adding to the debate the perspective of his discipline (i.e. folk studies), also opted for the “Hellene”, for it symbolized the unbroken continuity of the Greek Nation” (Livianos 2008: 268). Others supported enthusiastically the term *Romeic* and argued that the latter, “may not come ‘straight from the age of Pericles”, but smelled “thyme and gun-powder” (Livianos 2008: 268; *see also* Tziovas 1986: 77-87); the general feeling of this circle was aptly summed up by Psycharis who claimed that “Acropolis, with all its ancient glory, is ready to fall upon us and trample us” (*cited in* Livianos 2008: 268; *see also* Yalouri 2001). Notwithstanding all aforementioned tensions concerning the content of Greek nationalism, we could nevertheless take the conflict between the two main conceptual/ideological ‘rivals’ to have reached a formal end with S. Zambelios’ and most importantly, K. Paparrigopoulos’ efforts for the historical ‘rehabilitation’ of the Byzantine Empire and its subsequent incorporation within the Greek nationalist narrative. It is precisely within this socio-historical context that the foundation of the first case study of this project, i.e. the National Historical Museum, actually took place.

The National Historical Museum, Athens

The National Historical Museum belongs to the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece (HESG), which was an idea inspired by N. G. Politis and founded as an institution in 1882 for the purpose of collecting, saving and presenting relics and documentary evidence relating to modern Greek history. From 1883 onwards, the HESG also began to publish a scientific journal (*Deltion tis Istorikis kai Ethnologikis Etaireias tis Elladas*), comprising studies and articles on Greek history and folklore. Apart from N. G. Politis, the first members to be registered in HESG were N. Papadopoulos (publisher), A. P. Kourtidis (author and publisher), I. D. Tzetzis (historian and ethnographer), S. Lambros (historian and subsequently Greek prime minister between years 1916-17), T. Ambelas (lawyer and poet), A. Miliarakis (historian and geographer), T. Philemon (journalist and philologist), A. Papageorgiou (historian and ethnographer), G. Kambouroglou (historian and ethnographer), D. Marinos (historian), N. Axelos (historian), G. Drosinis (writer and poet), A. Raggavis (poet/author and Professor of Archaeology, University of Athens), G. Kasdonis (author and publisher), G. Vroutos (artist), K. Zisiou (philologist) and T. Kozakis (philologist).

According to the founding statutes of the HESG (composed and signed by all its founding members in 1882), the main aim of the *Etaireia* was the “collection of historical and ethnological written sources and material culture contributing to the 'illumination' of the middle and late stages of Greek history, philology, folklore and language through the establishment of a museum and an archive that would encompass all foregoing monuments of national life (*ethnikou vion*)” (*cited in* Lappas 1982: 6, translation by the author). The goals as defined by the HESG's statutes were of fundamental importance for what was essentially the first time that a museum was

exclusively devoted to the visualization and display of *Neo-Hellenism*, thus bringing to the fore, the history of the late medieval period, the Ottoman Occupation as well as the early years of the Greek State.

The HESG's founding statutes mentions that the National Historical Museum had to be envisaged as a project following contemporary European examples, like the *Kensington Museum* in London, the *Hotel de Cluny* in Paris, the *Museo Civico* in Venice, the *Germanisches Museum* and the *Kunst-Gewerbe Museum* in Germany (Lappas 1982: 12). This effort was supported from its very outset by a large number of historians, intellectuals, artists, scientists, journalists and publishers as well as governmental officials and the municipality of Athens (Lappas 1982: 6). Support was either financial or realized through the generous provision of relics and manuscripts (considered to be of 'historical/national importance') that could subsequently be used as exhibits (Lappas 1982: 13). 'Subsequently' refers to the fact that initially, the collection had to be accommodated in the houses of several members of HESG; however, as the collection increased in quantity, it became imperative to transfer all items to a basement room of the Greek Parliament (Lappas 1982: 14).

In 1883, the historian S. Lambros (founding member of the HESG) took the initiative to propose to the mayor of Athens, D. S. Soutsos, the transfer of the collection from the basements of the Greek Parliament to the *Polytechnion* (i.e. the National Technical University of Athens). The transfer coincided with the first (temporary) exhibition of the collection to the public. The success of the event triggered a series of actions on behalf of the HESG (particularly T. Philemon) aiming at the permanent (as opposed to temporary) display of the collection and the obtainment of a building that would serve precisely for this purpose (Lappas 1982: 18). In August 1884, the Prime Minister Harilaos Trikoupis bestowed Hall 24 in the *Polytechnion* while the Ministries of Military, Maritime and Religious Affairs granted portraits and weapons of heroes of the Revolution, which were previously stored in the Acropolis Museum (Lappas 1982: 20). However, the capacity of Hall 24 was disproportionate to the (steadily) increasing number of exhibits (and visitors) so the need for a more spacious environment continued to be an issue of great concern (Lappas 1982: 20-21). It is highly indicative that on March the 25th 1889, two thousand people visited the museum and that during the celebrations of Konstantinos the Crown Prince's coming of age (date?), ten thousand visitors were reported. In July 1895, the Greek Minister of Education, Aggelos Vlahos, granted a larger hall of the *Polytechnion* to the HESG. An exhibition was organized and its opening coincided with the first Olympic Games, which were hosted in Athens in 1896. In subsequent decades, much effort was invested in guaranteeing a permanent basis for the collection and amongst the suggested *loci* were the old buildings of the Ministries of Finance and that of Military Affairs, the *Donkissis Plakentias* Megaron and *Zappeion*. In 1935, the possibility of using the Old Parliament building was advanced for the first time; however, this was only materialized 25 years later, in 1960. During the Second World War, all exhibition items were packed and stored, hidden in basement rooms of the university building as well as private houses (Lappas 1982: 34).

With the end of the war in Greece, the HESG rented temporarily *Stegi Aporon Korassidon* (i.e. 'Shelter for Impoverished Young Females'), a building located at the city centre (Vassilissis Amalias Street) (Lappas 1982: 34) where a "cursory exhibition", "in the form of an accessible storage room rather than museum" was set up (Lappas 1982: 36-38).

In 1960, the official decision was made to transfer the HESG collection in the Old Parliament Megaron (*Palaia Voulī*) in Stadiou Street. The construction of the Old Parliament had begun in 1854 on plans by French architect François Boulanger but was completed by 1871, with modifications by the Greek architect Panagiotis Kalkos. The Parliament remained in the building from 1875 until its transfer to its current location in the Old Palace in 1932. In 1961, the building underwent major restorations and from that period onwards, it has permanently accommodated the National Historical Museum.

With the actual members of the HESG sharing the consensus that the National Historical Museum (for most part of its early history), did not really operate as a museum but instead as a “visitable storage space” (Lappas 1982: 36, 38), no concise information can be found in the extant body of literature with regard to the strategic handling (organization, set up and management) of the collection for exhibition purposes. Nevertheless Lappas (1982) offers some informative details concerning the curators of the museum from 1884 to 1962. Apart from K. Paparrigopoulos, the principle coordinator of the first exhibition, ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’ (March 1884) (Lappas 1982: 14, 17), Lappas reports that in August 1884, the collection was transferred in Hall 24 of the *Polytechnion* and A. Meletopoulos took over as the museum's *Ephor* at the time (Lappas 1982: 20). During the period 1886-1887, T. Philadelphas is mentioned as the museum's *Ephor* (Lappas 1982: 21). Lappas also reports an exhibition in a 'larger hall' of the *Polytechnion* in spring 1896 during the time of the first Olympic Games (Lappas 1982: 22) but does not mention the name(s) of the curator(s). For the period 1899-1908, K. Rados acted as the museum's *Ephor* (Lappas 1982: 21) while for the same period, reference is made to C. Vlassopoulos, the guard of the museum, for whom Lappas employs the soubriquet *Argos*, the name of Odysseus' loyal dog (Lappas 1982: 26). In 1927, the first pictorial catalogue of the museum exhibits was published, edited by A. Nikaroussis (member of the HESG) still under the supervision of the president K. Rados (Lappas 1982: 30). In the preface, Rados mentions that the catalogue was composed under his direction, “by the curators of the museum C. Vlassopoulos... and the assistant curator C. Bazos, whose great knowledge of the collection was combined with the firm scientific background of the historian A. Nikaroussis” (*cited in* Lappas 1982: 30, *my translation*). C. Vlassopoulos, guard and curator of the HESG collection, worked in the museum from 1889 to 1934; he resigned only two months before he died (September 24th, 1934) (Lappas 1982: 34). All efforts made to protect the museum's exhibits during the Second World War are reported to have been conducted under the supervision of the guard, G. Georgiadis (Lappas 1982: 34). During the period 1960-1962, which coincides with the transfer of the collection to the Old Parliament and the organization of the first exhibition within the confines of the Megaron, the *Ephor* was I. Meletopoulos and the 'scientific personnel' D. Motos and M. Ladda-Minotou (Lappas 1982: 37).

The most important exhibitions of the HESG collection were the following: The ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’, which took place at the *Polytechnion* in March 25th, 1884 (Lappas 1982: 14-17). During the spring of 1896, another important exhibition was held at the *Polytechnion*, only a few days before the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games (Lappas 1982: 22). In 1899, a third exhibition is reported to have taken place again at the *Polytechnion* under the curatorial supervision of K. Rados (Lappas 1982: 25). Between the years 1905 and 1908, the *Polytechnion* remained closed for restoration purposes; in July 10th, 1908, a new exhibition of the

HESG collection took place (Lappas 1982: 26). In 1954, the collection was transferred to the *Stegi Aporon Korassidon* (i.e. 'Shelter for Impoverished Young Females'). In October 25th, the HESG published a one-page leaflet (and not a proper exhibition catalogue), which included a brief overview of the museum's history (Lappas 1982: 34-36). An exhibition opened two days later, i.e. in October 27th (Lappas 1982: 37). In 1962 the collection was transferred to the Old Parliament building. On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the HESG (21/06/1962), the official opening of the 'ethnological museum' took place (Lappas 1982: 37); the new catalogue (80 pages in total) was edited by I. Meletopoulos and published in 1965 while its second, revised edition (108 pages in total) was launched ten years later, in 1975 (Lappas 1982: 38).

