

**POLITICAL GENEALOGIES OF A GENERATION:  
KIN, MOVEMENT AND PARTY IN THE GREEK DIASPORA**

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY  
YORK UNIVERSITY  
TORONTO, CANADA

APRIL 2015

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about the struggle of one generation of men in the Greek diaspora to come to terms with—and act within—political genealogies that had shaped their everyday lives since childhood and with which they remain in an ongoing relation of (dis)identification today. The Greek civil war (1946-1949) had bestowed upon these men an inheritance of polarized associations: nationalism, religiosity, order, on the one hand; anti-Greek communism, on the other. Their childhood and adolescence in the post-civil war years were shaped by state practices that polarized the Left from the Right. By the time of the dictatorship in 1967, which was the catalyst for many to leave, families in Greece had experienced decades of institutionalized marginalization. The focus here is on the intersection of this legacy with the political activities and sensibilities of those who arrived in Toronto and mobilized themselves against the Greek regime.

While the anti-dictatorship movement they created was originally heterogeneous, it became concentrically organized around the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (PAK) and the leadership of Toronto-based professor Andreas Papandreou. After the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, PAK became the foundation for a new political party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), with Andreas Papandreou as leader once again. Emerging as the hegemonic articulation of the left, PASOK became the first socialist party to govern Greece in 1981. Practically speaking, this meant that those anti-junta activists returning to Greece from Canada after the fall of the dictatorship found themselves navigating opportunities and trajectories that would have been inconceivable just a few years prior.

The problem to be investigated in this dissertation is twofold: First, to what extent does the civil war have a legacy in the narratives of men who migrated to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s

and how is this expressed? Second, how are political subjectivities constructed in these accounts from the vantage point of the ambiguous present-as-crisis? These questions are approached through ethnographic observations and interviews with those who were involved in the anti-dictatorship movement and either stayed in Toronto or returned to Greece after the fall of the military junta.

## **DEDICATION**

*This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Mary, and to my father, Paul, who fought his last brave battle in the course of this research*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without those participants who generously shared their stories and reflections. I have learned so much in your company. I sincerely thank my committee members at York University. My advisor, Michael Nijhawan, offered multiple readings of chapters. His insightful and challenging comments brought a richness and conceptual clarity to this work. Thank you, Michael, for your intellectual rigour and friendship. Many conversations over the last five years with Marc Lesage shaped my dissertation, but also my relationship to academic life. Many thanks, Marc, for your generosity-with time and home-cooked meals-and for your perpetual optimism. I am also indebted to Sakis Gekas, who contributed a much appreciated historical eye to the work.

Andrea Muehlebach, Carlota McAllister and Kathy Bischooping were wonderful interlocutors during the dissertation defense. Thank you for such an interesting conversation and for challenging me in a nuanced and respectful way to further develop particular ideas. The assistance of Audrey Tokiwa (Assistant to the Director of the Graduate Program in Sociology) was also invaluable in facilitating the completion of my dissertation.

Many of the ideas found here have been discussed with kindred spirits and strong minds: Kalle Dahlquist, whose friendship and creativity I cherish, read over many sections and offered thoughtful feedback at all hours of the night; Ilias Toliadis, who contributed an incredible set of sketches to this work, has been a consistent conversational companion and a wonderful Greek teacher; Rena Bivens was an unwavering source of intellectual and emotional support, patiently encouraging me to speak out my ideas as often as possible; my brother, Andrew, among many other things, helped clarify my thinking about the political left and center. I thank Jesse Carlson

for a productive conversation about the social life of political categories. I am grateful to Sylvia Mittler for making her excellent library available to me.

As writing can be lonely business, I am especially grateful to friends who insisted that I remain a social creature. I thank Elisabeth Rondinelli for her unique ability to find the funny in almost everything and for being my ever stable companion. Weekends with Karine Côté Boucher, discussing film and literature over the most delicious meals (thanks Chris) were much needed reprieves from writing. My mentor, Danièle Bélanger, continues to be an inspiration for her ability to mother, educate, research and be good to everyone that comes her way. I thank Jasmin Hristov for her political kinship and loving support. Bhavani Ranganathan, Leah Sherwood, Jenn Wiebe, Rebecca Comeau and Selma Purac have brightened many days with their humour, curiosity and care. In Athens, one man bore the brunt of dissertation crazy-making: Ερνέστο, σε ευχαριστώ για την υπομονή και τη φιλία σου και ακόμα για όλα όσα που δεν υπάρχουν λέξεις να σε ευχαριστώ.

I should note that this dissertation was generously funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Resource Council of Canada. The financial support offered by loved ones is also greatly appreciated: Many thanks to Mary, Andrew, Uncle John, Kalle, and Rena.

Finally, I want to express my deepest appreciation for my family: Thank you, mum, for your unwavering love, good humour and joy for life. You taught us the importance of perseverance and autonomy. Andrew, your curiosity is always contagious, as is your playful spirit and commitment to better futures. I thank you for these gifts and for our many years of sibling complicity. Dad, I can not forget that the grueling hours you spent on the road made our education possible. For this I am grateful beyond words.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

*Athens*

*Oct 10, 2012*

*I'm sitting with Yannis in his small second-hand store. He's smoking at his desk—stacked with old newspapers, books, papers. We've been speaking for hours and I can see he's tired, depressed. We've discussed his plans to return to Canada for a visit. He hasn't been back to Toronto since '84 and he's hesitant, worrying that the changes would be too much. Just as he's explaining to me that the best decision he made was to get a Canadian passport for his son, we hear yelling and crying outside. He stands and motions for me to stay seated. Out of nowhere, it seems, a young migrant man tumbles in front of the store—a meter away from the entrance—and is surrounded by policemen. Five or six. They are beating him. He's screaming, "Yiati, Yiati?" (Why? Why?) Yannis approaches the police officers and tries to calm them down. He somehow gets between them and [...] he's saying, "This man is in your protection. If you have arrested him, he is in your protection, do you hear me?" He's repeating this again and again. A crowd has gathered...two men are egging the police on, encouraging them. "He is a thief," another yells. All of this as the man continues screaming just one word: "Yiati." Yannis raises his voice when the beatings continue: "I will be a witness for this man in court." Another man in his 70s says the same and the beatings subside. An officer calls for the supervisor, the man is picked up and taken away. I have watched all of this from the entrance of the store. Yannis comes back in and we sit quietly at his desk for a moment. I curse under my breath and he does the same. He*

*lights another cigarette, takes a long slow puff, his hand shaking visibly. Silence. I am thinking about the scene: Yannis—an old leftist, an old man—unsteady on his feet and trying to subdue these young officers, stamped with the authority of the state. And then he speaks: "That's an everyday scene now, Katherine. And it's only normal because when people have nothing to eat, no place to sleep, nothing, they will do something." He adds, "It is very dangerous too because if you say something—if you try to intervene—you can have problems yourself. You know, I don't want to mark this store. They could burn this place in 10 minutes flat..."*

## **1. The Project**

This dissertation was written during the years of what came to be termed the "Greek Crisis" (and soon after the "European Crisis").<sup>1</sup> Its earliest conceptualization began during my visit to Athens in June 2009, at which time the international media had not yet become alarmed by the state of Greece's finances and the country's credit rating was still an impressive A. Athens had been making headlines, however, just six months prior as the site of "youth riots." The police shooting of 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos on December 6th, 2008, led to three weeks of widespread youth protests and confrontations with the police. Images of hooded youth throwing stones and gasoline bombs, streets of fire and tear gas, and heavy-booted riot police with plastic shields and helmets flooded online media. While sparked by the murder, these protests expressed a profound and long-standing discontent with the education system, youth unemployment and political corruption.<sup>2</sup> Snap elections were eventually called in October 2009, the conservative

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<sup>1</sup> "Greek Crisis" begins to circulate in international media in December 2009 and "European Crisis" in February 2010.

<sup>2</sup> I highly recommend director Christos Georgiou's 2011 documentary, *Children of the Riots*, which explores the impact of these weeks almost three years later through the stories and reflections of seven young protagonists. It is especially good at bringing to voice the diverse experience of becoming

government (New Democracy) was replaced by the social democrats (PASOK) and the announcement was made, a few weeks later, that Greece's finances were in big trouble.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the volatility that preceded my visit in the summer of 2009 eluded me. The city had calmed and there was no immediate evidence, in my eyes, of either the winter protests or the political and economic crisis that was just on the horizon. Of course, by the time I was interviewing Yannis and witnessing the police beatings that I describe above, "i crisi" (the crisis) had fully implicated itself in my research. By then, Greece had been subjected to more than two years of brutal austerity measures and many small-business owners like Yannis had closed up shop and were living on meagre pensions or dwindling life savings—a situation Yannis described as his "bitter lemon."

It was not Greece's contemporary troubles that had initially brought me to Yannis' small store in the fall of 2012, but his involvement in a political movement against the Greek dictatorship, waged nearly four decades prior in Toronto. Yannis was among the many thousands of young Greeks who had left for foreign lands during the years of the military dictatorship (1967-1974). Official figures from Athens show that 328,977 Greeks emigrated abroad through legal means between 1961 and 1976 (Gavaki 1991: 73). Canada formally received 46,271 of those people between 1967 and 1973 (77). And yet, these figures do not capture the diversity of migrations: Some left urgently, others through prepared departures; some left with papers and passports bought on the black market, others through "legitimate" means and with interventions from the "right" people; some jumped ship as young sailors at various North American ports,

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politicized and the ongoing negotiation of aspirations and disappointments under austerity. One young woman states of the protests, "It was my baptism of fire [...] it was then that I realized what injustice and violence are. To have your future and your life taken from you."

<sup>3</sup> In October 2009, George Papaconstantinou (finance minister in Greece's socialist government) revealed that the country's deficit was double that predicted by the previous government. Fitch began to downgrade Greece's credit rating in the same month, first to A- and eventually to CCC in July of 2011.

eventually finding their way to Toronto, while others were sponsored by family members already residing in Canada. What they shared was the experience of leaving their country at a moment when democracy was a crippled dream, censorship was the rule, state violence was no stranger and the marginalization of a whole sector of the Greek population—those deemed "Left"—had been legally instituted.

This dissertation is about the struggle of one generation of men in the Greek diaspora to come to terms with—and act within—political genealogies that had shaped their everyday lives since childhood and with which they remain in an ongoing relation of (dis)identification today. The Greek civil war (1946-1949) had bestowed upon these men an inheritance of polarized associations: nationalism, religiosity, order, on the one hand, and anti-Greek communism, on the other. Their childhood and adolescence in the post-civil war years were shaped by state practices that polarized the Left from the Right and, in the words of one my interviewees, "separated the good Greeks from the bad." By the time of the dictatorship in 1967, which was the catalyst for many to leave, families in Greece had experienced decades of institutionalized marginalization.

The focus here is on the intersection of this legacy with the political activities and sensibilities of those who arrived in Toronto and mobilized themselves against the Greek regime. While the anti-dictatorship movement they created was originally heterogeneous, it became concentrically organized around the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (PAK) and the leadership of Toronto-based professor Andreas Papandreou. After the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, PAK became the foundation for a new political party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), with Andreas Papandreou as leader once again. Emerging as the hegemonic articulation of the left, PASOK became the first socialist party to govern Greece in 1981. Practically speaking, this meant that those anti-junta activists returning to Greece from Canada after the fall of the

dictatorship found themselves navigating opportunities and trajectories that would have been inconceivable just a few years prior.

*The problem to be investigated in this dissertation is twofold:* First, to what extent does the civil war have a legacy in the narratives of men who migrated to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s and how is this expressed? Second, how are political subjectivities constructed in these accounts from the vantage point of the ambiguous present-as-crisis? These questions are approached through ethnographic observations and interviews with those who were involved in the anti-dictatorship movement and either stayed in Toronto or returned to Greece after the fall of the military junta. In answering these questions, a great emphasis is placed on what I call the "social life" of the political. In other words, while specific political structures, formations, parties and discourses are addressed throughout, they are somewhat in the "background"; questions of relationality, (mis)recognition, visibility and proximity constitute the "foreground." The sociality of the subject is of interest here, especially as he is represented in narratives: Here navigating the political file that institutionalized marginalization (chapter three), there organizing a resistance movement against the junta in the streets and basements of Toronto (chapter four) and later negotiating his "place" in post-dictatorship Greece (chapter five).

If Luisa Passerini (1996) is right that "memory speaks from today" (23), it remains true that "today" is itself an ambiguous and shifting point of articulation. This means that even when we speak of the "perspective" or "vantage point" of today (as I have just done), we can only do so in a tentative and hesitant way and with an awareness that such a phrasing offers us more an analytical device than a reflection of reality. This is especially true in Greece since 2010, where the present has been discursively produced in media accounts and commentaries as—at once—paralyzed, on the verge of collapse, in free-fall, and pregnant with radical change. Undoubtedly,

Greece has been the site of an immense experiment in the art of neoliberal crisis management within the structure of the European Union. New laws stripping Greeks of their rights, property and security are passed through unconstitutional processes and, for a period of six months, the country was governed by unelected officials.<sup>4</sup> The casualties of austerity measures set in place since 2010 by the coalition government (in collaboration with the Troika) are by now well known:<sup>5</sup> An unemployment rate of 27.5% (58.3% for youth under 25) (Eurostat 2013);<sup>6</sup> an estimated 30% decrease in wages and pensions (with another 15% anticipated over the next three years) (Gow 2012);<sup>7</sup> a 22% cut to the minimum wage (International Labour Office 2012: 5); a 25% increase in homelessness (Laskos & Tsakalotos 2013: 111); an enormous spike in suicides (for every 1% decrease in government spending, research shows a 0.43% rise in suicides among men) (Antonakakis & Collins 2014: 44); dramatic cuts in medical spending with poor health outcomes (Kentikelenis et al. 2011: 1457); greater reliance on soup kitchens and charitable medical services<sup>8</sup>; and widespread closures of businesses (one third of Athenian shops are estimated to have closed since the onset of austerity measures).<sup>9</sup> This is precisely the social and

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<sup>4</sup> Prime Minister George Papandreou (PASOK) resigned in November 2011, a coalition government was formed between PASOK (social democratic), ND (conservative) and LAOS (far-right), and economist Lucas Papademos was appointed Prime Minister without elections.

<sup>5</sup> The coalition government that was established after the summer elections in 2012 was comprised of the two ruling parties, PASOK and ND, as well as a third minority party, DIMAR. "The Troika" refers to the three financial bodies governing austerity: the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank.

<sup>6</sup> These are the 2013 figures released by the European Commission's statistics service, Eurostat. [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=une\\_rt\\_a&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=une_rt_a&lang=en) (accessed July 1, 2014)

<sup>7</sup> David Gow, "Greeks face further wage cuts as price of latest bailout," *The Guardian*, February 21, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/07/business/businessspecial3/07cities.html> (accessed March 14, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Helena Smith, "Greece's food crisis: Families face going hungry during summer shutdown," *The Guardian*, August 6, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/06/greece-food-crisis-summer-austerity> (accessed August 8, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> This is according to the president of the National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce (ESEE) Vasilis Korkidis, quoted in the Reuter's article, "Crisis shuts a third of shops in Athens city center" (Sept 24, 2012), <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/24/us-greece-business-idUSBRE88N0NW20120924> (accessed October 3, 2012)

political horizon in which Yannis lamented his "bitter lemon" as a small-business owner (in his 70s) struggling to keep the doors open.

Widespread discontent and suffering brought on by austerity measures have transformed the political map of the country, challenging the essentially two-party system that has been in place since the fall of the Junta. Having been the governing party in 2009 (with 43% of the popular vote) PASOK has lost its legitimacy and social base in its handling of the crisis and is now reinventing itself under the cover of new political parties such as "The Olive" and "The River." European elections in May 2014 suggest that the traditional PASOK (winning 9% of votes) is no longer a viable political actor (although it remains the minority partner in a governing coalition with New Democracy) and that Greek citizens are in large part split between the party of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) (26.6%) and the conservative New Democracy (ND) (22.7), while others are supporting electorally the far-right Golden Dawn (XA) (9%), the Communist Party (KKE) (6%) and "The River" (6%). These figures are striking given the fact that neither SYRIZA nor Golden Dawn had achieved the 5% of popular support necessary for parliamentary representation back in the 2009 elections.

The implications of this period of party reconstruction for my research can not be overstressed: I was, after all, *asking after the birth of a movement and a party—once celebrated as the great defender of social justice and reconciliation— at the very moment its death had been heralded.* Many of the men I interviewed had been active members (and in some cases "founding fathers") back in 1974 and returned to Greece after the fall of the junta to take part in the "socialist reconstruction" of their country. For both those who returned to Greece and those who stayed in Canada, the degraded place of the party today is a primary point of reference that narratives pivot around, even if discreetly. The current crisis announced itself in various—but

identifiable—ways: Sometimes it did so violently and suddenly (as I captured in my ethnographic notes above), other times it crept around in statements of regret. Some interviewees discussed the present as a period of vulnerability and others as a measure of the futility of past efforts and ideologies. Some framed the crisis as a form of punishment for "past sins," a rude awakening, or—in Yannis' words above—his "bitter lemon." And sometimes the implications were written on the wall: "EAT YOUR LOCAL PASOK POLITICIAN. HE ATE YOUR FUTURE AFTER ALL!"

## **II. A Brief History of Marginalization**

It is always perilous for sociologists to claim a "historical background" against which they will present their work. We often introduce our analysis of a contemporary institution, discourse, or relation with a rather rapid treatment of what came before. In doing so, we can too easily be critiqued for making claims to an unproblematic and fully intelligible past. That history is not linear or teleological, but a constellation of memory, interests, repressions and denials—that it is more a field of contestation than a universal chronology or mapping of events—has been acknowledged and taken seriously within the discipline of history itself at least since Foucault's Nietzschean emphasis on ruptures and discontinuities entered scholarship. Nevertheless, much of the research we do within sociology often rests implicitly on historical recordings of events that have informed our research at its earliest stages. This reading can be essential for projects exploring events and records in their ambiguity or contradictions, in their interpretations and commemorations or their "construction" through collective and interpersonal memory.

As I began to narrow my own interest in the social dimensions of political inheritance, I read widely work (in English) on Greece during the Second World War, the Civil War, the post-war years and the period of gradual "liberalization" of the 1960s, the Colonel's dictatorship, as

well as the years of the Metapolitefsi—works, I should add, that follow the tradition of plotting history according to key events, such as wars and changes to political parties and government regimes. Through this reading, I acquired an understanding of the political personalities and parties, geopolitical conflicts and foreign interventions, rural and urban developments and population exchanges that make up much of what is commonly called "Modern Greek Political History." This helped enormously in interviews, as I was able to keep up easily with accounts—peppered as they were with names, parties, and dates— and I was able to bring back into focus the core themes of this dissertation, rather than getting lost in details. This project would have been quite impossible without these prior readings, and it would be rather disingenuous to minimize their importance in the conceptual framing of my core problematic. For example, had I not discovered the rather obscure reference about the Idionym Law of 1921, which set in place the legal apparatus for *persecuting kin* for crimes committed, perhaps I would not have incorporated into my interview a focus on the *family as a political subject*—a theme I explore in some detail in chapter three.

How might we present, in broad outline, those events, practices or institutional changes that have shaped the lives of those who enter our research but which we have not addressed directly in interviews or, oppositely, which we discuss in such detail that the wider significance may be lost? This remains an open question—one I have struggled with throughout this dissertation, as I attempt to reveal forces that have shaped the lives of those I interviewed in both significant and subtle ways. I want to highlight here specific historical developments that lie somewhat outside of the narrative frame I explore throughout this dissertation, but which are nonetheless crucial. The politico-legal practices that I outline effectively rendered "the left"

abject, constructed the family as a political unit and institutionalized marginalization across generations.

I'll begin in the not-so-distant past of the late 1980s: Through the historically unprecedented cooperation of the right-wing "New Democracy" and Communist parties in Greek government, a law was passed in 1989 "for the remedy of the consequences of the civil war." One article called for the destruction of *citizen files* and another called for the transformation of the *civil war lexicon*: Partisans would no longer be called "Communist gang fighters" but "Democratic Army of Greece fighters," and the war itself would no longer be called "bandit war" but "civil war".<sup>10</sup> In these two "remedies" we may find our point of departure for the brief history I want to offer here. Because what follows in this dissertation is a consideration of identity and political subjectivity in relation to political genealogies that, from childhood, were marked by the tendency to "separate the good Greeks from the bad" and an institutionalized anti-communism that at once created and persecuted "left families," I wish to outline the politico-legal practices that generated continuity in relations between the state and those whom Panourgia (2009) has called "dangerous citizens" (7).

That state discourse prior to 1989 referred to the civil war as the "bandit war," of which "communist gang fighters" were the main provocateurs, is not surprising given that the very legal tools by which communists were punished had been created initially for "bandits" and thieves. Indeed, "The Law Concerning Brigands and the Prosecution of their Relatives," which was established in 1871, permitted the prosecution of anyone believed to have aided and abetted suspects, including family members (Panourgia 2009: 23). This practice of collective punishment would later be applied to people regarded as leftists and their families.

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<sup>10</sup> Law 1863-1989 (Άρση των Συνεπειών των Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944-1949)

From the earliest manifestations of worker organization and protests in Greece, it was not uncommon for workers to be punished for their participation. Prior to WWI, in 1913, a law was passed which permitted the suspension of constitutional civil rights under a declared "state of siege"—a measure that was used sporadically to control worker dissent and banish the first socialists and unionists and later deployed systematically during the dictatorship of Pangalos (1925-1926) (Voglis 2002b: 33). Pangalos formally outlawed the Communist Party (KKE) and sent members, trade unionists and their “fellow-travellers” into exile. Greek islands were refashioned as self-contained labour camps and prisons (41).

Worker unrest in 1927 and 1928—especially by those working in tobacco production, in bakeries and on the rails— provided the pretext for the liberal government's 1929 "Idionym Law"<sup>11</sup> It declared a penalty of prison or exile for "whoever aims at the implementation of ideas whose manifest purpose is the overthrow of the established social order by violent means or the detachment of part from the whole of the country, or proselytizes in favour of these ideas" (Voglis 2002b: 35). Preventing a communist takeover was the guise under which Metaxas' regime then came to power (in 1936), dissolving parliament, acquiring extraordinary powers through Emergency Law 117 and making full use of the Idionym Law to punish and speedily process dissenting individuals. Bypassing the courts and refusing the accused any possibility of appeal, the legal means were created for detaining and exiling thousands (Voglis 2002a: 527). This also laid the legal foundation for isolating an entire segment of the population on account of their *ideas* about social change (Kenna 2001: 16).

The Metaxas regime also created the legal category of “dangerous and suspicious person,” which included people with infectious diseases, those *suspected* of left-wing sympathies,

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<sup>11</sup> For a detailed overview of these legal measures, see Panourgia (2009): 23-26.

"declared" members of the communist party and their family members (Panourgia 2009: 9). Once a person was convicted, their voting rights were permanently revoked along with the possibility of employment in public office (Voglis 2009b: 40). Law 107 introduced new measures to the anticommunist state apparatus during the Metaxa dictatorship, including the "declaration of repentance" ("diloseis metaneias")—a statement renouncing the Communist party that was a condition for release—the "civic-mindedness certificate" (pistopoiitika koinonikon fronimaton)—an official document necessary for participation in public life, university attendance and work in many occupations—and the establishment of concentration camps (Panourgia 2009: 40). Statements of repentance obtained by people under immense physical and psychological pressure, along with the photographs and names of arrested communists, were published in newspapers and posted in public squares (71). With the enactment of a number of emergency laws, the publication and circulation of books deemed subversive were prohibited and all educational material came under the direct control of Metaxa (Petrakis 2011: 37). Metaxa's anticommunist state practices characterized the interwar period and would be deployed again in the post-civil war period.

During the Second World War, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) was the central organizer of mobilizations against the occupiers. As Mazower (2000) summarized, "British military and political interests tugged different ways. The war effort dictated supporting EAM/ELAS<sup>12</sup> as it was providing the most effective guerilla opposition to the Axis; but longer-range political concerns required [an] anticommunist counterweight" (5). As the war came to a close, the British transferred support from the communist-organized arm of resistance to one

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<sup>12</sup> The National Liberation Front (EAM) was a broad resistance movement, albeit organized centrally by the (banned) Greek Communist Party (KKE). The Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS) was established in 1942 as the military wing of the KKE.

supportive of the conservative establishment (ibid). Given their enormous contribution to the Allied war effort, communists were justified in thinking that they would have a place in the post-war government. Instead, those who had actively supported EAM and ELAS found themselves screened out of army conscription in order to "build a state apparatus loyal to the regime" (Voglis 2002a: 531). In the year leading up to the civil war, the National Guard (backed by the British), along with newly formed right-wing paramilitaries, terrorized those villages that had supported the partisans. According to Tsoucalas (1969), 2,961 persons were given the death sentence, 500 were murdered and 20,000 were arrested from 1945-1946 (94).

During the civil war, more than 50,000 people were imprisoned on political grounds. On the islands of Makronisos, Giaros, and Trikeri, "re-education" and work camps were established with the pronounced aim of "rehabilitating" the left into a nationally-conscious citizenry loyal to the existing government (Voglis 2002b: 34). While death penalties, physical and psychological torture, solitary confinement, hard labour, and general mistreatment were consistently imposed on imprisoned subjects, the possibility existed for some to be "pardoned" so long as they denounced the communist party and signed declarations of repentance (ibid). These were read in front of the local parish and broadcasted over the radio in order to publicly humiliate and to breed suspicion and judgment within the ranks of the party.

The period following the civil war was marked by a well-institutionalized, state-administered system of anticommunism that targeted the defeated—one similar in many ways to American McCarthyism (Samatas 1986)<sup>13</sup>. According to Samatas, an institutional continuity had

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<sup>13</sup> That anticommunism directly after the civil war was both geopolitically inscribed and supported by Liberal representatives is evidenced by the fact that it was a Liberal post-war government that announced: "None of the (political) prisoners detained in prisons and (concentration) camps will return home unless they repent and subjugate themselves to the way of life which we insist on establishing in Greece with the ample aid and assistance of our trans-Atlantic allies." (Quoted in Samatas 1986: 16).

been built into the bureaucratic practices of the state that would shape the lives of those on the left for decades: Since the late 1930s, Greeks required a certificate of “social convictions” —a testament to holding "social beliefs" supportive of the government and thus to being one of the "nationally-minded citizens" (*ethnicofrones*) (12). By 1967, this certificate (re-named "certificate of civic-mindedness") was required for access to university, the acquisition of bank loans, driver’s license, passport, national identification card, and employment in the public sector (including transportation, administration, military, police, social services, medicine, education, utilities, merchant marines, banks, and the emerging corporations partially or fully owned by the state) (32). Being refused certification was socially and financially devastating for individuals and their family members (*ibid*).

I hope this short overview of institutional marginalization will give the reader a sense of i) the relatively long duration of practices of exclusion; ii) the specific legal tools that both center and right-wing governments used to subordinate dissent; and iii) the politico-legal process by which family members of different generations were institutionally tied together through their exclusion.

### **III. From Dangerous Citizens to Political Migrants<sup>14</sup>?**

This political history has been largely ignored in the scholarly literature on the Greek diaspora. This is likely a reflection of the specific approach to migration that dominated the field in the 60s and 70s, when Greek migrants really caught the attention of academics and researchers in the social sciences. The extensive literature from this period—focusing principally on demographic

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<sup>14</sup> "Dangerous citizens" is a term Panourgia (2009) uses in reference to Greek Leftists.

elements and "community" characteristics—influenced research for over four decades.<sup>15</sup> Studies emerging out of this tradition are most useful for establishing a general sense of what was then called "waves of migration," patterns of settlement, religious affiliations and cultural developments, such as churches, Greek schools and regional associations (Glytsos 1997; Constantinou 2007; Schultz 1980). Others examined the central role of kin networks in small business production and other income-generation activities (Lovel-Troy 1979).

Taken together, these studies tend to draw upon the language—and indeed, "the problem"—of assimilation, integration, acculturation and adjustment and are primarily concerned (either explicitly or implicitly) with the extent to which Greeks represent a more or less "successful" immigrant group. Their success is measured variously in terms of language acquisition, involvement in host country associations, leisure time activities, achievements in education (Vegler 1988) and labour participation (Kourvetaris 1989), as well as the extent to which specific cultural forms and traditions, especially within "the Greek" or "the Greek-Canadian" (or "Greek-American") family have undergone continuity or change (Tastsoglou and Stubos 1992; Tsemberis et al. 1999). Although, as Laliotou (2004) has pointed out, there is quite a bit of consensus about the cultural and social integration of Greek immigrants, the "process itself is not analyzed," with the effect that assimilation is taken to be "a natural event" (150). Significantly, the demographic and social scientific emphasis underpinning many of these studies—primarily oriented to fact gathering, social psychological categorizations and the demonstrated relations between structural variables (education, language, age, sex, income, occupation and family structure)—have the effect of depoliticizing the migrant by either ignoring

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<sup>15</sup> In addition to a few broad historical overviews of Greek diasporas (Clogg 2000; Tziouvas 2009), there are many nation-specific histories (for Canada, see Chimbos 1980; Tamis & Gavaki 2002; for Australia, see Tamis & Gavaki and for the US, see Moskos 1989; Soloutos 1964) and, especially in the context of Greek-American studies, there are countless studies of more local communities.

questions of the political or reducing them to a historical context (ie. Whatever happened in the "old country"), an attitude "held" by a more or less rational individual, or one "push factor" among others.

Others have considered questions of identity—and indeed, "identity crisis" (Kourvetaris 1990)—with an interest in Greek immigrants' opinions and perceptions of the cultural practices of the "home country" as well as the "new" (See Chimbos (1971) on attitudes about inter-ethnic marriages; Constantinou (1985) on "ethnic" differences between generations; Karlis (1999) on changing ideas about recreation; and Karpathakis (1994) on religiosity). Studies of this kind have highlighted tensions within the Greek diasporas. For example, Schultz (1981) considered some of the intergenerational tensions existing between what she termed "newcomers" (those arriving to the US after the second world war) and the "oldertimers" (the offspring of immigrants arriving in the 1920s); while the former judged the latter to be "Americanized" and "inhospitable," the latter saw the former as "lazy," "selfish" and "entitled" (385-386). Similarly, an early anthropological study of the Greek "kafeneio" (men's coffee house) found that regulars maintained strong affective attachments to Greece, were "ambivalent" about American culture and were marginal from the more established Greek-American middle class (Patterson 1970: 247).

Saloutos' (1964) *The Greeks in The United States* is widely acknowledged to have inaugurated the productive field of "Greek-American Studies." He demonstrated the social mobility of Greek labourers from the margins of American society to the middle class, a trajectory that Moskos (1989) also traces and gives the name "embourgeoisement" (55). It is within this field that the figure of the apolitical Greek migrant has been somewhat challenged. Karpathakis (1999) examined the participation of Greek immigrants in New York following the

Turkish invasion of Cyprus in the summer of 1974, exploring the strategic ways in which Greek Americans created formal relations with political parties at both the local and national level and then took specific steps—becoming naturalized American Citizens, contributing funds to campaigns, voting and even running for office at all three levels of government—to influence homeland politics (see also Kaloudis 2006). Peck (1998) has examined the initial obstacles to Greek-Americans' incorporation in the workers' movement, along with their gradual participation in labour unions and strike activities, while historians Dan Georgakas (1987 and 1991) and Karpozilos (forthcoming)<sup>16</sup> have comprehensively traced their contributions to the workers' movements, especially through leadership positions in the Communist Party. Georgakas (1987) also provides an overview of the wide support (or silent acquiescence) given by Greek Americans to the Greek dictatorship in the 1960s and 70s, as well as the few suppressed attempts at protest by Greek American intellectuals and journalists during that time. Explaining the disparity between the early activities of Greek immigrants in the workers movements and the relatively accommodating response to the junta, Georgakas emphasizes the well-entrenched impact of McCarthyism:

The majority of the [Greek American] community had supported the Communist-led EAM-ELAS, but the American government had determined that EAM-ELAS would have as small a post-war role as possible [...] Discussions of alternatives, proposals for compromise, and the formation of pressure groups was rendered impossible by the specter of McCarthyism. Any sentiment that could be interpreted as pro-Communist put a foreign-born Greek American in danger of deportation. For the native-born, there was the

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<sup>16</sup> Karpozilos' doctoral research on "Greek American Radicals in America" (1900-1950), which will be published shortly with Crete University Press, provides the historical research for the excellent documentary, "Greek American Radicals: The Untold Story," (directed by Kostas Vakkas), first shown at the Thessaloniki Film Festival in 2013.

prospect of the blacklist. Support for American policy, which might have developed naturally, was brutally commandeered [...] As a consequence of this process, Greek America developed a kind of amnesia. It forgot its own turbulent history in America (43).

The relatively "weak" position of the Greek-American Left is differently explained by Moskos in his response to Georgakas: "In brief, those immigrants who prospered in America, or at least made a decent living, were the most likely to establish families here. The class base of the Greek American Left [...] either returned to Greece or did not reproduce itself<sup>17</sup>" (1987: 59). Years later, however, he briefly describes a revival, primarily due to Greeks students and workers arriving during the junta and raising awareness of its brutality in the context of the emerging New Left—a movement which he claims also impacted a "scattering of second-generation academics" (Moskos 2014: 116).

The literature on the Greek diaspora in Canada is sparse and tends to deny both Greek migrants' political inheritance and their own political activities. That the Greek Junta both created a wave of progressive migrants to Canada and sparked a political movement against the regime has been overlooked. The power of the assimilationist or integrationist paradigm over research is strikingly evident in the case of Efrosini Gavaki's (1977) treatment of political antagonisms in the Greek diaspora. Reporting her findings from a questionnaire designed to assess immigrants' level of "powerlessness and, consequently, [their] level of cultural integration," Gavaki explains her discovery of a "bias" in her study. I quote Gavaki at length here in order to make my point :

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<sup>17</sup> On the latter point, Moskos is speaking literally, as he notes (without revealing his sources) that "among the less economically successful of the immigrants who stayed in America, a disproportionate share never married" (59)

A parenthetical note [...] The interviewing process was progressing smoothly until the section of the powerlessness scale which deals with attitude towards governments and power structures was reached. At that point, the flow of the interviewing process was interrupted and the respondents (students and professionals excluded) hesitated in answering the questions. The most frequent reason given for that was that they did not want to get involved with politics. It took a lot of reassurance to persuade them to believe that they were guaranteed secrecy and anonymity. However, it was felt that respondents were giving the ["least questioning the legitimacy of established order [" answer], rather than what they really felt. *Thus a bias towards less powerlessness should be expected.* The "undecided" category almost exclusively represents those who insisted on not giving an answer (20).

Gavaki then tells the reader that there is presently a military dictatorship in Greece and considers how this may have affected her respondents:

[...] the Greek community is broken into many factions supporting or opposing [the state]. The political orientations of most of the interviewees were relatively known in the community. Rumours and incidents of threat by the military government and its sympathizers and rumours of incidents of retaliation by its opponents were widespread among Greeks in Canada. Thus, fear for themselves and their relatives in Greece kept them from risking being personally identified with any political stand, whether related with Greece or not [...] *Thus, the overall significance of this situation will be a deflated level of powerlessness, as most of the respondents concentrated their answers in the middle* (ibid).

Many years later, Tamis and Gavaki (2002) co-edited a comparative history of the Greeks in Canada and Australia. Truly remarkable to me is the fact that Gavaki says nothing about the antagonistic relations that had previously "biased" her assessment scale. That the political emerges in her work as an external condition intervening on a measure that would otherwise be valid and then disappears completely in her discussion of the Greek diaspora can only be explained by the twin attachment to a positivist paradigm and a desire to represent the Greek diaspora in positive terms. The significance of this absence can not be overstated; after all, Gavaki is taken to be a major scholar of the Greek diaspora in Canada and there have been no studies on this generation of the Greek diaspora since her co-authored book. Thus, the only evidence that we have in the literature that an anti-dictatorship movement actually occurred is gleaned from the few pages Chimbos (1980) offers on various organizations and newspapers in his social history of the "Greeks in Canada."

Close to the spirit of this dissertation are those studies that disturb the representation of Greeks as a "model ethnic" and focus on questions of subjectivity. For example, Tastsoglou (2009) examines state archives from the 1950s and 60s to show how Greek women were portrayed as ideal domestic workers but also how migrants' identities were inherently gendered and classed, emerging out of daily practices of domestic and paid labour. Offering a "history of migrant subjectivities" in the first decades of the 20th century, Laliotou (2004) looks at practices of writing the self in memoirs and letters of Greek migrants in the United States within the frame of transnational cultural production. She concludes that "the physical migration and dislocation of Greek populations" had the effect of "displac[ing] the nation-state [...] enacted difference and heterogeneity in Greek national culture (200).

Importantly, Laliotou is writing about the experiences and constructions of Greek migrants to America in the first half of the twentieth century, while I am focusing on the generation of men who migrated to Canada in the 1960s and 70s. Many of those migrating to Canada at this time were familiar with practices of exclusion, degrading discourses and an ambivalent (dis)identification with the hegemonic articulation of the "nation" and "national culture." Said otherwise, state persecution and marginalization had already enacted "difference" in subjectivities long before the dislocating experience of migration.

Finally, Anagnostou's (2009) similar attempt to disrupt the figure of Greeks in America as a uniform ethnic group resonates with reflections in this dissertation. Anagnostou asks after the experiences, struggles and identities that are repressed and silenced in the making of a homogenous ethnic community and ethnic past. The last chapter of his book is particularly relevant, as it tracks those moments of political exposure in the memoirs and popular ethnographies of migrants and their children in the United States. A few pages explore the ways in which state oppression during the McCarthy period created a "heritage of fear" for those Greek Americans who saw their left-wing immigrant parents (along with others) surveilled and intimidated by the state.

#### **IV. Chapter Breakdown**

In *chapter two*, I set out my methodological approach and clarify the theoretical concepts useful for thinking about political subjectivity, the social life of political categories and political genealogy in the narratives of those who migrated to Canada from Greece in the 1960s and 1970s. I draw from ethnographic literatures on the state and kinship—two fields that are often not considered together—and work on subjectivity. I also discuss questions pertaining to the

archive, ethnographic methodologies and the narrative approach I took to interviewing and data analysis.

The point of departure for *chapter three* is the political file—"o fakelos"—that was used in the postwar years and up to 1974 to categorize Greek citizens based on their *family's* loyalty to the state. Approached symbolically, as that which renders one ontologically "left," and ethnographically, as a structuring experience that shapes daily life, I examine what it means for Greeks to have been "living in the file for generations." Above, I have provided a very cursory overview of some of the institutional arrangements that legally and politically legitimized the exclusion of an entire section of society over the course of many decades. In chapter three, I ask how one inhabits the file—that which has all the connotations of order, preservation, and authority. In whose name does the file speak? To what extent can the file be contested? And how do interviewees come to terms with their political inheritance? While the majority of these documents have been destroyed—and a few classified—I show that the file still speaks in the narratives of those I interviewed. The purpose of chapter three for the dissertation as a whole is threefold: i) to develop my problematic of political genealogy, which will be considered in each of the following chapters; ii) to demonstrate the very particular forms of sociality that underpin expressions of political subjectivity; and iii) to provide a detailed case of what I call the "social life of the political." Specifically, I am demonstrating the ways in which conceptualizations of the political pivot around an understanding of the family as a political actor.

*Chapter four* explores forms of sociality and constructions of political subjectivity in men's narratives of the anti-dictatorship movement established in Toronto. I ask: How did men negotiate, manage, and socialize along political lines in their new city? And, having carried the weight of the file's interpolations for many years—indeed having been told *what they were and*

*what they were destined to be*—what was it to actively participate in a movement and to *act* (often for the first time) *politically*? I argue that for men in their 20s and early 30s, differences of age, but also of culture and education forged a sense of being a marginalized and progressive generation in the Greek diaspora. I also show how specific forms of sociality—solidarity, but also antagonism and distrust—developed between different branches of the movement and between men and state authorities in Toronto. In other words, I examine precisely those antagonisms that Gavaki's research unintentionally discovers and then disappears. Importantly, I demonstrate that political genealogies remained animated in the streets of Toronto in three ways: first, in the struggle over "naming" the anti-dictatorship movement and the pressure placed on communists not to reveal their political identities in collective actions; second, in the intimidations of men by Greek authorities in Toronto and interviewees' fears that their activities would have consequences for relatives back in Greece; third, in the use of family background to (de)legitimize activists.

*Chapter five* journeys from Toronto to Greece, as many families did after the fall of the Junta in 1974. By 1981, the resistance movement discussed in chapter four had evolved into the first ever governing socialist party (PASOK). In this chapter, I locate men's accounts of return in a context in which a particular pronouncement of "the left" was ascending through the party and personality of Andreas Papandreou, gaining institutional legitimacy and opening up unprecedented opportunities for those who had been marginalized for many decades. What was it to move from a diasporic site—and a marginal one at that—to the "center" of the action in homeland politics? How were relations established in the diaspora reconfigured in the transforming political space of Athens? I argue that narrated returns are fraught with connotations of culpability, innocence, opportunism and integrity, both in the accounts of those

who remained in Canada and those who re-settled in Greece. In drawing on a nuanced set of tropes—of naming, visibility and proximity—men engage in precarious "appropriations" of moralities (Butler 2005: 7). A particular kind of normative political subjectivity emerges in these accounts, one which tends—albeit discretely—to promote withdrawal, marginality and failures over participation, success and "being at the center."

*Chapter six* is by far the most open-ended of chapters, raising more questions than advancing arguments. The hesitancy of its ethnographic and theoretical statements is no doubt a reflection of the volatility of the present. I explore here manifestations of political genealogy—expressed as movement, rupture, continuity, contradiction and suspension—in interviewees' attempts to come to terms with that cluster of economic and political events, discourses and institutional changes that constitute "the crisis"<sup>18</sup>. As they try to give discursive shape to "these troubled times" and to weave their own life account into the narrative, they tend to draw on identifiable "constellations of political genealogy." The first narrates *continuity*. One way it does so is through an adamant adherence to the party line of the communist party (KKE). A second constellation holds a *disillusioned* relation to the present, in which a specific political genealogy may have had its merit in the past, but provides no political or moral direction out of the

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<sup>18</sup> I must note here that while I can sympathize with the reader who would appreciate an ethnographic account of the extent to which political genealogy is alive within accounts of young people in Greece today, this legitimate and interesting project lies outside of the scope of this dissertation. Too often, we tend to implicitly equate "today" with that of the young, as one interlocutor did when asking of my research: "Yes, but is this still relevant today?" But the today that I am examining is populated by an aging group and it is through their accounts that I am approaching the crisis. Moreover, one only has to look at the demographics of street protest in Athens to challenge the popular idea that austerity dissent is the domain of the young, whose futures will be influenced by the outcome of political decisions. Protesting pensioners and those close to retirement, as well as the older unemployed and activists have a very strong presence in strikes and protests and it is common to overhear laments that there are not more young people participating. I should also emphasize that it was also this demographic of Athenians (above 65) that filled the lecture halls to discuss the future of left politics in Greece whenever such events were organized in 2012 and 2013.

contemporary crisis. A third is built around a reflexive identification with "the center" and what I tentatively call the "centric imaginary." While it breaks with genealogy in a similar way to that of the disillusioned figure, it is different in so far as it finds relief and inventiveness in the center as a sound moral and political project. A fourth constellation uses ambiguous auto-essentialist tropes that obscure the political and economic dimensions of the crisis through reference to a vague and homogeneous "the Greeks." I conclude with a final constellation—one that attempts a creative re-inhabiting of political genealogy.

## Chapter 2

### **From Anecdotes to Ethnography: Reflections on Method and Conceptual Clarifications**

Just as I was beginning to narrow my research topic in the winter of 2010, a colleague remarked, "I don't know where you find the patience. The problem with doing interviews with Greeks is that they end up telling you *so much irrelevant stuff*." But remarks on the triviality of all the "stuff" that is said to orbit and get in the way of politics must be interrogated. I became ever more convinced of the need for doing so after attending a workshop on the "Greek crisis," hosted by a socialist group in Toronto, in May 2012. In the context of a discussion on the rapidly changing political map of the country leading up to and after the first set of elections of that same month, I began to offer a few "stories from the field," pointing out that the Communist Party in Greece had spent more time critiquing the emerging Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) than it had the governing parties that had brought the country into the course of austerity and debt packages. I was interrupted by one of the organizers of the event with the caution that what I was saying was "only anecdotal." Meanwhile, the Canadian professor who had returned from a few days in Athens (and had spoken with party leaders and representatives) was not once charged with having the same unscholarly perspective.

As Herzfeld (2001) has pointed out, the charge of "anecdotalism" is regularly encountered by those in—and outside of—the field (76). Tending not to carry statistics in hand ("hard facts") and privileging the everyday interactions of "ordinary folk" over the statements of spokespersons and representatives, ethnographers can easily be discounted as mere storytellers. This is especially true when they turn their attention to matters of "the political" or "the state." Like

Herzfeld, however, I believe that it is precisely with "such 'triviality' that [ethnographers] play their strongest card" (ibid). As one of my interviewees advised, if I wanted to understand "what was going on in Greece today," or "what happened back then in Toronto," I'd have to pay attention to the "things that people don't take into consideration when they talk about politics [...] the everyday living details [...] *Cultural stuff*."

## **I. Methodology**

### **Narratives of the Present, Ethnography of the Past?**

I initially became interested in the political life of the Greek diaspora through casual conversations with a former member of the Panhellenic Liberation Movement (PAK)—the anti-dictatorship organization that had been established in 1968. It was September of 2010 and I had just arrived back to Toronto, having spent a month in Athens visiting relatives. In the course of chatting with my new acquaintance, Kostas, about what I had learned of Greece's political history during my stay, I discovered that he had left Athens in "the years of the Junta." In explaining that he had done this "like so many others," he inadvertently became my primary source and my first interviewee. The next time we met, he came with an electronic file of black and white photographs of the "PAK days." Here was a photo of Varsity Hall, packed full of people awaiting the speech of Andreas Papandreou. Here was another of the same event: Against the background of a sea of distracted faces, an old man sits, crutches in hand, staring directly into the camera. Tired, dignified, resolute. A third photo of suited men with finely combed hair, placards raised above their heads: "Don't Make Greece Another Vietnam"; "Dictatorship is Hell"; "We are Freedom Loving People." And here was a group of men standing huddled around Mr. Papandreou in the corner of a room posterred with the Greek flag, a banner reading "Friends

of PAK" and a photo of..."Who's that?" I asked Kostas. "Ah, it's the old man, George Papandreou," he replied. In this way, my first impressions of the movement were born: black suits, cigarettes, smoke-filled rooms, placards, Papandreou the father, Papandreou the son.

As we sat in front of my laptop with the photos enlarged, Kostas squinted as he tried to make out familiar faces. He mulled over each one: "He's dead, he's dead, he just died, I don't know this face, who the fuck is that? He was a malaka [idiot], dead. He lives in Crete...Yannis something, Yannis, Giorgos, they were brothers, had a restaurant on the Danforth...I forget their last names. Ah, there's Portokalis, God rest his soul!" I had the sinking feeling that most of my potential interviewees were underground or scattered somewhere back in Greece, retired to villages with names that no one could remember. But very slowly, the research progressed; faces were remembered in the last moments of my initial interviews and phone numbers or addresses were recovered in small books that had not been opened for decades. This process proceeded in fits and starts and lasted for just over two years.

