

The formation of resistance culture in Greece and the history null curriculum: a preliminary account.

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ABSTRACT

The last decade Greece is undergoing a multi-crisis. During this period of time the history and the past emerged in a peculiar way: the past was used as an example to be followed, while the demonstrators were calling people for disobedience and resistance against the imposed monetary and fiscal measures and against the state as well. This projection of the past to the present was entrenched on certain historical facts which are questionable and not overall well accepted, such as the 1945-9 Civil war, or the 1973 students' uprising against the military dictatorship. Under these circumstances one could be reasonably wondering about the uses of history and the ways history is perceived as a means that construct identities. The notion of the "resistance culture" is emerged through the utilization of history and the school history's null curriculum, revealing the role various forms of historical narratives can play in the process of historical awareness.

Key words:

school history; null curriculum; unwritten history; resistance;

1. (Greek) Mythologies and Histories (from 1945 to 1973 and beyond)

As it is widely known, Greece is suffering for almost a decade now (2008-) from a severe crisis, not solely an economic (debt crisis), but a political and a social one as well. During the demonstrations (which quite often were turned into violent and destructive riots in major cities),¹ against the imposed austerity measures,² particularly in the first years of this crisis a graffiti appeared on downtown walls and pillars with the rallying slogan «*We are at war again – Varkiza Agreement is over*», referring to the 1945-1949 Civil war period (this graffiti is still visible in certain central areas of Athens downtown). One could be reasonably wondering about the association of this historical moment to the present and the rational connection that could be found between the post-WW-II trauma of the civil war and the current monetary-debt crisis. Moreover, another rallying slogan heard at these demonstrations, «*junta didn't end on 1973*», was referring to another traumatic moment of the recent Greek political history, the military dictatorship regime (1967-1974) and the 1973 November 17th students' revolt against it. Both of these slogans, often heard in the demonstrations during the first years of the crisis - the latter one especially for the upcoming educational reforms, are reflecting a peculiar perception and a utilization of the past, certainly from specific political groups. Is this an ideological and political mixture of past events and periods, hence one could thoughtfully argue about the use and the misuse (or even abuse) of history,³ or is it a valid and justified use of history? In either case, which is the role of the "school

¹ For a brief chronicle of these upheavals, however under a certain perspective, see D. Dalakoglou, *Beyond Spontaneity - Crisis, violence and collective action in Athens*, «CITY», vol. 16, n. 5, 2012, pp. 535-545 and D. Dalakoglou, *Neo Nazism and Neoliberalism: A few comments on violence in Athens at the time of crisis*, «Journal of Labor and Society», vol. 16, n. 2, 2013, pp. 283-292.

² These monetary and fiscal measures were imposed by the «troika» (the IMF, EC and ECB), the international institutions that were (and still are) supervising the Greek economy rendering the loans they gave to Greece as an international debt bailout.

³ The *uses and misuses of history* have a long history in historiography's debate. The elaboration of these concepts or topics are beyond the purposes of this article. See M. Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History, or, How the Past is Taught*, London, Routledge, 2003 as an initial and fundamental reading for this discussion. Also see H. Swoboda, and J.M.

history”, its textbooks and curriculum? One could also wonder whether this arbitrary mixture of past events, well formed and deep rooted myths and causal misconceptions is a product of an unavoidably biased presentation of school history (due to its role in the national identity construction), or behind this *irresponsible use* of history⁴ it’s just been hiding an exquisitely formed political and ideological agenda? So as to rejoin these hypotheses and questions -and to the extent of this paper’s limitations, one needs to thoroughly survey the data: the school textbooks and the history curricula will be anticipated to reveal the ideological and political use of the historical narratives.⁵ The Press will be used as an example of the *public narratives and conflicts over history*, given the intervention of political, academic and journalistic approaches presented in Press and Media. It’s quite common in Greece, especially in times when the school-history syllabus or a history’s textbooks reform is impending or it has just been launched, to be followed by massive interventions by politicians and journalists and by discussions in Media and publications in Press. Conflict quite often replace the argumentation during these debates and the lose of point is unavoidable, as, ie, in the case of the “Repousi’s school history textbook (2006-7)” controversy, as it is known in Greece. Around this textbook was one of the last conflicts over the school-history textbooks (and their reform), which unfortunately ended in an unquestionable losing of point: the methodological -almost paradigmatic- shift in this book was diminished in favor of political agendas and disputes in Media (to record history, this textbook was promptly withdrawn and replaced by the older textbook, a typical case of counter-reform in Greek education).⁶

In the beginning of the year 1945, right after the end of the WW-II and the liberation from the 1941-1944 Nazi occupation, a civil war blasted in Greece (1945-9). Typically, as the opening scene of the civil warfare has been considered a guerrillas’ attack on a rural-police station, in the night of March 30th 1946, to free some imprisoned comrades. This attack concurred with the day of the announced general elections. Other than that the political agenda for this war had been set some time before this attack, when the Communist Party, which triumphed during the Resistance against the Nazis (1941-1944), denied to take part into the announced for the 31st of March 1946 general elections.