The 'Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle'

As already mentioned above, in 1883, S. Lambros proposed to the mayor of Athens the transferring of the HESG collection to the *Polytechnion*. What is particularly noteworthy is that he advanced the idea in conjunction with another proposal, namely the organization of an exhibition that would be based on the extant body of materials from the HESG collection. The main aim of the exhibition would be to illuminate different socio-historical aspects of the 'Greek *Paliggenesia*', in other words, the 're-birth' of the Greek Nation. The expectation also was that the organization of a formal exhibition of the collection would encourage (and thus potentially increase) further donations of relics and written documents from individuals and/or institutions (Lappas 1982: 16). It is noteworthy that Lambros suggested that the opening of this exhibition should take place on March the 25th of the following year (1884), i.e. the date officially recognized as the anniversary of the Greek Revolution (Lappas 1982: 14). His proposal was accepted with great enthusiasm and a committee was soon thereafter established (in co-operation with the Philological Society of 'Parnassos') for overseeing the exhibition's organization. The full title of the exhibition was 'Monuments of the Holy Struggle' (*Mnimeia tou Ierou Agonos*).

All individuals and/or families possessing relics from the War of Independence were invited to make offerings for the exhibition. Most of them replied to the HESG invitation "with trust and fervor" (Lappas 1982: 15). The exhibits (1100 in number) were divided into four main categories: (i) 'inscriptions, paintings and sculptures' (224 items), (ii) 'weapons' (246 items), (iii) 'manuscripts and documents' (423 items) and (iv) 'various' (246 items) (Lappas 1982: 16). A detailed catalogue of the exhibition was also composed (70 pages in total), in which all items were meticulously described while the 'exhibitors' (be that the HESG itself and/or private donors) were also acknowledged.

King George I presided over the exhibition's official opening. Although its catalogue was edited by the HESG and the *Parnassos* Philological Society, the welcoming speech during the museum's opening ceremony was delivered by the curator K. Paparrigopoulos (Lappas 1982: 17). Interestingly, a ticket worth five drachmas allowed visitors to attend the ceremony. Visits to the museum during regular opening hours were also charged but with a significantly lower amount of money (two and at times, one drachma). Free access to the exhibition was only allowed during school visits (for both teachers and pupils). The relics offered by families and/or individuals for the purposes of the exhibition remained in the hands of the HESG. Enthusiastic reports concerning the exhibition can be found in the press and for this reason, in the HESG General

Assembly that took place right after the opening of the exhibition, the president Philemon stressed the following:

This exhibition, visited by millions of Athenians brought profound enthusiasm to all Greeks, [but also] activated the memory of the pan-hellenic struggles and the honour of those who fought for the Greek Nation (*cited in Lappas 1982: 19, my translation*).

The Curator: Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos

Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos (1815-1891) was born in Constantinople. He completed his school studies in Odessa and later moved to Greece to study in the 'Central School' (*Kentrikon Scholeion*) of Aegina, founded by the first Governor of Greece, Ioannis Kapodistrias. He acquired his university degrees in France and Germany and soon after that, returned to Greece where he worked temporarily for the Ministry of Justice. While he was still at the Ministry's service, Paparrigopoulos published his first historical study *Skýthai, Slavoí, Alvanoí, paides choron ypervoreion* ('Scythians, Slavs, Albanians, children of the northernmost countries'), which investigated the Slav presence in the Peloponnese (1843). This was essentially a reaction to a study published earlier, in 1830, by the German philologist Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790-1861), who basically claimed that modern Greeks were not racially descended from the ancient Greeks, but instead of Slav origin (Gourgouris 1996: 141; Livianos 2008: 259). The legacy of Classical antiquity was thus portrayed as belonging to the west, of which modern Greeks were not a part:

Fallmerayer's claim... that massive Slavic invasions of the Byzantine Empire had led to the racial disappearance of the Greek population of the Peloponnese came as a stupendous shock to the newly minted Greek nationalism. His theories attacked many targets: by depicting the Greeks of his day as descendants from Slavs, he not only deprived modern Greeks of their foremost source of pride and equated them with 'lesser breeds' like the Slavs, but removed their European credentials, as well. For if they are not the linear descendants of 'the Glory that was Greece', then they had no real place in European civilizations. The entire ideological *credo* of both the Greeks and the European philhellenism seemed to be suddenly turning into a castle of mud, swept over by the Slavic tidal wave of the Middle Ages (Livianos 2008: 262).

Considering the unequaled impact of this work upon the development of Neohellenic national culture, the fact that it was not translated into Greek for 150 years testifies in itself to the practically hysterical resistance that greeted it. Indeed, within the traditional domain of modern Greek letters, the name *Fallmerayer* has achieved a virtually Satanic signification (Gourgouris 1996: 141).

For the next few decades, Greeks responded to the aforementioned 'challenge' in a number of ways. An immediate consequence of Fallmerayer's execration was the "sudden flowering of folklore studies, history, philosophy and language studies, and 'studies of character and customs'; all central to the institution of modern Greek national culture" (Koundoura 2007: 90). Scientists and intellectuals were thus called on to produce the 'symbolic capital' that would successfully demonstrate the link between the Greeks of 'today' and those of the distant past (Hamilakis & Yalouri 1999); as Livianos rightly points out, in this particular historical conjuncture, "the Greek national and historical imagination was accordingly recast, and embarked on a process that would transform the Bulgarians from harmless peasants and good Christians into blood-thirsty barbarians" (Livianos 2008: 259; *see also* Livianos 2003).

All foregoing efforts however, did not end up sufficiently bridging the gaps of recent and distant history. In 1852, the historian Spyridon Zampelios expressed the hope that the “scattered and torn pieces of our history” would eventually “be articulated and acquire completeness and unity” (*cited in* Livaniou 2008: 260, 264). In a similar vein, in 1872 the philosopher Petros Vrailas-Armenis claimed that for fully appreciating the historical past of Greece it would be necessary to examine “the ways Greece is related to its preceding Oriental World, the influence it exercised on the Romans, its relation to Christianity, what happened to Greece in the Middle Ages, in which ways Greece contributed to the Renaissance, how it contributed to contemporary civilization, how and why Greece survived till our times although it was enslaved, how it resurrected itself, what is its mission today” (Vrailas-Armenis 1972: 4).

Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos embarked on the exploration of all these themes and question and he ultimately managed to accomplish the task of producing a ‘totalizing’ history (Gourgouris 1996: 253; *see also* Dimaras 1986). In 1851, he became Professor of History in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and almost a decade later, in 1860, published the monumental work *History of the Hellenic Nation from the Ancient Times Until the Modern*, in which he brought under a single narrative several chronological phases of the nation. Largely drawing upon the work of Spyridon Zampelios, Paparrigopoulos essentially argued that there was a direct and unbroken history of the Greek nation, or *ethnos*, divided into three phases, i.e. Classical, Byzantine and Modern, each of which built upon the other:

The constitution of the “unity” of Greek history also created its narrative form. The innovation in Paparrigopoulos’ work lies in the fact that it reifies Greek history, and organizes it around a main character, giving a different meaning to each period. He introduces the terms *First Hellenism*, *Macedonian Hellenism*, *Christian Hellenism*, *Medieval Hellenism*, *Modern Hellenism*. The First Hellenism was ancient Hellenism, that is the Classical Hellenism that declined after the Peloponnesian Wars. It was succeeded by Macedonian Hellenism, which was actually “a slight transformation of the first Hellenism”. This one was followed by Christian Hellenism, which was later replaced by Medieval Hellenism, which brought Modern Hellenism to life in the thirteenth century (Liakos 2008: 210).

How each Hellenism was defined and distinguished from other ‘versions’ related to the “historical order”, or as Liakos explains, the “mission” or the “final aim”. In effect, Paparrigopoulos had constructed a thoroughly modernist historical scheme, “a teleological sequence” for Greek national history “with long-term consequences”, the latter being the Greek nation’s “contribution to world history” (Liakos 2008: 210-11). Under this scheme, Greeks could profess to be both eastern and western, at once laying claim to the legacy of ancient Greece as well as the Byzantine Orthodox Christian tradition. And although “his predecessors” employed “the third-person in referring to their object”, Paparrigopoulos imposed and used extensively “we” and “us” in order to describe all ‘Greeks’ of the past; by doing so, he portrayed the readers (and also encouraged them to perceive themselves) as trans-historical national *subjects* (Liakos 2008: 208). His appropriation of Byzantine history changed the content of Greek national identity on yet another level: essentially, Paparrigopoulos transformed the narrative “from one that had been imported” by foreign scholars “into one that was produced locally” (Liakos 2008: 208):

This modification acquired the features of a “revolt” against a view of the national self that had been imposed on Greece by European classicism (Liakos 2008: 208).

The shift of the centre of the writing of national history from outside to inside the nation, as well as the move from intellectual elites to the ordinary people, is the attempt to romanticize and popularize national history (Liakos 2008: 209).

In view of the above, it could be argued that Paparrigopoulos outlined the modern Greek heritage: he created an image of unity for the Greek past and, of equal importance, a sense of unity amongst modern Greeks; for all these reasons he was honoured as “national historian” (Dimaras 1986; Koundoura 2007: 88-95; Liakos 2008: 208-9; Livianos 2008: 258). His curatorial work at the National Historical Museum forms yet another explicit manifestation of his greater nationalist vision.

The curatorial agenda

As Psycharis famously declared in *My Journey* (1888): “A nation in order to become a nation requires two things: to enlarge its frontiers and to create its own literature” (*cited in* Shannan-Peckham 2001: 52). At a symbolic level, it could be argued that both Paparrigopoulos and the HESG achieved this twofold aim through the organization of the ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’. On the one hand, the exhibition did indeed strive to extend the temporal frontiers and enlarge the ‘historical space’ of the Greek nation by broadening its scope so to include the period(s) prior and after the Revolution. On the other hand, by imbuing the nationalist narrative with additional stories, images, materials, memories and experiences “from periods between the Classical Age and the Greek revolt” (Liakos 2008: 208), the exhibition produced a novel visual narrative which further reinforced the public’s perception of the Greek past as a continuous, undisrupted and linear historical sequence.