I completed semi-structured interviews with 37 participants of the anti-dictatorship movement. Of those I interviewed, 34 were men and 3 were women—a strongly weighted ratio that explains my use of the terms "men's stories" and "men's accounts" throughout this dissertation. Interviews in Canada typically lasted 3 to 6 hours and were conducted at the participants' home or in cafes in or around the GTA (Greater Toronto Area).<sup>19</sup> Interviews were conducted in English and recorded with the consent of each interviewee. In Greece, due to the fact that interviewees had retired to different cities and villages throughout the country, I travelled extensively and was often invited to stay for full days with their families. Despite this

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<sup>19</sup> Later in my research, I was given the names and numbers of "very active people" who were part of the movement against the dictatorship in Montreal. While my dissertation will not include stories from Montreal, I look forward to exploring these in subsequent research.

variability in residence, almost all of the men I interviewed in Greece had "returned" in the 1970s and 80s to settle in Athens. Two did so in Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece. With about half of my interviewees, I had second meetings and in rare cases, I had three or four.

If a reader is seeking from this dissertation a historical treatment of "what the Greeks did in Canada" and "what they did when they returned," she will be sorely disappointed. In fact, I imagine the same response from interviewees themselves, many of whom hoped that I was researching their activities in order to tell the story of the young Greek diaspora of the 1960s and 1970s and the risks they took in defence of their homeland. I have expressed to others many times that I wished such a book existed, as it would have made my job much easier by providing a reference to key events, organizations and trajectories. My dissertation, however, is more about the travels of political categories in social life—about subjectivity and the difficult labour of narrating one's personal and political past—than the history of the Greek diaspora. That said, there is a chronological thread evoked by my interview guideline—as well as by men themselves in the telling of their stories—that is affirmed in the structure of this dissertation around a prototypical life course (from growing up in the post-civil war period to getting old in the present-framed-as-crisis).

This dissertation is ethnographic in the sense that it pulls from the anthropological literature on state, kin and subjectivity in the construction of its conceptual framework and relies on the methodological practices of ethnographic observation and extensive interviewing. But more specifically, it pivots around a defining feature of the "ethnographic": namely, "the attempt [...] to understand another world using the self—as much as possible—as the instrument of knowing" (Ortner 1997: 42). Treating the accounts of interviewees not as pieces of a historical puzzle, but as sites of struggle over classification, recognition and exoneration, I show how men

are engaged in the double pursuit of making sense of instability and making themselves socially and morally intelligible in the process.

To the extent that matters of the political preoccupy these pages, an ethnographic approach "routes" them through "connections between persons" (Strathern 1995: 13). In practice, this meant reading interviews for the subtle dynamics and relations in which precarious social and political subjects set out, again and again, in new and difficult terrains. Striking in the accounts men offer is the ongoing interpretative labour required to keep in one another's company and the moments of becoming aware "of the ways they are connected and disconnected" (ibid).

My research is heavily dependent on the stories shared by my interviewees. Narratives, writes Trouillot, "are emplotted in a way that life is not" (Trouillot 1995: 6)—an interesting point of departure for considering those recurring and identifiable frames and terms (tropes) within which men give accounts of themselves and others. As I discuss at length below, interviewees draw in diverse ways upon tropes of proximity, visibility and voice in their narratives of "living in the file" in post-civil war Greece (chapter three), politically organizing themselves in the Greek diaspora (chapter four) and returning to Greece in the post-junta "Metapolitefsi" (chapter five). My focus is consistently on how the story is told and the way it positions the teller, rather than the pursuit of the most valid and reliable version of events.

We know that oral narration does not provide windows into unmediated patterns of behaviour, intentions or consciousness (Passerini 1987). Within critical circles in social sciences, it is almost part of the course these days to distance oneself from what Trouillot (1995) calls the "storage model of memory-history" (14-15) and the idea that what an interviewee "knows" can be accessed and discussed "at will," as one opens a cabinet with the appropriate key (ie. a "good" interviewer"). Stoler and Strassler (2000) have referred to this as the "hydraulic model," in which

experiences are presumed to be "housed as discrete stories awaiting an audience" and then "tapped" by the researcher (168). And yet, this double-awareness—that there is a disconnect between lives lived and the narratives told about them ("emplotment") and that what we call "memory" is not a resource merely accessible (regardless of how skilled or experienced a researcher is)—leaves aside another fieldwork trouble. This is the problem of benevolently seeking to bring the village "back to life" and is expressed in a dissatisfaction with interviewees that "speak like a book" (Papailias 2005:133). In chapter six, I document my own discovery that one of my interviewees was working along the lines of a "script." While I was originally—and perhaps problematically—disappointed with this interview, I later rethought this discovery along the lines of abiding lexicons and their role in the reproduction of political genealogies.

### **Ethnographic Reflections in the Archive**

Apart from the photos that Kostas generously shared with me, which became my primary "leads" for subsequent interviews but also evocative sites of ethnographic exposure throughout this dissertation, I also acquired Thanos' personal archive of *Neos Kosmos*, a democratic newspaper that was published weekly in Toronto during the early years of the Junta. I recall now, with great tenderness, the memory of Thanos, more than 80 years old, coming to meet me in downtown Toronto with a very heavy vintage suitcase, using his leg to absorb the weight with each step. I offered to help him; he refused. Thanos had collected every edition of the community newspaper and had neatly sorted them chronologically. As he handed them over to me at the end of our second meeting, he said simply, "You'll find everything you need to know in there." These papers became useful chronological indicators for framing stories that men often shared with me in an absent-minded manner. Some of those still living in Toronto, upon learning that I was in

possession of the beloved newspapers, often referred back to them: "It was the summer of 72...or was it spring? In any case, you will learn in the paper..." In this way, the presence of this particular archive allowed some of my interviewees to take a much looser relation to chronology in their accounts. Others even expressed that they probably had "little to add," given the fact that I had access to the newspapers—a concern that was probably genuine but seemed to pass quickly once the interview began. Thanos' newspapers were useful for revealing some of the discourses employed in protests and campaigns. These enter my analysis in chapter four.

More than a year into my research, I found myself pouring over the details of Yannis' collection "from the Toronto days" in his small Athenian shop. Yannis exemplified the spirit of a true conservationist, having dated and secured in plastic wrap stacks of newspapers and magazines now decades old. Our first meetings took place among piles of archival material, carefully framed political posters from Toronto and photos of his wife and son. After a few meetings, Yannis invited me to his family home in order to present what was, in his own words, "my archive." He even estimated how many hours it would take to go through the more than 15 boxes of material that he had brought with him from Toronto when he returned to Athens in 1984. We met two times every week for three successive weeks, slowly and deliberately working through newspaper clippings, photos and memorabilia from the community (such as tickets from annual dances and pamphlets from various organizations). Watching Yannis gingerly return documents to their "proper" place among the others, I understood quickly that each piece was felt to be precious. More than once, Yannis referred to his archive as "belonging to the Greeks of Toronto" and expressed a hope that it would eventually return to Canada. "Otherwise my son will burn it when I die," he said frankly.

Against these deliberate archival encounters, were those that were fleeting and unannounced. Having completed an interview with Apostolos, I was offered "a quick tour" of his Athenian home. Passing up a flight of stairs, he stopped suddenly and pointed to the wall. "What do you see there?" he asked impishly. It was a strange, colourful piece; painted block cubes descending upon a line of male faces in profile, a single laurel wreath above their heads. After several seconds, I made out torn pieces of an old newspaper. "Eh, it's not my best piece," he said shrugging. And then he told me about the long nights he had spent, casting each letter of this "radical" student newspaper—a collective labour premised on raising awareness in Toronto about the plight of Greeks during the Junta. Here was the past literally deconstructed and rendered anew; archive fashioned as art and Apostolos' years in Toronto exposed for sons and visitors alike.<sup>20</sup>

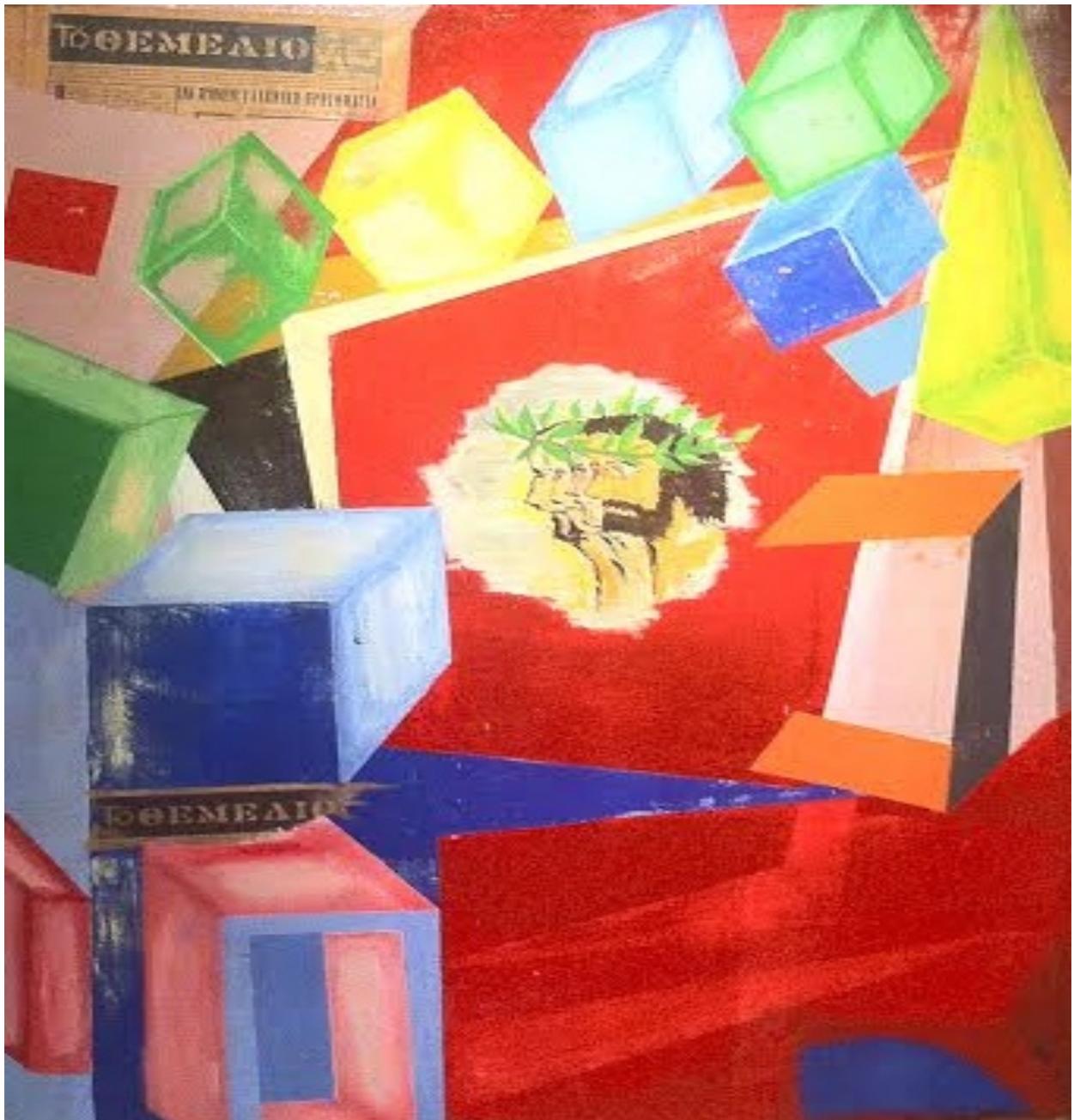
Another fleeting archival encounter occurred after a second interview with Evangelos in a busy cafe in Toronto. Sitting together in his car and with the engine running—a subtle sign that my lingering was not a possibility—Evangelos took a set of photos out of a simple white envelope. "I knew you'd want to see these," he said, as he began flipping through one photograph after another with an obligatory air. He had taken these photos at the funeral of George Papandreou Sr. in November of 1968. With few words, he put the photos back in the envelope and then hesitated, perhaps contemplating if he should lend them to me. He placed them in the glove compartment and sighed. "On that day, we came across a cop from Patras," he said, "Let's leave it at that." The funeral of George Papandreou, who had been placed under house arrest by the military authorities, became the occasion for street protests against the Junta. These ended

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<sup>20</sup> Stavros, who also contributed to this newspaper, recounted a much less dignified fate: "My father-in-law lined the bird cage with it," he said, laughing.

brutally, with some interviewees implying that their experiences that day had inspired a quick departure from Athens.

*Figure 1: "What do you see there?"*



State files, another manifestation of the archive in this dissertation, have only received ethnographic attention more recently. According to Hull (2012a), those studying state files have often tended towards polarized treatments: on the one hand, "realists" "assume records are unmediated traces [...] of people, places and things," while "social constructivists," tend to "see bureaucratic objects as the results of discursive positing" (246). "Neither," writes Hull, "give adequate attention to the mediations through which bureaucratic objects are enacted and consequently to the oblique relations documents have with that about which they speak" (ibid). "Oblique" relations are those that couldn't possibly be read straight off the page, but would only be detectable in ethnographic reflections on, say, the file in its contested interpretations and uses by various social actors, including bureaucrats, municipal authorities and community members.

In other ethnographic work on the state archive, emphasis is placed on its social construction in the more literal sense—as something that relies on a number of agents for its creation. Notes written in the margins, signatures, first and second drafts of letters, crossed out words and phrases, repetitions, the use of a pen versus a typewriter, along with the distribution and use of the file all become fascinating areas of research. Anne Stoler's (2010) work on the archive was ground-breaking in this regard, especially as it brought to light the precarity of the files construction: Even in the colonial archives of the Dutch government, we find that recording is a contested and unpredictable social process. Similarly, Katherine Verdery (2013a; 2013b) argues that the files of the Romanian Communist regime tell us less about the individuals filed by the secret police than the latter's attempts to fashion and make sense of the world. Turning the file into a veritable "ethnographic database," Verdery (2013a) sets out "to treat [the archive's]

2,780 pages as if they were someone's field notes, attempting to reconstruct from them the worldview and practices of the officers and informers who produced them" (9).<sup>21</sup>

In chapter four, I draw on state files from the Library and Archives Canada (Ottawa), where I spent four weeks in 2011 pouring over diplomatic exchanges, remarks by political figures, parliamentary discussions and profiles of specific persons. At the time, I was searching for information about the Canadian government's position on the Greek dictatorship in 1967 and the extent to which it constructed Greeks in Canada as political persons of interests. As I show in chapters three and four, some activists involved in the anti-dictatorship struggle in Toronto had been regarded as dangerous by successive Greek governments before their migration; I was thus interested in the extent to which their family and political histories were of concern to the Canadian state. I discuss this material alongside accounts of interviewee's encounters with agents of the state.

I did not take the ethnographic perspective of Stoler and Verdery into consideration in my first readings of these files. It was at a much later stage in my research that I began to see its relevance. Canadian diplomats experienced their own difficult labours of interpretation as they danced around awkward social confrontations with representatives of the Junta, and in Ottawa, officials scrambled to find the appropriate terms with which to recognize the new regime. For example, upon the arrival of King Constantine to Canada in 1967, just months after the coup, Pearson's assistants struggled to discursively neutralize relations between Greece and Canada in the Prime Minister's welcoming speech. Scratched out sentences indicate precarious attempts to recognize the "longstanding" good relations between the countries, while avoiding any

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<sup>21</sup> On the construction of worldviews among the Stasi of East Germany—what the author calls "political epistemics"—see Glaeser's (2010), *Political epistemics: The secret police, the opposition, and the end of East German socialism*, (especially part 3).

connotations of Canada's current position on the illegal regime. Other lines salute Greek sons who are settling in Canada, while repressing the political circumstances of their migration. These few examples suggest that a more in-depth ethnographic reading of Canadian state files is both warranted and fruitful.

The citizen files kept by the Greek state are analyzed ethnographically in chapter three, but not in the sense of having spent hours perusing them. The majority of these files were destroyed by government decision in 1989, while a few—those deemed to be of "historical importance"—were kept and classified (as they remain today). Thus, my relation to these files is mediated entirely through the narratives of those I interviewed. As I demonstrate, the file has an ambivalent presence throughout this dissertation. It has, at once: a materiality (emerging in storied "encounters"); a spectral sense (no longer a physical object, but leaving profound traces); and a representational force (as an abiding metaphor for "being one of two" in a highly polarized political climate).

Figure 2: "...to pay tribute to a land which has sent so many of its sons..."

- 2 -

Both Greece's heritage and its <sup>modern</sup> ~~present~~ progress are well reflected in its most attractive pavilion at Expo. May I compliment your country on this contribution to <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ World's Fair. We are also looking forward to the classical plays to be performed here by the Greek National Theatre in October.

Anyone who knows today's Greeks knows them to be supremely alive, with a philosophy that, although most conscious of life's sorrows, has not lost touch with nature's joy and gaiety. From our northerly viewpoint, you have one further advantage: a climate that lends itself to communion with nature and a landscape that, since ancient times, has been sung by poets and storytellers.

We in Canada have good reason to be aware of <sup>the</sup> ~~Greek~~ qualities, and I <sup>of Greece,</sup> ~~and I~~ should like to pay tribute to a land which has sent so many of its sons <sup>to settle</sup> ~~to settle~~ in this country. The first recorded Greek in Canada came to southern Vancouver Island in 1851 and married an Indian chieftain's daughter. This year, additional settlers from Greece will bring the total number of actual immigrants close to the figure of 80,000. In 1960 Greek Canadians in Montreal celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the first Greek Orthodox Church there. Greek settlers are an energetic, growing element in our population. They are active in business, and in the arts and professions, as tradesmen, technicians, architects, doctors and teachers. We value this contribution and trust it will increase.

In addressing Your Hellenic Majesties, I am therefore greeting you both as distinguished visitors and as representatives of a country with whose people and traditions Canada has long-standing ~~and continuing~~ ties. In this spirit, <sup>we</sup> ~~we~~ warmly welcome Your Majesties to Ottawa and wish you a most enjoyable stay, ~~today and during the days to come.~~

## **Situating the Researcher: A "Greek Daughter" comes home to Roost?**

I arrived for the first time to Greece in 2009, unable to communicate to the customs official. "You are Greek" he declared and then laughed, "a Greek who doesn't speak Greek!" I explained, in English, that I was "hardly Greek at all"—which was probably a strange and awkward response. Nonetheless, he was insistent: "What is your father? What is his name?" I told him our last name and he concluded in victory: "Eisai Ellinida" ("You are Greek"). He smiled decisively and stamped my passport. This became something of a script between myself and customs officials marking the beginning of each of my 4 trips to Greece between 2011 and 2014, with the difference that each time my Greek was just a bit better. It never seemed to matter that my mother was British or that I was a Canadian citizen; if my father "was Greek" than so "was I." I struggle with my interpretation of these exchanges: On the one hand, I would not be the first to point to the patrilineal naming tradition in Greece nor the patriarchal aspects of the culture;<sup>22</sup> on the other hand, perhaps this was a variant of hospitality, bringing me closer into the fold and welcoming me as though I belonged.

Although within a very different context of questions and dialogue, I confronted a similar mode of categorization during my interviews in both Greece and Canada. Even after explaining to those I interviewed that my father was raised in Canada and that he knew nothing about Greek political history, I was consoled on many occasions that "he was still Greek." Because I always

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<sup>22</sup> Anthropologist Michael Herzfeld (1992) had a similar exchange, highlighting the father and the father's name in the last instance:

The patrilineal emphasis is never far away [...] In other words, the father is almost always the crucial link. When filling out a request for a residence permit some years ago, I expressed puzzlement about the categories of "nationality" [...] and "religion." In the rather literal-minded spirit of the encounter, I explained that I was a British-Jew: how should I incorporate that, if at all? "What is your father?" the official wanted to know. That was really all that mattered. Thus was my ethnic, religious, and personal identity established through paternal links (79).

answered questions about my family with the past tense designation for my father ("He was a truck driver," "He was raised in Canada," "He didn't teach me any Greek"), his death was often a kind of absent presence in these discussions. The men I interviewed sometimes noted some variant of, "It's a shame your father isn't around. He could have helped you with your project"—a comment that I found more than a little patronizing. Yet, comments like this were actually very revealing, confirming the sense I often had of being perceived as a little lost girl of the diaspora, coming home to explore ancestral roots. The fact that I had lost my father was in some cases known before I arrived at the interview, as information passed between contacts.<sup>23</sup> In such cases, I felt rather exposed and found myself hurriedly trying to switch gears away from condolences and an interest in his death to the purpose of my research. But there is no doubt that many of my interactions with interviewees was clothed in a not-so-subtle benevolent paternalism—one which I came to accept as structurally determined by our gendered and age differences, as well as my personal story.

### **Telling Masculine Stories: Ethnography & Male Protagonists**

I must concede and clarify at this point that my dissertation, as a qualitative and ethnographic exploration of political genealogy, is heavily shaped by male protagonists and a reoccurring theme in accounts is political patriline. I would not have assumed such a conceptual trajectory

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<sup>23</sup> Early on in my research, one participant was explaining the purpose of my research to a second participant, just as I was beginning my interview with the latter. While my Greek was not well enough developed to understand the conversation at the time, two years later I listened to the recording and discovered the following exchange:

Interviewee 1: This girl's father was a Greek [...] He's dead.

Interviewee 2: What was his name?

Interviewee 1: Pendakis. Pavlos, I think she said

Interviewee 2: I don't know it.

Interviewee 1: In any case, he's dead and somehow she got it into her head to tell our story, so you must help the girl.

Interviewee 2: OK, OK...but I won't remember much!

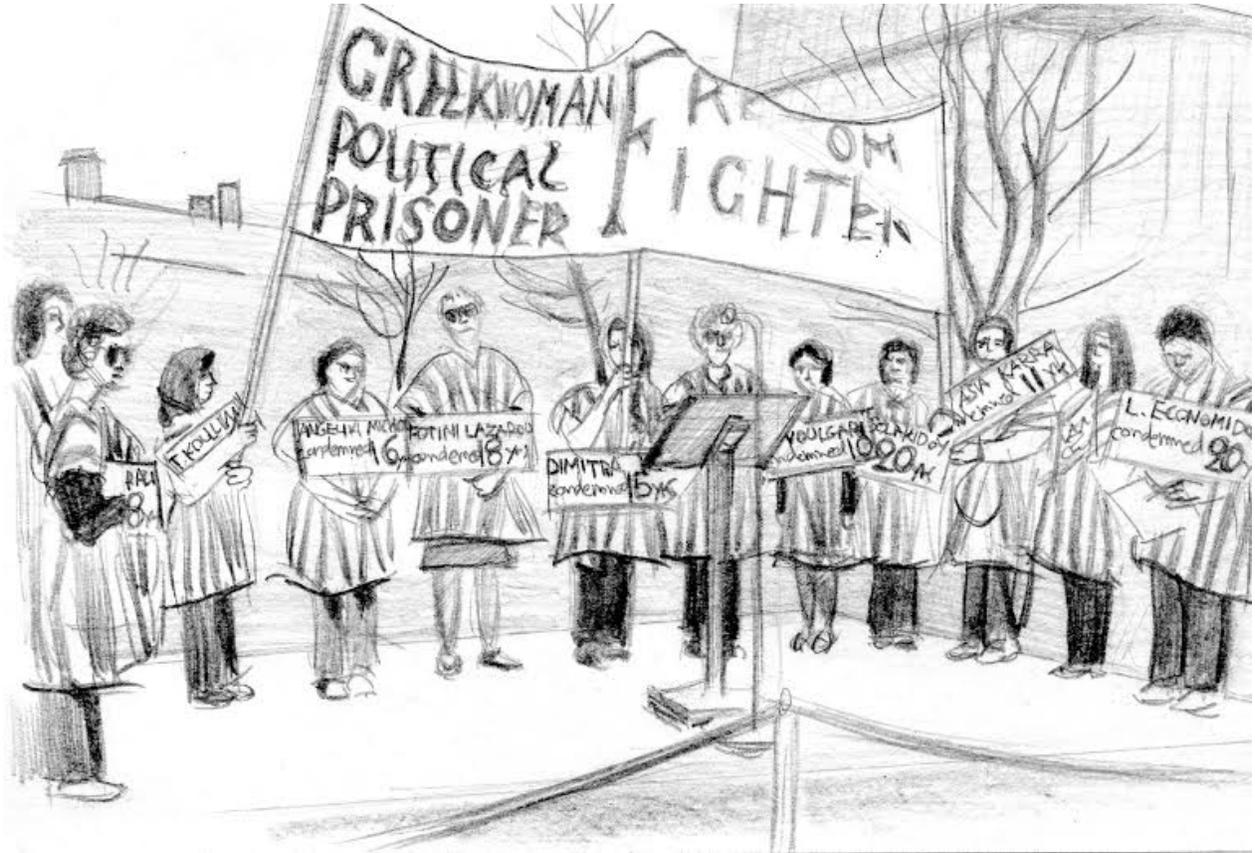
in my second meeting with Kostas, having in my hands "documentary evidence" of women's participation in the anti-dictatorship struggle in Toronto. Against a series of photos of mostly male protagonists, one photograph stood out: Thirteen women, dressed in the classic, Hollywood version of the striped prisoner uniform, stood with placards hung around their necks, each marking a woman's name and a number. These women were protesting on behalf of female prisoners in Greece and the numbers represented the duration of the latter's prison sentence. Despite the fact that a few other photographs similarly reveal women's involvement in the anti-dictatorship struggle, I didn't succeed in my efforts to access and incorporate women's stories in the way I had hoped.

Women's "absence" became acutely apparent as my research progressed and I began addressing it repeatedly in interviews. I very often regretted doing so: Asking one interviewee "where were all the women" and whether he could recall the names of a few, I was told with a sly smile that "they were in the bedroom." Another supplied, "in the kitchen." Making an effort to help, one interviewee clarified, "well, there were *the wives*, but they weren't really *involved*." Kristos, who had a leadership role in PAK and was well connected to all the organizations involved in the Toronto movement, dismissed these comments as "rubbish." Yet, when I asked him to provide me with contacts, he had difficulty recalling more than three women by name. Two had passed away. I called the third and was very politely told, "the research sounds wonderful, but I'm tired, Katherine, and there are others who can tell the story better." In Toronto a few months earlier, I had approached Eirini, a communist still active in the community. She had declined in precisely the same way—"there are others who know more"—so I persisted a little, explaining that I hadn't had the opportunity to speak to women in the movement. Smiling,

she responded, "Honey, if you have the right politics, the sex doesn't matter!" And then she gave me the name of a male figurehead of the communist party.

By the time I began writing, I had managed to interview three women. Thalia was the first woman I interviewed and by far the oldest of participants. In her early 90s, she was the only interviewee to have taken part in the partisan struggle during the civil war. I did not incorporate Thalia's account into the early chapters of this dissertation because, at the time of the interview, her daughter informed me that she was suffering from dementia. I didn't feel that I could do justice to her story without situating it within a careful consideration of memory and amnesia. During our conversation, Thalia repeated the same few stories again and again, within a very particular frame. In addition, and perhaps due to her illness, Thalia's narrative was fixed on the civil war years. She had trouble recalling her experiences in Toronto during the dictatorship and did not comment on the contemporary political situation in Greece. I remain convinced that Thalia's account requires special analytical treatment and that this dissertation is not the most suitable place for doing so. Nonetheless, Thalia makes a very brief appearance in my ethnographic notes in chapter six, where I discuss instances of the narrative reproduction of political genealogy.

Figure 3: "Honey, if you have the right politics, the sex doesn't matter!"



My interview with Margarita was conducted in her home and with her husband, Panos, by her side. While Panos was eager to share moments of their past and enthusiastically answered my questions, Margarita consistently cut answers short, stating that "we don't remember anything" or "we don't know anything." Sometimes she did so even as her husband was mid-sentence, creating a dynamic that was very difficult to navigate. It became quite clear that while Panos was seeking to stretch out our conversation, Margarita was eager to end it as soon as possible. I did not quote Margarita in this dissertation, primarily because her answers were more an enacted

refusal to engage. I didn't feel I could engage her few comments without tending towards a psychologizing language or implicit statements about the relationship she was performing with her husband.

Katerina was the third women who agreed to be interviewed. She had been recommended to me by another interviewee who had known her "fairly well" in the capacity of PAK activities in Toronto. Although Katerina had been enthusiastic when we spoke on the phone to arrange our meeting, she began our interview by saying that she didn't quite know "how useful" she could be. Within minutes, after responding to a few basic questions about where she grew up and the circumstances of her migration to Toronto, Katerina turned to the theme of her children and grandchildren. She described, at length, the degrees that her children had acquired and detailed the musical and language achievements of her young grandchildren. When I brought the conversation back to my interview questions, Katerina distanced herself from the events she had participated in through humour and claims to ignorance. She repeatedly told me that she had joined PAK with the single intention of finding a husband—a "democratic man". She concluded our interview rather abruptly with the offer to put me in contact with a few men who "knew more" and were "more involved."

In light of my thematic, there is nothing surprising about the responses of these women. When conducting interviews regarding "matters of the political," these kinds of refusals are not uncommon, nor is the tendency to be referred to male representatives of parties and movements (Aretxaga 1997: xi; Visweswaran 1994:96). This is particularly true when the context—here, the Greek diaspora in the late 1960s and 70s—is significant shaped by patriarchal social forms. As others have shown, these obstacles can often be circumvented through long-term ethnographic

research that fosters "conditions of intimacy" (Herzfeld 2005: 216) and participates in women's everyday lives.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Failed Taxonomies of Research: "Political Migrants" in the Diaspora?**

It is not easy to bring together the men I interviewed in one encompassing category; neither "diaspora," "generation," "exile," or "immigrant" seem entirely appropriate. It is nevertheless worthwhile trying to isolate what it is that my research presumes they share; what they have in common as a distinguishing quality that merits a study of aspects of *their* lives, and not those of others. My analysis in chapter four throws into sharp relief the points of both connection and disconnection between those I interviewed and demonstrates why the notions of "diaspora" or "community" are especially fraught with limitations in this regard.

"Diaspora" is a vexed term, often used to describe a wide variety of groups having in common only the experience of mobility (personal or ancestral). Thus, expatriates, guest workers, exiles, refugees and immigrants (and their children) have been brought under the term in different analyses. Most broadly, the term has been used to refer to a group that has been deterritorialized or dispersed—in other words, it "has originated in a land other than that which it currently resides, and whose social, economic and political networks cross the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec 1997: 277). There are at least three common ways of thinking about diaspora in the existing literature; namely, as a *social form*, a *type of consciousness* or a *mode of cultural production* (ibid: 278). As a social form, a diaspora is said to have a "triadic relationship" with: groups that are dispersed throughout the world but are "collectively self-identified"; "states and

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<sup>24</sup> For a recent effort to think through this issue, see Ryan Flood and Gill's (2009) *Secrecy and Silence in the research process: Feminist reflections*. For excellent examples of intimately textured feminist ethnography, please see Seremetakis' (1991) *Last word: Women, death and divination in Inner Mani*, Povinelli's (1994) *Labor's Lot* and Ferme's (2001) *The Underneath of Things*.

contexts where such groups reside"; and "homeland states and contexts" from which they have originated (Vertovec 1999: 449). While such a categorization may be appropriate for those who remain in Canada today, it can only apply weakly to those who returned to Greece after the junta as a kind of temporary, structuring experience. Even if we use it in the Canadian context alone, we would have to deny the many subjective refusals of collective identification, which become so apparent in chapter three.

To the extent that those I interviewed recall and express sentiments "linking them simultaneously to more than one nation" (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blan 1992: 11), we might accept that there is (for those remaining in Canada) and perhaps was (for those returning to Greece) a degree of shared "diasporic consciousness." My trepidation here is reconciling such a claim with, for example, the tendency of communist respondents to assert a "we" that is entirely politicized and denies an identification to nation states as a point of principle. With few exceptions, however, men do express a sense of having passed through two very different cultural and political spaces and having gained a different sensibility as a result. Even Apostolos' claim in chapter four that he "never passed with both feet" in Canada—suggesting a present indifference to his experiences in Toronto—can be troubled by his creative labour, nearly 30 years later, to return to and write out those experiences in the form of a novel. In this way, I suppose Apostolos' preoccupation with the years he spent in Canada might be evidence of a kind of persisting dual consciousness.

Diaspora cast as a unique site of *cultural production* could be useful for thinking through the collective labours of those in Toronto (creating student newspapers, making music, establishing organizations) with the qualification that we frame culture as "the (politically inflected) schemas through which people see and act on the world" (Ortner 1997: 18) and that

antagonisms and points of disconnect are kept within the frame. Moreover, if we uproot "diaspora" from specific contemporary geographies (ie. narrowly confined to those in Toronto) and cast it more as a structuring experience, we might also be able to bring back into the fold those who returned to Greece after the Junta. From this angle, we might approach Apostolos' painting and novel—as well as Yannis' carefully coded archive—as material manifestations of precisely those schemas Ortner identifies.

While there is no basis for claiming the men I interviewed were "refugees" in the sense of collective forced migration and dispossession, I refer to the statement of one interviewee who left abruptly when the junta came to power: "My only bitterness is that I left my country like a refugee." Even here, there is a sense of an imperfect analogy ("as if"), rather than identification. Through a very unusual route and with the assistance of international organizations, one of the men I interviewed did claim refugee status, but he was quick to present his case as exceptional. Others occasionally drew on the language of "being in exile," especially when they recalled missing very significant moments due to being legally denied the right to return to Greece (or fearing the consequences of trying to do so). This sentiment was strongly pronounced when men described not being able to attend the funeral of a parent or to care for a sick family member. Exile, in the sense of an impossible return, was a painful obstacle to fulfilling their obligations as sons and to mourning a loss alongside their family. Interestingly, for others, "exile" was actually a term of disidentification; I heard variations of "we didn't suffer like the Chileans" or "we weren't all escaping for our life, like the Chileans." In this sense, "exile" stood for a particular kind of violent departure, which most of those I interviewed did not experience. This specific reference may also be an expression of the close ties forged by some of my interviewees with Chilean activists and musicians when the latter began arriving to Toronto after Pinochet's 1973

coup. Others drew on the language of exile to describe their decided position of struggle vis-a-vis the settled life achieved through Canadian immigration, echoing the idea that "what distinguishes political exiles from other diaspora members is not only the exiles' continuous struggle to facilitate the conditions for their return, but also their determination not to establish life abroad as a comfortable option, even temporarily" (Shain and Ahram 2003: 663).

I collectively situate the men I interviewed as "migrants," a term general enough to absorb the specific nuances of narratives that I discuss throughout this dissertation. Glick Schiller's (1992) "transmigrant" comes close to the generality of experiences I document to the extent that, at least during the period of the dictatorship, my interviewees "[took] actions, [made] decisions, and [felt] within a field of social relations that link[ed] together their country of origin and their country or countries of settlement" (Glick-Schiller et al 1992: 1). Certainly the organizations in which men participated during the junta had statedly *transnational* goals: the acquisition of material support that would then be sent to families of imprisoned and exiled comrades; the placing of pressure on Ottawa to stop diplomatic relations with the Greek state; and the sharing of ideological texts, political developments and organizational strategies between Western Europe, Canada, the Soviet Union and Greece.

At the same time, I don't wish to overemphasize the transnational dimension in these accounts, as much of the "dark" years under the dictatorship involved a deeply felt *immobility* and even a *lack* of communication between loved ones. The belief that very little could be shared with parents and siblings, as letters or postcards from Canada could raise suspicion of local authorities, characterized the period as painfully muted—never mind that we are speaking about a world long before email, mobile phones, Facebook and Skype, where many homes did not yet even have landlines. Moreover, as I consider the accounts of men within larger biographical

narratives, it is important to stress that one is not a "migrant" or "transmigrant" to the same extent and at all periods of one's life. For example, Apostolos, who returned to Athens in 1981, admitted that his time in Canada felt like "suspension," that he had no remaining relations with anyone in Canada and that had never returned. In this sense, Apostolos narrates the transnational aspect of his life as short-lived, necessitated by circumstances and having very few social or material implications for his life today.

I find it most useful to think about those migrating to Canada in the years of the dictatorship loosely as a specific "generation" of the diaspora. In fact, those I interviewed were keen to associate themselves as a generation apart from the immigrants who had arrived in Canada prior. They often explicitly spoke about the realities of arriving to Toronto during the junta in terms of a "we" and an "us" who were immediately confronted with both the "older generation" of Greek immigrants and "their children," with whom they had very little in common despite their similar ages. Some of those I interviewed had been part of cultural youth organizations in Greece that were expressly working towards the liberalization of Greek society in the early 1960s and they were thus "shocked" at the "mentality" of those Greeks who had migrated between the two wars or directly after the second. The modern poems, music and literature that they had been accessing and sharing despite the regime's censorship in Athens were absent in Toronto, an allegedly "open" and "democratic" society. This gap in cultural references was discussed as a major point of disidentification with established Greeks and Greek-Canadians.

Importantly, while those I interviewed frequently used the general trope of generation in their narratives, they did not necessarily claim the same reference point in their generational identification. While most drew on the language of the generation of junta migrants in their

accounts of the Toronto years, when referring to their lives before the junta there was quite a bit of diversity. For example, Apostolos claimed he was of the generation of the "Lambrakis Youth," Stelios referred to the "Democratic Youth," and others cast themselves as the "postwar" generation. In other words, the structuring experience of migration to Toronto forced a set of confrontations that men drew upon in their constructions of themselves in generational terms. It is in this latter sense, the "problems of a generation" (Borneman 1992: 47) becomes especially relevant: It is not necessarily age or even cultural references alone that merit the categorization of "generation" but the shared experience of dislocation.

## **II. Conceptual Clarifications**

### **The Sociality of the State**

The state is often taken to be a governing body that "sees," "perceives," or "constructs," reflecting "the almost unavoidable tendency to speak about the state as an 'it'" (Brown 1995: 174). In the brief historical narrative I provided in the introduction of this dissertation, I portrayed the state along these lines; that is, a state implicitly stands behind the legal, military and political apparatus that was used to categorize, marginalize and punish an entire section of Greek society for many decades. I outlined a series of government-led initiatives, seemingly motivated by a consistent anti-communist ideology and backed by a monopoly of violence.

Yet, this construction needs to be qualified in light of the theoretical challenges that have been waged precisely against this manner of conceptualizing the state. Challenges to the thing-like quality of the state have come from different perspectives within the social sciences. Bourdieu (1999) argues that such a framing obscures *processes of state formation*. Consequently, the state is essentialized as an obvious fact—something natural and necessary that has always

been at the center of modern societies. He urges, instead, to examine the state as a field of competing and contradictory strategies, discourses, and practices—as the "culmination of *processes* of concentration of different species of capital" (57). Following Foucault, Mitchell (1991) claims that the state "needs to be analyzed as a structural effect"; that is, "not as an actual structure, but as the powerful metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist" (94). Abrams (1988) points out that the Marxist tradition too has exposed the illusionary aspect of state power and calls for thinking about the state in terms of a mask, rather than a subject. Corrigan and Sayer (1985), drawing on Weber, argue that the state is better viewed as a claim to authority and that it is through perpetual iterative processes—whether as banal documentary practices or elaborate public ceremonies—that the effect of the state's singular and continuous presence is achieved. These theoretically diverse contributions evoke a key question: How does the state come to be regarded as real, independent, and a power standing apart from society?

I accept the primary challenge to my first approach to the state and explore how men both negotiate state effects in their everyday life and narratively construct the state as presence: whether this be in the form of a person of authority (chapters three and four), practices of bureaucratic exclusion (chapter three) or a mode of sociality sharing characteristics with the extended family (chapter five). Ethnographers, claims Gupta (1995) are of particular value in answering the question of how the state is constructed because they most effectively track the "degree to which the state has become implicated in the minute texture of everyday life" (375). As Herzfeld (2008) argues, the promise of anthropologists in this regard is to observe the state's "real-ization [...] in moments of ethnographic encounter" and to "piece [its] substance together from the indirect evidence [they] glean of its operations and institutional structures" (87). In

other words, ethnographers of the state observe state effects from the position of the subject; they ask after the local and everyday practices through which subjects encounter, imagine, and construct the state (Das and Poole 2004; Navaro-Yashin 2002). The figure of the state thus emerges as a "repository of images, ideologies, fantasies, [and] ideas" (Aretxaga 2003: 395).

Especially important for my discussion of the political file (chapter three) are those studies of the place of documents as a crucial site for constructing both states and citizens. Navaro-Yashin (2007) writes that "papers, especially written and official documentation bear the symbolism of permanence" and that "printed, handwritten, and/or signed documentation carries the image of proof, stability and durability" (84). The effect of practices of official documentation, and indeed encounters with the documents themselves, is that of a "state fetish" (ibid). Navaro-Yashin makes the further claim: "If documents seem more benign than the police, I would argue that from the point of view of [...] those [...] from marginal positions, they are not" (83). Herzfeld (1992), whose work is very important for my discussion of men's accounts of the *Metapolitefsi* (in chapter five) has examined in detail the ways in which *talk* about bureaucracy emerges as a crucial site in which the relation between state and citizen is figured and the former is established as an authority.

Interviewees themselves, at times, speak of the state as a singular actor—as in "the Canadian state treated me like a gentlemen, while the Greek state treated me like a criminal"—but their narratives also reveal other conceptualizations, both nuanced and complex. The ethnographic literature is thus important to the extent that it orients my analysis to the ways in which men narratively encounter and imagine the state in the post-civil war years (chapter three), their participation in the anti-junta movement in Toronto (chapter four), and their return to Greece in the post-junta period ("*Metapolitefsi*") (chapter five). Throughout, I explore men's

constructions of state power in relation to forms of sociality and political subjectivity. I pay special attention to how men reflect on the political through their storied social interactions. Gestures, rumours, exposures, retreats, misrecognitions, petty and not so petty name-calling all have a place in my analysis.

### **The Social Life of Political Categories**

In conversations with colleagues, I've often referred to my dissertation as an "ethnography of political categories." What do I mean by this? Political categories are of interest to this dissertation to the extent that they have a "social life." There is an aporia of sorts between many of the reflections I encountered in my fieldwork and the tendency to reduce "the Left" to the party. For example, Panourgia (2009) writes that the history of the Left in Greek politics "is to say, the story of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE)" (32). This reduction of political forces to political parties has had a long and ambivalent discursive life: It was central to the ideology and practices of the repressive Greek state (as in: if you resist or if you have subversive *thoughts*, you are, by definition, a communist); but it is also found in the Greek Communist party's own self-centered historical discourse (as in: it was the communists who organized an effective resistance). This kind of double reduction also has a place in interviews; for example, in the statement that "few were brave enough to resist, and if you did, you were a communist." But what does this conflation of dissent and party obscure as a point of departure and how does it reckon with the more ambiguous claims: "Am I a communist? Depends whose asking," or "I was called many names...communist was the one that bothered me least." Rather than presuming that during this period "to be left was to be communist," I take this statement itself to be representative of a dominant discourse—one which those I interviewed negotiated in various social spaces as children, adolescents and men. My effort here is to take a position against

"ethnographic refusal," what Ortner (2005) defines as the "impulse to sanitize the internal politics of the dominated" in reductive accounts of participants' "intentions, desires, fears [and] projects" as they "engage in these dramas [of resistance]" (62).

The categories "left" and "right" are often presumed to represent more or less stable traditions of political thought (Kymlicka 2002). White argues there are two primary approaches to thinking theoretically about the left and the right: In one reading, the terms enjoy relative consensus and are associated with either opposing values or very different interpretations of the meaning and priority of shared values (examples would be Bobbio 1993 and Lukes 2003); In another reading, the terms are taken to be a highly subjective—and thus flexible—set of signifiers that an individual imbues with meaning, according to her values and interests (an example would be Dieter Fuchs and Hans-Dieter Klingemann 1990). In both approaches, the left and right are taken as signifiers representing political conflict.

Troubling these dominant approaches, White (2011) argues that "left" and "right" are themselves "the site of conflict as much as an exogenous device for its representation" (123). He claims that the dichotomy is better understood as a "discursive resource with which actors can play" (126). Not wanting to risk falling into infinite interpretative flexibility, White cautions that the very "possibility of engaging" in such "performance" nevertheless suggests that the terms "enjoy some level of stable semantic content" (124). He calls for analyses that explore the "second life" of the terms, following their "adoption in day-to-day politics and the "effects" which are thereby "achieved" (124).

While White's analysis begins to gesture towards (what I call) "the social life of political categories," it is nevertheless framed through positioning theory and applied narrowly to the discourse of politicians. I am more interested in observing how men narrate their negotiation of

these terms in the years after the civil war, in the streets of Toronto during the junta and in the Metapolitefsi. This dissertation is grounded in the theoretically and empirically-informed assumption that those referents that we have generally taken to be indicative of well-defined stakes, interests and ideological position have a complicated, dynamic and nuanced social life worth tracing.

Speaking of the "social life of political categories" thus involves approaching terms that have been steeped in the institutional discourses of states and parties as capable of surprising us. In a very different context, Raymond Williams' (1977) raised awareness of our tendency to take "terms of analysis as terms of substance" (129), thereby "reducing to fixed forms" those dynamic "presences and processes" that "masquerade as fixed forms" (ibid). Williams thus proposes the concept of "structures of feeling" to capture "meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt" in process (132). I am attracted to this framing and find inspiration here for thinking about the presences and processes of the political categories "communist" and "the left." As I will show, these categories are woven through interviewees accounts as ambiguous structures of feeling that entail quite a bit of interpretative labour in their negotiation.

I also see my treatment of the social life of political categories as inspired by Joan Scott's (1992) call to take "concepts and identities as historical events in need of explanation" (792), rather than as historical facts, documented and closed off from interpretation or easily identifiable social formations (as in "the Left"). It is not, in other words, a matter of what the Left did or did not do and what those actions, inactions and decisions mean for the course of history that is my concern here. Consequently, we have something much more or much less than a social history, depending on the vantage point: Much less for the left historian, as (ig)noble political causes are put aside and the agent (whether this be "the resistance", "the party" or "the people")

loses its recognisable form; and much more in the sense of both inviting that which is statedly beyond ("irrelevant to") the political (kin, blood, soul, culture) into our analysis and including the experiences of those who—from the retrospective gaze of 2013—do not belong. The latter is not the intention, but the *result* of a project that follows the social life of political categories, rather than a predetermined "Left".

### **The Lexicon of Politics of Kinship**

Closely bound to the guiding preoccupation of this dissertation with the social life of the political is a specific problematic best summarized as the "politics of kinship." This is a theme that first struck me after reading a Guardian article published in February of 2009.<sup>25</sup> In the context of the shooting death of 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos by an on-duty police officer, a young Athenian woman is quoted as saying: "What we have had in Greece is a civil war that never goes away. [*Those*] who come from left families, have grown up with political warfare, the police in our homes, the struggle in our lives. My family has suffered a political murder in every generation since the Nazi occupation." There are two things about this quote that are of particular interest here: first, the construction of the family as a political unit and the expansion of a political identity usually associated with an individual to the family as a whole; and second, the fact that this statement is expressed publicly sixty years after the civil war and more than thirty years after the fall of the dictatorship (and the subsequent government-led initiatives to improve the material conditions and the status of the Greek left). This suggests that the figure of the politicized family endures as an experiential trope. It also implies that injury is a meaningful premise upon which contemporary identification with the Left may be based.

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<sup>25</sup> Ed Vulliamy and Helena Smith, "Children of the Revolution," *The Guardian*, February 22, 2009 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/feb/22/civil-unrest-athens> (accessed February 2, 2010).