The typical argument on the beginning of the 1945-9 Civil war sets as its crucial point the 1945 Varkiza Agreement⁷ – an agreement between the communist-driven Resistance guerrilla army and the quasi-official Greek government, to cease fire and grant amnesty to the guerrillas. Before the “1945 Varkiza Agreement” (1945 February 2) a raw and cruel British intervention in Greek

Wiersma, (edd), *Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History*, Renner Institut, 2009, for the political agenda in history, although this reading may be judged as biased due to its political stand. An earlier argument was in Balz’s notorious titular essay: see A.G.A. Balz, *The Use and Misuse of History*, «The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods», vol. 16, n. 2, 1919, pp. 29-41. A much older discussion can be found in Fr. Nietzsche, *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen, Zweites Stück: Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*, Leipzig, Verlag von E.W. Fritzsch, 1874; Engl. transl. *Untimely Meditations: The Use and Abuse of History for Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp 57-123. Besides these classic works, one should also mention De Baets’s project as a theoretical effort to segregate the terms “misuse”, “abuse” and “irresponsible use” of history: see A. De Baets, *A theory of the abuse of History*, «Revista Brasileira de História», vol. 33, n.65, 2013, pp. 17-58.

⁴ De Baets, *A theory of the abuse of History*, cit.

⁵ The Greek history textbooks (and all the other subjects’ textbooks) currently in use to all the school levels can be found as “pdf” files or as an “enriched html” form in the official web portal of the Greek Education Authority (Ministry of Education), Last updated: September 14, 2019, <<http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/allmaterial.php>> (last access: 30.03.2019). The older (or not currently in use) textbooks can be found in the official portal of Institute for Educational Policy, Last updated: September 14, 2019, <<http://e-library.iep.edu.gr/iep/index.html>> (last access: 30.03.2019).

⁶ For a brief discussion on the school history textbooks conflict in Greece see Ch. Athanasiades, *The withdrawn textbooks – Nation and school history in Greece, 1858-2008*, Athens, Alexandria, 2015 (in Greek).

⁷ Named after the location where the negotiations took place, Varkiza, a suburban area in Athens, Greece.

politics took place, known as the “1944 December Battle of Athens”. In this battle the intervened British powers did reinforce the roughly official Greek army troops (of a not yet legitimate government) fighting against the Communist driven Resistance guerrilla army. After this 1944 December Battle the superintending power of Greece changed with the intervention of the USA military and political agents (not only troops, but financial aid as well, under the Truman Dogma and Marshall Plan, indicated this shift of the superintending power on Greece).⁸ Nevertheless this can only be seen nowadays as a part of the early Cold War conflicts throughout Europe.⁹

Opponents on the above 1945-1949 Civil war were the official State army (supported initially by the UK and by the USA later on) on one side and on the other side the remaining of the guerrilla army, who previously fought in the resistance against the Nazi Occupation during the WW-II (supported by the illegal –at that time- Communist Party of Greece). There is an ambivalent narrative regarding this war, but this ambiguity is the key-point to comprehend the historical narrative of post-war Greece till nowadays¹⁰.

When the Civil War was ceased in 1949, the Greek society and economy started to develop again, after 10 years of fiercely warfare, given the financial aid of the Marshall Plan. The right-wing party of that time came lawfully in power and established a legitimate government even though an era of “reinforced” or “iron” democracy was established throughout the 1950s¹¹ (and as some support till the mid of 1960s, but this is part of another discussion). Trying to re-establish the post-civil war regime under a severe legislation the government imposed “silence” on the Civil war issue, maintaining nevertheless imprisoned and exiled almost all of the Civil war guerrillas, and excluding their supporters, their family members or anyone suspected to be of their adherents from the access to State’s public services (such as education, health care system, etc). Even till the mid ’60s, the right-wing government was determined to uphold the established order, despite calls for change.

Ever since (till very recently), Civil war was never a part of the formal history narrative, neither was reference of it in history school textbooks (just in the 2007 history textbooks for the 3rd grade of junior-high-“Gymnasium” and the 3rd grade senior-high-“Lyceum” there is a roughly two pages mention) and it was scarcely mentioned in academic discussions. Moreover, while in the Gymnasium history textbook the Greek Civil war is exclusively presented in a roughly two pages solid narrative form, into the Lyceum history textbook is presented in a fragmentary form (paragraphs in various chapters) perspectively as a problem and an effect of the Cold war issue.

⁸ M.P. Leffler and D.S. Painter, *Origins of the cold war - An International History*, New York, Routledge, 2005, pp. 32.

⁹ J. Kinsman, and K. Bassuener, *A diplomat’s handbook for Democracy Development Support*, Ontario, The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) in partnership with the Council for a Community of Democracies, 2013, pp. 29; Hr. X. Tzolis, *The Price of Freedom: Greece’s Role in the Cold War*, M.A. Thesis, College of Arts and Science (Supervisor: Jared Poley), Atlanta, Georgia State University, Academic Year, 2012-2013, Last updated: March 12, 2019, <https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_theses/66> (last access: 12.03.2019); C. M. Willard, *America’s Strategic Blunders: intelligence analysis and national security policy, 1936–1991*, Pennsylvania, The Penn State University Press, 2001, pp. 52-54; B. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1980; L. S. Wittner, *American Intervention in Greece: A Study in Counterrevolution*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1982.

¹⁰ Indicatively, Greek society, its historians and the academia, didn’t discuss openly about the 1945-1949 Civil War until the end of the 20th century (just in 1999, “celebrating” the 50 years from the end of the civil war, only a few conferences and some publications have taken place). As part of this ambivalent narration of the Civil War, see N. Marantzides, *Democratic Army 1946-1949*, Athens, Alexandria, 2010 (in Greek); St. Calyvas and N. Marantzides, *Civil passions - 23+2 questions and answers on Civil War (new enriched edition)*, Athens, Metehmio, 2016 (in Greek), and the relative discussion on these publications in Press.