Following the Greek confrontation of Fallmerayer’s theories and the awakening of a systematic interest in the history of Byzantium (both being by-products of Paparrigopoulos wider intellectual project), the study of ‘ordinary people’ and their lives (i.e. folkloric studies, *Laografia*) became a widely recognized and a highly promising research field in Greece at the time (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1978: 52-57). The premises of this new discipline were basically “to prove that the Greeks of the nineteenth century were the direct descendants of the ancient Greeks” and to recognize “elements of such continuity in the modern Greek folk culture” (Livianos 2008: 263; *see also* Herzfeld 1982: 75-96, 97-122). Nikolaos Politis, founder of the HESG but, interestingly, also of modern Greek folk studies (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 69), considered as an issue of pivotal importance the search for “kinship between our own manners and customs and those of the ancient Hellenes” (*cited in* Herzfeld 1982: 101; *see also* Kyriakidou-Nestoros 1978: 127):

Within this framework, the role of the modern Greek customs became an issue of paramount importance in the second half of the nineteenth century, for they were treated primarily as “survivals” of ancient Greece offering “living proof” of the unbroken line that connected the “ancients” with the “moderns” (Livianos 2008: 263).

The object of the folklorist was to identify “certain elements of modern culture as fossilized relics of ancient Greek culture. In this sense, too, there was a link with geography and geology, which strove to uncover interred histories. Folklorists, no less than geologists who delved into the physical substrata, strove to disinter the remnants of the nation’s buried pre-history; what Politis termed “the continuation of a former life”. Folklore’s aim was to affirm what Drosinis, employing a geological metaphor, called “the granite-like foundations of [Greek] moral and spiritual authority”. Just as fossils were employed as a means of

reconstructing a geological history, so the study of folklore was conceived as a way of reconstructing an ancient cultural heritage (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 70).

Folklore thus [became] a truly national discipline, because it [told] the Nation: “Know Thyself”... In particular, Greek folklore [helped] our national philology and ethnography both ancient and modern, to demonstrate their continuity and similarity over the ages and strengthen in this manner, the reputation of our people and our Nation in the eyes of the international intellectual community (Loukatos 1978: 291-2).

The ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’ reflected many of the foregoing ideal(s). At the same time, it set as its aim that these ideals (as well as symbolisms and values) were fully apprehended (and appreciated) by a wide variety of target groups. Historical education constituted “a prerequisite” but also operated as a vehicle for the “nationalization of the masses” (Liakos 2008: 209). Accordingly, along with the Society’s obvious concern for the development of an archive of written sources, historical documents and publications (Lappas 1982: 54-56) aimed for academic/intellectual/scientific ‘consumption’, HESG also laid particular emphasis upon establishing sound communicative bridges with the wider public. From a very early stage, the Museum developed an explicit educational orientation and a wide spectrum of strategic actions (i.e. free access to the collection for teachers and pupils while at times, also to the whole body of visitors). Equally noteworthy is the emphasis laid on symbolic manifestations of the value accorded to education and accessibility, as exemplified by the decision made by the private tutors of Andreas and Christophoros, the children of King George, to bring the ‘royal heirs’ to the museum in order to further enhance their knowledge of Greek history (Lappas 1982: 25).

Of equal interest is that the *Etairia* sought to guarantee a more solid foundation for the relation developed between the collection and the wider public, through the construction of a profoundly sentimental narrative; the latter was based on the display of a wide array of materials and items that could somehow trigger emotional and affective reaction. *Estia*, an Athenian journal of the 19th century portrays this tendency very eloquently: ‘[in the museum, one may find] furniture touched by the hands of our great fathers...’; ‘while [our great fathers] were preparing the conditions for the resurrection of Greece, [these furniture, these materialities] acted as humble but precious supporters of great thinkers and great ideas’ (Lappas 1982: 16). These venerable relics implied “a moment of death, mourning and melancholy” but also gave “the beat for the successive renaissances, revivals, re-evolutions, re-formations”, in other words, all “concepts of a new beginning” (Liakos 2008: 208). Finally, another indicative example may be drawn from the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the museum. The author Z. Papantoniou delivered a speech at the *Stegi Aporon Korassidon*, arguing that the lack of space in this particular phase of the museum’s history, brought to mind a storage area, a ‘dark space’ highly reminiscent of the ‘dark ages’ of the Ottoman rule. The need for a new building for the HESG collection constituted therefore a symbolic call for ‘light and revolution’. The coming out of the dark of the collection was essential, like the revolution itself (Lappas 1982: 32-34).

Another issue of cardinal importance with regard to the ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’ is the conscious and explicit investment on behalf of the curator and the Society as a whole, in establishing a direct correlation between the HESG collection and Greek Orthodoxy. More specifically, the very vocabulary employed to describe the collection made obvious reference to a “national frame of meaning” which incorporated, essentially through a process of

cultural syncretism (Stewart 1994), dominant “religious notions”, foundational principles and ecclesiastic rituals of the Orthodox doctrine. Intrinsically, this constituted yet another strategy for bringing the public closer to the museum and the exhibition. For instance, as already mentioned earlier, when S. Lambros proposed to the Mayor of Athens the organization of the exhibition at the *Polytechnion*, he also claimed that the latter would lionize Greek *Paliggenesia* (i.e. regeneration-renaissance), a term which “evokes the Christian notion of Resurrection after the Fall” (Hamilakis 2007: 84). The notions of the “Fall” as well as “death and resurrection so common in Christian tradition”, occupied a prominent role in the Greek national narrative and were also addressed through the museum narrative: put simply, what the visitors of the HESG Collection could experience in full measure upon arrival in the area of the exhibition was how “after the Fall”, the Greek nation resurrected “itself in its former glory” (Hamilakis 2007: 84). Equally indicative is the use of the word ‘holy’ in the very title of the 1884 exhibition at the National History Museum, essentially implying that the ‘survival’ of the Greek Nation and its people through time constituted a sacred battle. Also noteworthy, is that at the centre of the main room of the exhibition, a large inscription was placed, inscribed with the words ‘Sanctum of the liberators of the Greek Nation’ (Lappas 1982: 16) in an obvious attempt to add further force to the ecclesiastic ‘aura’ of the museum collection. Finally, Lappas reports several interesting religious terms and/or expressions found in documents written by members of the HESG: in one of those it is mentioned that ‘by entering [the museum] visitors could breathe the air of freedom and experience a pure enthusiasm of patriotism, a feeling comparable to the holy communion (*iera metalipsi*)’ (Lappas 1982: 24). Lappas himself characterizes the HESG collection as the ‘immaculate treasure of the Greek Nation’ (*abrantos thisavros*) (Lappas 1982: 26). Moreover, the 1954 exhibition catalogue uses the term ‘the Holy of the Race’ (*ta Agia tis Fylis*) to describe the museum’s exhibits (Lappas 1982: 36) while in 1887, the Ephor, K. Rados calls the museum ‘a shrine’ (*iero proskynima*) (Lappas 1982: 21). All the above information indicates how the ceremonial elements of Orthodox Christianity were adopted by both the curators and the visitors of the collection while the actual exhibits of the HESG collection were supposed to be approached in a manner very similar to the “worshipping of Christian icons” (Hamilakis 2007: 84).

A final significant observation concerning the ‘Exhibition of the Monuments of the Holy Struggle’ stems from the surplus of emphasis accorded to the heroic image. During the late stages of the 19th century, ‘warriors’, ‘heroes’ and ‘frontiersmen’ living on turbulent borders were celebrated throughout Europe (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 49-61); only a few years earlier than the exhibition, Y. Sathas and E. Legrand published *Diyenis Akritis*, “the story of the eponymous Byzantine warrior”, “who fought to preserve the Hellenic Christian state of Byzantium from the ceaseless incursions, raids and oppression of harsh tyrants and brigands of another race, to uphold and extend freedom and justice for the people” (*cited in* Shannan-Peckham 2001: 51). For N. Politis, the Akritic epic was “the national epic of the modern Greeks” (*cited in* Shannan-Peckham 2001: 52) and stresses emphatically the following:

To put the matter in its appropriately proud context, in *Diyenis Akritis* the desires and ideals of the Hellenic nation reach their peak, because in this man the long centuries of ceaseless struggle by the Hellenic against the Islamic world are symbolized (*cited in* Shannan-Peckham 2001: 51).

From the 1880s, analogies were increasingly drawn between “Diyenis’ heroic exploits” and the “heroic deeds” of the War of Independence (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 52). The commemoration of 1820 and its heroes, “who against all odds” carved “an independent Greek Kingdom out of the Ottoman Empire”, merged with an idealization and more general affirmation of the values of “masculine bravery”:

The celebration of the... frontiersman as a protector of national Greek space was thus bound up with a nostalgia for the heroic struggle for independence and with a concomitant desire to regain the impetus for expansion. In this sense, the move to the frontier marked a journey back through temporal layers to an ‘original’ heroic history (Shannan-Peckham 2001: 53).

For the above reasons, the Society had exhibited a great degree of concern for the collection of weapons that became literally personified: for instance, the quest for all implements and weaponry setting up the complete armour of T. Kolokotronis, hero of the Greek Revolution, was a long-term project for the HESG (Lappas 1982, Fig. 5). At the same time, flags bearing the blood of heroes (Mazarakis-Ainian 2007), the heroes' weapons as well as weapons collected after the defeat of the enemy were popular targets for the HESG but also seemed to have acted as special poles of attraction for the public. The heroic image was further enhanced by individual portraits as well as paintings depicting scenes from the revolution.