Reflecting on her position as a "native anthropologist" studying Greece, Panourgia (2009) writes that "members of my family have been imprisoned, have been sentenced to death, many more have voted for the Party, but the family as a whole has been Centrist," a fact that has "not sheltered the family from suspicion" (17). This statement also raises a number of questions about the relationship between the political and the familial. How can a family be "on the whole" left, right, or centrist? What political subjectivities and experiences need to be repressed, ignored, or obscured in order to formulate a family's political identity? This is particularly ambiguous given the realities of Greece's fratricidal history: the civil war did not split the country in ways that left families and villages; violence cut brother from brother and son from father.

In developing the concept of *politics of kinship*, it is important to indicate how I am departing from the conventional use of the phrase in anthropology. The term was used primarily within mid-20th century structuralist paradigms to express the centrality of kin relations in the organization of societies. This work was based on the assumption that by analyzing the intricacies of kinship relations, such as marriage conventions and the distribution of power through lineage—defined as "bounded entities that demand allegiance of members, maintain order through intervention of elders, and provide the fountainheads from which flow the leadership and authority structures" (Kurtz 2001: 82)—one could locate fundamental organizing principles underpinning larger cultural and social relations, including the economic and the political. Importantly, this research was almost exclusively focused on communities deemed "pre-modern"—those existing either prior to (or at the margins) of modern states. According to Borneman (1992), this was the result of two tendencies underpinning anthropological studies: first, the categorization of societies by state presence (concluding that those with states were organized on the basis of territorial control and those without states were organized by kinship

patterns); second, the dependence on evolutionary paradigms by which "kinship polities" were "superseded by a territorial state" (28-29). Consequently, when studying Western European societies, the significance of kinship (in relation to the political) was relegated to the past, "prior to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the epochs before states and national groupings began occupying the landscape" (29).

In the Greek context specifically and in "the West" more generally, Herzfeld (2005: 132) has shown how kinship *metaphors* (along with those of blood, intimacy, and love) have been extended to the national level, a process he terms the "stretching of domesticity" (see also Hunt 1992 and Berezin 1999). This language of kinship, according to Herzfeld (1993) serves as a "powerful emotive magnetic"(12) and a rhetorical device that provides a familiar model of attachment and belonging. Beyond the rhetorical, family relations can also operate as literal conduits for the distribution of resources, a constitutive feature of bureaucratic favouritism and clientelism long identified in Southern Europe (50)

My analysis examines kinship as an organizing principle of *modern* state practices and presents the family as a primary site of political reproduction. In chapter three, I examine in detail the ways in which those I interviewed were targeted and marginalized by the Greek state on the basis of the actions and perceived thoughts of their relatives—usually fathers, uncles and brothers. My analysis of the politicization of kin began, in the introduction of this dissertation, by outlining the Greek state's persistent use of law to inflect kin ties with political meanings and to render them central to processes of political reproduction. For example, laws in effect from the 1920s to the 1970s made it possible for family members to be internally exiled and imprisoned and for the children and siblings of resistance fighters and leftists to be placed in re-education camps in order to purge communist ideologies from the family. Moreover, the certificates of

social thinking (already introduced and discussed again in chapter three) were "extended [or denied] to the whole family on a semi-hereditary basis, as a formal presupposition for every kind of license, public certification and work" (Tsoucalas 1986: 32).

Let me then outline the lexicon of this specific problematic. First, I define the *politics of kinship* as both the practice of ascribing political identities based on kinship and the forms of sociality that take shape around this practice. *Political inheritance* is the term I have given to these bestowed ascriptions and their consequences (specific forms of denial and marginalization). Finally, *political genealogies* refer to those narrative frames within which political subjectivities are constructed in relation to one's political inheritance.

### **Political Subjectivity & Forms of Sociality**

Subjectivity is defined by Ortner (2006) as both "the ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire and fear that animate acting subjects," and the "cultural and social formations that shape, organize and provoke those modes" (107). This definition is an appropriate point of departure for considering how men narrate themselves and story their relations within an explicitly polarized political culture that constructs the family as a primary political subject. I frame the political subjects at the heart of this dissertation as having been born out of a sharply divided post-civil war sociopolitical environment and, in some cases, through exacting state interpellation and marginalization.

My earliest thinking about political subjectivity was significantly influenced by the accounts of those who had been interpellated through family ascriptions. Thus, in chapter three, I discuss at length men's coming into awareness of their political inheritance. The analysis in this chapter resonates with Voglis' (2002b) argument that the "Greek Left" was produced, in the

Foucauldian sense, through systematic persecution and punitive measures. Importantly, Voglis' project is centered on the treatment and experiences of *political prisoners* in the institutional setting of the prison camp. My departure from Voglis in thinking about post-civil war political subjectivity is necessitated in two respects: first, despite the fact that the file was institutionalized and activated systematically in the post-war period and up to the fall of the junta, life in the meantime was not a prison sentence; second, there is a broader sense in which men express the structuring experience of "living in the file"—a vague awareness of "being one of two." Consequently, I take the ethnographic route out of the Foucauldian paradigm (of the productive aspect of discipline) and immerse the analysis in the everyday storied accounts of negotiating political categories and political inheritance.

Even for those who experienced what I call the "paper effects" of the anticommunist state, I show that the articulation of political subjectivities don't end with the file, nor can men's encounters with the state or their negotiation of the political categories "left" and "communist" be deduced once and for all from the politico-legal apparatus of the period. Their stories, of course, continue; indeed, the analysis I offer stretches over many decades and follows men through their narratives into the anti-junta movement in Toronto (chapter four) and post-junta social worlds in the Metapolitefsi (chapter five). In each chapter, as we are introduced to sites of transformation and emerging political forces and political actors, close attention is paid to "how the self is enmeshed in relations" (Han 2012: 20). Navigating the social life of political categories becomes an interpretive labour carried out among others, involving risks and opportunities. Central to the construction of political subjectivity in these accounts is the use of narrative tropes that convey this labour, as well as the fears, anxieties and (in the words of one interviewee) "big disappointments but also big hopes."

Voice is one of these recurring tropes, along with visibility and proximity; all three are drawn upon liberally to express forms of sociality and their significance. While I want to keep these terms open, rather than prescribe a definition to each at the onset, voice deserves some clarification because it has a very strong presence in sociological and anthropological literature. As Weidman (2014) points out, the term both carries "a set of sonic, material, and literary" connotations and is "invoked in discourse about personal agency, cultural authenticity and political power"(38). Having both material and metaphorical dimensions, voice thus "lives a life in two registers" (ibid). It also conveys expressions of both the most intimate and the most public: The "figure of voice," writes Kunreuther (2014), is a "nexus of metaphors associated with the voice as a sign of intimacy, consciousness, and presence [and ...] above all, with those modes of selfhood central to [...] political agency" (5).

Voice is also shown to be a site of vulnerability, where ideas of authenticity and presence are either challenged or suspended. Butler's (1997) interventions here are well known; voice (perhaps better framed as speech) is not simply created *by* a stable self; rather, as repeatedly enacted discourse, it is productive *of* the subject. While I make some use of this intervention in my discussion of the political file (in chapter three) my thinking about voice is closer to Veena Das' (2007) ethnographic formulation: In periods of explicit violence, says Das, where social norms, modes of expression and forms of trust can not be taken for granted—that is, when "context is no longer in place"—there is a dislocation of words, voice and the subject. Das remarks in "fragile and intimate moments [...] a shared language [is] built" without trust in "shared conventions," the risk being that one may become "voiceless—not in the sense that one does not have words—but that these words become frozen, numb, without life" (8). In my discussions of post civil war Greece, the anti-dictatorship movement in Toronto, as well as the

Metapolitefsi (post-junta Greece), my interest remains in the labour of interpretation involved in establishing and negotiating voice(s) in sites where "context is not in place," where there is a loss of trust and where conventions either present risks or are unreliable for the speaking subject. Throughout my analysis of the accounts men give, I focus on who or what is constructed as having a voice; the ways in which the categories men negotiate afford or deny voice; and what is at stake in the very act of naming oneself and others. Used as a trope, voice thus carries ambivalent concerns with (mis)recognition, agency, authenticity and morality. This is to follow Panourgia's lead and to ask "what is in the act of naming and of the admission that one knows the person who resides within the name?" (Panourgia 2009: 141).

## Chapter 3

### "Living in the File": The Social Life of Political Categories

*"Greeks have been living in the file for generations"*

*"Files are made to be kept, not thrown away"*

As we have seen in the brief history I outlined in the introductory chapter, the instability of governments and the oscillation between monarchical, republican and dictatorial regimes throughout the history of modern Greece took place alongside the persistent persecution of those deemed politically dangerous. Supported by police and military force, a politico-legal apparatus came to define the lives of families on the left for more than fifty years. In these conditions, what we could call a "dossier society" (Samatas 1986: 52) or "political economy of papers" (Hull 2012b: 114) emerged, in which the file ("o fakelos") became the central means of classifying citizens and their families. Only on the basis of a clean file—that is, one indicative of a "nationally-minded," religious and conservative family history—would a "certificate of civic-mindedness" be given (Samatas 1986: 12). This document was necessary for the acquisition of licenses and passports, access to university studies and employment in many occupations (ibid). In this way, the file—and the politics of kinship upon which it was premised—became a structuring feature of everyday life in the post-civil war years and up to the fall of the Junta (in 1974).

I do not address here how and by whom the citizen file was produced, circulated or authorized. Nor do I approach the file from the position of what was "in fact" written. I should stress, again, that I have not seen the files I discuss here and apart from the fleeting encounters

interviewees had with the files as young men, they have not seen them since. By government decision, the majority of citizen files were destroyed in 1989, while a few—those deemed of "historical importance"—were kept and classified. As I will show, the file has an ambivalent presence in these pages. It has, at once, a materiality (emerging in storied "encounters"), a spectral presence (no longer a physical object, but leaving profound traces); and a representational force (as an abiding metaphor for "being one of two" in a highly polarized political climate).

In this chapter, "reading" the file ethnographically involves unveiling its "role [as a] document in the construction of subjects and forms of sociality" (Hull 2012a: 260). Taking the deeply divided political climate of the 50s and 60s as its point of departure, I explore the file as a structuring experience for those I interviewed. What does it mean to have been "living in the file for more than three generations"? How does one inhabit the file—that which has all the connotations of order, preservation, and authority? In whose name does it speak? What is the social life of those political categories that are animated in the file? And finally, to what extent could the file be contested?

I divide this chapter into four sections. In the first, I discuss the most concrete and material encounters with the political file. As young men seeking employment or entering the army, many interviewees confronted a bureaucratic initiation into their political inheritance—some even read their "fates" in print. In the second section, I detail the *politics of kinship* that underpins the file, unpacking its primary conceptual components and demonstrating how men, in turn, narratively construct the family as a political unit. I specifically show here how the relation between men and their fathers is established as a primary site of political inheritance. In the third section, I explore men's accounts of coming to age in the file, emphasizing the sometimes surprising ways

in which they negotiated political categories in the social spaces of their everyday life. Approaching "life in the file" ethnographically, I pay close attention to how forms of sociality are narrated along with the tropes of visibility, proximity and (mis)recognition. I conclude the chapter with manners of "closing the file"—the most feasible being migration to a site where the file would presumably no longer hold meaning.

## **I. Encountering the File**

Details of life in the file emerged in my first interviews in Toronto, in the winter of 2011. Thanos was an Athenian, born in 1934 of Cretan parents and raised in a "historic neighborhood of the working class." As I listened to Thanos weave his personal stories through accounts of transformative events, such as the street combat between the English army and the Greek communist partisans in his neighborhood in 1944, I was struck by a recurring reference to the file. Thanos referred to Greeks as "a people who have lived in the file for many generations." He also spoke of "being filed" and recounted for me the circumstances in which he read the details of his own file. While part of my interview guideline had been designed to evoke conversations about "left" and "right" and the experience of being categorized as one or the other, I did not expect such a reoccurring emphasis to be placed on documents. Yet, Thanos—and many of the men I interviewed after—spoke of the file emotively and in the experiential terms of "living in the file."

Thanos' material encounter with his own file had all the elements of a dramatic scenario: locked doors, mischievous young soldiers, shocking revelations. Having snuck into the office of his military camp, he and a friend found their files and read them aloud. He recalls:

Oh yes, I remember reading in that file that I was categorized [...] I was category A [alpha], which is the first letter for "Aristera" [left]. "A" was leftist by association. Blood. Family. I remember that "B" [beta] was leftist with his own personal involvement with the movement and that "Γ" [gamma] was very active and very dangerous. "E" [epsilon] meant you were a nationalist, a "good" person. For those people, they needed no other information. Just the category. It was written that I was "A" through my father's family.

Thanos was reading about his father during his mandatory military training—a period of his life he described as "unbearable."<sup>26</sup> His father, who he referred to as a "fellow traveller of the communist party," had been identified as part of the resistance and brought into the Athens police station on many occasions after the civil war but avoided imprisonment by signing a statement of confession.<sup>27</sup> Certainly, in cases like Thanos', the encounter facilitated proximate and explicit contact between interviewees and the authoritative *gaze* that had shaped the lives of families, neighbours and friends for many years.

The *fakelos* was often recalled for the covert act of reading it, its bulk, size and colour, the contents of one's recorded fate and the curiosity peaked (or satisfied) by family descriptions. Many participants "met" the file for the first time during their obligatory military duty; others as

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<sup>26</sup> Thanos was one of a number of interviewees who described his months of military service in these (or similar) terms. Politely declining to go into detail, he stated that he was blessed with a convincing "nervous disorder" that became the grounds for his early dismissal from the military. "It was just eczema," he said, with a sly grin.

<sup>27</sup> Others commented on the regularity with which their fathers or uncles were called to the police station. Laughing cynically, one interviewee reenacted how his father might have handled these summonses. With one hand lifted as if holding a pen, he exclaimed, "OK, OK, just tell me what to sign this time!" The latter signals some of the contradictions at work in the writing technologies of state governance. As Das (2007) has demonstrated, "once the state institutes forms of governance through technologies of writing, it simultaneously institutes the possibility of forgery, imitation and the mimetic performances of its power" (163). My interviewees' comical reenactment suggests a sense of "going through the motions" of signing one's name to a document, yet the very repetition of the action belies a gesture of insincerity and the inefficacy of the technology itself.

young men trying to enter universities or seeking employment. Like Thanos, they snuck into military offices where paper files were kept, asked friends stationed as office clerks to smuggle files out or to tell them the details of what was recorded. "It was written that I was a communist, on account of my father," another interviewee told me with a shrug. Discovering the contents of his file a few weeks into his military placement, he added, "I had known this file existed, but I had never seen it firsthand."

Evangelos, who was being trained as a typist at the time,<sup>28</sup> had access to all the soldiers' files in the main office. He recalls inconspicuously reading the files of his friends. Of his own, he recalled, "I read there that my father had abstained from the elections in 1946 and, as a result, *I* was considered a communist.<sup>29</sup> For this reason they would not make me an officer." "I couldn't believe what I saw," another interviewee exclaimed, "All of the details! Where you are from, who is your family, what you have done, what they have done, your uncle was in the mountains..."<sup>30</sup>

This sense of wonder was similarly expressed by Stavros, for whom the file was a revelation of sorts: "In that file, I read about my father. I knew that he was involved, but he never spoke about it. He was working on the ships for years. I didn't know the details. But in that file, I learned how smart my father was and all the places he had travelled." In this way, reading one's file could be a discovery into the personal history of a father or uncle, or a confirmation of

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<sup>28</sup> The ways in which men describe and justify the division of labour in the military is both interesting and inconsistent. Some men recall being isolated from the others, being placed outside of the camp in a garbage sorting site or being kept in the office as a typist-in-training. Ex-office boys tended to explain their isolation as a means of denying them arms training (signaling the potential danger they were perceived to pose as young leftists) or, quite oppositely, as a reward, more or less, for good behaviour and exceptional intelligence.

<sup>29</sup> In 1946, the Communists and their followers abstained from the elections on account of right-wing intimidation and rigging of the ballots.

<sup>30</sup> This is a reference to participating in the civil war on the side of the communist partisans.

exclusions and marginalizations already felt *but not yet named*. Some interviewees recall being surprised, not so much with the categorization itself but more with the details provided.

It was not until April of 1967, just days after the Colonels' coup, that Ilias encountered his file "first hand." Previously denied jobs because of his "roots," he, like his father, had been working as a sailor on a foreign-owned ocean liner. In the early days of the dictatorship, however, he experienced directly the *paper effects* of the new regime:

Let's say somehow I had already been characterized [...] But when the junta happened, they turned my [...] work license into a [...] dirty rag. There was no job for me anymore. Not even with the commercial fleets. I went to the police station and I saw my file. They had underlined my name in red ink. That was in the port police office. I tried again with a foreign company in Kavala, a factory for making fertilizers. I went and took some exams and I was struggling for 4 months back and forth from Athens to Kavala<sup>31</sup>. They kept saying "come back next week, come back next week." I was really pissed off and asked the clerk working there, "don't fool with me, what's going on here? I'm living in Athens. I have no money and I'm just waiting for news..." He was a good guy and he told me, "look, don't drag yourself here anymore. They will never take you..."

Ilias narrates the discovery of his file together with the degradation of his license and his vanished exam scores. For others like him, unrecorded grades and missing exams marked both the seriousness of the file's implications and the emergence of a consciousness of bureaucratic marginalization. It was, as Stavros describes, a feeling of "being wrapped up in paper," of there being too many records of exclusion and not enough of the kind that would "open doors." The repetition at the heart of many of these stories—writing tests over and over for a job one would

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<sup>31</sup> The distance between Athens and Kavala is about 650km.

never be offered or for university studies one would never take up, visiting again and again the offices of consulates, local authorities and police only to be told, "come back"—represents a bureaucratic initiation into one's own political inheritance. The repetition is both scripted and subtle: on the one hand, accounts of these experiences are common, widespread and similarly narrated; on the other hand, this form of exclusion does not deny through the name explicitly, but allows time and fatigue to erode requests for recognition. The futility of the effort is not voiced, but implied.

In this chapter, I use voice quite often to convey related encounters between men and persons of authority, men and their files, and men and their peers. I approach "voice" in the broad sense of conveying men's concerns with (mis)recognition, agency, authenticity and morality. I focus on who or what is constructed as having a voice, the ways in which the categories men negotiate afford or deny voice, and what is at stake in the very act of naming oneself and others. In whose name, after all, are these files perceived to speak? Local authorities? The village? An abstract "anticommunism"? There are many instances, where authors of voice seems absent, as in the repetition of vanished scores or in the details of family histories apparently recorded without author. Indeed, if in those fleeting, often illicit encounters with one's files, boys noted the presence of particular signatures, as men, they do not recall them. One common and identifiable tendency is to refer to the file's recorders and keepers with an abstract and undeveloped "they."

Let's pause here for a moment to consider the initial theoretical implications of these encounters with the file and the paper effects of being categorized on "the left." In so far as they constitute moments of bureaucratic marginalization—of record keeping in the pursuit of exclusion—Judith Butler's (1997) brief remarks on the *interpellative* function of documents are

compelling. Writing that "the interpellative name may arrive without a speaker," Butler adds, "the bureaucratic and disciplinary diffusion of sovereign power produces a terrain of discursive power that operates without a subject, but that constitutes the subject in the course of its operation"(34). Instances of bureaucratic marginalization in the accounts above illustrate the power of discourse in the absence of "originators of discourse" (ibid) or interpellation without the voice of a particular sovereign actor. Butler is not alone in noting that bureaucratic procedures and their documents seemingly convey a realm of action without actors. Hull (2012b), drawing on Weber, shows that part of the complexity of the "political economy of papers" is that the processes in which they are produced, circulated, and used has the sociological effect of "mak[ing] it hard to understand who does anything" (115).

And yet, men also narrate—with incredible detail—scenes in which the file emerges through an entirely *social* confrontation with a specific person and a memorable voice and face. If Althusser's (1970) moment of police hailing (read literally) has been thoroughly interrogated with the Foucauldian emphasis on the "death of the sovereign," it is nevertheless enacted—again and again—in accounts of both encounters with the file and with the utterance: "communist." Indeed it is in these social encounters—some vulgar, cruel, others seemingly benevolent or sympathetic—that what has perhaps been latent, whispered, more ambiguous, or at least sporadic and unsystematic, is brought to authoritative voice. "Utterance" here refers to a very specific encounter with dominant categorizations in the form of "you are a communist" or "you are a traitor"—moments of blatant, explicit naming that men recall experiencing as children and young men.

Markos' story reveals this second tendency within accounts. I met Markos in his dental clinic on the Danforth, just as he was finishing with a client. We spoke of his father's political

activity and exile—experiences his father did not discuss explicitly with Markos until he was a very old man. Coming to the end of his mandatory military duties in 1966, Markos approached a lieutenant general to request a letter of good behavior in order to make a visa application for studies abroad. In telling me this story, Markos brought to life the timidity with which he knocked on the door and then acted out the lieutenant's response to his request. With sweat on his brow, Markos slammed his fist on his desk and raised his voice dramatically: "I won't help you people, I won't! *You, your father, and your papers will stay on this shelf until they are eaten by insects!*" Collecting himself and shaking his head, Markos added, "He said, 'the law gives me permission not to let you go.' What could I say to that?" A few moments later, Markos' surmised, "Anti-communism was a profession for some."

The vulgarity with which this lieutenant exposes Markos' political inheritance is in stark contrast to the dull, repetitive bureaucratic initiation that I documented above. Dimitris' account, below, brings together both the aspect of a ritual denial and a social interaction that finally leads to an explicit exposure. In this case, it was a relative "on the right" who spelled out the future repercussions of Dimitris' political inheritance:

I was arriving again for the test to enter the navy college and I had already written it three or four times. And each time, these papers went missing. I persisted. And finally my uncle, an officer, said, "You could write it eight times perfectly and you'll never be accepted." I didn't understand. "Why?" He said, "You know your father is a communist." And I said, "But that was my father, this is me." And he said, "Even your kids, when you get married, and their kids, all of them *will have this stamp.*"

The stamp here seems to have a double significance; as the signature—par excellence—of the state's bureaucratic marginalization and as a testament to the longevity of stigma attached to

Dimitris' political inheritance. Indeed, offspring stigmatized before they have even been born, records intended to last as long as nature permits (how long *would* it take for paper files to decompose?) and the fact that "files are made to be kept, not thrown away"—all of these references point towards an indefinitely condemned inheritance.

## II. Politics of Kinship and the File

Even in these initial reflections on material encounters with the file, we can identify an underlying logic that tends to animate it; namely, the categorization of citizens based on one's family history. How did those categorized—"the filed" ("*i fakelomeni*")—view these attempts at definition by the post-civil war establishment? One answer came out of my interview with Dimitris. With some exasperation, he attempted to explain how "the state" isolated its object and then subjected it to writing:

Dimitris: You see they keep the records, like who your family was, were they involved, and the relatives of the family, were they involved? For example, if my mother did not participate but let's say my uncle [her brother] did and my aunt [his wife] did, then I would be on the left side and they characterize my family as left. That is how we were characterized. Even if we did not participate. By association. Or by relations.

Katherine: So what happened in those families that were divided politically?

Dimitris: Yes, that was the case too. One brother was right wing, one brother was left wing, so nothing happened.

Katherine: What do you mean "nothing happened"? To whom?

Dimitris: Because if there are two brothers, one from the right and one from the left, the kids of the right brother are OK, the kids of the left brother are not. It would be better for

the kids if there was a third brother, on the right. But in this case, they [the authorities] would use their judgment. But the right side is fine, the left side is not. *And that's the way it is.*

What begins as an effort to map the logic of the politics of kinship is quickly reduced to the subjective assessments of individuals in power. Indeed, the messiness of real families, those which are not homogenous in political beliefs and activity, challenge the logic and introduce human judgment and intervention into what seeks to be a pseudoscience of governance. It would be "better," a more simple affair, if the bloodline was more purely one or the other, suggests Dimitris. The added "That's the way it is" (a phrase used quite often with small variations) lends a sense of both clarity and finality to an interpretative labour that seems, if anything, open, difficult and complex.

I argue that in men's narrations of the file, there are two notable constructions: i) The family (rather than the individual) is cast as the primary political actor; ii) Political identity is conveyed as an ontological state—that of *being* "left." I turn now to a detailed exploration of what I term "the politics of kinship," referring to both *the practice* of ascribing political identities based on kinship and the forms of sociality that take shape around this practice. "Political inheritance," in the way I have used it above, refers to *bestowed ascriptions and their consequences* (forms of denial and marginalization). Finally, I use "political genealogy" to refer to *identifiable narrative frames* in which political subjectivities are constructed in relation to one's political inheritance. These terms will be fleshed out through ethnographic reflections below.

Working through one's political inheritance—part of the interpretive labour of "living in the file"—involves both a sociological and metaphysical imaginary on the part of those I

interviewed. More specifically, we see a pairing of what we would typically refer to as "socialization," with something that tends, quite paradoxically—to subvert the social. This reflects the file itself, which does the sociological work of categorization, on the one hand, while evoking a stigma that goes beyond the living social, to ancestors now dead and unborn children. Panourgia (2009) artfully captures this rather (anti)social aspect of the political through the metaphor of DNA:

But how can I lay all this open for you, so that you can sense what this thing we call a "civil war" [...] really means on the ground for children who are not old enough to understand that there is a realm in their lives called politics (let alone that this politics organizes their lives in brutal and inexplicable ways) and for adults who find themselves in the vortex that produces a political DNA of sorts [...] which organizes not only their lives but also the lives of generations to come and has been organized by kinship lines that extend into the past (6)?

Panourgia's reflections, read alongside the narratives of "the filed," are the inspiration for building a theoretical vocabulary around the "politics of kinship."

Reflecting on his "historic neighborhood" in Athens—known for the support it gave to the Communist Party and its efforts and losses during the first months of the civil war—Thanos spoke of the significance of the word "resistance." "It was the first political term I was aware of," he explained, "and when I was just 8 or 9 years old, I wrote a poem about resistance, which I still have today." He added:

I didn't go to primary school until grade 6. From no schooling at all to grade 6! Because the day I was supposed to be in the first grade, was the day that the Italians attacked Greece. We had war, the famine [...] I remember reading the newspaper from the time I

was four years old because I had all the siblings before me and they had schooling and were teaching me. I was four years old and I was beginning to read! I was reading everything and by the time the war started my father took pride in giving me some articles from Rizospastis.<sup>32</sup> I was six years old. It was 1940. And I was taking and reading the newspapers from my father, which made me very proud but not as proud as my father.

Thanos conveys the image of a close-knit family, actively instructing the young in political ideology—in this case, in the absence of the school. With the exception, perhaps, of a touch of the child genius, Thanos' rendering of childhood seems to present continuity in political lineage as a result of family socialization.<sup>33</sup>

In Pavlos' account, we discover something only slightly different. In the 1950s, Pavlos was a child growing up in a small northern village, close to the border of Yugoslavia.<sup>34</sup> I met him at his "joint"—a busy food court in a Scarborough mall, where he and his friends gathered everyday because it was easily accessible from their respective suburban neighborhoods. With a Tim Horton's coffee in hand, and surrounded by a sea of shoppers and their purchases, Pavlos enthusiastically explained what it meant to have "left roots":

In the village, as a child, I was always putting my ear to hear everything. You know, we didn't have a television at that time, of course. Some of us had a radio. But we observed things. We had these family stories. Our mothers told us about our grandfathers. I am from

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<sup>32</sup> Rizospastis is the official newspaper of the Communist Party, first published in 1916.

<sup>33</sup> The theme of children's socialization into specific political ideologies and sensitivities has been discussed in the case of "red diaper babies"—children of American communists (see Kaplan 1998). Loring Danforth and Rick Van Boeschoten (2012) explore, through interviews, experiences of children who were evacuated from their homes in northern Greece by the Communist Party during the civil war and placed in orphanages in Eastern Europe. The remaining children were relocated by the Greek government to institutions overseen by the Queen. This case is rich ethnographic ground for interest in children's political socialization outside of the family.

<sup>34</sup> This area now borders the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

Left roots. My grandfather was very active politically, he was a revolutionary, not a politician, but someone who fought for justice. He was a very impressive person [...] and my father participated in the solidarity movement before the popular front was organized against the Nazis. He founded the organization in our village to help people with food and clothes [...] That was one of our three enemies: Hunger. The Germans. And the Fascist[s]. He was supporting the resistance [...] I was not so active as a boy, of course, *but I had all this in my blood.*

Once again, we seem to have an account of very early socialization into left culture and history through a combination of stories of village elders and careful attentiveness. But there is also a hint in Pavlos' account of a kind of non-socialized spirit or soul—a quality of "being left" that is said to run self-determined through the family line like a genetic proclivity. While Pavlos states that politics proper is the realm of adult action, he nevertheless imagines that, even as a boy, the quality of the left was alive within him. As the bearer of an impressive political inheritance, the son thus narrates himself as an extension of his forefathers' tendencies towards social justice and solidarity.

Reflecting on his family's political orientation, another interviewee spoke of both his parents' and his own distaste for uniforms. Digging a little deeper into this shared aversion, he discovered a Cretan "soul" at its root:

My mother was anti-establishment, if I can use that term. Very anti-establishment. She could not stand uniforms. That is why she lived so many years in harmony with my father. On that, they agreed. They both had contempt. But when I had been to Crete, I saw that this was a characteristic of the Cretan soul. Not that she was following vendettas and getting a knife and killing somebody, no. But there was this soul...

In this way, both the suspicion of authority for the son of Cretan parents and the quality of "being left" for the grandson of a communist, point to origins somehow both in—and statedly beyond—the realm of culture (either transcendent, in the case of the *soul*, or inherent, in the case of *blood*).

### **The Family as a Political Agent**

In the excerpts from interviews above, there is an identifiable tendency to narratively constructing the family as a political unit. In the academic literature, the idea of the "left family" was raised conceptually—albeit more precisely as the "socialist family"—in the context of the ex-Soviet Bloc by Basile Kerblay (1996) in the mid 1990s. Was it possible, he asked, to speak of an organized form of kinship that bore the exclusive mark of Soviet Socialism? To make the case, legal changes and social policies concerning abortion, marriage, divorce, child benefits, and taxation were compared across Eastern European countries of the ex-Soviet bloc. More than a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in a volume dedicated to the history of the 20th century European family, the "socialist family" was again raised but determined to have little analytical value for understanding the diversity of families under communist rule (Blum 2003). In other words, researchers had a difficult time isolating any consistently occurring features of a "socialist family" across countries.

Approaching the figure of the family as a political unit *ethnographically* moves us away from specifying the empirical existence of the "socialist" or "communist" family with such and such characteristics. The question here is not which family is indeed a "left family," but rather how families were *imagined* as integral political actors, and how in turn, subjects come to terms with their own political inheritance. To this end, we might consider the vocabulary involved in constructing the family as a political unit. In what terms were families of the left discussed? This

is a dense question and one I can only begin to address here. When asked, men had quite a lot to say about familial adjectives. Certainly, "left family," ("aristeri oikoyenia") is probably the broadest manner of asserting the left-leaning tendencies of a family over the course of generations and it was used widely in accounts. It often refers to families "deep in the left tradition," explained one interviewee, stretching as far back as the first articulations of communist and socialist sympathies. Because a "left family is probably one with many books" explained another, it may also share significations with the "cultured family" ("kalliergimeni oikoyenia"), the "educated family" ("morphomeni oikoyenia") or the "atheist family" "atheistiki oikoyenia." Yet, neither "cultured family" nor "educated family" can be seen as the exclusive lexicon of the Left.

While there appears to be many expressions in Greek that construct the family as a political subject, not all of them emerged organically within interviews. At times, I asked after the terms interviewees had heard or those they had used themselves. Some adjectives bring the experiences of families closer to a periodized political history. A "family from the mountain" ("oikoyenia apo to vouno"), for instance, refers to those who fled to the mountains of Grammos, where the civil war was fought between 1946-1949. "Mountain family" is thus a more subtle variant of "fighting family" ("agonistiki oikoyenia"). To speak of the "kinigimeni oikoyenia" is to implicitly refer to the persecution of one's family, derived as it is from the passive tense of the verb, "to hunt" ("kinigo"). Use of the term, "hunted family," expresses both the political identification of the family and the suffering that this necessarily entailed. Unlike "fighting family,"— which tends to carry a sense of agency—"hunted family" is more self-aware of one's participation in a war that had been lost, and speaks from the position of the vanquished. Finally, the "banished family" ("diogmeni oikoyenia") describes those who fled from Greece—very often to the Soviet bloc—

as a result of systematic persecution. In this way, it signifies the completed act of state and paramilitary practices. Importantly, all of these terms capture both the social life of a political category and the intimate and historical variations of families over generations. Of course, some of these terms have fallen out of use. Interviewees stated that while their parents would use some of these terms, their own children would probably not know what they meant.

In this way, the tendency to speak of the family, despite the reality of divisions, as a singular political subject, capable of acting and thinking in common, comes not only from the position of governance—that is, the discourse and practices of regimes historically—but also, as I have begun to show, from those who were "characterized" by the state. Indeed, families taken to be integral political agents are even woven into accounts of the first republic: "Greece is like an ancient tragedy," said Panos, "the divisions are so deep. Even during the Greek revolution against the Ottoman empire, we have the family vendettas and assassinations. Families willing to kill the first democrat because of what they risked losing!"

In the construction of one's own political genealogy, remarks like Athanasios' were common:

All my family are left people, democratic people. My father was with Venizelos in 1922.<sup>35</sup>

My father was a soldier in the Middle East and Turkey in 1932. He saw the catastrophe

there. He saw Smyrna burn!<sup>36</sup> He was with Venizelos at the time but he was left. My

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<sup>35</sup> Venizelos was a leader of the Republican movement in Greece. He sought to incorporate the Greek-speaking populations throughout the Ottoman Empire into a single nation state (a project termed the "Megali Idea"—the "Big Idea"). The National Schism, which interviewees speak about, refers to the split that was created between the Republicans and the Monarch over Greece's position during the first World War. While the King wished to keep Greece neutral (implying support of the Central Powers), Venizelos, as Prime Minister, brought Greece onto the side of the Allies.

<sup>36</sup> After WWI, the Greek army, under Venizelos, fought the Turkish army over the partitioned land of the Ottoman Empire from 1919-1922. In Smyrna (today's Izmir) there was a large population of Greeks and thus it was Venizelos' intention—part of his "Megali Idea"—to incorporate the city into the Greek nation

family was never right. Never right! From far, far back, they were communists [KKE] and PASOK. I don't have any rightists in my family. No one from my family ever voted for Nea Demokratia!

Petros' description constructs a brotherhood of the left comprised of PASOK and communists—a genealogy that is defined principally by its exclusion of the right. His remarks render PASOK well-rooted in the tradition of the left through its association ("and") with the oldest political party in Greece (KKE). The effect is one of asserting longevity and continuity in political genealogy.

Of course, the civil war in Greece is so lamented precisely for the ways it cut through families, arming "brother against brother" and "son against father." How then, can the family be taken both as a unified political subject and site of significant political divides? And how is this contradiction worked out in personal accounts? Some interviewees found very interesting ways of neutralizing their right-wing relatives. For example, consider how Vasilis describes his right-wing uncle:

My family was left, but there was an uncle who worked with the right wing. But he was not killing, because he knew that if you kill like this, one day they will come back for you. For that reason, when he died, so many people went to his funeral. Leftists came to say, "Thank you!" There were many communists who expressed this, because, OK, better he sends you to the island, because if you stayed in Athens they would imprison you, torture you, kill you. So he sent many to the islands, saying, "Stay over there, or sign."

If Vasilis' uncle emerges, in a roundabout way, as a kind of benevolent actor for the left, and is brought into the family fold without compromising an otherwise consistent lineage, Angelos'

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state. The attempt failed and the Turkish army reclaimed the city in 1922 and set it on fire. Many thousands of Greeks and Armenians died and those who survived were evacuated en masse.

maternal relatives on the right are remembered as good guys playing for the wrong team: "They joined the right at that time not with consciousness, but out of habit, like you follow a hockey team here in Canada. And they were the ones who informed my mother that the prospects for me in Greece were not very good at all." This last point—that right-wing relatives became instrumental in navigating a dangerous political landscape and, as we will see, acted on behalf of "the filed"—is one that I discuss more fully in the final section of this chapter.

Others worked through the right-wing tendencies of family members by placing them in their historical context. The result, in the case of Kostas, was a carefully surmised tragedy:

He was my half-brother and he was very right wing. Even though his father was killed by them! He was killed by the Germans because the fascist [Greek] government did not open the jail for political prisoners when we were occupied. They handed over all these prisoners to the Germans [to be] executed. Presumably [...], well, he told me once that his father had left him a journal. It was given to him by a colleague [...] and presumably he read it and became right wing. Probably his father had a disagreement with the party within the prison [...] Ah, [they faced the] worst punishments when they disagreed with the party. It's worse than the police! [To see] them do this to their own colleagues [and] to isolate them from the rest...

In explaining his brother's right-wing position as a reaction to the persecution of his father *by the left*, Kostas presents a political genealogy turned against itself. To be marginalized by your own blood, "communist against communist," "brother against brother" is a feature of left political history and a reality for families most poignantly articulated by the "sons of signers"—those whose fathers signed statements of conversion in order to avoid imprisonment or exile. Importantly, the historical lens through which Kostas observes his half-brother (one which

introduces the sins of the party) was neither used nor acknowledged by those maintaining a communist position at the time of interviewing.

### **In the Name of the Father**

It will be apparent to the reader by now that my ethnographic reflections on the politics of kinship are heavily shaped by male protagonists and the political genealogies under examination tend to pivot around patriline. It is not that women are totally absent from men's narratives, but rather that they tend to be depoliticized in one of two primary ways: Mothers are either narrowly storied into contexts of domesticity and care or, when they do appear as potential "political" actors, their commitment or reasoning is swiftly undermined. Let's consider two illustrations.

I have just addressed the situation of Kostas, whose half-brother was right-wing. I add here that Kostas described his father as a "democratic person" and his mother as "left." I asked Kostas to tell me more about his mother. The narrative emergence and disappearance of Helen as a political actor is quite remarkable in its ambivalence:

My mother was a leftist but nobody knew. She did not speak about it. My father was pressuring her to vote liberal and my brother was pressuring her to vote for the right wing [...] They were like vultures but she was voting for the communists. Not the communists because there was no communist party [they were banned], but there was the substitute EDA [...] But she was the kind of leftist [with air quotes] who had an instructor. [Our neighbour], Mrs. Kefalas would come and put [a piece of paper with] the name of the person that she must vote for under [the garbage bin]. And [my mother] was taking it and going to vote.

After introducing his mother as holding a distinct political opinion, Kostas then narrates the influence of a neighbour who essentially dictates to his mother how she should vote. Kostas concluded frankly that his mother "knew fuck all," having "finished grade 4" and having "never read a book in her life." Of his half-sister, who was once "a communist," Kostas added with a cynical laugh, "she was left until the moment she turned religious!"

While Kostas relates the political sensibilities of his mother and sister with allusions to their lack of commitment or intelligence, others removed their mothers from the frame by placing them on a kind of transcendent plane. Some men portrayed their mothers as angels—divine creatures—who had no relation to the political world, fraught as it was with the all-too-human pursuits of violence and corruption. Others denied more subtly that their mothers knew anything about the political, but showed great respect and care in descriptions of their mother's domestic worlds. Angelos does so while maintaining his mother's intelligence:

My mother was a self-educated philosopher. She went just three years to school and after her mother died she basically became mother of her brothers and sisters. About 5 years ago, I heard a very sad and touching story about my mother. During the day, nine or ten years old, she was doing a job for a full grown-up woman, cooking and doing stuff like that and at night, when the moon was shining in her room, she was taking her doll out and playing. That was a thing which has struck me. My mother was...Look at the picture... tells a story, doesn't it?

I was in Angelos' home in Toronto when he shared these thoughts with me. Just behind him was a large photograph of his mother's face, tilted sideways and framed by a beautiful golden light. He noted tenderly, "that was taken just before she passed away."

It would be an exaggeration to suggest that men's attempts to narrate their mothers' worlds were frequent or elaborate. In fact, my efforts to get men speaking about their mothers were often felt by interviewees as departures away from the main story they were trying to tell. Nevertheless, we can gesture towards alternative readings of Kostas' description above. While sites of silence emerge in a number of interviews as an effect of fear of reprisal by state actors, Helen's muteness must also be read against pressures to vote alongside her husband or son. Might we then see, in that tiny piece of paper, an act of solidarity between two women subtly and silently subverting the "vultures" and their attempts at intimidation?

Still, when considering the place of parents in men's narratives of political lineage, it is *fathers* that remain the primary preoccupation. These fathers have many faces: There are noble and heroic fathers whose courage was recounted with pride; sensible fathers, who warned sons about the costs of a political life and emphasized moderation; fathers weighed down by fear or shame; fathers perceived as victims of the times; fathers who called for the end of doctrines, ideologies, and "isms" and who encouraged their sons to think for themselves, to find their own way and to be their own man. Some spoke of distant fathers. The story of one's father often involved some speculation or filling in gaps. Evangelos, himself a "social democrat," recalls:

My father was supporting the Communist Party all along, but he wasn't a member. I remember in the elections of 1946 [...] there was a referendum for the restoration of the king in Greece and the Communist Party ordered followers to abstain from that vote. My father didn't vote on that occasion. And it was written in the books, the *fakelo*, that he did not vote, that he abstained from the elections, that he was a communist. Of course, he was a truck driver and for that reason I think it is at least possible that he was travelling, and

that is why he didn't vote that day. In any case, he had leftist ideas, although I don't think he was a member.

Ilias' father was covertly assisting the resistance. Hired as an electrician by the German army to fix the telecommunication lines that were frequently sabotaged by the resistance, he was killed when the Germans discovered that he was covertly passing messages to the guerillas. This legacy was perceived by Ilias as an immense burden: "In Greece as things have been, from the primary school until you are an adult, it depends on who your father is [...] So I had enough of all of this, who is your father, who is your grandfather."

While "left and right" are the organizing principles for those who had a communist—or "fellow traveller"—father, slightly older interviewees experienced the file as a result of a prior "national schism" between republicans and royalists. "As you know," began Markos, whose father was a veteran of the Greek-Turkish war, "we had an earlier split in 22, between those supporting the king and those who wanted to make a republic [Venizelists]." The semantics of communism and resistance later played a strange role in the lives of these self-proclaimed Venizelists and their sons. Many fathers were described as having been critical of the communist party; as one interviewee recalls, his father "could not tolerate the heavy and crude things they were saying, like Stalin was always right." Yet, liberal supporters of Venizelos, and later George Papandreou, were not shielded from accusations and persecution. In the decades after the civil war, by which time the national schism had been remapped onto the polemic, Left-Right, the sons of centric fathers sometimes found themselves strange bedfellows with active communist members and their sons.

Born in 1939 on the island of Naxos, Nikos spoke at some length about his family's characterization:

My father was a war veteran from the Greek-Turkish war. And he was a Venizelist. And for this, my family suffered. But he never spoke about his support. I first discovered it when I realized there were no pictures of the king hanging in our house! And in those days, if you found a house with no king, you knew who they supported [...] But he didn't want us to get involved [...] Still, we suffered because they cut his pension. For two years he had none. He was very sick and we were 8 people in the family. This was in 1946 when there was a referendum to bring the king back. My father didn't want to bring the king back so he didn't vote. They manipulated the numbers, rigged the elections. The King returned [...] And, you know, I was a very good student at the time, but I left school because they would not give me books to study. They refused to give me a book because my father was with Venizelos! [...] So when I left Greece, I said to myself, I am going to leave and I will never come back to this place [...] I was very angry with the whole system.

These reflections reveal a social life of political categories that was consequential for those we are not likely to include in accounts of "the Left." In other words, the sense of having inherited a condemned political inheritance was not an experience exclusive to the sons of communists.

Interestingly, only one interviewee denounced the resistance movement on account of his political inheritance. Dragging the family into collective responsibility was irresponsible and destructive in his view and "good fathers" were those that remained home, stayed quiet, and fulfilled their obligations to their family. "Those were the real heroes," he said. When more subtle resentments surfaced in accounts with other interviewees they were typically stifled with a general remark about the profound anxieties and difficult living conditions of the time: "We all suffered....How could we not?"

Additional narrative elements of a condemned political inheritance were those claims of bequeathed accusations and even sins. The chain of responsibility, from one generation to the next was, at once, lamented, challenged and claimed. Vasilis was the first interviewee to name the two sides of the paternal sin —resistance and its denial: "My father and my uncle were communists. They were part of the resistance. My uncle, he was a brilliant philosopher actually, but they imprisoned him and then they killed him. It was just after the civil war in 50, 51. They were hunting all of them. [...] My father? They let him live, because he signed."

In the years after the civil war, the Communist Party regarded the signing of "declarations of repentance" ("dilosi") a shameful offence against the party and its core principles. In 1945, the question of how to negotiate the previous "generation" of signers (those who had repented of and renounced their communist sensitivities during the Metaxa dictatorship of 1936-1940) was raised, and the Communist Party's new constitution formally denounced these men and women (Voglis 2012b: 80). Consequently, in the post-civil war years, signing the dilosi was also signing one's fate in relation to the party. Thanos recalls:

My father was asked to sign and I believe he did sign. It was true that after signing such a thing they lived their lives with guilt and shame and these are not feelings that a person should feel in such an environment. *I was the son of a signer*. This was used to disgrace me many many many times when I disagreed or did not follow a party line. This is a mistake of the party that we can not forget.

While some men attempted to work through what the act of signing represented for both their fathers and for themselves, others spoke of this part of the family's history dismissively or with hostility. One interviewee recalled brusquely, "I had asked as a kid, why didn't he just keep his big mouth shut?"

In reflections on the Communist Party as an active political force, the practice of shaming signers is deeply lamented; indeed, it is seen as a formidable error and unforgivable sin of the party. This is one of the primary instruments by which the party turned against its own, rendering people of the left vulnerable and doubly marginalized. The second oft-referenced historical mistake of the Communist Party was the official call to abstain from elections in 1946. This abstention, as we have seen above, provided the speedy identification of many communists and "fellow-travellers," leaving them exposed to police intimidation and arrests. In this sense, the party played its own ironic and tragic role in the persecution of left-wing Greeks.

In a story concluded sadly with, "That's war for you, my dear," Thanos explained the trail of events that led to his own marginalization by the youth wing of the Communist party. I quote Thanos at length here:

My father was employed at a German factory [...] making beer. The chemist was a German fellow [...] and when they occupied Greece he appeared to the workers in the uniform of a Nazi captain and apparently, according to my father, he assured them that they had nothing to fear. But at the same time, the majority of [...] the workers had joined the communist party [...] Now, before the end of the occupation, the Germans wanted to take Greeks to work in the war machine [...] and they tried to gather those people, by organizing blockades in the different neighborhoods of Athens [...], gathering all the men from age 16 to 65. At the same time, they wanted to wipe out the communists, who were the leaders of the resistance at the time. You have probably heard the stories of the guy with the mask [...] He would go in front of a line of hostages and point out the communists, saying him, him, him and then they would take them out and kill them right on the spot. The rest would [be gathered] up and take[n] to the famous labour camp or jail [...] So my father, of course,

he had to present himself in the square and he was pointed out, identified by the guy with the mask as being a communist person, and we were there, my mother and I, watching. But all of a sudden, just as they lined him up, the German jeep drives up and the owner of the factory jumps out! He picked up 6 or 7 workers from the factory, including my father, and brought them back to work. So, you can only imagine the type of problems that created for my father with the communists.