¹¹ N. Alivizatos, *Political institutions under crisis, 1922-1974 – Aspects of Greek experience*, Athens, Themelio, 1983 (in Greek).

The stories and the narrative of the Civil war was predominantly written by historians or academics in quasi one sided publications eulogizing the notion of “*resistance*”¹² – initially the resistance against the Mussolini's fascist army,¹³ later against the Nazi occupation (1941-4) and finally (the Civil war case) against the roughly official Greek army troops of a not yet legitimate government. Hence, the notion of resistance has a positive tone.

Nevertheless, it seems to be a historical paradox, since the winners of the 1945-9 Civil war have not as yet officially written the narration of their victory.¹⁴ In educational terms and as far as the history textbooks are concerned, this is a part of a null (history) curriculum.

Seventeen years after the end of the Civil war -and at the pinnacle of the Cold war, in 1967, a military coup established a new regime in Greece (1967-1974). There are lots to be said about this coup, but keeping in track with “histories and mythologies” one should point out to the case of the American intervention. For years after the restoration of democracy this was a point of a high ideological and political conflict between those who proclaimed themselves as leftists and those as rightists: the former accused the American foreign policy (and the USA Embassy in Athens as its local representative) for intervention into Greek affairs by supporting the military coup (hence the yearly protest-march on the American embassy in Athens) while the latter balanced between “silence” (alike the “silence” for the Civil war) and “silently acceptance” of the foreign intervention – just a few rightists impeached the indigenous political parties and the politicians of that time for their plots and shenanigans.¹⁵

This conflict around the foreign (specifically, the USA) intervention was decisively resolved when a former US Ambassador in Greece, Robert Keeley, published a book acknowledging that the USA's and the US Athens Embassy's politics of that time empowered and facilitated the military officers (Colonels) to carry out the coup in 1967.¹⁶ This was a moral and political vindication for the Left, for all those years of criticizing and developing an anti-American (and hence, an anti-capitalistic, anti-state, anti-banking, anti-globalization, etc) attitude¹⁷, something that was needed for the Lefts, since the Eastern World broke down in 1989. This “anti-American” attitude, following the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1974, was materialized in the annual “November 17th protest-march” on the US Embassy, stating the willing to resist against any threats to parliamentary

¹² Briefly see N. Svoronos, *Histoire de la Grèce moderne*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1953; Greek transl. History of Modern Greece, Athens, Themelio, 1999; N. Svoronos, *Analects of modern Greek history and historiography*. Athens. Themelio. 1999 (in Greek); T. Vournas, *History of modern Greece, 1821-1974 -vol. 3 and 4*, Athens, Patakis (6 volumes) (in Greek), 1999; R. Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

¹³ The 1940, October 28th was the opening scene for Greece into the WW-II, fighting against the Mussolini's army attempt to intrude on Greece (even though Greece itself was in 1936-1940 under a fascist regime).

¹⁴ For an alternative approach to Greek Civil war see C. M. Willard, *America's Strategic Blunders: intelligence analysis and national security policy, 1936–1991*. Pennsylvania, The Penn State University Press, 2001, p. 53. For an overall alternative explanation see N. Bermeo, *What the Democratization Literature Says -or Doesn't Say- About Postwar Democratization*, «Global Governance», vol. 9, n. 2, 2003, pp. 159-177 (although Bermeo implicitly associates overall the military intervention to the process of democratization after the WW-II throughout Europe).

¹⁵ One could see the dictators' perspective in Gr. Bonanos, *The truth, April 21st, November 25th and the Cyprus issue*, Athens, Christakis, 1986 (in Greek). Gregory Bonanos was one of the Generals who participated in the 1967-1974 dictatorship regime servicing that period as Chief of the Army -the highest statutory office in Greek Army officers ranking.

¹⁶ See R. V. Keeley, *The Colonels' Coup and the American Embassy: A Diplomat's View of the Breakdown of Democracy in Cold War Greece*, Pennsylvania, The Penn State University Press, 2010. This assistance provided to dictatorship regimes seems to be a common practice for the USA politics during the '60s and the '70s, since predominately Latin America was the field to exercise political interventions via military coups (ie, Chile, Argentina, etc). During the '60s and the '70s the Mediterranean was a field of exercising military coups as well, since Spain, Portugal and Greece experienced this kind of regime.

¹⁷ For the term attitude and its role in society see P. S. Cohen, *Social Attitudes and Sociological Enquiry*. «The British Journal of Sociology», vol. 17, n.4, 1966, pp. 341-352.

democracy. Consequently, this is a march predominately by the leftist, or center-leftist, since the rightists and the right-wing parties aren't in favor of this march. This march (initially anti-American, but turned to anti-anything) has long served as a triggering event on behalf of certain marginal and extreme political groups for a violent expression of a "resistant attitude" against the State (which, since 1974, is a constitutional, parliamentary and democratic state after all).

Nevertheless, lefts or rights, all agreed that the 1973 November students' rebellion against the military regime was a milestone towards the restoration of democracy one year later, in 1974 and although it was not the first act of resistance against the military regime it became the benchmark for the new (3rd) Democracy Period of the Greek Republic (1974 –). Unsurprisingly, in history school textbooks the period of 1967-1974 military regime and the 1973 students' rebellion (actually, the whole 1945-1974) were not mentioned, until very recently (2007 reform), being part of the history's null curriculum.