The National Archaeological Museum, Athens

After the liberation and the founding of the modern Greek state, new legislation and novel institutions were instituted by the first Governor of Greece (between 1827-1831), Ioannis Kapodistrias to promote the protection and study of the past (Kaltsas 2007: 15):

[In 1829] just weeks before Kapodistrias decreed the creation of a National Museum (*Ethnikon Mouseion*), to be housed in an Orphanage in Aegina, we have a most remarkable document, signed by the Interim Commissioner of Elis, Panayiotis A. Anagnostopoulos, and addressed to the inhabitants of that prefecture. It is written in strong, unequivocal language. It begins by defining the word “Museum” (“the place where antiquities are deposited and safe-guarded”). It then offers an intensive definition of “antiquities” (“old things [*palaiotites*], those, that is, which are works of ancestral Greeks and were preserved below or above ground”) and continues with an extensive definition (a long list of things that constitute antiquities). Last, it identifies the significance of antiquities for the people and it specifies in 11 articles the duties of citizens and government vis-à-vis such antiquities. Article 6 absolutely prohibits the sale of antiquities, “only the Nation is the possessor and buyer of all antiquities” (Fotiadis 2004: 84).

In order to implement this new legislative regime, the Greek Archaeological Service was founded in 1834. For the first two years it was under the direction of a northern German archaeologist, Ludwig Ross (1806–59), who also held the chair of archaeology at the University of Athens until 1843. Ross was eventually cast out from the Archaeological Service because of his arrogant attitude towards his Greek colleagues, particularly towards his superior Alexander Rangavis, and his subordinate, Kyriakos Pittakis (1798–1863) (Diaz-Andreu 2007). Rangavis and Pittakis subsequently published the first official archaeological journal *Archaiologiki Ephimeris* while also founded the Archaeological Society in Athens, a city that attracted a surplus of interest ‘owing to its monuments’ (Gran-Aymerich 1998: 47). In September 1832, after the assassination of Kapodistrias (1831), the Administrative Committee, which had in the meantime, undertaken

state governance, assigned Stamatis Kleanthis and Edward Scaubert to draw a master plan of Athens, “which had to be comparable to the ancient glory and brilliance of this city and worthy of the century that we live in” (*cited in* Kaltsas 2007: 15). The restoration of ancient monuments in Athens “that proceeded through the remaining 19th century”, entailed “the meticulous removal from archaeological sites of almost every ruin deemed un-Hellenic” (Fotiadis 2004: 85). Along with this clearing, “neoclassicism was also implemented in architecture as a corrective means, a way of re-instilling into national character its long ago departed worth” (Fotiadis 2004: 88-9).

We should recall that 19th century Greeks were routinely compared (by themselves and by others) to their classical ancestors, only to be consistently found inferior, wanting in every respect, contaminated by shameful oriental manners. Classical antiquity thus came to be experienced much of the time as a *loss*, an *absence* amid present day life... [Neoclassicism] promised to offer what the present was thought to lack (Fotiadis 2004: 89).

In 1834, the first archaeological Law set out the establishment and construction of a *Central Public Museum* for antiquities in Athens and after a series of failed attempts to assign the museum design and building to various architects, the current location was proposed and the construction of the museum began in 1866 based on the plans designed by architects Ludwig Lange and Panagiotis Kalkos (Kaltsas 2007: 18). The cornerstone of the museum was laid on October 1866 in the presence of King George as well as numerous governmental and clerical officials. Subsequently, the museum underwent several architectural modifications; first, the architect Ernst Ziller used for the museum’s façade, a design he had created originally for the museum in Olympia (1899); between the years 1903-1906, the architect Anastasios Metaxas added three halls to the building; finally, another section with two internal courts was added by the architect G. Nomikos between 1932-1939, thus offering the museum enough space for additional exhibition venues, storage areas, offices and workshops (Kaltsas 2007: 20)..

Kaltsas describes quite eloquently the situation that was about to emerge in the following years, the period of the Second World War:

But when everything was ready for the great change and a new arrangement of the exhibits, World War II broke out. The antiquities were moved for security reasons, some to hiding places in caves in hills around Athens, the valuables to the underground vaults of the Bank of Greece and the remainder to the basement of the new building where they were covered with sand. To hide the large sculptures, the floors of many halls in the old building were dug up and underground hiding places were created in which the sculptures were buried (Kaltsas 2007: 20).

During the War, the spaces of the museum were occupied by various public services (i.e. State Orchestra, Post Office and Ministry of Health). During the subsequent period of the Civil War, space was provided within the museum for holding prisoners. At that time, bombings caused widespread damage and “when all these misfortunes of war had ended, virtually the entire building required general repairs” (Kaltsas 2007: 21). Meanwhile, the painstaking task of digging up the hidden antiquities for conservation and re-exhibition also began. In 1946, a small-scale exhibition was held in a restricted area of the museum, for the rest of the building was still undergoing major repairs. The post-war exhibition, a work bearing the curatorial signature of Christos and Semni Karouzos, was regarded as “almost pioneering, since it expressed a new viewpoint from the one hitherto applied by all museums” (Kaltsas 2007: 21; *see also* Demakopoulou 1997: 18-9).

The ‘Sculptures Collection’

The nucleus of the ‘Sculptures Collection’ was formed in 1874, when representative ancient Greek sculptures long based in temporary archaeological collections in Athens began to be transferred to the Archaeological Museum, which, at the time, was still under construction. A major contribution to the enrichment of ‘The ‘Sculptures Collection’, which includes approximately 16000 works dating from the 7th century BC to the 4th century AD, was made by the gradual acquisition of antiquities unearthed by excavations or purchased by the Archaeological Society of Athens but also through the transfer to the National Museum of numerous sculptures from the provinces of Greece (i.e. Attica, Central Greece, the Peloponnese, the Aegean islands, Thessaly, West Greece, Macedonia, Thrace and the island of Cyprus). The collection consisted of statues, funerary, votive, and legal reliefs, architectural elements, sarcophagi, busts, altars, statues of animals, Hermaic stelae etc. The display was arranged in chronological order to point up the curatorial ‘vision’, i.e. the stylistic developmental trajectory leading from the austere and conventional shapes of the Archaic period to the realistic and dramatic Hellenistic figures as well as the personalized facial features of Roman portraiture (Kaltsas 2007).

The first temporary exhibition in the National Archaeological Museum occupied only three rooms in the new wing. The openings took place on January the 14th, 1948 (Petraikos 1995: 109). By September 1950, six extra rooms were made accessible to the public. For the curators, large-scale and time-consuming repairs, which were still taking place within the architectural premises of the museum, formed the main criterion for deciding which areas could be used for exhibition purposes (Zervoudaki 1997: 31). Addressing all those who were impatient and anxious for the re-opening of the museum, S. Karouzou wrote:

Museums have always been works of patience and elaboration, because they are made also for future generations and not solely the present ones (*cited in Zervoudaki 1997: 31 my translation*).

On that basis, the first two rooms in the upper storey of the new wing were opened in 1955; in 1956, the hall accommodating 7th century and 6th century BC pottery was made accessible; in 1957, the Altar Room, the great central hall with the Mycenaean exhibits (along with the side halls housing the display of prehistoric finds) were also ready. The same year, the Stathatos Collection and five more rooms with archaic sculpture were also opened. In 1959, the opening of the Karapanos Hall is reported; in 1964 the halls of the Youth of Antikythera and the bronze hoards from the Acropolis and Olympia were put on display. Finally, in 1966, three halls with representative examples of Hellenistic sculpture were inaugurated (Petraikos 1995: 109-110).

To understand how Karouzou envisioned his curatorial work at the National Archaeological Museum (and particularly ancient Greek art) we need to take a closer look at one of his speeches:

‘Some would wonder which principles were adopted by those who made this museum for the exhibition and ordering of antiquities. The answer is that those responsible for the new museum have not read any books concerning what is commonly referred to today as “Museum Studies” for there existed no such texts. Therefore, they did not follow any *a priori* principle, apart from one: how to elevate in importance every single ancient art piece, how to unveil the beauty of each piece and let it speak, at times alone and at times along with its group, without being bothered [burdened?] by its environment, i.e. the architectural building or its ‘colouring’. A necessary precondition however for the success of the project is (a) [for

the curator] to have a thorough knowledge of the museum material (b) a deep understanding of the history of ancient art, within which the rich material of the museum occupies a very specific position and (c) to have a broader expertise in the history of modern art. The familiarization with the history of art allows the researcher to formulate the necessary aesthetic criterion, which will prevent him from unforgivable mistakes' (*cited in Petrakos 1995: 110, my translation*).

The Curators: Christos and Semni Karouzos

Christos Karouzos was born in Amphissa in 1900 while he completed his studies in philology and archaeology at the University of Athens. Already from childhood, he became actively involved with the Educational League (*Ekpaideftikos Omilos*), in which many leading figures of *demoticism* took part (i.e. Alexandros Delmouzos, Dimitris Glinos) (Petrakos 1995: 26). 'Demoticism' was a language movement of the early 20th century that was opposed to the use of *Katharevousa*, i.e. the archaistic idiom officially taught and spoken but little understood by the masses of the Greek population. At the University, Karouzos met his future wife Semni and his future rival, the archaeologist Spyridon Marinatos. Christos Tsountas, Professor of Prehistoric Archaeology at the *Kapodistriakon* was his teacher, a person that he respected immensely (Petrakos 1995: 21). In 1919, Karouzos passed successfully the exams for the Archaeological Service and two years later also received his university degree. Initially he was transferred to the Ephorate of Thebes and later to Attica, Thessaly, Sparta and the Cyclades. It is noteworthy that while still in Thebes, he compiled a catalogue for the town's museum that was written in *dimotiki* as opposed to *katharevousa* (Petrakos 1995: 42-44). The ministry of Cultural Affairs literally sabotaged this initiative by not buying any copies of the museum guide (Petrakos 1995: 37)

Karouzos was greatly committed to the institutional mechanism of the Archaeological Service, despite the fact that he had become repeatedly involved in 'wars' and rivalries with his colleagues (Petrakos 1995). In one of his writings, he mentions:

I believe that archaeology in Greece (as in Italy) has –not trivially- allowed the tight and inextricable connection between scientific research and the continuous physical contact with the antiquities. Outside of this [relationship] there is no salvation for the Greek researcher... Even among the foreigners, the two truly big names, A. Furtwängler and E. Buschor,... also confirm this [statement]. There are of course also some foreigners who have to offer, even without this precondition, valuable insights to the science [of archaeology]. But those come first of all from an educational and cultural background entirely different from the Greek one; and after all, I still fear that their work still appears to be missing the 'optimum and primum' (*'mega kalon kai proton'*). This fundamental precondition for the [potential] contribution of the [work of the] Greek researcher, namely the unproblematic and continuous physical contact with antiquities, can be guaranteed only through his [sic] presence in the Archaeological Service.