The publicly displayed favoritism for Thanos' father by the German boss—turned uniformed fascist—made relations between him and the party difficult. Thanos himself would later face claims of collaboration and being "an agent for the CIA"—charges bequeathed because he was "the son of a signer." Thanos followed this story with an emotive critique of the party's silent condoning of this kind of treatment:

This is terrorism exercised by those who have been terrorized themselves for many generations. This is a terrorism in defense! I am against terror no matter what. There is nothing, for me, more ugly and pitiful than the sight of an eleven year old boy who went through 4 years of occupation and then all of a sudden experiencing the allies using a machine gun to hit people in your own neighbourhoods.<sup>37</sup> That is the worst kind of

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<sup>37</sup> Thanos is referring to the events of December, 1944, in Athens, when the British Army (previously an ally against the German occupiers) turned its guns and tanks against the Greek left-wing resistance forces. He elaborated:

"I was scared, yes I was scared. I remember exactly when the British airplanes began to machine gun the streets of Athens. The neighborhood—*my neighborhood*—you understand? As a child in those days, you didn't scare easily...You get used to machine guns, to killings, you know, you still believe what adults say about the better days ahead of you. But the day when I saw the plane is when I really felt for the first time what fear is. I broke. I remember my mother was there to embrace me and she hid me in this embrace, because I was really shocked and I was crying for hours. That, I had forgotten until now. I was probably ashamed for having broken down [...] Looking back, I think I began to sense that my father was scared also. Because as a real strong guy from Crete, he never let his fears show. But in those days, fear became the eighth person in my family. We were seven people, but fear became the eighth, going in and out of the house, in and out of his work, and returning home. And I sensed this and it made me weak. Because I

terrorism! Now, this blackens your soul. And then you can adopt measures and thinking that can terrorize other people. And yet, no one has the right to do this, no matter what you have gone through.

Finally, it was the sins of the others that interviewees wished to speak about. Having discussed their own condemned political inheritance, we turned to those who, over the course of many decades, had evaded punishment. One interviewee lamented that George Papandreou was remarkably "lethargic" at the close of the second world war, making little attempt to punish collaborators.<sup>38</sup> "If you write anything," said Nikos, as our interview came to a close, "please write this: Nobody...*nobody* ever got punished in Greece, neither the collaborators with the Nazis, the traitors. Never did they get punished. After the dictatorship too." The left, on the other hand, "Well, you know the story..."

### **III. Coming to Age in the File**

At the beginning of this chapter, I discussed at length men's encounters with the material file, framed by some combination of repetitive bureaucratic denials and acts of naming that varied in subtly. Yet, years before men encountered their files in institutional spaces like the military, everyday life had presented its own proximate interpellations—at school, in the playground, at church and in the streets. Narratives reveal, on the one hand, a dynamic "social life of political categories" and, on the other hand, a vague sense of "being one of two." Memories of the first utterance—"You are a communist"—were poignant for their vulgarity and the way they ruptured the ordinary, slicing one moment out of a day like any other. Angelos frames the story he tells

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remembered what my father had told me six months before...that soon Papandreou would have Greeks in their own blood."

<sup>38</sup> George Papandreou Sr. was appointed Prime Minister in 1944 but resigned in 1945 after the December events that Peter discussed above.

below with: "From the time I was small, the three forces in my childhood were the teacher, the priest and the policeman":

I was [...] twelve and I had written a sad story about a kid who was really sick with a high fever, he has no money, and another story about another boy who has lots of toys and is celebrating carnival. I found a way to join these stories, to show they are both human. The next week, everyone is asked to read their story in front of the class. The teacher doesn't call on me, so I ask, "Won't I read mine?" He says, in front of the others, "Come over here" to the front [of the class]. He takes up my paper from his desk and tears it to pieces. He began assaulting me there in front of the other kids and he says, "You are a communist." I say, "What is a communist?" I didn't know...I mean I had heard the word before but never bothered with it. But after that, you can imagine, I was inclined to figure out what it meant!

The teacher, the public humiliation, the interpretation of a child's imagination as politically engendered: These are common elements of the first utterance in the social space of the school.

For Kostas, memories of his most despised teacher are recalled with a sense of the absurd:

I was in the first year of high school and, at that time, we had these oral exams. We had to stand up and recite the previous lesson. I had this teacher who refused to test me! He never called on me and near the end of the class he gave me 2\20 [...] One day, I wrote a response to one of the stories we had to read. There was swearing in this story and at the time I thought this was wrong! I wrote that "the Good God said not to swear. And once someone swore and he developed calluses and pimples on his tongue, full of blood and puss." It was harmless. In 10 days he called the entire council of teachers—the school had 2500 students, can you imagine how many teachers? He wanted me to be expelled from all the schools in Greece and my philologist, my teacher of philology—God bless his soul—said,

"What do you expect of this boy? You fail him and don't even put him to examinations!" Finally they compromised and gave me six days suspension. But Katherine, when the dictatorship came to power, he went directly to the police station, gave them the paper I had written, and said, here, "Here is a communist!" They called me to the station, I went. And they asked, "Why are you here?" SLAP [across the face]. The captain asked, "Why did you write this?" [...] And I said, "This teacher is not a serious person! It was a form of joking!" He said finally, "You are lucky that he shit in his own nest," meaning that he used to play it democratic and then played it right-wing, "because if it was not this way, you can't even imagine what we would do to you..."

Stories of this kind bring to life the overdetermined polarity of the post-civil war years, but they also remind us of the creativity and intrepidity of young people in their own self-defense. Caught between perceptions of children as mere vessels for the reproduction of communism and as already-guilty subjects carrying the sins of their kin, the autonomy and intelligence of youth was regularly denied by authorities in narrated accounts:

I remember [the priest] was telling us about all the angels God had. Gabriel and the others. Out of innocence, I said, "If god is so good and has all these angels working for him, why doesn't he send one or two down to earth and care for the sick children and bring my friend Fortula's father back from exile?" He was a communist. The next day I had to go and answer from where I got this idea. When they hear you talking like that in Greece, the next thing is they call in your parents, never believing that the child's mind could produce such an idea...

Police, the third of Angelos' childhood "forces," were present in narratives of youth as the source of spontaneous bullying and intimidation. Having been sent to purchase the left paper "Avgi" for

his father, Ilias recalls being stopped by an officer of his village: "What is this?" the officer demanded, "You are a communist?! You should be ashamed of yourself! Tell me here and now, who won the war?" Encounters of this kind explain why parents sent their sons to adjacent neighborhoods to purchase left-wing newspapers.

If this trilogy of authority—teachers, priests and police officers—comprised a field of petty symbolic tyrannies, physical violence (more often implied in narratives than named explicitly) can hardly be overlooked. Recounting his nightly adventures, Takis "could not forget the beatings." He told me, "As boys, we would go about the village and wherever we would see white walls, we would make the symbol of the sickle. Of course, they caught me and made me blue all over. My mother was putting onions on me for days after to treat the bruises..."

Takis' recollection and the cost of what might otherwise (that is, in a different time and place) be nothing more than boyish mischief is enough to explain the hesitancy with which interviewees discussed the matter of "being involved." In the years following the civil war and up until the fall of the dictatorship, children of the left were inherently so: "Getting involved...What does this mean?" posed Ilias, "We were so by birth." Intimidations and accusations of guilt by birth make it difficult, then, to speak in terms of *action*. It also makes the denial of these charges and the claim, "I am innocent," almost impossible to substantiate.

In the social space of the school, children navigated terms pulled from adult discourse—fragments from conversations and newspaper headlines— and a "foggy," sense of "being one of two." Dimitris, born and raised in a small northern village close to Mount Olympus, described the years after the civil war as a space of division with clear borders but without obvious significance. "As children," he recalls, "coming out of the war, we did have some kind of division [...] The village had a square and the kids north of the square fought for power over

those in the south. It was an instinct of the war that had remained with us, I suppose." Others recalled more precise words of exclusion. Thanos described a persist politicized bullying: "There was even a song, whoever does not want the king, the country, religion, they would be paid to go Bulgaria! There were asking us to go somewhere else even though they never actually gave us a chance to do it! But you can imagine. I was 12 years old and I had so-called patriot kids singing that to my face at school!"

Given this social life of inherited polarities, naming was loaded with significations for children and adolescents: It anticipated the denials they would later encounter as young men and activated, I believe, both a curiosity about the title and what it bestowed ("As you can imagine, I was inclined to find out what it meant...") and an attachment to figures of the self-identified man. On this last point, Nikos concluded our interview: "I remember something that my father told me as a child, which I didn't understand at the time. He said, 'It's a big thing to say your name in front of a crowd.'" This persistent tension between stating one's name and being bestowed a degraded title is one I will return to again in both chapters four and five. For the time being, I want to continue exploring how this ambivalence is expressed in men's accounts of the post-civil war years.

### **Visibility of the Political and (Mis)recognitions**

An ethnographic approach to political subjectivity involves placing those I interviewed in the company of others—ancestors, parents, uncles, grandparents, comrades, "opportunists," friends, mentors, leaders, parties and compatriots—and asking after "the ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire and fear that animate" them as thinking and "acting subjects" (Ortner 2006: 107). This involves paying attention to "whatever is at stake" (ibid) for men as they come to terms with a political history rendered profoundly intimate. This "whatever is at

stake" is explored here in the subtle moments of interaction—in silences, gestures, anxieties, hesitant exposures and retreats. As I demonstrate, in the highly polarized post-civil war years, interviewees inhabit ambivalent sociopolitical sites: on the one hand, men are "known" to one another by virtue of their close proximities and identifiable genealogies; on the other hand, they find themselves in unchartered social situations, "ceas[ing] to trust that context is in place" (Das 2007: 9). Thus, questions of visibility, proximity and voice emerge as central stakes in the making of political subjectivities.

On the question of visibility, Thanos' account is illustrative, as it renders transparent both the neighborhood itself and the political genealogies inhabiting each home:

I can close me eyes now and remember eight years in one kilometer. *My neighbourhood*. I can still see who lived in this house and who lived in the next. You know, how many girls this woman had and were they beautiful girls. I can remember like yesterday [...] that this neighbour was involved and what the other did. You know, we knew one another.

For Thanos, the political involvement of his neighbours is as evident—and as easily recalled—as the beauty of their daughters. While what "knowing one another" might mean in such a context remains an open question at this point, I'd like to emphasize that this framing of social relations as translucent, proximate, and even fixed emerges as a frequent trope. As Dimitris surmised, "well, in a sense everybody knows where everybody stands," largely on account of "this family orientation."

Yet stories of (mis)recognition—some comical, others tragic—reveal the complexities of identification, anonymity, and the visibility of the political. As young men from Northern Greece, Dimitris and Panos had travelled with their classmates and teacher to the city of Thessaloniki for an overnight stay. As it happened, on this very day Grigoris Lambrakis, the

much-loved leftist and pacifist, lost his life after being attacked by right-wing gang members.<sup>39</sup> Thousands took to the streets to protest this attack, and young Dimitris and Panos found themselves, whether intentionally or not, in the center of the action: "The police come and they start hitting us. They say, 'you goddam communist', and I tell him, 'hey hey, wait we are from Macedonia...'"

Is this cry, "We are from Macedonia," not that of someone whose anonymity has been betrayed—of a young boy whose political inheritance should not, technically, be known in Thessaloniki and who should therefore be able to remain obscure? Such a response to police brutality may not work in one's own village, where one is "known" but in streets that are not one's own, it articulates a misrecognition, or perhaps, a recognition out of place: How could you know what we are?

In recollections of the visibility of political ascriptions in the 1950s and 60s, a tension thus emerges from the village—as well as the neighbourhoods of Athens and Thessaloniki— between presumptions of candor and its opposite. If one is told that "the village believes you are a communist," it is the village *itself* that is said to speak through the file.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, as my

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<sup>39</sup> Grigoris Lambrakis was a peace activist on the left who was assassinated in Thessaloniki in 1963. His death brought incited public protest and was the catalyst for the formation of a cultural-political youth movement. The world renowned composer Mikis Theodorakis became the elected president of this organization in 1965.

<sup>40</sup> There is much to be said about how deeply anticommunist ideology of the state mobilized and solicited citizens in the practices of surveillance and informing after the civil war. As a young man, one of my interviewees who had entered the university in Thessaloniki was called to the police station and offered a hot meal. On that visit, he was warned against getting involved in communist activity and then the officers asked him to begin informing on his classmates. This practice—of offering meals in exchange for information—was discussed in other interviews. Another participant explained that his older brother was pressured to close his kafeneio (cafe) in Athens after his subtle refusals to "listen in" on his clients and to report back to the police. After many visits by the police to his cafe (which in itself unnerved his clients on the left) and failed attempts to persuade him to supply information (as well as the gentle warning that he came from a left family, so he should "take care"), his brother closed shop and migrated to Canada. I also learned of the "lady informer" in the village of one interviewee. She was well-known for observing the activities of his neighbours and for sharing information with the police. The interviewee said that he

interviewees recall, the file *did* rely on members of the community to "inform it" and to abide by it. Yet, in the interview excerpt below, we have an example of the file seemingly turning against the village as source:

I knew this man. *We all knew him*. A guy named Niko. Tom's sister married [...] a tall guy, who never speaks politics. He speaks about music, soccer, everything else, but no politics. Just when I was leaving for the army, they come and get him and send him to a special concentration camp for communists. And we say to [Tom], "What happened? Niko was never a communist! He was not a political guy!" And we asked him why did they take him over there? [...] He said, "Maybe by mistake." But even the right guys, the conservative guys, *they all think that Tom is a right-wing guy*. Everyone thinks he is conservative. Everyone, except the police. So, the years pass. We never see him and then I left for Greece [...] Years pass and [...] I return to Greece [after the junta falls] and I go to this gathering [for leftists]. So, I see Niko there! And I say [...] "What are you doing here? [...] Homosexual!" You know, and he [laughing] says, "It was my secret..."

This story documents a deeply privatized political identity and positions the narrator in an ambiguous relation to questions of recognition and authority: On the hand, it challenges the transparency of village sociality and the knowability of one's neighbour; on the other hand, it hints at the exacting gaze of authority and its capacity to penetrate even the most guarded interiors. The metaphor of sexual transgression and coming out, in the story above, renders the political a carefully carried secret and likens it to an ontological reality. This is the awkward and

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feared her and tried to avoid her at all costs. When I asked what happened to her after the junta, he could not recall any details. All of these brief references to the social relations of surveillance give us some idea of i) how the "modalities of the state....rest[ed] on everyday practices" (Das 163) and ii) the ambivalent discursive formulations of the "village" as a singular actor or subject capable of laying judgment on an individual.

hindered social life of a privatized politics, having no legitimate means of expression—one that can be traced through accounts of both intimate and enduring silences and hesitant exposures:

They called me to the army for my duties. They put me first in Athens. But after five days, they come and ask me, "What is your relation to Yiannis P?" "He is my father," I told them. They tell me I shouldn't be here and they take me to a site, a place where garbage is sorted. And there are two other guys there [...] one was a teacher, one was an artist. We had to sort copper with copper, aluminum with aluminum, steel with steel. That was our only job. I was at that time 22 years old and was thinking, I don't mind! I don't feel tired [...]

The secret police would come every few days, but we could see them coming from far away and we would make the coffee and the sugar and the cigarettes disappear. I remember they caught me sleeping once on the job, so they gave me another month [...]

Well, time passed and it was the day the teacher was going to finish his duties. And he says "OK with our last coffee, I want to know, for what reason you are here?" [The artist] says, "I don't know, but no one bothers me here and I'm happy." And he looks at me, and I say, "I don't know, I am a good guy..." But he says, "Leave that Bullshit! Who is it? Your uncle? Your father?" And when he said this, I breathed deeply. I was so afraid! I thought, "They know! They know about my family!" And he says, "Listen, I am a member of the Communist Youth. Maybe you are not. But your father, your brother..." And I say, "Yes! Yes! My father! And my uncle, they killed him in 1951." And the teacher says, "Yes! Yes! My brother is a member of the Communist Party!" We stood and we kissed each other, we embraced, and then he left the camp.

After telling me this story, Vasilis admitted that he would guard the "secret" of his father very carefully for many years after and that he carried this fear of being exposed into his relations in Canada.

## **V. Contesting the File**

We have seen above the ways in which everyday life was animated by a politics of kinship and a certain dynamic social life of political categories. Here I ask, to what extent was the file—despite its powerful signification of being both true and authoritative—negotiated or contested by those who inhabited it? How does one create distances from identifications imposed? How does one demonstrate that he is not who the others claim him to be? I show that living in the file was, in many cases, a matter of persuading others to reinterpret it, to see it as unsubstantiated, or at least to temporarily ignore it and pretend it didn't exist.

I discussed earlier the manners by which right-wing relatives are incorporated into political genealogies, such that the designation "left family" remains relatively intact. Indeed, while the right is typically not admitted or invited into the family history, they are nevertheless brought into the narrative to contest and "close the file" in the sense I will discuss in the remaining pages. Described as well-meaning, harmless, ill-informed, perhaps dim-witted, and—most certainly—a product of the times, right-wing relatives and friends were often called upon to navigate dangerous terrains.

Yet, it becomes apparent that the protection offered by the "well-connected" (which is to say right-wing acquaintances, employers, friends or family members) was often precarious. Admitting the protective effect of having a right-wing relative, Kostas said simply and dismissively, "I supposed it functioned as a protection at the time, in the sense that they would

have beaten the shit out of me otherwise. But I never asked him to do it for me. He did it on his own accord." Given that his brother eventually settled with his own family outside of the city, Kostas added that this link, even had he fostered it, would not be strong enough to provide any enduring protection.

Takis, who made a name for himself as the artist of his village, was encouraged, in spite of his file and family history, to stay in Northern Greece under the protection of his employer. The latter, a retired police officer and owner of a photography studio, was impressed by Takis' detailed photo finishing (a very rare and specialized craft at the time) and implored him to stay: "Don't worry," he said, "I'm police. Nobody can touch you." But assurances of this kind, surmised Takis, were rather weak given the volatility of the period. Against the advice of his employer, he began seeking ways of leaving the country.

It was during the first year of the dictatorship, in 1967, that Constantine first sought the protection of a right-wing relative against police intimidation:

A major came to see me and said they had received information that I had taped illegal texts. He looked around my office, found the tapes, and took them. He said he would review their content. But a member of my brother-in-law's family was a general, so we got in touch with him and he called the boss of the major. So the major came back, returned the tapes and said my case had been reviewed and the text wasn't so subversive. But he told me not to do it again and then he said as he left, "Skepsou Ellinika!" "Think Greek!" But I couldn't stay in these conditions. It wasn't safe. I knew the general [the family tie] could be kicked out of the army at any time and that's exactly what happened a few months later.

If relationships "with the right" were not perceived to provide an enduring security within Greece, they nonetheless seemed to play an instrumental role practically and symbolically in the final act under dictatorship: The departure. Dimitri recalls:

I applied to come to Canada and I was waiting to get my passport. Two months go by, three, and I approach some relatives on the right and say, "Come on guys, get some information! Help me!" And they say "ok," and I'm sure that they did their best, but I wasn't getting the passport and I was very upset. Eventually, I went directly to the chief of police in the capital of the region—I was naive—and he checks my file and says, "The village believes you are a communist." But he was a reasonable guy. I told him, "I have relatives on the right! I have friends on the right!" I told him their names. [...] He made a phone call to the office of my own village and he told the policeman, "Give this man a passport!" [...] And he hung up and said, "Go now. You will get it." In a few days, I received it and I left for Canada immediately.

Although we can't possibly infer from Dimitris' account that acquiring life-changing documents was as easy as naming right-wing friends and family members most of the time, his experience (and that of others) does reveal the subjective cracks—inhabited by those "reasonable guys"—in the state bureaucracy. Describing his own last act under the dictatorship, Stavros similarly demonstrates the power of having friends in the "right" places:

One day he saw me in the street and he said, "Come here." I said, "What do you want?" I was nervous [...] I had avoided him since the junta had come to power. He said again, "Come here, let's go for a coffee, let's talk." I say, "About what?" And he says, "I don't know, Malaka, about girls! Come!" So, we go for a coffee. He says to me, "I know you are scared. I know you are called to the police station but I'm not to blame [...] Be careful of

your friends. If you want anything, you come to me. I can help you." And without hesitating, you know, I say, "OK, I need a passport!" [...] He says, "a passport? I'll tell you tomorrow." Next day, he comes and says, "I give you a passport but you don't want to know how much it costs!" I say, "I don't care." He said, "give me 1000 drachmas, 300 to make, the rest to someone in the ministry. I'll pay them to authorize it." I gave him pictures and he gave me the passport in 10 days! So, I have my passport in my pocket [...] Before I had no such thing! Few days after, I am there with my brother in the corner of the airport, worried, you know, that they would take it away. And I hear the announcement, I go through the check and when the plane is up I say, "Ah, I am free..."

## **VI. Closing the File**

What better metaphor exists for continuity and preservation of meaning than the paper file, deliberately recorded and secured? For files, as Thanos reminds us, "are made to be kept, not thrown away." And yet, in these narratives, the file does undergo a closure—material or symbolic—that is intended to render the information within it irrelevant. One way of closing the file is to do as Karamanlis' conservative government did after the fall of the junta in 1974: officially ban the practice of file-keeping. A more dramatic way of closing files is to physically destroy them, as the coalition government of 1989 did in public ceremonies throughout Greece.

During the dictatorship, however, it seems there were only two manners of closing the file and of rupturing the politics of kinship upon which it rests: The first was to sign the statement of repentance, which would, theoretically, have redeemed the signer and his family. Rather than an act of repentance and forgiveness, however, it was discussed as something of a formality; effective in avoiding the most extreme forms of punishment, it nevertheless rendered the signee

(and his kin) additionally suspicious "to both sides" (in the words of one interviewee). The blood of the father is only literally saved, while that of the son remains suspect. As Vasilis explain, "They know he only signed to save his life! Except if he shows them by signing *and* agreeing to work for the police. To sign, ok, you won't be killed." He added, that for the son of the signer, there would be "nothing"; "All you will be able to do is be a driver...a taxi cab driver, or a truck driver [...] Nothing else." In this sense, signing does not so much imply closing the file, as a personal validation of it (and the state's interpellation). Superficially, it also expresses a conversion and, in this sense, is a testament to the completed act of state persecution: the cleansing of the body politic. Signing is an act of self denial that neither protects oneself or one's family from charges. From the perspective of genealogy, it also has the capacity to render one's children political orphans —unable to claim inheritance on the left or right.

In this sense, emigration appears to be a more effective means of rupturing the politics of kinship and closing the file during the dictatorship. Thousands took the decision to leave Greece for countries in which the files would, presumably, have no relevance and where anonymity could be achieved. In the following chapter, however, I show that for those arriving to Toronto in the 1960s and 1970s, political inheritance remained relevant and, in this sense, the file was given a second life in the diaspora.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I discussed the presence of the *fakelos* in men's accounts and the politics of kinship upon which it rests. The file has both a materiality and a metaphorical dimension; while men express specific encounters with the file, they also articulate a vague sense of "being one of two." Documenting the *social life of political categories*, I showed how "living in the file"

involved a field of careful negotiation and interpretation. Moreover, by tracing the work of the file, I began to establish the theoretical and ethnographic foundation of the dissertation as a whole in two ways: first, I outlined a theoretical lexicon for thinking about the *politics of kinship*, *political inheritance and political genealogy*; second, I demonstrated how men's constructions of political subjectivity are articulated through a set of identifiable tropes; namely, voice, visibility and proximity.

## Chapter 4

### **(Re)claiming the Political: Acts of Naming and Resistance in the Diaspora**

*"I was called many names in Toronto. 'Communist' bothered me least."*

*"By the time we had arrived, they had all changed their names!"*

*"I remembered something my father said, that it's a big thing to say your name in front of a crowd."*

In the fall of 2013, I visited Yannis in his second-hand store, tucked away in an old neighbourhood of central Athens. I was surprised to find Yannis perched against a large desktop computer, his face pressed up close to the monitor with squinted eyes. Nearly a year had passed since our last visit and he received me with a distracted "yeia" ("hi"). He eased himself away from the screen slowly and said, "We have a computer!" I knew that Yannis' business had been in decline for years and that he was struggling to keep the doors open. To supplement the income he had lost, he began selling a few very old books—part of his small stock of treasures that were worth quite a lot. To make these purchases, he worked through a small network of personal contacts. Aware that there was a more lucrative market online, if only he "could figure out how to work a computer," he had been frustrated with his tech-savvy son's reluctance to take the initiative. Yannis explained that his son had finally mobilized some friends to help put the store in order— to "modernize" the system and to link it into the rare book market.

Getting online offered more than a supplementary income; it had fostered a virtual return to Toronto. As we sat together, Yannis slowly typed the names of people he had known from Toronto, amazed to discover that some of them had become "important" people. Then he told me that he had found something I'd be interested in seeing. Taking a DVD from a small brown envelope, he struggled to find the drive and then handed the disc to me with exasperation. Once loaded, a video opened and there was a slightly younger Yannis, standing where we sat now and addressing a small, white-haired audience. I pulled my chair closer.

The video is a recording of an event from about 7 years ago. Yannis had organized a commemorative gathering for his friend Manos, who he had met in Toronto during the years of the Junta. Being an atheist, Yannis explained that he could not "step foot" in the church or cemetery when Manos died, but he wanted to honour his friend in his own way. Inviting Manos' family and friends to his shop, Yannis made a presentation about what his friend "had done for the Greeks" in Toronto. Originally a member of the Communist party of Greece (KKE), Manos later became active with the Eurocommunists (KKE-I).<sup>41</sup> A few moments in, Yannis paused the video to explain how difficult it was to organize this event. Calling a number of "the guys from those days" to invite them, he was met with long-winded critiques of Manos' decision to break with the KKE. "I don't give a fuck about that!" Yannis recalls yelling, "Will you come and honour the man, or not? He's dead for Christ's sake!"

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<sup>41</sup> KKE is the Communist Party of Greece, which narrates itself as being founded in 1918 as the Socialist labour Party of Greece and thus the oldest political party in the country. KKE-I was formed after the significant split in the KKE in 1968, a result of opposing opinions about the role the Soviet Union should have in guiding the party. KKE-I, like other left groups in Europe, critiqued the Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia and built close ties to the "Eurocommunist" movement.

The recorded commemorative event begins with Yannis stating that he would like to share the struggle of the "Greeks in Toronto" in honour of Manos. And then, for the next half hour, he highlights moments in the anti-dictatorship movement, with images projected against the wall behind him: Here is Manos in the boîtes of the Danforth; there he is protesting in the street; here are his friends outside of the consulate, holding a hunger strike. And suddenly, a surprise (Yannis glances at me sideways to see if I've noticed): In a sea of white hair and black hats, there is the poster-boy of the contemporary resistance himself, Alexis Tsipras. It is in Mr. Alexis Tspiras and his left-wing party SYRIZA that many hopes lies today, but at the time of the commemorative event, Tsipras was "just" a young member of the municipal council of Athens. I show my surprise at seeing such an important public figure in this intimate setting. Yannis laughs at my reaction, "Who would have thought, eh?"

This is surely a unique moment of historical folds: the present insecurity of Yannis and his shop, "pre-crisis" images of a more agile, healthier, confident self, a commemoration site for the diasporic struggle, the casual but pensive pose of the future Prime Minister in his younger days. As a visual composite, perhaps there is no better mode of illustrating the ambiguous present from which Yannis spoke to me at length of his 15 long years in Canada.

Yannis was among the many thousands of young Greeks who left for foreign lands during the years of the junta. Official figures from Athens show that, between 1961 and 1976, approximately 320,000 Greeks emigrated abroad through legal means and Canada is recorded as receiving about 40,000 between 1967 and 1973 (Gavaki 1991: 73, 77). More than one fourth of the men I interviewed entered the country illicitly while another half entered with official passports, overstaying their tourist visa and eventually acquiring immigration status or student visas. In other words, only one fourth of my interviewees settled in Canada through methods that

Tamis and Gavaki (2002) claims to have been dominant in those years; namely, sponsorship through relatives or through the new "point system" that the Liberals put in place (118). Nonetheless, the latter may have played a role in the eventual granting of citizenship to those who had entered as tourists. There is no estimate for those arriving and staying in Canada outside of the formal categories of "nominated," "sponsored" and "independent" immigrants used at that time. Most interviewees indicated that they personally knew 10 to 20 individuals in Toronto living "paranoma" (illegally) in those years, although they commented that most of these people later acquired study visas in order to stay in Canada temporarily. Regardless of the specific numbers, some interviewees emphasized that those migrating in the 1940s and 50s (and to some extent the early 60s) had generally done so as a result of the devastating economic conditions of post-war Greece, while many of those leaving Greece after 1967 were doing so to avoid the Junta. As one participant explained, "If you met someone coming after 1967, you understood *what he was...*"

This chapter explores forms of sociality and constructions of political subjectivity in men's narratives of the anti-dictatorship movement that was established in Toronto. The coup took power on April 21st, 1967, and most of those I interview migrated to Canada very shortly after. On the basis of interviewees' accounts, I ask: How did men negotiate, manage, and socialize along political lines in their new city? And for those who had carried the weight of the file's interpolations for many years—indeed having been told *what they were and what they were destined to be*—what was it to actively participate in a movement and to *act* (often for the first time) *politically*? If, in chapter three, I demonstrated how young men navigated the file and the overdetermined political categories that were bestowed upon them, I now focus on how men engaged in the articulation and actualization of political identities. In the process, I argue that

political genealogy remained animated in the streets of Toronto and that the file gained a second life in rather surprising ways.

I have organized this chapter into three parts: The first sets the scene of men's arrivals and their initial encounters with the established "Greek community." I show that for men in their 20s and early 30s, differences of age, but also of culture and education forged a sense of being a marginalized and progressive generation in the Greek diaspora. In the second part of this chapter, I explore men's narratives of "reclaiming the political," demonstrating specific forms of sociality—solidarity, but also antagonism and distrust—that developed between different branches of the movement. In the third section, I place the problematic of political genealogy squarely into the analysis, documenting both the ways in which political inheritance continued to matter between activists themselves and between activists and the regime's representatives in Toronto.

## **I. The Ambivalent Faces of "Community": Migrating to the Village**

*From the first days I asked around, searching, trying to find some contact with Greeks who have formed an organization with the goal of restoring democracy in Greece. My cousin couldn't tell me anything, since he works day and night, cut off from every Greek element, in order to feed his four children. As I wrote in my last letter, there is here, unfortunately, another Greek town "me oti afti borei na exei mesa tis" [with whatever she is able to hold within her]: the politically-ignorant, the indifferent, the "me, if I don't work, no one will feed me," the workers, the "restoran man" [restaurant men], the scientists and the priests. Here, in this other Greek town, with the successful and the unsuccessful, with their Greek mixed together with their Hellenized English, every afternoon after work, I set off for my*

*house....I stop at a disc store that stays open all night, browsing the rich collections of classical music. Most of the time, I find cheap copies of performances by Soviet and Czech orchestras for just a dollar. Slowly, I've put together a collection that helps me escape from the wretchedness and alienation of this "frikis" [horror] they call immigratsia. Most nights, I study English. I have to overcome the barriers of the language, because, as the situation evolves, I'll only be seeing Greece in post cards for a long time [my translation].*

This is the description of a new migrant's first months in Toronto, having left Athens with the "junta at his feet." Apostolos wrote these words (under a pseudonym) in a 600-page work of historical fiction that is based, in part, on his own experiences. I met Apostolos nearly three years ago, just as he was completing his first draft. Understandably, his reflections in our interview had a literary quality to them—rich in detail, emotive and intimate. He had, after all, spent a year churning over sites, relationships, conversations and his own intentions in the labour of writing. Before I had even asked a question, Apostolos warned me that he had not spoken English in many years and that I "might not like" what he had to say. He elaborated, "Because, how can I say it...You know, I never set my two feet in Canada. One foot remained always in Athens, the other was sinking into the Atlantic. I didn't pass with both feet."

Apostolos' expression of suspension, and his figure of the strolling migrant, invites a alternative reading of migrant arrivals to Toronto in the late 1960s. The site that the contemporary reader might hurriedly identify as "The Danforth" or "Greektown,"—the street lined with Greek restaurants and home of the Greek community's annual parades and festivals—is narrated here as a space of distantiation, alienation and contempt. The only respites are a 24-hour record store (now disappeared) and a personal collection of foreign music, claimed against the "horrors" of "immigratsia. "The Danforth" as a site of Greek ethnicity has not yet been

constructed as such, and the spectacle that Apostolos narrates is a hodgepodge of Greek villagers and "professionals," and a cacophony of dialects muted only by the sounds of Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff and Stravinsky. In other words, in the space that others have cited as *the* "immigrant settlement" for Greek newcomers, Apostolos moves within the streets like a ghost, regarding his so-called "patriots" as if they were nothing more than figures on a postcard.

Apostolos' reflections refuse the figure of the "Greek community," illustrating instead a distrust that "context is in place" (Das 2007: 9). What kind of political subjectivity and what forms of sociality are possible in a space regarded as postcard? Yannis' account invites the same probing, albeit with slightly different implications:

First of all, you had sexual needs, intellectual needs, social needs, to belong somewhere! You were learning new things, new mentalities, you had to face Greeks. *You knew they were Greeks, but at the same time they were somehow speaking a different language.* I had nothing to do with Greeks from other parts of the country! [...] You know, when they migrated in the 50s, most of these people were directly from the mountains, with a stop over [on an island] to take the boat to Canada [...] What was Toronto before we arrived? We are speaking about a very conservative community! *I mean their thinking was from a different time!*

The perceived differences of urbanity and rurality, between north and south, and between generations were discussed extensively in this way. Regarding those who had already "established" themselves, one interviewee said reproachfully, "by the time we arrived, *they had all changed their names!* Iannis was John! Kostas was Gus!" In the context of the political and social dynamics that I laid out in chapter three, one can better imagine both the motivation of those arriving in the post-civil war years to "shed" their name through the well-established

process of anglicization, as well as the dismay of those arriving in the 1960s at giving up something so culturally entrenched. Why change your name in a land that does not recognize its political significations and in which you have no record? In this sense, "they had already changed their names" is quite a bit more complex than an expression of mere cultural assimilation.

Yannis was not alone in describing what he saw as a "museum," familiar in some sense, but "at least a generation behind" in terms of cultural reference points. Rather than their own beloved songs—songs which had been banned in Greece but could still be acquired through underground channels and, of course, played and performed at a distance from authorities—it was bouzouki music that came out of the "dog houses of the Danforth." The latter were popular with mostly middle-aged, working-class men. This significant gap in generational and political cultures, then, is at the heart of how the Danforth of the 1960s gets constructed by interviewees; first, as obsolete and only later as a meaningful space of sociality. Posed otherwise, this to ask, how a "hot spot"—in this case, a site of supposed "Greek ethnicity"— is ontologically defined through the migrant's own perceptions?" (van Dijk 2011: 106).

Yannis was born to an Armenian mother and a working-class father— the two having met in Athens "somewhere under the moon of the second world war." Unlike many of those interviewees discussed in chapter three, Yannis had not been filed based on his family's political ascription. As a young man, he became involved in the Lambrakis Youth, a political movement sparked by the 1963 assassination of peace activist Grigoris Lambrakis and rooted in the growing contempt for the repressive state control of everyday life and lack of political freedoms. Within a year of Lambrakis' murder, the movement had attracted over 20,000 members and was steadily increasing (Kassimeris 2001: 47). In fact, the movement was expressed as a cultural and political

flourishing "despite enormous pressure and persecution from an omnipresent secret police" (ibid). From his home in Toronto, Thanos described it as a sense of something moving, a hesitant but promising awakening:

You have to understand that the regime was very oppressive. We could not express our thoughts! We could not write what we wanted! We needed to find a way out, so we created cultural associations in different neighbourhoods in order to express ourselves and to be with others who were going through the same situation. You understand? It was for survival. And we would be going to different neighbourhoods for our meetings, because everyone knew us in our own streets. Not that the police did not know about our efforts and that they did not raid our meetings! But's its true that these cultural organizations, by promoting literature, poetry, the arts, they brought about a renaissance. Think about Theodorakis' music—it first became known through those organizations. And poetry! There was political thought, but it was so covered by the arts that we almost didn't take it to be political. Listen, I am coming to the end of my life now, and I can say that I loved that time. We had music in Greece like never before! But it didn't come from one day to another...we had different metamorphoses, where everything, I suspect, was moving from different roads but towards the same river. And the river must have been something wonderful, because they created the junta to stop it!

The perspective that Thanos lends here is crucial, as these creative "rivers" were not developed in the previous chapter's discussion of "living in the file." We can better understand, then, why the lack of evidence of this "new wave" in Toronto was so deeply lamented—especially for those who had participated in the movement but also for those who had come to love the music of Theodorakis and the poets he had popularized through his compositions.

Yannis' activities came under the scrutiny of neighbourhood authorities and soon after, he experienced first-hand the brutality of the new regime. Beaten and then imprisoned overnight, he managed to leave Greece a few days after his release through illicit routes:

I went to Switzerland because I was stupid enough to believe it was a neutral country and asked for political asylum in Geneva. This was 1968. It took them 11 hours to deport me. To my luck, there was, in Geneva, the World Council of Churches. Greece, being a member, Canada being a member, and Soviet Union being a member, I had the right to go there and to say, "I have a deportation order and I can not go back to Greece. Tell me what to do." They said, "OK, you have two choices, either the Soviet Union or Canada." So I signed a promissory note of repayment for whatever expenses to pack me to Canada with a nice tie around my neck and I went to Toronto.<sup>42</sup> And that's how it was. One day you are here and the day after you are there and you don't know what is going on. No money, no job. My English, you know, from Plaka,<sup>43</sup> was "Hi my name is Yannis. You have pretty blue eyes, let's go and make love." You know, silly things. Well, they told me that there were a number of Greeks on the Danforth, so I went. I entered into a restaurant and I said, "I'm Greek and I'm hungry." They said, "Please come in." And that was my first job, washing dishes.

Yannis soon became acquainted with other newcomers who, like him, passed their days between tiny rented rooms in the area and the kitchens of the Danforth restaurants. In the evenings he would join them at a small Greek coffee house, "Esperides" on Yonge Street. Soon after his arrival, the "Trojan Horse" was born on the Danforth, becoming a popular boîte for young, progressive Greeks (whose numbers were increasing by the day). Yannis elaborated:

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<sup>42</sup> Yannis was the only interviewee who claimed to have acquired refugee status.

<sup>43</sup> Plaka, of course, is the neighborhood surrounding the Acropolis and is very popular with tourists.

In order to have our own little circle, we had to gather all of our forces, and the Trojan horse [became] the center of our existence. Usually, there were no more than 30 or 40 of us, you know, under very very difficult conditions. I mean, jobs...Most of us were here or there, part-time bartender, waiter, you know, jobs that could not support us to make us feel secure that this part of our salary goes to rent, blah blah blah. It was, "today I have money, so I give you something." It was a very very hard space for us, so the Trojan Horse really [became] the center of our survival.

In the years of the Junta, the Trojan Horse became the regular meeting place for progressive Greeks. The music of Theodorakis played at all hours, musical groups were formed, and a constant conversation was nightly constructed around news from home, political developments and the shared struggles of finding work, paying the rent and learning the language. It was the locus of brainstorming and planning for local initiatives to support newcomers arriving daily and for "hundreds of cultural activities." Even after the fall of the Greek regime in 1974, this creative wave continued, explained Yannis, reaching an apex with "progressive names of the Left" (like Manos Loizos and Christos Leontis) arriving in Toronto for performances. In this sense, the Danforth was slowly reframed as a cultural and political "hotspot" for progressives, through a combination of many labours, common points of struggle and the desire to "belong somewhere":

[...] And not only to do it, but to export it: to Montreal, to Chicago, New York and back to Toronto. [An] *unofficial bridge* was created between Athens and Toronto directly, outside the commercial framework. Because, what was Greek Canada until then? OK: Bouzouki. Who sings at the bouzouki place? All the leftovers of the cultural material of Greece that come to Toronto, all the seamen go there to get drunk, fuck, and listen to shit. So, the commercial part of [Greeks]...they were the ones responsible for the one-hour of Greek

TV, for the radio. They were involved in all this mentality. So, they would bring the leftovers to Toronto—the ones that could not even make money in Athens, but had names thirty years [prior]—in what we call "dog houses" OK? To sing here....

This "unofficial bridge" can be read as both a cumulative effort—an antidote—against a very specific and dominant figure of the "Greek community" and a collective revision of Apostolos' lonely figure, standing "on the stairs over the Atlantic, suspended, without reaching the other coast."

Consider too, that these changes of space and forms of sociality occurred just four kilometres away from the storied center of progressive and left youth culture in Toronto. In its day, Yorkville "served as a crossroads for Toronto's youth, as a venue for experimentation with alternative lifestyles and beliefs, and as an apparent refuge from the dominant culture and the stifling expectations it had placed upon them" (Henderson 2011: 8). Yorkville had undergone its own process of transformation, as diverse groups—"politicians, hippies, journalists, bikers, 'greasers,' 'speed-freaks,' shop owners and 'teenyboppers' alike"—engaged in its "continuous making and remaking"(7). Henderson further notes that "by 1964 most young Torontonians (and many young Canadians) likely knew that excitement and Yorkville went together as fingers interlaced. By 1970, however, most would have known that the excitement had fled, and it was time to look elsewhere" (8).<sup>44</sup>

To some extent, the Trojan Horse did attract those who had previously been active in the "Yorkville scene," including artists, poets and a few "progressive types" later involved in the

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<sup>44</sup> "Since the 1970s, and even more so today, Yorkville has been known [...] as the Rolls- Royce of Toronto neighbourhoods. Flashy, absurdly wealthy, home to martini bars and salons and overpriced restaurants, Yorkville is defined by the kinds of joints where conspicuous people wear three-hundred-dollar sunglasses inside at midnight, during the Toronto International Film Festival, hoping to be mistaken for a movie star" (Henderson 2011: 6)

NDP. Those I interviewed described the clientele of Trojan Horse as "mostly male," with a few "Greek girlfriends" and a smattering of "Canadian girls." In reference to the latter, one interviewee mused, "they came and ordered a coffee and a Greek to go." Beyond references to university classrooms and those specific events where Canadian representatives were asked to speak on behalf of the "Greek cause," interviewees narrate very little daily interactions with "native Torontonians."<sup>45</sup>

"Its hard to believe that it all happened here," Lukas said with a sigh. We had been sitting together in his popular restaurant on the Danforth, discussing the "music scene back then" and browsing through old photos of the Trojan Horse. Lukas had "jumped ship" as a young sailor, lived undocumented in Toronto for some years and was granted citizenship through Trudeau's amnesty in 1972<sup>46</sup>. Like Yannis, he had passed the first months in Toronto washing dishes on the Danforth. When the owner overheard him singing to himself, he said, "that's some voice, come sing for us." Lukas found himself relocated from the back kitchen to front stage, collecting good tips for performing and waiting tables. Many years later, he opened his own restaurant. "And now, I'm still here washing dishes," he exclaimed with a laugh. "I'm one of the only ones left around here." Lukas explained that by the mid-80s, "the scene" had slowed right down, as many Greeks left the area to buy houses in the suburbs or returned to Greece. With the end of the dictatorship, explained Lukas, "all those revolutionary songs" became somehow out of place.

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<sup>45</sup> There are, of course, important exceptions. A few of my interviewees told me that they had serious relationships with Canadian women and three ended up marrying women who were not from Greek families.

<sup>46</sup>"Assent was given to amendments to the Immigration Appeal Board Act. The universal right of appeal from a deportation order was abolished and provisions were made to clear up the backlog. Appeals from deportation orders were limited to landed immigrants, people arriving at the border who had been issued a visa overseas and "bona fide refugees". Persons in Canada since 30 November, 1972, were given 60 days to apply for adjustment of status. More than 39,000 people from over 150 countries obtained immigrant status" (Report by the Canadian Council of Refugees). (<https://ccrweb.ca/en/hundred-years-immigration-canada-part-2>) June 1 2014

That they continued to have a force and an audience throughout the late 70s was credited largely to the presence of young Chileans, exiled by Pinochet's 1973 coup. A few excellent musicians eventually made their way to the Danforth, and the Trojan Horse in particular, where they began collaborating with Greek musicians who had already made a name for themselves. The band, "Companeros," was formed, producing music in both Greek and Spanish and bringing "new blood" to the progressive scene on the Danforth.

These initial reflections on men's narratives are important in two respects: First, they warn against any homogenous treatment of the Danforth as a mere "immigrant settlement" or any inclination to see Greeks living in the area as a "community." Second, they remind us that, in speaking about political genealogies, as I have done at length in the previous chapter, we have to acknowledge that not all of those participating in Toronto's anti-dictatorship movement had experienced state repression on account of their family backgrounds. In the case of Apostolos and Yannis, for example, it was their involvement in the Lambrakis movement in the mid-1960s that caught the attention of local authorities and eventually made them targets of the Junta's henchmen. Taken together, their accounts represent an alternative political genealogy to the one I have opened this dissertation with.

## **II. (Re)claiming the Political**

Those who organized themselves in the first days against the military junta in Toronto had immigrated to Canada a few years earlier. These were men who had left Greece with the intentions of staying in Canada and had begun to establish themselves in their new city. When the news of the coup came, on the evening of April 21st, 1967, it was a shock for Thanos and Kristos. Kristos was thirty-three at the time and had been working at a large Canadian

manufacturing company. He recalls his efforts "to be middle class, trying to have a nice happy life in a civilized country and suddenly, on the evening of April 21st, it was like a wild horse kicked my head." Re-enacting for me the first conversation he had with his closest friend, Thanos, he explains that "it was as if all the ancestors woke up in us." By the following evening, they had managed to bring together "a hundred or so Greeks" in front of the local Orthodox church to condemn the illegal regime. This was the first act of public protest and the earliest manifestation of the anti-dictatorship movement in Toronto.

Both Thanos and Kristos were Canadian citizens when the Junta came to power—something that marks their stories as quite distinct from most others. We met Thanos in the previous chapter, as one of the "fakelomeni" ("the filed"). Having been involved in the "creative river" he so beautifully captured above, Thanos left Athens when he fell under the even heightened scrutiny of local authorities. Kristos' migration was very unique in the sense that he was a landed immigrant from the moment of his arrival. In a curious way, Kristos insisted that he too had left Greece due to the weight of his political inheritance: "My family was a political family since the early 1900s and we had members in parliament at that time. People came to us for favours and, as a young person, I was disgusted. I wanted to avoid all that." As the grandson of a well-known Venizelist (liberal), Kristos yearned for anonymity abroad.

When they staged their first protest, Kristos and Thanos did so without having had any experience with political organizing in Canada, although Thanos, as we already know, had been involved in "cultural" youth groups in Athens. Of this event and the days after, Kristos recalled the initial orientations of those gathering and the discouraging interventions by the Greek embassy:

At least 100 came that first day, a large group, including the so-called elite of the Greek community—intellectuals, professors, business people—but then something happened that probably characterizes coups of this kind [...] There was a guy there who agreed to print some leaflets for us to hand out [...] You know, telling people to come to Toronto City Hall for another demonstration [...] But he just disappeared. We were supposed to meet a few days later, but we couldn't find him. Then some of the leaders of the community—professors, senior executives—disappeared as well. "Where were you?" "Where are you?" we asked them. "We called you...." "Well," one says, "they called me and they said my mother would...[that they] would cut her pension." Somebody else said, "I have a brother in the army and he is a captain and if I don't shut up he will be kicked out." Or whatever else they do. *Everyone had a relative.* Everyone had something to lose.