2. The "resistance", the written and the unwritten history and the null curriculum

But what is the connection between the Civil war issue, the history's null curriculum¹⁸ and the case of the 1973 Greek students' uprising and its imprint to present? Following the Media and the Press, especially during the period of the current crisis, one could see that the 1945-9 Civil war (its roots, its instances and its outcomes) is still publicly referred in many cases, even though there is no direct connection between the Civil war per se and the topic under discussion, ie, when the Civil war -and the foreign troops intervention- is mentioned in a discussion on foreign investments as an example of lose of sovereignty. Even more, an anti-American movement, most favorable to the center-to-left political identities is entrenched into the period of the Civil war and the American intervention on behalf of the Greek government.

Theorizing this case, the question concerns *the construction of a social and political identity through both the written and the unwritten history/histories*.

Reviewing the post WW-II Greek education system one can realize that the Jerome Bruner's approach on "spiral curriculum" was very influential for a long time and had a strong impact on the Greek scholars and teachers, thus the subjects and the syllabuses are repetitively presented between the classes of different school grades (the Elementary, the Gymnasium -junior high and the Lyceum -senior high), although in a more extensive and elaborated form in every higher grade. According to the "spiral curriculum" model this repetitive pattern for syllabuses sets the ancient Greek history in the Elementary 4th grade and in the Gymnasium and Lyceum 1st grade. The Medieval-Byzantine era is presented in the Elementary 5th grade, Gymnasium and Lyceum 2nd grade. Finally, the modern history (namely the period of 1821 War for Independence expanded up to the 20th century) is presented in the Elementary 6th (final) grade and Gymnasium and Lyceum 3rd (final for both) grade.

Analyzing the Greek school history textbooks one can find a lot of examples of "resistance" – a modest way to say that the overall school history is a praise to "resisting Greeks"¹⁹, practically turning the school history into a war history. When the resistance/battle ends with a Greek victory the written school history attributes glory to the Greek forces. When the resistance/battle ends up to

¹⁸ D.J. Flinders, N.Noddings, St.J. Thornton, *The null Curriculum: its theoretical basis and practical implications*, «Curriculum Inquiry», vol. 16, n. 1, 1986, pp. 33-42; M.Gholami, A.Rahimi, O.Ghahramani, A.R. Dorri, *A reflection on null curriculum*, «IIOAB Journal», vol. 7, n. 1, 2016, pp. 218–223.

¹⁹ There are a lot of examples, which are known worldwide: the *battle in Marathon*, the *battle in Thermopylae*, the *naval battle in Salamis*, etc. As it is claimed, *ex post facto* – implicitly or explicitly, exaggerating or not, the "resisting Greeks" saved the western civilization from the onslaughting and raiding barbarians of the east (namely, for the Ancient history, the Persian Empire). Nevertheless this claim is justified enough, if one thinks of the Greek originated words and notions s/he uses in every day's activities and in his/her native language.

a Greek defeat, then this defeat per se is laudatory for the defeated, such as was in Thermopylae. The same pattern can be found in the case of WW-II: when the Greek army was victoriously triumphed against the fascist Italian troops (1940 October - 1941 April), history -and school history textbooks- attributed glory to the Greek youth. When the Nazi superior forces broke the Greek defense lines (1941 May), then it was a laudatory defeat for Greeks due to the excessive inequality of powers.

This *resistance worship* has its roots into two chronically irrelevant historical periods: the former is what can (in a broad sense) be perceived as “*the Antiquity*” and the latter is the “*1821 War for Independence*” (liberation from the Ottoman Empire). Common and core characteristic for the narratives on these two periods is the “*struggles of Greeks*”, the “*resisting Greeks*” who fight against all odds to maintain freedom and preserve the civilization and their way of life; preserve the identity features which differentiated them from the neighborhood population. No need to mention that in these textbooks the Greek civilization, the ideals and the way of life are a priori considered as superior than all the neighboring ones.

These two periods place a certain, profound, strong and nonnegotiable meaning on identities as they legitimize the modern Greek nation-state. “*This is who we are*”, is the meaning, independent, eager to fight for our freedom and our way of life, protecting our long lasting values and traditions. Fighting for these, one becomes a hero, a worth mentioning character whose name is not to be forgotten in times to come (as Achilles understands in Homer’s Iliad – and the 8 years old pupils have to learn since the 3rd Grade of the Elementary school). These two periods consist of the core element of the Greek national identity.

One could see as examples the Elementary school 4th grade history textbooks (pp. 50-62), where the Persian wars, from *Marathon* battle to *Plataeae* one, are used as simplified examples of pride, glory and freedom gained through war. This narrative is escalated in the Gymnasium 1st grade history textbook (pp. 57-62), where the emphasis is on freedom gained through battles (resisting against invaders, identified ipso facto as barbarian intruders) and on the glory resulted from these battles, in a detailed narration accompanied by ancient sources as documentation. Furthermore, in the Lyceum 1st grade history textbook the historical narrative draws to the conclusion of a civilization clash, the battle between two entirely different value systems, two different political stances, exhibiting the nation’s ideals which echo a higher civilization (pp. 97). But confronting these two ancient civilizations, the Greek, literally the Athenian democracy, versus the Persian empire, in terms of political ideas clashed into these warfare (democracy plus freedom vs empire and obedience), one could claim the fact that Sparta, the other predominant ancient Greek city-state, was not a democracy and this very fact is obscured into the school history narratives, which in a curricular perspective is clearly a “null curriculum” case.

No need to mention as to the ancient history the Greek history school textbooks are full of heroic names, appearing along with the dates of their heroism from all of these periods, troubling though the pupils to memorize them.