Those who remain in the Service sacrifice, without doubt, both time and mental strength as well as their nerves in order to rise up to the challenge, namely to save, protect and praise the antiquities. For this purpose, that they consider sacred, they are obliged to be also an accountant or a bureaucrat (even though the Service made sure in the last few years to ease this burden in every possible way). [Archaeologists of the Service, however] do not feel that [in doing so], they manifest infidelity with respect to the mission that they chose as their destination, first of all because the price they have to pay is minute when weighted against the happiness which I developed above, and also because in reality, the obligations in the public sector never prevented those who wished to engage in science from fertilizing in full scientific spirit their work as public servants. Even the so-called 'rivalries' are not personal but instead a difference expressed at the level of intellect; above all, they are not 'internal'

affairs of the service, but instead artificially cultivated from outside' (cited in Petrakos 1995: 171-172, *author's translation*).

In 1928, both Christos Karouzos and his future wife Semni were awarded a Humboldt Fellowship to study Classical and Roman archaeology at the universities of Munich and Berlin. Additional courses on Western art, and their enthusiastic participation in the rich cultural life of these cities broadened their interpretations of ancient art. Among Karouzos' teachers were P. Wolters, K. Weickert, E. Schwartz and W. Pinder (Petrakos 1995: 32). As Semni puts it, through their acquaintance with the masterpieces of Renaissance and modern art in Germany and Rome, 'a new romantic passion' for Classical antiquities 'warmed' them (S.Karouzos 1984: 22 *cited in* Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 240).

The close association between Greek archaeologists of the Archaeological Service and the German academia was consciously cultivated by both sides. It is worth mentioning at this point that during the 1950s and 1960s, German scholarships for Greek archaeology students and graduates were literally controlled by Christos Karouzos (partly because of his close friendship with Emil Kunze, Director of the German Institute until 1967) (Petrakos 1995: 174).

On their return to Greece in 1930, Christos Karouzos and Semni got married. From 1928 to 1933, Karouzos devoted his attention to the study of the newly discovered statue of Poseidon of Artemision. The publication of the results in the *Archaeologikon Deltion* (1933) is considered to be 'an exemplary analytical study concerning the problem of the relationship between the statue, the artist and the viewer' (Petrakos 1995: 33). As opposed to his wife Semni, Karouzos was not considered very productive at the level of scientific publishing (Petrakos 1995: 177). His main concern however, appears to have been, every time, to meticulously analyse his object of study by combining information from various sources and scientific fields (history of art, ancient written sources, modern literature, philosophy etc).

The German influence in his work is more than evident. This is particularly the case as regards his analysis of Poseidon of Artemision but similar trends may also be detected in other writings.

[1] 'Perikalles agalma exepoiise ouk adais' (very rough translation: 'A statue of absolute beauty was not made by someone without an idea', *Περικαλλές Άγαλμα εξεποίησ'ουκ αδαής*). (1946). This article was a contribution to a *Festschrift* for Christos Tsountas. Here, Karouzos examines the 'aesthetics' of archaic Greece. For this purpose, he collected epigraphic and philological sources (ancient poetry and philosophy) and re-constructed a chronological sequence of stylistic and aesthetic development, illuminating "the ways of seeing and feeling of early Greeks" (*cited in* Petrakos 1995: 63). This was considered a pioneering study by many distinguished scholars, amongst them his teacher from the years in Germany, Ernst Buschor (Petrakos 1995: 64-65).

[2] 'Aristodikos' (1956). Karouzos began to study the statue from the time of its discovery in 1944. He completed the work in 1956. The full title of the publication is 'From the History of Attic Sculpture with a focus on late Archaic times and the funerary statues'. The work combines once again ancient texts, epigraphic material and archaeological data as in the case of the *Perikalles Agalma* (Petrakos 1995: 116-117). The publication was dedicated to Ernst Buschor (Petrakos 1995: 65)

[3] 'Tilavges mnima' (very rough translation: 'Bright monument', *Τηλαυγές μνήμα*). This is the last great publication of Karouzos and concerns the archaeological study of the funerary inscription of Myrrina, the first priestess of the Temple of Athena Niki (National Archaeological Museum, catalogue no: 3716) (Petrakos 1995: 173). Beginning with the detailed examination of

the fragmentary inscription, Karouzos proceeds with the identification of the artist (an underlying theme in most of his publications) and ends up with a complete interpretation of 4th century BC attic funerary relief sculpture.

Petrakos describes quite eloquently, Karouzos' principles and method as regards Greek classical art:

'For those who possess a knowledge of Greek archaeology and science, Karouzos' spirit [influence] is obvious in the ways [we] examine Greek monuments of art. This is put very well by Schefold: "First fundamental characteristic of his work is the Greek sense of the 'individual', a sense which is expressed in the themes he undertakes for analysis in his writings. Almost all stem from his encounter with a great piece of art". This has been the main criterion in his selection of themes of study as well as the ideology that he cultivated in his mind. Whether an isolated work of art or a group, there had to be within them what he called "an authentic meaning". This stance is developed in all of his studies but it is best exemplified, as Schefold stresses, in *Tilanges Mnima*. [Karouzos] seeks to understand in depth an important monument of art while through this description and interpretation he also illuminates many [other examples]' (Petrakos 1995: 173, *my translation*).

Even though he is not considered particularly productive in terms of scientific publications, Karouzos' presence was highly prominent in journals and newspapers of his time. Also important is the fact that many of his studies, even though not officially submitted for publication, could be considered as complete works, covering a wide spectrum of subjects (i.e. translations of ancient Greek texts, translations of philosophical works, commentaries on ancient texts etc) (for a complete overview of his work, *see* Petrakos 1995).

Amongst them, we find the translation of 'Ippias Meizon' (Ἰππίας Μείζων) by Plato, a work he considered highly intriguing, for it gave him the opportunity to study pre-Socratic aesthetics and to translate a rigorous ancient Greek text in modern Greek, *dimotiki*, "our national language" (Petrakos 1995: 71-72). Equally important is his commentary on Dimitris Glinos' translation in *dimotiki* of Platos' 'Sofistis' (Σοφιστής). This commentary is essentially a more general assessment of Glinos' work and in particular his Marxist understanding of social life and history. Glinos describes the philosophical foundations of his approach as 'dynamic realism' but Karouzos explains why it is more suitable to use the term 'dialectic materialism' (Petrakos 1995: 73). The commentary was published under the pseudonym Christos Logaris and therefore eluded the attention of the wider circle of archaeologists and government officials; this was an obvious attempt on Karouzos' behalf to conceal somehow his interest for (and adherence to?) Marxism.

At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1940, Karouzos and his wife Semni along with their colleague Ioanna Constantinou and the philhellenist Austrian scholar Otto Walter undertook the project of hiding the artefacts of the National Archaeological Museum. In fact, Karouzos participated in similar projects in the museums of Thebes, Kerameikos, Piraeus and Chalkis (Petrakos 1995: 58). When the Germans finally occupied Athens in 1941, both Christos and Semni Karouzos resigned from their membership of the German Archaeological Institute and this was considered a profoundly symbolic gesture (Petrakos 1995: 61-63).

In 1941, Karouzos was appointed Director of the National Archaeological Museum. This was his main dream and ambition from the very early stages of his career (for a detailed discussion *see* Petrakos 1995). During the subsequent year of the Civil War (1948), Karouzos had to resign from his position for repeatedly serious concerns were raised from several state officials and colleagues

as regards his political/ideological beliefs (Karouzos 1995: 80). Despite the attempts to link Karouzos (one way or another) with the communist party, he was eventually reappointed to the directorship of the museum to undertake, along with his wife, the rearrangement of the buried objects. With Yannis Miliadis, Nikolaos Zapheiroopoulos and Marinos Kalligas, Karouzos published in 1946 a small book entitled *Zimiai ton Arhaiotiton* (i.e. 'Damages of Antiquities'), where all damages that the antiquities suffered during the war are described (Petraikos 1995: 79). Reinstallation of the exhibits was made possible through reference to and employment of the meticulous inventories of the museum's sculptures, bronzes and vases that Semni Karouzos had earlier compiled (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 243).

In an official letter which was addressed to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs (November 1944), Karouzos stated that all our great museums (Athens, Delphi, Olympia, Delos, Herakleion) as well as the smaller ones were totally ruined and had to be re-made from scratch. This re-making however should not aim at the reconstruction of their older form; instead, it should be an enterprise that would ultimately satisfy the aesthetic and educational needs of contemporary people (Petraikos 1995: 77). Karouzos also stressed that archaeologists were "now obliged to produce serious intellectual work for ancient Greece for it to become for us [Greeks] a source of life, as it was and still is for the rest of Europe. The human values found within ancient Greek art [had] to fertilize the soul of our own people" (*cited in* Petraikos 1995: 78).

The complete reorganization of the National Museum, a long-term process was interrupted by the obligatory retirement of Semni in 1964 (Petraikos 1995: 50-52) (*see below*). Karouzos had another year to serve until his retirement. However, he was disqualified by the new bureaucracy within the Service and was moved from the post of museum director. Pressure and stress proved fatal for his health: he died from a heart attack in March 1967. A month later, on the 21st of April 1967, a military junta overthrew parliamentary democracy. Karouzos' rival, Spyridon Marinatos, who had been the General Director of Antiquities also during the Metaxas dictatorship before World War II, was reappointed by the junta, and was soon to fire all dissident archaeologists.