This emphasis on the potential risk to loved ones is a theme I will discuss at length below; it is important in so far as it suggests a continuity in the forms of sociality I analysed in the previous chapter. In addition, Kristos suggests that, from the very first days, the anti-dictatorship movement was structured along politicized lines and a target of intervention by Greek authorities. It is certainly true that interviewees report having felt anxious about intimidations of this kind and held the belief that what they were doing in Toronto was risky and consequential for loved ones back home.

In trying to reconstruct for me the "who" of the movement, Kristos surmised that the main protagonists were Greeks of the working class who had migrated to Canada in the years prior to the coup and a steady stream of young newcomers who left shortly after the junta came to power. Kostas, who we met in the previous chapter in the context of his "divided" family (having a "democratic" father, a "communist" mother and sister, and a "right-wing" brother), came to

Canada as a tourist and then was sponsored by his father's sister in Montreal. He details how he became involved in the movement in Toronto:

We had agreed on everything. [My uncle] showed me my room. He had decided what I would study: I would become a dentist [laughs]. Yes, because his son was a professor of medicine [...] so I should be a dentist [...] He took me and dressed me up properly. Oh, what else? Who I was going to marry, this was decided for me too! And he said, "On one condition. No politics!" But to please me, he brought me Greek newspapers. And on the first page, there was my old friend who was underground and who had been arrested. They had pulled out all of his hair. So I started swearing and he said, "Didn't I say no politics?" I said, "Fuck you!" and left. It happened the first days I was there and I left for Toronto.

Kostas had encountered the first signs of what he later referred to as the "apolitical Greeks," who others similarly described as "unaffected," "apathetic," and "indifferent." Upon his arrival in Toronto, and searching for signs of organizing, he discovered very quickly that "the community" was basically a group of "indifferent immigrants" and that it was dominated by the Orthodox church and the Greek embassy. Another interviewee said with exasperation, "What was this 'Greek community?!' Nothing but an artificial union of people that become members completely "efkeriaka" [by chance]." Apostolos' written portrayal of local hegemony is particularly incisive:

*Here exist two primary poles around which the Greeks concentrate: the church and the local organizations. The first is clearly a politico-economic organization, where you pay in order for them to baptize you, to marry you and to bury you. At the same time, and as usual, when it can't be the only power, it becomes indistinguishable from the political; that is, the Junta. As for the others, the local organizations..."What news do you have from the village? Come to the celebration of our organization! We'll have souvlaki, mousaka,*

*keftedakia [meatballs] and...kefi [good mood]!" Unfortunately, nobody can expect anything from them, neither from the one nor the other. Their difference is this: While the role of the church is something like an informal embassy of the Junta, most local organizations are her branches [my translation].*

Another interviewee claimed that "this bunch" took to the street only once, in 1974, when the Turkish forces occupied Cyprus. "But this was because it reached their national feelings —about the Greek Cypriots—not their politics," he explained.

Apostolos joined the "Committee for Restoration of Democracy in Greece," an organization established in Toronto, in August 1967, with the manifesto for all Greeks of Toronto—"the free part of Greeks [...] of all political colours"—to take a stand against the illegal regime.<sup>47</sup> While the elected representatives of this organization were from both "communist" and "democratic" backgrounds and had a stated prerogative of "welcoming anyone against the junta," one interviewee recalled that there was a "definite red colour over" the group. This sentiment was shared by others and sits awkwardly aside claims that The Committee was a broad group of democratic people organized with the sole purpose of overthrowing the illegal regime. Pavlos, a supporter of the (banned) Greek Communist Party (KKE) at the time, commented on the formative presence of the "old guard":

I met those old persons. They were the first ones to immigrate here. Many of them were left— communist, organized, non-organized, followers—they were the first ones who made an anti-dictatorship movement. They were the first ones to make a political organization against the junta [...] and they were quite a bit older than me, the previous generation. They had an organization called "Sparta" before the Junta and they had been

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<sup>47</sup> *Neos Kosmos* (August 25, 1967).

helping the left movement in Greece economically and politically after the civil war, sending money to the families of the exiled...

Stavros, who arrived in Toronto in the winter of 1967, similarly recalled an older group of men who were "communist to the bone." "You have to realize," he began, "that at that time we were, what, let's say 20, 25 years from the civil war?" After silently doing the math in his head to confirm, he continued, "There were many people from the ranks of the Communist Party and from ELAS,<sup>48</sup> many of them. Especially the Greek butchers of the St. Lawrence market. Maybe 50, 60 of them, of the old generation of fighters." Stavros explained that this older generation of Greek immigrants were effective organizers, experienced in clandestine activity and connected to anti-junta activists abroad.

Pavlos was eager to speak about the early days of the movement, when there was a "sense of solidarity" and a shared commitment to raising awareness about the repressive regime:

We were making handouts and distributing them to show Canadians that where democracy was born, it was no longer, making pamphlets in English about those who were being tortured. We were protesting the role of the government. The Committee for the Restoration of Democracy was a solid, solid group. But it's true that the major role, you know, politically and ideologically, was taken by the communists. No matter if the KKE was underground, it always found a way. And we welcomed anyone who wanted to restore democracy in Greece [...] You know, they had the Voice of Truth, a radio station, and once a week a communist newspaper was issued in London [UK] and we were receiving some others also from Greek political refugees in the socialist countries,

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<sup>48</sup> ELAS ("Greek People's Liberation Army"), formed in 1942, was the military arm of the National Resistance against the German occupation during WWII.

announcing the decisions of the KKE about this or that. They were sending books from Bulgaria, from the Soviet Union. We also raised money for the families of prisoners.

The language of being on the vanguard of the movement emerged frequently within the narratives of active communists. This likely reflects the ideological discourse of the time, but also the experience of being marginalized as a group from the movement after the arrival of Andreas Papandreu in 1969. I will pick up on this thread again below.

When it was announced that young King Constantine would be visiting Toronto, in August 1967, to participate in an international sailing competition, the Committee called for all "democratic Greeks of Canada" to come out in protest.<sup>49</sup> By refusing to denounce the military junta, the king had discredited himself in the eyes of democrats, who were already against monarchical rule of Greece. In the days before the royal's arrival, the president of The Committee was accused publicly of insinuating that Constantine would be subjected to a "continuous ordeal" during his visit—words that caused the King's supporters to ring alarmist bells about violent demonstrations.

Interviewees participated in a multisite protest, which began with picketers outside of the airport and along the highway leading into the downtown core. Others met in Queen's Park—in numbers which led some interviewees to claim that Toronto had never seen such demonstrations.<sup>50</sup> Placards of "Don't Make Greece another Vietnam" and "Democracy for

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<sup>49</sup> *Neos Kosmos* (August 25, 1967).

<sup>50</sup> At Queen's Park, religious leaders (including a rabbi and a pastor from the United Church), representatives of local organizations (including "The Voice of Women") and the NDP showed their support with short speeches. A member of the Committee proposed and read aloud the points of a "psisma" (resolution) to the crowd: The Fascist regime was to step down; political prisoners and those in exile were to be set free; immediate efforts to establish a democratic parliament should be made; the king should recognize his limited role, as defined by the constitution, and refrain from involving himself in Greek politics. The crowd clapped loudly to show acceptance of each point. A small group gathered later in front of the Park Plaza Hotel to deliver the proposal to the King. With the supportive and well-known

Greece" filled the park. "Foreigners looked on in astonishment, not having ever seen such a thing in Toronto," the Greek newspaper, *Neos Kosmos*, reported days later. "Den Xortainei to mati," (the "eye could not be satisfied") and the King and the "Ksenoi" (foreigners) had seen something "from the chest of the Greek people."<sup>51</sup>

Some attending the protest still remember the haunting figure of a young Greek girl, dressed as Athena, enchained on a float and surrounded by men in Nazi uniforms. This photo made the front page of the *Toronto Star*, while the *Globe and Mail* published a photo of one interviewee with a placard raised as if to strike. "That made things difficult with my landlord," said Petros. "The picture made me look like an angry terrorist, so I denied it was me!"

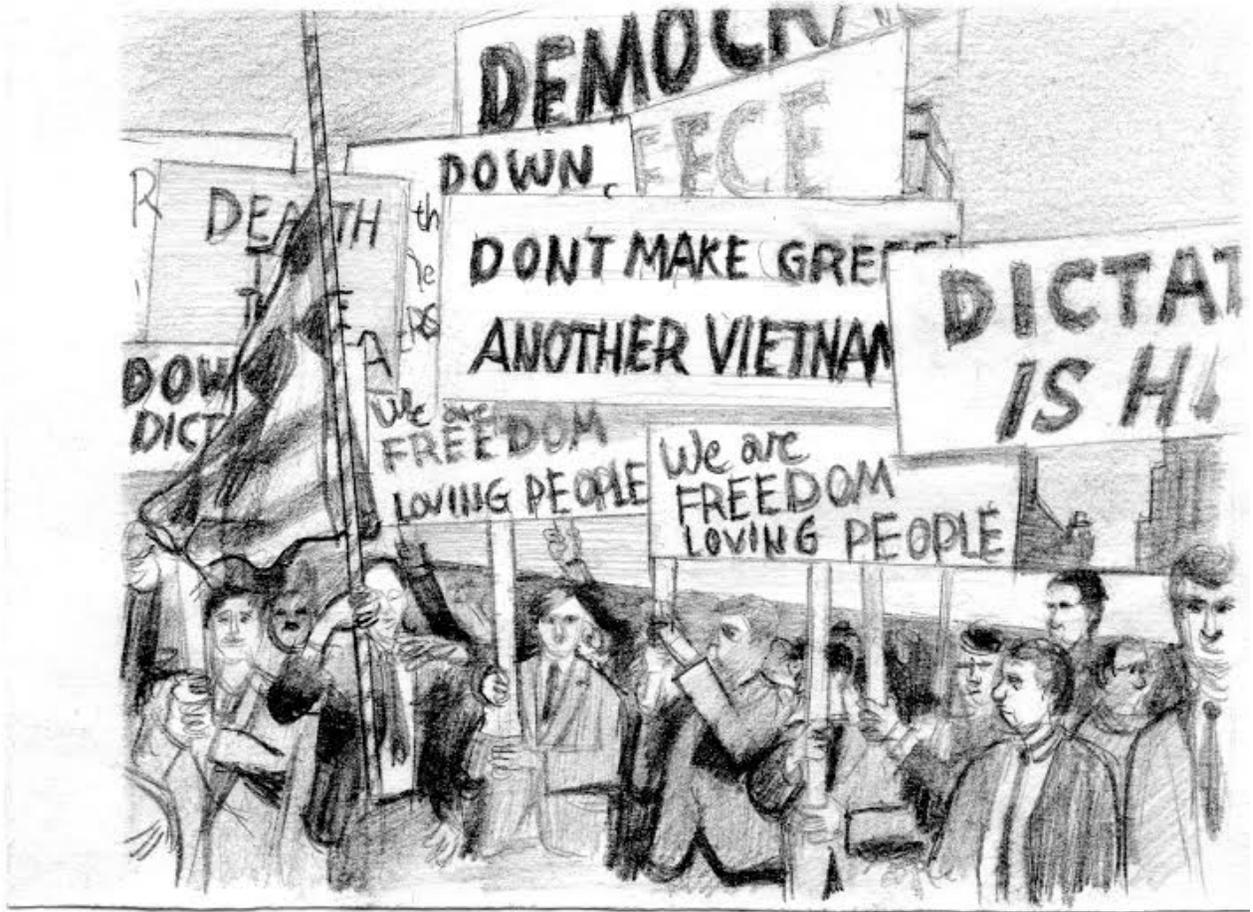
This event convinced some interviewees that the democratic element of the community was much stronger than they had originally thought. "We were amazed," said Kristos, "and we had Canadians asking us how we were able to organize such a large crowd!" *Neos Kosmos* boasted that the police congratulated the group for demonstrating "so democratically" (meaning, of course, in a disciplined manner) and Kristos added, "we had our own people, security guards, to keep our own in line." This emphasis on the democratic mode of protesting was a measured response to those who had been warning of violent demonstrations.

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rabbi by their side, activists entered the hotel, were told that it was a matter for the embassy and were then escorted out. After walking "2 miles in the rain" to take the letter to the embassy, protestors found the doors locked. After persistently ringing the bell, a "very polite young night guard came and received the vote" reported *Neos Kosmos* (September 1, 1967).

<sup>51</sup> *Neos Kosmos* (September 1, 1967) .

Figure 4: "...something from the chest of the Greek people"



The desire to "show something from the chest of the Greek people" was also expressed in accounts of men's encounters with "Canadians." "Generally, to go to a new country is an experience that I want everybody to avoid," said Markos. He added, "especially if you are a sensitive person." He recalled the typical exchange he would have with Canadians: "When they asked, I would say 'I am Greek'. 'Ah, such nice weather you have over there! Why would you leave it?'" Shaking his head, he added, "Yeah, we all dealt with that." Of the same kind of ignorance, Yannis was less forgiving: "Greece! Yes, what a lovely country! Lovely islands, we have! Ah, you've been to Naxos? How nice! But 10 miles from that island is another with

10,000 political prisoners and these people have families and they are hungry! Can you help us please?!" This was, of course, the semi-imagined conversation Yannis had in his head when confronted with the question, "Where are you from?"

Thousands gathered again in April of 1968 for an event narrated with profound ambivalence. The coming of Andreas Papandreou is a symbolically schizophrenic placeholder for both all that was right with the movement and all that was destined to destroy it. Apostolos writes:

*Who would expect that this city would be converted into a "resistance" stronghold? Living here in his family's mansion, in the aristocratic suburbs of "King City": the "Leader of the Resistance." But let's start from the beginning. After his departure from Sweden and his stay in the country of enemies [the US], he would be visiting us here, in the city of Toronto, due to our large democratic movement and from here he would preach the "eiper pandon agona" [lit. "struggle for the sake of all"]. The Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Greece [...] had undertaken the preparations for his reception. It had to be an "upodoxi sullalitirio" [reception-demonstration], capable of rousing the Greeks of the diaspora, of sending a message of resistance and a condemnation as loud as possible against the junta. No one from the Committee offered even the slightest criticism. Without reservations, and all together, we worked to rouse the people, calling our friends and acquaintances throughout North America. We had neither the same ideas nor the same political past; with us were the Communist Party, old fighters, centrists who waited for him like the Messiah, Lambrakides [from the Lambrakis movement] and even some right-wing antifascists. In the end, with patience, we had managed to bring together as many as we could in this joint effort. And yet, some of the old men who had passed through the fire of*

*the Resistance and the Civil war, clenched their teeth and shook their head, certain that he would break us apart and that the unity of the whole anti-dictatorship forces would be added to the pile of lost dreams [my translation].*

Andreas Papandreou: Harvard-trained professor of economics, son of the ex-Prime Minister George Papandreou, and father to little George Jr., who would himself become Prime Minister forty years later. Andreas Papandreou had begun his political career in 1964, when he was elected to the Greek parliament as MP of his father's Center Union Party. His outspoken protests against foreign interventions in Greece, critiques of NATO, as well as his imprisonment and exile in 1967 rendered him a controversial international political figure with quite a lot of public appeal. In February 1968, Papandreou had established the "Panhellenic Liberation Movement" (PAK) in Stockholm and began actively raising awareness about the plight of Greece throughout Europe and North America.

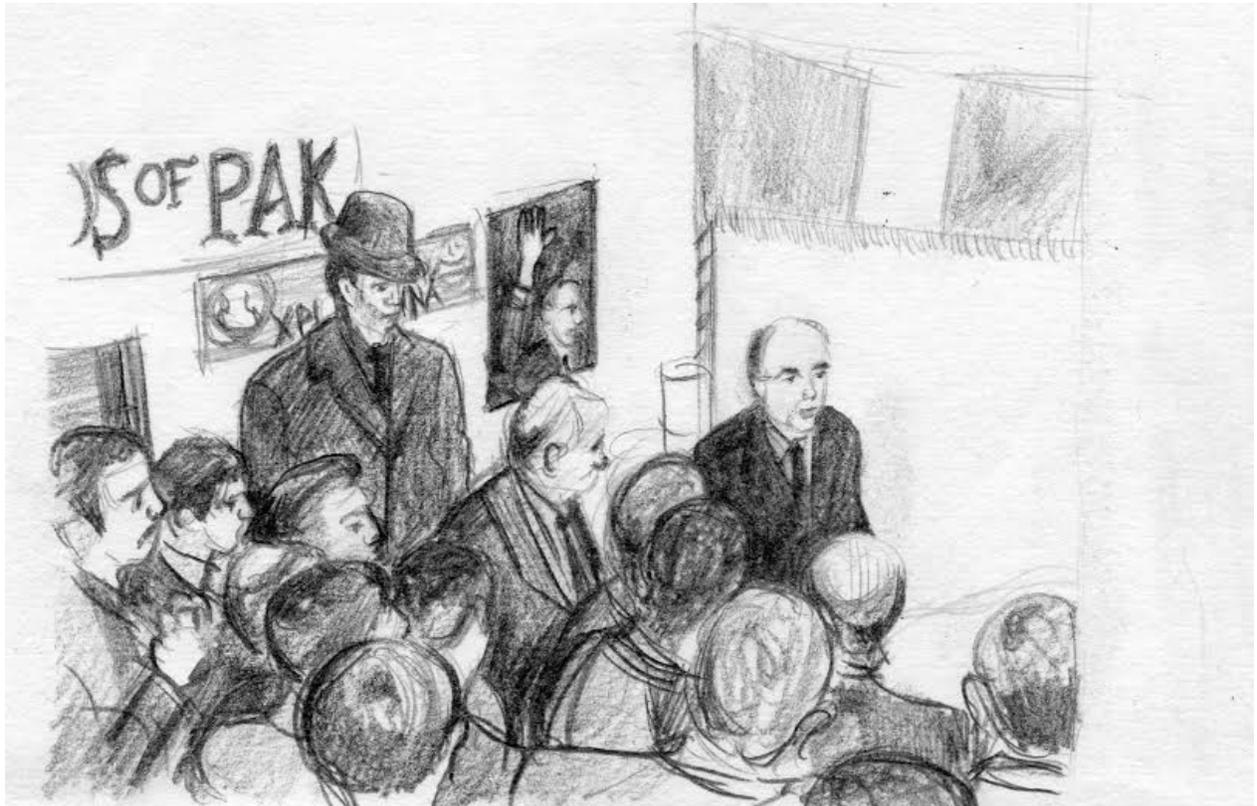
Papandreou's visit in April of 1968 marked the anniversary of the Colonel's coup. Several thousands gathered at Varsity Hall, leading interviewees to remark that it was the largest showing ever for a political figure in Toronto.<sup>52</sup> Laughing, Pavlos exclaimed, "Even Trudeau didn't attract those crowds!" Another interviewee remembered that his "knees shook" with the thrill of standing among so many democratic Greeks and of hearing his native tongue spoken in such a massive public forum. Papandreou's speech, recalls Apostolos, was charged, emotive, revolutionary—all the elements a young Marxist would wish to hear from a popular political leader. And then, as Apostolos narrated it to me, came the moment of awareness at just that point in the speech when Papandreou was evoking the epitaph of the fallen Spartans: "And if we fall in

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<sup>52</sup> The Toronto Star estimated 7,000 greeted Papandreou at Varsity Hall "7,000 Greeks Scream and Chant Welcome to Exiled Papandreou," *Toronto Star*, April 8, 1968: B25

the beautiful struggle for democracy, we won't expect anything but a humble placard, on which will be written for the one who passes, 'Go tell the Spartans, passerby, that here, obedient to their laws, we lie.'" Apostolos "lost his words."

Figure 5: "They waited for him like the Messiah"



In Apostolos' written account of this moment of awareness, it is more collectively elicited in the company of his comrades. One in particular—an old partisan who *"had counted Makronisos stone by stone [and] was one of the last who left, with a broken back but with his head held*

*high*<sup>53</sup>—signaled with a low-toned curse that Andreas was looking for nothing but adventures. "I hope I come out a liar," warns the old man, "but I think he'll break us."

In the days after, as *Neos Kosmos* threw its absolute and unreserved support behind Papandreou, Apostolos and others were on edge with a new piece of information: Andreas Papandreou had been offered a position at York University in the department of Economics. "You see, Katherine," said another interviewee, "he had not come here as a liberator. He was looking for a job." But Alexis, a communist who had lost family members in the civil war, was moved by Papandreou's speech and waited in the long line to thank him for the strong, public stance he had taken against the dictatorship:

I was impressed with many of the things he had said, so I waited to have a chance to speak with him. When I reached him, I shook his hand. I was emotional, and I said, "Thank you Mr. Papandreou." I told him what the communists were doing in Toronto and I explained that my father was imprisoned after the civil war and my uncle was killed..." But he gestured to come closer and said, "Are you still *back there*? We must *exelichthoume* [evolve]." I understood that what he had been saying was just words...

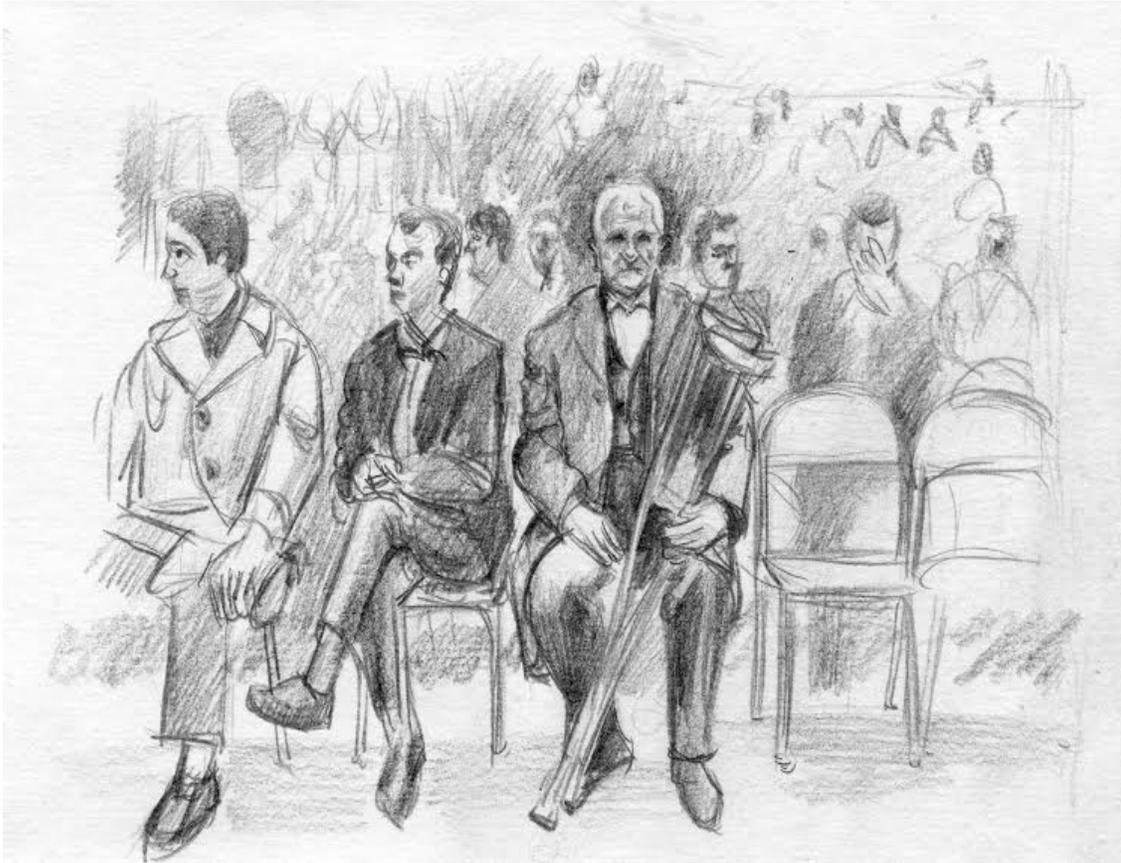
Sharp words received as sudden betrayal. Alexis, added, "I've never forgotten that." Within a few months, Papandreou had taken up his position at York University, which he would hold until the fall of the Junta, in 1974. Alexis and others continued attending the meetings of the Committee for the Restoration of Democracy, sensing a growing tension between members. Apostolos and a few others believed it might be a good idea to speak with Papandreou "face to face" and made an appointment to see him at the university:

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<sup>53</sup> Makronisos was a prison island during the civil war and up to the fall of the Junta. Today it is uninhabited.

Someone [...] said, "Mr. Papandreou, you said you are going to establish here PAK. You saw the welcome that we planned..." "Oh yes," said Papandreou, "I thought it was Athens!" "Well, OK, we have done that united. All the antifascist and anti-junta forces of the people. Now, if you are going to create, to establish another anti-junta organization, from where are you going to attract people around you? People here in Toronto are either [...] with the junta, indifferent people [or] against the junta and those against are in this committee already. It is impossible to attract from the indifferent people, because they are indifferent and they will stay indifferent. So, [...] do you know what is going to happen? You are going to take people out of the Committee. And that is going to be another pull of attraction, and in future times [...] we'll lose our target, the junta, and we are going to end up fighting each other." "Oh," Papandreou said, "No, no, no, we are another story all together. We have nothing to do with that. We are an armed force [and] we are going to train [men] in lake Ontario, in order to attack the junta." This kind of bullshit! You know? "We are an armed struggle, we are not a committee for restoration, we are a liberation front and we are going to establish and start an armed struggle against the junta." *And we all lost our words!* We didn't know what to say! "He's a joker," we said.

*Figure 6: "Are you still back there?"*



Soon after, the Committee called for a meeting to elect a new council for the organization. It's this event that is narrated in quite a few interviews as the "breaking point," at which more or less latent antagonisms were suddenly unambiguously exposed. In the middle of proceedings, someone evoked the "two extremes," referring to the Junta's henchmen in Toronto but also the communists "lurking" on the corners. Nikos remembers trying to calm the storm this created among attendees but, despite his efforts, only a few members of the Committee remained behind. "This is all we needed to fall apart," he said sadly.

Quite often, those who migrated to Papandreou's PAK reflected on this split in the Committee as "inevitable" and nothing more than a reflection of the wider political conflict in

Greece. Some suggested that it was a split provoked by the communists, so keen on putting their "stamp" on everything. Yannis spoke candidly about this frustrating tendency:

There was this conservative element...how to convince the Greeks that what we were doing was right. First problem. Second: How to convince the communists not to mention *that*. I mean, ok, you are communist, I don't give a shit [...] because my job is to overthrow the Junta. When the Junta is overthrown and the Greek parliament opens, go there! Bravo, Yes! Go and do your fight! But right now, you are doing a great deal of harm *to us*! Shut up! Down with the Junta! Mexri ekei kai tipote allo [Up to there, and nothing more!] [...] But it was a constant struggle with the Communist Party. We were always having to deal with the fact that they wanted to define and stamp everything [...] *To put their name on everything*, you know? We are going to write on the poster that this is organized by the Communist Party. But why?!

And yet, from the perspective of others—not all of whom were communists—this obsession with not "stamping" the movement can be seen as an extension of precisely the kind of censoring of the left that many had sought to evade. Speaking about visions of a future Greece—the stuff of "real politics"—was essential, and there was no reason to believe that protesting *against* the junta should be incompatible with an analysis of the political and economic structures of the country. Especially for those who identified with the history of left persecution or who felt themselves to be explicitly caring the weight of this interpolation, the movement against the junta was an opportunity to contest their degraded genealogy (not the genealogy itself, but the degradation of it), to imagine a kind of reconciliation and to take an active part in the left struggle. For others, focused strictly on the regime and its illegality, the fall of the junta was an end in itself. In a

sense, men were working with different temporalities: one stretching back to (at least) the civil war, another to April 21st, 1967.

But what else *could* the fall of the junta represent for the Communist Party, having been banned since 1936 by both right-wing and center governments? Like the collaborators before them, the Junta's men and their descendants would appear as familiar faces in parliament, explained Nikos. The forces would reproduce themselves, as they had done for many decades, with or without this specific regime. Understandably, many communists were preoccupied with questions of political amnesty for political prisoners and provisions for families of the convicted. They were also vocally challenging the practices of surveillance, expressing the concern that this was continuing in Canada—a position which led others to claim they were conspiracy theorists.

In this context, men narrate a series of retreats away from others, as well as the emergence of new groups. Having previously been located on the west end of Bloor, Rigas Feraios—the name under which the Communist Party was operating in Toronto—opened up an office on the Danforth. PAK opened a new office on the same street. In Apostolos' written account, this created a stale political environment:

*I have to tell you, living in the "free Greece of foreign lands," and whether or not I wanted it, I ended up passing through all [...] the democratic and anti-dictatorship places and they all had a similar character: "If you aren't one of us, you are against us." [...] There are clear and specified separations [...] But taking a distance from the political shops of immigration and the different representatives [...] who parade from shop to shop with their sacred words, we decided to do something in order to overcome the inaction: We established a newspaper. [...] The first issue has reached 10, 000 Greek homes, but I'm certain even more will read it...[my translation].*

Apostolos had decided to go to graduate school, finding at the University of Toronto a small group of like-minded students eager to express their frustrations and visions through more creative channels. Passing long days in classes and at the Robart's Library, they spent their nights at the Trojan Horse brainstorming the next edition of the student newspaper.

In fact, a good number of those I interviewed were pursuing university degrees during the years of the junta. Given that the opportunities to study for children of the left were limited, some were eager to register in universities and colleges as soon as they arrived. Their participation in the anti-dictatorship movement often took the form of, and was mediated by, student groups and initiatives. "Studying in Canada" also functioned as a blanket term for parents and siblings to minimize or obscure migrants' political activities under the scrutiny of the Greek authorities.

Students at York University and the University of Toronto were organized sporadically throughout the dictatorship. Inviting Greek intellectuals and activists for seminars, distributing anti-junta material on campus, and raising money for democratic student newspapers were among their typical activities. One student project that captured the attention of the media, in 1971, was a campaign to challenge networks of exploitation that had been set up by "established" Greek Canadians. Under the cover of tourist offices,<sup>54</sup> newcomers from Greece were offered translation or pseudo-government services by representatives claiming to liaison on their behalf in order to secure resident status or unemployment benefits, or to sponsor relatives remaining in

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<sup>54</sup> Of these tourist agencies, Tamis and Gavaki (2002) writes that they "helped the sponsors at every stage, filling out the application forms, going with them to the immigration offices, translating and guaranteeing the loans for the immigrants' fares [...] and upon their arrival in Canada, the agencies were the only entities that could help the immigrants make sense of their new world, translate papers for them, and give them advice for action. They also helped many immigrants find a job" (118). That these networks may have involved exploitation (or indeed, remuneration of any kind) seems not to have entered Tamis and Gavaki's analysis.

Greece. Charging hundred of dollars to "simply fill in names and addresses," or arranging for the first of a series of government cheques to be sent to their office, rather than to clients, they took particular advantage of those without documents or with very little English. Sotiris was one of three students who set up a voluntary program at a church on the Danforth. Open at designated hours every day of the week, Sotiris estimated that they processed about 500 people in the first few months of operation. Eventually, they secured government funding to hire more regular employees and to keep longer hours of service.

At York University, there was also a small contingent of graduate students involved with PAK, some of whom were students of Papandreou. For Kostas, then a graduate student, Papandreou's presence at York was transformative; "You have to understand, he was a god at York. A king! I mean, suddenly, professors were coming and treating us like we were very respectable people!" Others similarly reflected on their rather sudden transformation from being "country boys" to "respectable people," with an awareness that this was entirely the result of Papandreou's position at York. According to Stavros, the social and political networks established in the university halls during the PAK years would later be important inroads to positions in post-dictatorship Greece, where Andreas Papandreou would lead the country as the "first ever socialist" prime minister. Stelios disagreed with the latent "populism" of the PAK movement, taking a critical distance from the "center of the action": "Remember, Katherine, we were just a bunch of country boys and we saw others like us accessing Papandreou's academic corridors of power...being called to "King City!" [...] It was like The Godfather, OK? Kissing the hand..[laughing]. We're talking jobs, baptism, patronage!"

Petros, who was studying political science and actively engaged in any efforts to undermine the junta "in or outside of the university," explained to me what it meant to be invited

for dinner at King City,<sup>55</sup> where Papandreou had made his family home. After politely refusing a number of invitations by a central member of PAK and "close friend of Andreas," Petros eventually clarified to this man that if he wanted to be a member of PAK, he would have done so, rather than "wait for an invitation from Papandreou." Critical of the kind of star-gazing that he felt characterized many of Papandreou's relations with students, Petros simply didn't want to get involved in King City affairs.

Spyros, then a graduate student in Economics, lamented having "wasted his time" attending all of the events put on by each organization individually. He recounted for me, with a shake of his head, one PAK meeting in which Papandreou announced that they were "Marxists but not Leninists." Spyros eventually concentrated his efforts in a small group of students who called themselves the "Anti-Dictatorship, Anti-Imperialist Front of Greeks Abroad." (AAMEE). Reflecting the break in 1968 within the Greek Communist Party between the Soviet-dominated party line and the "Eurocommunists," these students became associated with the latter, focusing on "democratic socialist" solutions to the problems of their country. Kostas was at the same meeting with Spyros and Papandreou and recalls feeling "relieved to hear [Papandreou's words]" because he was a Marxist and wanted to be "open about it." But, like Alexis above, who was disillusioned in his private exchange with Papandreou at Varsity Arena, Kostas surmised that "these were just words." Indeed, by those remaining closely identified to the Communist Party or the "left of the left," Papandreou was often associated with "mere words" and empty rhetoric.

Efforts to mobilize student unions were also taking place at the University of Toronto. Panayiotis, who was one of three interviewees to have immigrated to Canada with other

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<sup>55</sup> King City is a town 50 km north of Toronto.

relatives, was a young undergraduate student in 1971. Involved with the Greek student union, he found himself in a constant struggle against the imperatives of the union to "avoid politics":

Graduate students who had some exposure to the Greek University system were much more politically orientated. There was an organization of Greek students, some in McMaster, Western, and they would move between universities, in Hamilton, London. They would come and visit and try to organize the Greek student unions or the Greek club. There was a lot of involvement from those graduate students—they were politically left [...] I was, of course, much younger, so that's why I was chosen, after some discussion, to be the go-between, communicating between those arriving from Greece and the Canadians [of Greek descent] [...] And at the Robarts library, we would have 5 or 6 tables, in the cafeteria, Greeks and some Greek Canadians, and we would begin our political conversations at 9 o'clock in the morning! There were about 150 of us at the Greek student association, most of whom were born in Canada. Those of us who were chairmen or secretaries from Greece, wanted to position the union [...] We decided to write letters to the embassy saying that the Greek students disagree with this and that, but it was difficult to convince the other students to get involved in the Greek plight. [...] How could it be their struggle? [...] So, I would say that the Greek Canadians, those not coming from Greece, tolerated us. But when we got into fights with the Greek community center, then they differentiated their position [...] Well, they stopped us from going forward, actually. You know, we would try to disrupt Greek community meetings, for example, by demonstrating in front of the church. But then they would disagree [...] I don't actually remember any Greek Canadians who got involved.

Of the same "tolerant" attitude, another interviewee began, "put it this way, if anyone was from the *other side* they would not be studying in Canada because they would have positions in the Greek university, right? They would be looked after by *their side*." After pausing to find his words, he continued, "So anyone who emigrated to study had problems, ok? What would they have in common with Greek Canadians who had never experienced oppression?" Others echoed the distant relations between these two groups of young people and said that they couldn't "recall the face" of a single Greek Canadian—meaning here the children of those who had migrated to Canada—who engaged in political initiatives during those critical years.

### **III. The Return of the File in the Diaspora**

Having established some of the main points of contention and division in the movement against the Junta, I want to explore how men were positioned between the two states of the Canadian "liberal democratic government" and the Greek regime. Government archives of the period present us with a fairly clear picture of the Canadian state's position on the 1967 military coup, as well those migrating from Greece. Lester B. Pearson's liberal government spent the first days of the junta corresponding with Canadian ambassadors in Greece, Western Europe and the US. The dominant question was that of recognition. Given the co-membership of Greece and Canada in the NATO alliance, on the one hand, and the illegal character of the coup, on the other, how should Canada frame its relationship with the new regime? Correspondences between Canadian embassy officials in Greece and ministers in Ottawa reveal a careful diplomacy on the question: Embassy officials were told to avoid contact with any members of the new government—to not, for example, attend social events where they would be expected to shake the hand of a representative of the regime—until the issued could be analyzed. Eventually, the Canadian

government decided not to take an active position against the dictatorship, even when the Netherlands filed a complaint with the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe and the Scandinavian contingent began pushing actively for the expulsion of Greece from the Council. While these countries were specifically calling on Canada to differentiate herself from the Americans, Pearson's government remained set on encouraging those in power to restore stability through elections, and urging democratic dialogue with the Greek government *within* NATO relations, rather than expulsion.

In May of 1967, the Pearson government was again specifically called upon by the Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian, French, Danish and Norwegian delegates of the International Labour Organization to support efforts to block the regime's access to common markets and to back a complaint against Greece submitted to the governing body of the ILO. No efforts were made by the Pearson government to support these requests. When Trudeau came to power in April 1968, a year after the coup, Canada's official position did not change. Asked in parliament a number of times by NDP ministers to clarify Canada's relation to NATO funding of Greek arms and the support of an unelected regime, Trudeau insisted that Canadians' tax dollars were not supporting the military regime. NDP MPs repeatedly called on the liberal government to cut all diplomatic relations after the dictators implemented mock elections under martial law in September 1968. After the decision of the European Council, in December of 1969, to force the withdrawal of Greece from the council, Canada maintained its position that the best route to restoring democracy in Greece was by keeping it within diplomatic folds. Thus, despite a letter campaign by Greeks and a few Canadians, the Canadian government offered a consistent response throughout the period of the military junta. Nevertheless, Kristos and others recall one

small victory for the movement: Not one representative of the military junta came to Canada on an official visit during that period.

Of Andreas Papandreou, who the *Toronto Star* heralded as the "Exiled Greek Freedom Leader,"<sup>56</sup> Canadian state agents appear initially cautious and then tolerant—a position interviewees often attributed to the "friendly" relations between Papandreou and Trudeau. The files kept on Papandreou in government archives reveal exchanges between the Minister of Foreign affairs and the Dean of York University concerning Papandreou's terms of employment. The Minister first insists that Papandreou agree to refrain from politically organizing in Canada as a condition of his employment. Although this was refused by the dean, Papandreou's employment was processed nonetheless. Later, when Papandreou was seeking travel documents, having been dispossessed of his Greek citizenship and passport, Canadian authorities again suggested that these be given on condition that he not use them for activities related to PAK. Based on Papandreou's extensive travelling during the course of his employment at York, throughout Europe and to the United States, we can probably conclude that authorities were only weakly committed to obstructing Papandreou's movements. This lack of genuine concern about the activities and whereabouts of Papandreou was not at all surprising for many interviewees—especially those who were communists at the time. After all, Pavlos claimed, "Papandreou was one of their own guys"—that is, part of the American-educated elite who were comfortably established in Canadian institutions at the time. Still, it should be noted that the establishment of foreign political organizations in Canada was illegal. For this reason, PAK—having the overthrow of the junta as its core objective—was always publicly termed "Friends of PAK" in

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<sup>56</sup> *Toronto Star*, April 8, 1968: B25

order to take a symbolic distance from these objectives. This is also true of the Greek Communist Party, which masqueraded under the name "Rigas Feraios."

Many of the men I spoke to—across political backgrounds—spoke of the "tolerant" stance of the Canadian state and the RCMP towards newcomers from Greece. In fact, interviewees were fond of saying that the Canadian state "treated me like a gentleman," while the Greek state "treated me like a criminal." Three of the men I interviewed were visited upon their arrival in Toronto by police officers, questioned about their political involvements in Greece and Canada, and cautioned to avoid trouble. "Do you associate with communists?" one officer asked plainly. Two of the three were sailors who "jumped ship" in 1968 and entered the country illegally. Both were subsequently deported but once again obtained papers through "unofficial" means and were back in Canada within a year.

Petros, who was visited by a police officer within 40 days of arriving in Toronto, recalls the conversation being "respectful" and the officer's manner "sympathetic." Petros believed that the Greek embassy had tipped off the RCMP to an "illegal alien," on orders of the Greek regime. In fact, Petros' mother had been visited many times in the weeks following his departure by officers enquiring into which local authority had granted him a passport and how he had managed to leave the country. His mother pleaded ignorant.

Speaking to Constantine in a quiet cafe in Toronto, I was told that although he could not be sure what the extent of the Canadian state's interest was in Greek activists, there was a palpable concern that activities were being observed:

The guys did believe that the state was monitoring their activity. They were saying the RCMP was after them, they were checking the walls for bugs, saying they were being followed. But of course, some of these men, many really, were the sons of communists,

who had been exiled and some executed. *They had been illegal, so they had to conspire for survival.* So they learned this and assumed the same here.

Of the Greek Embassy in Toronto, interviewees consistently voiced the belief that it was a vehicle of the junta, describing instances of surveillance, interference, and even direct threats. Some of these complaints came to the attention of journalists in the summer of 1969. A month-long investigation by the *Toronto Star* documented complaints to police quarters in both Montreal and Toronto, formal accusations against members of the Greek embassy, and a request sent to the External Affairs Minister for state intervention. Professor Portokalis claimed that in the years following the dictatorship, "a very efficient organized campaign" was created to "terrorize an entire community into silence" and to "quiet the opposition of overseas Greeks by the dictatorship in Athens."<sup>57</sup> At the heart of this effort was a "system of informers and information, as well as just plain goons." A correspondent for *The Toronto Star* documented 70 reported cases of intimidation in both cities. According to interviewees, threats were made against activists and their families in both Greece and Canada, and some were explicitly warned to stop their involvement in Canada because parents and siblings could face consequences at home. One man claimed he was asked to visit the embassy and was told by the consular that "they had information" about him, that he was to report back to the embassy regarding the activities of others in the movement against the dictatorship, and that he must "think of his father" and the position he stood to lose back in Greece if he did not comply with the request. Later, he discovered that his father had undergone repeated interrogations about his activities in Canada. There were also documented cases of violence: After receiving threatening calls warning against participation in anti-dictatorship activities, two men were attacked by a knifed

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57 "Anti-Junta Greeks Charge Intimidation," *Toronto Star*, June 11, 1969, B1

assailant on the way to a protest. This case went before the court. And in Montreal, the daughter of an outspoken critic of the dictatorship was threatened by a swerving car, the driver warning, "Tell your father that next time, I won't miss." In the summer of 1969, these threats were felt by some to be so serious as to constitute a community-wide injustice. An man quoted in the Toronto Star at the time explained, "There are two governments for us here [...] one is the Canadian government, which is little known to most immigrants. The other is the junta. It has its own machinery, its own police force, its own political party right here in Canada. We have not escaped."<sup>58</sup>

A member of the Greek Communist Party explained that, "we had this pressure when were in Toronto. People were talking and many were too afraid to come to gatherings. They feared that everyone was watching and they were *hiding their faces* from the cameras because everyone was saying that there were spies all over." In fact, the "regime's men" were suspected of infiltrating protests and opening meetings of political organizations. "There were many stories," explains Pavlos, "that men were pretending to be supporters and they would go and take words, take watch, in order to persecute the people. It was this climate of fear and intimidation." Giorgos adds, " I always had it in my mind that people who were in PAK, they might be double agents. One [didn't] know who to trust." The position of the Orthodox church in Toronto was also discussed with contempt by interviewees. In the days leading up to the protest against King Constantine's visit, one of my interviewees recalled the appalling threat from the Archbishop, warning that protestors "risked hell in the afterlife."

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid*

Asking about conversations in those years with family members back in Greece, I was told that they were infrequent and devoid of political content. Most, like Kostas, wrote letters to parents, avoiding references to any activities in Canada:

We didn't speak about these things in the letters. For God's sake, not there. When I went back to Greece [after the fall of the junta] my father had burned my books. I said, "Why the fuck did you burn the books!?" He did it because he was afraid. They were coming in and he was afraid that they would arrest him and also he had my military clothes [...] He burned those too. Because he could be accused of plotting to have a counter-revolution using the military clothes. When I left, my parents lived in fear. Because they were making searches, coming into houses, you know. And I mean my father was an old man. Let's say, he was 71 years old. And they were coming on occasion, policemen, coming and inquiring about me.

Men expressed their concern for the safety of their parents and siblings in Greece, although most learned of the reality of interrogations and intimidations only after the fall of the junta. "My brother was a smart guy," explained Nikos. "When they tried to force him to discourage me, he said, 'I don't want to know anything about that guy, don't tell me!'" Implying a false sense of strife between siblings in this way was one way of justifying their alleged lack of information or contact. Parents similarly pleaded ignorant about or disinterested in their sons' political activities, or emphasized that they were "just studying."

#### **IV. Political Genealogy in the Diaspora**

Having discussed the political mobilizations of the Greek diaspora and the forms of sociality that took shape around them, I wish to situate the narratives I have discussed squarely within the problematic of political genealogy. I argue that political genealogy remains a useful analytical

device for thinking about political subjectivities and forms of sociality in the diasporic movement against the Junta.

In chapter three, I argued that the sons of those deemed to be leftists were interpolated by the Greek state as having inherited political affinities. Through an ethnography of the file, I showed how kin relations were drawn upon as justification for marginalization and persecution. In this way, it was difficult to speak of a political actor, in the sense of a politically-informed subject who processes, acts upon and affirms a position in relation to the dominant or counter-hegemonic political discourses of a period and place. In fact, much of that chapter was marked by a tension between overdetermined political categories and the *absence* of men's own ideological assertions, position-taking, and instances of political *action*. To the extent that the latter were present, they tended to be familial rather than "personal"; in other words, they were storied in the actions of fathers, uncles, and sometimes older brothers.

In contrast, this chapter explores a context that is defined by protest, demonstration and the consequences for men in Toronto and their families remaining in Greece. In these accounts, the political file—and the politics of kinship upon which it is premised—gain a second life in the streets of Toronto and the family homes of relatives in Greece. Here, it is not so much the spectre of left-wing fathers and uncles that marks the scene, but the activities of men themselves that have engendered the suspicions and interventions of the Greek state. Even if the consequences for family members were not particularly serious or pronounced, a social imaginary emerged that was defined by a concern for one's kin and the prospect and fear that one's actions in Canada could harm those in Greece. Combined with new arrivals' relatively limited knowledge of Canadian state practices, the condition of "being between states" was at once productive of new modes of dissent and familiar punitive consequences. While most of the men I interviewed stated

that, in retrospect, concerns about the Canadian state were probably more "imagined than real," at the time, there was really no way of knowing.

It is important to note that just as the forms of political inheritance discussed in chapter three were not straightforward—recall, for example, statements like "my father was left but not communist," "my father was a driver, so it is at least possible he was unable to vote that day," "my family was left, but...", "he was asked to sign and I believe he did sign"—in Toronto they were similarly fraught with contestation and ambivalence and marked by a tension between desires for visibility and fears of (mis)recognition. When one's family genealogy was recognizable, as in the case of Kristos (from a family with known centric associations), the navigation and articulation of one's political identity and ideological position could be fraught with condescension, suspicion and name-calling. Kristos explains how, as a very active member of the resistance movement, he was continuously dismissed for being too conservative—charges that were not felt to be based on what he was saying or doing, but on the positions of his father, uncle, and grandfather:

Kristos: I was a "red centrist," OK? I never really belonged there, but that was *the tradition* and that was the perception of me.