Acknowledging consequently the Byzantine (the Greek Medieval) period as the second one which provides profound elements into the modern Greek identity (namely the Christian tradition), legitimizing equally the modern Greek nation-state (19th century –), none can find some heroic names in this narrative preserved into the public discussions on history and referred into Media and Press relative topics (especially when history is brought as an example for today’s problems), none can proclaim this period as an example; actually, this period, important nevertheless for the modern Greek identity as it is and for the Greek and European history, is almost never mentioned in public discussions and the names of Byzantine emperors and great warriors are roughly remembered, since

not great instances of resistance are presented into school history textbooks (apart from the Byzantine empire's last stand in Constantinople siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453).

Truthfully, there are a lot of resistance instances during the Byzantine period, but the religious -namely, the Christianity- narrative has a stronger impact in identity construction. Therefore, the resistance instances during the Byzantine period are not considered as such: Byzantine period is an important element into school history curriculum not for the resistance instances, but predominately for religious matters. If one examines the content of the Byzantine history textbooks (5th Elementary grade, 2nd Gymnasium and Lyceum grades) would be astonished for each book chapter has to a greater or lesser extent references to religion (Christian Orthodox) or to religious/Church matters²⁰.

The third major historical period which is included into the history textbooks is the "modern and contemporary history", implying the period since the Ottoman invasion and the subjugation of the territories belonging once to Byzantine Empire (the Balkan peninsula, namely, today's Greece and all neighborhood states), until the end of the 20th century.²¹ Although, examining the textbooks' content one can reasonably conclude that the "1821 War for Independence" has a major impact on these narrations: almost the 4/5 of the Elementary 6th grade textbook content is taken by it. It has taken the 1/3 of the content into Gymnasium (3rd grade) textbook. Only in Lyceum (3rd grade) textbook the "War for Independence" is incorporated into the broader discussion for a transitional world in the late 18th and in the 19th century. There is no other explanation than the nature of school history itself; it has to construct a national identity to future citizens. Therefore it has to have a content orientated to nation ideals. Since Lyceum is not a mandatory school level, the construction of a national and political identity has be fulfilled until the end of the Gymnasium (the age of 15), when the obligatory education ends. Therefore the narratives in Lyceum history textbooks could have a broader -a more global/European and not so nation-oriented- perspective.

In the Elementary 6th grade textbook in particular, the concept of a religiously and culturally different conqueror (Ottoman Empire) is prevailing. Gradually the narration is ascending to the notion of "resistance", that is what the enslaved Greeks did for years until the final clash of the "1821 War for Independence" (p. 40). Ironically, in different chapters of the very same textbooks one can read that the enslaved Greeks manage to seize high statutory offices in Ottoman's reign, or manage to flourish financially. The "relative autonomy" of communities within the Ottoman Empire and all the benefits the Greeks gained on several occasions conducted the revolutionary ideas of the late 18th century from Europe (Enlightenment and French Revolution) to Greek communities so as to the "1821 War for Independence" be doable.

²⁰ Undoubtedly, the Medieval era is the period in which the Church (the Christian Church, both Orthodox and Catholic) was established and expanded throughout Europe (from the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, to the East-West Schism of 1054 or the Western Schism of 1378 and the battles throughout Europe between competitive reigns inflamed by the Church itself). Hence the European Medieval history seems to be dominated by the clergy, its politics, plots and shenanigans. The Greek Medieval history, videlicet the Byzantine era, has from this standpoint the exact characteristics of this period of time: for instance, the Byzantine Iconoclasm, a dogmatic difference in the 8th and 9th century CE, turned to be a political affair affecting the Empire's stability. In any case, the beginning and the end of this period is signified by religious clashes, at the beginning against the "old", pagan, polytheistic Hellenic-Roman religion (with Zeus and other gods and goddesses) and at the end against the invading Ottoman-Muslims. Ergo the references to religion and to religious/Church's affair is an unavoidable variable in historical narration for this period of time.

²¹ As it's has already been reported, the extension of the historical periods in history textbooks narration was just recently made possible (after the 1990's textbooks' reform). Until the end of the 20th century the narration in history textbooks was ending just at the end of the WW-II without any reference to the Civil war whatsoever.

Into the narratives for the “1821 War for Independence”²² the notion of resistance against the foreign intruder (the Ottomans) consists of a praise to those few brave who gave their lives to free their country, the father-land of their ancestors. If one is resisting for the traditional and time-honored values (which includes the language, the religion and other social institutions) then is uplifted to the pantheon of nation’s heroes, equal to Leonidas and the other ancient heroic figures, who also resisted against the enemy and fought for their freedom and their way of life. “Resisting” is essential to nation’s construction and nation consists of high valued actions of resistance, such as predominately the “1821 Revolution” (War for Independence).

But inside these narratives, one may find some elements of a paradox. “*Where were the actual levels of slavery?*” one may be wondering, since the language could be spoken, the Church was active and the religious faith could freely be exercised (depends on the particular period of course, but to a greater or lesser extent the Christian religion and the Christian Church as an institution were not ultimately inhibited or forbidden). Besides that, financial activities were not restrained; on the contrary, Greeks (as much as the Armenians or the Hebrews) were distinguishing in trade within the Ottoman Empire and the Greek communities outside the borders of Ottoman Empire –the “diaspora”- were enriched by this trans-empire trade (the “1774 Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji” finds Greeks with a substantial fleet by means of which they dominated throughout the Mediterranean Sea at a subsequent time). This is a point for the “null curriculum” hypothesis, since the actual history is not really need to be written within the school textbooks, due to the limitations of educational aims, political agendas and other curricular restrictions.