Semni Karouzos (1897-1994) was born in Tripolis and like Christos Karouzos, studied archaeology at the School of Philosophy, University of Athens (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 238-9). At the *Kapodistriakon*, Semni joined a group of 'young intellectuals including her future husband, Christos Karouzos' (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 239). Professor Christos Tsountas was a source of inspiration for Semni and a great influence as regards her decisions in archaeology. After her graduation, she acquired a curatorial position in the Archaeological Service and her first appointment as a curator was at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens in 1921 (Zervoudaki 1997: 26-7). The main research interest that she developed while holding this position was Attic pottery. Her connection and acquaintance with Ernst Buschor, the director of the German Archaeological Institute, Sir John Beazley, a prominent figure of ancient pottery studies, Gisela Richter, director of the Metropolitan Museum of New York and Emil Kunze, the excavator of Olympia in Peloponnese contributed greatly to the further enhancement of her research (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 240).

In 1928 Semni and Christos Karouzos were awarded a Humboldt Fellowship to study Classical and Roman archaeology at the universities of Munich and Berlin. Their enthusiastic participation in courses and seminars on topics pertinent to Western art but also the rich cultural life of these cities broadened their interpretative 'gaze' (Petraikos 1995: 32) As Semni states,

through her acquaintance with the masterpieces of the Renaissance as well as modern art in Germany and Rome, “a new romantic passion” for Classical antiquities “warmed” her heart (S. Karouzos 1984: 22, *cited in* Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 240). On their return to Greece, Semni Karouzos became Ephor of Antiquities and was appointed initially in Thessaly and then in the Argolid. In 1933, she returned to Athens and became head of the National Museum’s Pottery Collection (Zervoudaki 1997: 27), where she “devoted herself to the toilsome task of identifying, recording and displaying this vast material” while at the same time, “publishing extensively on ancient Greek ceramics” (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 241; *cf.* S.Karouzos 1954, 1956).

During Second World War, her main concern became the protection of the exhibits from the National Museum (Demakopoulou 1997: 18-9):

‘The moon was often still shining on the sky when I was leaving home to go to the Museum. When all the showcases were emptied we all gathered in the basement and there, Otto Walter came to comfort us. Some nice wives of guards were themselves wrapping objects, even the most valuable of them. It was with pride for our people that I was assured in the end of the war, when the boxes were opened and the antiquities received, that despite this fatally insufficient supervision not a single gold object, no precious gem was missing’ (S.Karouzos 1984: 32 *cited in* Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 241).

During the Civil War, she continued to work at the museum but Nikos Karouzos was forced to resign. Her husband eventually returned to his post and along with Semni they undertook the project of re-exhibiting the artefacts from the National Museum. This enterprise enjoyed international recognition and the couple was honoured by the universities of Lyon, Tübingen and Thessaloniki (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 243; *see also* Romiopoulou 1997). The complete re-organization of the National Museum was interrupted by the obligatory retirement of Semni in 1964, which was imposed by a new law concerning the age limit of civil servants (Petraikos 1995: 50). In 1967, during the military junta, Semni could not receive permission for access to the Museum’s study areas and her own research material and as a result, decided to leave the country. On her return to Greece, as Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou report:

‘[S]he was faced with the old accusation of being a communist and was refused the right of free movement. It was then that her British colleagues denounced this prohibition on the front page of the *Times* under the title “Passport refused”, where they stressed her and her husband’s scholarly and patriotic work. The military authorities were eventually forced to permit her departure’ (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 243).

With the end of junta and the subsequent re-establishment of democracy in 1974, Semni returned to her work and produced ‘some 20 monographs, more than 120 articles and numerous contributions in newspapers and literary magazines’ (Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 243; *see also* Romiopoulou 1997: 44). As a retrospective comment as regards her life, she once claimed:

‘I cannot but consider it a good fortune, and be grateful to the benevolent fate that guided me to the study of ancient heritage...If some good instinct shows the way to the study of the ancient world, the reward is the strength that this study offers to people even at the hardest moments of life. Miserable are those colleagues who, not having anything to do at the end of their lives, become thirsty for honours and get lost in the pursuit of temporary and doubtful, superficial fame. There is one more thing that I learned from studying antiquity, that is, to value humanism’ (S.Karouzos 1984:51 *cited in* Nikolaidou & Kokkinidou 1998: 244).

The curatorial agenda

The work of both Christos and Semni Karouzos was deeply influenced by principles and ideals deriving from the German archaeological tradition. Johann Winckelmann in particular, seems to have played a highly significant role in the shaping of their image of antiquity (*cf.* Dyson 2006). With Winckelmann having contributed decisively to the shift of focus of classical archaeological research from Rome, where it had been positioned since the Renaissance, to Greece (Dyson 2006: 3-4), it comes as no surprise that the Karouzos ‘took advantage’ of this marked shift of perspective; this was essentially a strategic move exemplified both in their (regular) contact with German academia but also their work in the Archaeological Service (i.e. research, publications and curatorial work). At the same time, both supported vehemently the idea that the highest point in evolutionary art history had to be placed in classical Greece and its years of decline in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. This constituted a historical thesis and value judgment with a profound impact on the course of classical archaeology.

Echoes of Winckelmann’s work are traced first of all, in Karouzos’ attempt to synthesize and theorize the past by creating new frameworks for understanding ancient art. Like Winckelmann, they set as their prime aim the transformation of the study of classical art into a historical as well as evolutionary enterprise, examining ancient written sources in conjunction with the stylistic development of the Greek collections (for a detailed discussion, *see* Petrakos 1995). They also established the centrality of the Greek aesthetic and it is on that basis that they sought to reconstruct the historical trajectory/sequence of ancient art. This notion is confirmed by the fact that the National Archaeological Museum was primarily perceived as a ‘museum of art’, accommodating ‘artworks’ as opposed to mere ‘objects’.

Again in full accordance with the principles set by Winckelmann, the Karouzos were interested in far more than mere historical reconstruction; echoing the modernist paradigm (particularly as it became crystallized during the period of the Enlightenment), they sought truth in abstraction, in other words, in paradigms of absolute beauty that were embodied in ancient works like the statue of *Aristodikeos*. Both Christos and Semni Karouzos’ efforts to find ideal beauty in high classical art reflected one of the ideological underpinnings of classical archaeology throughout its history. Already from the 18th century, Greek antiquity “receded beneath the exterior surface of things and the immediately perceptible, and had become an “inner reality”, hidden in the interior of things and people: a matter of (what the Enlightenment already called) *character*” (Fotiadis 2004: 89). After all, Winckelmann himself had argued that “authentic expression springs from inner sentiment” (*cited in* Fotiadis 2004: 89).

In order to be in a position to capture this “inimitable magic” (as once described by Humboldt) (Fotiadis 2004: 90), a new display strategy had to be introduced. In one of her writings, Semni Karouzos claims the following:

In order to rejoice the artwork itself, *in* itself, from every possible angle, as a work that happened once and thus impossible to be imitated, we want the [exhibit] to stand in front of our eyes in full honesty... Every medium of display aiming at the flaunting of a statue or a painting, as for instance... museum showcases filled to capacity, pompous statue bases, extensive use of gypsum etc. ought to be abandoned altogether. We need to focus on the artwork and not the media employed for its display. We enter a museum in order to learn but also be moved. From now on, the mind and the heart travel alongside each other” (*cited in* Zervoudakis 1997: 30).

To achieve this end, Christos and Semni Karouzou set as their main priority to liberate museum exhibits from the “ash-coloured Victorian sternness” that burdened them prior to the Second World War (*cited in Romiopoulou 1997: 41*). The symmetrical visual effect that the visitors encountered in earlier years as they entered the museum was essentially the product of the placing of exhibits in such fashion so as to resemble a totalizing setting; under such conditions however, the individuality of each art piece was thoroughly underrated. By way of contrast, the Karouzou’s vision was “asymmetrical” and yet, under this novel scheme, the exhibits managed to reclaim their original value; their details were highlighted and so was the personality of the artist and/or workshop that created them in the first place (*Romiopoulou 1997: 42*):

Ancient artworks, ought to be free-standing, self-contained, under diffused light, without furtive alternations and evocative shadings, honest, so as to appeal to (and also be understood by) the public (*cited in Zervoudakis 1997: 30*).

In practice, this agenda led to the following strategic actions: New showcases were ordered from England and Germany and similar ones were also fabricated in Athens while only a few of the imposing ‘heavy’ furniture of older times were kept (*Zervoudaki 1997: 33*). For the purposes of the ‘Sculptures Collection’, the high statue bases were placed by low ones (*Romiopoulou 1997: 42*). Finally, the captions of the exhibits were kept to a minimum; they were “brief, ripe and poetic texts” created by the museum artists, providing information on the corresponding chronological period, its “spirit”, its overall “contribution” and its “artistic achievements” (*Zervoudaki 1997: 35*). Additional comments were offered only in a limited number of cases, namely artworks that were considered of “extraordinary” importance (*Zervoudaki 1997: 35*).

For such an enterprise to be realized, the mastering of the “archaeological language”, the “deep knowledge of the archaeological material” and the “thorough understanding of affiliated fields” (Greek and Latin literature, philosophy, art history etc) were essential preconditions; Christos Karouzou had repeatedly stressed all foregoing parameters while both he and his wife provided vigorous support to the modernist vision of archaeology-as-science (for a detailed discussion *see Petrakos 1995*). More fundamentally, in projects like the ‘Sculptures Collection’, “the classical Greek accomplishment” was “posed as an ethical task in the present”; the Museum was not merely “a place where a nation safeguarded its ancestral achievements” but rather a “Temple of Aesthetic Education” (*Fotiadis 2004: 91*). Semni Karouzou repeatedly supported the premise that archaeological museums in Greece were “the main source of national and aesthetic education” while “our National Museum is something more: it is the School of our national education, a place where people realize that our classical ancestors are not a myth but a long surviving glory that fed and continues to shed light to the whole world” (*cited in Zervoudakis 1997: 32*).

“The sharing of “aesthetic education” its “continuing functioning, the functioning of civil community” and for that matter, the very “reproduction of the classical ideal” depended on archaeologists, who perceived of themselves as “a class of educated” (hence higher-order) “civil servants” (*Fotiadis 2004: 91*). The same holds true in the case of Christos and Semni Karouzou who were not only originating from upper to middle-class families but also constituted active members of various intellectual circles and Societies in Athens and beyond.