Katherine: The Tradition. So the center for you at that time was more of a family designation?

Kristos: Yes! Yes! Exactly that! Although this is why I had left—I left Greece to avoid this "who your father is"...

Katherine: But did you claim a more politically centric position in your work with PAK?

Kristos: No, I didn't claim anything...The perception about me was that I am a "Fiotakis," [family name] and that my family are center union, therefore, [I am] a

conservative. But I wasn't comfortable with *what we were*. It was not the same for my best friend in Toronto, whose father was a communist, although we used the same labels of being left *for ourselves*. The communists here would say, "That damn Fiotakis! He is conservative, he is center, his background, I mean."

The important point made by Kristos is that the weight of political inheritance can not be understood as exclusive to the Greek Left. Phillipanos, who I did not interview at length but had the great opportunity to meet at the end of my research, similarly described his own struggle with political inheritance—this time from the perspective of having "right roots." Originating from a small Northern village, which had experienced mass immigration to Toronto, Phillipanos found himself marginalized by the Communist Party on the basis of his family's political ascription:

OK, so my name can tell you something—right-wing family. And for those of us who were from non-working class families [...], if you were from a bourgeois family and you started to disagree with some aspect of the party line, people would start questioning your motives. Your family background must play a role, "Ah, you say this because you are a member of the bourgeois class, you are a Trojan force of the bourgeois imperialist!" After that, they would isolate you and then maybe expel you, so that you would not be on good terms with the rest of the party.

The significance of names—as symbolic articulations of concrete, local political affinities—in the diaspora is something worth exploring in subsequent research. While discussing the case of a Greek Leftist in Toronto, Phillipanos explained that this man would not have access to communist countries during the junta because his communist father had "been a snitch" in Athens after the civil war and had revealed the names of other party members in order to avoid punishment. His name "was known." I encouraged my interlocutor to say more: *How could they*

*possibly know that?* "Simple," he began, "they say, OK, Grigorios Mintsoulis, Where is he from? Athens. What region? Send a message to our guys in Greece, find out about his family." OK? The same way the police operated in Greece, the Communist Party operated. Within our own party, we had an oppressive state apparatus! [laughing]"

We can also imagine the level of sensitivity activists showed with one another in order to *avoid* factions and conflict in Toronto. Stavros, for example, described speaking more freely with his student friends, but otherwise keeping the conversation strictly to political issues—the junta's activities, progressive analyses, party decision, and anti-junta actions. Stavros was one of a small organization of Maoists involved in the anti-dictatorship movement. During our interview I was interested to know as much as I could about this group, whose members were quite a bit older than he was and who have since passed away. When I probed a little further into their family background, Stavros reflected a little and then explained: "You know, I never asked them if they were from left families. It was a sensitive thing. We never spoke about this and I was never asked myself. Perhaps they were exiles. I don't even know when they came. That's interesting, actually, isn't it? That we knew very little about each other's histories. It would have felt inappropriate to ask..." The response was not what I expected from a group of similarly-minded political compatriots, far removed from Greece and presumably from the dangers that had existed for those on the left. Perhaps this collectively maintained silence about family histories was precisely what kept the small group unified and active in those years.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I explored the question of how men managed and socialized along political lines in their new city. I argued that in the streets of Toronto, political genealogy remained animated in the directives by the dominant arm of the resistance movement —PAK—to minimize the

"communistic" element of the movement, in encounters with the regime-controlled Greek embassy, and in the belief that one's actions could have dangerous consequences for family members back in Greece. If chapter three demonstrated that men were navigating the political categories *bestowed* upon them, chapter four showed how men engaged in the articulation and actualization of political identities and that, in the process, the file gained a second life. Importantly, I also discussed what we might call "alternative genealogies" to those I introduced in chapter three: We met men who had migrated prior to the Junta, men who engaged in the political movement in Toronto who had not been filed in Greece but became so in Toronto, and—in the case of Constantine—a man from "right roots" negotiating his own ambivalent political inheritance.

## Chapter 5

### **Precarious Returns: Giving an Account of Oneself in the Metapolitefsi**

*"The junta fell, the parliament opened, and I said, "They can go and pull their eyes out!"*

*"It was one of Papandreou's great passions that the Greek diaspora come back to Greece. The question was: Which Hellenism, which diaspora, would return?"*

*"It's a riddle: What gets red in Toronto and green<sup>59</sup> in Athens?"*

Apostolos offers just one sentence in his novel to characterize what became of Greece after the fall of the junta: "The opportunists of the foreign circles have begun to liquidate their political investments, digging up titles of resistance from the battles they gave in the Latin Quarter in Paris, Trafalgar Square in London, the Danforth of Toronto and the villas of King City." By 1981, elements of the PAK resistance movement had evolved into the first-ever governing socialist party in Greece, PASOK, and Andreas Papandreou was Prime Minister. Many of those who had left the country as "dangerous citizens" (Panourgia 2009)—or who, in their activities abroad, had become so—returned as protagonists of the resistance.

Once in power, and as a "reconciliatory gesture," PASOK provided pensions for those who had fought against the Germans in WWII and permitted the return of partisans who had fled to communist countries after the war (Panourgia 2009: 151). This marked the close of the Greek state's long practice of seeing and constructing the Left as dangerous and abject. According to those I interviewed, its symbolic weight was enormous, but not without ambivalence.

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<sup>59</sup> Green is the colour of the PASOK emblem; red the communist party

Official data from Greece indicates that 17, 143 "Greek-Canadians" returned to Greece in the 70s and 80s (Statistical Yearbook of Greece, 1997, in Tamis and Gavaki 2002: 45). This figure does not including the large number of those who never claimed Canadian citizenship (students, permanent residents, the undocumented or temporary workers). Those who returned did so in the "Metapolitefsi"—a term signalling the process of democratization and a period of transition between political regimes that was inaugurated with the elections of 1975. The "end" of the Metapolitefsi was announced again and again in popular media and party discourse throughout the 80s in order to declare a new age free of lingering civil war antagonisms.

I use the term "Metapolitefsi" to convey the discursive, ideological, institutional and relational transformations that shaped experiences of return after the fall of the junta. In the previous chapter, I was interested in forms of sociality that men narrated in their negotiation of emergent and institutionalized (a)political sites—whether this be "the Greek community," the "movement," "the state," or "the party"—as well as their expressions of ambivalent and contested political identification. In this chapter, I locate men's accounts of return in a context where a particular pronouncement of "the left" was ascending through the party and personality of Andreas Papandreou, gaining institutional legitimacy and opening up unprecedented opportunities for those who had been marginalized for many decades; in other words, in a period of reconciliatory gestures with symbolic weight but primarily manifested as redistribution of jobs, benefits and funds.

In accounts of those returning in the Metapolitefsi, political subjectivity is constructed and expressed socially—within relations of fluctuating intimacy and in more or less institutionalized environments—and is expressed narratively through tropes of proximity, visibility and naming. What was it to move from a diasporic site—and a marginal one at that—to the "center" of the

action in homeland politics? How were relations established in the diaspora reconfigured in the transforming political space of Athens? Consistent with the ethnographic approach developed throughout this dissertation, my primary interest remains with the subtle moments of dialogue and exchange, of hesitant approaches and retreats, rather than party lines, slogans, ideological formulations or electoral results. A close reading of men's recollections, reveals both the social and moral implications of where one "stood" in a period of tremendous change.

As Passerini (1996) reminds us, "memory speaks from today" (23) and in the narratives of those I interviewed, the present-constructed-as-crisis penetrates the discursive frame, both implicitly and explicitly. Crucially, many of those returning in the Metapolitefsi did so as "founding fathers"—or at least active members—of the new socialist political party PASOK—the very same party that (in the now of 2012) has fundamentally lost its legitimacy because it set the country on the course of austerity measures. PASOK has governed for the greater part of thirty years and is currently serving as the minority partner in a coalition with the conservative New Democracy. According to recent polls, PASOK ratings are around 5% (from 43% in 2009), indicating a striking blow to its social (and electoral) base. The party has been publicly disgraced; its claims of justice, democracy and reconciliation, which brought the party to power in 1981, are now discussed as farce or parody. Questions of responsibility, shame, culpability—while never part of my interview guideline—were often creeping around the edges or entering our discussions. In asking after the period of the Metapolitefsi, I was unwittingly placing many of my interviewees in the position of having to give an account of themselves.

An analysis, then, of what's at stake in "giving an account of oneself" involves reading the narrated "I" within the "social conditions of its emergence" (Butler 2005: 8)—in this case, within the sociopolitical contours of both PASOK's ascent and its very dramatic decline. From this

double angle, I show that narrated returns are fraught with connotations of culpability, innocence, opportunism and integrity, both in the accounts of those who remained in Canada and those who re-settled in Greece. In drawing on a nuanced set of tropes—of naming, visibility and proximity—men engage in precarious "appropriations" of moralities (7). A particular kind of normative political subjectivity emerges in these accounts, one which tends—albeit discretely—to promote withdrawal over participation and marginality over "being at the centre." This corresponds with a surprising reversal in common sense understandings of failing and succeeding; failing in Papandreou's Greece is framed contemporarily as an indication of the speaker's integrity and even one's commitment to a specific political genealogy that has long been hollowed out by the bureaucratic gestures of a "socialist" government. Indeed, in light of a now delegitimized—but once hegemonic—political project, "failing" in Papandreou's Greece has its merits, while successes require distanciation.

### **I. "I didn't come back with the rest of them": Narrating Returns**

Those returning to Greece directly after the fall of the regime did so amid transforming political tides. At the governmental level, Karamanlis, leader of the newly established conservative party "New Democracy," was invited to take over power from the junta's generals in July of 1974. His first acts of reconciliation were to legalize the Communist party, abolish citizen file-keeping, free political prisoners and pardon any crimes against the junta. He also called elections for November of the same year, at which time he was chosen to be Prime Minister.<sup>60</sup> Among his

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<sup>60</sup> While most observers of the Metapolitefsi period agree that these were "probably the freest elections ever held in the country," they did not proceed without criticism. Parties of the left complained that elections were premature, that they did not have time to organize themselves and that the elections could hardly be termed "democratic" given the extent to which junta supporters remained entrenched in the state apparatus. They also pointed to "mechanisms of repression" still in place, especially in rural areas of the

initiatives towards democratization were the referendum in 1974 that abolished the monarchy, compulsory "retirement" for hundreds of officers of the junta's military army, the bringing to trial of the junta's principle protagonists in 1975,<sup>61</sup> the implementation of a new constitutional act to satisfy student demand for "dejuntification" of the universities (which included the restoration of positions to leftist professors who had lost their jobs during the junta and the removal of those who collaborated with the junta "beyond the call of professional duty") and the granting of permission to university students to hold their own elections. By January of 1975, "108,000 civil servants and other officials and employees had been dismissed, transferred or otherwise disciplined" (Psomiades 1982: 259). The formal recognition and legalization of the communist party and the release of political prisoners and exiled persons were the most significant acts of the Karamanlis government for the Left. Having been outlawed by successive regimes since

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country. Other complained that: the electoral system discriminated against small parties; voting registers were out-dated (given many politically motivated exiles and migrations); the large population of Greek workers living outside of Greece should have the opportunity to vote; and that the election age should be reduced from 21 to 18. This last point was especially important for the Left given the fact that four out of every five university students, most of whom were under 21, were oriented towards the two communist parties, other left-wing fractions and PASOK (Psomiades 1982: 260).

<sup>61</sup> I point the reader to the trials of the Colonel's, documented by Amnesty International (Torture in Greece: The First Torturers' Trial, 1975). It should be acknowledged that in the post-junta years, according to the testimonials of those put to trial and the witnesses that were asked to testify, those soldier who had been serving at holding cells and camps as "part of their duty" experienced stigma and marginalization by their communities. When one soldier was brought to trial, he said the following:

I think in this hurricane of terrorism, violence and fear, I tried to participate as little as possible. I would rather not have participated at all, but it was impossible... I was caught up in a machine and became a tool without any will of my own to resist. I remember Spanos threatening a soldier that he would ruin his family. The next day the boy began to beat prisoners... Now all of my friends and relatives look upon me with suspicion and pity. I can not find work. A friend took me on and, after a few days, he gave me quiet hint to leave. The [...] discharge certificate is like a leprosy...I feel the need to tell this respected tribunal and the Greek people that I am a human being, like you, like your neighbour's son, like a friend. When I struck, it was not [my] hand, but the hand of Spanos, of Hajizisis [officers]...(Quoted in Kritz (1995) 245)

At the trial of this same soldier, his father, a farmer, stated, "We are a poor but decent family [...] I see him now in the dock as a torturer. I want to ask the court to examine how a boy who everyone said was 'a diamond' became a torturer. *Who morally destroyed my family and my home?*" (246).

1936, the fractured elements of the Communist Party set about busily reconstructing themselves as autonomous parties.

Men frequently expressed their energized commitment to political engagement upon their return. Tasos, who had been organized with the Eurocommunists (hereafter referred to as KKE-I), said he had returned to Greece in 1975 fully believing that, in doing so, he was "part of the socialist revolution." "I wanted to be part of the reconstruction of my country," he explained, with a serious expression and a long sigh. Another interviewee involved in the same group in Toronto, looked forward to being part of a "socialist project in Greece"—one devoid of the "Stalinist orientation." Others similarly narrated their return to Greece as deliberate and enthusiastic. Ilias, who had been an active member of PAK in Toronto, described being "full of dreams" upon his return and acutely conscious of the responsibility tied to establishing a new political party. One of the founding fathers of PASOK, he recalls a flurry of travel, discussion and planning. Having recently obtained a Masters degree in Economics, his friend Manolis was also returning as a founding father of the new party, ready to participate in the difficult campaign of convincing Greeks it was time for the first ever "left government." Regardless of the fact that these men were returning with different visions of Greece in mind, they shared the condition of returning to Athens with university degrees in hand and a readiness to participate in political configurations that had never before had a legitimate place in Greek politics. The emergence of new parties was one important manifestation of new beginnings.

Against the narratives of zealous and urgent returns were those of a different kind—measured, hesitant and sometimes emphatically so. From his small second-hand store in Athens, Yannis spoke at length about his own return. During our first meeting, I showed him some black and white photos of the PAK group. He brought the first one close to his face to inspect it: Here

was an exuberant Andreas Papandreou, one armed raised above his head in a charismatic wave, stepping out of an airplane upon his arrival in Athens and surrounded by PAK members. "Ahh," he said, "Papandreou and all his cronies." After a pause, he added, "You know, I didn't return with the rest of them. I came a few months later."

I encountered the same statement just a few months later in the wealthy neighbourhood of Kifissia. A former PAK member, Kristos presented himself as "probably the most favoured of the guys from Toronto" and then, in the same breath, stressed the point: "But I didn't come back right away with the rest of them." Both Yannis and Kristos were keen to have me understand the difference between their own contemplative returns and those who hurriedly jumped on the first plane back to Athens with (what Yannis called) "the taste of yummys in [their] mouth."

In other accounts, returns were portrayed as gestures of fatigue or withdrawal. Yannis described feeling like he had no reason to remain in Canada. He recalled waking one morning and "not recognizing the face that stared back" at him in the mirror. Having been a "known person" in the movement, Yannis went through a period of total isolation upon his return:

And I came here and *I wanted nobody even to know my name*. Nothing. I wanted to be totally left alone. So I occupied a deserted house [...] for about a month and then some relatives of the owner arrived and I said, "Listen, I'm not a thief. I want to live here. I will paint it, and any time you want to take it, you can." So they agreed, I gave them some symbolic rent and I got a table with a nice cloth over it and I started selling some used [goods]. [...] And that's how I started.

Yannis' account is probably the most poignant example of a reclusive return. Yet, others similarly expressed a process of disentangling themselves from the political relations and activities with which they had been preoccupied in Toronto. Having politely received me at his

home in Athens, Giorgos offered me some coffee and then very quickly began to explain that he was not at all interested in the political developments of the post-junta period. When I asked him about the political mood in Thessaloniki, where he first settled in 78, he responded:

I have a *total blank* about the years after the junta. I really don't know what happened. Actually, I haven't followed anything since then [...] I really don't know what to say because I didn't keep any friendships or relations from that time. I had a *clear head* about not being involved [...] Politics just wasn't for me.

Giorgos' description of "blanking" is interesting in so far as he equates his lack of knowledge about the period with the cutting of social networks and a resolved and intentional distancing. This speaks to the tendency demonstrated many times throughout this dissertation to give accounts of the political alongside anecdotal stories of social intimacy and distance. Note that while both the accounts of Giorgos and Yannis involve retreats, they do so in different ways. If Giorgos could convey nothing to me of the political mood of the Metapolitefsi, it was precisely the peculiarities of the post-dictatorship period that Yannis detailed as the impetus for his *drive to withdraw*. Yannis was returning to Athens as one of the few who had had their citizenship revoked. Returning to the center of Athens—"his neighbourhood"—was an entirely ambivalent experience: on the one hand, Yannis described feeling fearless and full of disdain for the fallen regime; on the other hand, he found the transforming political map dizzying and strange. Revolutionary songs were coming out of every cafe and restaurant, stories of suffering and resistance under the junta were surfacing left and right. The sight was disorienting, somehow.

Another interviewee remarked cynically that "if the government decided to give pensions to those claiming they had fought against the dictatorship, like they did for partisans against the Nazis, the state would have gone bankrupt." These are reflections on what was, for some, an

excessive (and superficial) visibility of the very progressive and revolutionary tendencies that had been so punitively suppressed only a few years prior. Marginality was spilling into the mainstream, a situation that seemed to mock or undermine those who had lived a persecuted existence for many decades.

Apostolos, who returned to Greece in 1979 with a master's degree in Engineering, was optimistic only in his portrayal of one short period just "after the junta but before the rise of PASOK." "We were politicized but not yet *particized*," he explained, "that was the big difference. Everything was open." Laughing, he admits that there was a certain cultural hegemony in the university at the time, among both students and professors, and among people of his generation and younger: "Let me say it like this [...] If you weren't Left, you couldn't get laid".

This sense of things being "open" is more difficult to discern in the accounts of those who, upon returning to Greece, were immediately shuffled into the army to fulfill their obligatory military duty. Spyros was not the only interviewee who told me he had pursued every opportunity to study abroad in order to avoid the army during the dictatorship. Recall (from chapter three) that the military was a concentrated site of filing and surveillance, even prior to the junta. Once the dictatorship came to power, stories from within the military camps deterred those from "left families"; studying abroad was one way to postpone one's service until the junta had been overthrown. When Spyros returned in 1975, the army had already been purged by Karamanlis of the most adamant junta collaborators; nonetheless, the practice of filing persisted:

Spyros: Although I was doing all the jobs of an officer during those 28 months, I was not made an officer [...] I will tell you, because I had friends who were in the so-called "Third Office," "Trito Grafeio." The "First Office" is for personnel, the "Second Office" was

where I worked, to plan the education, and the third was simply to follow the people who were left. To follow what they do...

Katherine: Wait, this is after the fall of the junta?

Spyros: Yes, I am talking about the summer of 75. So I had friends responsible and were telling me. They said there were three categories: alpha, beta, gamma [...] Alpha was unknown; Beta were those with political ... those who were left and Communists in Greece; and Gamma [...] were Slavic speaking persons [...] These were the military characterizations at that time [...] We could not bring newspapers to the camp, we could not be mixed in politics [...] These were orders...

As I explained in the previous chapter, a great majority of files have been destroyed or classified, making it difficult for scholars to compare filing practices of different regimes. For this reason, I refrain from making generalizations about characterizations as they emerge in interviewees' accounts. The point I wish to make here is simply that Spyros invokes a site of continuity in the file-keeping of the left (as well as those deemed "Slavic"). Given the fact that he was entering the army with a master's degree in Economics—a rare level of educational achievement in the mid 1970s—not being made an officer certainly poses a curiosity.

It is useful, at this point in my analysis, to begin distinguishing between the narratives of those who remained in Canada and those who returned to Greece after the fall of the junta. Although there is nothing like homogenous perspectives on either side of the Atlantic, it is possible to identify specific modes of relating to the past that are structured around "having remained" or "having returned." In this regard, it is interesting to keep in mind research exploring returns to other post-dictatorship sites, such as Chile, Brazil and Argentina in the 70s, 80s and 90s. Much of the research on Chile, for example, reveals accounts of ambiguous

receptions. Media portrayed returnees as having had a privileged "golden exile," and even children born abroad were reportedly received coldly. Resume items, such as foreign education, exposed a person's absence and rendered him suspicious as having been abroad because he was leftists, or because he was part of a left family. Comrades who had remained in Chile also drew on the discourse of the "golden exile" after the fall of the dictatorship, expressing resentment towards those who had not stayed behind (Hirsh 2012; Wright and Zuniga 2007)

This chilly reception did not emerge in my interviews with those returning to Greece in the 70s and 80s, neither in their recollections of popular or state discourse or in everyday conversations. But this doesn't mean that one's absence in the years of the junta was perceived by others to be inconsequential. Kostas, for example, returned to Thessaloniki in the late 1970s. Having just reunited after more than 8 years, he and his friend attended an outdoor political speech by a PASOK representative in the center of the city. Recognizing a man from their village who had been brutal with both of them during their military service, Kostas nudged his friend in a state of disbelief, cursing and shouting—in his words, "freaking out." He was about to confront the man: how dare he show his face at such an event, given all those years of "working for the junta?" But his friend held him back. "Leave him," he insisted, "you're not here, Kostas. You don't know how things are. He's one of us now." This instance was brought up again in a subsequent interview as Kostas' evidence of the fickleness of both memory and conviction after the junta. Yet, the story also reveals how claims of proximity could be used to silence critique. Kostas' companion played the experiential card of "being here" to put him in his place.

Recall (from chapter three) the appeal of two village boys finding themselves accidentally in the turmoil of a political protest in Thessaloniki—in the very same public square where Kostas reunited with his friend. These village boys had wandered out to the streets of Thessaloniki

during a high school trip just after the death of the beloved activist, Lambrakis, in 1963. Their defense against the police officer's charge, "goddam communists," was this simple appeal: "But we are from Macedonia!" I argued that this case was a betrayal of anonymity and the security that distance was expected to provide. But in Kostas' story above, the period he has spent outside of Greece renders his gaze partial, somehow uninformed and from another—now irrelevant—time. His recollections of the way things were, along with his appeal to background and familiarity, are now interpreted as misrecognition: "He's one of us now." As a consequence, whatever experience of marginalization Kostas had before and during the first months of the junta is reduced to a peripheral perspective that becomes all the more distant and irrelevant as a result of 8 years "exoterika" (abroad).

## **II. Political Genealogies at the "Center": Living PASOK'S Ascent**

Andreas Papandreou declared the establishment of his new political party, the "Panhellenic Socialist Movement" (PASOK), on the 3rd of September, 1974. He did so in the presence of PAK comrades from Canada, Germany, Sweden and Italy.<sup>62</sup> As Spourdalakis (1988) has pointed out, the declaration "signalled PASOK's entrance into Greek politics in an unprecedentedly radical fashion" (65), referring as it did to "Greece's dependence upon the imperialist establishment of the US and NATO," the vision for a "socialist democratic Greece," the "elimination [...] of the [...] exploitation of man by man," the "social liberation of the Greek working people [through] the socialist transformation of society" and the "socialization of the

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<sup>62</sup> On the emergence of PASOK in the late 70s and 80s see also: Clogg's (1987) *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for Legitimacy*; Mouzelis' (1978) On the Greek Elections, *New Left Review* 108: 73; Kalogeropoulos' (1989) Election Promises and Government Performances in Greece, *European Journal of Political Research* 17 (3): 291; Featherstone and Katsoudas' (1987) *Political Change in Greece: Before and After in the Colonels*; Sotiropoulos' (1994) Populism and Bureaucracy: The Case of Greece under PASOK 1981-1989, *British Journal of Sociology* 45 (3): 349-365; Lefebver's (1989) The Socialist Experience in Greece, *International Journal of Political Economy* 19 (4): 32-55.

financial system in its entirety" (ibid: 65-66). "Statements such as these," writes Spourdalakis "made the 'Down with Capital' slogan [of] some of [...] PASOK's most radical recruits [...] seem not as out of place as one might have thought" (ibid: 66-67).

Founding fathers of the party busied themselves with a campaign focused on appealing to leftists, who had been marginalized from the political process, and convincing "moderates"—especially from the rural areas of Greece—that socialism didn't mean (in the words of one of my interviewees) "stealing your sheep and chickens and giving them to the state." The result was impressive, but "still disappointing," explained an interviewee supportive of PASOK: In the first elections of 1974, PASOK won just over 13% of the popular vote, although they were supported by 21% of the students (most of whom were not eligible to vote because of their age) (ibid: 84).

One of the great strengths of PASOK in the late 70s and early 80s was its capacity to navigate contesting political genealogies, claiming as its own a history of injury and resistance, while carefully obscuring the anti-communism of some of its founding members. Many of the men I interviewed commented on Papandreou's broad use of both the critiques and rhetoric of the far left, as well as a kind of conciliatory language focused on overcoming the traces of civil war discord. One interviewee explained that in public speeches, Papandreou represented himself as a figure through which three generations of resistance could be united in a common genealogy: The generation of the resistance against Nazi occupiers during WWII; the generation of the "unending struggle" (referring to the campaign initiated by his father's center party against right-wing terror and vote-rigging in the 1960s); and the "Polytechnic generation," named after the November 1973 student protests against the junta, during which the army and police showed brute force. Papandreou's orchestration of the politics of memory and generation coincided with

the portrayal of PASOK as breaking entirely from the right-wing and its corrupt practices of repression.

By the second elections of the Metapolitefsi, in 1977, PASOK had built up a stronger support base, winning over 25% of the votes (Spourdalakis 1988: 166). Many of those I interviewed described the years leading up to these elections as "very PASOK" and members of the party were euphoric with the prospect of becoming Greece's first governing socialist party. Lukas, who was trying to resettle in 1981, explains why he voted for PASOK in the elections of that year despite being a communist:

I was never a member of PASOK [...] but I voted for [them] because I was preferring them over Nea Demokratia. If there was chance for the communist party I would vote communist. But you know, many people, most of the people, who were coming back were voting PASOK. They were voting for the party that could change the system that was for hundreds of years...It was the same people running the country, even during the Ottoman Empire. So we were voting for democratic and socialist ideas. That's how they got [...] so many votes.

This reference to the "same people" emerged especially in accounts of those who continued to describe themselves as "left." For these interviewees, the shared processes of subordinating minorities, marginalizing the left and protecting the elite, rendered political actors "the same," regardless of their party affinities. Some of the men I interviewed were more exacting in their interpretation of continuity from the 1800s, claiming that it wasn't just the same sort of people, but the "same families" who had governed and excluded. With the ubiquitous campaign slogan of "change" ("allagi"), PASOK promised fundamental breaks with a political structure that had been dominated by "tsakia"—literally meaning "fireplaces," but referring to long-established

families belonging to the right. Papandreou also promised to cut the chains of foreign interventions that had defined the country since its inception. Famously, in response to Prime Minister Karamanlis' claim that "Greece belongs to the West" (meaning that the country should actively seek integration into the European community and avoid Soviet political influence), Andreas Papandreou declared, "We prefer that Greece belongs to the Greeks!"<sup>63</sup> This was received with enthusiastic applause. In this way, as Spourdalakis points out—and interviewees attested to—the early successes of PASOK certainly sprung from the fact that it was the "first organized attempt to lay claim to that part of the political spectrum which had traditionally belonged to the left" (67).

Kostas observed the performance of PASOK from Toronto with a mix of enthusiasm and foreboding:

[In the] elections in 1977 he got 26% and I started to get worried because I thought, "you can't double the number of supporters in your party so quickly if you want to have a socialist party because you don't have the structures to absorb them. You are going to become another leader party," which is exactly what happened in '81. Papandreou would ask the minister of affairs what time it is was and he would respond, you know, "Whatever time you want it to be!"

Variations on Kostas' last comment—namely, on the leader-centric aspect of the emergent PASOK—were especially pronounced by those who were originally members but left the party on their own accord or because they were "pushed out. Evangelos was in the process of resettling in Greece in the years between 1977 and 81—the crucial period, as we have seen, in which

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<sup>63</sup> This occurred during a 1977 debate concerning Greece's accession to the European Union.

PASOK secured its social base.<sup>64</sup> With a strained voice and sad eyes, Evangelos described his movement away from Papandreou:

I disagreed with what Andreas was doing. I was deeply believing that he was a democrat and then I felt he was a dictator. I could not follow him anymore. I had invested dreams in him [...] I lived this experience with PAK and I feel those were some of the best years of my life. But unfortunately, after 1975, it changed. The period before one was one of agony, of despair, but also of big hopes and I will take inspiration from that time. The period that followed didn't have those qualities. I could see a new reality and it was not the one I had dreamed of.

Others were "removed" in 1977, when Papandreou clamped down on the most "radical" and Trotskyite elements of the left. In the words of one interviewee, these groups had "infiltrated" PASOK—something that they "were very adept at doing." He explained that a few hundred people were removed "from leadership positions," a decision that he believes helped Papandreou to win the next elections. And indeed, PASOK came to power in 1981 with 48% (Spourdalakis 1988: 210). While a consideration of the party's policies over its almost continuous three-decade rule is far beyond the scope of this dissertation, I quote Yannis here, as his remarks offer a relatively representative portrayal of "what PASOK did right":

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<sup>64</sup> Political scientist, Nikiforos Diamandouros (1993) demarcates two "sub-periods" of the "post-authoritarian" period, distinguished by the "capacity of the polity and economy to successfully incorporate and to integrate the extensive and upwardly mobile social strata effectively marginalised within the postwar, anticommunist system and excluded from autonomous participation in it" (8). The first, "incorporative moment" (from 1974-1985), is marked by the "incorporation of these strata into [...] political democracy [...], their autonomous participation in the political system [...] and their clear ideological (1974-1981) and political (1981-85) ascendancy in society and politics [...]; The second, "moment of entrenchment" (the post-1985 period) is "to be understood as a period in which the incorporative momentum reached its limits, as the social forces which had served as its main carriers sought to consolidate their gains and to entrench themselves in their newly-acquired social and political space" (ibid).

At the beginning, they did some beautiful things. The formation of the family law. A woman had no rights in Greece legally until 1983. OK? Like if you were my wife and you were in a hotel with your lover, I had the right to come with the police, grab you, it was evidence of a divorce and you had no rights to defend yourself. The other fucking shit. The dowry problem...if you have no dowry, there was no way you would find a husband. OK? For that, I take my hat off [...] Good reforms. They did reforms on the health. They copied OHIP from Ontario and brought it to Greece. A direct replica. OK, later on [...] they fucked it, but it still exists. They did a number of things. They established the official language of Greece, the demotic, the spoken Greek [...] The abolition of the tones of the Greek language [to make it] more accessible to everyone...

### **Luck, Favour and Being at the Center**

Those who became involved with matters of governance, public office, or the emerging research, educational or economic institutions when PASOK came to power, tended to narrate their incorporation as a matter of "luck," "exception," "being convinced," and "a surprise." Similarly, those who occupied these positions— but did not identify themselves as party supporters at the time—recounted their integration as being "lucky despite" their divergent political ideologies. These remarks fascinated me.

Hired at a technical institute with a master's degree in Economics, Manolis (who had been a member of both PAK and then PASOK) explained that he had been encouraged to apply for a teaching position by one of the founders of the institution and was evaluated by a hiring committee "from the party." "You know something? I am a very lucky person. There are two, three times in my life when I can say I had good luck, and this was one of them." Narratives of

this kind—that is, of "getting established" under the PASOK regime—were especially interesting in so far as they somehow tended to evacuate one's education, experience, merit, or any other personal achievements out of the story. In fact, not a single interviewee who became integrated in so-called "PASOK institutions" spoke from the position of having outright deserved their placement. Even if they used a narrative of excelling, development or mastery in their descriptions of work and school in Toronto, this self-portrayal was not extensively carried into narratives of re-settlement.

But time and time again, sitting across from the faces of those who had described their PAK anti-junta activities in Toronto with so much enthusiasm and pride, I became aware of the precarity of their contemporary speaking position. The stories from Toronto had been ones of struggle, but also of protest, action, vision and knowing what one stood for (as Evangelos recalled above, it was a time of "agony, [and] despair, but also of big hopes"). Regardless of the ideological and social factions that dissolved the movement, there was nonetheless something—at least temporarily—thrilling about the feeling of standing together against something bad, totalitarian, illegal. But in asking men to reflect on their activity in PASOK, the narrative of solidarity in the face of injustice could not stand up to scrutiny—certainly not as protestors were presently filling the streets to condemn the local "PASOK traitors" who had delivered the country into the hands of the Troika. To what extent, then, was this kind of narrative self-effacing a reflection of the unique moment in which I was conducting my research? Put simply, I was asking after *the birth* of a party with which these men were closely involved, at the very moment of its *degraded (and very public) decline*.

My thinking on this finding remains tentative. I shall pose it this way: If recourse to bad luck, as Hertzfeld (1992: 134) suggests, is one way of distancing oneself from one's failures—by

implying a line of causality that is out of one hands—does good luck perhaps function in the same way for those successes that are now—for one reason or another—deemed suspicious? But if that is the case, how do these expressions of good luck position the speaker differently to questions of power and culpability than would outright admissions of patronage, on the one hand, or claims of merit, on the other?

Merit, of course, implies education, experience and expertise, and is ideally translated into competency and contributions on the job. I thus read this hesitancy to claim a merit-based allocation as retrospectively guarding against suggestions of responsibility. In the case, for example, of the two well-educated PASOK economists who I interviewed—one having worked as a Professor of Economics and the other having worked for the country's central bank—both emphasized that despite being actively involved in the party, they left matters of economic policy to the experts. There were "always those who knew more," surmised one of them. "That's just the way it was."

If in this analysis of narrative self-effacing, merit is undermined and luck emphasized, outright admissions of obtaining positions through either intimate or clientelistic relations were, in general, absent from my interviews. I consider here an excerpt from my interview with Antonios as unusual in this regard. Antonios, described himself as "probably an exceptional case,"<sup>65</sup> and was extremely forthcoming about his placement in PASOK structures upon his return. Antonios was an active member of PAK and met Papandreou when he was a student in Toronto. When PASOK formed a government, he was given a ministry position and moved to Athens. Anticipating that the post would be a busy one, he learned otherwise soon enough:

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<sup>65</sup> For reasons I will not discuss in order to protect the anonymity of my interviewee, Antonios' biography is exceptional in ways that have justified his exclusion from my analysis. I nonetheless include him in this section for his insight into the everyday working of institutions as well as his poignant and rather blatant use of the familial metaphors that emerged (albeit more discreetly) in other accounts.

Basically, I was there to collect a salary [...] It was not because I didn't want to do anything. It was because the structure was so weak that no one gave me anything to do! [...] *One of my stories about that period* [is that] after I had become head of the section, three months later [I discovered that] I had 8 people working for me that I didn't even know existed! But who were they? How did I find out about them? They came into my office one day, one at a time, asking for me to sign their leave of absence. For vacations. They needed my signature. But I didn't know they existed! [...] But, it was tragic, in the sense that I was getting a salary for basically doing nothing [...] And you know, the dream of the Greek youth was to get a job in the public sector but that was itself tragic. I saw a number of cases of people who came back to Greece after studying in England or Germany with degrees, [finding] jobs in the ministry. With connections. And what did they end up doing? They sat and read newspapers all day. They did nothing. We were "argomistoi,"—getting salary for doing nothing.

Soon after relating this frank portrait of working in the ministry, Antonios summarized his work history during the period with an undisguised reference to his intimate relations with the Papandreou family. "My ability to maintain myself in Greece has to do with having a relationship with the family, basically," began Antonios. "I mean, when I was in the government I was protected more or less... [I was] understood to be "oikoyeniakos," part of the presumed [...] family court, so to speak [...] This is what I was. I was part of the family."

Although there is a lot to unpack here, for the purpose of my discussion, I'd like to highlight two aspects of Antonios' account: first, it gives a name to forms of sociality that were otherwise spoken about discreetly; second, rather than avoiding the question of responsibility, it draws attention to it. I inquired about the word that Antonios had used—"argomistoi"—in

interviews with others. I was usually told that it is a word one would use for someone else and never for oneself. When I countered that I had heard the word for the first time used self-referentially, one interviewee shrugged his shoulders and responded matter-of-factly, "They might say 'we', as in, 'We're all to blame,' but never ever 'I.'" And then he added, "Anyway, now is different. Everyone is coming out, to *release themselves from all the bad things*. Even the CIA did that many years later, right?" We can probably better understand this position in light of the popular discourse of collective blame that has emerged over the last few years, both from government and media sources. It is perhaps no better—and no more crudely demonstrated—than in the remarks of Theodoros Pangalos, a well-known PASOK politician serving since 1981, that, "We all ate it together." Statements like these, which construct an ambiguous and non-specific "we," have been interrogated by left parties in Greece, including SYRIZA and the KKE.

Both this ambiguous "we" and the decline of PASOK structured the account of Kristos' return and his incorporation into the party almost from the onset of our interview. I met Kristos at his home, on a beautiful, tree-lined neighbourhood of northern Athens. Upon my arrival, Kristos made me a strong Greek coffee and then showed me a framed declaration from April 1967. It was called, "The oath of the immigrant," and outlined the responsibility of the Greek diaspora to come to the defence of their country's democracy. His closest friend had written this in the days after the Junta had come to power as a rallying cry for Greeks to begin mobilizing. Since his return to Athens, in 1975, Kristos had been involved on and off in PASOK:

*Well, I didn't come back with the others, after the junta fell. I stayed there. Andreas told me to come down, I said "no" [...] But he said, "The party can pay you." "Party pay me?!" He said, "Why not?" And I said, "I can't say no to you." Well, many of us said that [...] When Andreas was putting his fight here, I felt like I couldn't say no to him. He is not a guy you*

say "no" to [...] You know, I was never a politician, I was never elected, never became a member of parliament. I was appointed [in] non-parliamentary [posts][...]over a period of years. Anytime Andreas asked me to, [I came] and then I left when I thought, "Ok, I've done what I should do," and then he would call me back again [...] Anyway, we did a few things, especially in tourism [...] I don't regret anything except that we tolerated unhealthy situations within the government among people that we worked with [...] But what happened in Greece, *we are all at fault, but not all the same. Even the last citizen had a responsibility by not asking for receipts, by tax evading, by asking for his or her son and daughter to be appointed to public service.*

Kristos' discussion of his measured and hesitant return—one requiring a fair bit of persuasion—is followed immediately by a statement of collective responsibility. In an interview with a long-time critic of PASOK, the "unhealthy situations" Kristos refers to was recounted through the metaphor of "the extended family of PASOK."

### **III. Aborted Returns and "Failing" in Papandreou's Greece**

Throughout my research, I was frequently told that those who attempted to resettle in Greece after the fall of the dictatorship returned to Canada "within a few months." Men who claimed they had never made efforts to return permanently to Greece seemed rather fond of recounting the failures of others. In fact, they did so with wry grins and, at times, a sardonic laugh. The difficult returns of others were rarely narrated matter-of-factly or with sympathy. More than half of those I interviewed in Canada had moved to Greece at some point in the late 70s or 80s, but ended up going back to Toronto. While some were hesitant to speak about the factors at work

here, others were quite forthcoming about their "failed returns." In fact, "failing" was narrated as a rather ambivalent experience with surprising connotations.

In his extraordinary treatment of the symbolic construction of bureaucracy in Greece, Michael Herzfeld (1992) makes the argument that on a daily basis, people draw upon a standard moral fault line that effectively removes the speaker from culpability in his own failures. Specifically, he notes that: i) "people attribute *the failure of others* (or members of other social groups) to character flaws"; ii) "one's *own failures* and those of one's kin and friends [...] are the result of bad luck" and iii) that it is "*one's successes* that one attributes to qualities of character" (134). Herzfeld grounds his argument in J.L. Austin's (1975 [1962]) claim that there is a conventional quality to excuse-making, one that is well-known and entrenched in everyday speech (37). If it is true that "citizens who fail to get what they want may seriously lose standing in their home communities," saving-face necessitates "a convincing, or at least socially unimpeachable, defence of their actions" (Herzfeld 1992: 46). If it is the task of the ethnographer to consider the "social ramifications of failure" (46), it is also necessary to consider the symbolic architecture of self-exoneration; not as static social code, but as a challenging aspect of giving an account of oneself within contingent social and political relations. Let's consider, then, this pronouncement of the unfulfilled return as "failure" in the accounts of those I interviewed and ask: *Are these failures dismissed as a matter of fate or bad luck? How do men come to terms with the disappointment of an aborted return?*

In September of 2013, I interviewed Kyriakos, who had just retired after many years of running a small printing shop. We met at a busy cafe in Toronto, where he had carefully laid out some very precious booklets of resistance, handwritten by imprisoned communists during the dictatorship. His brother, Michaili, had sent these texts to Toronto at some point after his

incarceration in the early 1970s. Our discussion was structured around a kind of dual narrative, including both his own experiences in Toronto and those of his brother in Greece; Kyriakos would occasionally evaluate his own contributions and losses in relation to those of Michaili:

I returned in '75, just after the junta collapsed, when my brother was out of prison, of course, and his wife began to have serious psychological problems. My brother had started to have problems with his feet and hands because they had been broken by officers stepping on them [...] So, I went to the party office<sup>66</sup> and saw that we were not doing anything, that Papandreou had attracted most of our people. You know, he was on the roofs saying the revolution is coming! The revolution! He is despicable [...] but respecting the memory of the dead, I don't want to go further [...] Then in '85, I tried to go back again, intending to stay *but I failed* [...] I saw that it was a terrible idea to try to stay in Greece. The social environment [with] the nouveau riche. That's what I saw. Just consumerism and cars [...] I got shocked about ideas and principles, about work and ethics [...] I had the experience of modern Greece, if you can call it "modern." The guys at PASOK used to call me "comrade." "Come in comrade, have a coffee." I said, "No, it kills my nerves." An old classmate was an MP [and] he was trying to recruit me, but I said, "Don't try!" It would have meant becoming a member and getting anything I liked; getting money and opening a painting shop with a development loan [...] but then, I would already be corrupted [...]

In his first return narrative, Kyriakos finds his brother a "half person" and his sister-in-law, who had also been imprisoned, similarly "broken." Having been very active in Toronto, Kyriakos recounts going to the KKE-I office, searching for indication of initiatives that could bring some relief to his family and that would lend hope for a radically different political solution in Greece.

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<sup>66</sup> Kyriakos is referring here to the Communist Party of the Interior (KKE-I), the pro-European, anti-Stalinist party.

His brother found employment as a teacher, while Kyriakos, profoundly disappointed, returned to Canada. If this first return (in 1975) is narrated through the lens of his broken family, the second return (in 1985) is conveyed through a critique of a farcical modern "socialism," conspicuous consumption and entrenched clientelism. What is thus implied in Kyriakos' claim to failure? There is no reference to fate or chance here, but rather a decidedly political analysis with ethical connotations: Failing in Papandreou's modern Greece is actually a failure to become corrupted and, in this sense, is a narrative testament to Kyriakos' unwavering principles and, perhaps, to his political lineage.

Others made similar first and second attempts—sometimes more—to establish themselves in Greece. Some described these as false starts that were bound to fail. To the extent that the failure could have been foreseen, given "how things are done over there," perhaps there is an element of fate here (or at least fatalism), but ultimately, the speaker is constructed as bound to fail because he is a good person. It's not a question of chance.

The same kind of talk about failure emerges in accounts of those who resettled in Greece, but did so at the margins and with the experience of being overlooked, underutilized or pushed aside. My conversation with Tasos is illustrative in this regard. I was invited to his village in the Peloponnese where he and his wife had retired some years ago and were now living on a limited income from a small supply of homemade wine and olive oil. His wife, Eleni, was vocal about their difficulties surviving the economic crisis. Reflecting on the decision they made to leave good jobs in Toronto and start over in Athens and then to later retire to the isolated village, Tasos sighed deeply, "you could say I was a failure." Laughing, he continued: "I was the naive Canadian, returning to Greece and thinking I was going to be part of a socialist project."

What we learn from these accounts is that if we are going to fail, it is best to do so in circumstances where we were bound to—not by the hands of god or fate—but because of our strong characters, principles or ethics, which make it impossible, by definition, to succeed in a corrupted system. In these accounts, succeeding in Papandreou's Greece is *easy*. One fails because he took the *difficult* road of integrity. As one of my interviewees exclaimed, sympathizing with his father, "He once said, 'my dignity is to have broken chairs in my house and pants with holes!'" For those leftists who did not take the bait—who did not enter the office of PASOK "comrades"—continuity of a principled political genealogy is narratively constructed against all odds and temptations.

### **Invitations and Moral Proximities**

Some of those returning in the Metapolitefsi had experienced decades of exclusion and marginalization because state actors had declared them dissident by birth, while others were deemed so on account of their involvement in Toronto or Athens against the conservative regime. As political support in post-junta Greece increasingly turned leftward and as Papandreou's PASOK emerged as the hegemonic representative of the left, it became at *least possible to imagine* a kind of social mobility previously inconceivable. What happens when someone who has been marginalized for decades is invited to take a place at the center? How is this movement negotiated and how is it reflected upon and justified through a subject's ethical lens? I pose these questions for both those who resettled in Greece and those who stayed behind. The center-periphery binary, of course, has been heavily entrenched in political sociology, as well as in political science and international development literatures. Thinking about forms of sociality at the political center and at the margins, however, requires a recognition that the binary

itself (and the structured relations of power and inequality that it is intended to represent) is subject to transformation, ambiguity and reinterpretation.

To begin exploring these questions, I quote an excerpt from my interview with Lukas, the chef on the Danforth who arrived in Toronto without documents at the age of 19. I met Lukas, a tall, broad-chested man with a wide grin and firm handshake, during a mid-day break at his restaurant. Still wearing his stained apron, he offered me a cold glass of water and sat down with a long sigh. "I'm old but still working!" he began, with a laugh. When we came to the topic of his two attempts to resettle and make a life in Greece after the fall of the junta, Lukas offered a very detailed and fascinating reflection on questions of sociality and identity in the "here" of Toronto and the "there" of Athens. The encounter Lukas describes in the quote below occurred in 1984, three years after PASOK had come to power. It is helpful for the reader to know that the "George" he refers to is the son of Andreas Papandreou. At the time of the narrated meeting, George was an MP in his father's government; at the time of our interview, he was the ex-Prime Minister of Greece. As a young man, George Papandreou had been living in Toronto during the years of the junta with his family and later, when he was studying in the US, he returned for frequent visits.

George and I had many conversations over the years when he was coming to "Esperides" [a boîte on the Danforth] and then after, when the family returned to Greece, George was visiting Canada for some reason and he was coming to the "Trojan Horse." The last time I saw him there was in 1984 and I mentioned that I was planning to go back to Greece. He gives me a few of his phone numbers and says, "For sure, you must call me..." A couple months later I went to Greece. I hadn't called him, because, like I said, I wasn't interested in participating in the government or taking a position that I didn't deserve, though *they*

*were giving positions away to people like me.* So, now I was in Greece and I was working at a nice taverna in Athens. It was a very famous place, a huge place called "Ama Lahei", in Exarcheia. Big names were coming in there—a few politicians, lots of artists and musicians, but all leftists. One day [...] who comes in but George Papandreou! Remember, we had been speaking just three months before. He doesn't recognize me! Nothing! I said, "OK, no problem," because I didn't need anything. Now, I understand a whole number of things: If you are the son of Andreas Papandreou and your father is in government, there are a million people who want to meet you, who want to talk to you, want favours. *When we are here, in Toronto—I mean him and I—yes, we have something to talk about. But over there, what do we have to talk about?* [...] I was not a member of PASOK and I didn't want any help from them [...] So anyway, I didn't need to talk to George *but the thing is, I was speaking to him in Toronto like I'm speaking to you now.* And he was behaving as if we never met!