Examining the “written history” in school textbooks one can discuss the null curriculum in history, which incorporates all the unwritten history, the uncomfortable silences imposed on school history textbooks and all the misinterpretations of history, written though in school textbooks. Apart these two cases (the Antiquity and the “1821 War for Independence”) which both contain brilliant moments of glorious resistance(s), and of course the “Resistance” itself (the 1941-44 resistance against the Nazis), there are certain instances which are not mentioned in history school textbooks because they are not fitting at all into the national narration of the “resisting Greeks”. Notwithstanding the notion of resistance is implicitly a fundamental one throughout the Greek history curriculum, it was never mentioned a moment of resistance on behalf of the Greek opponents, ie the resistance against Alexander’s invasion to the East. Into the school history textbooks the narrative of Alexander’s invasion to East is reflecting the glorious and triumphant march of Greek army far into the East (initially as a quasi revenge for the Persian wars), spreading and planting the Greek culture deep into the “barbarian East” (an uncharted land so far). Undoubtedly as Alexander was marching deep into the East some form of resistance had to be expressed by the locals against him. This resistance though is covered by the Alexander’s glorious victory, such as it was the “Battle of Gaugamela”. In this case the focus is on the triumphed Greeks, not on the resistance as an ideal expresses by others (the opponents).

Neither has been mentioned (at all, or as a positive attitude) the resistance displayed by the Turks in 1920-1921, when the Greek army victoriously invaded deep into Ottoman Empire’s land and arrived almost 100 km before Ankara, the current Turkish capital city. Then the Turks were defending for their own country after all and some form of resistance had be expresses against the Greek army. Nevertheless, it’s a constantly huge dispute in parliamentary discussions, in Press, in

²² The “1821 War for Independence” is referred, generally in Greece, as the “1821 Revolution”. Semantically there is a crucial difference: while “war” means two parts involved into a warfare, the revolution holds a higher value, meaning the action of the depressed and their struggle to regain their freedom, their values, their dignity and their way of life; hence the revolution could morally be justified.

Media and in society as well, over the “true” narration -that “*has to be*”- in school textbooks regarding the “1922 Greek retreat” back to the coasts of Smyrna (Izmir) and the slaughtering by Kemal Ataturk’s army of all the non Turkish residents in Asia Minor.²³ There was a huge and a massive clamor over Media when a new (in 2006) history textbook dealing with the 1920-1922 warfare in Minor Asia took the Greeks away from the “resisting few” position and let a sense of devictimizing into the national narration.²⁴

Besides the null curriculum case in the written (school) history one could claim that the unwritten history has also a major contribution in our perception of the past.

In the case of the 1945-1949 Civil war, since the winners of the Civil war did not write the narrative of their own victory, they let enough space to the defeated to shape an ideological field for confrontation on the Civil war issue. The notion of resistance was predominant in this narration. Regardless their defeat, regardless what really was at stake during the Civil war (the political turnover), regardless their proportion on civil massacres, the defeated (and their political descendants) used what is known nowadays as the “social appropriation” mechanism.²⁵ Through one sided publications they presented themselves as undoubtedly defeated in warfare but as morally and ethically winners, since they were *resisting* against all odds, fighting an army supported by great powers (the USA military aid and the UK troops), and most of all, they were fighting for great ideals, such as freedom, equality, justice, etc. This stance is clear in the Lyceum 3rd grade history textbook where these exact ideas are presented as if they were in stake during the 1945-1949 Civil war. Did the defeated in this Civil war actually entered into the warfare in order to maintain these ideals (social rights, equality and freedom), or just in order to seize the power and establish a new political (overtly communist) regime? This is not clarified into the school history textbooks. Through the unwritten history the involved parts in this war were rearranged as for the moral judgment of their participation.

The ’60s in Greece were a troubled period. Others call it as a “long lasting”, others as a “brief decade”.²⁶ At the beginning of the ’60s the right-wing party of that time was in government, using the “iron” style of democracy prevailed throughout the ’50s; it was literally an authoritarian administration. During these intense years a lot of demonstrations took place (advocated by the major opposition party), demanding the democratic rules to be followed, less intervention to politics by the King (during that time Greece was a kingdom). In the mid ’60s, the center-wing party came in power, promising justice, equality, constitutionalism and among others a 15% of GDP grant to education (equal to the “marital grant” given earlier to Princess Sofia of Greece, for her marriage to King Juan Carlos of Spain). Soon, parliamentary activity became overwhelmingly biased and problematic and new elections were pronounced. But the military coup came before these elections (1967). The military dictatorship was in power for seven years (1967-1974).

During that time the society, at first, was numbed and didn’t react to claim democracy back. Gradually a few fragmentary and unsuccessful activities revealed a sense of resistance, while some activities did manage to internationalize the problem: famous or distinguished people (such as actors, writers, musicians, etc) who were either already abroad or left Greece after the coup to seek

²³ This, on the other hand, could be discussed as a clear genocide against the Greeks, the Armenians and other national-religious minorities performed by the Kemal Ataturk’s army in the early 20th century, so as to construct the modern nation-state of Turkey after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Although the modern Turkish foreign policy is constantly denying the term “genocide” as part of their own history, and their history syllabuses are focusing on the Turkey’s victory against its long-standing enemies – an other example of a history null curriculum case.

²⁴ This was the 2006-7 “Repousi’s history textbook” case, as it’s already been mentioned previously.