At the same time, the intention of the Karouzou to elevate in importance every single art piece in the exhibition and ‘let it speak for itself’ presupposed an “educated audience”. In general,

during the early stages of the 20th century, classical archaeology continued to appeal to the wider public, beyond the professors and antiquaries and this interest reflected the ongoing importance of Greece and Rome in the political/cultural ideologies of Europe; this ‘public’ however, essentially the bourgeois public, i.e. the newly emerging middle-class, had to be *knowledgeable* and *trained*. It is particularly noteworthy, in this respect, that Christos Karouzos’ first contact with education was in the context of the public seminar series at *Athinaion*, an event that took place at a private school, the College of Athens, with the aim of attracting very specific segments of the Athenian population (*cf.* Petrakos 1995). Highly illuminating is also the opinion expressed by Semni Karouzos, basically putting forward the premise that a visitor ought to enter the National Museum “prepared” for the experience: classical artworks are “full of sacredness” and characterized by “spiritual depth and creativity” (*cited in* Zervoudaki 1997: 35). For this reason, they cannot be approached and appreciated by a “tired visitor”, “who seeks to see all great artworks in a hurry”, and not “in a contemplative and ecstatic spirit”; instead, what they demand from the visitor is “time, persistence and focus” (*cited in* Zervoudaki 1997: 35). The contemplative, knowledgeable visitor was thus the target group of the ‘Sculptures Collection’; even if “modern man [sic] loaths *vita contemplative*, he has learnt to be an observer... [C]ontemplation may be more intriguing than knowledge but certainly not more interesting than observation” (*cited in* Zervoudaki 1997: 37).

Archaeological Museum of Volos, Thessaly

The Archaeological Museum of Volos (*Athanassakeion*) was built in 1909 with funds disposed by Alexis Athanassakis from the nearby village of Portaria, Pilion. The plans were drawn by the architects Skoutaris and Angelidis and the style of the building is neoclassical. The main reason for the undertaking of this project was the provision of a space for the storage and display of local finds, namely the district of Magnesia but also the broader Thessalian region. Initially the category of ‘local finds’ did not involve any prehistoric material whatsoever and concerned mainly (if not exclusively) items of the classical period. In fact, the famous funerary *stelae* from Dimitriada are taken to have triggered the establishment of a local museum at Volos along with Athanassakis’ own intention to request from the National Archaeological Museum of Athens the return of all (‘borrowed’) golden, silver and bronze artefacts to their place of origin, Thessaly (Chourmouziadi 2006: 49). By the late stages of the 1960s, the marked increase of archaeological finds coupled with the steadily growing body of empirical evidence (particularly from the Neolithic period), rendered necessary the spatial re-organization of the museum but this time, with a concern to also incorporate a section devoted to early prehistory. Since then, the *Athanassakeion* has been considered a provincial museum of fundamental archaeological importance, for the broader region of Thessaly remains, even until today, probably the most extensively investigated/ excavated area of Greece as regards Neolithic sites and corresponding material finds. Despite the fact that this is a museum which has never received any form of funding and/or financial support from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and/or *Archaeologiki Etaireia* (Chourmouziadi 2006: 49), it offers, nevertheless, a remarkable amount of empirical information of the highest value on early prehistoric life in the region.

The 'Neolithic Exhibition'

In 1968, shortly after Giorgos Chourmouziades was accorded a curatorial position at the Museum of Volos, he took the initiative of requesting from the Director of Antiquities to take over the organization of an exhibition concerning the archaeological material from the Thessalian sites of Sesklo, Soufli Magoula, Yediki and Achilleion. In an article submitted to the Greek archaeology journal *Archaeologikon Deltion*, he develops the problematique behind his decision to undertake this task:

The problems that had to be faced were not of aesthetic but rather of scientific nature...An effort was made to demonstrate... [that] the museum exhibits do not constitute a mere sum of excavation material, but instead representative elements of an important cultural/historical stage, in the course of which a transformation takes place from the human nomadic agony to the solidified conditions of a new 'political' life' (*cited in* Chourmouziadi 2006: 91, *my translation*).

Two years later, his highly innovative approach to museum exhibits is further exemplified by his decision to set up a 'special, large-scale museum case' in the *Athanassakeion* for the display of selected Neolithic figurines, with the selection being based upon purely educational ('didactic') criteria (Chourmouziadi 2006: 91). It is significant to mention at this point, that this was also the period during which Chourmouziades was conducting his research for his doctoral thesis, a pioneering reconfiguration of the role, function and socio-historical significance of Neolithic figurines. Right after the completion of his thesis and slightly before the publication of his book *To Neolithiko Dimini* (i.e. 'Neolithic Dimini', one of the most important –and extensively excavated– settlements in prehistoric Thessaly), the exhibition of the Neolithic finds at the *Athanassakeion* was also completed. Three years later, Chourmouziades published (in Greek) an article entitled 'An introduction to the ideologies of Greek Prehistory', raising explicitly and vigorously, his concerns on the most fundamental problem of traditional archaeological discourse: the lack of interest amongst his colleagues for an archaeology that would view critical analysis and interpretation as its essential epistemological foundation (Chourmouziadi 2006: 96). Both as an archaeologist and a museum curator, Chourmouziades thus sought to demonstrate, in every given opportunity, that past materialities ought to be viewed as the 'products of an essentially social activity' and not of 'individual sensitivity' (Chourmouziadi 2006: 96):

[Social relations] lead us to the identification of an ideological apparatus and [by extension] to ideology itself, for within these relationships objects become relativised (they acquire in other words, a historical character), they are relations 'on becoming', developing only through an ideology and for the sake of this ideology. These observations force me to believe that the material brought to light and at our disposal by excavation, cannot be assessed only with reference to its typological or chronological classification. When research stops at this point, it becomes arbitrarily indifferent in my opinion, to the possibilities offered from the prehistoric material itself and limits itself to monolithic empirical theorizations... This limitation does not bring research forward towards the direction of interpretation or the simple approach of the problems pertinent to the prehistoric community in its entirety...' (Chourmouziades 1978: 30-31).

By 1975, the room of the Neolithic finds at the *Athanassakeion* was completed along with the room of the reconstructions of ancient burials and funerary customs. The Neolithic exhibition occupied room 3, a spacious rectangular space at the right hand side of the main entrance. However, the realization of Chourmouziades' revisionist vision was limited to this space and no

further work was conducted in any other parts and/or collections of the museum (with the exception of the room of ‘funerary customs’). The remaining parts of *Athanasakeion* continued to operate along the lines of more standardized exhibition strategies, evidenced in the striking majority of museums of the post-world war era in Greece (Chourmouziadi 2006).

A reconstruction of the stratigraphic sequence from the excavation at Sesklo, which along with Dimini, constitutes one of the most important Neolithic settlements in Thessaly (and Greece for that matter), introduces the visitor to the complex stratigraphic narratives of the Greek Neolithic and concomitantly, the broader theme of the exhibition. A large-scale map of Thessaly, covering the north wall of the room in its entirety, depicts a distribution of Neolithic sites that have been either excavated or identified through surface survey.

Chourmouziades’ vision for the room’s spatial arrangement is particularly noteworthy (cf. Chourmouziadi 2006; Solomon 2008). Room 3 has not been treated as a neutral spatial canvas, a mere spatial container; the curator has intervened in the very shaping of the room by breaking its space into smaller sections and units through the employment of building materials that are of local origin. The construction of walls, platforms, benches and shelves at the *Athanasakeion* draws inspiration from Neolithic building techniques. The Neolithic ‘aesthetic’ is further exemplified by the use of wood, clay, textiles as well as subtle colours (like brown and ochre). In fact, the clay and stones used for the creation of the exhibition’s ‘setting’ originate from the Neolithic site of Sesklo itself. The exhibition is divided into themes, including architecture, diet and economy, tools and technology, pottery, religion and finally, the reconstruction of a burial context with its associated funerary paraphernalia.

The exhibited items are not placed in cases but instead on wall shelves, platforms as well as small niches opened upon the surface of the added walls. The conscious avoidance of technologies aiming at the protection of the exhibits (such as museum cases and the window glass ‘tactic’) is also worth mentioning at this point. Tools and pottery vessels of the Neolithic exhibition are displayed in conjunction with large-scale photos and drawings providing reconstructions of the original form and shape of the exhibited finds. The plethora of ‘images’ (be that the original artefacts or their visual reconstructions) is set in sharp contrast with the total lack of ‘words’. Throughout the exhibition, no captions were used as a means for providing (even minimal) explanatory comments hence some form of guidance to the visitor. In fact, by way of contrast to most Greek museums, the Neolithic exhibition at *Athanasakeion* does not ‘burden’ the visitor with any kind of archaeological terminology (chronological, typological or other). In order to prepare the museum audience for this unexpected shift from the norm, a text was thus placed at the entrance to room 3, indicating that the purpose of the exhibition was above all ‘didactic’ (educational) and thus stripped off the ‘symbolic language of archaeologists’.

The curator: Giorgos Chourmouziades

Giorgos Chourmouziades, was born in Thessaloniki in 1935. He conducted his university studies at the School of Philosophy in the *Aristoteleion* University of Thessaloniki between the years 1953 and 1958. Between 1961 and 1964, he was appointed as a philologist (i.e. teacher of history, Latin, as well as ancient and modern Greek) in secondary schools. In 1965 he became Curator of Antiquities in the *Ephoreia* of Thessaly. In 1973 he completed his doctoral dissertation on Neolithic figurines (School of Philosophy, *Aristoteleion* University of Thessaloniki). Right after

submission, he also completed the 'Neolithic Exhibition' at the *Athanasakeion*. In 1976-1978 he travelled to Heidelberg as an A. V. Humboldt scholar for a taught post-graduate programme in European History. In 1981, he became Professor of Prehistoric Archaeology in the History and Archaeology Department, School of Philosophy, *Aristoteleion* University of Thessaloniki. His research focuses on the Neolithic period in Greece with particular emphasis on Thessaly and Macedonia. He has excavated several important sites with the most recent being the Neolithic site of Dispilio in Kastoria, Northern Greece (since 1992). For the purposes of this project, he has also been involved in the establishment of the first eco-museum in the area of the lake of Kastoria based on the results from the Dispilio excavations. His daughter Anastasia Chourmouziadi, an architect with a PhD in Museum Studies (2006), has been a regular collaborator in this project as well as several other projects pertinent to the site of Dispilio. From 1981 until recently, he was registered as an official member of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and in fact, elected as an MP for the Party between 2000 and 2007.