I quote Lukas at length here because I think his statement evokes, in a meaningful way, the complexities of the returning diaspora and the subtle ambiguities of relations that are in one site proximate, frequent, more or less familiar, and in another fraught with implicit inequality, suspicion and distance. "They were giving jobs away to *people like me,*" recalled Lukas incredulously. And indeed, given that the democratic Greek network was rather small in Toronto and other diasporas (referring here to those who were actively involved in the anti-dictatorship movement) this meant that many men had ordinary relations with figures that rose to prominence or became "very respectable people" in Athens.

In Lukas' analysis, a casual exchange in Toronto between two persons of the Greek diaspora in a progressive atmosphere of socializing, gets reframed in Athens as "asking for

something." If conversation is perceived as a means of acquiring status or favour, through party lines, then speaking is itself perilous; it always risks being taken as opportunistic or self-serving. In Lukas' account, the meeting in Ama Lahei—which we can imagine being the Athenian equivalent to the Trojan Horse in Toronto—is stripped of its sociality; names and faces go unrecognized, there is no longer "anything to talk about," and Lukas finds himself in the position of being just another guy "going around the king." Of course, this recollection also serves as a reminder that whatever relations were created in the diaspora, they were not guaranteed channels to benefits upon return.

A rather striking comparison emerges from my interview with Nikos, who was working in a factory in the "PAK days" and remained in Canada after the fall of the junta. He recalled an exchange he had with the new Prime Minister when the latter visited Toronto in 1982. A dinner had been prepared for Andreas Papandreou and all the "PAK guys" remaining in Toronto were invited:

We had a dinner [...] and I was sitting next to him. Every couple of minutes someone comes over and tells him what he needs. You know, "My daughter is at the University in Ottawa but now she needs to go the University in Athens, because now we are going to move to Greece, so I need help..." and Papandreou [would say], "Tell my secretary." And then another person comes right away, and I'm sitting there, watching. All kinds of requests. You name it! So I go like this [gestures placing a hand on Papandreou's shoulder] and I say, "Look man, with me, you're safe. I don't want anything from you. I don't want anything!" [...] And, you know, I always believed in my life that it's a big thing if you don't want anything. A very big thing. This is what I got from my father. OK? And my father didn't speak too much.

My conversation with Nikos was interrupted at this point by one of his friends, who I would later interview. Makis sat down at the cafe table, asked what we were speaking about and then stated matter-of-factly, "It's no good time to be Greek." I asked him what he meant, and he explained that he had taken to avoiding his "Canadian" neighbours whenever they greeted him, pretending not to hear them. He had been doing this ever since they had started asking about the crisis in Greece. Every time they heard a story about Greece on the news—about families who recorded low incomes but were found to have luxury homes and swimming pools, about the island where "fifty percent of the population pretends to be to crippled in order to get benefits," or the village where widows were cashing their dead husbands' state pension cheques even decades after their deaths—the neighbours would ask Makis what he thought. "I have nothing to say," Makis said, shrugging. "I'm ashamed to be Greek." Nikos, upon hearing this last remark, made a gesture of annoyance and cut his friend off, "We got nothing to be ashamed of. Don't forget that."

There was something unique about Nikos' approach to my questions and the concern of his friend. There was an assuredness to his statements and a confidence that suggested little regrets and little need for self-reflection or analysis. This sense of stability is also reflected in his' description above. Here we have a second example of one of the "old PAK guys" encountering a Papandreou, albeit with very different connotations. If Lukas' story is one of an intimacy betrayed by new relations of power, of comradeship broken by a performative amnesia in post-dictatorship Athens, Nikos' version of "dinner with Andreas" maintains all the expressions of friendship—the close proximity, an affectionate hand placed supportively on a shoulder, the unguarded "listen, man." Just a few moments later, Nikos said simply, "the good people always step away"—a statement that sheds direct light on questions of subjectivity, morality and

proximity. Note too the claim to continuity of genealogy in Nikos' reference to his father: Neither men "want anything" from anyone.

Echoing this moral imperative—that the good keep their distance—Kristos (the man who was convinced by Papandreou to return to Athens) constructed a very particular profile of those who remained in Canada after the fall of the junta:

And the great and most wonderful thing that makes me very proud, almost emotional [and here the speaker tears up a bit] is that [the] group in Toronto, never never cashed in. No one came to ask for anything, to take a position. *They stayed there in quiet dignity*. They keep their memories, and they don't talk about it [...] So this separates these people; it makes them a distinct social group with special virtues, alright? A lot of [others] came, and look what happened.

What begins here as a rather poetic portrayal of the whole PAK group in Toronto ends up demarcating between those who "*stayed* in their quiet dignity" and those who "came." Kristos then provided a comparison between those in Toronto and other diasporic groups from Western Europe; those arriving from Germany and Italy did so with expectations of "distribution," he said, while many from Canada were invited but couldn't be "persuaded" to come.

This equation of those remaining in the Toronto diaspora with dignity, on the one hand, and those returning with opportunism, on the other, was a persistent trope in accounts, necessitating a series of qualifications for those who returned, but were good guys with good intentions. So too was the theme of silence as an antidote to the excessive and public manipulation of discourses of resistance in the post-dictatorship years. In fact, next to the miming of anti-dictatorship and liberation speak—from "all sides"—silence appears as a virtue in Kristos' narrative. As one interviewee pointed out, CVs of many of the older PASOK

members and MPs even today include the requisite statement that they were engaged in the anti-dictatorship struggle. Especially if one looks at the resumes or biographies of the first group of governing PASOK ministers back in 1981, "anti-dictatorship resistance" is as common a qualification as a degree in Law or Economics.

In this way, silence and keeping a distance are narratively constructed as indications of integrity in many interviews. Other variations of the trope of proximity are expressed in the claims, "I never made a call" and "I never visited anyone." These appear both in accounts of failed returns, which I have discussed above, and the resettlement narratives of those who ended up staying in Greece. As one interviewee claimed: "I was one of the few guys who had Mikis Theodorakis' private number. But when I got to Greece, I never used it. I never made the call." Of course, this remark suggests that it was not only former PAK or PASOK members that could have benefited from visits and calls. Not making a call was taken to the extreme in Tasos' account of adjusting to life under "PASOK hegemony." Despite having been an active member of the KKE-I in Toronto, Tasos was employed in a PASOK research institution, established with the proclaimed purpose of researching modern Greece in all of its economic and political specificities. Tasos explained that in the late 70s and early 80s one would be placed on a list in order to acquire a telephone number and, "like many lists in Greece," one's position could be elevated dramatically with interventions from the right people. Acknowledging that he could have easily asked one of his PASOK colleagues to enlist the help of a Minister, he refused to do so. Despite repeated inquiries to the telephone company, Tasos had no luck. Laughing in disbelief, he added "I waited more than two years for a fucking phone!"

Finally, in the accounts of those who remained in Toronto after the fall of the junta, we find confirmation of Kristos' claim that others were invited but could not be convinced to join

PASOK's efforts in Greece. For Nikos, the manner in which the party solicited him was problematic from the onset. Nikos explained to me why he refused to join PASOK back in September 1974:

Nikos: Listen, when PASOK was created and I went to the meeting, do you know why I decided not to join? Because they asked me to make an application!

Katherine: And?

Nikos: An application! To be a *member*! I was asked to fill out an application! Do you understand?

Katherine: Umm...

Nikos: I was asked to fill out an application and I resented that.

Katherine: And why did you resent that?

Nikos: Why?! [and hear the speaker raises his voice] What more did I have to prove?! And to whom? I did my duty, didn't I? I did more than what I was supposed to do! And I told them so. I never joined them.

When PASOK came to power in 1981, Nikos was solicited by the Prime Minister's office: "The letters came for me and two other guys. 'Come and join us,' they said." He declined each time. This experience of having been solicited was raised in other accounts—"They called me from Greece"; "I received a letter"; "Andreas invited me personally"—as were statements about the *potential* for one's involvement in government or for select public offices. Thanos, who referred to himself as "left of the left" (and when asked if he was a communist, replied "it depends who's asking") had been actively involved in the PAK movement. Invited "personally once Andreas was in power" to be an unelected minister, Thanos refused. "Knowing me," he began, "wanting to say what I wished, I hate to think of what would have happened. Because people like me, and

I'm going to get personal here [laughing], they don't have many friends. And, of course, Greece is not a country to be without friends." Thanos' remark is interesting in so far as it notes both the individualized solicitation, as well as the prediction that his return would end in failure. Precisely because he could not refrain from speaking his mind and keeping his principles—"as a leftist"—he anticipated isolation as inevitable.

Others speculated on the contours of their fate in Greece had they returned. Noting that they could "easily have held a position" or that they "would probably have become an MP," men engaged in the imaginary construction of how things could have been. Recall, however, Lukas' claim that "they were giving positions away to people like me," a statement that speaks not so much to an individualized solicitation but a general sense of benefits and jobs being up for grabs.

Between the lines of these accounts, and taken together, we gain insight into how men think about political subjectivity. We see that an "ethical subject *position*" (Faubian 2011: 36) in the Metapolitefsi is probably better understood through *movement*—of retreats, withdrawals and "stepping back." Restraint and declinations—both to invitations for coffee at the local PASOK office and to formal offers of party positions—are presented as proof of one's integrity. In the citing of humble fathers, or appeals to left origins, these refusals and retreats can sometimes be read as a commitment to one's political genealogy.

#### **IV. Left Genealogies in Ashes?**

As I have discussed above, when Andreas Papandreou came to power in 1981, he did so as the leader of the first governing socialist party in the history of modern Greece. One of the first reconciliatory gestures "between left and right" that Papandreou proposed was the destruction of citizen files, which had so long been the basis for persecuting leftists. Indeed, what better way to

close the files—which Thanos warned us were "made to be kept, not thrown away"—than to burn them? However, Papandreou rescinded this directive after protests from the scientific community convinced him that these were documents of historical importance.

In September of 1989, the great majority of the files (an estimated 30,000,000 documents) were nevertheless destroyed in a public incinerator just outside of Athens and in public squares throughout Greece.<sup>67</sup> The ambiguity of the act and its consequences for those I interviewed is complicated by the fact that it was *not* PASOK, but a short-lived coalition government of KKE, KKE-I (the communist parties) and ND (conservatives) who destroyed the files.<sup>68</sup> This coalition government is understood to be a stain on the history of the Communist Party and one that any critic of the party (on the left, right, or center) can easily raise to discredit communists up to the present (especially in the current political climate of the KKE's stubborn refusals to work with the emerging radical left SYRIZA). This kind of alliance, between left and right, was unprecedented in Greek political history, and it was established as an attempt to wipe Papandreou off the map after the emergence (quite ironically, perhaps) of public allegations that he was engaged in wire-tapping of political opponents (Samatas 2004: 11).

The burning of the files was enacted through a law for the "Remedy for the Consequences of the Civil War."<sup>69</sup> This law also called for changes in terminology; specifically, the replacement of "War against the gangs" (simmoritopolemos) or "Bandit War" with "Civil War" (emfiliopolemos) and of "Communist Gangfighters" (koumounistosimorites) with "DSE fighters" (Democratic Army of Greece fighters). While the changes of terminology (mostly in

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<sup>67</sup> Manolis Karellis, "The destruction of the political files", *Patris*, November 26, 2011. [http://www.patris.gr/articles/211328?PHPSESSID=#.VGN-t\\_TF8f8](http://www.patris.gr/articles/211328?PHPSESSID=#.VGN-t_TF8f8) (Accessed December 22, 2001).

<sup>68</sup> *ibid*

<sup>69</sup> Law 1863-1989 (Άρση των Συνεπειών των Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944-1949)

government and educational texts) were welcomed enthusiastically, the destruction of the files was not without critics from the left. They argued, as Panourgia (2009) does, that such a move would "secure the past in the furnace of the steel mill" (153), removing any accountability from the state, paramilitary, or informants. On the eve of the incineration, Harilaos Florakis and Michaili Kyrkos (leaders of the KKE and KKE-I, respectively) raised their objections to the destruction of the files. Nevertheless, the public destruction of the files proceeded as planned the following day and both men made public statements of support for the decision.<sup>70</sup>

Approximately 2100 files—pertaining to "figures of historical importance"—were kept and classified in 1989 with the justification that this decision avoided "scratching at public passions" and maintained the "spirit of national reconciliation." It was promised that the files would be made open to the public in twenty years.<sup>71</sup> Some of the men I interviewed expressed a belief that many files (including their own) had not been burned or the opinion that, whether or not the actual material file existed, the contents of their file had been digitalized into police computer records. One interviewee, who regarded himself as a communist, explained that the burning of the files was just another problematic gesture on the part of Andreas Papandreou, made in the name of national reconciliation but more indicative of the center's long history of anti-communism and tolerance for right-wing collaboration. Papandreou, like Karamanlis before him, missed the opportunity to bring those responsible to justice because it was never a genuine concern, just as many decades prior, George Papandreou (in the words of another interviewee) was remarkably "lethargic" at the close of WWII and made little attempt to punish

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<sup>70</sup> Karellis

<sup>71</sup> *ibid*

collaborators.<sup>72</sup> Here, Karamanlis (ND), George Papandreou Sr. (Center Union) and his son Andreas (PASOK) are all figured as friends of the right, concerned only with the protection of "rats" and "informants" and not with the "good people who suffered."

Panourgia (2009) renders the dual gesture—of Karamanlis' 1975 legalization of the party and PASOK's alleged burning of the files—an act of "enforced amnesia": "The Left was made, at once, *both legal and forgotten*" (153).<sup>73</sup> But if we accept Panourgia's suggestion that the burning of the files was an "askesis (exercise) in forgetting" (150), what shall we make of the amnesia around the left's own involvement in the destruction of the files? And how might we begin to reckon this point of silence with the persisting preoccupation of Kyriakos—one of the two brothers I discussed who were involved in KKE-I. Reflecting on a conversation he had with his brother "just days ago," Kyriakos recounted: "He said to me, when I die, ask your children to seek that fakelos because I believe after 10 or 15 years they will be in our hands, god willing." In this way, the destruction of the files takes on the additional significance of having precluded forms of redress that may have been possible by tracking one's genealogy against state power, even under the changed political imperatives of a leftist government and its attempt to "restore justice."<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, Minas Samatas (2004), a scholar of Greek surveillance, writes that Papandreou's decision *not* to burn the files demonstrates both a lack of genuine commitment to reconciliation and the party's populism: "The first PASOK administration (during 1981-1989), despite the end of institutionalized anticommunism and the liberation of society from most remnants of the police state proved its populist character first by its *negligence in fulfilling its promise to ban anticommunist surveillance entirely and burn the file of all Greek citizens used to exercise political control*" (11). He also notes the continued practice of widespread surveillance of political opponents by both the PASOK and New Democracy governments (even employed against one's own ministers, in the case of Papandreou).

<sup>73</sup> Panourgia herself places the burning of the files among PASOKs "conciliatory gestures" and does not indicate that it was actually carried out by the coalition government comprised of the Communist parties and the right-wing New Democracy.

<sup>74</sup> I thank Michael Nijhawan for framing this point so articulately.

This conversation, between two brothers of the left who had been persecuted more than four decades ago, obviously moved me. It also led me to research parliamentary discussions (or lack thereof) concerning the files. No efforts have been made by either PASOK or New Democracy governments to make the existing files accessible to the people filed or their families. The 20-year period of classification expired in Sept of 2009, at which point the government of New Democracy (just a few weeks from elections that were forecasted to bring PASOK back to power) decided that, in defense of the "public interest," the files would remain closed to all interested parties (including historians and other academics).<sup>75</sup> In a much later justification of the government's decision, Antonis Liakos, a professor of modern history at the University of Athens, stated that, although the persons named in the files were probably dead, they had "nonetheless left behind families" and it was out of concern for their family members that the files should remain closed.<sup>76</sup> One can hardly overlook the fact that Liakos is referring here to the family members of informants and collaborators, neglecting entirely the interest expressed in the files by the families of the left. The decision was taken at that time to re-classify the files until 2029 and, to the best of my understanding, it was taken with little public discussion or parliamentary debate.

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<sup>75</sup> " Political files extended for another 20 years" (in Greek), *TVXS*, September 18, 2009 <http://tvxs.gr/news/ελλάδα/παρατείνονται-για-άλλα-20-χρόνια-οι-«φάκελοι-πολιτικών-φρονημάτων»> (Accessed July 27, 2011).

<sup>76</sup> Quoted in Sofia Pakalidou, "The political file still divides" (in Greek), *Aggelioforos*, November 1, 2009 <http://www.aggelioforos.gr/default.asp?pid=7&ct=10&artid=9240> (Accessed June 25, 2011).

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to shed light on forms of subjectivity and sociality in the period Panourgia (2009) ambiguously refers to as "after history" (150).<sup>77</sup> Considered in light of the perspectives of those returning to Greece after the junta with high hopes and a commitment to restructuring the country, this is perhaps a telling qualification. "After history" is an obscure periodization and one used by Panourgia to note the banishment of memory, traces, accountability. In fact, one of my interviewees echoed this impulse with a designation of his own: "the never changing present." He told me (albeit misinterpreting my research), "It is good you are going to write only about the struggles in Canada during the junta, because after PASOK comes to power *nothing happens in Greece*. It is just the *never-changing present*." In the "after history" of the late 1970s, 80s and 90s, according to Panourgia, the struggle against the junta becomes ossified in, for example, names of streets and metro stations—symbolic markers without historical or genealogical depth. And yet, I have tried to evoke the sensibilities at work in those attempts to "make history" in this period, shedding light on forms of sociality and paradoxical expressions of (dis)identification and (mis)recognition. I have considered at length the tension emerging from narratives of return—one of proximities and moralities—between revealing, naming and claiming, on the one hand, and of retreating (sometimes in silence), on the

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<sup>77</sup> Panourgia's chronological chapters (bookended by two more personal and ethnographic ones) are organized into periods of repression: i) 1936-1944: The Metaxas Dictatorship, the Italian Attack, the German Invasion, German Occupation and Resistance; ii) 1944-1945: The Battle of Athens; iii) 1945-1945: White Terror; iv) 1946-1949 Civil War; v) 1950-1976: Post Civil War; vi) 1967- 1974: Dictatorship; viii) 1974-2002: "After History." Of the post-civil war years (my preoccupation in chapter 3), Panourgia writes very little. In fact, the chapter, despite covering 17 years, is only 7 pages in length, of which 4 pages are dedicated to the ideological battle ground in civil war historiography, 1.5 pages are used for photos and only 1.5 pages deals specifically with what happened "after the end of the civil war" (122). Similarly, of the period she names "after history"—the post-dictatorship period up to 2002—she writes a total of *three paragraphs*. As a point of contrast, it is precisely these "post" periods that make up the focus of this chapter and chapter 2.

other. I have argued that these moments of hesitation and withdrawal, and of self-identification with the misfit and the marginal, should be read against both the backdrop of the "present" loss of PASOK's legitimacy and the state's efforts in the Metapolitefsi to hollow out political genealogies through its own rhetorical and bureaucratic processes.

## Chapter 6

### Political Genealogy in Crisis: Reflections on an Ambiguous Present

*Athens, September 5, 2013*

*The crisis in Athens has many faces: It accompanies those in the long lines outside unemployment offices and soup kitchens; it weighs on the shoulders of daily commuters, faces gazing blankly out of car windows as they idle in the congested centre; it springs up in buses and trams in remarks between strangers, "another new tax," "too many immigrants," "he'll go and study abroad"; it displays itself colourfully in shop windows—"Crisis Prices!"—and leaves its traces in the unopened bills that litter the dusty floors of stores closed indefinitely. The crisis folds itself into the foreheads of the old and young alike, causing men to ask, "have you noticed something different about the girls these days? Don't they look old?" It is written on the walls, in the scrawled graffiti that seems to coat the entire city centre—"Eat your local PASOK Politician! He ate your future!" "Nazi or Human?" "Troika = Junta." The crisis reveals itself in the whispered stories of elderly parents dying in their homes because there is no money for treatment, or in the clanging symphony of early risers scavenging dumpsters for food and metal scraps. It stands uniformed, armed and self-assured outside of Alpha Bank and it is performed daily in the street arrests of young migrant sellers, with their garlic cloves or Nike shoes still in hand. It creeps into the dreams of young people and is expressed in trailing sentences about where to study, how to find work, who to call...It circulates between neighbours in the always asked but never answered: *Ti na kanoume?* "What can we do?" The crisis is provocatively*

*evoked through painted swastikas and the black shirts of the Golden Dawn. It is commemorated with the wilted flowers at Syntagma, where an old pensioner shot himself publicly<sup>78</sup>. The crisis is embodied in street protest and in the cries of youth and elderly alike—"Freedom. Bread. Work," "The dictatorship did not end in 73"—and it incites bitterness in the hearts of those who've "worked [their] whole life for a better Greece."*

I wrote these reflections in the fall of 2013 from my apartment in Kato Patissia— one of the poorest and most diverse areas of Athens. I would regularly hear French, Arabic, Bengali and English spoken between migrants from Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Morocco, Sudan, Somalia and the Ivory Coast. Serifou Street became my home for a year, throwing into sharp relief socioeconomic realities and struggles that I had not seen during my stays in the more affluent neighbourhoods of Vrilissia and Chalandri and that I had only witnessed momentarily passing through areas like Zografou and Kypseli. Looking back at my observations, which I had recorded in the first weeks on Serifou Street, my tendency to personify the crisis is very evident, but I understand that I was trying to provide a visual scale of the social and economic impacts of "these troubled times" in both their most subtle and explicit manifestations.

This is by far the most open-ended of chapters, raising more questions than advancing arguments. The hesitancy of its ethnographic and theoretical statements is no doubt a reflection

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<sup>78</sup> The note he left behind stated: "The Tsolakoglou occupation government has nullified any chance of my survival which was based on a decent salary that for 35 years I alone (without state support) paid for [...] Because I am of an age that does not allow me to forcefully react (without, of course, excluding that if some Greek took a Kalashnikov first, I would be the second) I see no other solution than a decent ending before I start looking in the garbage to feed myself. I believe that youth who have no future will one day take up arms and hang the national traitors upside-down in Syntagma square just as the Italians did in 1945 to Mussolini" (translated and published by *The Guardian*) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/04/greek-man-shoots-himself-debts> (Accessed April 10, 2012)

of the volatility of the present. I explore here manifestations of political genealogy—expressed as movement, rupture, continuity, contradiction and suspension—in interviewees' attempts to come to terms with that cluster of economic and political events, discourses and institutional changes that constitute "the crisis." I show how men situate themselves within specific constellations of political genealogy and culture. In other words, as they try to give discursive shape to "these troubled times" and to weave their own life account into the narrative, they tend to draw—in diverse but distinguishable ways—from frames worth identifying and analyzing in some detail here. My hope is to translate some of the open-endedness of this volatile period into relevant questions for the relationship between contemporary articulations of insecurity and specific narrative "fates" of political genealogy.

In the next pages, I identify specific constellations of political genealogy and culture that are deployed in men's accounts of the crisis. The first, what I call "political genealogy as reproduction," primarily narrates *continuity*. One way it does so is through an adamant adherence to the party line of the communist party (KKE). A second constellation holds a *disillusioned* relation to the present, in which a specific political genealogy may have had its merit in the past but provides no political or moral direction for the way forward (out of crisis). A third is built around a reflexive identification with "the center" and what I tentatively call a "centric imaginary." It involves a recognition of the left-right binary (as well, perhaps, as one's own position in a left political genealogy), but relegates both to the past and strips the political genealogies I have been discussing of their contemporary relevance. While it breaks with genealogy in a similar way to that of the disillusioned figure, it is different in so far as it finds relief and inventiveness in the center, which it advocates as a sound moral and political project. A fourth constellation uses ambiguous auto-essentialist tropes that rest on cultural stereotypes of

"the Greeks," on the one hand, and a redemptive depiction of "Canada," on the other. In this case, political genealogy of the left and right is obscured completely by a hollowed out *cultural* genealogy—a vague and homogeneous "the Greeks." I conclude with a final constellation—one that attempts a creative, reinhabiting of political genealogy.

In using the term "crisis," I am fully aware of its potentially spectacular and apocalyptic connotations. But the word itself is fully entrenched in everyday conversation in Greece and, in its most general interpretation, carries with it a sense of living in troubled times. I am interested, then, in the ways in which political genealogy orbits in the explanations, analyses, anxieties and forecasts that are expressed by those I interviewed—both by those who remain in Canada, observing the crisis from afar, and by those who resettled in Greece.

## **I. The Party and I : Political Genealogy as Reproduction**

*Toronto, December 10 2010*

*Thalia is the oldest of my interviewees and the only woman who has agreed to speak to me until now. I met Thalia at her home in Mississauga, a small bungalow that she shares with her daughter, son-in-law and adult grandson. Before we begin our interview she tells me to go upstairs to see "her wall". She'll wait downstairs. I find myself in her bedroom, in front of a wall covered in black and white photographs. One stands out. It is not quite a photo, or perhaps it is but some lines and details have been inked in: A young woman is standing in uniform and resting on a rifle. She stares straight ahead, determined and very young. "Did you see it?" she asks, once I've returned to the basement. "Is that you with the gun?" I ask. "Of course it is!" We begin our interview and from time to time her daughter interrupts with comments of her own: "Family should come before parties," she says, matter-of-factly, "not the other way around." Thalia*

herself often loses her place in the narrative she is telling and becomes frustrated. She speaks of the "opportunists" in Greece and so-called "leftists" like Mikis Theodorakis, who "is no communist." "They called me from the party just a few days ago," insists Thalia, "'Ti kaneis, Thalia? [How, are you, Thalia].' You see? They still remember me." She tells her daughter to bring her purse. "I want to show you something," Thalia says, as she opens it. "Look!" She holds in her hands a small booklet, in which many small stamps indicate she's paid her membership fees to the Communist party. The book is a few decades old. She puts it back carefully in a sleeve of her purse and sighs. A Greek soap opera has been on for the entire duration of our interview, not quite muted. "They called me from the party just last week," she repeats, looking sideways at the television, "'Ti kaneis, Thalia?"

Given the inherent intimacy between the concepts of genealogy and reproduction, let me clarify what aspects of this relation I am interested in exploring here. By "reproduction," I am referring to a continuity in lexicons, (dis)identifications and attachments, but I am also addressing one's own reflexive awareness of the *problem of reproduction* as it emerges in accounts of the current crisis. Put more simply: Participants both perform a certain reproductive tendency in their accounts, by claiming affinity with the political past that has excluded them, while at the same time reflecting on and assessing the challenges in Greece today as *stemming from the problem of reproduction*.

Let me begin with an explicit example of the reproduction of genealogy, one emerging at the highest level of government and from a set of protagonists with whom we are now well familiar: George Papandreou Sr., Andreas Papandreou and George Papandreou Jr. Grandfather. Father. Son. In early June of 2013, former Prime Minister George Papandreou appeared on

Canadian TVO's *The Agenda* for what was framed as a frank discussion of "the Greek crisis." After Paikin introduced his guest as "the third Papandreou to become prime minister of Greece," Mr. Papandreou pointed out that he was also a fellow Torontonian many years ago. He then clarified the ways in which his family's history is often misportrayed:

Sometimes when people say, you know, "He is the third of a family of prime ministers," it sounds a little bit like a dynasty. But think about it—it was basically three generations of fighting for democracy. My grandfather was in jail six times in his life, and in exile. My father, twice was in jail, one of them, of course when I was a kid...I was 14 when the dictators arrested my father and, during the arrest, I had a gun pointed to my head...

In his appeal for the viewer to "think about it," George Papandreou counters what he implies to be a rather superficial interpretation of his family's involvement in politics as dynasty and urges a second, more nuanced, reading. Reclaiming his genealogy as one of freedom fighters in flight (and "Canada" as a site of refuge), he clarifies his roots in politics as not so much about family title, but family oppression (or title valiantly achieved through fighting oppression). This television interview took place about three years after Papandreou had brought the country into the course of debt packages and austerity measures and a year and a half after he had had resigned from the office of Prime Minister.

George Papandreou had made a similar appeal to genealogy a few years prior in the middle of parliamentary proceedings. Having misused a Greek expression, Papandreou evoked a loud outpouring of mockery and laughter, to which he responded, "That's enough! Show some respect, show some respect! I am a Greek of the diaspora and this was not my decision but

because my father was exiled twice!"<sup>79</sup> In this moment, Papandreou explicitly evoked his family's *exile in defense* along with the injury done by right-wing regimes (descendants of which sit in parliament today).

While this is perhaps an overly publicized demonstration of the continuing relevance of genealogy, it was commented upon by interviewees in both Greece and Canada. Yet, as Yannis' remarks show below, continuities can also be reinvented in the use to which they are put. As an old PAK activist, but one "never involved in PASOK," Yannis repositions the Papandreou clan as proverbial fish out of water in his explanation of the "state we're in today":

If you are Prime Minister, you don't go by bicycle to the parliament [referring to George Papandreou]. The Greeks are not ready, you *Malaka!* [You idiot!] You are not in Sweden! You are not in Canada, where the Prime Minister goes with a jacket over his shoulder to a movie! You know [laughing], you are not in Toronto! He was unable to understand that. For him, it was the most simple thing and I agree with him. But this is not Toronto [...] But these are the things that people don't take into consideration when they talk about politics, culture [...] even though these are the main things! These are so important! Everyday living details. You know? So *obviously, in this way, George Papandreou was totally unable to rule Greece.* And to some degree, his father. To some degree.

Yannis' reflections are perceptive in a number of respects. Indeed, they express a sociological perspective in their own right: In the foreground of what we typically take to be "political" are a host of subtle social and cultural dynamics that matter for those thinking about their politicians and assessing their government. I am especially interested in Yannis' emphasis on a very

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<sup>79</sup> Deepa Babington, Dina Kyriakidou, and David Lawder, "Papandreou: The Rise and Fall of a Greek Prince," *Reuters*, November 8, 2011  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/08/us-greece-papandreou-idUSTRE7A74RU20111108>  
(accessed December 1, 2001).

particular inheritance; Andreas the father, marries an American in exile abroad, and bestows upon Georgakis —or "little George" as he is referred to by many, minimizing at once his masculinity, intelligence and authority—*the condition of being in exile*, a circumstance that rendered him unsuitable to govern Greece from the onset. All of this exposes their illegitimate genealogy: father and son, raised in foreign lands, coming "home" to roost, generating policies and programs for which Greece was never "ready" to adopt. According to some of their critics, father and son are rendered not quite kin—not quite Greek enough—for Greek standards. In other words, continuities of political genealogy are put to two very different uses: While George Papandreou (along with a number of his loyal followers) calls upon a political genealogy of exile to *legitimate* himself (and his father and grandfather) as political actors, Yannis points to the *problem of political genealogy* as the root cause of PASOK's failures and the "state we're in today." In the latter analysis, contemporary predicaments are, in a very roundabout way, the consequence of a genealogy that renders one out of place.

Such remarks must be analyzed with an awareness that, at the time of PASOK's rise, Andreas Papandreou's speeches were experienced by many as "music to the ears." Judging from video footage of these events (and, of course, the mass electoral support for Papandreou's PASOK) there is no doubt that he was incredibly effective at mobilizing sensitivities and loyalties.<sup>80</sup> Yannis' remarks must be read in their ambivalence. There is a clear tension between casting Papandreou as inherently inappropriate for the political role of Prime Minister and his broad appeal, which interviewees expressed variously as the "love of the people," "mass support," "manipulation," "just words" and "rhetoric." Of course, even their inappropriateness can work in the favour of the Papandreou's; they were progressive advocates for a "better

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<sup>80</sup> To get just a sense of the crowds that Papandreou attracted, see video footage of his speech in Thessaloniki (1985): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TWdQvng4jI> (accessed January 2, 2012)

Greece," being "light years ahead of the people." For the purpose of our discussion of political genealogy here, I want only to highlight the emphasis on a narrative continuity between grandfather, son and grandson that renders the Papandreou "line" il/legitimate.

Returning now to my interview with Thalia and the ethnographic note that opens this chapter, I want to highlight a distinct manifestation of reproduced genealogy that was narratively performed with quite striking consistency by some who maintain a stated attachment to the Greek Communist Party (KKE). Thalia was the first person I met during the course of my research who avowed an outright identification with the communist party. Her case is exceptional for many reasons: at 91, she was by far the oldest person I interviewed; she remains one of only three women who agreed to speak with me; she is the only interviewee who participated in the civil war as a young partisan; and having been diagnosed with dementia, she experienced significant memory loss during our interview. Thalia could not address the current economic and political events in Greece and despite having been active in the anti-dictatorship movement, she had very little to say about it. For these reasons, I was hesitant to include Thalia in this discussion. And yet, the ethnographic note captures so well a certain insistent rhythm of reproduction that was identifiable in other interviews with members of the Communist Party. Thalia's specific gestures towards inclusion and exclusion (her use of the term "opportunist" for dissenting leftists, the prioritization of proof of supporting the party, her desire for continued recognition from the party ("they still remember me") were conveyed by other "card carrying" members of KKE. In other words, there is a reproductive feature at work in accounts that closely aligns the speaker with a specific political position and performs genealogical continuity.

I identified this reproductive tendency again in my interviews with Pavlos, a communist of the KKE who maintains his membership in the (Canadian) party today. Pavlos is in his mid-70s,

with a youthful walk, very alert and inquisitive eyes and a happy disposition. He was probably the most enthusiastic interviewee, intent on "setting the record straight" about both the anti-dictatorship movement in Toronto and the current economic and political realities of Greece. He repeatedly offered any help he could give to my project and volunteered to meet with me as often as necessary. Within a few moments of our first interview, as we were addressing the most recent political polls conducted in Greece, Pavlos exclaimed, "Tsipras and SYRIZA are nothing but opportunists! Just like our guy, Mr. Papandreou!" He laughed a little and then stopped himself, adding "sorry for my laughter, but come on, these are not serious people, ok?" More than two hours into our interview, I was exhausted. Pavlos rarely answered my questions specifically and I was beginning to feel like I was in a lecture. He narrated what seemed to me a detailed history of the civil war and the years leading up to the dictatorship from the vantage point of the Communist Party. He insisted a number of times that what he was telling me was the "real story," one that I wouldn't be told by the "other guys" (men he knew I had spoken to who were not themselves members of the party). He interrupted himself on occasion to set the frame: "Theodorakis? A wonderful composer! But come, on, he's an opportunist!" And then, "What is this 'left', Katerina? Everyone can say they are so! Papandreou can say he is left!" These statements had the air of being at once profoundly obvious—when paired with laughs of ridicule, rolls of the eyes and hand gestures that expressed, "Come on! Get real"—and top secret and privileged information I was unlikely to hear from anyone else—when conveyed in hushed tones and a folding of Pavlos' body inward that made it clear others were not meant to overhear. I returned home some hours later to transcribe the interview, first downloading and then deleting it from my device. To my dismay, I realized I had accidentally deleted the interview completely.

Embarrassed, I called Pavlos, apologized profusely, and arranged another meeting for one week later.

On our second meeting, Pavlos was much more laid back. He was jovial and forgiving of my mistake and the need for a "round two." I began asking my specific questions but, once again, he digressed and seemed to divert from any attempt on my part to bring the interview back to my core themes. Having interviewed him only one week prior, I found that much of what he said was already familiar to me. When it was time to transcribe this interview, I discovered, with frustration, that the first had been downloaded after all and that I had accidentally misfiled it. I decided to listen to both interviews, one after the other, and in doing so, I realized that Pavlos had been working along the lines of a script. Of course, it wasn't exact, but the mode of developing the narrative was identifiable in both interviews. From this perspective, the vocabulary of attachment and identity to the party, distance from the others, mistrust and disdain became particularly evident. In a third interview, perhaps feeling that he had set the ground for "getting it straight," Pavlos was more accommodating of my specific questions.

But what did Pavlo and other KKE supporters have to say about the contemporary economic and political circumstances in Greece? Many provided an analysis grounded in political economy, devoid of claims that what was happening in Greece today was exceptional or that there was a cultural explanation for contemporary problems. There was also a belief that what we are seeing today is "just another capitalist crisis"; as a result, much of what the party has "always said" is proven to be true and doesn't require revision.

This abiding lexicon is precisely the point of reference for those critical of the communist party. As one interviewee remarked, "they keep selling the same old cars although the factory's closed," impressing that repetition is the marker of redundancy. But the point was also made by

leftists and self-affirmed communists who had broken with the party. Kyriakos declared at the close of his interview, "No longer will they get me again in the 'dream of the dictatorship of the proletariat'"—the latter phrase intoned ironically and with air quotes.

I have shown above how Yannis' remarks about the failures of PASOK expose the *problem of reproduced genealogy*. The same interpretive device is used in both critiques and valorizations of SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left). SYRIZA, led by Alexis Tsipras, was established first as a coalition of left-wing parties in 2004 and then as a party in 2012. As a coalition, it attracted 5% of the popular vote in 2004. As a party, it rose to become the main oppositional force in 2012, claiming 27% of votes. In narrative terms, dismissing SYRIZA as a viable political alternative rests on genealogical references to the party's constituency: After all, who is Tsipras but "a product of the student movement," "originating from the communist youth group" and how could Greece put its faith in the "old Stalinist guard?" This is a strategy of delegitimization focusing on the communist composition of the party (thereby obscuring the other political groups that claim to be left, but not communist). And yet, for others, it is precisely the *heterogeneity* of the party and thus the *ambiguity* of political genealogies that immediately disqualifies SYRIZA from being a viable contender in leadership. Originally a coalition of 13 groups, the party appears to some interviewees as a mixed bag of political actors whose many past disagreements and factions make any "party position" impossible. Said in another way, there is no recognizable, singular, shared and continuous genealogy that SYRIZA can claim and, as one interviewee explained, "a political party without an extended family" is suspect from the onset.

Panayiotis, who never supported PASOK electorally and refers to himself as "left but not communist," similarly rejected the viability of a SYRIZA government because, in his view, it is simply the contemporary refuge for political orphans—those who have lost their "extended

family" and safety networks in the decline of PASOK and who are now seeking to protect themselves against additional loss and preparing themselves for "future distributions". For Panayioti, SYRIZA is nothing more than an adopted father, beckoning the lost ones to come in from the storm and promising, in return, restored public offices, wages and pensions. This is a question not so much of reproduced political genealogies, as the capacity of political forces to discreetly cover themselves with *the intention of reproducing* specific privileges and securities.

Others supporting SYRIZA sometimes found political genealogy useful for justifying the movement of specific persons from PASOK to SYRIZA. This involved recasting those moving between parties as the "old guard", "true Pasokers" who had always been fighting for the cause of social justice but had been muted by power-hungry leaders set on diverting the party from its original goals. The migration of the old guard of Pasokers to SYRIZA is welcomed as a kind of return to the noble founding principles of a now corrupted party—one that had long ago disappointed its social base in the pursuit of political power.

What do these observations have in common for our discussion of the narrative fates of political genealogy? I am suggesting here that they either *perform* a reproduction in political genealogy or *pose it as a problematic* in their assessments and interpretations of the contemporary "state we're in." In the first case, we observed Pavlos and Thalia performing a commitment to the lexicon of the Communist Party; the very tendency that critics identify as proof of the party's contemporary irrelevance. We also saw the play of reproduction between the language of George Papandreou to *legitimize* his place in politics and of Yannis to *delegitimize* the ex-Prime minister. In the second case, I showed how the problematic of reproduction is used in diverse ways to ground competing interpretations of Greece's crisis; with the same logic, one can (de)legitimize SYRIZA and condemn or sanction the movement of Pasokers to SYRIZA.

## II. The Disillusioned Leftist: Political Genealogy in Retreat

"That's what my son calls me, a frustrated leftist," remarked Yannis, one evening in his Athens home while we were perusing his very extensive personal archive. "I suppose I am a *disillusioned* leftist." While sorting through boxes upon boxes of newspapers, photos, personal letters and recordings, Yannis continued, "He's an anarchist. And as you know, the anarchists are meeting Golden Dawn every night in the streets..." He sighed, "He does say 'to hell with the state' and why shouldn't he?" I asked Yannis to tell me more about this idea of the "disillusioned leftist":

Look Katherine, I know one thing...that when *everything is erupting* and *everything goes down*, by law of nature, something else has to go. That's the end of this trip. I don't understand why they are not reacting violently. The other day we had Merkel here and we had no more than maybe 40, 50 thousand people here in the streets. I don't understand why there was not more than 2 million. I don't know what they are expecting. Will there be a specific drop that is going in the glass of water? To overflow the water? [...] I know in my personal life, I used to work from 8 o'clock in the morning to 2 o'clock [...] I would close the shop, go home, eat a little bit, sleep a little bit [and return]. I'd have to do something with my son, with my wife [...] Now, the last three years, 2 o'clock either my son or my wife will work here and the store will remain open until 11 o'clock at night. Just to keep the door open, because when you close the door, there is no way you will open it again. That's it. So, from that point of view, I am feeling bitter because I wasn't expecting this! After all, I have done my life to see a better Greece, to reach a level, to reach a point where I'm like, "Oh shit, do I have money to buy cigarettes today?" Because I don't think

personally I deserve something like this. Let alone the rest of the Greeks. And that is my bitter lemon.

Yannis captures the insecurity—material and existential—of living in "end times," a mood that was all the more pronounced in the space of his dusty archives. But he was not alone in envisioning a catastrophic conclusion to the crisis; the foreseeing of "everything falling apart" emerged often. Angelos' remark, in a dejected tone, that "Greece is like a sinking ship, going down, down, down and I guess when it hits bottom, it will start again... the development" was a more ambiguously optimistic version of this prediction. Of course, it takes a certain kind of distance to call for a whole society, of which you are presumed to be a part, to "hit bottom" and "start again".

*Figure 7: "And that is my bitter lemon"*



Thanos, who we met initially in chapter three as one of the "*fakelomeni*," reflected on the crisis in our interview during the fall of 2011. He lodged a severe critique of "the left," one that I read as fundamentally *imbricated with (but not reducible to) his own political genealogy*: "You know, today I hear about this situation and I see Papariga [leader of KKE] and Tsipras [leader of SYRIZA] and ok, they do an analysis which I like and everything they say is right about the crisis. I know the polls, if the two of them get together they will be the number one political force in Greece. What's stopping them?" I posed the question back to Thanos and he continued:

I don't know! I don't know! It only enhances my belief that they are useless! You have the right analysis and know the reasons why this is happening but you can't make the move. You go on endlessly critiquing the two-party system and when you have the chance to give it a deadly blow, you kick it away! You don't have the magnanimity to come out and say, "We're together[...] whatever our differences may be!" Listen, I am at the end of my life here [...] *All this time I am waiting for them to come and embrace me [...]and to say, "We are together. To hell with our differences. We don't care." Can't they make that choice? Is it so difficult? Do you know how many people, not just communists, who would welcome such a move? It would be like a resurrection.*

Thanos' comments are compelling. I tentatively interpret his portrayal of the primary splits in the left to reflect his own trajectory as a political orphan of sorts; distrusted by party members, but aligned ideologically, Thanos is very candidly expressing his own deeply felt and persistent longing for recognition and reconciliation. For a man in his late 80s, observing an economic crisis that he could "never have predicted," the failure of the left to overcome its own divided history stands as the most significant and "unforgivable" aspect of the present moment. The

right, explained Thanos, was doing as they always had—protecting elite, securing the interests of a few over the many, drawing on racist and xenophobic discourse to disorient the public and legitimate critique. Party representatives of the left, however, in failing to overcome their differences, "had chosen to be absent of what is going on in Greece. And this, they will pay for, as now they are paying for other mistakes that they have done in the past. History does not wait or forgive or forget."

In chapter three, I briefly discussed the language of sin and condemnation—Christian terms, no doubt, that have been incorporated into political discourse. In my discussion of the "sons of signers," I explored the ways in which men negotiated a political genealogy in which "their own" had turned against them. What is striking in Thanos' narrative is the extent to which the Communist Party is held to be responsible for the severity of the crisis, as well as for the disillusionment and marginalization of the left. The present is one of negligence, somehow familiar to Thanos through historical parallels, but nonetheless impossible to fathom. He was not the only interviewee to quote Marx's sentiments on history: "What did he say? First as tragedy, then as farce?"

This sense of coming to terms with contemporary troubles in the terms of a *failed left* similarly emerged in my conversation with Kyriakos:

Kyriakos: If I was in Greece today, I would be selling vegetables or [having a] printing shop. I wouldn't be involved. If they were to approach me, I would say, "No, no thank you. I don't take it no more. I don't smoke it no more."

Katherine: You don't take what? Politics, or....

Kyriakos: Not politics generally! I am aware of what is going on, but I won't be involved. What for? [...] Why did I spend that part of my life—and I am laughing, I am just a little

ant in the struggle of the left, I am nothing—but why was my brother tortured and he is half a person today? With his feet broken and epilepsy from the trauma [...]? For what? No, I remain, a person of the left. I belong to the stream of Marxists. But no way will they get me again in the dream of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." That was a fraud, a balloon, nothing. In Germany, as Hitler was rising, the communists said, "Do not make an alliance with the Social Democrats. They are dogs! They are traitors." And the German communists did nothing to stop that monster [...] I'm totally disappointed today. Katherine, I'm 70. I'm sad. When I'm thinking that I was there [...] when they had the opportunity to make a better future for me and my generation...

While I do not mean to reduce the accounts of Thanos, Yannis and Kyriakos to a static position of disillusionment, their frames for understanding the present do share a sense of things falling apart. Sometimes this is read alongside a coming to the end of one's life and a moment of reflective assessment of one's previous political commitments and struggles. There is, of course, a bitterness in the accounts of Yannis and Kyriakos, both of whom, in interpreting the present moment of crisis, call into question the value of lives "spent for a better Greece" (in Yannis words). In all three accounts there is a strong sense of disillusionment born out of abandonment ("All this time I am waiting") and deep contempt for a present that seems to mock past struggles and sacrifices, casting them as farce or tragedy.