²⁵ D. McAdam, S.G. Tarrow, Ch. Tilly, *Dynamics of contention*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

²⁶ D. Papanikolopoulos, *The “long” ’60s decade*, Avgi (Press, in Greek), July 27, 2008; N. Alivizatos, *The brief ’60s decade*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 2008 (in Greek).

a shelter abroad were giving international publicity to the problem in any occasion. The US financial support and the hard rules of the military regime (censorship, imprisonment, exiling, unspeakable tortures, etc) prevented further resistance instances. Despite censorship applied in domestic Press, the US army radio station broadcasting from a US military base in an Athenian suburban, and other foreign radio stations were transferring into the Greek society the news from abroad as well as the “new” culture of the ‘60s. Within this political environment Greeks learned about the turmoil and the students’ uprisings in the US and European universities (and of course about the new rock bands and the new trends). In many universities across Europe and a lot in the USA, students were protesting against the war in Vietnam and in Cambodia, protesting against the educational system of their country, and they wanted their voice to be heard. Many voices, many requests, many ways for claiming what was sought as right. Once again the powerless resisting against the ones with power, claiming for social rights and other ideals.

Gradually after six years of political asphyxiation the military regime began to loose its stiffness, certain publications were permitted, and a transitional political government succeeded the military staff in power in order to prepare general elections as a process to restore the parliamentary democracy. The military regime realized the lack of legitimization into society due to economic restrictions and the hardship for the most. Legislating for the students’ affairs the regime decided to cancel the postponement for military servicing²⁷ for those students who participate in students’ political unions. This was like a touchpaper for the students that triggered demonstrations in some tertiary institutions in Athens, but also in other major cities hosting universities.

Surprisingly, in 1973 November, students of the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) did a sit-in and their act of resistance was spread by the word of mouth throughout Athens – a small radio broadcast station made by the students in NTUA labs helped out to spread the message of resistance faster. Soon thousands of people -the same people who were earlier semi-comfortable and looked unwilling to react- now flowed out in the streets and surrounded NTUA, giving food and other necessities to students for their sit-in. To record the historical sequence, one ought to mention that 3 days later the regime reacted, there was an invasion of a tank into the NTUA, and the sit-in was savagely terminated causing some deaths (protesters and supporters were killed by the police snipers surrounded the NTUA). This protest, the NTUA students’ sit-in as an action of resistance, triggered a second military coup (a coup within the military regime), from some hot-tempered officers who established a much harder and crueler military dictatorship and canceled the announced and promised process of parliamentary democracy restoration. Within a few months this second military regime invaded to Cyprus to overturn the legitimate government of Cyprus and establish a military regime there too. This caused the Turkish reactions (almost a war between Greece and Turkey for a couple of days) and the island of Cyprus is divided ever since.²⁸ The “1974 Cyprus tragedy” was the ultimate end of these regimes. Under this tremendous national defeat²⁹ the dictators resign, they delivered the power to the political personnel, the parliamentary

²⁷ In Greece servicing the military was -and still is- obligatory for all the male population over the 18 years of age. Only the students in Universities and other tertiary institutions can have a “postponement” from the service for the time of their study.

²⁸ To record history, Cyprus is still divided today: the northern part of the island has been illegally captured by the Turkish army and a non legitimate government has been established (the “pseudo-state” of northern Cyprus -as the Greek and Greek-Cypriot- foreign policy entitled it- is recognized solely by Turkey). Nicosia, the capital city of Cyprus, is the last divided European city with a buffer-zone in the center of it.

²⁹ “*I shall not deliver lesser the land [our father-land] delivered to me*” is the oath that the military personnel is giving before entering the service. This oath comes from the (glorious and sacred) ancient times. The irony was devastating here, since the military coup was made just to preserve the historical ideals of the nation, as they proclaimed, but they ended up with the national tragedy they caused.

democracy was restored (1974 July), all the military officers involved into the coup went on a trial and the most of them were imprisoned for life. A few years later Greece entered the EU as a full member-state.

Unsurprisingly this incident of a massive resistance against the authoritarian regime was not written in history school textbooks till recently. Besides the unwritten history per se, what remains hidden as part of a null curriculum is the true causes for the 1973 November students' uprising. One could agree with the *1973 legislation on students' affairs* as a motive and could indicate the loss of freedom as the cause for the uprising. Another could claim that students revolted only when their own interests were under question. Nevertheless, the actual history null curriculum in this case is that students' revolt didn't break down the military regime. A direct consequence of the 1973 students' revolt was a much harder dictatorship and the Turkish invasion to Cyprus along with the tragedy that followed. Nevertheless from the tragedies mentioned above, what remains in social cognition as the imprint of the 1973 students' revolt, is the public acknowledgment of a students' and society's resistance that brought the democracy back (Tsirides, 2017: 313)³⁰. It's a form of social appropriation, given the numbness of society, an alibi for the inertia expressed for long time during the military regime.³¹

3. Bridging the past to present: the role of the resistance culture

Since 2008 Greece is undergoing a multi-crisis. During this period a lot of demonstrations and other forms of "resistance", predominantly violent and destructive, have taken place against the imposed monetary and fiscal measures. Surprisingly, the public discussions around this crisis partly involved the guerrillas' disobedience to the 1945 Varkiza Agreement and the 1973 students' revolt against the military regime, as major resistance examples which ought to be followed. During the demonstrations against the fiscal and monetary measures in 2010-2012, where Athens turned to be a battle field, some of the demonstrators' slogans were calling for disobedience and resistance in similar ways as it was in 1945 and 1973. The 1945-1949 Civil war unrest and passion seemed to be alive in the beginning of the 21st century! This negotiation on behalf of some social agencies or broad collectivities brings forward the relation between the written and the unwritten history and the history null curriculum. This relation reveals a gap in collective memory that is preventing the wounds from history to heal: *what we do know* (or *what we have learnt*), *what we think we know* and *what we don't talk about* construct a highly volatile and toxic environment in both the political life and the society itself. The most recent example of history's troubles can be seen in the "2019 Prespes Agreement" (agreement between Greece and the FYROM, which ended a dispute over the name of the latter state). A society seems to be ready to burst again for a historical cause not efficiently explained and justified in school history narratives; but on the contrary, it was often hidden in the unwritten history or it had been part of the null curriculum; things never been said, remained hidden under the history's rug.