Marxist Theory (and its representative in archaeological discourse, Gordon Childe) have largely influenced Chourmouziades' work. In 1980 and 1981, he published two articles in Greek under the general title 'An Introduction to the Neolithic mode of Production, Part I and Part II'. The general argument put forward by both those studies is that past material culture constitutes 'the product of social relations'; in turn, these relations are embedded within a (historically determined) mode of production and negotiated in the context of specific "programmes of spatial organization, food production and technological development" as well as "within the context of very specific ideological behaviours" (Chourmouziades 1982: 1).

From the late 1970s onwards, he has acted as the chief editor of two archaeology journals, both in Greek, 'Anthropologica' (1978-1982) and 'Gordon' (1991-1995); the aim in both cases has been to familiarize Greek archaeologists with theoretical developments in archaeology abroad (Europe and the United States). Along with several articles and archaeology monographs, Chourmouziades has also written short stories and novels (i.e. 'The Peddler', *O Gyrologos*) and archaeology books intended for a wider public (i.e. 'Words out of dirt', *Logia apo Choma*). From the early 1980s onwards, he became more involved with museum studies (cf. Chourmouziades 1980, 1984) and regularly organized numerous seminars on this particular subject. Currently, during the excavation seasons at the site Dispilio Chourmouziades invites specialists from different fields to deliver seminars to his colleagues, students and excavation workers, several of which address issues pertinent to museum studies. These seminars are broadly known as the 'Excavation School (of Dispilio)' (*Anaskafiko Didaskaleio*).

The curatorial agenda

Largely drawing upon Chourmouziadi's and Solomon's seminal work on the ideological background of the 'Neolithic Exhibition' at Volos (Chourmouziadi 2006; Solomon 2008), the foregoing curatorial agenda should be discussed by stressing two principal factors. First, Chourmouziades' explicit intention to disassociate the visitor's experience from the authoritarian and self-referential character of archaeological discourse; how archaeologists understand, talk and write about the past is of no concern whatsoever to the visitor. As a result, and this takes us to the second point of importance, the curator uses the exhibition narrative to bring forward an image of the Neolithic which does not aim at the conspicuous display of higher forms of art and

civilization (as in the case of the National Archaeological Museum) but focuses instead, on the unveiling of the poetics of everyday life (Solomon 2008). Chourmouziades rejects the idea of presenting the Neolithic as a period of primitiveness; the mundane, ordinary practices of the everyday are professed to be (analytically) ‘extra-ordinary’ for they as well played a major (if not central role) in the historical development of human kind. Essentially, this is a narrative that places at the centre of enquiry a fiction of “peasant simplicity” and “village utopia” and yet, as Tziovas has rightly observed, this does not necessarily run counter to the nationalist narrative: “the opposition is not so clear-cut, since one might argue that nationalist ideology propelled the narrative (re)turn to the region” (*cited in* Shannan-Peckham 2001: 113).

Another issue that requires some serious consideration as regards the curator’s image of the museum, concerns the very essence of the term ‘museum education’. More to the point, it would be misleading to suggest that in those museums we consider to be ‘museums of art’, there is no educational/didactic agenda. In fact, it is through exhibitions like the ones hosted in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens that the Greek nationalist narrative was brought forward as an uncontested version of historical reality and truth (*cf.* Fotiadis 2004). This latter museum example formed a solid institutional mechanism of knowledge transmission, with its main difference from Volos being that the latter made a far greater investment in the establishment of a model of education that would place at its foundations the notions of *accessibility*, *familiarity* and *active participation*. This ideological/curatorial predisposition constituted a communitarian vision, whose “political project” was “to strengthen local influence and boost grass-roots participation” in the creation of Greek (pre)history (Leontis 1995: 82).

To this end, the conscious avoidance of museum display cases in Chourmouziades’ exhibition acts as an explicit manifestation of the need to bridge the gap between the visitor and the exhibits but also for that matter, the Neolithic past. The surplus of emphasis laid upon the display of socio-economic practices that survive even until today in villages and the countryside, in conjunction with the use of local materials for the clothing of the exhibition literally transformed the Thessalian Neolithic from a ‘foreign country’ (Lowenthal 1985) into a familiar place. Moreover, visual reconstructions encouraged the visitor to approach past materialities not as fragments or remains but instead as clearly defined entities. Finally, the total lack of captions favoured an unbiased, bottom-up interpretation of the exhibits; this interpretative technology was very different from the top-down, ready-made and undisputed interpretation imposed to the finds in cases like the ‘Sculptures Collection’ at the National Archaeological Museum. In a way, it could thus be claimed that ‘museum education’ in *Athanassakeion* relied more upon the visitor and less upon the archaeologist and/or curator.

The discussion so far, does not establish any straightforward connection between the issue of national identity and Chourmouziades’ curatorial work at Volos. This lack of any apparent signs of convergence is further reinforced if one considers that, by way of contrast to Paparrigopoulos’ historical project, there has been no real attempt so far to include the Neolithic period in Greece into a unified linear narrative that could be considered part of the national narrative. In fact, more often than not, the period is portrayed as ‘Pre-Hellenic’ (Chourmouziadi 2006: 84). We could perhaps detect some sort of connection in writings portraying the development of particular types of architecture and/or spatial organization in the Bronze Age (like the *Megaron* or the *Acropolis*) as signs of compatibility with Geometric/Doric architecture (or what is broadly labelled

as ‘early Hellenic’ architecture) (*cf.* Alty 1982). The Mycenaean period has also been linked with the development of *Hellenization* (particularly because of the adoption of a writing system, Linear B) (Zacharia 2008: 4). The Neolithic, however, does not figure in any of those discussions and therefore the quest for establishing a connection with ‘*Hellenism*’ has never crystallized as an analytical trend within the confines of the archaeological discipline. Chourmouziades’ work does not form an exception to this rule.

Even a cursory glance at the ideological background of Chourmouziades himself provides further support to the foregoing observation. Chourmouziades’ scientific writings largely draw upon Marxist ideas and what is significant in that respect, is his concern to communicate, to popularize archaeology by producing a series of books and articles addressed to non-archaeologists and non-specialists. In his scientific work, Chourmouziades made extensive use of Marxist vocabulary. His account of Neolithic society attributes primacy to the ‘economic’ (*see above*); the latter determines and dominates the ‘social’ (i.e. a privileged economic causality in other words gives shape to the entire structure of society). However, and despite his obvious adherence to Marxist principles, Chourmouziades also makes extensive use of a literature that may be characterized as functionalist or systemic. In several of his articles and books, he refers to the work of Lewis Binford, Colin Renfrew and David Clark (all prominent figures of neo-evolutionist thought in archaeology) but also, Russian archaeologist Leo Klejn, whose work has attempted to find points of convergence between Marxism and systems theory. Interesting in this respect, is that his work produces a strange combination of terms: from the one hand, a Marxist terminology, i.e. ‘forces of production’, ‘means of production’, ‘economic infrastructure’ and on the other hand, functionalist and systemic terms, like ‘equilibrium’, ‘homeostasis’, ‘negative’ and ‘positive feedback’ and the Binfordian distinction of ‘technomic’, ‘sociotechnic’ and ‘idiotechnic’ artefacts (*cf.* Trigger 1998). All aforementioned influences may be detected, at least to a certain extent, in the Neolithic exhibition of Volos. However, even for someone who is more familiar with the relevant theoretical literature, it becomes difficult to discern whether some of the choices made by Chourmouziades may be painted as Marxist or functionalist in orientation. After all, even for the curator himself, it did not seem to be an issue of importance to draw clear boundaries between these schools of thought, despite the fact that several systemic interpretations in archaeology have been taken to invoke conservative, imperialist or colonialist ideas (as for example the widely used narrative of social complexity) (*cf.* Shanks & Tilley 1987a, 1987b). So, in order to summarize, this exhibition opposes itself from the idea/image of the glorified classical past (and the broader issue concerning the origins of civilization) but also from the tendency to present Greek national history as a linear, undisrupted sequence.

Perhaps, to a certain extent, Chourmouziades’ work constitutes a conflicting version of pre-history, an alternative narrative in relation to the greater narrative of nationalism as expressed in the other two case studies. A more careful look upon the produced story however, brings us once again to the Kuhnian concept of the ‘paradigm’ (Kuhn 1962): a paradigm is the greatest of narratives, the most fundamental set of principles and ideas about the world for a given period of time a world-view, a regime of truth, a system of thought (to state but a few of its synonyms). Seen under those terms, Chourmouziades’ work is not a peripheral, alternative narrative in relation to the nationalist narrative, for the latter is itself a second-order narrative, a by-product of a greater cosmological framework, namely modernity. As already discussed in the introductory

part of this paper, the modernist paradigm accords a surplus of value to scientific truth and its capacity of empirical validation, elements also present in Chourmouziades' work. Equally interesting is the concern of modernist thinking for order and ordering, the establishment of clear boundaries in scientific practice. Whether perceiving the work of Chourmouziades as Marxist, functionalist or systemic, the notions of the 'system', 'unity' and 'wholeness' are present both in his writings as well as his presentation of the Neolithic period as a *unity* in the *Athansakeion* exhibition (*see also* Chourmouziadi 2006). To summarize therefore, rather than being seen as a mere side-effect (or even an 'anomaly') of the dominant nationalist discourse, the 'Neolithic Exhibition' at the Archaeological Museum of Volos constitutes a more subtle confirmation of a fundamentally modernist ontology. It is perhaps for this reason, that the efforts made by Chourmouziades to redefine the nature and character of museum display (at a very early stage in his career and within the highly conservative and hierarchical environment of the Archaeological Service) was not prevented or rejected in any way as too provocative or too political; instead, it was allowed to be realized. These 'unintended consequences', to use Giddens' terms (1984), allowed the realization of a museum project that continues to be seen as a pioneering vision amongst Greek archaeologists and museum specialists even until today.

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