### **III. The Centric Imaginary: Political Genealogy Surpassed**

*What more exemplary figure of the center can one imagine than the "fully-assimilated" Greek Canadian...who holds his motherland dear in his heart, who's in frequent contact with his loved ones in Greece and visits routinely (perhaps spending the summer months in his native village),*

*who pays his taxes "without being reminded" to the Canadian state, has savings (perhaps a small property investment in Greece), who's never missed the opportunity to vote in either country, whose bilingual children are well-settled, with good jobs, two passports and bilingual (perhaps trilingual!) children of their own? This is a man who feels as comfortable in Toronto as he does in his village, who dutifully reminds his friends and family in Greece of the value of hard work and the importance of paying taxes. He evaluates his motherland with equal parts romantic attachment and disdain. Having moved passed the "two extremes," the "two bulls of the right and left," he has learned to appreciate the quiet tranquility of moderation, of "keeping people in a balance," of "having a good name" in the community. He acknowledges that in his youth he was "ideological," but understands now that "with dogmas, you miss the miracle of the new." He is familiar with all the new technologies, uses the internet, has an iPhone, and is writing a memoir about those early years in Canada, which he terms, "the years of the innocent". When asked if he has any regrets, he responds, "Not in the least, I have the best of both worlds!" He looks with sadness at the situation of his country today—wondering aloud if he hadn't already predicted its fate— but expresses gratitude that "Europe hasn't abandoned Greece" in these difficult times.*

This is an excerpt from my ethnographic notes of fall 2012, written in one sitting after the last of three consecutive interviews with PASOK supporters in Toronto. As such, they do not represent a single interviewee but a kind of caricature of what I tentatively term the "centric imaginary." This is not a monolithic mentality, but an assemblage of narrative fragments pulled together through the construction of the center as a mode of transcendence. This can take the form of having overcome one's own political inheritance, political binaries in general, or "politics" all

together. In the accounts of those I interviewed—especially men living in Canada who maintained an identification with PASOK—the center is the site of a paradoxical identity: It at once affirms a shared lineage of resistance and injury with the left, while having surpassed the latter's failings. It affirms, as we will see, rationality over affect, responsibility over irresponsibility, innovation and entrepreneurialism over redundancy, moderation over excess and autonomy over dogmatism.

In some accounts, the centric imaginary is premised on a double-edged injury: the injury done by the military regime, on the one hand, and a more enduring injury suffered by "the people," having been split since the civil war between the "two bulls" of the right and left. Angelos' image is evocative; we can easily imagine two snarling, brutal beasts tearing at the flesh and ligaments of the body politic. Indeed, the center is evoked as the site of neutrality and the natural place of the people were it not for the stubborn aggressions of the horned extremes. Motions to the left or the right are thus the consequence of force or coercion. In speaking about his distrust of the Greek Left today, another interviewee began to recall his feeling during the "junta years" that the center was inherently vulnerable to the two extremes:

It is the mystery of people [that a well known Greek Communist] becomes a minister of the dictatorship [in 67] [...] [which] was in the same [category] as Franco and the other one in Portugal. Unfortunately, there was the feeling at that time that the [dictators] would stay, like for 40 years, and there was no end in sight. And there was the feeling...The words come to me now of the Greek writer Elytis—whose work impresses me although many people like [the poet] Ritsos because he was a member of the political left party. But Elytis was strong minded and the first [to receive] the Noble prize for literature for Greece. Anyway, he wrote all the time—and I say this now in Greek because it is beautiful [...]—

"There are no solutions. There is no exit from this crossroad. We can not walk on the street because there are people on the left and right that will destroy you." That was the feeling that many of us had.

In Markos' use of Elytis, then, the steadfast democratic line is thus always precarious, while those on the right and left use the same tactics of intimidation—and sometimes even switch sides! Importantly, my interviews with both Markos and Angelos were conducted at a time when the "theory of the two extremes" had been circulating in the Greek media and falling out of the mouths of both conservative and PASOK politicians. This "theory" holds that there is an equivalence to the left and right to the extent that they both rely on illegal and violent means to achieve their political goals. It emerged in the lead-up to the 2012 elections and was seemingly given all the more legitimacy after the murder of leftist rapper Pavlos Fissas by a member of the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn, in September of 2013, and the shooting deaths of two young supporters of Golden Dawn less than two months after. Yet, this rendering of the left and right as extremes that compromise—and reconfirm the need for—the center is well-entrenched in contemporary political thought, whether manifested as the ubiquitous "horseshoe theory"<sup>81</sup> or Giddens' "third way." The idea that the center expresses moderation against the two extremes is a well-versed reflection of both post cold-war politics and neoliberalism.

In the accounts of those I interviewed, the centric imaginary asserts an affinity *with* the left when speaking as "we the left, democratic people" against "the right," while explicitly staking its identity *against* the institutional left at crucial moments by claiming that the latter "has had its moment," was "at one point great," "has disappointed the people," and is—in the last instance—

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<sup>81</sup> The "horseshoe theory," generally attributed to political sociologists Seymour Martin Lipset and Daniele Bell, argues that the extreme left and the extreme right are much more similar to one another than they are to the center; something that their supporters would be unlikely to acknowledge.

antiquated. Recall the comment made above that the Communist Party "keep[s] selling the same old cars although the factory's closed." Part of the pulse of the center, then, lies in its claim to overcome redundancy. Its promise is, in the words of one interviewee, "the miracle of the new". The center thus stands for innovation.

Not surprisingly, the centric imaginary sometimes expresses this innovation as an overcoming of all political orthodoxies that have so long imprisoned men's creativity and intelligence. Those reflecting on the crisis through some variant of the centric imaginary heralded the death tolls of all ideology and the histories from which they come. As Theo put it, "things have changed and the isms are out; socialism, communism, even humanism." In this way, the center offers the right cure for the crisis precisely because it is the only political form that can approach economic problems with a "clear head" The centric imaginary forges a rational path without the weighty emotional and ideological dogmas and dramas that have possessed populations for generations. Theo reminded me, "This is precisely why the center was created, don't forget. To get beyond all this history."

*Are you still back there? We must evolve.* Recall these words from chapter four. They were spoken by Andreas Papandreou to Alexis after the latter had waited to shake his hand at Varsity Arena and to tell him of his family's losses during the civil war. In other words, collective memory is a hindrance to development. In this way, the center is often figured as the product of a twofold process: interpretive labour *and* the natural evolution (adaption) to the imperatives of the modern world. In his critique of the Communist Party's "impotency" in responding to the crisis, Markos shook his head and said summarily, "Unfortunately, they did not grow up." More sympathetically, one PASOK supporter explained, "I too was ideological in my youth but later I began to understand." In this reading, one has overcome their own political genealogy, arriving

at the mature version of an adolescent idealism long been subjected to learning, time, and the discipline of reason.

In this way, the centric subject emerges as a reasoned man for all seasons—equipped with a set of "sensible" proposals for Greece. Centricity is here equated with moderation, planning and fixing. It is self-reflective, self-critical, and learned. As one interviewee insisted, the "best solution to the crisis" will come from the "honest people within PASOK" who have "learned their lesson." Kristos, who has been working in Athens "for PASOK" for many decades, reiterated the need for technocratic solutions and another interviewee agreed that it's time for Germany to send its army of 500 tax collectors to "get beyond politics." The center is thus announced, not only—or necessarily—as a political position, but as a progressive step that is demanded both of history itself to the extent that contemporary conditions are not the same as "they were back then" and by a rational, intelligent, non-ideological and flexible subject who can adjust to the times and place in which he finds himself. Perhaps it goes without saying that — flanked by the German army of tax collectors—the centric subject is also impeccably fiscally responsible

The centric imaginary is sometimes possessed by the entrepreneurial spirit. In the face of present austerity it speaks to the promise of greater productivity, new projects, an educated and technologically savvy Greek youth that is faced with the challenge of "turning crisis into opportunity." Sitting in his living room in Toronto, with enlarged photos of Papandreou and other significant political figures framed on the walls, one interviewee described his sound investments in new business opportunities after the fall of the Junta. Establishing himself in the transportation industry, he recounted with pride his frequent traveling between Canada and Greece. "Having the best of both worlds" (as he said) was an indication of his successful

business ventures in both countries. Indeed, as a testament to this busy, transnational lifestyle, his mobile phone rang constantly throughout our interview and he apologetically noted that he received "business calls" from Greece at all hours of the night.

As a diasporic modality then, the centric imaginary places a lot of weight on "having the best of both worlds." If living amongst Canadians had once felt like "exile," it was now as much home as the village or neighbourhood of one's childhood. A comfortable, routine and fluent movement between countries reveals the appropriateness of the decision to settle in Toronto and the crisis raging in Greece today is greater confirmation still. Wisdom begets nothing lost and everything gained. One interviewee took great pride in the fact that both of his adult children spoke Greek and spent summers in his home village. He added that they "don't really understand what's going on today" or "what happened back then" because they are distant "from all of that." In this way, living in Canada was a moderating experience, creating smart and settled kids sheltered from the nasty side of politics.

This figure of the centric diasporic subject could not be more different than the one narrated by Apostolos (in chapter four). Never permitting him to touch "Canada with both feet" and suspended "over the Atlantic," the bridge that Apostolos constructs was never functional; it never succeeded at rendering diasporic life settled, established, secure or lucrative. Remarking on all the trouble he had caused among the "Greeks of Canada," Apostolos cast the common concerns with "keeping people in a balance" and "having a good name in the community" as sound strategies for business owners on the Danforth but not part of his own particular story.

#### **IV. The Crisis and "the Greeks": Political Genealogy Suspended**

*Stelios offered to introduce me to Petros during his one-day stopover en route to the island of Naxos. Stelios and Petros were close friends in Toronto during the Junta. While Stelios emigrated with his family in the early 70s, Petros left Greece to escape political persecution through a series of illicit actions (making a false statement to the authorities and buying a passport on the black market). Forming an anti-Stalinist communist group in Toronto (a product of the '68 split in the Communist party in Greece), Stelios and Petros were active members until the fall of the junta. In the years after the junta, Stelios made a few attempts to return to Greece but decided, as "a married man and father," that remaining in Canada was the best decision for his family. Petros, single and without children, moved to Montreal for some years and then permanently to Athens. The two men had not seen each other for many years, and only a few times since 1975. We met in a Kypseli restaurant for lunch. Against Petros' suggestion that we eat something light, Stelios insisted that lunch would be his treat and proceeded to order a salad and many meat dishes. Petros explained that he rarely ate out these days, while Stelios, acknowledging the excess, laughed and said his time in Greece was short. Just a few minutes into our meal, we began speaking about the political developments of the last days. The conversation became increasingly tense, with Stelios arguing that the only viable answer for Greece was DIMAR<sup>82</sup> and Petros insisting that SYRIZA was the more obvious choice, given "our past" (meaning, I presume, their shared political ideologies). I was silent but encouraging with nods of the head as both men, in turn, pressed their positions. Eventually Petros became*

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<sup>82</sup> DIMAR is a small left-of-center political party that is currently the minority partner in the coalition government with PASOK and New Democracy.

*increasingly frustrated and said to me, "You know, Katherine, I have become sick. This same old argument puts my stomach in knots. I don't even leave my house, ok? I'm hearing the same garbage every day on the news..." And then, turning to Stelios, he said, "I can't believe you are saying these things! I expect more from you. You are left! You are educated!" Petros raised himself and then sat down, raised himself again and stood. He continued stressing his point, addressing alternatively Stelios and myself. Stelios turned to me, and as if to narrate what I was seeing said, "Look, Katherine, This is exactly what I have been speaking about! It is this fundamentalist attitude! The left checklist, who is left, who is not!" As Petros begins to contest this point with, "But you are not here, you don't know what it is like...." Stelios continues: "And this [nodding his head in the direction of his friend]...this culture of shouting. We need rational arguments! We need to change the entire political culture in Greece!" The reasoned, articulate, sensible Greek-Canadian, a veritable anthropologist, observing and translating the irrational, affective Greek in his natural habitat....*

I took these notes in the fall of the 2013. The last sentence is rather tongue—in—cheek, of course, but it speaks to the sense I had of being complicit—somehow having been solicited—to observe and evaluate the "Greek" in real time. Like a narrator in a National Geographic documentary, describing the lion's habits of survival against images of mating, hunting and eating, Stelios was translating the words and gestures of an old friend into a teaching moment about the tendencies of an entire "political culture."

In the next pages, I outline the logic at work in culturalist understandings of the crisis. I want to stress that the tendency to make sense of the current economic and political crisis through cultural assumptions about "the Greeks" and the Greek mentality, was particularly

evident in the narratives of those remaining in Toronto. A persisting trope in these accounts draws on cultural and historical references that, on the one hand, portrays Greeks in Greece as part victim, part assailant and, on the other hand, provide a deficient moral standard that the speaker has overcome through hard work and immigration. Like the language of failure, which I discussed at length in chapter five, this discourse has both self-degrading and self-exonerating elements and it usually functions to valorize the figure of the steadfast, autonomous, hardworking democrat.

Throughout my research in Toronto, I was reminded, informed or cautioned (depending on the tone) that "Greeks think...," "Greeks do...," "Greeks don't...," "Greeks have always....," "Greeks have never..."—invitations, it appeared to me, to consider "the Greeks" en masse, along with the peculiarities of their mentality. At times, this took the tone of utter distanciation: Discovering that I was on my way to Athens in a few days, one interviewee in Toronto urged me to "just look upon them." Nodding his head knowingly, he added, "you will understand." But what was I meant to discover by subjecting "Greeks" to a painstaking analysis—one that was foreshadowed to uncover some pretty unpleasant characteristics? "Greeks like to trick you," explained one interview, "in any way they can and at every opportunity." "Greeks want to beat you, remember that Katherine," another began, "even if it is only to get first in line on the bus or in the grocery store." "It's not that they don't want to pay taxes," remarked another, "it's that they want to get away with something." "Greeks only respect someone, they only obey someone, if they are being oppressed by them," he said later, while offering a justification for the Troika's bullying presence in Greece.

While statements like these were sometimes made without context, as if it should be understood that Greeks simply suffer from a peculiar set of character flaws, others implied an

ambiguously defined cultural or historical inheritance. "What we have in Greece today is a totally individualistic culture, no sense of the collective" said Vasilis, matter-of-factly. Greek parents, suggested Sotiris, are probably to blame for this, imparting as (he claimed) they do "individualistic values," a drive for "security," and a weak work ethic.<sup>83</sup> Others sought to place the alleged mentality of Greeks within "historical perspective." In this reading, it's not that Greeks want to avoid paying taxes, nor is it a matter of wanting to trick you; it is instead a question of *habits of survival* learned under occupation—whether this be Ottoman or German—that persist as cultural inheritance through the generations. "The problems in Greece are not 20 years old," explained Vasilis, "They go way back to the years of the liberation from the Ottoman Occupation." "The problem in Greece today," echoed another interviewee, "is that people don't pay taxes [and] this is a behaviour that goes back to the Ottoman period." This was a sentence that I heard, almost verbatim, many times by those living in Toronto. Clientelism and tax evasion—the two "sins" of the Greek people—are habits passed down from their ancestors who were living under an oppressive occupying regime for many generations:

Historically, yes, there has come the feeling of deep mistrust of the state, because when Greece was liberated from the Turks in 1921... even at that time, I don't know if you know about Kapodistrias...he was the first governor of Greece, sent by the Allies. He was trying

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<sup>83</sup> Similarly, philosopher Stelios Ramfos, who was known in name and thought by a few of my interviewees in Toronto, has conveyed a culturalist explanation, par excellence, for the crisis: Essentially, Greeks have a difficult time weaning from their mothers, who are typically overpowering in their parental approach and this translates into a tendency toward "milking the state." Echoing, to some extent, the interviewee above who claims that Greeks only respect those who dominate them, Ramfos contends that Greeks seek father figures and thus tend towards populist political figures like Papandreou. Children inherit the consequences of mothers that are too attached, fathers that are too dominant and, in the long run, become self-centered citizens and bad neighbours. Indeed, some interviewees stated that he had read his blog:  
<https://steliosramfosgr.wordpress.com/2013/04/16/homo-economicus-homo-hellenicus/>  
(accessed January 1, 2014).

to collect money for the state in order to build the country and he was assassinated [...] by a family from the Peloponnese who wanted to keep privilege [...] This story repeated itself again and again, so there is a mistrust against the state. And the people who had the power, had the government, always used it for their own benefits, *so gradually, there developed a situation in which nobody cares about the collective effort, everybody cares about himself.*

In this narrative, Greeks "behave badly" because their ancestors refused to become assimilated into a modern state, and they did so, as Vasilis explains, because not paying taxes was an act of patriotism against the Ottoman occupiers. These kinds of cultural and historical justifications for behaviours said to be the cause of the crisis are expressed in summarizing formulations like Sotiris': "How European can we be Katherine? We had to do in 50 years what others had hundreds of years to go through. You know modern Greece is younger than Canada! Imagine. My grandmother had small crosses tattooed on her knuckles and on her forehead in order not to be abducted and placed in harems by the sultan... And you ask me to be European? How to be European?"

Herzfeld (2001:67) has described Greeks as a people with an "excess of history" and a preoccupation with their ancient past, which he attributes to the fact that "the West" has associated Greece's cultural worth with that of ancient ancestors. To the extent that Greece is conveyed as a backward-looking cultural amalgamation of various habits of survival that work against the development of a healthy, well-functioning modern state, it is not surprising that Europe is heralded as a benevolent figure to "help Greece along". Evangelos and I had been speaking about Greece's dense and complicated bureaucracy, when he stated that: "From the Ottoman empire it was the same few families who controlled Greece, through Independence and the first and second world war. And the left was always marginalized, no jobs for your children

if you were suspected of being a communist. Then, when PASOK came to power, it was time to distribute to all the victims, so the structure remains." Evangelos concluded his analysis with a summarizing statement: "This is what Europe tries to correct. It is the only way for Greece to go ahead, to undergo these changes that Europe is asking for..." Referring to the "sickness" that is the public sphere, Evangelos said despondently that "the situation deteriorates month by month. And next year it will be worse than today, but this is the only way." And then he added that Greeks are surviving because of another aspect of "their culture": "They are supporting themselves through the family, as always. Like if you have a pension, the family will try to survive on that. They are supporting their adult kids who do not have work. It is difficult. For many many people, it is difficult. There is no doubt about this [...] But Greece needs support and fortunately, Europe at this moment still supports Greece." In this way, Evangelos draws on an analogy between the relation of adult children with their pensioned parents or grandparents, on the one hand, and of Greece with Europe, on the other. Both the dependent youth and the Greek economy are expected, over the next years and perhaps decades, to do no more than *survive* off of the generosity of their benefactors.

### **Redemption in the Diaspora/ Canada, the Good**

I have identified within narratives of the diaspora just one tendency to observe the Greek crisis through cultural stereotyping or auto-essentialism. Portraying those left behind in—or who returned to—Greece as cut from the same cloth (whether as a result of history or culture) functions as a strategy of distantiation. But how does one avoid implicating oneself in these cultural generalizations? I suggest here that a trope of *redemption through immigration* is drawn on liberally with precisely this effect. Dimitris' declared from a Toronto cafe that "Canada

shaped me in every respect, especially my bad habits." Another explained that he had "lost [his] bad behaviours," a process that "takes scratching...scratching at yourself. Very difficult". Having said to me in a sober tone that "in Canada, I was able to change a great deal of my Greek mentality," Yannis added, "listen, when I say that, they tell me I'm exaggerating, but I'm not!"

Such remarks, of course, require additional "scratching" on the part of the ethnographer. In second and third interviews with these men, we revisited their statements. Some came to the later conclusion that the most important changes had taken place through studying and in the context of mobilizing against the dictatorship. Given the fact that some interviewees were explicitly denied access to universities in Greece, comments like the following become very significant: "Because Canada offered me things that there is no way I could have imagined in Athens. I was able to continue my studies, I was able to meet new people, I was able to become something." This "becoming something," out of a history of institutionally-inscribed marginalization brings us back to Kostas' comment (quoted in chapter five) that the PAK organization—personified through the charismatic leader Professor Andreas Papandreou—had the effect of rendering young Greek students "respectable" in the corridors of the university.

Perhaps not very surprisingly, interviewees also spoke implicitly of the redemptive powers of work. If "Greece" is cursed by a generation who "doesn't want to work," by an unproductive base, or by workers who simply "don't know how to make anything," "Canada" provides a site for self-valorization through labour. According to Dimitris:

The worst thing they did was that they spoiled the people so badly that they don't want to work. They have come to the point where they think that everything is free! See, I was... I am here all these years. You know, I had my own business and I made a lot of money. I never bought a brand new car. I thought it was stupid! To spend thousands of dollars to go

from here to there. But if you go to Greece, a guy who is making one tenth of what I am making was driving two Mercedes, one for the wife, one for the husband.

Similarly, against the figure of the difficult-to-wean Greek son, Nikos presented his own "Greek-Canadian boy":

My oldest boy, when he said he wanted to get a car, I said, "That's a good idea, you better start working." And he was flipping hamburgers for two years. Not because I didn't have the money to buy one. I didn't want to spoil the guy. He has to know where the money comes from. Then he put the money together and bought a used car.

In this way, "Canada, the good" recurs as the site of cultural redemption for those who stayed in Toronto after 1974. Canada, "the civilized," the "well-ordered," the "modern," emerged in accounts of those who returned as well, but usually with a sense of the institutional differences between countries, rather than the differences of "mentalities." Returnees tended to refrain from using a culturalist discourse in reference to Canadians; in fact, interviews were almost devoid of "Canadians." Instead, the contrast worked something like: Civilized Canada vs. "The Greeks".

## **VI. Writing "Against Amnesia": Political Genealogy Reinhabited**

*It is late and I am lingering in Apostolos' office. We've been discussing his writing over the years. He stands and begins to peruse the shelves of his library. He hands me his MA dissertation, then a book he has written about [engineering in] Crete—the intellectual labours of his life. He shows me the inscription of his dissertation, dedicated to his wife: "To Maria, who helped me up when I was on my knees." He comes across Marx's Grundrisse and takes it from the shelf—an English copy he has had since the 70s, he tells me. He skims through it, finding something that makes him stop and smile. He asks me to read aloud an underlined paragraph,*

where Marx writes "Does not the true character of each epoch come alive in the nature of its children?"<sup>84</sup> His son has entered the room and is observing us mutely. Apostolos closes the book and laughs, "At some point, I was a Marxist!" And then he adds, "Remember what Marx said? That history has two options, either it becomes farce or tragedy?" His son interrupts him, correcting the quote: "No, it was 'first as farce, then as tragedy,'" he says. They disagree and his son disappears, returning moments after with *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. He reads the passage and closes the book with a decisive snap. His father smiles at me and shrugs. He tells me that these days, he writes fiction "to fight against amnesia."

I have already written a great deal about Apostolos, whose novel appeared throughout the pages of chapter four. I first interviewed him in the winter of 2011, at his home in Northern Athens. He picked me up from the metro station and as we drove the short distance to his house, he explained that the area had become a wealthy one, but back when he was a child, it was mostly just "dust and land." Apostolos returned after the fall of the junta with his wife and two small sons to his father's home. Twenty years later, they constructed a large addition. The tiny original construction had become two attached properties: a three-story home for his single sons and his own two-story home, where he lived with his wife. He explained that one of his sons was

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<sup>84</sup> "A man cannot become a child again, or he becomes childish. But does he not find joy in the child's naivety, and must he himself not strive to reproduce its truth at a higher stage? Does not the true character of each epoch come alive in the nature of its children? Why should not the historic childhood of humanity, its most beautiful unfolding, as a stage never to return, exercise an eternal charm? There are unruly children and precocious children. Many of the old peoples belong in this category. The Greeks were normal children. The charm of their art for us is not in contradiction to the undeveloped stage of society on which it grew. [It] is its result, rather, and is inextricably bound up, rather, with the fact that the unripe social conditions under which it arose, and could alone arise, can never return (from Marx's *Grundrisse*, pages 110-111).

working in France, because there was no way he could find a good job as a surgeon in Athens. His other son, working as a lawyer, was struggling but managing.

Once we were settled in his home office, Apostolos explained that he had recently retired from the university and had been spending his days writing a historical fiction. He offered me cookies and a Greek coffee, and then asked, as others had, "Where should we begin?" Without waiting for my response, he added, "You should know, I never stepped with both feet in Canada." This became an expression meriting close analysis in chapter four. At the time of our interview, however, it was a caution to keep my expectations in check: I would not be hearing nostalgic stories about his time in Toronto.

Apostolos was one of the few interviewees who had graduated from university when the junta took power in April 1967. He had been involved with the Lambrakis movement, leaving Athens when his activities came under the scrutiny of the military authorities. Living, as he described it, "like a refugee" in Toronto, Apostolos worked in construction, learned English, and eventually entered a graduate program in Toronto. In this period of "collecting degrees" he lost his mother and could not return for her funeral—an experience he very painfully rendered in writing: "*So, she left without a last kiss from her nationally dangerous son.*" He explained that soon after her death, his father also deteriorated dramatically and when he returned to Greece in the early 80s, his father was very ill, undernourished, and isolated in his tiny home.

I wrote the above reflection after my second meeting with Apostolos, almost a year later. Since our first interview, his book had already been published and discussed by reviewers on the left. In the next pages, I want to approach this book—part memoir, part fiction and the 600 page product of a year's worth of labour—as a creative reinhabiting of political genealogy. In the story Apostolos tells, there is no attempt to transcend the political inheritance that was bestowed him

as a child growing up in post-civil war Greece. There are no signs of posing reason against affect, or moderation against excess—as in the case of the centric imaginary—but nor is the story told as mere reproduction: There is no party line and the Left is neither purely abject nor heroic. Against these tendencies, which I have now considered at length, Apostolos descends into daily life in the decades after the war and paints a dense and detailed narrative of the total intertwining of biography and the collective political history of a generation.

We meet a young "Dimitris" who is from the first pages trying to make sense of the impenetrable drama of politics and the strange language of adults. From the perspective of a working class Athenian neighbourhood, we are confronted with the most devastating repercussions of civil war: corpses on the street, missing persons, the death of loved ones. But more subtly, the narrative develops around the boy's coming to terms with his political inheritance. Early on, we discover that his beloved uncle—and sister of Dimitris' mother—is a leader of a communist unit in his area. When he is found dead, the boy struggles to accept the explanations for his uncle's suicide and the posthumous descriptions of his uncle: melancholic, depressed, withdrawn. But a clue comes in the form of a unfamiliar man who attends the funeral. Dimitris recalls the "strange words" that the man spoke over the body, *"You haven't betrayed anyone, but showed how much you believed in the worth and goals of our fight. Do not feel badly that none of your comrades came to give a last kiss to your dead body [...] You will be close to us—the unburied dead people of our fight. Have a good trip, comrade."*

Strange words for a child, indeed. Watching his small son puzzle over this last dedication and moved by his grieving wife, Dimitris' father reveals to them both a carefully guarded secret: Uncle Nikos had taken pity on a right-wing cousin who had been exposed for collaborating with the Germans and was wanted by the Communists. When it was discovered that Uncle Nikos had

been hiding his cousin in his own home, he was expelled from the party. The shame had overwhelmed him, Dimitris' father explains, recalling that their last conversation had ended with the uncle's lament: "If this were a people's democracy, they would have executed me; instead, it is left up to me." "Now, forget what I've told you," says Dimitris' father, "as he would have willed it." In the context of the full narrative, this graveyard scene and the conversation that follows, constitute a defining moment in Dimitris' earliest awareness of his political inheritance, compelling him towards a journey that cultivates in the Lambrakis Youth—the left movement that I discussed in chapter four.

A central figure in Dimitris' life is "The Teacher" (*O Daskalos*)— a man who employs him to do odd jobs about the house in exchange for architectural lessons. More importantly, The Teacher details for Dimitris, over the course of many conversations, a history of political persecution and struggle. His beloved teacher dies a few weeks before the military dictatorship claims power. Another funeral, another grave. He promises his teacher he will visit soon but does not do so for almost five decades. The dark years of the junta set in and Dimitris and his friends try to stay under the radar, while sharing information and helping those more active in the anti-dictatorship movement by hiding them or planning their escape from the country. The protagonists in these pages are a progressive, tight-knit group of young architects who, from their office in Athens, share their political analyses and struggles close to—but not quite at the centre—of the action. Effectively, the narrative closes with the students' revolt against the dictatorship seven years later in 1974.

I reflected on a number of specific excerpts from Apostolos' book in chapter four. All of these passages were taken from the last 70 pages, which narrate the experiences of Theo, a dear friend of Dimitris, who flees Greece and lives out the years of the junta in Toronto. We learn of

Theo's initial months of struggle to find work, to learn the language, and to find like-minded Greeks with whom to fight the dictatorship from abroad—all of this through the letters he sends back to his closest friends in Athens. Deeply invested in how the political situation is developing in Toronto, Theo's friends receive his news in earnest. For example, in the fictionalizing of The Committee's dissolution in Toronto—in which the movement splits into fractions after the arrival of Papandreou—the significance of the news is expressed in the soberest of tones: "This is our mess. An independent, autonomous democratic movement converted into groups and little fractions. *I know I'm breaking your heart*. I trust that my next letter will have better news."

In pivoting the narrative of the Junta years around Theo's letters, Apostolos is essentially rescaling the struggle of the Greek diaspora; he is claiming a place for the "democratic Greeks in Canada" in a political genealogy of suffering and resistance that is ordinarily framed in terms of what happened to the Greeks in Greece. Apostolos renders the diaspora profoundly relevant; indeed, its activities have the power to stir hearts in Athens. This can be compared to another attempt to reposition those who lived out the Junta years in Toronto: Recall from the beginning of chapter four, Yannis' effort to commemorate his friend's role in the diaspora's struggle at the time of his death in Athens. The difference between the two gestures lies in the significance given to antagonisms: While Yannis labours to keep these at bay and to "simply honour" his friend ("for Christ sake"), Apostolos puts disappointments and betrayals in the diaspora on display and in the process subtly "redraws lines of inclusion and exclusion" (Han 2012: 23). The diaspora should not be read as an irrelevant margin of Greek culture; it was not a mere refuge from Greek politics but nor was it a microcosm of events in Athens. It had its own deeply divided and difficult dynamics and these matter in the large narrative of what it was to live out the years of the junta abroad.

The decision to write with two "I"s—that of the narrator in Athens and that of the exiled in Toronto—can also be interpreted as Apostolos' attempt to give multiple accounts of himself. By writing himself (as narrator) into the novel as *the one who stays behind* and his friend as the one who flees with the "junta at his heels," Apostolos, at once, affirms the political genealogy he has lived and imagines the parallel life he might have had in the absence of his departure. As an exercise in self-positioning along this fork of destiny, Apostolos keeps a distance from both what he terms the "horrors of immigratsia"(and the fear of one day being called "Daddy") as well as the potential connotations of being one of those who returned from abroad with "titles of resistance," well positioned for the new distribution of jobs and benefits in Papandreou's Greece. Importantly, he accomplishes this distance while preserving these ambivalent dramas in the narrative fold. Precisely for this juxtaposition of self implications, Apostolos' narrative strategy can be read as a creative reinhabiting of political genealogy.

The last page of Apostolos' novel, however, returns to and belabours the point of reproduction. We are suddenly in the present of 2012 and the transition is jarring. Dimitris has returned to visit his esteemed Teacher, fulfilling the promise he made decades prior. Standing over the grave, Dimitris offers a truncated account of Panourgia's "afterhistory" (the years after the Junta): "Teacher," he says "it all happened as you predicted. [Those from the] foreign circles [returned to] liquidate their political investments, digging up titles of resistance from the battles they gave in the Latin Quarter of Paris, London's Trafalgar square, the Toronto Danforth [...] and the villa of King City." We learn too, that Yannis returned to Greece, that he can not find clients as an architect and that his son is forced to work in Saudi Arabia. "This life is unbearable," Dimitris confesses to his dead teacher.

Though this graveyard monologue might seem an appropriate ending, Apostolos' decision to continue the narrative is significant. He does so with a lone paragraph that forces us to confront a lack of genealogical closure:

*The other day I [went] to Syntagma square to add myself to the voices of indignation. I'm not the same as I was back then—time has done his work well—but I managed to climb the stairs and found myself on the sidewalk of Amalias Street. A strange odor cut my breath. My son [...] said, "It's the tear gas from yesterday." [...] Holding onto the rail above the square, which had become full of the indignants' tents [...] I struggled to read [...] the outstretched banners above. My vision isn't like a hawk's anymore [...] but [...] one of them caught my eye: " Bread. Education. Freedom. The Junta didn't end in '73."*

With this closing paragraph, Apostolos lays the infuriating reproduction of political genealogy in the hands of the reader. What other function could the paragraph accomplish than to remind the reader, young or old, that once again personal biography is fundamentally determined by the political and that despite the struggles of previous generations, the call of protest remains unnervingly identical?

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to bring an analysis of political genealogy into the contemporary period of economic, social and political crisis in Greece. I have figured an intersection of biography and political history through the interpretations and reflections men offered on these troubled times. Framing these in terms of "narrative fates," I outlined five distinguishable frames through which men reckon political genealogy with the present: In the first, reproduction is the dominant pulse, compelling an adherence to party lines and lexicon. For others working within

this interpretive frame, the *problem of reproduction* is itself blamed as the primary cause of the crisis.

In the second frame, disillusionment is a dominant theme and men question very frankly the value of their personal and collective struggles for a "better Greece." I interpreted the kinds of analyses men provided through this frame as performing a *retreat of political genealogy*. There is no program, no previous experience, no moral or ethical commitment that can minimize or contain the repercussions of austerity in Greece. Apocalyptic language of decline and decay is mirrored in interviewees' own personal narrative of having come to the end of their life.

In a sense, the third frame, which I discuss in terms of a centric imaginary claiming to "surpass" political genealogy, can be read as an antidote to the disillusioned leftist. The centric imaginary gains its strength and legitimacy precisely by claiming a paradoxical relation to the Left; at once identifying with a lineage of injury and persecution and keeping a distance from the Left's supposed failures. Announcing moderation against excess, rationality against affect and innovation against redundancy, the centric subject is constructed as well-equipped to offer solutions to the present crisis.

A fourth interpretive frame tends to suspend political genealogy by replacing political antagonism with cultural stereotypes. Especially those remaining in Canada after the fall of the junta, interviewees offered explanations for the crisis that figured the Greeks en masse as unruly, undisciplined and burdened by an excess of history. In some ways, this frame shares tendencies with the centric imaginary, as it speaks moderation to excess and often sees the civilizing project of European technocrats as the only solution for Greece.

The fifth and final narrative constellation attempts a creative reinhabiting of political genealogy. I have relied heavily on Apostolos' novel in my discussion above, demonstrating one

manifestation of this tendency to affirm one's political genealogy, while finding inventive routes out of reproduction, centrality, stereotyping and disillusionment. We might conclude that *Apostolos* accomplishes not a particularly hopeful exit, but a reckoning of political inheritance that, at the very least, leaves the future in the hands of the reader.

## Conclusion

This project was conceived around acts of resistance in the Greek diaspora, from 1967-74, but developed almost instantly into a study of political genealogy, as it extends both "back" into postwar childhoods and "forward" into speculations on precarious futures under neoliberal austerity. The research commenced in 2010, in the early days of the "Greek crisis" and it is closing in the winter of 2015, when the political landscape of Greece has been radically redrawn precisely on the promise of ending the crisis. As of January, the Radical Left (SYRIZA) has been governing Greece in a coalition with a right-wing, anti-austerity party. While the international media is once again speculating on a possible "Grexit," there has been enormous post-election public support in Greece—and abroad—for the new government's first efforts to negotiate with its European partners. Apostolos and his family inform me that they have attended two large *pro-government* austerity protests in Syntagma square, remarking on the high-spirits and the unprecedented absence of tear gas and police. Another interviewee warns of the historical parallels between Tsipras' current popularity and that of Andreas Papandreou in 1981—a thinly-veiled caution that was expressed many times in the Greek media leading up to the January elections.

PASOK, for its part, secured just enough votes to remain in parliament. A few weeks before the elections, George Papandreou announced the creation of a new party, "Movement of Socialist Democrats," a decision that the current leader of PASOK, Venizelos, condemned publicly as a kind of family betrayal: "Unfortunately, [Mr Papandreou] is behaving like an heir who wants to destroy the PASOK that his father founded, the same party that honoured him by

electing him its president and helping him become prime minister."<sup>85</sup> It's not the new party's manifesto that has left Venizelos cold, but the break in political lineage and the impertinence Mr. Papandreou has shown to his father and the rest of his extended family. Political patricide, then, marks a powerful—but not quite final—blow to PASOK. Papandreou's new party did not succeed in entering parliament.

The horizon upon which this dissertation closes, then, could not be more different than its opening scene. Rather than trying to assess the "new," however, let me provide a brief overview of the main contributions made in this dissertation. I divide this conclusion into two main parts; the first reflects on how my empirical findings reclaim the political in studies of the Greek Diaspora; the second outlines the ethnographic and theoretical insights gained by this dissertation's novel method of approaching the political through its dynamic "social lives."

## **I. Reclaiming the Political in the Greek Diaspora**

Greek migrants have long been figured as a kind of ideal or model immigrant (Anagnostou 2009; Laliotou 2004)—a tendency that has been reproduced in the literature claiming to represent them sociologically, historically or anthropologically. With very few exceptions, "the Greeks in Canada" were incorporated into the positivist and assimilationist discourse that oriented the field of immigration studies in the 70s and 80s. Through this dominant lens, Greek migrants were reproduced in the following decades as a successfully-integrated migrant group, albeit with unique cultural characteristics and contributions worth studying. In generating this homogenizing scholarship, the political inheritance of newcomers was ignored, along with the political

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<sup>85</sup> "Papandreou to Launch New Party," *Kathimerini*, January 2nd, 2015  
[http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_wsite1\\_1\\_02/01/2015\\_545898](http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite1_1_02/01/2015_545898)  
(accessed January 10, 2015)

activities within the diaspora and the significant antagonisms that defined everyday life for young Greeks living in Canada during the years of the dictatorship. Importantly, my dissertation is the first sociological study of Greek migrants in Canada to focus on i) the *legacy* of their political inheritance; ii) their *political activities* generally (and during the years of the Junta, specifically); and iii) the experiences of the returning diaspora in the years after the fall of the Junta. In other words, my research has been an attempt to reclaim the political in our academic discussions of the Greek diaspora.

My focus on a group of young, politicized Greeks in the diaspora rubs up against the kinds of hegemonic stories of migration that have typically centered on "exemplary" migrations and which, as Laliotou argues, serves to "regulate the ways in which one [is] expected to be a migrant" (149). Indeed, the narratives that I have treated at length are much more appropriately read as, "alternative and marginalized ways of being a migrant" (ibid). Concerned with revealing not just the presence of antagonisms and the problematic framing of Greeks in Toronto as a "community," I have explored ethnographically how these conflicts both reflected and animated political inheritance. Importantly, I also have shown that what happened in Toronto can not simply be reduced to a microcosm of "Greek politics"; rather, forms of sociality in the diaspora and expressions of migrant subjectivities were uniquely forged around generational disparities and a sense of having arrived to a "little Greece" nearly a generation "behind," a marked cultural and political distance from settled "Greek Canadians" of the same age, a painful feeling of suspension and dislocation, new forms of political activity, encounters with a more-or-less tolerant or apathetic "Canadian" public and an ambivalent sense of new opportunities (for example, being able to "collect degrees").

My analysis of the emergence of PAK in Toronto and the involvement of returnees in the establishment of PASOK may also be of interest to scholars of Modern Greece. Like Dimitris' letters from Toronto, this dissertation has unintentionally placed the Greek diaspora in Toronto "back" into Greek political history. Such an endeavour might be better appreciated in light of the frequent biographical descriptions of Papandreou's exile in "North America," or even the discovery of photos of protests taken from Toronto but published as having taken place in Italy or the UK! Indeed, even in Spourdalakis' account of PAK and PASOK, which I relied on extensively in chapter five, the fact that activities took place *in Toronto*, is not once acknowledged. His political science orientation focuses on founding documents, official publications and meetings, electoral campaigns and Papandreou's statements; in this sense, there is no sign of the ethnographic landscape (or even "place") in which these events and formal positions occur.

## **II. The Dynamic Social Life of the Political**

Throughout this dissertation I have stayed closely attuned to the minute in men's accounts of living in and through politically turbulent periods. Whether discussing the post-civil war politico-legal regimes that shaped their youth, the emergence of an organized anti-dictatorship movement in the diaspora, or the establishment of a new political party in a period of tremendous transformation, the focus has remained on how these institutional and discursive developments have been experienced by interviewees at various scales: from their subtle anxieties about (mis)recognition in everyday relations to their great hopes and disappointments about a shattered political movement and a failed socialist project; from their gestures of withdrawal and refusal, to their embracing of positions at the center of "Papandreou's Greece." All along, I have

documented forms of sociality as they take on, give up, or rescale specific significations, risks and opportunities. By tracking what I call "the social life of the political," I arrive at three sites for rethinking the relations between state, kin, party and political subjectivity.

### **Social Life I: Living with "the State"**

Throughout this dissertation I have examined the ways in which interviewees articulate encounters with "the state"—its agents, practices of documentation and politico-legal measures of marginalization. Of course, this research was not conducted at a specific institutional site where encounters with the state are typically forged; rather it relied on narratives that men deemed worth sharing about their moments of shifting proximities to the state. There is nothing new about my concern for the ways in which state power permeates everyday life, but my interviews do yield rich ethnographic insight into how permeations can take many forms over a single biography. Precisely because my interviews evoked experiences over many decades, the state is constructed in these accounts as a constellation of contradictory manifestations and scales. Some of the political subjects at the heart of this dissertation have undergone the profound experience of negotiating both institutionalized exclusion by the Greek state and significant opportunities for inclusion in the Metapolitefsi. They know very well the effects of being categorized and filed by state agents, but they are also familiar with life at the "center" of ministries, and government-led research and financial institutions. Their perspectives on are thus particularly compelling.

In relations between state and subject, interviews revealed the central role of documents: the paper file and its bold red ink at a port authority, but also the document signed by fathers to "cleans" them of their communist sympathies and the legacy these signatures leave behind for sons and nephews. I am thinking about the official letters from the PASOK office, after the party

had come to power in 1981, that solicited the receiver to "come and join us" in Athens, but also that missing stamp in election booklets of 1946 that sealed the fate of men and their children as evidence that they were communist threats to the regime. Remarkably, this "political economy of papers" is narrated at length in men's accounts, having very real implications for interviewees' everyday life, their opportunities and exclusions.

Thinking about relations with the state over the course of many decades and in terms of social proximities allows a thread to be woven between these and many other ethnographic encounters that may otherwise be overlooked as trivial, "anecdotal" or irrelevant. From the angry lieutenant who slams down a dusty file and announces a condemned genealogy ("*You, your father, and your papers will stay on this shelf until they are eaten by insects!*"), to the gestures of intimacy over dinner with Prime Minister "Andreas," forms of sociality are narrated here that give us a much greater sense of moving between very different scales and proximities to the state—both in terms of the latter's undeniable capacity to render a subject abject and its ability to render "country boys" "very respectable people." Without falling into a trap of finding "the state" everywhere, it is worthwhile paying close attention to how these encounters are narrated and the manner in which the speaker is positioned as a particular kind of ethnical and political subject. Both for those who returned to Greece and those who stayed in Canada, demonstrating one's marginalization or withdrawal from circuits of power—whether this be expressed as refusals (to join the struggle in Athens, for example, or even to drink a coffee with "comrades" at the PASOK office) or outright failure—can affirm the speaker's political commitment and his integrity or "quiet dignity."

## **Social Life II: "Living in the File" as Political Inheritance**

A great part of this dissertation has concentrated on building a theoretical and ethnographic vocabulary for what I have called "the politics of kinship," referring to both *the practice* of ascribing political identities based on kinship and the forms of sociality that take shape around this practice. "Political inheritance" refers to *bestowed ascriptions and their consequences* (including forms of denial and marginalization). Finally, "political genealogy" refers to *identifiable narrative frames* in which political subjectivities are constructed in relation to one's political inheritance. Chapter three demonstrated most explicitly the usefulness of this conceptual language for understanding the narratives of growing up in post-civil war Greece. I showed how young people were "filed" based on authorities' perceptions of the actions and thoughts of family member. More than this, I demonstrated how the family is figured as an integral—albeit precarious— political unit. Nuanced terms for Greek families of the left, creative narrative attempts to neutralize right-wing relatives, the drawing on patriline in the articulation of political identities, and the citizen file as site of confirmation, discovery and contestation of family history: all of these are ethnographic exposures indicating how the political was heavily coded and constructed through kin relations and vocabularies.

While the politics of kinship is demonstrated most concretely in chapter three, it remained relevant for understanding men's experiences in Toronto during the Junta (in chapter four). I argued that the file—and the politics of kinship up on which it rests— is given a second life of sorts on the streets of Toronto: Sons concerned over the consequences of their political activities for relatives in Greece and one's family background was sometimes used to (de)legitimize activists in Toronto. In chapter five, we saw how framing oneself in the Metapolitefsi as a

failure, as being marginalized, or as having withdrawn performs a speaker's commitment to their *political inheritance* of principled exclusion. In the context of PASOK's ascent, I also document how the destruction and classification of citizen files can be read as a hollowed-out act of state reconciliation that denies "the filed" to track their political inheritance against powers that had persecuted families for decades. Finally, political genealogy emerged as an interpretive frame (in chapter six) for working through—often in parallel—one's own political inheritance aside reflections on Greece's contemporary crisis. There is quite a bit at stake in analyses of contemporary political and economic troubles—whether framed in terms of the disappointed leftist and apocalyptic futures of austerity, the promise of the center, the attachment to the traditional party line, or auto-essentializing stereotypes of "the Greeks"—precisely because these analyses rest on—or imply—assessment of one's own political inheritance.

### **Social Life III: The Social Life of Political Categories**

Through the lens of political kinship, we initially discovered that "being left" was often experienced as an ascription bestowed or inherited; in other words, as a kind of significant "structuring experience" traceable throughout childhood and young adulthood. While sociologists are accustomed to thinking about the "socially structured relations" of gender, class and race, for example, we don't tend to think about political categories in analogous terms. The ethnographic material I have discussed at length here calls for new ways of thinking through political categories as they structure everyday life. Rather than taking the "the left" as a political formation known in advance, or a specific group of people easily identified by their voting practices or ideologies, I have shown how the terms convey relational sites requiring interpretive labour and negotiation.

In chapter three, I discussed a number of explicit institutional marginalizations that men experienced as a result of "being left," as well as the more subtle forms of everyday interpellation that occurred on the streets, at school and in the playground, by teachers and priests, as well as peers. What it means to inhabit these categories as grown men, however, remained a persistent question circulating throughout accounts. Of course, some of these narratives took shape around instances of significant change, where traditional categories were resignified and new modes of acting and relating emerged alongside new political actors and forces. This is true of descriptions in chapter four, where men (sometimes for the first time) acted—and identified themselves—politically in the anti-junta movement. Statements like, "I was called many names in Canada, but 'communist' bothered me the least," read alongside struggles to "stamp" the movement as "communist" indicate that negotiating these categories—heavy in signification and affect—was a difficult and rather risky labour in the diaspora. Similarly, I illustrated (in chapter five) how those returning in the Metapolitefsi did so amidst transforming significations and political forces. The political categories of the left were no longer signs of abjection; quite oppositely, they afforded the bearer cultural capital (expressed in statements like "if you weren't left, you couldn't get laid," and "they were digging up titles of resistance from the battles [...] of the Danforth of Toronto").

Throughout this dissertation, I have argued that tracking "the social life of the political" reveals unique narrative constructions of political subjectivity and I identified how specific forms of sociality are narrated through a distinct set of tropes: visibility, (mis)recognition, proximity and naming. The accounts of those I interviewed presented subjects at once straining to understand and to be understood; to come to terms with over-determining political categories and the (mis)recognitions that had occurred in their name; and to negotiate both their attachment and

their measured distance from political genealogies. These are subjects suffering their disappointments and defeats and telling stories that are at once self-aggrandizing and self-blaming. Throughout my analysis I engaged in the interpretative labour of isolating even the most subtle expressions of exclusion, betrayal and dislocation. How else might we reckon with the four simple words recalled by Alexis —"are you still *back there?*"— more than 45 years later, Yannis' exclamation that "by the time we arrived they had all changed their names!" or Pantelis' frustration that "they asked me to *fill out an application!*"

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