In both of these cases -the 1945-1949 Civil war and the 1973 Greek students' uprising- their core element is the notion of "resistance", regardless who resists against whom or what. Along with all the glorious resistance moments in ancient history and the "1821 Revolution" as the ultimate action of resistance, this notion of "resistance" as it is generally perceived constructs a "*culture of*

³⁰ G. Tsirides, *The Greek Civic Society during the dictatorship regime (1967-1974)*, *Doctoral Thesis*, Department of Political Science (supervisor: D. Sotiropoulos), Athens, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Academic Year, 2016-2017 (in Greek), Last updated: September 12, 2018 ("Pergamos repository", the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens digital library) <<https://pergamos.lib.uoa.gr/uoa/dl/frontend/file/lib/default/data/1519108/theFile>> (last access: 14.09.2019), p. 313.

³¹ Ibid., p. 315 for a similar reference.

resistance” within the society. This “resistance culture” is penetrating the society through the unwritten history and the history’s null curriculum and it’s legitimized through the written school history, for which “resistance” carries a positive meaning, since the notion of resistance enhance the nation-state’s narratives. It seems that this “resistance culture” functions as a means of *technology for political domination*.³² In this sense, the “resistance culture” legitimizes the actions carried out regardless the causes or the consequences: resistance a priori maintains a positive quality even if one resists against his own state; this could explain up to a point the high levels of tax-evasion in Greece or the unwillingness of a substantial part of the Greeks to conform to the law in any occasion.³³ This “resistance culture” as it is cultivated predominately through the school history’s null curriculum and the unwritten history cannot serve as a logical argumentation whatsoever.

For the rightists the notion of resistance is contained into the national narration, praising the glorious past through the written (and school) history. The “resistance culture” is a concept which construct the core element of their national identity for which they are overwhelmingly proud of.

For the leftists the notion of resistance regardless of its historical roots is cultivated through the unwritten history and the school history’s null curriculum as part of their political agenda, as well as part of the political-historical knowledge and memory they ought to carry – a crucial tool to comprehend the past and transform the present.³⁴

Notwithstanding the roots, the causes and the consequences of this “resistance culture”, under this outbreak of memory due to current Greek multi-crisis, one has to reconsider the national narratives beyond their cultivated myths and the trisection narration of a misused history, divided into the officially written, the unwritten history and the history’s null curriculum. Then, as Axelos eminently illustrated, one could comprehend the history as a means to produce the present and the future and not solely as a product by which the past could just be merely consumed.³⁵

³² N. Mouzelis, *Post-Marxist Alternatives. The Construction of Social Orders*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1990; P. Kondylis, *The causes of Modern Greece’s decay*, Athens, Themelio, 2011 (in Greek).

³³ Actions of “resistance” can be seen even by the political personnel who are assigned to apply the law – in some cases the law they by themselves voted in earlier times (it is a notorious scene with a minister of health smoking inside the conference hall during a press interview, or other ministers riding bikes without helmet, or driving a car without their seat-belts fasten, etc. Not to mention other matters of importance such as traffic violations causing death, tax evasion, etc, all publicly known through the Press). Additionally, mostly during the ’80s the Greek society seemed to be in favor of a terrorist (“extreme left”?) group, named after the 1973 students’ rebellion (the notorious “17N”). Furthermore, the society seemed to be ready to justify their actions (bombing and shooting “enemies of the people”, such as members of American and British diplomatic corps in Greece -the excuse was the intervention of their politics into Greek affairs, years and years behind- or other distinguished Greeks, such as politicians, newspaper publishers, entrepreneurs, etc). This (terrorist) group was “resisting” against the state, the power, the foreign powers, the capitalism, and so forth, claiming the social rights and other ideals inherited to them by the people’s struggles in the past. There is an other dispute that this notion of the “resistance culture” could also be used, up to a certain point, as an explanatory concept for the ambiguous and ambivalent stance a part of the Greek society took in the Catalan issue: for some of the Greeks this is a case of a “few” (the Catalans) resisting and standing against the “mighty” (the state -Kingdom- of Spain) in order to preserve their own distinguishing identity, culture, language, history – under a naive and emotional reflection it could be a roughly similar case to the 1821 Greek Revolution; hence the Catalans are partially in favor in Greece, with no other logical reasoning but this naive and emotional perception for history.

³⁴ El. Koukee, *The end of Varkiza [Agreement]: the December [1944 Battle of Athens] as a heritage or as a foreign country?* «Chronos», Vol. 21, 2015 (in Greek), Last updated: September 12, 2018, <<http://www.chronosmag.eu/index.php/l-e-l-x.html>> (last access: 09.10.2016).

³⁵ K. Axelos, *Le destin de la Grèce moderne*, «Esprit», vol. 7, 1954, p. 39-54; Greek transl. *The destiny of modern Greece*, Athens, Nefeli.